

Coalitional Politics in the Development of Vancouver's Chinatown from 2000 to 2019

**by
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Abstract

This project tracks the shift in development and neighbourhood planning policy in Vancouver's Chinatown from 2000 to 2019. Using concepts from policy studies and Pierre Bourdieu's theories of class and group formation, it explores the conditions and degree of the policy change, and provides preliminary assessments of the durability of the change. During this period, there was a substantive shift in planning goals and primary policy tools from a focus on economic revitalization to a concern with preserving intangible heritage. This shift was driven by the arrival of a cohort of young, educated, Chinese-Canadian adults – part of a broader demographic phenomenon – whose work to stop a prominent development proposal fomented a restructuring of the neighbourhood's political coalitions and reframing of political discourse around concerns of social justice and cultural preservation. Within this political context, key policy entrepreneurs were able to link the political upheaval and reframed policy concerns with the pursuit of UNESCO World Heritage Designation as a new organizing policy objective for Chinatown's neighbourhood planning.

Keywords: Advocacy Coalition Framework; Multiple Streams Framework; Chinatown; Bourdieu; policy change; group formation

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List of Acronyms

ACF	Advocacy Coalition Framework
CAG	Chinatown Action Group
CBA	Chinese Benevolent Association
CCAP	Carnegie Community Action Project
CCG	Chinatown Concern Group
CHAPC	Chinatown Historic Area Planning Committee
CSHBA	Chinatown Society Heritage Building Association
CTT	Chinatown Transformation Team
DPB	Development Permit Board
GCAP	City of Vancouver's Greenest City Action Plan
HA-1 and HA-1A	Historic Area Zoning District Schedules in Chinatown
HAHR	Historic Area Height Review
HDC/HDC Report	City of Vancouver report: "Historic Discrimination Against Chinese People in Vancouver"
HUL	Historic Urban Landscapes
LSG	Legacy Stewardship Group
MSF	Multiple Streams Framework
TRC	The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada
VCBIA	Vancouver Chinatown Business Improvement Association
VCMA	Vancouver Chinatown Merchant's Association
VCRC	Vancouver Chinatown Revitalization Committee
YCC	Youth Collaborative for Chinatown

Chapter 1.

Introduction

On November 17th 2017, after nearly four years and five reworked designs, developers at Beedie Living received a rejection from the City of Vancouver for a building proposed for 105 Keefer Street in Vancouver's Chinatown. This decision from the Development Permit Board (DPB) – a body consisting of three senior staff – was controversial and drew a lot of attention from press and commentators on urban politics. Unlike the project's previous iterations, which were rezoning applications for more density which were pushed back by staff or rejected by Council, this latest application met all zoning and local area plan requirements, and had received approval from Vancouver city staff, the City's Urban Design Panel, and the DPB's own Advisory Committee. Furthermore, the decision wasn't unanimous; only two Board members rejected the proposal, the third accepting it under grounds that it fulfilled all legal requirements under the existing zoning. The decision was also unprecedented, being the first such rejection since the Board was established in 1974 (Mondor, 2018), and was called by former city councillor Gordon Price "a profound expansion of the responsibility of the Development Permit Board," exceeding its original mandate (Price, 2017). Indeed, project proponent Beedie Living has sued the City of Vancouver for this reason (Chan, 2019). Finally, the rejection of 105 Keefer was unusual in the context of City of Vancouver's recent development history which had since at least the early 1990s involved residential intensification of the city core as a means of achieving livability and sustainability objectives, including through the redevelopment of industrial and historic areas adjacent the City's central business district (Punter, 2003).

The 105 Keefer rejection also attracted attention because of the political context in which it occurred. Beginning in 2014, the successive applications for the development were paralleled by the growth of a grassroots political movement to resist it. The composition of this movement drew special attention, with media regularly highlighting the engagement in neighbourhood politics of a new generation of young, educated Chinese Canadians often with some personal connection to Chinatown (Bula, 2017; Cheung, 2015, 2017; Howell, 2017; James, 2017). Working with Chinatown's low-income Chinese seniors and numerous cultural organizations and benevolent societies,

this cohort of younger community organizers brought attention to how new development threatened Chinatown's cultural heritage and supply of affordable housing. Centring first on the activities of these youth-led non-profits, by 2017 there were hundreds of young adults participating in the struggle against 105 Keefer and likely thousands engaged through social media. Collectively, they used a variety of tactics in the struggle, from more traditional petitions and rallies, to "alternative open houses" (events mirroring formal public engagement), outdoor Mah Jong socials, movie screenings, and branded websites and social media hashtags (Duggan, 2017; Gold, 2017; James, 2017). Some accounts framed this movement's multi-year political struggle in heroic terms, likening this "new battle" to a famed struggle in the 1960's against a freeway project that would have gutted the historic neighbourhood (Gold, 2017). This historic comparison raised the stakes of the struggle by framing this as a fight for the survival of the neighbourhood; it also highlighted the power imbalance between a grassroots movement of traditionally marginalized Chinese Canadians (youth, seniors, and low-income residents) facing off against a municipally supported development regime. Indeed, representatives from the development industry credited this activism for the decision against Beedie's proposal; they complained that the board had "succumbed to political pressures", and they saw the event as a dangerous precedent of politics dominating policy (Mackie, Fumano, & Lee-Young, 2017).

The confluence of an unexpected and controversial decision by the DPB following prolonged grassroots political resistance against the proposal suggest something important was happening in Chinatown sometime around 2015. But it is easy to jump to a conclusion that the strength of the new intergenerational Chinese Canadian coalition shaped the DPB's decision or that this group would bring about some kind of fundamental change in the City's development politics. Clarence Stone, a progenitor of the urban regime theory of urban politics, distinguishes the "retail politics" of one-off decisions produced by a moment of popular pressure, from the "process of shaping arrangements" of political actors into effective and stable regimes that shape cities (Stone, 2005). My research question, then, is the following: was the decision to reject 105 Keefer a response to short-term "retail politics", or was it part of a more substantive and enduring shift in the policy approach to development in Chinatown?

Examining 105 Keefer decision through a wider historical lens, there is evidence that a significant shift in policy occurred around the time of the 105 Keefer decision

compared to the previous 15 years regulating how development in Chinatown was treated in key planning documents. Specifically, there was a shift in the underlying goals and rationale for Chinatown planning and policy from economic revitalization to a novel kind of “living” heritage and cultural preservation that moved beyond traditional concerns of building aesthetics. From 2001 to 2012, a series of plans were developed to support economic revitalization and development, including a Neighbourhood Plan and suite of new zoning policies permitting an area-wide increase in residential density (AECOM Economics, 2011; City of Vancouver, 2012b, 2012a). In 2018, these density increases were reversed and the City’s planning department created the Chinatown Transformation Team dedicated to preserving the neighbourhood’s “living heritage” (City of Vancouver, 2019). The work of this team since 2018 has been organized around pursuit of UNESCO World Heritage Designation, beginning with the development of a Cultural Heritage Asset Management Plan, which doubles as a component of the UNESCO Designation application and a community plan of “priority projects, actions, partners, and resources to foster a vibrant Chinatown” (City of Vancouver, 2020a). A shift at the level of these goals means that subsequent policies and decisions, such as development review and approvals, were to be developed and justified in wholly different terms.

This policy shift was paralleled by a reconfiguration of the political landscape in Vancouver’s Chinatown during the same period. The planning work of the first decade of the 2000s was dominated by a set of key stakeholder groups: the Chinese Benevolent Association, the Vancouver Chinatown Merchants Association, the Vancouver Chinatown Business Improvement Association, the Chinese Cultural Centre Association, and S.U.C.C.E.S.S (a social services organization established to support Chinese Canadians and new immigrants). Input and endorsement of these groups and other stakeholders was organized through the establishment of a community advisory committee called the Vancouver Chinatown Revitalization Committee (VCRC). Collectively, these stakeholders represented an alliance of long-time economic and business interests with groups working to preserve heritage and culture who together would support the policy approach of economic revitalization through residential intensification during the first stage of planning and policy, starting in 2001. By 2013/2014, when this coalition had begun to fragment, a new generation was becoming active in Chinatown civil society, eventually coalescing into a number of well-organized

and capable community organizations. These new groups, mostly run by young adults and working with low-income seniors from the neighbourhood, became aligned with the cultural heritage component of the previous coalition forming an intergenerational coalition concerned with stopping gentrification and the erosion of Chinatown's cultural heritage. This new coalition worked effectively to see 105 Keefer rejected by the Development Permit Board, a decision that called into question the economic rationale of the policies and plans of the previous decade, opening a window of opportunity for a new approach to development in Chinatown.

These parallel shifts in policy and politics match a general pattern of policy change described by the Advocacy Coalition Framework (ACF), a dominant theory from the field of policy studies, and a central component of the conceptual framework for my thesis. The ACF provides an apparatus for a methodical and comprehensive analysis of the conditions of policy change, making a distinction between relatively superficial change brought about by policy-oriented learning, and significant change in the values underlying policy that typically occurs when competing coalitions successfully have their positions formalized in policy by decision-makers (Sabatier, 1988). Within this general structure provided by the ACF, I draw on other theories from policy studies, such as Kingdon's Multiple Streams Framework, to help parse and interpret the enormous diversity and volume of activity (policy decisions, reports, programs, hearings, organizational change, etc.) that occurred over twenty years in Chinatown. These other theories help to identify the particular conditions and events that shaped the final policy outcome adopted by the City. Specifically, they explain how the policy window opened by the rejection of 105 Keefer is leveraged by a group of policy entrepreneurs within the intergenerational coalition championing the policy concept of living (or intangible) heritage and the pursuit of UNESCO World Heritage Designation, and how their success in seeing this formalized in City policy and budgets was aided by a broader policy context of decolonization and reconciliation with Indigenous and other groups historically oppressed by a culture of white supremacy and discrimination.

According to the ACF, a change in the balance of power in a coalitional struggle typically comes about when an external shock causes a redistribution of resources, giving one coalition an advantage over another. In this case, the external shock was a macro-level shift in Metro Vancouver demographics, made visible in the hundreds of Chinese Canadian youth that became involved in the resistance to 105 Keefer.

According to Canadian Census data for Metro Vancouver from 1996 to 2016, the number of young adults (aged 25 to 44) who identified as Chinese Canadians and held degrees at or above the bachelor level almost tripled in the from 28,000 to 75,000, including over 15,000 holding Master's degrees or doctorates. The number of people identifying as ethnically Chinese who were born in Canada rather than abroad has also increased steadily, more than doubling in 20 years from 63,000 to 138,095. Historians of Vancouver's Chinatown highlight the importance of these types of social and demographic changes on neighbourhood politics and Chinese Canadian cultural identity (Anderson, 2014; P. S. Li & Li, 2011; Mitchell, 1998; Ng, 1999). Ng in particular notes the distinct politics and identity of locally-born Chinese Canadians, or *tusheng*, including those who were instrumental in political struggles in the 1960s to protect Vancouver's Chinatown from City redevelopment initiatives (Ng, 1996, 1999). Similarly, geographer David Ley described the growth and political influence of an analogous cohort in his accounts of how a "new middle class" of educated, young professionals emerged in central city neighbourhoods across Canada, bringing with them a reform politics of 'livability' that would challenge the economic imperatives of the incumbent municipal regimes (Ley, 1996). For Ley, this challenge was not a moment of "retail politics", but a long-term reconfiguration of the political landscape (Ley, 1994, p. 62). Thus, I posit that the youth who were such an important force in the struggle against 105 Keefer are a kind of new "new middle class", with implications for Vancouver politics at multiple scales. As such, the coalitional changes this cohort helped to bring about, and the policy shifts that accompanied them, are likely to endure.

In the context of this account of changes in policy, political coalitions, and demographics, the rejection of 105 Keefer is revealed to be less important as a policy decision than as a catalyst of change. In the language of policy studies, 105 Keefer was a 'focusing event', supporting the development of a coalition and the popularizing of its political message among a broader public (Birkland, 1998; Kingdon, 1995). Drawing on the theory of sociologist Pierre Bourdieu, I explore how the struggle against 105 Keefer was the stage upon which this growing cohort would come to recognize itself as a distinct political entity, through the "political labour of representation" that is critical to the process of class (or group) formation (Bourdieu, 1985, 1993; Wacquant, 2013). These representations simultaneously assert the groups presence in the social field as well as its way of perceiving the values at stake in the struggle – the principles of legitimacy and

categories of perception through which people makes sense of proposals like 105 Keefer. So, prior to the policy success that saw intangible heritage become the backbone of a new approach to development in Chinatown, this cohort had changed the terms by which policy was to be judged from economic vitality to social justice and cultural redress.

In Chapter 2 of this thesis I describe the three bodies of literature that comprise the conceptual framework, and how they will be used to complement each other, expanding the analysis to different scales, first from the micro-account of political events and policy documents to a macro-structural description of social and demographic change, then to a longer timeframe that situates the contemporary struggle in Chinatown's deep history. Following that, in Chapter 3 I briefly outline my research method and data sources.

In Chapters 4, 5 and 6 I detail my findings, gradually introducing layers of the conceptual framework to offer successive rounds of interpretation of the events, agents, and policy that make up the historical account. Chapter 4 is the most empirical, outlining the main thrust of the historical events from roughly 2000 to 2019; in term of interpretation, it is organized only generally around the Advocacy Coalition Framework providing parallel accounts first of policy change then of changes to coalitional politics. Chapter 5 focuses on the 'moment' of change, roughly from 2013 to 2018, adding the Multiple Streams Framework and Staged Policy Cycle to further understand the timing, contingency, and agency that shaped the particular change that occurred. Chapter 6 brings in the macro-structural and historical aspects of the conceptual framework, integrating with policy studies to speculate about the durability of the shift observed through an exploration of the social conditions for change and a historical comparison with a similar policy event in Chinatown's past, the activism that prevented the building of a freeway through the neighbourhood in the 1960s.

Chapter 2.

Conceptual Framework

The core of my conceptual framework draws from an approach developed by Howlett, McConnell and Perl that integrates three prominent schools of thought from the field of policy studies: the staged policy cycle, the Multiple Streams Framework, and the Advocacy Coalition Framework (Howlett, McConnell, & Perl, 2016, 2017). Perspectives on policy change are supplemented by literature from geography and sociology that connect neighbourhood-level politics to larger socio-demographic change (Bourdieu, 1985, 1993; Ley, 1996). The third literature contextualizes the policy changes examined in a deeper history of the political struggles that shaped Chinatown's development in Vancouver, (Anderson, 1988; Mitchell, 1998; Ng, 1999).

2.1. Policy Studies

Policy studies is a field that explores the conditions and parameters of policy change in an attempt to understand “how and why policy comes about” (Schmid, Sewerin, & Schmidt, 2020, p. 1113). It was born of a shift away from normative concerns of political philosophy, to a practical, problem-centred concern with the “different drivers of policy-making and the way they interact to produce outcomes” (Capano & Howlett, 2020, p. 2). Collectively, they encompass a range of approaches, exploring policy decisions and change from the perspective of macro-structures (e.g., demographics, economics, etc.); the history and development of institutions; the rational learning of bureaucrats in the policy process; the political struggles of competing groups; and the strategic moves of particular agents of change (DeLeon, 2006; John, 2003). The most enduring schools have found ways to integrate multiple of these factors into a robust model of policy change, three of which have been particularly influential: Laswell's policy cycle, Kingdon's multiple streams, and the Advocacy Coalition Framework of Sabatier and Jenkins-Smith (Howlett et al., 2016).

One of the oldest and most enduring theories of policy is the staged policy-making model first developed by Harold Lasswell in 1956, with the basic premise that policy-making follows a somewhat rational sequence of seven steps from problems to

solutions (Perl, 2020). Lasswell's stages have been reformulated and elaborated by many contributors in the decades that followed (DeLeon, 2006; Howlett et al., 2017; Perl, 2020). The version of the model now most common breaks policy-making into five main stages: agenda-setting, policy formulation, decision-making, policy implementation, and evaluation (Howlett et al., 2017; Perl, 2020). A later contribution from Brewer and DeLeon was to incorporate feedback processes into the stages through the metaphor of the 'policy cycle', making the staged process more dynamic and iterative (Howlett et al., 2017). While criticized as presenting an overly simplistic and idealized picture of policy-making that is far from the messy reality of practice, it remains a helpful tool for organizing the complex events that make up the creation and use of a policy (Howlett et al., 2017). Indeed, where events diverge from the ideal model can be a fruitful point of analysis and interpretation on the particular history of a policy event, and a basis for further theorizing about policy-making (Perl, 2020)

The second key source is John Kingdon's very influential Multiple Streams Framework (MSF). Focusing on the agenda-setting stage of policy making, Kingdon sets out to understand "an idea whose time has come" (Kingdon, 1995, p. 1), or why a particular idea might successfully attract the limited attention of decision-makers at a particular time (rather than a competing idea, or at a different time). Drawing on the 'garbage can' model of Cohen, March and Olsen, this historical contingency in the policy process is explained through the timely convergence during agenda-setting of three independent streams of activity – the problem stream, the politics stream, and the policy stream. Events from the problem or political stream can result in a shift of decision-makers' attention, bringing an issue or concern onto the agenda that had not been there before. From the problem stream, this can include data or indicators, feedback from the public, or a dramatic 'focusing event', such as a crisis or catastrophe (Birkland, 1998). Changes in the political stream are primarily driven by the arrival of new people, such as new decision-makers following an election, new senior staff, or organizations in civil society. But the political stream can also involve broader political influences, such as public opinion or the 'national mood' (Kingdon, 1995). The policy stream is more typically the realm of experts and specialists (bureaucrats, academics, industry-experts, etc.) where policy ideas are being developed, refined and championed by groups within a broader policy community. For Kingdon, policy-making begins when changes in the problem or politics streams produce a 'window of opportunity,' which 'policy

entrepreneurs' – advocates for a particular solution from a policy community – can leverage to have their concern and associated policy idea placed on the decision-making agenda. If they successfully 'couple' the three streams together, linking a problem, a solution, and political will, it can result in policy change (Howlett et al., 2016, 2017).

The third prominent theory of policy-making is the Advocacy Coalition Framework (ACF) first established by Paul Sabatier (Sabatier, 1988), which has become one of the more influential theories in the field of policy studies (Howlett et al., 2017). The ACF provides an apparatus (Figure 1) for a methodical and comprehensive analysis of the conditions of policy change within a policy subsystem, incorporating exogenous forces (e.g., socio-economics, political shifts), policy-oriented learning, and the influence of actors (as loosely grouped 'coalitions').

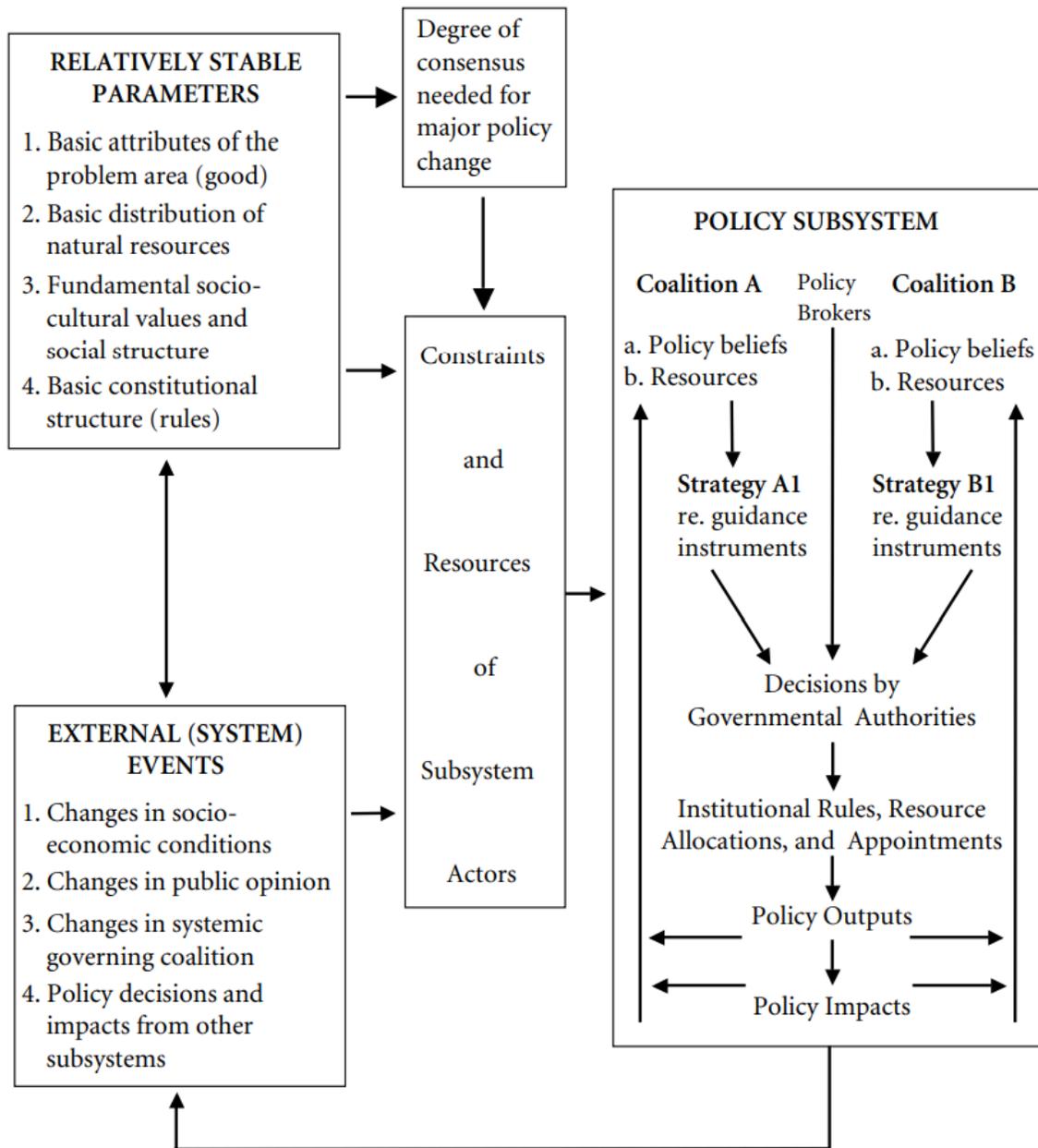


Figure 1: Advocacy Coalition Framework

Source: Sabatier & Weible, 2007

According to the ACF, policy change comes about either from learning among policy makers or as a product of the struggle between competing coalitions. The first form of change, policy-learning, tends to produce adjustments to the policy tool, or the exchange of one policy tool for another. This comes about from processes such as monitoring, where the success of policy in achieving goals is evaluated, and

subsequently adapted. But the policy goals (and underlying values) remain the same. Change that results from coalition struggle produces a deeper level of change at the level of what Sabatier calls the “policy core”, which are the application of fundamental values to a policy area, including priority of policy-related values, opinion on whose welfare counts most, and definition of legitimate goals (Howlett et al., 2017; Sabatier & Weible, 2007). Coalitions compete to see their values formalized in policy, to become the ‘official’ values of the state. As one coalition replaces a previously dominant coalition, a new set of values direct policy, reorienting policy goals. The success and failure of different coalitions is affected by the relative distribution of diverse resources among them, including things like finances, information, skilled leadership, and public opinion (Sabatier & Weible, 2007, p. 203). In the original version of the ACF, a redistribution of resources comes about exclusively from ‘external shocks’ such as shifting political ethos or economic and demographic trends. But a later version allows for ‘internal shocks’ to also drive changing coalition fortunes, which, drawing on the ‘focusing event’ literature from the multiple streams framework include things like shifted public attention, policy vulnerabilities or failures, or by bringing new information into the policy process (Sabatier & Weible, 2007, p. 204).

On the surface, the ACF has a lot of similarities with Clarence Stone’s account of urban regimes, a theory developed during Stone’s study of municipal development politics in Atlanta during the 1980s which by the late 1990s became the “dominant approach to understanding urban politics in the United States” (Lauria, 1999, p. 126). As a theory for “how collective decisions about urban development arise”(Lauria, 1999, p. 126), it is contrasted on one hand with a sanguine pluralism that insists elections lead to an “open and penetrable” politics; on the other hand, it rejects a notion that governance is at the behest of a cohesive elite (Stone, 2005). Like the ACF, Stone’s theory sees decision-making as coalitional. Specifically, regimes emerge from a social production of power that is “coalitional rather than unilateral” (Mossberger, 2009). Governance cannot be achieved by government alone, and as such a governing coalition must consist of a number of actors, including private sector, non-profit, etc. to achieve a policy objective. Further, both the ACF and urban regime theory acknowledge the importance of a resources (financial, political, human, organizational) for building a coalition that has the capacity to exert ongoing influence on policy decisions (Sabatier & Weible, 2007; Stone, 2005). Finally, like the ACF, which finds coalitions assembling around core values

(Sabatier & Weible, 2007), regimes come to cohere around “congruent concerns” (Mossberger, 2009).

However, while Sabatier understands coalitions to be defined in terms of values (both deep values and policy specific values), for Stone, “large purposes”, though important, are insufficient; collaboration toward larger goals is secured by a regime through selective material incentives used to award participants. In Atlanta, this could include contracts for downtown development or small opportunities like job training programs for local non-profits (Mossberger, 2009).

This distinction between values and interests is symptomatic of some of their other major differences. Sabatier’s coalitions tend to be looser, with the primary criteria that they show a “non-trivial degree of coordination over time” (Sabatier, 1988). While there may be a range of levels of coordination, from the ‘strong’ coordination of mature coalitions that may strategize together, to the ‘weak’ coordination of others, which could be as simple as monitoring an ally’s activity (Sabatier & Weible, 2007). By contrast, Stone portrays the politics he is concerned with as the “art of arranging” the structures and relationships by which society is governed. It is more about the conditions that produce stability with respect to a policy position, exploring how an enduring regime can be “arranged” to act collectively toward a policy objective. This politics of “arranging” is contrasted specifically, in his formulation, to the focused but temporary pressure used to influence a particular policy decision (Stone, 2005). This is part of Stone’s critique of pluralism, where victories of a temporary coalition are somewhat dismissively referred to as an example of “retail politics” (Stone, 2005, p. 311) – they can influence a policy decision once in a while, but do not amount to fundamental change in the policy direction of the city.

This final distinction points to an important limitation for urban regime theory in the context of 105 Keefer: the problem of how policies change. Urban regime theory is a model of the “factors that promise viable and durable arrangements” (Stone, 2005), but the theory offers little to understand how arrangements are disrupted, producing policy change (Rast, 2014). The ACF, by contrast, is a model of policy change. As discussed above, my interest in the Development Permit Board’s decision is that it may mark a shift in policy approaches around development in Vancouver’s Chinatown. As such, the ACF may offer a fruitful means of exploring the dynamics of external factors, coalitional

actors, and policy development that urban regimes do not. This is not to say that Stone's theory is irrelevant; research into development conflict (discussed below) specifically uses Stone's concepts to describe the established pro-development coalition in Vancouver (Ley, 1996). Also, later iterations of the ACF recognized the presence of interest based-coalitions just as Stone would later acknowledge the occasional importance of less material concerns in bringing people together (Sabatier & Weible, 2007; Stone, 2005), suggesting networks of policy advocates can and do coalesce on diverse foundations. Finally, since an aspect of assessing the difference between meaningful change and "retail politics" turns on the stability of the new coalition, Stone's "arrangements" have relevance to understanding the durability of the policy change examined in this study.

Howlett, McConnel and Perl have synthesized the three major theories of policy-making discussed into an integrated framework that attempts to draw on the respective strengths of each (Howlett et al., 2016, 2017). From the staged policy cycle, they organize policy-making into an iterative cycle comprised of five stages: agenda-setting; policy formulation; decision-making; policy implementation; and policy evaluation. Flowing through these stages are the different streams that comprise the main types of events and activities involved in policy-making. To adapt Kingdon's framework beyond the agenda-setting stage where it was first developed, Howlett et al add two more streams to Kingdon's problem, politics and policy streams: the process stream, which supports discovery and evaluation of a problem that has made it on the agenda, and the program stream, which enters after a decision has been taken and the details of policy implementation need to be worked out. The ACF is brought in to better conceptualize the political dynamics of each decision-point, as well as the importance of delineating a policy subsystem. In this integrated framework, the transition from one stage to another act in the manner of Kingdon's "window of opportunity", serving as moments of "confluence and distribution" (Howlett et al., 2017, p. 72) when different streams come in proximity, creating the conditions for different types of decisions to be made. Each stream and decision point is an opportunity for competing coalitions to exert influence on how things are done and what's considered important by decision-makers. By combining these theories, Howlett et al make up for their respective deficiencies while maintaining their strengths, even where the theories seem to offer nearly contradictory emphases within the policy-making process, such as the contingency of Kingdon's streams and the

agency of the ACF. The result is a holistic and comprehensive framework with sufficient clarity of structure to help “make sense of the babble of policy-making” (Goyal & Howlett, 2020).

2.2. Neighbourhood Change and Class Conflict

A noted weak point in the ACF is that a primary driver of policy change, the external shocks that affect coalition fortunes, are unpredictable and thus undertheorized (Howlett et al., 2017, p. 74). I thus introduce concepts from geography and sociology to better examine the way a particular exogenous force, demographic and social change, feed into coalitional dynamics. Specifically, I first draw on the scholarship of David Ley on locational conflict and gentrification in Vancouver from the late 1960s to 1990s. Ley's work not only provides examples of how class dynamics translate into municipal politics, but it introduces important context on the local politics that affected development in Chinatown. Ley's work draws heavily on the sociological theories of Pierre Bourdieu, particularly his expanded understanding of class politics which moves beyond narrowly economic definitions of class division to understand the social world as a complex field organized by amount and composition of cultural, social and symbolic as well as economic. I will also dig deeper into Bourdieu's work to provide a richer understanding of how demographic change coalesces into coalitions of people with aligned belief systems and policy preferences. Thus, this literature helps to theorize the important forces that that the ACF leaves undertheorized.

The forces and processes that drive and shape change in neighbourhoods has been studied for over a century and can be grouped under two general approaches. The first is the ‘human ecology’ lens that emerges from the Chicago School of sociology sees neighbourhood change as ‘natural’ result of processes underlying city growth (Betancur & Smith, 2016) or the life situation of individuals (Temkin & Rohe, 1996). The second is the political economy lens, an approach steeped in Marxist critique which sees neighbourhood change as produced by a historical process of class struggle shaped by capital accumulation and social reproduction (Betancur & Smith, 2016). At the neighbourhood level, this approach identifies the antagonism of the exchange value of space (i.e., the capital accumulation of real estate) with its use value, in terms of the occupation of homes by residents, and the social relations of community (Betancur & Smith, 2016).

The political economy lens has been well studied in Vancouver for decades. As early as 1980, David Ley and John Mercer, University of British Columbia (UBC) geographers, explored how class-based tastes underly conflicts in land use change in Vancouver in the 1970s. Through tracking debates in newspapers and Council minutes, Ley and Mercer demonstrate a marked difference in the geographies of conflicts over change to Vancouver neighbourhoods (much more in Vancouver's westside than east side); they also note a shift from an economic rationale that favours development to narratives of "livability" that are successfully used to curb or alter development. These shifts are linked to the rise of an urban, white-collar, middle class that around this time was increasingly locating in Vancouver's inner suburbs (as opposed to suburbs of the larger region), and simultaneously taking control of Vancouver's City Council (Ley & Mercer, 1980).

By the 1990s, Ley would elaborate on the rise of this new middle class, reframing the desire for livability as part of "politics of consumption", situating Vancouver as a key case study in the growing field of gentrification studies (Ley, 1994, 1996). Using quantitative methods, Ley identified a link between a new middle class of urban gentrifiers with the rise of reform politics in Montreal, Toronto and Vancouver. Specifically, that reform politics was tied to a cultural new class (professionals with high-levels of education, biased towards the arts, humanities and social sciences) (Ley, 1996, p. 197) that tended to be at the leading edge of gentrification. This group was defined by a high-cultural capital that not only drew it to a more urban life-style, but to be placed in opposition to the sitting class in power (Ley, 1996, p. 175). At the time he was writing in the 1990s, Ley, referencing Stone, indicated that the rise of reform politics of the new middle class had permanently broken the hegemony of business-led regime politics in these major Canadian cities (Ley, 1996, p. 62). Interestingly, Ley's use of Stone's concept causes him to look for the replacement of one regime by another, even though Stone indicates that there is no such guarantee (Stone, 2005). In any case, the crucial point is that the regime was successfully challenged by this new middle class, a group whose relatively high level of cultural capital not only drew them to the inner city in search of a cosmopolitan life-style, but aligned them along a reform politics in opposition to the development concerns of the previously dominant urban regime.

This tendency towards alignment of a class in both life-style and politics draws on the thinking of French Sociologist Pierre Bourdieu, in particular his concept of *habitus*

(Ley, 1996, p. 197,308). Bourdieu's *habitus* is a collection of dispositions (opinions, ways of acting, tastes, aggregating to a life-style) that is inculcated over the course of a person's life based in their material conditions and position in the social field (Bourdieu, 1984, p. 123,170). Because the *habitus* is deeply embodied in our practices and preconceptual "schemes of perception and appreciation", or taste, it is both a "structuring structure, which organizes practices and perceptions" and also a "structured structure", because it is an internalization of the world's division into social classes, i.e., it is shaped by the conditions of that person's life, including the position they occupy in the social field (Bourdieu, 1984, pp. 170–173). These conditions and the relative position of a person in the social field are determined by the sum and composition of that person's capital, understood as "actually usable resources and powers – economic capital, cultural capital and also social capital" (Bourdieu, 1984, p. 114). These concepts – *habitus*, field, and an expanded notion of capital – are at the heart of Bourdieu's reframing of class. Bourdieu's account of the social world is agonistic, placing struggle, not reproduction, at the centre of class formation (Wacquant, 2013, p. 275). Struggle occurs as individuals compete across realms for different forms of capital. The key distinction among the dominant (as amongst the dominated) is between those who are relatively 'rich' in economic capital and those who are 'rich' in cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1984, pp. 127–130). Since capital both determines a person's relative position in the social field, and underlies the development of their *habitus*, the dispositions (practices, aesthetics, political opinions) that make up the *habitus* tend to be shared by people occupying similar positions in the social field (Bourdieu, 1985, p. 725). These shared characteristics, then, by bringing people "closer in social space" become foundations for class formation (Bourdieu, 1985, p. 726). And because the *habitus* applies through a practical logic to diverse spheres of activity, the struggle between classes takes place on many levels, from the competing tastes of everyday consumption, to fields of cultural production, and the political field (Wacquant, 2013, p. 276).

But this is not a deterministic account – an alignment of *habitus* does not necessitate the formation of one particular class or another. An important characteristic of Bourdieu's reformulation of class is that it questions the "ontological status of groups" (Wacquant, 2013, p. 81). Bourdieu's account of how capital composition structures the social field doesn't treat class as what philosophers call a *natural kind*, something that really exists in the world, only waiting to be found; rather they are a "class on paper", or

at best a “probable class” (Bourdieu, 1985, p. 725). How this probable group or class becomes a “practical group” (Bourdieu, 1985, p. 725) is driven by a “political labour of representation” which “enables agents to discover within themselves common properties that lie beyond the diversity of particular situations” (Bourdieu, 1993, p. 130) and to assert their existence as a group. To extract a practical group, unified by a set of shared characteristics, out of the range of possible affiliations a population of individuals share, political labour of representation is nothing less than the transformation of the categories by which the social world is perceived, and are “the stakes, par excellence, of political struggle” (Bourdieu, 1985, p. 729). This process, whereby a probable group becomes a practical group through the “inculcation of schemata of perception and their deployment to draw, enforce, or contest social boundaries” is what Loïc Wacquant calls the “socialsymbolic alchemy” of group-formation (Wacquant, 2013). Since the *habitus* is not only *structured* by objective conditions but also *structuring* through schema of perception and appreciation, i.e., taste, when dominant groups compete over the representation of the social world they are at the same time creating it (Bourdieu, 1985, p. 729). Further, by struggling over these schema – the categories of perception by which the social world is perceived – dominant classes are involved in a symbolic struggle over what shows up to people as *common sense*, over a “legitimate vision of the social world” (Bourdieu, 1985, p. 731). This is such an important stake in social and political struggles because a change in what shows up to people as legitimate (good, just, valued), has direct political implications, as seen in the successful neighbourhood preservation politics of Ley’s Cultural Class which turned on the rise of a new principle of legitimacy, ‘livability’.

2.3. History of Chinatown Development

With the exception of Ley’s analysis of neighbourhood change and politics in Vancouver, most of the first two components of my conceptual framework are highly theoretical and abstract. To better ground this study of Chinatown’s policy change, this final section provides an overview of development and politics in Vancouver’s Chinatown. This overview begins with a very brief history of the conditions and change that have been common to Chinatowns across North America, including Vancouver’s. First, these neighbourhoods are typically located in city centres and found themselves, starting in the mid 20th century and after a long history of general urban decline, in the

path of government-led redevelopment and gentrification. Second, these broad stages of development were shaped by a general context of racism and the economic interests of the urban growth machine (Acolin & Vitiello, 2017; Anderson, 1988; P. S. Li, 1998; P. S. Li & Li, 2011; Lin, 1998; Vitiello & Blickenderfer, 2018). Histories of these broader macro and societal forces are complemented by accounts that focus on how the internal dynamics and politics of the Vancouver Chinatown play a major role in shaping the neighbourhood and the identity construction of Chinese-Canadians (P. S. Li, 1998; Mitchell, 1998, 2000; Ng, 1999).

While demonstrating the diverse range of outcomes for Chinatowns across North America (Vitiello & Blickenderfer, 2018), histories on Chinatown development also describe a pattern common to many of them across North America, beginning with ghettoization that created them around the turn of the 20th century (Anderson, 1988; Mitchell, 2000); this was followed by several decades of attempted eradication through the second quarter of the 20th century under City Beautiful and Urban Renewal movements; a period of essentialization parading as acceptance followed in the 1960s when heritage preservation was first deployed as a tool of economic development (Anderson, 1988; C. Li, 2015; Vitiello & Blickenderfer, 2018); and an intensified gentrification in the last several decades as the endowment of Chinatowns (central location, heritage buildings) would prove to coincide with the prevailing taste of the new urban middle class (Acolin & Vitiello, 2017; C. Li, 2015; Lin, 1998; Pottie-Sherman, 2013).

The ascription of racial categories has played an important role in this history of development. Kay Anderson's work has detailed the way the construction of racial categories and the process of racial classification shaped Vancouver's Chinatown (Anderson, 1987, 1988, 2014). Anderson's work demonstrates how, like race, the idea of "Chinatown" belongs to a white European cultural tradition (Anderson, 1987, p. 580) rather than from some innate "chineseness" of its inhabitants (Anderson, 2014, p. 3). Through the construction and ascription of racial categories, the concept of "Chinatown" was imbued with moral vice, failures of sanitation, and general "otherness" that not only justified a history of oppressive policy and planning initiatives, but supported the dominance of settlers of European-origin (Anderson, 2014, p. 104). This image of Chinatown and chineseness would justify decades of racist policy, from ghettoization in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, to urban renewal through the middle of the 20th

century, and later economic revitalization that turned on Chinatown as an 'exotic' destination in the City (Anderson, 1988).

While acknowledging the importance of the context of institutionalized racism and white settler cultural hegemony described by Anderson, other accounts of Chinatown's growth and development emphasize the dynamics and politics of the Chinese-Canadian population, including the arrival of new waves of immigrants from China later in the 20th century. Peter Li and Eva Xiaoling Li indicate how a growing Chinese middle-class driven in part by new waves of immigration of people from diverse parts of China are challenging some of the earlier racial definitions ascribed to Chinese-Canadians, especially in Vancouver (P. S. Li & Li, 2011). Li and Li also explore how changing settlement patterns of these new waves of immigration to suburban municipalities like Richmond are challenging the role of Chinatown as the centre of Chinese community life (P. S. Li & Li, 2011, p. 16). Moving from the macro-lens to the micro, much of the history of Chinatown's social and political life focuses on the establishment and work of the diverse Benevolent Societies and Family Clan Associations, generally referred to as 'societies'. These mutual aid organizations were set up by the earliest Chinese migrants to Canada and have been active in Chinatown since the late 1800s (P. S. Li & Li, 2011; Mitchell, 1998). The Chinese Benevolent Association (CBA), an umbrella organization for the societies, was founded around 1889, and dominated Chinatown politics through to the 1960s (Mitchell, 1998; Ng, 1999), and is still active and relevant today. Wing Ng Chung's history of the Vancouver Chinese from 1945 to 1980 links the macro and micro, exploring the history of struggle among diverse generations of Chinese in Vancouver for control of key social organizations such as the CBA and the Chinese Cultural Centre (CCC) Association of Greater Vancouver (Mitchell, 1998; Ng, 1999). For Ng, these struggles were "the tip of an iceberg. Beneath each confrontation was an ongoing contest - engaged in by several generations of Chinese immigrants and their Canadian-born descendants – over the meaning of being Chinese in Canada" (Ng, 1999, p. 4). In so doing, Ng aims to return agency in self-definition to Chinese-Canadians rather than portraying them as merely "hapless victims of racial prejudice and discrimination" (Ng, 1999, p. 10). Intending to challenge essentialist notions of Chinese identity, Ng identifies distinct generational cohorts, separated primarily by their historical era of settlement (e.g., pre or post exclusion era, 1923-1947) and their place of birth, being either foreign-born immigrants or locally-born *tusheng* (Ng, 1996, 1999). Kathyne Mitchell has placed

similar emphasis on the outcome of political struggles among Chinese-groups of diverse backgrounds, showing how changing coalitional alliances among local groups and new arrivals has shaped the history of key institutions and the development of Chinatown (Mitchell, 1998, 2000). Situating her work in the flows of globalization and how they are shaped at the local level, Mitchell's work emphasises the impacts of immigration and economic capital on the political structure of local institutions like the CBA and CCC, as well as land regulation in Chinatown.

The history of development and politics in Vancouver's Chinatown exhibit similar characteristics to some of the theories and literature discussed in the first two sections of my conceptual framework. Aside from the general context, specific events from the history of Vancouver's Chinatown provide insight into the potential coalitional alignments and cleavages that may be operating in the 105 Keefer dispute today. Heritage preservation, economic revitalization, and gentrification have a complex relationship that emerges in the history of political struggle and development in Chinatown. The first use of heritage (as a planning value) in the 1960s was part of an economic revitalization agenda based on tourism, and saved Chinatown from aggressive urban renewal programs of previous decades (Anderson, 1988). In later periods of advancing gentrification, successful heritage preservation focused on buildings and architecture made the neighbourhood ripe for lifestyle consumption hungry for 'authentic' experiences (Burnett, 2014; Pottie-Sherman, 2013).

Famously, Chinatown was also the site of an important protest in the 1960s against the proposed construction of a freeway, a major urban renewal project that would have (and partially did) devastate Chinatown and Strathcona, the adjacent residential neighbourhood (Madokoro, 2011). This event offers many important lessons for applying the ACF to such a development dispute. Scholars indicate that the success of Chinatown residents came from alliances (coalition-building) with a progressive, white middle class who treated Chinatown as "a liberal cause celebre through which to challenge the prevailing logic of progress" (Anderson, 1988, p. 143). This was in the context of a larger shift in the political ethos, marked by the establishment of the federal policy of official multiculturalism a few years later (Anderson, 1988). Such a shift is the type of macro-structural change that Sabatier indicates will lead to a change in the coalitional balance of a policy sub-system (Sabatier & Weible, 2007). Interestingly, some of the same Hong Kong immigrants involved in the fight to protect Chinatown from the

freeway proposal would in the 1980s find allies in overseas developers during their push to reduce heritage constraints on development in Chinatown (Mitchell, 2000). The history of these struggles points to the complexity of how interests and values of different times can move in and out of alignment, creating and breaking apart coalitions with them.

Knitting the three literatures together, the integrated policy studies framework of Howlett, McConnell, and Perl is at the core of my analysis and interpretation. But I don't adhere to it rigidly. For example, I generally centre the ACF, using the structure of competing coalitions to organize much of my research and analysis, later introducing the stages, policy cycles and Kingdon-style streams to account for events and their interactions beyond the explanatory scope of the ACF. I also draw on Stone's Urban Regime Theory, with its emphasis on stable "arrangements", as part of assessing whether the coalitional change observed can be expected to endure. Ley's account of the new middle class combined with the historical work of Ng and Mitchell provide a template for understanding the emergence and political impact of the generation of young Chinese-Canadians that emerged to oppose the 105 Keefer development application. Finally, Bourdieu's theorization of group-making builds a bridge from the structural accounts of Ley, Ng, and Mitchell, to the agent-specific activity of political coalitions and their work to redefine a vision for Chinatown.

Chapter 3.

Methodology

Studying the 105 Keefer Street rejection, making sense of it and assessing its impact, involves considering the history of policy-making, planning, and political events that lead up to and follow it. I restricted research to a period of policy and plan-making of about 20 years roughly beginning in 2000. Part of this decision was practical – Chinatown in that period was very active in terms of planning and policy making, so I had to restrict the scope of detailed data collection. But it also takes seriously Kingdon's warning that too much emphasis on a search for origins can lead to a fruitless infinite regress (Kingdon, 1995, pp. 72–73) – there is always some prior set of conditions, so at some point one must choose a beginning. This particular beginning was justified by a preliminary review of relevant policy and planning documents which showed that a connected series of neighbourhood planning and policies began with the launch of the *Chinatown Vision*, a planning policy endorsed by Council in 2002 after roughly two or three years of engagement (City of Vancouver, 2002).

The Advocacy Coalition Framework (ACF) is my entry point into organizing the large volume of interacting policies, reports, political events, organizations and people active in this time period. In the ACF, it is the political struggle between competing coalitions that results in a more fundamental change to policy, where fundamental here means a change in underlying values or major policy tools. The success of a new coalition usually merges from a shock to the policy subsystem affecting the distribution of diverse resources between the coalitions. Thus, central to the research was a search for parallel changes in policy goals and in coalitions competing in the field, as well as the connection between them. More specifically, it involved looking for evidence of the following:

- The character and changes in policy approach to development in Chinatown.
- The existence and form of the coalitions, including their participants, values and alignment, level of formalization (e.g., Are they organized and formally connected, or loosely and casually connected?), and conditions that gave rise to them.

- The alignment of policy with coalition values, including around the 105 Keefer decision, and larger policy context (i.e., Chinatown specific policy and programs before and after)
- The contextual factors that led to one coalition's success over another, including political and policy context, economic conditions, and demographic change

My research employed a mixed-methods approach split into two phases: first a thematic analysis of documents to identify distinct policy approaches, the field of political actors and their degrees of alignment and coordination, and the contextual factors and forces that affected the success of different groups and/or policy ideas; a series of eight semi-structured interviews, to validate and deepen findings from the document analysis.

Given the controversy and attention of several of the key policy decisions during the study period, an extremely rich archive of documents was available. Thus document review and analysis was the backbone of my research. With a focus on policy change, at the centre of my research were the City documents and archived public hearing footage surrounding a series of policy decisions and plans related to Chinatown development during the period of study. These included:

- Chinatown Vision Planning Directions (2002)
- Chinatown Revitalization Program/Community Plan (2002 to 2006)
- Historic Area Height Review (2008 to 2011)
- Chinatown Neighbourhood Plan and Economic Revitalization Strategy (2012)
- 105 Keefer Street Rezoning and Development Applications Council and Development Permit Board decisions (2017)
- Amendments to the Chinatown HA-1 and HA-1A Districts Schedule, Design Guidelines, and Policies (2018)

A number of other public documents were generated around these key policy events, including staff reports, policy decisions, and Council and public hearings (minutes and video archive). This set of documents allowed me to identify the policy core values at play in the struggle, including economic development, heritage preservation, cultural identity, and social justice values, such as impacts to low-income residents from neighbourhood change (i.e., gentrification). It also allowed me to explore how these (and

other) themes were framed, related, contrasted, when they emerged or gained priority, and how they figured in the dispute around 105 Keefer Street.

This archive supplemented by journalism and organisational reports, websites, social media posts, and blogs were used to map the field of participants (individuals and organizations) and their relationships to one another and the key policy events towards defining distinct advocacy coalitions. The definition of an advocacy coalition is a group of actors with shared policy core beliefs and a non-trivial degree of coordination (Sabatier, 1988). Following analysis approaches used in other applications of ACF (Heinmiller & Pirak, 2016), I used this definition to shape my analysis techniques towards identifying a) the policy core beliefs of key actors in the Chinatown development policy subsystem, and b) evidence of coordination among them.

For analyzing the range and degree of shared beliefs, I used NVivo to code actor statements tracking the range of values and policy stances of key individuals and organizations. Based on preliminary document review, I began with a preliminary set of codes for general values (development, economic activity, affordability, social justice, heritage – built, heritage-living, cultural identity), policy disposition (for or against key decisions such as 105 Keefer), and policy concepts (rezoning, social housing, cultural space). I then proceeded inductively, adding and collapsing categories as needed.

For mapping coordination between actors, I used NVivo's networks analysis tool. According to Sabatier, coordination can include "weak ties" or "strong ties" (Sabatier & Weible, 2007). Weak ties might include something as simple as mutual communication about attendance at a public event or Council session, hyperlinking between organizational websites (Heinmiller & Pirak, 2016), or public assertions of alliance between groups (Zafonte & Sabatier, 1998). Strong ties usually indicate some shared resource commitment, such as joint communications; or collaborative activities (e.g., a rally where multiple actors are named as organizers). To keep things simple, I began by coding all connections, weak or strong, in NVivo. With the general map developed, I was able to define general coalitions and sub-coalitions based on the relationships of roughly 40 organizations and over 60 individuals between roughly 2000 and 2019.

I used Interviews primarily to validate findings from document analysis around policy approach and coalitional make-up. I used them first for confirming and filling gaps

around the rationale and framing of preferred policies or additional detail about the working relationships and alignment among different actors in the political field. As such, interview content mirrored thematic analysis used for documents, allowing me to discover underlying values/interests and coalitional relationships. But interviews also extended beyond document analysis where needed to gather commentary from key participants on gaps in the documentary record, such as on the history of organizational development of relevant NGOs, perceptions on change and continuity in the planning approach for Chinatown, and contextual factors that influenced their activities, ideas, and political fortunes.

I conducted eight interviews each lasting roughly between 45 and 90 minutes with individuals selected for their role within prominent organizations in coalitions, or for their knowledge of the period of study. Participants were identified during document analysis or were recommended by other interviewees. The following people were interviewed:

- Fred Mah; Mah Society, the Vancouver Chinatown Revitalization Committee, and the Chinatown Society Heritage Buildings Association
- Helen Ma, City of Vancouver Planner
- Kevin Huang, Hua Foundation
- Sofie Fung, Chinatown Action Group
- King-mong Chan, Chinatown Concern Group, Carnegie Community Action Project
- Doris Chow, Youth Collaborative for Chinatown
- Judy Lam-Maxwell, Vancouver Chinatown Revitalization Committee, the Chinatown Society Heritage Buildings Association
- Henry Yu, Professor of History at the University of British Columbia

I contacted participants through emails collected from organizational websites and in one case shared with me with permission by another interviewee. I sent invitations to representatives from Beedie Living Group and the Vancouver Chinatown Business Improvement Association, but received no response. I conducted one interview by phone, and the rest by Zoom due to COVID-19 health restrictions. All participants consented to identity disclosure. I took notes during interviews, and digital recordings of

all Zoom-based interviews were used for review and validation; interviews were not transcribed. I followed up with participants so they could review and validate quotations or anywhere their interview was used to justify a claim in the final thesis. I used an interview guide to structure discussion, but questions varied depending on the person's involvement in events throughout the period of study, or the particular knowledge gaps that needed to be filled.

Chapter 4.

Parallel Shifts in Policy and Politics

4.1. Policy Context: The Downtown Eastside and the Vancouver Agreement

Before delving into the evolution of development policy and supporting coalitions in Chinatown, it is important to understand the context of what was happening in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside (DTES), the broader City district of which Chinatown is a part. In response to continued degradation of social conditions in the DTES, there was a series of government responses beginning in the mid-1990s (Building Community Society of Greater Vancouver, 2010) leading in 1998 to the approval of a set of actions by Vancouver City Council including an application for funding to the National Crime Preventions Program (Chen-Adams & Edelson, 2005), "to implement a community development and mobilization process...to address the issues of community safety and economic revitalization" (City of Vancouver, 2002). Having secured these funds, the DTES Revitalization Program was kicked off in 1999. In 2000, this work gained additional momentum with the signing of the Vancouver Agreement, an urban development agreement between the federal and provincial governments and the City of Vancouver to address the "social, health and economic challenges in the City" with a first focus on the DTES (City of Vancouver, Province of British Columbia, & Government of Canada, 2000). The Chinatown Revitalization Program kicked off in the late 1990s was part of the DTES Revitalization Program (Chen-Adams, 2002), and was initiated to ensure a separate voice for Chinatown within the larger project (H. Ma, Interview, December 23, 2020). This framing policy work in the DTES continued in parallel with the planning work in Chinatown throughout the study period of this thesis.

The social and political context of planning and policy work in the DTES is very complex, and beyond the scope of this paper. In short, throughout the period of this study, the work in the DTES included the creation of: multiple plans and policies, such as the development and implementation of the 2014 Downtown Eastside Plan, (City of Vancouver, 2014); a rich ecosystem of interest groups and stakeholders, such as the Carnegie Community Action Project (CCAP), an organization that has been working to

resist gentrification in the DTES for decades (“Carnegie Community Action Project 加麗基社區行動計劃,” n.d.) ; and important development projects, such as the Woodward’s Project in neighbouring Gastown, a highly controversial major development of a historic department store that is often cited either as an important example of successful redevelopment or the leading edge of gentrification in the DTES. Where relevant to the narrative of policy and coalitional change, this larger context will be explored in this project.

4.2. Analysis of Changes to Chinatown Development Policy: 2000 to 2019

From 2000 to 2019, there was a distinct shift in policy language guiding development in Chinatown from an initial stage (roughly 2000 to 2011) focusing on economic revitalization and built heritage conservation through redevelopment, to a later stage (roughly 2017 to the present) where that economic logic embedded in policy was supplanted by a concern to preserve intangible heritage, resist gentrification, and protect seniors housing.

4.2.1. 2000 to 2012: Upzoning for Economic Revitalization

In 2002, after nearly three years of community engagement as part of the Chinatown Revitalization Program, Vancouver City Council approved in principle the *Chinatown Vision Directions*. This high-level policy document outlines eleven ‘Vision Directions’ organized under three broad vision statements summarizing the hoped-for future of Chinatown as “a place that tells the area’s history with its physical environment, serves the needs of residents, youth and visitors and acts as a hub of commercial, social and cultural activities” (City of Vancouver, 2002). These vision directions speak to a broad range of policy goals from heritage conservation, Chinese history commemoration, and youth community engagement, to public safety, business development, and new housing (both market and non-market options). However, subsequent planning processes and Council priority setting would continually emphasize economic development and built heritage over the other policy concerns; consequently, in this period real estate redevelopment emerged as the primary mechanism of revitalization.

Alongside adoption of the *Chinatown Vision Directions*, in 2002 Council adopted recommendations to explore investment and land use, “especially residential intensification in Chinatown”, strategies for filling vacancies, tools to conserve built heritage, and means of encouraging neon lighting (City of Vancouver, 2002). In 2004, Council passed a resolution directing staff to consult with community leaders on steps needed to develop a community plan based on the *Chinatown Vision* “to encourage private sector investment in Chinatown” (Chen-Adams & Edelson, 2005). In 2005, staff outlined the development of a Chinatown Community Plan with a three-year action plan for implementing the vision, structured around five areas: community and social development; residential intensification and land use; public realm and transportation; cultural development; and economic development. While the three-year action plan offers a significant breadth of policy goals, three of the four strategies identified as priorities for annual Council updates were for economic development and heritage: rehabilitation of society buildings; residential intensification and land use; and a parking strategy (Chen-Adams & Edelson, 2005). By 2006, in a report on the action-plan’s progress, staff declared, “Private sector and consumer confidence is growing in Chinatown” (Chen-Adams & Ma, 2006, p. 12).

In 2008, Council gave direction that would result in *Historic Area Height Review (HAHR)*, a study focused on “consideration of policies for additional density and corresponding height in suitable locations in Gastown, Hastings, Chinatown and Victory Square” (Chen, 2010a, p. 6). The HAHR did not emerge directly out of the Chinatown revitalization work (H. Ma, Interview, December 23, 2020). Rather, it was initiated by the City Council of the day as part of the 2008 *EcoDensity Initial Actions* to consider additional density and height in suitable locations of the Historic Precinct (Chen, 2010a). However, the intent was consistent with the goals of area revitalization; the Council motion specified: “The intent of this direction is to support heritage conservation projects, to provide replacement low-income housing, and/or to support other public benefits and amenities” (Chen, 2010a, p. 6). Or as the staff report explained, the work aimed to address decline of the historic area and its heritage buildings employing a “Revitalization without Displacement” planning philosophy (Chen, 2010a, p. 5). In 2010, during discussion of the HAHR recommendations, Council directed staff to develop the Chinatown Economic Revitalization Strategy and a Chinatown Neighborhood Plan (City of Vancouver, 2010). In 2012 these two initiatives, developed in tandem and presented

as a unified *Chinatown Neighbourhood Plan and Economic Revitalization Strategy*, were presented as the culmination of “over a decade of work to encourage private sector investment in the community and improve conditions for those who live, work and visit the area” (McNaney, 2012). The framing of these two documents as two aspects of a single planning process are the clearest expression of the importance of economic revitalization in Chinatown during this period.

In parallel with and guided by these strategic initiatives, several major policies and programs were implemented to leverage private sector investment towards revitalization. In 2003, Council approved the Heritage Façade Rehabilitation Program and Heritage Building Rehabilitation Program (HBRP) utilizing special incentives for heritage building upgrades to “kick start revitalization of the area”(D’Agostini, 2003). Transferable bonus density is the primary tool of the HBRP (Jenkins, McGeough, & Knowles, 2007), allowing developers to bank the unused density of a heritage site for use in development projects located elsewhere in the city. In 2008, as part of the Chinatown Society Buildings Revitalization Strategy, Council approved \$500,000 toward a rehabilitation grant program for historic buildings owned by Benevolent Societies and Family Clan Associations (Chen & Knowles, 2008) and extended the program for a second phase in 2009 (Chen, 2009) . In 2011 there was a suite of recommendations coming out of the HAHR, including blanket amendment of the heritage zoning districts in Chinatown HA-1 and HA-1A (Figure 2) to increase maximum heights across Chinatown by between 10 and 20 feet (roughly one or two additional stories); creation of the Rezoning Policy for Chinatown South to allow for an additional 30 feet in the HA-1A zone; and amendments to the Transfer of Density Policy and Procedure allowing density to be transferred into the HA-1A zone (Chen, 2010a).

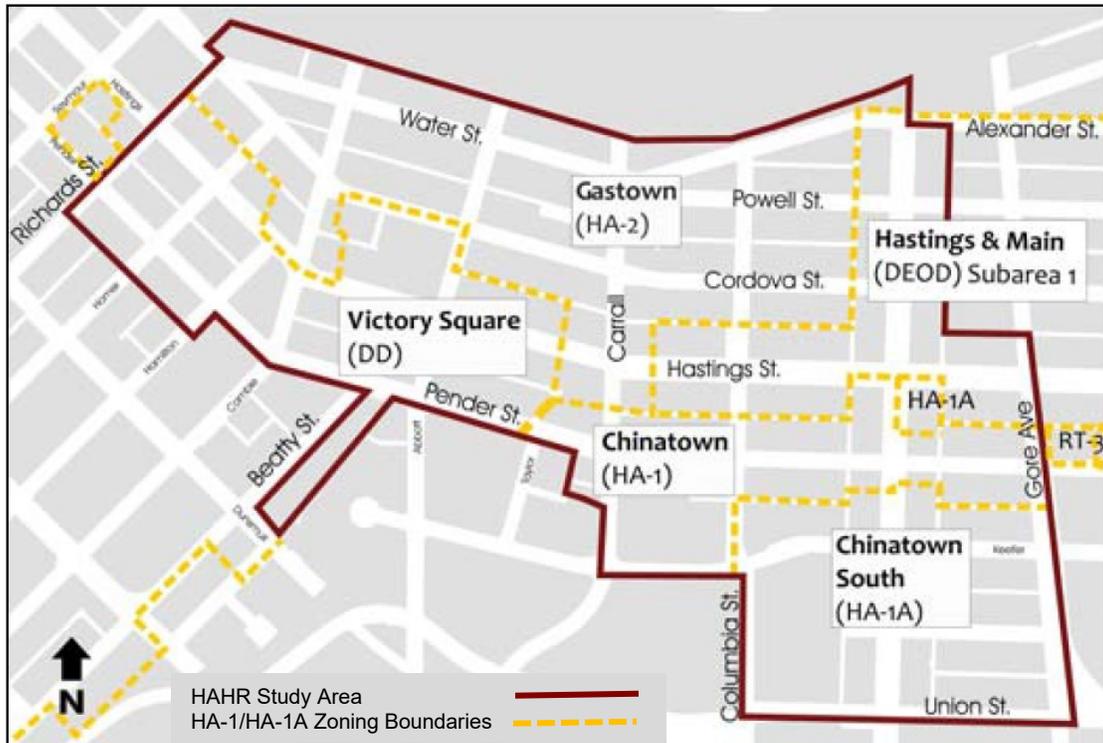


Figure 2: Historic Area Height Review (HAHR) Study Area and Applicable Zones HA-1 and HA-1A

Source: City of Vancouver, Historic Area Height Review: Conclusion and Recommendations, Chen 2010a.

As these strategic initiatives and supporting policy make plain, private sector investment in the form of redevelopment were the primary tools in this policy period for achieving the desired ends of heritage building and area revitalization. For cash-strapped local governments, this is not unusual. Development rights are a primary regulatory authority of municipalities, and density increases granted through changes to these regulations are frequently used to extract public amenities out of new development. However, this is typically done on a site-by-site basis with the planning process introducing an opportunity for negotiating this exchange. The neighbourhood-wide upzoning that came out of the HAHR work is much less common. Here, rather than using the rezoning process to negotiate provision of community amenities, some amount of increased development rights were granted upfront. This signifies the degree to which residential intensification was treated as the engine of revitalization.

4.2.2. 2017 to 2019: Downzoning for Social Justice and Cultural identity

Beginning in 2017, Council decisions and City policy around development in Chinatown took a notable shift away from revitalization through development, to a more constrained approach concerned with displacement, social housing, and a more expansive definition of heritage. The plainest expression of this shift came in 2018, when City Council approved a suite of changes to Chinatown zoning and rezoning policy that, in many ways, represented a reversal of the upzoning and height increases from 2011. While the overall increase to height in the HA-1 and HA-1A zones adopted in 2011 was maintained, density limits and minimum floor heights were added effectively reducing development potential. Another key policy change at this time was the revocation of the Rezoning Policy for Chinatown South, thereby removing the option for an additional two to three stories in the HA-1A zone. In tandem with these restrictions, additions to the zoning made more space for community-expressed needs, such as a requirement for commercial and other non-residential units on the second floor, exemptions to this requirement for projects with 100% social housing, a 25% minimum requirement for “family housing” (i.e., suites with two or more bedrooms), and limitations to the widths of storefronts (Hoese, 2018, pp. 12–13). The purpose of these changes was “to address community concerns about the changing character and the pace of development” and “enable developments that help conserve the special qualities of Chinatown” including “smaller buildings with narrow storefronts, spaces for businesses and culture, and housing for families” (Hoese, 2018, p. 2).

The broader policy context of these changes reveals more about the nature of the shift in policy approach in Chinatown. In 2017, a report was presented to Council entitled “Historic Discrimination Against Chinese People in Vancouver” (the HDC Report) summarizing a nearly three-year research and consultation project on how the laws, regulation and policies of the City of Vancouver from 1886 to 1947 discriminated against people of Chinese descent (Zak, 2017). This report and its recommendations, adopted by Council, lay the groundwork for a new approach to working with the Chinatown community on planning and decision making in the neighbourhood. At the level of Sabatier’s “policy core values”, the HDC established a new rationale for planning work in the community, elevating values of equity, social justice and reconciliation. These were most forcefully articulated in the City of Vancouver’s official apology to the Chinese

community in 2018. Following a summary of the historical wrongs and injustices perpetrated against Vancouver's Chinese residents by past City Councils, the apology evoked a preferred vision for the City as "diverse"; "celebrating cultural difference"; representing principles of "equity and fairness"; struggling "to make Vancouver an inclusive, resilient and vibrant city"; and rising "in defence of the principles of equity, inclusion and equal access" (City of Vancouver, 2018a). In closing, the apology was situated in a larger context of reconciliation, which in Canada refers to the processes and discourses associated with attempts to reconcile Canada's ongoing colonial presence (as a Nation State and population of settlers) and history of colonial violence with Indigenous peoples of the land. As a concern of policy, reconciliation is most prominently represented by the work of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), a major nation-wide initiative funded by the Federal Government that ran from 2007 to 2015. Reconciliation is woven into the HDC apology through phrases like, "Apologizing to a community for past injustices is a reconciliation process;" and "Through the process of reconciliation we consolidate and embrace our firm beliefs and values of being an inclusive community; one that embraces our collective human rights and prepares us to be proactive in preventing discrimination." At an operational level, the HDC report detailed an action plan of specific initiatives and programs including, *inter alia*, formal acknowledgment of past discrimination and an official apology from the City of Vancouver to the Chinese community in Vancouver, the establishment of a Legacy Working Group of residents and staff, a suite of cultural outreach and education items, and initiation of the process towards UNESCO designation of World Heritage Site for Chinatown (Zak, 2017). These legacy actions are contextualized as following from the apology and part of "confirming the values of a just and inclusive community" (Zak, 2017, p. 21). By situating the formation of the Legacy Working Group, the legacy actions, and the UNESCO Designation in the apology, it draws strong connections between cultural preservation and social justice, as well as to the influential work of the TRC.

The 2018 zoning amendments were also explicitly linked to the HDC and the policy shift it represents. The Council Report introducing those changes was titled "Amendments to the Chinatown HA-1 and HA-1A Districts Schedule, Design Guidelines and Policies", but much of the discussion and analysis was about a broader program of new policy in Chinatown. The introductory sentence explained that "the purpose of the report is to update Council on upcoming Chinatown planning work, including the

transformation framework and legacy actions in the neighbourhood” (Hoese, 2018, p. 2). The zoning changes recommended in the report were considered “a key first step of the program” and critical first steps on the “journey to achieve a vibrant, sustainable Chinatown and pursue UNESCO World Heritage Site Designation” (Hoese, 2018, p. 3). As part of the report’s strategic analysis, staff contextualized the recommendations in the legacy actions of the HDC, including protection of living culture and heritage (ultimately toward UNESCO World Heritage Designation). In closing, the report described ‘Next Steps’, outlining the “Transformation Framework for Chinatown”, which made living culture a key component of a ‘transformative change’ in planning for Chinatown and the broader downtown eastside (Figure 3). This section also described establishment of the Chinatown Transformation Team (CTT), which “will focus on deepening community involvement, capacity building, and protecting and growing Chinatown’s intangible heritage and living culture” (Hoese, 2018, p. 18). The CTT’s responsibilities described in this report include implementation of the legacy actions approved in the HDC; build community capacity and deepen engagement; maximize opportunities for seniors housing and inter-generational amenities; and managing new development. So, while the recommendations put forward are for a suite of zoning amendments effectively reversing the HAHR from nearly a decade before, the broader context is the HDC and a new approach to planning in Chinatown.

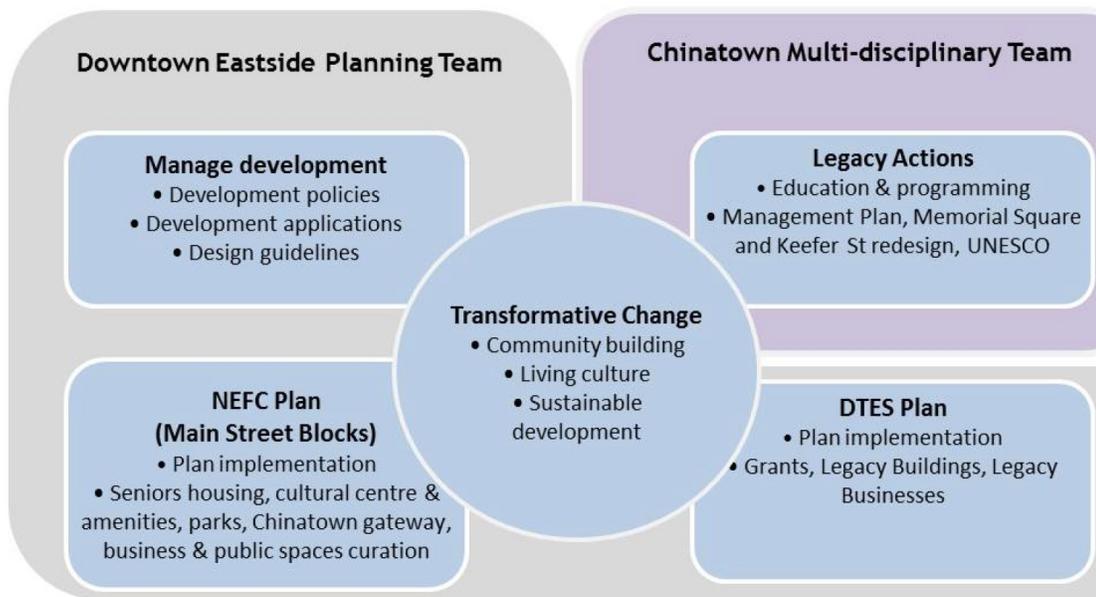


Figure 3: Transformation Framework for Chinatown

Source: Figure 4 in “Amendments to the Chinatown HA-1 and HA-1A Districts Schedule, Design Guidelines and Policies”, Hoese, 2018.

As with the previous decade, heritage had a pre-eminent place in the new policy program with key actions identified in the HDC and a major work program item for the CTT. But where the previous programs and policies supporting building restoration and public realm investment toward area revitalization, there was a notable new focus on “intangible” and “living” heritage. “Intangible cultural heritage” refers to “the living practices, expressions, skills and knowledge” of a community, (UNESCO, 2018, p. v) and is an approach to heritage preservation that gained prominence in 2003 when UNESCO adopted the *Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage*. As part of strengthening relations between City Council and the Chinese Canadian community in Vancouver, the HDC report included a set of recommended actions to “Conserve, Commemorate & Enhance Living Heritage and Cultural Assets” (Zak, 2017, p. 23), all leading toward a UNESCO World Heritage Designation. With this designation, a place becomes listed by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) as “being of special cultural or physical significance” and receives support from UNESCO and sponsor governments toward their protection. World Heritage Status is not just symbolic, it comes with a suite of conceptual definitions, guidelines, planning resources, management and monitoring frameworks, and eligibility to receive funding for conservation and project management that make it a practical response as well (UNESCO, 2019; “UNESCO World Heritage Centre,” n.d.). One of the actions from the HDC supporting the pursuit of UNESCO Designation is also a major early project of the CTT, a *Chinatown Living Heritage and Cultural Assets Management Plan* (Hoese, 2018, p. 19). This isn’t to say that built heritage and public realm investments have been replaced altogether: there has been continuous funding for a society building rehabilitation grant program from 2008 to 2019 (City of Vancouver, 2016; Hoese, 2016), and in 2015, Council approved \$3.6 million in seed funding to help launch the “Chinese Society Legacy Program” (McNaney, 2015). This latter initiative was based on a consultant’s report conducted in 2014, especially notable as the first instance where intangible heritage was repeatedly invoked by a City of Vancouver document, here in terms of “the Societies and the community members that strive to keep their traditions and culture alive” (McNaney, 2015, Appendix B). What is important about the addition of ‘intangible and living heritage’, is that in contrast to the earlier phase of built heritage which functioned as part of the economic revitalization it was framed as a constraint on runaway development: “The ultimate goal of the application, focusing on *using heritage conservation as a way of managing the pace of change* and

linking the past to the future, will be to achieve long term 'Sustainable Conservation and Development' for the whole community" (Zak, 2017, p. 23, Appendix 1, emphasis added).

The new policies and programs introduced in 2017 and 2018 – the HDC, the amendments to the HA-1/HA-1A zones, and the establishment of the Chinatown Transformation Team – mark a movement away from the economic revitalization driven policies of the previous 15 years. While the reversal of the upzoning is the starkest expression of that shift, the HDC and the City's apology to the Chinese Community articulate a new emphasis on social justice and intangible heritage. This is not to say that gentrification or seniors' housing were without consideration during the planning work that took place between 2000 and 2011, or that economic development has been left off the policy agenda since 2015. As mentioned, coming out of work in the DTES a guiding philosophy of the HAHR was "Revitalization without Displacement" (Chen, 2010a, p. 5). Similarly, the HDC's discussion in the Living Heritage and Cultural Asset Management Plan, stated that "there should be a focus on using an economic development approach, which is an important consideration for UNESCO" (Zak, 2017, p. 24 Appendix 1). Rather, this chronology illustrates a shift in emphasis, where 'revitalization' was replaced by 'legacy stewardship', and real estate development, once the engine of achieving the neighbourhood's vision, became a threat to community sustainability that must be managed.

In the background of much of this policy work was the community response to the 105 Keefer application, running from late 2014 to late 2017. In 2017, Council rejected the third revised rezoning application for the site (City of Vancouver, 2017g) , the first to be submitted to public hearing and reach Council's authority. In November of 2017, the application for a development within zoning constraints was rejected by the Development Permit Board (DPB). Understanding the context of policy change regarding Chinatown, this decision by the DPB is less an anomaly than an indicator of a change in the dominant sentiment toward development in the neighbourhood. As such, I explore the story of resistance to 105 Keefer in the following section, where it plays an important role in the changing composition of the political field and the changing policy context in Chinatown development politics.

4.3. Analysis of Coalitions in Chinatown: 2000 to 2019

The advocacy coalition framework suggests that more profound shifts in policy should be paralleled by a change in the composition and political fortunes of coalitions competing in the relevant sub-field (Sabatier, 1988). This kind of political rearrangement is indeed what seems to take place in Chinatown planning processes in the period of study. In the early stage, roughly 2000 to 2011, the dominant groups were a relatively well-aligned coalition of business, property owners, societies and well-established community and cultural institutions, which found a shared purpose in redevelopment and heritage preservation, although rifts begin to appear late in that period. By 2014/2015, a set of new players entered the field, mobilizing resident Chinese seniors and youth with diverse connections to Chinatown to advocate for seniors housing, cultural programming, and resistance to new development (ranging from a cautious approach to outright opposition).

4.3.1. 2000 to 2011: Established interests - the Chinatown neighbourhood 'regime'

From development of the Chinatown Vision to finalization of the Neighbourhood Plan and Economic Development Strategy, planning work in Chinatown was dominated by a set of key stakeholder groups: the Vancouver Chinatown Merchants Association, the Vancouver Chinatown Business Improvement Association¹, the Chinese Benevolent Association (CBA, an umbrella organization of Family Clan and Benevolent Societies), the Chinese Cultural Centre Association, and S.U.C.C.E.S.S. (H. Ma, Interview, December 23, 2020). Because of the alignment of these prominent organizations around economic revitalization and integration into City processes through the Vancouver Chinatown Revitalization Committee collectively these groups began to emerge as a kind of neighbourhood-level 'regime' during planning work in this decade.

During the initial years of neighbourhood and revitalization planning, the primary channel for community input was the Vancouver Chinatown Revitalization Committee

¹ The Vancouver Chinatown Business Improvement Association was actually called the Vancouver Chinatown Business Improvement Society at this stage, and only later changed its name. For simplicity, it is referred to as Vancouver Chinatown Business Improvement Association throughout this thesis.

(VCRC). The VCRC was a community advisory group formed in 2001 as part of the revitalization program “to bring together more than twenty of the area's social, cultural, resident and business groups to work with the City to develop short-term revitalization plans, and a long-term vision for Chinatown, along with strategies to implement that vision” (Chen-Adams, 2002, p. 2). Chinatown has many community organizations with a long history of advocacy and political involvement; there are also numerous stakeholders that have connections to, but do not live in Chinatown. While scant records on VCRC membership can be found, it seems to have been dominated by business, property owners, and well-established Chinatown cultural and historical institutions. In 2002, the VCRC consisted of representatives from a number of long-established organizations, and with strong representation from business and property owners and Chinatown Society and Family Associations. Specifically, of the 23 members of the VCRC listed in 2002, local business and property owners counted six (26%), and the Vancouver Chinatown Business Improvement Association and Vancouver Chinatown Merchants Association accounted for another four positions (17%); together, business and property interests made up over 40% of the VCRC (Chen-Adams, 2002, p. 7). Another seven members (30%) came from the Benevolent Societies and Family Clan Associations of Chinatown. The remaining members represented a number of heritage, culture, and community groups, including the Chinatown Freemasons, Chinese Community Policing Centre, Dr. Sun Yat-Sen Garden, Chinatown Historic Area Planning Committee, Chinese Cultural Centre of Greater Vancouver, and S.U.C.C.E.S.S.

The intent of the VCRC was to bring these stakeholders together to build community capacity and provide a venue for developing a more coordinated voice, and thus more clout advocating for community issues (H. Ma, Interview, December 23, 2020). Bringing such a diversity of distinct groups and interests was described as a major challenge (Wai, 2011; F. Mah, Interview, January 7, 2021), but was successful. From 2001 to 2007, the VCRC and its member organizations worked closely with staff to develop the *Chinatown Vision* and the three-year action plan. By 2006, the VCRC had a number of sub-committees and staff were described as partnering with the VCRC to “enhance this coalition’s viability and sustainability” and to support the committee in “becoming a stronger community coalition by the end of 2007” (Chen-Adams & Ma, 2006, p. 11). By 2007, with the completion of the three-year action plan implementation, the initial mandate of the VCRC was fulfilled and the federal grant that enabled staff

support for the work ran out (H. Ma, Interview, December 23, 2020). After this point, the VCRC ceased to be the central mechanism for City engagement with community stakeholders; as part of engagement for the HAHR, the VCRC was listed as one among many stakeholder groups (Chen, 2010a; Toderian, 2011a). All the same, the group continued to meet and act as a convener of Chinatown's key stakeholders for many years, including during development of the HAHR.

The HAHR was a very controversial topic within the community (H. Ma, Interview, December 23, 2020). During the first period of consultation (late 2008 to early 2010) fault lines began to emerge among the groups that had been relatively aligned during development of the Chinatown Vision earlier in the decade. The general divide was among those concerned that increases in height and density in certain areas would threaten heritage values, and those for whom the economic imperative of redevelopment was top of mind. In fall 2009, the Merchants Association and the Business Improvement Association submitted a joint letter to Council asking for "unanimous support" to "allow the height and density relaxation" (Chen, 2010a, p. 88). At the same time, calling themselves the "Alliance for the Conservation of Historic Chinatown", several other of the key stakeholders (such as the Chinese Benevolent Association, the Chinese Cultural Centre, Dr. Sun Yat-Sen Classical Chinese Garden Society) along with others submitted a letter decrying the more extreme densification proposals, reporting that they "were greeted with shock, anxiety and disbelief" and arguing that they "diverged completely from the City's policies on Chinatown that have been developed through hundreds of hours of public consultation and committee work in recent years" (Chen, 2010a, p. 90). According to staff engagement summaries, the Chinatown Historic Area Planning Committee (CHAPC) and the Chinatown Society Heritage Building Association (CSHBA, an association formed by Society leaders in 2008 to take advantage of the City's Society Building Rehabilitation Strategy) were concerned that changes to area HA-1 along Pender would threaten the small-lot character of Chinatown's urban fabric (Chen, 2010a, p. 46). The Vancouver Planning Commission, another volunteer-based advisory body, submitted a letter stating that "[t]he Commission was unable to arrive at a consensus on a response to the HAHR" (Chen, 2010b, p. 2). And while rezoning special sites for additional height and density was more broadly opposed by nearly all groups, the moderate increases in zones HA-1 and HA-1A received more support from groups like the VCRC, even splitting opinion among the CSHBA (Chen, 2010a, pp. 46–48).

Summarizing community feedback, staff reported that “[w]hile some individuals (7.7%) stated that significant development potential should not be something that is explored at all in the City’s historic area ... others such as the Vancouver Chinatown Revitalization Committee (VCRC) felt that while heritage was important, it should not hinder development, thereby highlighting the larger split of opinions on this issue.”(Chen, 2010a, pp. 5, Appendix B)

Unlike the earlier community planning work, the HAHR also drew attention and input from stakeholders and interest groups beyond Chinatown, who brought in city-wide concerns. In response to initial HAHR options, the Urban Development Institute (UDI), a non-profit association representing the development industry, submitted a letter in August 2009 stating that the review of the historic areas was “long overdue” but “does not go far enough” (Chen, 2010a, p. 85). The UDI invoked the economic development rationale explaining the benefits of “body heat” from new development coming from increased densification, citing the success of the Woodward’s project, a very controversial redevelopment project in the heart of the Downtown Eastside that had been recently completed at the time. The UDI also asserted that increasing densities through the HAHR could be used to address city-wide issues such as the imbalanced Heritage Density Bank, or offsetting the constrained residential development opportunity in the downtown core resulting from a recently approved jobs and economy plan. By contrast, the Gastown Historic Area Planning Committee mirrored the CHAPC’s concerns of heritage preservation in the face of increased heights, specifically citing the damage to the larger Historic District already brought about by the taller towers of the Woodward’s development (Chen, 2010a, p. 87). The Building Community Society (BCS) of Greater Vancouver and CCAP both submitted multiple letters raising concerns about how the proposals of the HAHR would impact social issues already faced in the DTES. Both organizations encouraged the City to ensure HAHR recommendations are understood in the context of the adjacent neighbourhoods, requesting that no action be taken on the HAHR until a local area planning program is underway for the DTES citing concerns about affordable housing, involvement of the low-income population, and requesting clarity how density would be converted into community amenities before extra height is granted (Chen, 2010a, pp. 82–84). While applauding the choice of a moderate height increase and emphasis on “revitalization without displacement” (Chen, 2010b, Appendix, p. 10), they raised questions about the negative impacts from Woodward’s

and other recent condo development, and requested a socio-economic study of impact from these developments and a local plan for the DTES with strong involvement of low-income residents of the area (Chen, 2010b).

In January 2010, following the initial round of engagement, Council endorsed staff recommendations which included, among other things, moderate height increases across Chinatown heritage zones and a rezoning policy allowing additional height in sub-area HA-1A (Main Street) and provision for higher buildings at two specific sites. Additionally, in support of economic revitalization goals, Council directed staff to investigate more opportunities for higher buildings within sub-area HA-1A (Toderian, 2011a, p. 3). This endorsement initiated another year of policy work and engagement, including meetings with historic area planning committees, the Vancouver Heritage Commission, the VCRC, the Merchant's Association, the Business Improvement Association, and CCAP.

Whatever rifts had appeared among Chinatown's core stakeholders in earlier HAHR engagement seemed to have been substantially resolved by the time decisions were being made by Council in 2011. By December 2010, with minor adjustments to some of the higher building sites, staff was able to report that all these groups were supportive of the proposed HAHR actions, with the exception of CCAP, which was still concerned about redevelopment impacts to low-income residents (Toderian, 2011a, p. 15). The VCRC was also once again playing a convening role, having struck a sub-committee to provide specific recommendations on how community amenity contributions should be used. These recommendations were supported with formal letters by the CBA, Merchants Association, Dr. Sun Yat-Sen Garden Society, and CHAPC, among others. The Public Hearing in the spring of 2011 to review the proposed zoning changes was still a very controversial event, lasting last five days, with dozens of speakers, emails, and written submissions (City of Vancouver, 2011b). But by this time, the core groups were all in support of the HAHR zoning changes, along with numerous other organizations active during the community planning work earlier in the decade. While many individuals were listed as speaking in opposition, none were Chinatown-based organizations, only those working out of other parts of the DTES, such as CCAP and the DTES Neighbourhood Council (City of Vancouver, 2011b, pp. 2–4). By March of 2011, Joe Wai, an esteemed Chinese Canadian architect who was responsible for the design of numerous important cultural buildings and restoration of Society buildings was

able to comment in an opinion piece for *The Tyee*, an online news magazine based in B.C., that Chinatown had a “united front backing this vision” and that “the Historic Area Height Review is an issue that all Chinatown groups can come together around, just like their opposition to the freeway planned to go through Chinatown some 40 or so years ago” (Wai, 2011). Wai rebutted the complaints of the DTES organizations asking for more local area planning, explaining that “the Chinatown groups had been working on their plans through the Vancouver Chinatown Revitalization Committee with city planning for the last 10 years.” In doing so, Wai confirmed that the proposed HAHR actions were not only consistent with the *Chinatown Vision* of 2002, but a product of the coalition of Chinatown organizations represented by the VCRC. On April 19 of 2011, Council voted to approve the zoning changes (City of Vancouver, 2011a).

Within the purpose of the HAHR, the Council decisions of January 2010 and April 2011 generally represented a victory for the Chinatown-based organizations. Moderate height increases, a rezoning policy that only applies to area HA-1A (and not the most historically complete HA-1 along Pender Street), and rejection of ‘transition zones’ and the more extreme heights contemplated for the special sites all seemed to capture the compromise between the property and business interests on one side with the heritage and cultural organizations on the other. The VCRC’s recommendations for community amenity contributions and letters of support were also received for information (City of Vancouver, 2011a). While the social impact assessment and DTES area plan were also endorsed by Council, the request from CCAP that all development be halted until their completion was not; these projects would not be completed until 2014 (City of Vancouver, 2017i). The UDI had been highly critical of the original HAHR options for not going far enough, and indeed, their more extreme recommendations were not taken on. However, the Council direction in January 2010 to explore more opportunities for higher buildings was beyond what staff had initially recommended, but it went forward in the adopting of a rezoning policy where a special sub-area was defined in HA-1A where additional height (up to 150 feet) would be considered (Toderian, 2011b, p. 7). It could be argued that this was a concession to the larger development industry. But ultimately, the selected policy most closely resembled the balance of interests and values of Chinatown’s core stakeholder groups, as articulated in the new rezoning policy created out of the HAHR:

Future growth in Chinatown South resulting from this policy is expected to contribute to the overall economic revitalization and residential intensification of Chinatown (HA-1 and HA-1A), as well as to support innovative heritage, cultural and affordable and social housing projects in the Chinatown area. (Toderian, 2011b, p. 5)

This policy language echoes the messages of Wai's *Tyee* opinion piece, beginning with its title and subtitle: "Why Chinatown Needs to Grow Taller: Vancouver's historic district is struggling for its spiritual identity. If done right, higher buildings could help it succeed" (Wai, 2011). Both articulations point to intensification as the mechanism for revitalization (whether that be heritage, cultural, or economic).

4.3.2. 2014 to 2018: Intergenerational Networks

By 2017 and 2018, when decisions were taken to reject 105 Keefer, revise zoning policy in Chinatown, and establish a new workplan under the Chinatown Transformation Team, the political field in Chinatown looked very different than it did in 2011. Between 2012 and 2015, two important changes began to take place: first, the solidarity of the core Chinatown stakeholders started breaking down; second, a new generation became active in Chinatown civil society, eventually coalescing into a number of well-organized and capable community organizations. From 2015 to 2017, these two changes would produce a new coalition concerned about the impact from redevelopment on Chinatown's heritage, low-income residents, and cultural legacy. Within a larger constellation of similarly-minded individuals, this new coalition shifted the focus of discussion away from the economic promise of residential densification, towards the disruption of redevelopment, densification, and gentrification. Coalescing around resistance to the 105 Keefer development application, the political activities of this new coalition undermined the logic of the previous period of planning and policy, and new voices in this coalition helped to articulate a new paradigm based on social housing, intangible heritage, and reconciliation.

Alignment among the core Chinatown organizations and numerous societies, including in forming the VCRC, had always been a hard fought achievement (Wai, 2011; F. Mah, Interview, January 7, 2021). The balance between intensification and conservation was already delicate leading up to the HAHR decision, as demonstrated by the conditional language Wai used to support higher buildings – "If done right..." (Wai, 2011) – implying that additional height can also be done wrong. As such, for some

groups, the new heights permitted under the HAHR were treated more as an experiment in addressing the economic decline of the neighbourhood (H. Ma, Interview, December 23, 2020; F. Mah, Interview, January 7, 2021). Support for the experiment began to erode in 2012 when rezonings under the new policy were proposed for new mixed use buildings on Main Street (City of Vancouver, 2018b; Klassen, 2015a; F. Mah, Interview, January 7, 2021). As early as June 2012, Joe Wai and many other community members who were concerned about design and character said these proposals “overwhelmed” the character of Chinatown (City of Vancouver, 2018b). But these concerns did not quite lead to opposition. In early 2013, shortly after two buildings of under 90 feet were approved in the HA-1A zone, public hearings were held for the two large-scale rezoning applications, where heights up to 150 feet could be considered in exchange for public benefits. Both events had a short list of speakers in support of the project from the more economically interested Chinatown organizations, namely the Business Improvement Association and the Merchant’s Association, but they were also still supported by the broader coalition of organizations involved with the earlier period of planning work including the VCRC, S.U.C.C.E.S.S., Chinatown Society Heritage Building Association, and the Chinese Benevolent Association (City of Vancouver, 2013b, 2013a). For one of the projects, Joe Wai provided comments (neither supporting or opposing the project) related to CACs, number of housing units, and use of historic motifs (City of Vancouver, 2013a). Along with a handful of individuals, the only organization opposed was CCAP, including King-mong Chan, a recent hire, and the first staff person at that important DTES anti-poverty organization with Chinese language skills (K. Chan, Interview, January 18, 2021). The general concern was gentrification and lack of social housing. Both projects were approved, and construction completed in 2015. A Starbucks opened in one of these developments at the corner of Main and Keefer Streets, which many in the community marked as a signal of gentrification (D. Chow, Interview, December 21, 2020). The culmination of these changes mark 2015 as a “turning point” in terms of the pace and nature of change, and led to more concerns being raised about loss of community character (City of Vancouver, 2018b, p. 4; D. Chow, Interview, December 21, 2020). This was the context in which the rezoning application for 105 Keefer, first announced to the public in September 2014, was received. By February 2015, while insisting the development wasn’t sensitive to aesthetic concerns or the need for seniors housing, Joe Wai’s language of opposition had become considerably stronger: “It’s the

line in the sand. We've said we're not moving. If city planning or city council wants to do this, you'll get protests from all of us" (Klassen, 2015b).

It is around this same time that a number of young adults with diverse connections to Chinatown became much more engaged in neighbourhood politics. While many had been active in Chinatown before this time, the period of the 105 Keefer Development Applications (late 2014 to late 2017) saw their work become more organized and politically-focused. Four organizations in particular were at the centre of this movement: the Chinatown Concern Group (CCG), the Chinatown Action Group (CAG), the Youth Collaborative for Chinatown (YCC), and the Hua Foundation (D. Chow, Interview, December 21, 2020; S. Fung, Interview, December 29, 2020; K. Chan, Interview, January 18, 2021). Generally speaking, the CCG and CAG had a stronger focus on gentrification, specifically how redevelopment led by the private sector threatened the supply of affordable housing in Chinatown, risking displacement for low-income residents, many of whom are Chinese seniors. YCC and the Hua Foundation had more of an emphasis on reconnecting Chinese Canadian youth with their cultural heritage and identities. Of course, these topics have a complex interaction, and all four groups certainly were concerned with both issues. But the difference in emphasis, linked to the distinct histories and purposes of the organizations, plays an important role in how the coalition formed in response to the 105 Keefer development application, and why it partially dissolved following 105 Keefer's rejection by the Development Permit Board.

The activity of the CCG and CAG were closely linked throughout the period of 105 Keefer applications and to a significant degree were formed in response to the development proposal. The CCG was established first, growing out of community organizing work in late 2014 and early 2015 facilitated by King-mong Chan of CCAP. When gentrification and affordable housing emerged as top concerns during a series of town hall meetings with low-income residents in 2014, Chan worked with community members to start a petition requesting a moratorium on new development in Chinatown (K. Chan, Interview, January 18, 2021). The petition was presented to Council during a rally at City Hall in March 2015, an event that attracted upwards of 150 people, including low-income seniors and youth advocates and organizers (Lee, 2015). The CCG, supported by the Carnegie Community Centre Association and consisting mostly of Chinese residents of Chinatown and the Downtown Eastside, was formed following this work. The rally also attracted a number of youth to the debate, some of whom eventually

formed the Chinatown Action Group (Chu, 2020), a group dedicated to community organizing with working-class residents of Chinatown towards building political capacity and leadership skills of community members (S. Fung, Interview, December 31, 2020). The CCG and CAG worked in partnership throughout the 105 Keefer fight with a focus on community-led resistance to gentrification. They supported each other logistically and strategically (K. Chan, Interview, January 18, 2021), including the joint development of a community-led “strategy for the social and economic development of Vancouver Chinatown” entitled “The People’s Vision for Chinatown” (Chinatown Action Group & Chinatown Concern Group, 2017).

The Hua Foundation and the YCC did not begin with such an overt and political involvement with Keefer. Both began through initiatives attempting to negotiate the preservation of heritage and cultural identity in a context of change, but soon became involved in the fight against 105 Keefer through their involvement with the Chinatown community. When Hua Foundation was officially established in 2013, it had already run a successful environmental advocacy initiative called Shark Truth, a shark conservation initiative which success diverted consumption of tens of thousands of bowls of shark fin soup, led to wide-ranging policy work, and earned them recognition in 2011 from Tides Canada for their innovative approach to environmental issues (Hua Foundation, n.d.). When Hua Foundation decided to locate in Chinatown in 2013, it began renting space from the Mah Society (K. Huang, Interview, January 26, 2021). Hua Foundation was also building experience working with the City of Vancouver, participating as a stakeholder in the City’s Greenest City Action Planning (GCAP) Project. That experience highlighted the cultural bias in the City’s definition of sustainability; while the creation of farmer’s markets and community gardens were counted towards achievement food security targets, shop closures that were eroding food security in Chinatown went unrecognized based on the GCAP’s working definition of food assets (K. Huang, Interview, January 26, 2021). Motivated by this observation, in 2016 Hua Foundation produced the Vancouver Chinatown Food Security Report, which tracked the loss of cultural food assets from 2009 to 2015 (Hua Foundation, n.d.), marking a 50% loss of food assets in Chinatown. This statistic was regularly cited during discussion of the negative impacts of 105 Keefer (K. Huang, Interview, January 26, 2021). With their experience, and a commitment to working with other local community groups on their priority concerns such as supporting

CCG's moratorium petition in early 2015, Hua Foundation slowly became more politically involved.

In May 2015, Hua Foundation supported the YCC on its first initiative, a monthly Mah Jong Social night that would run through the summer of 2015 (Kathryn Gwun-Yeen Lennon, 2016). In response to the recent closure of the Chinese Night Market, and building on the Master's thesis of YCC co-founder Kathryn Lennon, the initiative was trying to revive a "hot and noisy" atmosphere in Chinatown (Kathryn Gwun-Yeen Lennon, 2016) with a goal of "building opportunities for intergenerational and intercultural activity" (Youth Collaborative for Chinatown - 青心在唐人街, n.d.). While the development and timing of the initiative were not related to the 105 Keefer application, the choice of location was. The Mah Jong nights took place at the Keefer Triangle, the public space immediately adjacent 105 Keefer Street. Co-founder Doris Chow described this approach as "advocacy with a little 'a'": rather than through rallies and policy demands these public realm activations are used to present and create an alternative vision for this location (Chu, 2020; Youth Collaborative for Chinatown, 2017). But like the rally for the CCG's petition, the Mah Jong socials became an informal gathering place for young people wanting to become more engaged in Chinatown. Conversations about the future of the site that had been taking place in small groups behind closed doors became more public, involving a broader audience through the "hot and noisy" initiative and its publicity (D. Chow, Interview, December 31, 2020).

So when the second rezoning application for 105 Keefer Street was submitted in September 2015, a larger, intergenerational coalition had already begun to emerge. These four core groups – often referred to as "youth" groups even though many were in their 30s and had Chinatown seniors as active members – were actively collaborating, holding numerous strategy sessions out of the Hua Foundation office to identify areas of agreement and develop a coherent set of demands and to speak with a unified voice (D. Chow, Interview, December 21, 2020; S. Fung, Interview, December 31, 2020). In October, organized by the YCC, a "coalition of youth, residents and concerned individuals" hosted an alternative open house at the Keefer Triangle opposing the rezoning unless the new development had 100% affordable seniors housing and provided accessible public, community and cultural space. The event ended with a march involving youth and seniors to the City of Vancouver's Open House (Youth Chinatown Collaborative, 2015). Over the next two years, during which Beedie Living

submitted two more rezoning applications and a final development application to the DPB, this coalition continued to oppose the development of the site, organizing numerous additional events like the petition rally and the alternative open house, doing speaking events, and expanding the coalition through connecting with other groups and individuals (D. Chow, Interview, December 21, 2020; S. Fung, Interview, December 31, 2020; K. Chan, Interview, January 18, 2021). This included groups like the Youth for Chinese Seniors, an organization dedicated to bettering the lives of seniors, which contributed to the 105 Keefer opposition by supporting participation of local seniors. Or Chinatown Today, another non-profit supported by Hua foundation producing a zine chronicling contemporary life in Chinatown. There were also individuals making an impact, people like Melody Ma, who was regularly profiled for having established #SaveChinatownYVR, a website and social media campaign dedicated to protecting Chinatown heritage in the face of redevelopment (Duggan, 2017; James, 2017). The hashtag associated with Ma's website, a kind of online rally cry, was frequently used in social media for posts critical of 105 Keefer. Importantly, this newer coalition also found allies with more established Chinatown organizations and individuals that were also opposed to 105 Keefer (F. Mah, Interview, January 7, 2021; K. Huang, Interview, January 26, 2021). While the degree of collaboration may not have been as high among these other groups, representatives from the different groups met and discussed what they wanted to see at 105 Keefer, and would support each other even if only through attendance at each other's events, such as the alternative open houses (K. Huang, Interview, January 26, 2021).

By the time the fourth 105 Keefer rezoning application finally brought the project to an official public hearing in May 2017, opposition for the development had brought a diversity of groups into political alignment. In addition to people associated with the CCG, CAG, YCC, and Hua Foundation, over four days of public hearing people speaking in opposition included representatives from groups that had supported the HAHR in 2011, like CHAPC, the Chinese Cultural Centre, the Dr. Sun Yat Sen Garden Society, a number of the Benevolent Societies, and the VCRC, as represented by then Chair Carol Lee, a prominent Chinatown business person and landowner (City of Vancouver, 2017c). Also speaking in opposition were organizations that operated beyond Chinatown, such as Heritage Vancouver Society, the Coalition of Vancouver Neighbourhoods, and the Vancouver Tenants Union, and individuals active in politics or

the planning field, such as Jenny Kwan, MP for Vancouver East, Pete Fry and Jean Swanson, two current Vancouver City Councillors elected the year after this public hearing; Nathan Edelson, former senior City of Vancouver planner responsible for the DTES; and Andy Yan, a private sector planner regularly solicited by local media for input on city planning issues. In addition to the speakers, there were two petitions totalling more than 3000 signatures and over 500 pieces of correspondence opposition the project. Those in opposition identified gentrification, affordability, lack of seniors housing, insensitivity to the cultural importance of the site, and incongruity with neighbourhood character and adjacent sites. In addition to a group of Chinese seniors supporting the project, the only named organizations speaking on behalf of the project at the hearing were the YWCA Hotel, the Urban Development Institute, and the Vancouver Chinatown Merchant's Association. Comments in support of the project generally indicated that the design was respectful of the context, that the proposed seniors centre and seniors housing was worth the additional height of the project, and that the building would contribute to area revitalization (City of Vancouver, 2017d). In June 2017, Council sided with the intergenerational coalition, voting to oppose the rezoning of 105 Keefer Street (City of Vancouver, 2017g). Later that year, when the DPB was hearing public input on Beedie Living's final development application, a very similar set of speakers voiced their opposition to the project (City of Vancouver, 2017b). Like Council, the DPB ultimately sided with the coalition of voices opposing development, and rejected the application (City of Vancouver, 2017a).

The struggle against the 105 Keefer application proved to be a high point in terms of political energy and unity among the intergenerational coalition (D. Chow, Interview, December 21, 2020; S. Fung, Interview, December 31, 2020; K. Huang, Interview, January 26, 2021). In June 2018, half a year after the DPB decision, a public hearing was held for the downzoning amendments to the HA-1 and HA-1A district schedules. While still strongly contested, it attracted fewer speakers, correspondences, and petitions than 105 Keefer had the year before (City of Vancouver, 2018c). But more importantly, the four groups at the core of the intergenerational coalition opposing 105 Keefer had diminished and fragmented. When Keefer ended, the volunteer-driven Chinatown Action Group were burnt out, and their work as an organization ended in 2018 (S. Fung, Interview, December 31, 2020). There was also diminished representation at the event from Hua Foundation, YCC, and CCG (City of Vancouver,

2018c). It was also at this public hearing that the divergent goals of these groups, previously eclipsed by the shared concern with preventing 105 Keefer, were brought into relief: where representatives of YCC and Chinatown Today spoke in support of the zoning amendments, the proposal was opposed by representatives of CCG, CCAP, and the Yarrow Intergenerational Society of Justice (a group that emerged in 2018 out of the Youth for Chinese Seniors). This split revealed the durability of a sub-coalition organized around concerns of culture and heritage, where the more culturally focused Hua Foundation and YCC aligned with heritage groups like the Chinatown Society Heritage Building Association, CHAPC, Heritage Vancouver Society, and key individuals like UBC History Professor Dr. Henry Yu. In an unexpected twist of the political field, the latter groups opposing the zoning amendments for insufficiently addressing the concern of affordability and gentrification found themselves speaking on the same side of the issue as a number of developers and area property owners who were decrying the lack of consideration of economic impacts from the proposal.

But despite some degradation of the intergenerational coalition's cohesion, many of the groups and values that emerged in response to 105 Keefer are represented in the most recent neighbourhood planning initiative in Chinatown. Specifically, it can be seen in the composition of the Legacy Stewardship Group (LSG), the group of community representatives and stakeholders established in 2019 to oversee the work of the CTT, including development of the Cultural Heritage Asset Management Plan (City of Vancouver, 2020a). Of the 35 LSG members listed on the City of Vancouver website, roughly one quarter are members of, or closely associated with, key groups from the intergenerational coalition that emerged since 2015 (City of Vancouver, 2020a); four of them are members from the CCG (H. Ma, Interview, December 23, 2020; K. Chan, Interview, January 18, 2021). The remaining seats of the LSG are split among representatives from local business including the BIA and Merchant's Association (20%), Benevolent Associations (14%), the established heritage and cultural institutions (11%), and other groups and individuals (17%). This is in contrast to the 23 member VCRC established in 2002, of which business and property interests made up over 40% of the seats (Chen-Adams, 2002, p. 7). Of course, the values represented by these 35 people and the organizations they represent are more complex and nuanced than the simplistic categorizations used for these statistics. But the breakdown of seats demonstrates a distinct shift in representation away from groups with a direct interest in economic

revitalization, towards those with a set of concerns and values (anti-gentrification, affordable housing, and intangible heritage) articulated in opposition to the proposed development of 105 Keefer. There were two other significant changes in political involvement between the two periods and composition of the community advisory groups. The first was the presence of youth and young adults, which was a critical source of the political energy from 2015 onward, but scarcely mentioned from 2002 to 2011. The second was the inclusion of groups representing concerns of the broader Downtown Eastside neighbourhood (e.g., the CCG) as part of the LSG, representation which had generally been excluded in the earlier phase of planning.

Chapter 5.

Coupling streams: Linking 105 Keefer, Reconciliation, and Intangible Heritage

The preceding narrative illustrates parallel shifts in policy and coalitional composition, generally mapping on to the ACF. In broad strokes, during the first phase a broad coalition of business/property interests and heritage/cultural groups supported the establishment of a set of plans and policies directed toward the economic revitalization of Chinatown, with residential intensification as the primary means to that end; in the second phase a new alliance formed among relatively new entrants into the field and existing heritage/culture groups who together successfully stopped or reversed residential intensification policies and helped usher in a renewed focus on cultural preservation and social justice, and a formal commitment to a community-led process to pursue UNESCO World Heritage Designation. But as the details of the narrative might suggest, the broad strokes bely a more complex set of contingent policy events, actor interactions, and enabling conditions that led to the policy change described. To “make sense of the babble of policymaking” (Goyal & Howlett, 2020) over this period, I follow the example of Howlett, McConnell and Perl in using an integrated framework combining a Laswellian policy cycle, Kingdon’s multiple streams, and the Advocacy Coalition Framework of Sabatier and Jenkins-Smith (Howlett et al., 2016, 2017). By parsing the flow of decisions, events, and activity of different actors with this framework, the specific conditions and moments that gave rise to the observed shift can be better discerned. The seemingly continuous and complexly interwoven policy decisions and coalitional activity can be organized into two distinct moments: 1) the rejection of the existing policy paradigm that allowed for a return to agenda-setting in which the policy problem facing Chinatown could be reframed; and 2) the timely arrival of a new policy solution that was ‘coupled’ by a savvy policy entrepreneur (Kingdon, 1995) to a newly described policy problem and the restructured coalitional politics.

5.1. How 105 Keefer opened a window: policy learning and the return to agenda-setting

One explanation for policy change in the ACF is through policy-oriented learning, wherein policies are assessed against policy goals (e.g., through monitoring) and adjusted accordingly. This tends to produce more superficial changes, such as adjustments to a policy setting (e.g., raising or lowering a tax rate) or the exchange of one policy tool for another, but leaving the policy goal in place (Sabatier, 1988). At the level of zoning, this manner of change seems to have taken place between the HAHR decisions in 2011 that increased development opportunity and the 2018 reduction in development rights. This policy learning took place over a complete policy cycle closely following the theoretical ideal. With the agenda (stage 1) set as part of prior planning work, the HAHR was a multi-year policy formulation process (stage 2) beginning in 2008 with the objective of exploring additional density and height in historic areas, and ending with an endorsement to increase allowable height in the HA-1 and HA-1A zones by 10 and 20 feet to 75 and 90 feet, respectively, as well as creation of a rezoning policy permitting an increase up to 120 feet in the HA-1A zone, and 150 feet in a sub-area of HA-1A along Main Street (Toderian, 2011b). As mentioned, the formulation of these specific heights was a contentious process for the established Chinatown Coalition (H. Ma, Interview, December 23, 2020), but they were ultimately endorsed by said coalition (Wai, 2011) in advance of decision-making by Council (stage 3). The next several years of policy implementation (stage 4) involved the series of redevelopment projects described above, culminating in 105 Keefer, that would see political support for increased heights fall away, and a new coalition emerge to oppose large scale redevelopment in Chinatown's historic core. Prompted by community concerns, staff began a review of the HAHR policy amendments (stage 5, evaluation) through an extensive, multi-year engagement process beginning in 2015 (Hoese, 2018, p. 3, Appendix F). The outcome of this review was a staff report that marked the beginning of a new policy cycle, with a suite of recommendations including several zoning amendments that effectively scaled back on the policy decisions made under the HAHR (Hoese, 2018).

This return to the policy formulation and decision-making stages followed an almost textbook description of rational policy development: a policy was set, implemented, evaluated, and revised based on findings. It also fit the pattern for a

change in more superficial policy (i.e., secondary policy beliefs) in that it is driven by policy-learning (Sabatier, 1988), and resulted in an adjustment to policy settings, not policy goals, or even a change of policy tools. According to ACF, this lower-order policy change is typically less politically driven, rather it is a concern of the bureaucrats who are usually conducting and learning from the policy monitoring that drives adjustments to the policy (Sabatier, 1988). During the 2018 public hearings for the HA-1/HA-1A zoning amendments, this rational approach to policy change was described by planner Helen Ma in explaining how monitoring had been an expected part of the 2011 upzoning: “Council directed staff to carefully monitor impacts of change, and review and adjust the policies if necessary” (City of Vancouver, 2018d, Helen Ma, June 28, 6:28pm). The three-year review and engagement process by staff from 2015 to 2018 was the form of that monitoring and evaluation.

But the policy learning that took place leading up to the 105 Keefer development application doesn't follow the ACF's description as it extended beyond the civil servants responsible for implementing the policy; instead it involved the community and stakeholders that comprised a significant portion of the coalition that shaped neighbourhood planning for the first decade of the study period. This coalition had not been easily brought together in the first place (Wai, 2011; F. Mah, Interview, January 7, 2021), and involved elements of Chinatown civil society that had a long history of varied political alliances and disputes (Mitchell, 1998). According to the ACF, coalition building and stability is based on shared policy core beliefs (Sotirov & Winkel, 2016); by contrast, the factions comprising this coalition represented diverse concerns around economic revitalization, property development, and cultural and heritage preservation. So instead of being built on a shared policy core, this coalition had been built through years of collaborative neighbourhood planning with a shared understanding that the social and economic conditions of Chinatown were not sustainable. This shared belief that existing conditions were not supportable is what the ACF calls a 'policy stalemate', and can lead to an alliance between coalitions without shared core policy beliefs (Sabatier & Weible, 2007, p. 206). Without a shared policy core, support for the HAHR zoning amendments had been a negotiated agreement rather than an enduring, values-based alignment. As an outcome of this negotiation, the approach embedded in the HAHR was an experiment in whether increased density could achieve economic development objectives without sacrificing values of heritage and neighbourhood character (H. Ma, Interview, December

23, 2020; F. Mah, Interview, January 7, 2021). Speaking to Council in a 2018 public hearing about the Chinatown zoning review, Nathan Edelson, former senior planner for the Vancouver's DTES, summarized what was learned about the HAHR: "Several years ago, I spoke in support of what we called the 'honourable compromise', to put to rest and to test the divisive debate between those who wanted more height in Chinatown, and those who wanted more restrictive zoning. The results are too obvious as many people have said. Large buildings that have little to do with the character of Chinatown"(City of Vancouver, 2018d, Nathan Edelson, July 4, 11:29) . For Joe Wai and others in the community, the "right density" was not found, and the community benefits extracted not enough (City of Vancouver, 2018b; Klassen, 2015a). Once this had been determined, the core policy beliefs that had previously co-existed were put back into conflict, and the coalition split. So, unlike the typical pattern described in the ACF, because policy-learning took place among the broader community rather than the professional staff, it became part of the coalitional re-alignment rather than producing smaller adjustments to policy tools.

While policy-learning eroded the basis of one coalition, another was being formed as diverse groups came together to organize for open houses and public hearings. It was in this context that the 105 Keefer development application process acted as a 'focusing event'. As a driver of change that emerges suddenly out of the problem stream, a focusing event can mobilize people around a perceived policy failure, leveraging it to expand an issue of concern to broader group (other stakeholders, public, politicians, etc.) (Birkland, 1998; Birkland & Schwaeble, 2019). This pattern was certainly evident around 105 Keefer. The skill and capacities brought by newly established organizations like the Chinatown Concern Group (CCG), Hua Foundation, Youth Collaborative for Chinatown (YCC) helped build and strengthen the coalition and expand it well beyond the residents and stakeholders in Chinatown (F. Mah, Interview, January 7, 2021). This included community organizing and petitions, strategic planning sessions, social media campaigns (e.g. #SaveCHinatownYVR), and cultural programming and events (Mah Jong and movie nights organized at the Keefer Triangle). Importantly, the 105 Keefer proposal was an implementation of the HAHR zoning amendments, which in turn were a suite of policy changes rationalized by the residential intensification strategy of the Chinatown Neighborhood Plan and Economic Development strategy (and ultimately the Chinatown Vision of 2002). This nested policy structure meant that the

rationale brought forward to oppose 105 Keefer during rounds of engagement and public hearing cascaded upward to bring the entire policy framework for the neighbourhood into question. Indeed, the expansion of the policy discussion was so successful that the staff report would assert “The application has become a symbol of the struggle of the Chinatown community and the city as a whole to define the future for Vancouver’s Chinatown.” At the opening of the public hearings, Councillor Geoff Meggs, who would ultimately oppose the application, emphasized this staff comment through his question, “Is the debate...really on two levels, both the project itself and evolving understandings and feelings about the development of Chinatown?” (City of Vancouver, 2017e, May 23, 7:04). In this way, 105 Keefer acting as focusing event secured the attention of decision makers on broader questions about the future of Chinatown, and the stage was set for a struggle to set a new agenda.

Through the series of public engagement events and public hearings of 105 Keefer and the HA-1/HA-1A zoning review, and the development of the HDC report, the new intergenerational coalition reframed the policy problem of Chinatown’s development. Between the Chinatown Vision in 2002 and the Neighborhood Plan and Economic Development strategy in 2011, a fairly consistent understanding of the policy problem underlay much of the planning and policy work that took place – namely, the economic decline of the neighbourhood due to growing social issues and the residential and commercial movement of the Chinese Canadian population to other communities across the region (J. Chen-Adams, 2002, p. 10; J. Chen-Adams & Edelson, 2005, p. 3 & 5). As discussed above, part of this framing owed to the origin of the Chinatown Revitalization program in the Downtown Eastside Revitalization Program, a project funded by the National Crime Prevention Centre with a goal to “address the issues of community safety and economic revitalization” (Chen-Adams, 2002, p. 2). In 2011, this narrative of Chinatown’s existential crisis was utilized to make sense of the HAHR upzoning with speakers talking about the need “to address the growing concerns over the continuing decline of the Chinatown Historic Area over the past several decades” (City of Vancouver, 2011c, Shirley Chan, March 17, 1:22) or the lack of a “vibrant street life”(City of Vancouver, 2011c, Cecilia Yeung, March 17, 2:51), a concern with vacancies, and that “it just seems like all the businesses are dying out, they’re going out of business. Tak Shing Chow, a Vancouver Chinatown BIA representative, drew the threads together, explaining to Council, “This is not really about the height, this is about

the survival and future of Chinatown...Over the past 15 to 20 years, Chinatown has been declining steadily” (City of Vancouver, 2011c, Tak Shing Chow, April 5, 2:30). A letter from a Chinatown property owner clearly links this problem framing to the preferred policy approach of that early period: “Vancouver Chinatown has been in steady decline for over the last two decades as the traditional consumers have moved to competing neighbourhoods that have been able to provide similar goods and services in a more contemporary setting and in larger facilities... Chinatown needs...the development of a consumer oriented residential neighbourhood...Chinatown needs a greater density of population consisting of local residents who will use and benefit from facilities in the area.” (Chen, 2010b, p.7, letter from Mandate National Mortgage Corporation) The narrative was maintained years later, with speakers supporting the 105 Keefer redevelopment proposal similarly referring to the problem of vacant stores, and how business had been “going down hill” (City of Vancouver, 2017e, Yi Fu Su, May 23, 9:00). For example, in 2017 Bob Rennie, owner of a prominent real estate marketing agency with an office located in Chinatown, discussed the degradation of the business environment in terms that attempted to respond to the concerns raised against commercial gentrification: “Chinatown is at a fork in the road right now. If I look out five years from now, the only way that herbalist can stay is if we bring back a walkable, livable community, and fill those vacant storefronts” (City of Vancouver, 2017e, Bob Rennie, May 23, 9:22).

But by that time, the intergenerational coalition had begun to reframe the policy problem. One of this group’s key themes was the impacts of gentrification and how they related to neighbourhood identity and cultural preservation. In this narrative, instead of redevelopment and increased density leading to economic revitalization, it leads to commercial and residential displacement, and increased costs of rent. During the first day of hearings of 105 Keefer in May 2017, several Chinese seniors who were members of the CCG spoke to these themes, like Chen Hui Qing, explaining what the recent large-scale developments on Main Street meant to her: “I felt that there won’t be a Chinatown anymore. It’s so gentrified, all the herbal stores were closing down” (City of Vancouver, 2017e, May 23, 8:20). Or Lily Tang, who explained how the commercial gentrification alienated low-income seniors like herself from the neighbourhood: “When I went to a bakery store...maybe you can afford it, we can not afford that. One bun cost \$3. Of course, people are free to have that kind of store in Chinatown, but it’s not affordable to

us, the people in Chinatown” (City of Vancouver, 2017e, May 23, 8:28). The final phrase of Lily Tang’s comment here points to another important aspect of the narrative, which was to contrast a low-income population of existing Chinatown residents, including their style of living (modest and culturally imbued), against profit motivated developers and luxury condos that threatened the neighbourhood. Ling Wan, after describing the amount of and unaffordability of new condos in Chinatown, asserted that “Chinatown should not be developed for personal profits” (City of Vancouver, 2017e, May 23, 8:00).

In addition to these personal accounts and experiences, members of the intergenerational coalition were articulating the gentrification problem using quantitative analysis, or bureaucratically “sanctioned methods of producing knowledge,” in an act of strategic positivism (Fields, 2015). A key example was the Vancouver Chinatown Food Security Report produced by the Hua Foundation, which tracked the loss of cultural food assets from 2009 to 2015 (Hua Foundation, n.d.), marking a 50% loss of food assets in Chinatown. This statistic was regularly cited during discussion of the negative impacts of 105 Keefer (K. Huang, Interview, January 26, 2021). During the public hearings for the HA-1/HA-1A zoning amendments, Kevin Huang of the Hua Foundation was able to demonstrate to Council the failings of the HAHR density increases in terms of cultural preservation, citing the decrease in traditional business and increase in new businesses in the neighbourhood since 2011 (City of Vancouver, 2018d, July 4, 2018).

An important aspect of reframing the problem was the connection of the concerns of gentrification and displacement to emerging discussions of systemic racism, colonialism, and cultural oppression. During the 105 Keefer hearing, Yuly Chan of the Chinatown Concern Group insisted the application be reviewed according to principles of social and economic justice, and made connections between heritage, historic injustice against Chinese Canadian residents, and ongoing gentrification: “So what preserving culture and heritage for Chinatown really means is that for a historically and still marginalized neighbourhood, it should be those who have the greatest need to remain in the neighbourhood that get to have the most say over what happens in their lives and their future” (City of Vancouver, 2017e, May 23, 10:18). During hearings for the HDC report, a young woman recounted an emotional history of family discrimination, and the importance of the cultural practices of mourning taught to her by Chinatown shopkeepers after she had lost her grandparents. She linked the displacement of these shops and Chinatown residents to the threat development posed to cultural the area’s

culture and heritage: “Chinatown is nothing without its people. They are the living cultural assets your report says we must protect. If we keep on raising prices by putting luxury condos in, we are going to lose it. And children like me will never be able to reconnect with their culture” (City of Vancouver, 2017f, November 1, 3:12). A final example is from King-mong Chan of the CCG, who drew similar connections at public hearings including for 105 Keefer when he explained how gentrification and real estate speculation accelerated displacement and the marginalization of Chinese culture (City of Vancouver, 2017e, May 23, 7:52), or the hearing for the HDC report where he referenced Keefer explicitly in the context of the report’s findings of past discrimination and injustice: “How can reconciliation happen as Chinese working class people are being marginalized by gentrification in Chinatown... What happens in Chinatown at 105 Keefer is central to reconciliation because it will show whether or not racism has passed us, or is still current and still happening” (City of Vancouver, 2017f, November 1, 3:08). Helen Ma, a senior City of Vancouver planner directly involved in much of this work, explained that an important contribution of the so-called “youth groups” to the discussion was the way they were able to take the issue of 105 Keefer, and “articulate it so clearly and connect it to social justice and cultural redress” (H. Ma, Interview, December 23, 2020).

By late 2014, 105 Keefer was the latest in a series of new developments (built and proposed) that represented for many in Chinatown the failure of the HAHR upzoning of 2011. This policy learning put an end to the ‘honourable compromise’ and caused a split in the coalition of established Chinatown organizations that had supported the economic revitalization strategies of the early 2000s. This event from the problem stream coincided with developments in the political stream, as new entrants to the field similarly saw in 105 Keefer a threat to the cultural heritage and security of low-income residents of Chinatown. 105 Keefer became a focusing event, which allowed the development of the new intergenerational coalition that coalesced to oppose it. Given the nested policy structure, the rejection of the 105 Keefer Street proposal cascaded upward, becoming a rejection of the policy settings and tools of the HAHR, and a rejection of the larger policy approach of economic revitalization through residential intensification. Through public engagement and public hearings, the intergenerational coalition was able to reframe the policy problem facing Chinatown directly to City staff and Council. In place of a neighbourhood in decline, threatened by rampant social issues and a suburban exodus of Chinese-speaking residents, gentrification and

displacement from under-regulated development would become the threat to Chinatown's residents and cultural heritage. This confluence of the problem and political streams marked a return to agenda-setting at the level of neighbourhood planning, opening a window of opportunity for establishing a new policy approach for Chinatown.

It is worth adding that the return to agenda-setting was aided by the contentious form in which rezonings occur. Public hearings are a required component in the implementation of rezoning policy; and they are also a highly agonistic form of political theatre. Organized around a series of five-minute testimonies to Council on the merits or deficits of a project, public hearings are a perfect opportunity for coalitions to raise their accounts of the policy problem, competing for the attention of decision-makers, press and the broader public. Drawing decision-maker attention to policy problems is the essence of agenda-setting (Kingdon, 1995). The nested policy structure discussed above – that allowed the rejection of 105 Keefer to cascade upwards through the policy hierarchy – is how the reframed policy concern during a specific moment of implementation causes a return to agenda-setting. So while public hearings are functionally meant to be part of implementation (stage 4), they are a recurring opportunity to cause a return to agenda-setting (stage 1) before implementation is substantially advanced or structured monitoring can occur. This dual role of public hearings and the nested structure of policy suggests that the process of land use policy implementation in Vancouver has a built-in tendency to continually bring the problem and political streams to the fore, opening repeated opportunities for a return to agenda-setting and decision-making.

5.2. Intangible Heritage and UNESCO World Heritage Designation: Ideas whose time had come

The return to agenda-setting means the intergenerational coalition had successfully moved the set of problems they were concerned with into the attention of City Council. Based on the Multiple Streams Framework (MSF), the window of opportunity comes as decision-makers search for a solution to this newly acquired problem. But the intergenerational coalition that so quickly and effectively coalesced to oppose Keefer based on their shared commitment to reject the proposed development, struggled to agree on a policy approach going forward (S. Fung, Interview, December 29, 2020; F. Mah, Interview, January 7, 2021). Even where they did agree, like on the

need for non-market seniors housing, they didn't always agree on how much should be required or how it should be delivered (i.e., as an extraction from development, or through public sector investment). This was not a problem when the goal was to prevent the 105 Keefer development from happening, but it caused a split in the coalition a year later once a new policy direction was articulated in the HA-1/HA-1A zoning review. In the language of the ACF, the broader coalition was not sufficiently aligned at the level of policy core beliefs to last beyond successful defeat of 105 Keefer. So, when 105 Keefer and its enabling policies were rejected and the agenda set with a new policy problem, the broader coalition would not take advantage of the window of opportunity created. Instead, the moment would be leveraged by a sub-coalition of people focused on cultural preservation, several of whom had been working in the policy stream helping to formulate what being a City of Reconciliation meant in the context of Chinatown. An important element of this work was the use of 'intangible heritage', a new concept from the field of heritage preservation around which a heritage focused sub-coalition would emerge. Intangible heritage (sometimes 'intangible cultural heritage') encompasses a broad range of cultural activity and objects, including "the practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, skills – as well as the instruments, objects, artefacts and cultural spaces associated therewith – that communities, groups and, in some cases, individuals recognize as part of their cultural heritage"; it is also alive and changing, "transmitted from generation to generation...constantly recreated by communities and groups in response to their environment, their interaction with nature and their history..."("Text of the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage - intangible heritage - Culture Sector - UNESCO," 2003). Thus, as a policy concept in Chinatown, intangible heritage was open enough to integrate distinct concerns of cultural preservation and redress, social justice, and neighbourhood change. Key members of this sub-coalition would act as policy entrepreneurs by 'coupling' the problems and politics that emerged in opposition to 105 Keefer with policy work taking place as part of the HDC report. In particular, they would introduce UNESCO World Heritage Designation as a way to operationalize the idea of intangible heritage and speak to many of the practical challenges of neighbourhood planning in Chinatown.

While the larger intergenerational coalition was working to oppose the 105 Keefer application, a sub-coalition was emerging around a new approach to heritage preservation that emphasized non-material aspects of culture. The previous approach which had been standard in Vancouver for decades is known as "adaptive re-use" and

emphasized the preservation of architectural aesthetics over use; it had been considered successful in the preservation of some of the City's other heritage areas, like Yaletown and Gastown (H. Yu, Interview, February 17, 2021). Some examples of the new approach that elevated non-material culture have already been discussed at length, such as the "Hot and Noisy" Mah Jong socials at Chinatown's Keefer Triangle put on by the Youth Collaborative for Chinatown, or the Hua Foundation's Choi Box program. But there are several others. *Chinatown Today*, established in 2015, is an online and print not-for-profit that "chronicles the change, past and present, in Vancouver's Chinatown through the lens of local businesses, people, shared experiences and passed on traditions" through, among other things, the creation and publication of *Chinatown Stories*, compendia of interviews with community members ("Vancouver Chinatown Today | About," n.d.). While not intangible heritage itself, as a chronicle of the lived experience and activities of local residents and business-people, *Chinatown Stories* helps preserve cultural practices and expressions of Chinatown. Much of the work of local businessperson Carol Lee has this non-material concern with heritage, such as Chinatown BBQ, a reasonably priced restaurant serving traditional Cantonese-style barbecued meats, and staffed by Cantonese speakers hired from a barbecued meats shop that had previously been lost to fire. Chinatown BBQ is an example of intangible heritage in the traditional craftsmanship of barbecue and the social practices of this style of restaurant, which are components of Chinatown's cultural identity. Another example is in Lee's support of the establishment of the Chinatown Storytelling Centre supported through her work at the Vancouver Foundation ("Chinatown Storytelling Centre ," 2020; Robinson, 2018). These people and groups are, of course, in addition to established institutions such as Dr. Sun Yat Sen Garden and the Chinese Cultural Centre, both of which were established with heritage mandates beyond architectural aesthetics. Indeed, desire for a broader approach to heritage has been at the heart of political tensions in Chinatown for decades. In the 1980s the Chinatown Historic Area Planning Committee (CHAPC) was asked to review the HA-1 and HA-1A zones which were being blamed by local businessmen for Chinatown being "frozen", and unable to attract development that was occurring in the rest of the city. In a letter to Council by Joe Wai, a CHAPC member at the time, articulates the conflict:

The issue is not necessarily "the numbers of buildings to be preserved", but the fundamental view, thus approach, of what is "heritage"? If the view is primarily "architectural character", then Planning is correct in holding on to

their position. However, if "Heritage" is consideration of culture first (and architectural character is *A PART* of that) then a more holistic view and action are required. It is our contention that "Heritage" particularly for Chinatown goes beyond "Architectural merits" only. [Chinatown is] a place where a continuous way of life has thrived, evolved over 100 years..."Culture" (language, sounds, smells, ways of being. . . etc.) is the essence and the character. . . . The economic clock is ticking louder and louder each passing day, buried in an essentially stifling environment: high taxes/rents; crime, inadequate parking and virtual freeze on redevelopment. (Letter to City Manager Ken Dohell as quoted in Mitchell, 2000, p. 14, underlining and emphasis in original)

Here, Joe Wai is positioning his "holistic" approach to heritage, one that aims to preserve a "continuous way of life", against the material focus of the existing adaptive re-use model. Nearly 30-years later in his op-ed for *The Tyee*, Joe Wai was still working to articulate the importance of what he called the "spiritual factor" of preserving Chinatown which, while having a place for architectural guidelines, was not limited to them (Wai, 2011).

While I couldn't determine the first use of 'intangible heritage' in planning and policy discussions in Chinatown, from 2015 to 2017 it was taken up readily by several groups and individuals. After the 2014 consultant report supporting the Chinese Society Legacy Program (mentioned in section 4.2.2), one of the more prominent early governmental uses came in the summer of 2015 when the Provincial Government commissioned the "Vancouver Chinatown Intangible Heritage Values Report" (Heritage BC, 2015). This research project involved public engagement and stakeholder workshops through August of 2015. This was the same summer that the "Hot and Noisy" Mah Jong socials at Chinatown's Keefer Triangle were being held, and the YCC organizers promoted and contributed to the provincial heritage project (Katherine Gwun-Yeen Lennon, 2015; D. Chow, Interview, December 21, 2020). In 2016, YCC organizers met Bill Yuen, who would soon after become Executive Director of the Heritage Vancouver Society, requesting Chinatown to be placed on the society's annual Top 10 Watch List of most endangered heritage resources, with specific reference to intangible heritage (D. Chow, Interview, December 21, 2020) and by 2017 were presenting jointly at the National Trust conference about intangible heritage and its role in the rejection of 105 Keefer ("Pop-Ups & Partnerships," n.d.; D. Chow, Interview, December 21, 2020). Fred Mah, a prominent Chinatown figure and member of the Chinatown Society Heritage Building Association (CSHBA) had also spent years advocating for a more holistic

perspective on heritage preservation, including the UNESCO designation specifically (F. Mah, Interview, January 7, 2021; H. Ma, Interview, December 23, 2020; H. Yu, Interview, February 17, 2021). Over this three-year period, the concept acted as a 'coalition magnet' (Béland & Cox, 2016), drawing together a diversity of groups, mobilizing supporters and framing interests. Soon, many organizations and individuals mentioned above – e.g., Hua Foundation, Chinatown Today, Carol Lee – were using the term 'intangible heritage' to describe their work ("Chinatown Stories Volume 3 is out! Free online version available.," n.d.; Ho & Chen, 2017, p. 9; White, n.d.). In short, the concept helped to build a sub-coalition of individuals and organizations around the policy core value of intangible heritage.

At the same time, policy work was underway to interpret Vancouver's commitment to being a 'City of Reconciliation' within the Chinatown context and, crucially, connecting it to a new approach to heritage preservation. This work originated independently of the debate around development in Chinatown with a 2014 motion from Councillor Raymond Louie directing staff to research the history of discriminatory decisions from Vancouver City Council between 1886 and 1947, and to "report back to Council with recommendations on steps and actions in support of reconciliation, including a public acknowledgement and formal apology" (Louie, 2014). This motion is part of the City of Vancouver's commitment to being a "City of Reconciliation" and was part of a growing governmental concern with reconciliation and discrimination. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, a federal initiative that ran from 2008 to 2015 documenting the truth of Indigenous residential school survivors, was just wrapping up when Louie put his motion forward (National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation, 2015). The motion referenced formal apologies by the Prime Minister of Canada, British Columbia Legislature, and City of New Westminster for a long history of discriminatory laws, regulations and policies against Canada's Chinese populations (Louie, 2014). The realization of the motion was the Historic Discrimination Against Chinese People in Vancouver initiative (HDC) led by the City's Social Policy department from 2015 to 2017. The purpose of the HDC was to provide a detailed history of discrimination against Chinese Canadians perpetrated by City of Vancouver Council, prepare a formal apology to be delivered to the Chinese community by Vancouver City Council, and offer recommendations to support reconciliation and strengthen relations with the Chinese Canadian Community (Zak, 2017). Of the twelve legacy actions recommended, three of

them supported the conservation and enhancement of living heritage and cultural assets, two of which referred specifically to the process of pursuing UNESCO World Heritage Designation for Chinatown (Zak, 2017).

Parallel changes to city-wide heritage policy similarly deepened the connection between reconciliation, intangible heritage, and UNESCO World Heritage Designation. This shift moved away from an old-fashioned model focused on preservation of architectural aesthetics (H. Yu, Interview, February 17, 2021) to a contemporary approach informed by best-practices from UNESCO, including the Historic Urban Landscapes (HUL) protocol (City of Vancouver, 2017e, Bill Yuen, May 25, 1:55; Donald Luxton and Associates, 2017). It had already been introduced in Chinatown through the National Historic Site and the Canadian Register of Historic Places designation applied to Chinatown in 2010 and 2015, both of which utilize UNESCO guidelines, a fact Bill Yuen communicated to Council at public hearing (City of Vancouver, 2017e, Bill Yuen, May 25, 1:55). Indeed, the updated Heritage Management Program would identify the work in Chinatown and Hogan's Alley (the historic Black community located adjacent to Chinatown) as the introduction of an approach to heritage "that centers intangible cultural heritage, or living heritage, as a way of understanding how communities and historic areas express their identity and culture, to inform approaches to community planning and urban development" (Olinek, 2020, p. 7). But these changes were not relegated to a particular neighbourhood or context. The updated heritage program was explicitly organized around concerns of equity, cultural redress and reconciliation, and emphasized the inclusion of intangible heritage and the UNESCO HUL approach (City of Vancouver, 2020b). Four of the six 'drivers of change' motivating the new approach were "Reconciliation with Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil-Waututh Nations, and Urban Indigenous People", "Cultural Redress", "a broader concept of Cultural heritage which includes both tangible...and intangible or living heritage", and the UNESCO HUL approach (City of Vancouver, 2020b, p. 4).

Along with the problem reframing described in section 5.1, these developments in the political and policy streams represent the contingent convergence of events that Kingdon says produce opportunities for policy change. The degree to which the various policy and planning activities in Chinatown overlapped should not be understated. The series of 105 Keefer applications, including associated open houses and public hearings, ran from late 2014 to late 2017 (City of Vancouver, 2017h). Work on the HDC

report took place between 2015 and 2017 (Zak, 2017). Consultation for the HA-1/HA-1A zoning review began in early February with final Council decision coming in July 2018 (Hoese, 2018). More specifically, the public hearing for the 105 Keefer rezoning application ran from May 23rd to 29th (City of Vancouver, 2017c), almost exactly concurrent with the public forums presenting the research for the HDC, which ran from May 17th to 27th (Zak, 2017, p. 6). So when Council was making the decision to reject Beedie Living's rezoning application, a history of discriminatory Council decisions was the rhetorical backdrop. October 31st and November 1st were the public hearing dates for the HDC report, when Council was listening to speakers respond to a documented history of discriminatory municipal decision-making, immediately after the public gave input to the Development Permit Board on the final 105 Keefer submission on October 30th (City of Vancouver, 2017b).

The point of this detailed timeline is to highlight that for the people participating in these activities – community, staff, and Councillors - the events and the topics of discussion must have been highly intermingled. There is evidence of this synthesis when speakers made reference to the parallel processes, such as the testimonies of Andrea Lum, King-mong Chan, Mariel Wall during the HDC report hearing (City of Vancouver, 2017f). Indeed, Ms. Lum had to be regularly reminded by Council that her comments about 105 Keefer were outside the scope of the hearing (3:07). Also important are the aspects of these processes that did not exactly overlap. By the time staff was finalizing recommendations around the HA-1/HA-1A amendments, 105 Keefer had already been rejected and the HDC report, including its recommendations, accepted.

It is in this context, of the mingling and sequencing of the problem, political, and policy streams, that the work of policy entrepreneurs took place. Several individuals active during the study period acted as policy entrepreneurs advancing intangible heritage and UNESCO, including Joe Wai and Fred Mah who were politically savvy, influential, well-connected in the community. The work of Doris Chow, June Chan, Katherine Gwun-Yeen Lennon of YCC and Bill Yuen of Heritage Vancouver were also examples of policy entrepreneurship because they helped articulate, demonstrate, and advocate for intangible heritage and its potential role in Chinatown's development and change, both politically and publicly. But for several reasons, I highlight the role of UBC History professor Henry Yu more prominently than these other figures. Part of this is

practical, since Yu has a sizeable archive of published materials due to his vocation as a professor and his work on a number of university programs, community non-profits and government advisory committees; Yu also has a blog and has written several op-eds. For these same reasons, Yu also fits Kingdon's description of a policy entrepreneur with his political and community connections, and his status and expertise as a professor of history about Chinese Canadians, which gives Yu a "claim to a hearing" by people in positions of authority. Finally, Yu's scholarly and advocacy work, discussed more below, specifically links some key policy themes – colonial legacies, reconciliation, intangible heritage, and UNESCO World Heritage Designation – that came together in the window of opportunity that opened during 105 Keepers rejection. Nevertheless, while Yu's role takes on special prominence in my analysis, he was only one among a group of policy entrepreneurs active at the time.

The work of Yu and others is an example of policy entrepreneurship because they 'coupled' the UNESCO World Heritage Designation as a policy option with the issues and political energy that emerged in Chinatown after 2015. This 'coupling' can be illustrated through few key moments in the more formal aspects of the policy process, beginning with the May 2017 public hearing for the 105 Keefer rezoning. At the hearing, Bill Yuen spoke to Council as a representative of Heritage Vancouver Society, connecting the potential impacts of 105 Keefer to Chinatown's cultural identity (a framing from the problem stream) to new approaches to heritage preservation. He explained that the 105 Keefer application failed to meet principles set out by UNESCO (City of Vancouver, 2017e, Bill Yuen, May 25, 1:49), and that Council risked "losing Chinatown." Soon after, Yu situated his opposition to the project within another reframing of the problem stream, describing the importance of Chinatown as a reminder of a history of governmental injustice and discrimination. Out of time and rushed by the Mayor to finish his comments, he closed by offering to answer any questions Council had about intangible heritage and UNESCO World Heritage Designation. Both men were asked more questions about approaches to heritage and UNESCO's process specifically, and Yu was able to more fully explain UNESCO World Heritage Designation and why it might work for Chinatown. This early introduction to decision-makers of the UNESCO option is an example of policy entrepreneurship that Kingdon calls 'softening up': the introduction of an idea to a policy community or larger public to build familiarity and acceptance (Kingdon, 1995, p. 128). This softening up had already begun with the other

organizations in Chinatown, including Yuen's work with the YCC, as well as presentations to area organizations by Yuen, Yu, and Sarah Ling, president of the Chinese Canadian Historical Society of B.C. ("Events - Chinese Canadian Historical Society of BC," 2015; F. Mah, Interview, January 7, 2021). Media exposure is another tactic, like the May 2016 op-ed Yu submitted to the *Vancouver Sun* linking the threat posed by 105 Keefer to intangible heritage and the potential for it to be addressed by a UNESCO Designation (Yu, 2016). This work bore fruit at the May 2017 public hearing when Council (at least some members) were already primed: in response to Yuen's description of UNESCO principles, a Councillor said she had heard people were discussing UNESCO World Heritage Designation for Chinatown (City of Vancouver, 2017e, Bill Yuen, May 25, 1:53).

Another key moment of 'coupling' was the introduction of UNESCO World Heritage Designation into the recommendations of the HDC. By embedding the policy option in this report, it gave the UNESCO designation a strong connection to the problem framing of systemic racism, discrimination, and reconciliation. This is not to say the connection was forced. Conceptually, the two are very compatible. As expressed in UNESCO's "Ethical Principles for Safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage", protection of intangible culture is linked to the protection of the rights of communities and individuals to practice their culture in a safe and respectful setting (UNESCO, 2018, pp. 113–114). The connection was also sensible given the historic focus of the HDC, and the composition of the Advisory Group tasked to support City staff in the HDC. In addition to academic and public historians, many members of this group had connections to heritage and cultural organizations in Chinatown (e.g., as members of Chinese Society Heritage Buildings Association, Dr. Sun Yat Sen Garden, the Chinese Cultural Centre, Vancouver Chinatown Historic Area Planning Committee, etc.), several of which were involved in the 2009 application for Chinatown to receive National Historic Site Designation (Atkin, 2009). This meant that the key stakeholders would have been amenable to including a heritage preservation and management tool like UNESCO World Heritage Designation and asset mapping as a key HDC recommendation. But compatibility with reconciliation and an amenable Advisory Group are just good conditions. The important point here is that the connection was not inevitable – it was an act of policy entrepreneurship. Henry Yu also participated in the HDC and was one of three people on a working group tasked to draft the formal Apology to Chinese

Canadians. During development of the HDC and drafting of the Apology, Yu and Fred Mah put forward UNESCO World Heritage Designation as one of the recommendations on the last day of committee meetings (H. Yu, Interview, February 17, 2021).

The introduction of intangible heritage and UNESCO World Heritage Designation into the reconciliation context of the HDC and Apology are in line with important themes in Yu's work in academia, civil society and with government. One such theme in Yu's academic work, as outlined in a 2011 op-ed for the *Vancouver Sun*, was to reframe our understanding of British Columbia as 'Pacific Canada', an account that replaces the story of westward expansion from the Atlantic with one of a "long process of historical engagement between trans-Atlantic migrants, trans-Pacific migrants, coureurs des bois and aboriginal peoples" (Parent & Yu, 2011). This work involved public education on the histories of Asian migrants faced by white supremacy and discrimination, which includes programs connecting students with Asian Canadian communities through their research ("Spotlight on Faculty: Henry Yu," 2019), and advocating for the creation of museums and other platforms where these stories can be shared ("Henry Yu - About," n.d.; Parent & Yu, 2011). As early as 2016, Yu was organizing an exchange class that brought UBC students to Kaiping, a UNESCO World Heritage Site in Guangdong, China. ("Henry Yu - About," n.d.) Yu contributed to the 2014 provincial *Chinese Historical Wrong Consultation Final Report*, and is a co-chair of the Legacy Initiatives Advisory Council advising government on its implementation ("Legacy Initiatives Advisory Council - Province of British Columbia," n.d.; Wat, 2014). The intangible asset mapping in Chinatown commissioned by the Province was a direct outcome of this provincial consultation report (Heritage BC, 2015). This work foreshadowed the "Chinatown Living Heritage & Cultural Assets Management Plan", which was a recommendation of the HDC report and requirement for the UNESCO World Heritage Designation (Zak, 2017). This abridged career history reinforces the characterization of Yu as a policy entrepreneur working in the policy stream. First, it offers further examples of "softening up", which can come in the form of educating people in different way (whether the public, fellow policy experts, or decision-makers) all with the goal of "getting people talking" (Kingdon, 1995, p. 129). But more importantly, it suggests that Yu, likely in collaboration with others in the heritage sub-coalition, had been devoting resources to "floating balloons", or proposing this policy solution (or similar) to different people, in different venues (Kingdon, 1995, p. 143).

So, in the summer of 2018, when Council was hearing public feedback on the staff recommendations to amend the HA-1/HA-1A heritage zones, Yu was able to answer Council's questions about UNESCO World Heritage Designation as an expert. This moment - spanning the staff report and the final Council decision – was when the policy stream was successfully 'coupled' with the other streams. As discussed previously, the March 2018 staff report recommending the heritage area zoning amendments are framed in the context of the recommendations from the HDC, explaining that the amendments “are critical steps towards achieving long-term, managed and sustainable development, as the City and the community embark on a journey to achieve a vibrant, sustainable Chinatown and pursue UNESCO World Heritage Site Designation” (Hoese, 2018, p. 3). When Yu voiced his support for the downzoning, he explained how the HAHR, while well-intentioned, was based on faulty assumptions about how redevelopment would support the established businesses in Chinatown (City of Vancouver, 2018d, July 4, 11:15). Yu then answered Council questions about how the UNESCO model would support a more sustainable management of change in Chinatown, including responding to concerns about gentrification, and impacts to the neighbouring DTES. While staff had already been directed to explore UNESCO World Heritage Designation as part of the HDC Report the previous fall, it was during the zoning amendments that it moved beyond a new approach to heritage and became, tacitly, the guiding policy rationale for land use decisions in Chinatown.

Up until now, my discussion has explained how UNESCO World Heritage Designation found its way on the agenda – the sub-coalitional collaboration, the confluence of streams and their 'coupling' – but this does not give rationale for why it was successfully formalized in policy (i.e., why staff and Council endorsed the idea). Part of this is attributable to the strength of the heritage sub-coalition. In addition to the important support of Henry Yu, Fred Mah, Bill Yuen with Heritage Vancouver, and groups like YCC and Hua Foundation, the sub-coalition was also comprised of a number of other influential groups, including members of the other established Chinatown stakeholder organizations (e.g., S.U.C.C.E.S.S., Dr. Sun Yat Sen Garden, and the benevolent societies). It also included private sector representation like the Business Improvement Association and Carol Lee, representing both the Chinatown Foundation and the VCRC (before it dissolved in 2018). Beyond the influence of the coalition,

UNESCO World Heritage Designation and the notion of intangible heritage also benefitted from 'polysemy', a semantic ambiguity that allows them to "mean different things to different people" (Béland & Cox, 2016, p. 432). This polysemy supported coalition building, but also meant that it was able to speak to many of the concerns raised at different times by different groups over the years of public engagement and hearings. As a recommendation of the HDC, UNESCO World Heritage Designation was already embedded in concerns for reconciliation, social justice and cultural redress (at least rhetorically). But it was also framed as able to achieve these goals without putting a complete stop to development and change. A key characteristic of this new approach to heritage preservation is that, done right, it can coexist with development and be "mutually reinforcing"(City of Vancouver, 2017e, Bill Yuen, May 25, 1:49) and is a framework for managing change sustainably (City of Vancouver, 2018d, Henry Yu, July 4, 11:15). In this way, it is contrasted against older approaches to heritage which constrained growth, characterized by Fred Mah for Council as an "old European Model" (City of Vancouver, 2017f, November 1, 2:48). This last formulation, by invoking a colonial viewpoint, shows the potency of the UNESCO Designation's polysemy as it simultaneously speaks to heritage preservation, reconciliation, and the still persistent desire among many influential stakeholders in Chinatown to allow for development.

Finally, UNESCO World Heritage Designation could also speak to the pragmatic requirements of staff and Council. Since it comes with a management framework, it is administrable by staff: it provides a set of tools, concepts, and best practices that can be implemented and generally meet the expectations around community-based planning, such as the Historic Urban Landscape (HUL) protocol, and the *Living Heritage & Cultural Assets Management Plan*. Another example is the use of 'Legacy Stewardship', language from UNESCO, to name the community advisory group that would oversee the work (H. Ma, Interview, December 23, 2020). UNESCO World Heritage Designation could also speak to the persistent problem of funding. An important rationale of the HAHR rezoning policy was how it could contribute to community needs like non-market housing, heritage building upgrades, cultural space through community amenity contributions extracted from development density increases (Toderian, 2011a, p. 13). During the HAHR public hearing, Ivan Drury of the Carnegie Community Action Project critiqued the CAC funding model outlined in the HAHR and offered instead a collaboration between benevolent associations and the low-income community to

leverage senior government funding. The response from Councillor Louie indicated that the City had pursued this solution for some time, but was unsuccessful in securing the needed funding (City of Vancouver, 2011c, March 17, 1:54). Six years later during the hearing for the HDC report, after the failure of the HAHR as a funding source for community amenities, staff responded to Council questions about funding by suggesting that the UNESCO designation might help attract senior government support (City of Vancouver, 2017f, October 17, 10:22). Thus the challenge of funding (and the ability to appeal to senior government to secure it) was a long-standing concern that UNESCO World Heritage Designation was expected to address.

Intangible heritage and UNESCO Designation were not the only policy option; their success was not inevitable. The CAG and CCG leading the sub-coalition focused on social justice and displacement put forward the “The People’s Vision for Chinatown”. But this approach would not be formalized in policy the way intangible heritage and the UNESCO World Heritage Designation process were. Why this should be the case is revealing, as both options enjoyed support of key groups from the larger intergenerational coalition and spoke to the new problem of framing that emerged during opposition to the 105 Keefer proposal. While I have not analysed the conditions that prevented advancement of “The People’s Vision for Chinatown” into policy, the option developed around intangible heritage and UNESCO Designation appears to have benefited more than the People’s Vision from the “complex combination of factors” (Kingdon, 1995, p. 76) that came together as developments in the political, problem and policy streams converged. Chief among these factors was the strength of the diverse and influential sub-coalition dedicated to a broader definition of heritage preservation, which included a number of core neighbourhood organizations with long-standing influence in Chinatown politics, newer groups such as YCC and Hua Foundation, and representatives of business interest such as Carol Lee and the Vancouver Foundation. Another important factor was the redefinition of the policy problem that came out of the struggle against 105 Keefer, which replaced an account of economic decline and social decay, to a concern with the social and cultural impacts of irresponsible development. These primary factors became ‘fertile soil’ (Kingdon, 1995, p. 77) in which policy entrepreneurs like Henry Yu, Bill Yuen, Fred Mah, Joe Wai and the YCC would introduce intangible heritage and UNESCO Work Heritage Designation. While ‘softening up’ of the idea had already begun, a crucial development in the policy stream was when the

connection between reconciliation and intangible heritage was formalized in the HDC report. This development in the policy stream would allow policy entrepreneurs to ‘couple’ UNESCO World Heritage Designation as a policy solution with the problem reframing and emergence of the intangible heritage sub-coalition. The successful ‘coupling’ was aided by the multiple, simultaneous policy activities underway in Chinatown between 2015 and 2018. This meant that the public, stakeholders, City staff and Council were involved in a seemingly continuous policy discussion integrating gentrification, cultural heritage, and a history of racial discrimination against Chinese Canadians. In this context, the polysemy of the policy option allowed it to respond to concerns of the diverse actors in the field. For example, intangible heritage extended the definition of heritage preservation to include the cultural practices and community identity that was such a concern during public hearings. But at the same time, it still maintained the traditional concern with tangible heritage – “the instruments, objects, artefacts and cultural spaces” – as part of its definition (UNESCO, 2018). UNESCO World Heritage Designation and the management tools that came with it had a polysemy of their own. As a values-based, community driven approach, it could, theoretically, be used to balance conflicting concerns about growth, change and revitalization on one side, with heritage preservation, cultural identity, gentrification, and displacement on the other. As a growth management framework with proven best-practices and a potential to attract funding, the UNESCO Designation and its supporting tools also addressed practical concerns of both to City staff and decision-makers. So though no policy outcome is inevitable, intangible heritage and UNESCO World Heritage Designation were potent seeds planted in fertile soil, and, as Kingdon would say, were ideas whose time had come (Kingdon, 1995, p. 1).

Chapter 6.

Real Change or Retail Politics?

Policy studies takes as a general rule of thumb that it takes ten years to know if a substantive shift in policy has happened (Sabatier & Weible, 2007). We aren't there yet in Chinatown since the establishment of a new policy core around 'intangible heritage' and pursuit of UNESCO World Heritage Designation is barely three years old at the time of writing. Many people I talked to had a "wait and see" attitude around the new UNESCO-based approach. But because the Advocacy Coalition Framework (ACF) describes the characteristics and conditions for policy change of different degrees, it can be used as a framework for providing a preliminary assessment of the nature and likely durability of the changes described in Chinatown. This section looks at the nature and conditions of change in order to explore whether this shift in Chinatown is meaningful, or just an example of Stone's "Retail politics".

6.1. Defining the sub-system

Policy studies, particularly the ACF, identify the policy subsystem as the most useful aggregate unit of analysis for studying policy change. It is critical for understanding coalition formation and for identifying the three levels of beliefs and policy precepts that allow analysts to distinguish between major and minor policy change (Sabatier & Weible, 2007; Zafonte & Sabatier, 1998). For the authors of the ACF, a policy subsystem will be defined in terms of "a functional and a territorial component" (Zafonte & Sabatier, 1998, p. 474), but identifying a subsystem can be complicated by "the existence of overlapping and nested subsystems" (Sabatier & Weible, 2007, p. 193). Overlap refers to a substantive interrelation between subsystems where the concern of one affects that of another, such as energy and air pollution, or agriculture and water (Zafonte & Sabatier, 1998, p. 474). Nested subsystems are those that take place one within another. They can also involve the substantive elements of policy, but also include the geographic, such as state programs that have a local application (Sabatier & Weible, 2007, p. 193).

The series of debates, decisions and coalitional participants active in Chinatown involve just this type of functionally and territorially overlapping and nested subsystems that can challenge a simple definition of the subsystem. Three obvious functional components at play are economic development, heritage preservation and housing; all of these topics were represented at several stages during the period of study through their own problem framings, coalitional actors, and policy alternatives. But other policy topics have influenced the shift described, such as reconciliation – which provided important rationale for the endorsement of UNESCO World Heritage Designation – or sustainability – which was behind the Council motion to explore the Historic Area Height Review (HAHR), an ‘eco-density’ initiative. In terms of nested geographies, the apology to Chinese Canadians and reconciliation more broadly were nested within initiatives at the provincial and federal levels. The concerns of housing, heritage, and sustainability were connected to policy work involving the larger Downtown Eastside (DTES) neighbourhood and at the city-wide level. Proponents and opponents of the 105 Keefer application and zoning densities attempted to frame the project’s need in terms of the City’s affordable housing crisis, and on a policy core debate around how affordability was defined and achieved. For those in support of the project, 105 Keefer and the higher densities of the HAHR were a supply-side answer to reducing housing prices. For those concerned about low-income resident displacement and gentrification, the suitable response was the government provision of below-market social housing (for some, that meant 100% of the project’s units).

The complexity caused by overlapping and nesting is heightened where the boundaries of the policy subsystem are the stakes of the struggle. For several of the policy decisions examined (especially the HAHR), whether they should focus on impacts to Chinatown or the broader DTES was one of the important topics of the policy debate. Similarly, in the struggle to reframe the problem, whether the policy decision was taken to be about cultural preservation, economic revitalization, or residential displacement was at stake. That these classifications are stakes in the struggle is especially important to keep in mind as I define the policy subsystem to better understand the significance and meaning of the policy shift observed. For example, it is tempting to see (as some of my informants implicitly do) that the adoption of the term “intangible heritage” and UNESCO World Heritage Designation into policy to be evidence that the central subsystem of this story is heritage policy. Certainly, there appears to have been a major

shift in heritage policy, from an approach of architectural preservation through the adaptive reuse of buildings to a more holistic consideration of living and intangible heritage. And in Chinatown, this shift followed the pattern described by the ACF involving a distinct coalition that formed around a policy core belief of what aspects of culture and heritage were most important to protect.

But while the developments in heritage policy were critical to the policy shift in Chinatown, this does not mean that the topic of this study has been the heritage policy subsystem. Assuming so would mean forgetting that the formalization of UNESCO World Heritage Designation as a policy goal was the result of a political struggle; had the Chinatown Action Group (CAG) and Chinatown Concern Group (CCG) successfully seen *The People's Vision of Chinatown* endorsed by Council, then the boundaries of the policy subsystem would be differently drawn, and this could be considered an example of changing social housing policy in the DTES. As Bourdieu reminds us, classifications employed in politics are the "...product of all the previous struggles, and that the same is true of the classifications the analyst implements in order to classify not only opinions but also the agents who express them." (Bourdieu, 1985, p. 738).

Fortunately, Sabatier and Weible provide a "fundamental rule" to guide identification of policy subsystem: "Focus on the substantive and geographic scope of the institutions that structure interaction" (Sabatier & Weible, 1999a, p. 193). They use "institutions" broadly here to refer to enabling legislation and policy, organizational structure of the relevant government administrative bodies, and the existence of distinct interest groups and policy experts.

Using Chinatown and neighbourhood planning/development as the central policy subsystem of concern can be justified on this "fundamental rule". The Chinatown neighbourhood is the geography of focus for many of the policy documents discussed, like the Chinatown Vision, HAGR, Neighbourhood plan and Economic Revitalization Strategy. It is institutionalized administratively by the creation of the Chinatown Transformation Team and the community advisory groups convened to support policy work throughout the period (the Vancouver Chinatown Revitalization Committee and the Chinatown Legacy Stewardship Group). Substantively (or 'functionally'), the policy change examined has been encompassed by neighbourhood planning with a focus on its implementation through land use development policy. Part of this focus comes from

the central role of the 105 Keefer development application and the way it is nested in zoning policy, and a land use policy from the neighbourhood planning work (i.e., residential intensification). But it also comes from the central role of land use policy in the local government toolbox – shaping where and how development happens is a mainstay of municipal governance. Finally, fulfilling another criteria of a policy subsystem, many of the more established civil society organizations in Chinatown (the “big six”) have been “interacting regularly over periods of a decade or more to influence policy formulation and implementation” (Sabatier, 1999, p. 135) within this policy domain.

This is not to say other subsystems don’t exert influence. The geographic nesting within the DTES means the Chinatown planning/development subsystem will always contend with the policy direction of the larger geography. Similarly, since heritage concerns have been a dominant topic of in Chinatown for decades, changes in the heritage policy subsystem may also affect neighbourhood development and planning outcomes. But the same change that is major in one subsystem may be minor in another (Sabatier, 1999, p. 147), thus delineating this policy subsystem is a precondition for assessing the significance of the policy changes observed.

6.2. A Chinatown Preserving Intangible Heritage: A substantive change in Chinatown Development policy?

With the subsystem more clearly delineated, this section will explore whether the policy shift discussed represents a substantive change (i.e., in terms of degree or magnitude) in approach to development in Chinatown. Using the picture of a tiered structure of policy core and secondary aspects of beliefs, the ACF provides “a relatively clear-cut criterion for distinguishing major and minor policy change: Major change is change in policy core aspects of a governmental program, whereas minor change is change in secondary aspects” (Sabatier, 1999, p. 147). The “policy core” Sabatier et al refer to are the application of fundamental values to policy, such as legitimate policy goals, prioritization of policy values, and identifying whose welfare counts, whereas the secondary aspects are narrower in scope and pertain to more detailed aspects of policy or its implementation (Howlett et al., 2017; Sabatier & Weible, 2007) Assessing magnitude of policy change, then, requires identifying the observed changes as policy core or secondary aspects.

Sabatier and Jenkins-Smith distinguish between policy core and secondary beliefs in several ways. The policy core consists of the “[f]undamental policy positions concerning the basic strategies for achieving core values within the subsystem” (Sabatier, 1999, p. 133) They are characterized by a number of topics such as “the relative authority of governments and markets, the proper roles of the general public, elected officials, civil servants, experts, and the relative seriousness and causes of policy problems in the subsystem as a whole” (Sabatier & Weible, 2007, p. 195), but most fundamentally by two normative precepts: the priority of different policy related values, and the identification of groups or other entities whose welfare is the greatest concern (i.e., whose welfare counts) (Sabatier, 1999, p. 132, 2007, p. 195). By contrast, secondary aspects are the “instrumental decisions and information searches necessary to implement the policy core”, including preferences for specific policies and administrative decisions (e.g., budgetary allocations, administrative rules, statutory interpretation or revisions) (Sabatier, 1999, p. 133; Zafonte & Sabatier, 1998, p. 492). They also tend to be of more limited scope, focusing on a sub-component of the subsystem, or a specific location.

The shift in policy goals from economic revitalization to intangible heritage preservation can be understood as a major policy change (i.e., a change in the policy core) in neighbourhood planning/development in Chinatown because they are distinct in terms of fundamental normative precepts. Economic revitalization prioritizes economic activity and the welfare of business and it could be argued that the specific economic revitalization strategy of residential densification reveals a prioritization of development rights and the welfare of property owners. By contrast, intangible heritage prioritizes cultural and neighbourhood identity, and the welfare of a diverse group touched by this value (such as low-income seniors, Chinese Canadian youth, and the benevolent societies). Understanding these differences in terms of relative prioritization (not an either/or) is important – the two policy goals aren’t mutually exclusive. As described earlier, the phase of neighbourhood planning motivated by economic revitalization still acknowledged the need for non-market housing and the importance of Chinatown’s cultural identity. Similarly, the work being carried out in support of preserving intangible heritage recognizes the importance of business activity as a component of Chinatown’s legacy. But this reprioritization can produce substantive material impact. The downzoning of HA-1/HA-1A that followed put a halt to residential redevelopment and

likely represented a reduction in land values of many millions of dollars. The reprioritization also resulted in a substantial resource commitment in terms of the planning program initiated to pursue UNESCO World Heritage Designation, a potentially five to eight-year process. So in terms of theoretical definitions, and material impact, the shift in policy priorities appears significant.

But when I asked whether these recent policy decisions represented a substantive, meaningful change, several people interviewed responded ambivalently, but for different reasons. Doris Chow of the YCC saw the broadening of heritage policy beyond buildings to include intangibles and the pursuit of the UNESCO Designation as a “shift in paradigm”, but that the mechanics – the people involved, the bureaucracy, the processes – were more of the same (D. Chow, Interview, December 21, 2020), though she did feel the resource commitment in terms of City staff time and budget of the Chinatown Transformation Team (CTT) signalled something more substantive. Sophie Fung of the CAG was concerned about whether UNESCO World Heritage Designation could protect people or just lead to a “Disneyfied” Chinatown, but felt that the shift away from “revitalization” was important and that the CTT had done a lot to connect to community. At the same time, Fung questioned how deep the policy change can really be in a system where the City can be sued by a developer (S. Fung, Interview, December 29, 2020), perhaps suggesting that in a capitalist system of land allocation that values private property rights above all, the scope of policy change will always be limited. While King-mong Chan of the CCG feels the resources and engagement of the CTT and the representation on the LSG are both positive signs, he is wary of what much of this change means for key questions of affordability and gentrification; he noted that in some places UNESCO’s designation had contributed to gentrification. For Chan, “time will tell” if the changes seen are enduring (K. Chan, Interview, January 18, 2021).

The reticence to judge the significance of the policy shift is a sensible response from the perspective of theories of policy change, which insist on at least a ten-year time frame for such assessments. But two interesting themes emerged from the answers given. The first was that the real test of change would be on how land is developed in Chinatown as a result of the new approach, which I discuss below. The second revolves around the nature of the new coalition, which I will treat in the next section.

With respect to land development, the debates about revitalization, community character, gentrification, cultural redress and reconciliation were paralleled by more concrete discussions of building heights and density, and the creation of community amenities such as amount of social housing, square footage of community spaces, and financial contributions to heritage building upgrades. Indeed, it was some of these 'secondary aspects' (Sabatier & Weible, 2007) upon which the larger, more weakly aligned coalitions were built. The "honourable compromise" of the HAHR was an experiment in how more intensive residential construction could deliver these community amenities and a generally revitalized neighbourhood without unduly impacting the cultural identity of Chinatown. This experiment was agreed to in the context of limited success securing senior government funding and a generally successful preservation of built heritage in Gastown through density transfers, a mechanism for leveraging private-sector investment. But the coalition of the early 2000s came apart once this model failed to deliver the expected amenities to the satisfaction of the community in Chinatown and instead was causing serious concerns about impacts to neighbourhood character and affordability. Similarly, the intergenerational coalition that defeated Beedie Living's proposal for 105 Keefer Street could not agree on amounts of social housing that should be required and how it should be paid for. Some were still looking to what could be feasibly extracted from developers, whereas others were advocating for 100% social housing built by the state. When the conventional, private sector-led model leveraging residential intensification failed to deliver, the potential of UNESCO World Heritage Designation to attract funding won out over full state-funding.

But whether the UNESCO Designation and the growth management plan that accompanies it can deliver is the test. Can it deliver the kind of built environment (buildings and infrastructure) that supports the diverse objectives of the larger coalition involved in the Legacy Stewardship Group? Will the building that is one day built at 105 Keefer Street be substantially different than what Beedie Living proposed? As an unfamiliar model to Vancouver, there is a tendency among opponents of UNESCO Designation to interpret it in familiar terms as another adaptive re-use heritage preservation policy that would "freeze" development like the early heritage zones of Chinatown were accused of doing. Depending on the policy core beliefs of the interpreter, this new approach based on 'intangible heritage' presents as yet another restriction on development rights, or a possible pathway for tourism-led gentrification (K.

Chan, Interview, January 18, 2021; F. Mah, Interview, January 7, 2021). So until the polysemy of the higher level policy idea is reified in an approved development project, only time will tell whether it represents a substantive shift in policy within the Chinatown planning/development subsystem.

6.3. Resourcing the New Coalition

The second theme that emerged from my question about the significance of the policy change in Chinatown was about the composition of the Legacy Stewardship Group (LSG), the community advisory body working with the Chinatown Transformation Team to implement the recommendations of the *Historic Discrimination Against Chinese People in Vancouver* Report (HDC). While one commented that the LSG membership was not substantially different than the Vancouver Chinatown Revitalization Committee (VCRC) (D. Chow, Interview, December 21, 2020), others felt the increased participation of youth groups and Chinese Seniors were an important aspect of the LSG. In terms of policy core beliefs, the representation on the LSG is objectively changed compared to the VCRC of the early 2000s, as shown in section 4.2.2 where roughly one third of the LSG was drawn from the newer elements of the intergenerational coalition (not including benevolent associations). Roughly a quarter are drawn from the sub-coalition organized around intangible heritage (more, if benevolent associations are included). The inclusion of the CCG low-income elders supported by CAG is an important change. It represents a strong formalization of the social justice sub-coalition, and given the provenance of this group in DTES political organizations, represents a successful redefinition of the boundaries of concern beyond Chinatown. Beyond the LSG's composition, the active partnership between UBC Initiative for Student Teaching and Research in Chinese Canadian Studies (INSTRCC) program led by Henry Yu and the Chinatown Transformation Team further shows how deeply the coalitional restructuring has been built into the policy program.

If the ACF is correct, then the composition of the LSG and partnership with UBC matter because they point to the formalization of a new set of policy core beliefs. The important question from here, then, is whether this coalitional restructuring can endure. This is crucial in distinguishing between Stone's "retail politics", limited to a short-term single policy decisions, and the long-term political work of establishing a "governing arrangement" which requires substantial resources (Stone, 2005). The preponderance of

the kind of pro-development regimes that Stone analyzed is due to the resources (and material interests) of the groups involved, which is in contrast to regimes dedicated to other purposes, such as progressive goals (environmental protection, heritage preservation, affordable housing) and support of low-income populations (Stone, 1993). The level of integration between the City of Vancouver and UBC, based on a Memorandum of Understanding between the two organizations, may even qualify as one of Stone's "arrangements" as it represents an ongoing commitment of resources, expertise, and political influence. While the scope of the relationship – primarily research support for pursuing the UNESCO designation – seems too constrained to be called a "regime", it suggests a durability beyond the rejection of a single development.

Like Urban Regime Theory, for ACF scholars the success of a coalition is also based on its supply of resources (Sabatier, 1988). In addition to finances, the ACF identifies a suite of "policy relevant resources" that include formal legal authority to make decisions, public opinion, information, "mobilizable troops" (Sabatier and Weible's term for a broader public that can be rallied behind an issue), and skillful leadership (Sabatier & Weible, 2007, pp. 201–203). A few of these resources were particularly important to the success of the coalitions that produced policy change in Chinatown. One was information, which was produced and utilized in acts of 'strategic positivism' by a number of the organizations to shape the narrative of the policy problem. Examples include the Vancouver Chinatown Food Security Report produced by the Hua Foundation, which tracked the disappearance of food assets in Chinatown and the annual Hotel and Housing Survey produced by the Carnegie Community Action Project (including King-mong Chan of the CCG), which tracked the loss of affordable housing in the DTES. Statistics from these reports were regularly at public open houses and in the media. The impact of "mobilizable troops" was in evidence from 2015 to 2018, where the intergenerational coalition to consistently outnumber pro-development voices at public demonstrations, petitions, written submissions to City Council, and open house speakers lists. Finally, the intergenerational coalition had an incredible depth of skillful leadership, which Sabatier and Weible connect to the work of policy entrepreneurs that can "create an attractive vision for a coalition, strategically use resources efficiently, and attract new resources to a coalition" (Sabatier & Weible, 2007, p. 203). Many of the policy entrepreneurs discussed above fall into this category, like Joe Wai, Fred Mah, and Henry Yu.

But the newer organizations primarily run by the younger generation also included a number of savvy individuals who contributed through skillful leadership. Where they may have lacked financial resources, these people made strategic use of resources and technology to shape the public discussion and “mobilize” many of the younger generation that became engaged in the debate. In addition to the reports mentioned above, these groups used social media, custom made webpages, and other technology to organize and disseminate their message. Two examples illustrate this capacity: first, Melody Ma, who ran the social media campaign #SaveChinatownYVR, developed the website at its heart by herself in one night (K. Huang, Interview, January 26, 2021). The second was the use of Slack, an online business communications and project management tool, to organize the diverse actors opposing the 105 Keefer proposal. Hua Foundation's Slack was used to organize numerous levels of tactical activity, from meal delivery to public hearing messaging that allowed the coalition to offer point-for-point responses to pro-development speakers; on the first day of the 105 Keefer Public hearing, 6000 messages passed through the group's Slack channel (K. Huang, Interview, January 26, 2021). These technologies were so important in the organization and amplification of the intergenerational coalition that I would add technical capacity to the list of resources proffered by Sabatier and Weible. This might make sense as a recent addition to coalition resources since it is closely tied to the deployment of digital tools and technologies that have emerged in the last decade. Social media and cheap website development allow for levels of message dissemination and information sharing that previously was only achievable through traditional media at great expense (and perhaps not even then). Collaboration tools like Slack similarly scale up the organizational capacity of a few people to allow for the mobilization of hundreds of individuals. Together, these tools and technologies allow for a very high degree of community and coalition building with minimal financial resources.

The success of the new coalition turned on the deployment of these resources. The durability of the new coalition into the future, then, depends on the extent to which this resource advantage can be maintained. Many of these resources are tied to the younger generation that became politically active in Chinatown starting around 2014 and 2015, although not all of them. Importantly, the culture-focused sub-coalition that saw intangible heritage and pursuit of UNESCO World Heritage Designation formalized in policy benefited greatly from the skilled leadership, volunteer time, and ‘mobilization’ of

individuals and organizations that have been active in Chinatown for decades. But much of the political energy that resulted in 105 Keefer's rejection by Council and the Development Permit Board came from the activity of this younger generation, including where that activity supported the critical and unprecedented level of involvement of low-income Chinese seniors. According to the ACF, the redistribution of resources upon which the fortunes of competing coalitions depend is primarily driven by external shocks including things like demographic change (Sabatier & Weible, 2007, p. 199). Thus, if the involvement of this constellation of younger individuals is tied to a demographic shift, not just the coincidental inspiration of some politically minded people under 40, then the growth of resources supporting the intergenerational coalition and its sub-coalitions will likely endure or even grow over time. To explore this shift, the analysis must move from the more politically contingent frameworks of the ACF and multiple streams to the macro-perspective of social and economic structural forces.

6.4. The new “New Middle Class” and Changing Politics in Chinatown

There was doubtless a notable shift in the political involvement of younger adults in Chinatown beginning around 2015. Several of the key organizations from the intergenerational coalition were all established relatively concurrently, such as the Hua Foundation in 2012, the Youth Collaborative for Chinatown (YCC) in 2015, Chinatown Today in 2015/2016, and Youth for Chinese Seniors in 2015 (becoming Yarrow Intergenerational Society in 2018). When these organizations and others engaged politically, they drew out large numbers of young supporters, such as Chinatown Concern Group petition and demonstration at City Hall in early 2015, the YCC “hot and noisy” nights throughout the summer of the same year, or the prodigious uptake of #SaveChinatownYVR on social media. The picture of this cohort that emerged in media was of well-educated people of Chinese descent, often 2nd or 3rd generation of immigrants from prior eras, or if not born here, with strong language skills and cultural literacy (“About – Chinatown Action 2017,” 2017; Azizi, 2017; Cheung, 2015; Duggan, 2017; F. Mah, Interview, January 7, 2021; H. Yu, Interview, February 17, 2021).

This description echoes other demographically driven political contests and change from Vancouver's history. Wing Chung Ng showed how a number of political struggles in Chinatown between 1954 and 1980 arose from “perennial conflicts between

the generations” about what it meant to be Chinese (Ng, 1999, p. 6). Katharyne Mitchell examined the political impacts of immigration in Vancouver’s Chinatown showing how enmities and alliances emerged between local Chinese Canadian groups and different waves of immigrants from Hong Kong (Mitchell, 2000). While both Ng and Mitchell found other principles of group division and alliance, such as age and immigration status, other class characteristics, such as wealth, education, social connections, and cultural acumen were present throughout their historic accounts. These class factors were more prominent in David Ley’s studies of Toronto, Vancouver and Montreal linking the gentrification of inner-city neighbourhoods to the rise of a new class of well-educated young professionals driven back to the city by more cosmopolitan consumer tastes. Drawing on Bourdieu, a high level of cultural capital among this class brought a focus on concerns with a particular definition of ‘livability’, thus class and demographic shift drove a reform politics of neighbourhood preservation. This group struggled for social and political dominance with the sitting elite, an urban regime that had been championing a development driven agenda in Canadian central cities for decades.

An analogous dynamic seemed to be at work in the neighbourhood development politics that have emerged in Chinatown roughly between 2013 and 2018. Specifically, that the politics associated with a wave of educated young people was placed in opposition to an existing politics of an economically focused regime of property owners and development interests. Where in a previous generation there was an impecunious disposition toward the arts and ‘livability’ coming out of the ‘joyous revelry’ of the politics of the 1960s, today’s non-economic sentiments are shaped by concerns with climate change, runaway global inequity, and growing attention to the oppressions of white supremacy and colonialism. Some of this cohort were people with cultural and other connections to Vancouver’s Chinatown, predominantly 2nd or 3rd generation Chinese Canadians, who coalesced around the fight to oppose Beedie’s development proposal for 105 Keefer Street. As described in the last section, this youth involvement in Chinatown politics represented an important redistribution of resources that were critical in the success of the intergenerational coalition. Thus, connecting the coalitional restructuring with a broader demographic shift is an important aspect of considering the durability of the policy shift that it produced. Making this connection could constitute a thesis in its own right, so here I will only provide an initial sketch of the demographic shift and how it translated into development politics in Chinatown. In this section, I offer some

evidence for the characterization of this youth who organized against 105 Keefer as a new “new middle class” and draw further on Bourdieu’s theories of group formation and his politics of language to explore how a macro-structural forces translated into Chinatown’s specific policy struggles. Finally, I will explore how a comparison with conditions and politics of a previous defining moment in Chinatown’s history, the freeway fight, link the work of this new generation with historical political patterns and a larger struggle against discrimination and colonial institutions.

For Bourdieu, a primary means of acquiring dominant cultural practices is the educational system, thus educational qualifications are a measure strongly correlated with cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1984, p. 13). Similarly, in his studies linking gentrification and reform politics, Ley found educational attainment and professional-managerial employment as the most suitable indicators of the emerging new middle class (Ley, 1994). Ng would add to this immigration status and period, separating out whether Chinese Canadians were 1st generation immigrants or *tusheng*, people born in Canada (i.e., 2nd or later generation). As such, educational attainment and immigration status are good starting points for tracking the emergence of this new cohort. Short of a comprehensive statistical analysis, high level general statistics do point to the growth of a young cohort of well-educated Chinese Canadians. I focus primarily on young adults given their importance to the 105 Keefer opposition as well as the historic conflicts studies by Ley and Ng. Ng’s in particular noted the impact of young, educated *tusheng* in the political contests over the Chinese Cultural Centre and the freeway resistance in Chinatown in the 1960s (Ng, 1999, p. p.112-118).

From 1996 to 2016 in Metro Vancouver, the people aged 25 to 44 who identified as ethnically Chinese rose from roughly 98,000 to 133,000, a 36% increase, much less than the 73% increase in the overall population of Chinese Canadians. However, the education level of this cohort did increase substantially, with the number of people with degrees at or above the bachelor level almost tripling in the same period from 28,000 to 75,000, of which over 15,000 hold Master’s degrees or doctorates. One notable change in types of post-secondary education over the time-period for this cohort was the rise in certifications in social and behavioural sciences and law, which rose proportionately from 9% to 15% of all post-secondary accreditations. That’s an increase in real terms from 4,900 people to 16,000 young people. This focus is more pronounced the younger the group, with 19% of those aged 20-24 pursuing social and behavioural sciences and law

compared to 17% of those aged 25-34 and 13% of those aged 35-44. The number and proportion of locally born Chinese Canadians (i.e., 2nd or 3rd generation), or *tusheng*, is also increasing. The number of people identifying as ethnically Chinese who were born in Canada rather than abroad has increased steadily, more than doubling in 20 years from 63,000 to 138,095. That's also a proportionate increase among Chinese Canadians, with *tusheng* making up 28% of all Chinese Canadians, up from 22% in 1996. This proportional increase is more pronounced among younger cohorts, with the statistics rising from 13% to 24% among those aged 25-44, representing nearly a tripling of this *tusheng* cohort from 12,720 to 32,405. This group for the most part are the children of people who immigrated here in very high numbers through 1980s and 1990s. The result is a localized 'echo-boom' of 2nd (and perhaps 3rd) generation Chinese Canadians which has entered the young adult cohorts in the last 15 years (Figure 4).

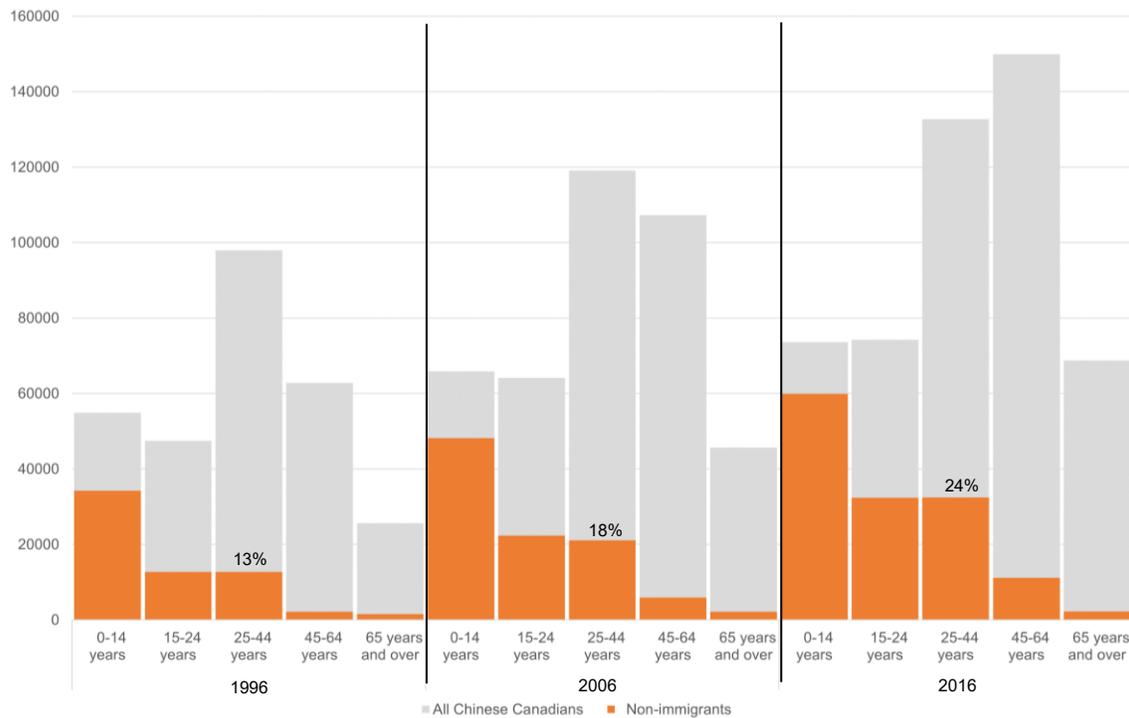


Figure 4: Chinese Canadians Non-Immigrants in Metro Vancouver: 1996, 2006, 2016

Source: Statistics Canada Census, 1996, 2006, 2016

Together, these statistics point to a growing cohort (both proportionally and in real terms) of young-adult Chinese Canadians who are increasingly well-educated and locally born. The point here is not to give a fulsome statistical account of the contours of this youth movement. It is rather to explain – at the structural level, the level of

population growth, and changes to important demographic characteristics –why so many youth-driven, civil-society and political organizations would independently emerge in Chinatown in the mid-2010s; and why their political engagements would be met by such a strong mobilization of university students to the demonstrations against the 105 Keefer development proposal. Similarly, highlighting the growth in social and behavioural sciences and law degrees does not lead in a direct, causal chain to a youth movement concerned with social justice. But these statistical traces of growth in particular kind of cultural capital indicate there may be a different set of shared dispositions, a *habitus*, growing among some locally born Chinese Canadian youth.

For Bourdieu, *habitus* is a crucial ingredient for the formation of groups, though not in a simple, deterministic way. These measurable population characteristics explain the “probability of individuals constituting themselves as practical groups, in families..., clubs, associations, and even trade-union or political ‘movements’ (Bourdieu, 1985, p. 725). The constitution of a practical group out of a probability is a political action, the “political labour of representation” in which new visions of the world and its social divisions, i.e., groups, are enunciated. These representations enable “agents to discover within themselves common properties that lie beyond the diversity of particular situations which isolate, divide and demobilize, and to construct their social identity” (Bourdieu, 1993, p. 130). They are “performative utterances” in which not only is the political vision collectively articulated, but it is enacted practically as the individuals mobilizing for the articulation become a group, a collective will (Bourdieu, 1993, p. 128). In other words, through larger structural changes (demographic shifts, rising educational attainment, immigration) a cohort may emerge with similar tendencies based on some shared characteristics, and through political activity, through assertions about how the world should be, becomes a real and distinct group within society.

Ng’s history of generational struggle over Chinese cultural identity in Vancouver provides a series of examples of this dynamic. Similarly, in the mid 2010s, a series of representations and assertions about the meaning and future of Vancouver’s Chinatown was being put forward by young Chinese Canadians. Some of these assertions are embedded in the formation and work of the key non-profit organizations at the heart of the intergenerational coalition. But these groups also acted as meeting points for young people who were looking to be politically engaged, and who began to find affinity with others working on different topics, like heritage preservation, or anti-gentrification (S.

Fung, Interview, December 29, 2020). By 2015, these representations and assertions were being uttered and shared more frequently, more explicitly, and with a growing number of people. This took place in a number of organized and explicitly political ways, like the petition and City Hall demonstration organized by the CCG in the spring of 2015, the “Hot and Noisy Nights” organized by the YYC throughout the summer, the “Alternative Open houses” jointly organized by these groups in the fall of 2015, or the *People’s Vision* developed through the community work of the CCG and the CAG. But there were other important modes for these political representations, such as op-eds to local publications like Melissa Fong’s 2014 *Georgia Straight* article “What are we going to do about Vancouver’s Chinatown?” (Fong, 2014) or the 2014 documentary “Everything will be...” by Julie Kwan, which explored development, change and loss in Vancouver’s Chinatown. Screenings for the film provided more opportunities for the cohort to self-represent, as they discussed and debated the issues raised, and expressed support for the kind of politics emerging in Chinatown at the time. In 2015, when Doris Chow of YCC participated in a panel following the screening of the film, she noted examples of the growing political energy among Chinese Canadian youth. After promoting the first “Hot and Noisy Summer Nights” event, audience members asked that it become a weekly event. One participant explained that they wanted to be involved, but had no idea where to go (D. Chow, Interview, December 21, 2020). The public expression of this energy continued through the summer in the margins of the “Hot and Noisy” events, where people from different groups “started coming out of the woodwork”, either forming at the time, or connecting with existing groups. The conversations at these events may have occurred behind close doors previously, but as the YCC events drew in a broader audience, the conversations became more public. As Chow explained, people “saw a place where they could be engaged” (D. Chow, Interview, December 21, 2020). Through attending these and other events, people continued to encounter each other, learning about where they had common cause (S. Fung, Interview, December 29, 2020). As the public open houses for the 105 Keefer proposal approached in the fall of 2015, the work of political representation gained focus through the strategizing sessions of the core groups of the intergenerational coalition and drew an increasingly broad group of adherents over the two years that followed through media attention and the success of social media campaigns such as #SaveChinatownYVR. The apogee of self-representation came in 2017 during the Council public hearings and the media profiles that followed, where the politics were fully articulated and the cohort of young, locally-

born, Chinese Canadians consistently characterized. It was through these diverse activities that a distinct group, coalescing around a vision of Chinatown based on a politics of cultural redress and social justice, formed out of socio-demographic change (and the fluctuating social probabilities Bourdieu associated with it).

The “performative utterances” through which a group puts forth a political vision do more than help to constitute the group, they are also the acts by which a group produces and imposes meaning in the social world, through establishing new categories, new modes, of legitimate perception (Bourdieu, 1985, pp. 729–730). Bourdieu’s agonistic account of the social field is similar to the coalitional struggle at the centre of the ACF, where the goal is to see their values embedded in policy. But in Bourdieu’s account the stakes run deeper, because when a new set of categories are internalized, embodied practically, first in a group and then in the larger society, they become the basis of a new “common sense”, a new principle of legitimacy. In practice, this means that for an idea (or a policy) to appear legitimate, it must be made using the categories and definitions of the politically dominant group in the field. When a new group gains political clout, so does a new perceptual schema, a new vision and set of categories for making sense of the world. This also means that what shows up as being legitimate (good, effective, worth doing) can change. The legitimacy of the new categories stems from the legitimacy of the group, but it also works in reverse: as a new set of definitions become common sense, the legitimacy of the group that best exemplifies the definitions (often subtly, through the diverse dispositions that make up the habitus) grows in parallel (Bourdieu, 1985, p. 731). Through this mutual legitimation, the categories of meaning are not only the key stakes of the struggle over political representation, they are also the “trump cards” (or “weapons”) in the struggle as they settle in as a more broadly held common sense (Bourdieu, 1984, p. 235, 1985, p. 734). Thus the symbolic capital that comes from alignment with these categories could be listed as another resource supporting coalitional success. It follows, then, that the more completely these categories are taken up in the general society, the more durable will be the position of the coalition from which they emerged.

While the focus of this study is on changes to policy, there is some evidence that the principle of legitimacy had changed over the period of interest. To begin with there was the shift in policy language described in Chapter 4 from a priority concern with economic revitalization, to a concern with social justice and a broad definition of culture.

At a deeper level, the term “revitalization” lost all legitimacy and had become “passé” and developed a “bad connotation” that the City deliberately moved away from in the work of the Chinatown Transformation Team (H. Ma, Interview, December 23, 2020; S. Fung, Interview, December 29, 2020). That is to say, the meaning or “revitalization” had changed. Helen Ma, in explaining the political effectiveness of the younger generation, explained that it was their ability to “articulate issues in terms of social justice and cultural redress”. This statement from Ma points to the functioning of these ideas at the deeper semantic level of a principle of legitimacy in a couple of ways. First, she did not need to explain why the ability to articulate the policy debate in these terms was effective. It was just assumed by her (and me, the interviewer), that the categories of social justice and cultural redress were good, powerful arguments. Secondly, these ideas were not new to the debate in 2015; people like Ivan Drury, Jean Swanson, and Syd Tan had articulated their critique of the HAHR upzoning in very similar terms in 2011 discussing gentrification, displacement, language rights, and living heritage (“Historic Area Height Review: Vancouver City Council Public Hearing - April 5, 2011,” n.d.). So what changed from 2011 to 2017 was not the presence of those arguments, but their perceived legitimacy by decision makers.

As explored in Chapter 4, part of this change in legitimacy came from the delegitimization of the revitalization and residential intensification strategy of the earlier set of policies, but the growing legitimacy of the policies that replaced it was influenced by the work of the intergenerational coalition aided by the broader policy context of reconciliation. In terms of Kingdon’s theory of policy change discussed above, these factors were treated as a contingent confluence of the independent political and policy streams. Bourdieu’s theories of group-making and legitimacy allow an interpretation that links the policy context of decolonization and reconciliation more causally with the emergence of the youth groups in Chinatown, as each supported the growing legitimacy of the other. As the political clout of the youth active in Chinatown grew, the legitimacy of their political message did as well. It could even be argued that since the youth groups emerged out of a socio-demographic shift, that its political impacts are not likely to be constrained to Vancouver’s Chinatown. For example, the proportional and real growth in the cohort of young, educated, locally-born Chinese in Vancouver that supported a new vision for Chinatown could be mirrored by demographic change at a larger scale (provincially, nationally), which may well be linked to the emergence of the broader

policy topic of decolonization and reconciliation. In other words, the growing focus on decolonization and reconciliation in provincial and national policy might partially stem from a broader socio-demographic shift (e.g., the growth of a non-white middle class) of which the locally-born, Chinese middle-class is a localized example. As such, this would explain the alignment of dispositions that results in the way this diverse group quite consistently takes on the politics of reconciliation through, for example, Indigenous land acknowledgements on websites and during public hearings. This is not meant in the superficial sense of “virtue-signalling”, but in Bourdieu’s sense of the embodiment and practice of dispositions that are the implicit work of legitimation done in parallel with the explicit work of political representation.

These complex dynamics and their effects can be illustrated by comparing the struggle around the 105 Keefer development proposal with its closest historic analogue, the freeway debate of the 1960s. There are broad similarities between the two events: development forces threatened Chinatown but were resisted by the Chinese Canadian community, particularly by the work of a cohort of educated young adults (Cheung, 2015; Gold, 2017). In general, the young cohort of the 1960s (whose influence would continue into the 1970s during the establishment and growth of the Chinese Cultural Centre) were university-educated *tusheng* (Mitchell, 2000; Ng, 1999). The Strathcona Property Owner’s Association (SPOTA) that formed to resist the freeway was, like the intergenerational coalition of the 2010s, a multi-generational, grassroots organization (Ng, 1999, pp. 101–109). But the two events also have a critical difference: in contrast to the struggle against 105 Keefer, the success of the freeway fight turned on the involvement of non-Chinese young professionals embroiled in a larger ideological battle against a pro-development municipal government (Ng, 1999, p. 99). Made up of professors, architects, and students from the University of British Columbia, this cohort are Ley’s overwhelmingly White new middle class, relocating to inner-city neighbourhoods in Vancouver’s west-side, coalescing around a politics of neighbourhood preservation (Anderson, 2014; Mitchell, 2000; Ng, 1999). For this group, Chinatown would by the late 1960s become a “liberal cause celebre” (Anderson, 2014, p. 205), likely buoyed by the new national policy (and ethos) of Trudeau’s multiculturalism (Ng, 1999, p. 134,135). Ng asserts that before their involvement, “Chinatown had been virtually powerless in this struggle” (Ng, 1999, p. 99). To be sure,

the work of SPOTA and Chinatown's diverse organizations was also crucial to the success – but only in alliance with this powerful new political force in Vancouver.

With the importance of this politically and culturally dominant group in mind, the history of the heritage discussion in Chinatown becomes relevant to understanding the durability of the contemporary policy changes under scrutiny. While the neighbourhood preservation politics of this cohort helped protect Chinatown from redevelopment, by 1974/75 it had introduced the HA-1 and HA-1A zones that were derided by much of the Chinatown community for freezing development (Mitchell, 2000, p. 12). This notion of heritage focused on the preservation of buildings (called 'adaptive reuse') is something Vancouver has become known for owing to successes in neighbouring historic districts of Gastown and Yaletown (H. Yu, Interview, February 17, 2021). It is also consistent with the neighbourhood preservation and aesthetic lifestyle concerns with Ley's middle class. As previously referenced, Joe Wai, representing the Chinatown Historic Area Planning Committee, was critiquing this preservationist view of heritage as early as 1993 in a formal letter to Council. Around that time, the heritage zones were being framed as "racism in reverse" and identified as part of the colonial attitude of City Hall (Mitchell, 2000, p. 14). It wouldn't be for another 20 years that Wai's understanding of heritage would find new articulation as intangible heritage and the support of a demographic shift and newly emergent political class who were replacing a commodified multiculturalism with a concern for decolonization and cultural redress. While the full story of this change is no doubt more than a mechanistic product of demographics, the force of the raw numbers matter. The number of people of identifying as being from Chinese ethno-racial group in Metro Vancouver grew from a little over 35,000 in 1971 to nearly half a million in 2016. For those among them aged 25-34, rates of university degrees (bachelor's level and above) rose from 12.3% in 1971 to nearly 60% in 2016. These staggering differences in demographics and amount of cultural capital suggest why the policy changes protecting Chinatown in 2017/18 were less dependent on external alliances than those that took place in the late 1960s.

Making the connection from socio-demographics to politically active groups provides insight into the durability of the political and policy shift in Chinatown. For one, it suggests that the political energy behind the shift is not limited to the collection of individuals that have been highlighted in this study. As the statistics in Figure 4 suggest, the several dozen that staff the youth-driven non-profits, or the many hundred

“mobilized” at alternative open houses and City Hall public hearings are drawn from a substantial cohort of many thousands (even tens of thousands) of locally-born, Chinese Canadian youth. Like Ley’s new middle class, growing levels of cultural capital (tracked by education levels) indicate growing clout in the social and political field, positioning this group in opposition to incumbent classes dominating politics. The point is here not to put too fine a point on particular statistics; for example, whether a Chinese Canadian is born in Canada or abroad might be less important than whether or not they lived here long enough to build up a certain amount of cultural literacy or experience negotiating a backdrop of white supremacy. But following Bourdieu, the assertion is that on the basis of shared characteristics and life circumstances, the people from this cohort are disposed, through their habitus, toward a range of similar political stances; they were increasingly mobilized toward particular positions through the labour of political representation through which a shared vision of the world and their existence as a group was consolidated and legitimized. Seeing this demographic shift in ACF terms as an external shock to the policy sub-system, it substantially shifted the balance of resources to favour the politics of the intergenerational coalition. And since this cohort of locally-born Chinese Canadians can be expected to grow as people in their teenage years enter university and become politically active, this resource redistribution is unlikely to reverse, and may even continue to grow. Further, the policy change that this group supported in Chinatown had resonance with an emerging national level discourse of decolonization and reconciliation. The weak assertion would call this a fortuitous, historically contingent alignment. The stronger assertion is that this multi-level alignment of politics is potentially connected by the same demographic events, i.e., the growth and capitalization of populations in Canada that have endured forms of oppression related to the white supremacy and colonial legacy of the state. In either case, this alignment may further contribute to the durability of the recent developments in coalitional politics and policy in Chinatown by bolstering their social and moral legitimacy.

These demographic changes provide some evidence of durability for the policy shift, but they do not guarantee it. As Bourdieu explains about the political struggle over representation, “the shift from the implicit to the explicit is in no way automatic: the same experience of the social may be uttered in very different expressions” (Bourdieu, 1985, p. 730). That is to say, shared characteristics may dispose individuals of a cohort to a somewhat common set of political opinions (among other tastes), but they can coalesce

into a group under many different political representations. This was born out to some degree by the split of the intergenerational coalition after the rejection of the 105 Keefer proposal, each promoting different visions of Chinatown and descriptions of the social field (one emphasizing economic class division, the other race and culture). Another danger to the durability (and meaning) of the policy changes comes from one of the characteristics that helped make intangible heritage and UNESCO World Heritage Designation such a forceful coalition magnet: polysemy. Again, Bourdieu:

The words of the political lexicon are stakes in struggle that bear polemic within themselves in the form of the *polysemy* that is the trace of the antagonistic uses that different groups make or have made of them. One of the most universal strategies of the professional manipulators of symbolic power – poets in archaic societies, prophets, politicians – thus consists in putting *common sense* on their side by appropriating the words that are invested with value by the whole group because they are the repositories of its belief. (Bourdieu, 1985, pp. 743; italics in original)

Bourdieu is warning that when a group has successfully seen their categories of meaning legitimized more broadly in society, i.e., become accepted as common sense, there is a risk of it being co-opted by antagonistic positions. This struggle produces and is possible because of the diverse meanings of these categories, in other words, their polysemy. A relevant example is how the word ‘diversity’ came to be employed in 2012 by politicians like Vancouver Councillor Kerry Jang and B.C. Housing Minister Rich Coleman to reframe policies and investments accused of gentrifying Vancouver’s Downtown Eastside (The Canadian Press, 2012). As such, the meaning of ‘intangible heritage’ and the content of management plan developed as part of pursuing UNESCO World Heritage Designation will likely be an ongoing site of struggle.

Chapter 7.

Conclusion

In November 2017, the City of Vancouver's Development Permit Board rejected the development application of Beedie Living Group for a condo building at 105 Keefer Street, in the heart of the historic Chinatown neighbourhood. The decision was an unusual use of the Permit Board's powers especially since the project, after several years of failed attempts at rezoning, had been scaled down to meet the parameters of existing zoning. Some commentators called the decision a precedent setting moment (either of progressive planning, social justice politics, or bureaucratic overreach), others that the Permit Board had merely succumbed to political pressure from the youth-led community back-lash elicited by the project. But a comparison of planning initiatives and policy decisions surrounding the 105 Keefer application indicate a shift in policy from an agenda focused economic revitalization and residential development to a concern with preserving "living heritage". The research question guiding this thesis was whether the decision to reject 105 Keefer was a short-lived response to what Clarence Stone called "retail politics", or was it part of a more substantive and enduring shift in the policy approach to development in Chinatown?

To answer this question, I used a conceptual framework linking the field of policy studies, literature on the social-structural changes driving class-conflict, and histories of development and political struggle in and around Vancouver's Chinatown. Research and analysis was primarily organized around a policy studies framework developed by Howlett, McConnell and Perl that integrated three influential lenses of policy change: Laswell's staged policy cycle; Kingdon's Multiple Streams Framework; and the Advocacy Coalition Framework (ACF) developed by Sabatier and Jenkins-Smith. The work of Ley and Bourdieu in exploring the sociological and geographical mechanisms that bridge macro-structural conditions to group formation and political struggle. These theoretical perspectives were grounded in local conditions by the historical work of Anderson, Ng and Mitchell which showed how Chinatown's development was simultaneously shaped by a societal context of colonialism and white supremacy and the generational and class struggles of successive waves of Chinese immigrants and their locally born off-spring.

My research focused on the rich archive of documents –plans, policies, reports, public hearings, webpages, blogs, and media publications – produced during a roughly 20-year period of planning and policy work beginning in the year 2000. This archive was analyzed using an inductive coding scheme to identify common policy positions and the rationale that supported them. NVivo network analysis tools were used to identify and track connections between individuals and organizations actively attached to these policy positions. Findings from the document analysis were validated and enriched by eight semi-structured interviews with key informants who were from politically active groups in Chinatown or who were otherwise involved in the policy-changes observed over the period of study.

From 2000 to 2019, there was a shift in policy language guiding development in Chinatown from an early stage, roughly 2000 to 2011, focusing on economic revitalization and built heritage conservation through redevelopment, to a later stage, 2017 and later, where that economic logic embedded in policy has been supplanted by a concern with intangible heritage, gentrification, and senior’s housing. Over the period there was a parallel development in the composition of political coalitions active in Chinatown. In the early stage, neighbourhood politics were dominated by a relatively well-aligned coalition of key business, property owners, societies cultural institutions who found a shared purpose in redevelopment and heritage preservation. By 2015, development projects resulting from the policies of economic revitalization residential intensification had been deemed a failure by many, leading to the erosion of that early coalition. Beginning around 2014/2015, a new set of actors had entered Chinatown’s political field, generally characterized as young, educated, Chinese Canadians, often with personal connections to the historic neighbourhood. Working with resident Chinese seniors and merging with the heritage and cultural component of the previous coalition, a new intergenerational coalition emerged to advocating for social justice and a definition of heritage preservation expanded beyond architectural aesthetics to include living, intangible heritage.

From 2015 to 2018, the activity surrounding three parallel processes – the 105 Keefer application, the HA-1/HA-1A zoning review, and the Historic Discrimination Against Chinese People in Vancouver initiative (HDC) – brought relatively independent politics, problem, and policies streams in close contact. During the public hearings for these processes, the intergenerational coalition reframed the problems faced by

Chinatown away from a concern for an enervated business climate to the social and cultural impacts of unchecked development, gentrification, and the larger issues of social justice and cultural redress. So when the rejection of the 105 Keefer development application finally came it cascaded upward through the nested policies that enabled it, including the 2011 zoning changes that came out of the HAHR, and the strategy of economic revitalization through residential densification at the core of planning work from the early 2000s. This holistic policy rejection opened a window of opportunity, a return to agenda-setting, when a new approach might be established. In an act of policy entrepreneurship, Henry Yu and Fred Mah supported by the cultural heritage sub-coalition were able to 'couple' distinct political, problem, and policy streams in that window, offering the concept of 'intangible heritage' and UNESCO World Heritage Designation as policy solutions for managing growth in Chinatown. In 2018, with endorsement of the HDC report and its recommendations, pursuit of UNESCO World Heritage Designation and use of associated growth management frameworks became the foundation for a major new neighbourhood planning initiative. This includes long-term commitments of staff resourcing by the City of Vancouver, and the establishment of a new community advisory committee, the Legacy Stewardship Group.

To be sure, the successful formalization of 'intangible heritage' and UNESCO World Heritage Designation in policy comes about from the strength of the heritage sub-coalition. But the strength of this coalition, in terms of breadth and diversity of adherents, was aided by the polysemy of the policy solutions offered, which allowed them to respond to concerns of the diverse actors in the field. This polysemy also meant that the policy solutions, framed within the HDC, could connect with the larger policy context of reconciliation and decolonization.

This polysemy makes it difficult to answer the research question of whether this policy change is substantive. According to the ACF, a policy change is substantive when it represents a change at the level of the 'policy core': as overarching policy goals economic revitalization and intangible heritage preservation would seem to qualify as seem to represent different fundamental normative precepts. Yet until a new 105 Keefer tests the policy solutions, resolves their polysemy into a concrete change in the neighbourhood, it is difficult to assess how substantive this policy shift really is.

How the policy gets interpreted overtime will depend on the strength and longevity of the coalition that sponsored it. Like the new middle class that brought in the reform politics of the 1960s and 1970s in Vancouver, there is reason to think this youth-supported coalition and the policy concerns it represents are driven by a demographic shift that saw a rapid growth in the proportional and total numbers of young, educated, locally-born Chinese Canadians. Understood through the ACF, this cohort was the 'external shock' that reconfigured the coalitional field; in terms of the Multiple Streams Framework, it as the political stream that turned 105 Keefer's rejection into a window of opportunity for policy change. But drawing on Bourdieu and Ley, this cohort can't simply be seen as an exogenous force, or a contingent historical event. Through the positional logic of the social field, this cohort's high cultural capital placed it in opposition the economically interested and endowed group that had been prioritizing densification and economic revitalization. Through the working of the *habitus*, the politics of this cohort are connected to changes in the larger political context, such as concerns with social justice, decolonization, and reconciliation. As the data indicates this demographic will continue to grow, it is expected that the coalitional politics it supports will continue to thrive.

Amidst this story of policy change, the importance of the rejection of 105 Keefer can be fully understood. The rejection of 105 Keefer was not a policy decision – it was the ejection of a policy that opened a window of opportunity. But it the struggle against 105 Keefer was a 'focusing event' bringing together the latent political strength of this growing cohort of young, educated, *tusheng*. Once mobilized against 105 Keefer, this cohort was engaged in an activity of group-making, involving the political labour of representing a new vision of the world, new categories of understanding the social field and its values. So in addition to being a political catalyst, the open houses, media, and public hearings of 105 Keefer and the other parallel processes were a forum for establishing a new principle of legitimacy. This was the problem reframing that would replace economic activity with social justice and cultural redress as a new *common sense* judgement of what's a good policy. It was on the basis of these new principles of legitimacy that the "time had come" for intangible heritage, an idea that had been present in the community for at least 30 years.

Through the recursive effect of symbolic capital acting as both stakes and prize in the political struggle, the coalition's position is strengthened through the reformation of the categories of meaning. But Bourdieu warns that these principles can always be

reinterpreted, so their final meaning, along with those of intangible heritage and UNESCO World Designation will always be a product of political struggle. Thus while 105 Keefer remains an undeveloped parking lot, the meaning of those terms remains an open question. While this openness can be seen as a weakness, it's also an opportunity to maintain momentum for bigger policy change. Henry Yu said something similar when he explained the political value of 105 Keefer as the site of an unfinished struggle for meaning:

The greatest thing about fighting over an empty parking lot, is you get to keep fighting over it as long as its empty. You can keep people together around what might happen to that empty parking lot. As soon as you put something in that empty parking lot, there is no future (H. Yu, Interview, February 17, 2021).

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