

Overview

- Why is there a fight over a parking lot in Chinatown?
- What are Chinatowns anyway?
- Heritage Values, from tangible to intangible character
- UNESCO proposal for Chinatown?
- What we can learn from around the world for Vancouver's Chinatown?
- History and Cultural heritage—Why is eating so important?

REZONING APPLICATION

更改土地用途申請

105 Keefer Street and 544 Columbia Street
奇花街105號和哥倫比亞街544號

DETAILS: REVISED APRIL 2016

內容: 在2016年4月更改

To rezone and develop the site for a mixed-use building that includes:

- 119 market residential units
- 25 seniors social housing units
- commercial uses on the ground floor, including a seniors' cultural space

更改土地用途和發展建設。建議書裡的混合用途大樓將會包括:

- 119間市場房屋
- 25間非牟利慈善機構經營的長者社會房屋
- 一樓用於商業用途, 包括長者文化空間

APPLICANT: Merrick Architecture
839 Columbia Street #300
Vancouver, BC



PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT 建議大樓



LOCATION 地點

What's happening: 現狀:

Revised Rezoning application submitted in April 2016

修改更改土地用途申請 2016年4月提交

Application review by City staff
溫市專員正評論中

Open House: 開放日

Chinese Cultural Centre Auditorium
50 East Pender Street
5 - 8 pm, May 16, 2016
華人文化中心大禮堂, 片打東街 50號
2016年5月16日·下午5時到晚上8時

Further application review 進一步評論

Public Hearing: 公開聽證會

Information to come
未來信息

Decision by Council 市政會的決定

更多消息: For more information:
網頁: vancouver.ca/105keefer
電話: or phone 3-1-1





Why Fight Over an Empty Parking Lot?



What keeps stopping the attempts by Beadie to rezone, and on October 31, 2017, a straightforward Development Permit application?



What was so upsetting to people who were anti-105 Keefer?



Was it the “height”? The “size”? The “context”?
Was it the “design”? The “program”?

NI HAO



188 Keefer at a Glance

- 134 condominium homes
- 22 rental suites targeted for senior citizens
- Make your home in historic Chinatown
- 17 storeys of city views
- Designed by award-winning W.T. Leung Architects
- High-end appliances
- Super-efficient floor plans
- Over 4,000 square feet of amenities
- Starting from \$239,900

“A Boutique Chinatown
Development by
Westbank”

188 Keefer Vancouver condos will offer high-end living in one of Vancouver's most dynamically transforming real estate districts. Located at 188 Keefer St. (Main and Keefer), the development will be a burst of new life on the site of a former casino.



What keeps stopping Beedie's proposals? History? Nostalgia?

What is a Chinatown? Why so many gates?

- Mosaic of 40 Chinatown gates from around the globe
- Most were built between the 1980s and the present
- Buenos Aires, Havana, Mexico City, Los Angeles, Melbourne, Washington DC, Seattle, Ottawa, Edmonton, Montreal (4), Perth, Adelaide, Bangkok, Jakarta, Kolkata, Cholon (Saigon), Kobe, Liverpool, Lima, Nagasaki, Yokohama, Kyoto, Manila, Sydney, Boston, Portland, Philadelphia, San Francisco, Bendigo, Mississauga, Victoria, and...

Chinatown Gates



Edmonton


愛蒙頓

Canada 



Ottawa

渥太華

Canada 



Mississauga


密西沙加

Canada 



Victoria

維多利亞

Canada 

Issued: May 1, 2013



- rehabilitation/revitalization/urban renewal
- sister cities in China
- local tourism and business development organizations
- municipal governments partnering with local merchants, usually ethnic Chinese
- aspirations for trade with China and Chinese tourism

-sometimes, but usually not, local heritage societies/associations (non-Chinese) also involved

-in Australia, United States, Canada, and New Zealand, often the majority of interested stakeholders are not ethnic Chinese

Saving Chinatown?

Why so many Gates?



a story that creates a *desire* for an object or place through invoking a feeling of displacement in time

Nostalgia

Affect (“emotions given meaning”) and the Making of Place

“This place reminds me of...”

“When I’m here, it makes me think about my grandmother...”

“The smells and sounds bring me back to my childhood...”

the politics of affect/emotion seems to be a relatively minor factor in how we should plan a neighbourhood

and yet feelings are the most powerful part of the politics of place-making

Lots of things are old...

But not all old things are the objects of “nostalgia” or of “heritage” or “history”

Almost any place that has been inhabited has held meanings for a set of people

What is a *non-insignificant* period of time?

When does a place have “history”? When does it become “old”? When and how does it acquire “heritage”?

What has historical value? What gives something from the past meaning in the present?

Why was 105 Keefer about the future of an empty lot?

Superficial references to China or to “Chinese culture” or “tradition”



A new condo building under construction is reflected in a sign with Chinese characters in Chinatown in Vancouver, B.C., on Thursday January 15, 2015. (Darryl Dyck for the Globe and Mail)

One of the fundamental misapprehensions of Chinatowns is that they are “...a little bit of China”



Cantonese, Hokkien, Teochiu, Hakka migrants — but are they Chinese?

What is 唐人街? What is a Chinatown?

Chinatown

Local Nodes of Global Migration Networks

“Chinatown” as localized expressions of broader migration processes and encounters between peoples

clustered nodes for dispersed networks

institutions (family associations, merchant associations) and businesses

catering to both Chinese and *non-Chinese*

“Chinese restaurant cuisine” as best example/illustration of mix (BBQ Duck salad, milk tea, egg tarts, coconut buns and of course—*chop suey* and *fortune cookies*)

Heritage

- Tangible vs Intangible
- **Tangible?** Buildings, architectural details, the objects and the forms
- **Intangible?** What goes on in a building, on the streets, the ephemeral such as the food, the smells, the sounds —the people, the sense of community, ***the feelings***

Hong Kong

Feelings and the politics of nostalgia



What was voted as “All Things Hong Kong”? Not buildings but everyday objects that had *meaning to people*...

Is it the building
or the life in the
building?



Intangible character

- ways of life obliterated by new “modern” buildings
- fine grain structure of everyday streetlife
- popular culture as medium of story telling



Hong Kong Heritage gets tied to:

1. food
2. unique culture
3. streetlife

Hong Kong and Heritage: From constant construction and destruction to intense desire to not lose signature culture:

“ALL THINGS HONG KONG”



What can we learn from UNESCO? World Heritage Site 2008

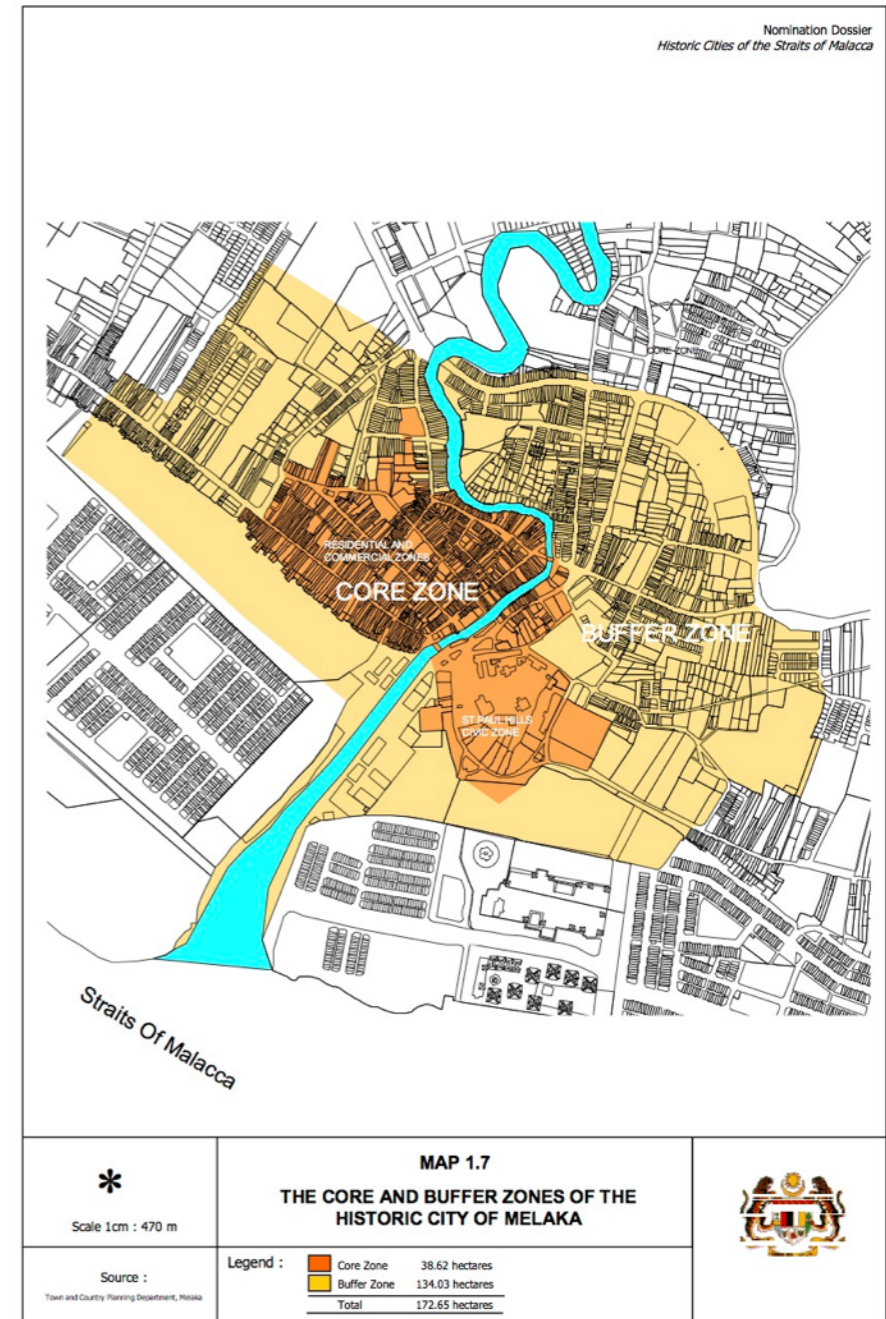
Nomination Dossier
Historic Cities of the Straits of Malacca



Malacca (Melaka) and Penang (Georgetown)

Outstanding Universal Value

Melaka and George Town, Malaysia, are remarkable examples of historic colonial towns on the Straits of Malacca that demonstrate a succession of historical and cultural influences arising from their former function as trading ports linking East and West. These are the most complete surviving historic city centres on the Straits of Malacca with a multi-cultural living heritage originating from the trade routes from Great Britain and Europe through the Middle East, the Indian subcontinent and the Malay Archipelago to China. Both towns bear testimony to a living multi-cultural heritage and tradition of Asia, where the many religions and cultures met and coexisted. They reflect the coming together of cultural elements from the Malay Archipelago, India and China with those of Europe, to create a unique architecture, culture and townscape.





Malacca and Penang as
illustration of Street Life and
Street Food

Malacca: From ghost town to
3.76 million visitors a year in
2009

Penang had 5.96 million visitors

Food and Heritage

- Penang laksa
- Georgetown White Coffee
- Singapore Heritage Brands
- Maxwell Food (Hawker) Centre in Singapore anchors “Chinatown”
- Anchoring a sense of place with food and a feeling of unique belonging

GEORGETOWN
WHITE COFFEE
The Heritage of Penang





... *Vancouver*

What should we do?

What does saying “sorry” have to do with saving Chinatown?

The City of Vancouver’s Historic Apology for Anti-Chinese Legislation and Discrimination

(Voted by Council on October 30, 2017,
planned for April 2018)

Following the Historic Apology of BC in 2014 and of Canada in 2006

Conserve, Commemorate & Enhance Living Heritage and Cultural Assets
This priority will focus primarily on Chinatown, particularly in the conserving, commemorating and enhancing of the living heritage and cultural assets of the neighbourhood, with the following key actions:

C1. Initiate a process towards a UNESCO designation of World Heritage Site for Chinatown

- COV “Historical Discrimination Against Chinese” Advisory Group Final Recommendations, 2017 (Priority Action C)

UNESCO Criterion

Criterion iv:

Vancouver Chinatown reflects the history of the Chinese who helped build Canada, especially the CPR. It reflects the significant role played by Chinese in the development of British Columbia, during the late 19th and early 20th centuries, and the continuing links between the Chinese community in BC/Canada and the Chinese communities in China, Hong Kong, Southeast Asia and other places around the world.

Key Points to Consider

- **1. Heritage is good for the economy**—Malaysia’s national tourism visits before and after UNESCO designation for Penang and Malacca went from 10 million to 24 million
- **2. Heritage conservation management is a form of managed development**--Financially viable, sustainable if *managed*--cultural tourism is economic opportunity but also potentially a threat as great as speculative condo development for inflating property values if *unmanaged*
- **3. City of Vancouver Apology in April 2018 (and Provincial Government apology in 2014) provide the moral context**—The impetus for next 8 months of collective action is **reconciliation** and **redress** for **urban displacement** and **racism**—parallel to **Hogan’s Alley**

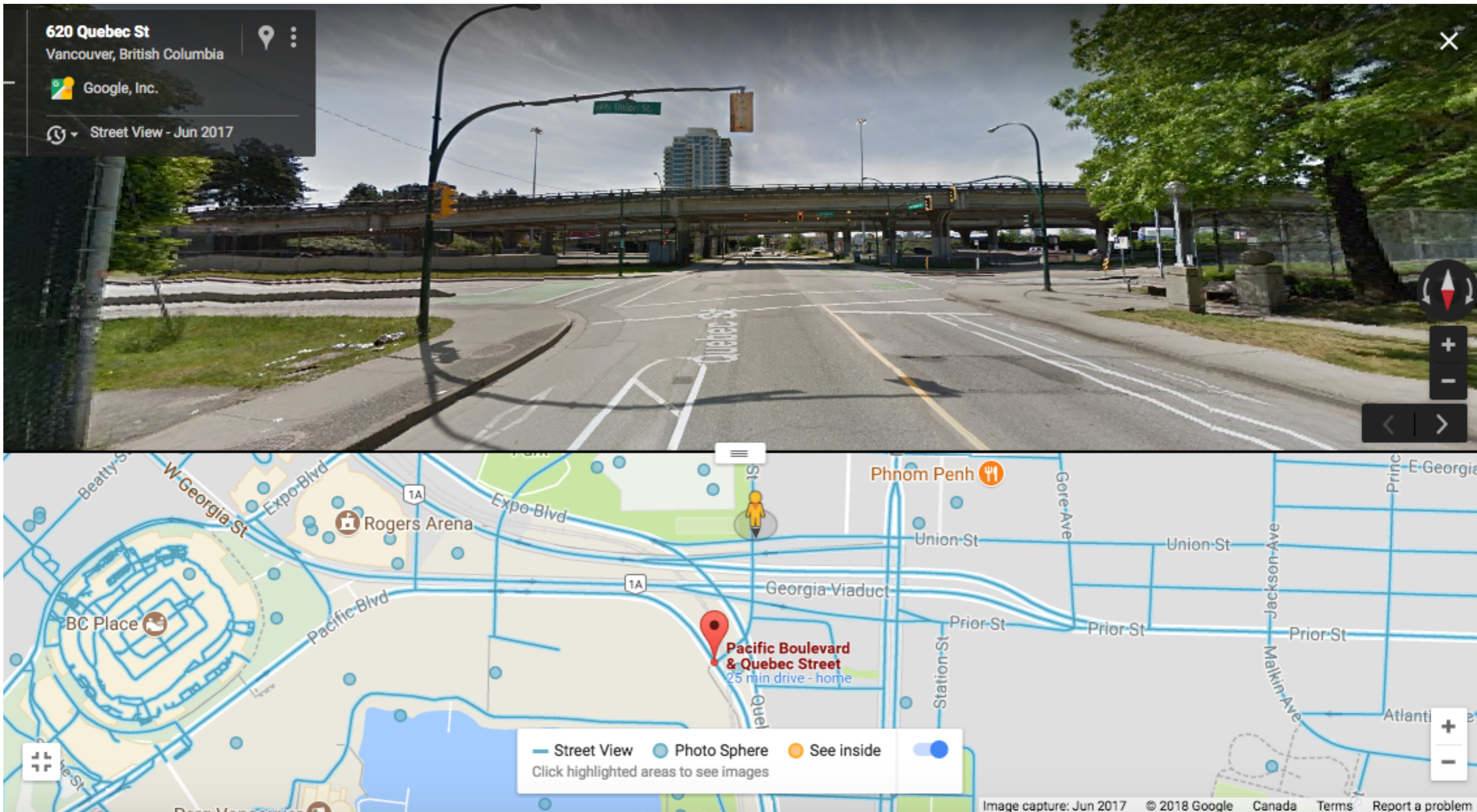
Key Points

- **4. FOOD! FOOD! FOOD!** Alleyways can be brought alive to create unique year-round destination, enhancing historic Asian character of Chinatown; legacy businesses but also innovative, youth entrepreneur incubation tied to “Creative Cities” strategy—HK and Singapore invest heavily in creative culture infrastructure aimed at youth
- **5. Much needed housing for seniors/other low-income groups can come with UNESCO**—planning for areas neighboring Chinatown to the south, including Georgia Viaducts and False Creek (large numbers of seniors housing—3000, 4000 units total, not 100 or 200)—seniors housing with economies of scale provide financial sustainability and long term, “safe return” capital investment
- **6. Valuable Outcome?** A management plan proposal for area that is **long-term** (25-50 years in vision), **staged** (5-10 year milestones), with governance and regulatory structure that is comprehensive, sustainable, and responsive at periodic review intervals to dynamic changes over the long-term

Conservation, Development & the Future

- *“In fact, conservation is a kind of development, it is not about retaining the past and resisting change, but about managing the pace of change in our built environment. It is to bridge the past and the future.”*
- Dr. Selia Jinhua Tan, Lead Researcher, UNESCO Proposal, Kaiping, Guangdong, China

What is to be returned to Chinatown?



- Condition given from CBA and Chinatown community supporters for removing viaducts
- Redress of urban displacement due to historical racism and discrimination

*One of the important historical legacies to
build upon...*

- Chinatown as historical heart of fresh local produce distribution
- Local produce and local farms Chinese farms have always been part of a vertically integrated network system with Chinatown as central node
- “**100 km diet**” existed in Vancouver and still remains (hidden) –long before it became a catchphrase of sustainability movement (*Covered Roots* film)

CHINESE MARKET GARDENS AT MUSQUEAM RESERVE #2



Story of the Grant family in "All Our Father's Relations"

Connection between Chinatown produce and local sustainable farm and agriculture

Link to food strategy/cultural policies



**1. STUDENTS AND
YOUTH INVOLVED**

**2. LOCAL CONNECTIONS
BEYOND CHINATOWN**

**3. CHINATOWN AND
CHINESE CANADIANS
ARE NOT JUST IN
CHINATOWN**

**Possibilities? Public education and local community gardens
Chinese local farmers as sustainable urban agriculture
Hua Foundation “Chinatown**

A FARMERS MARKET IN CHINATOWN?



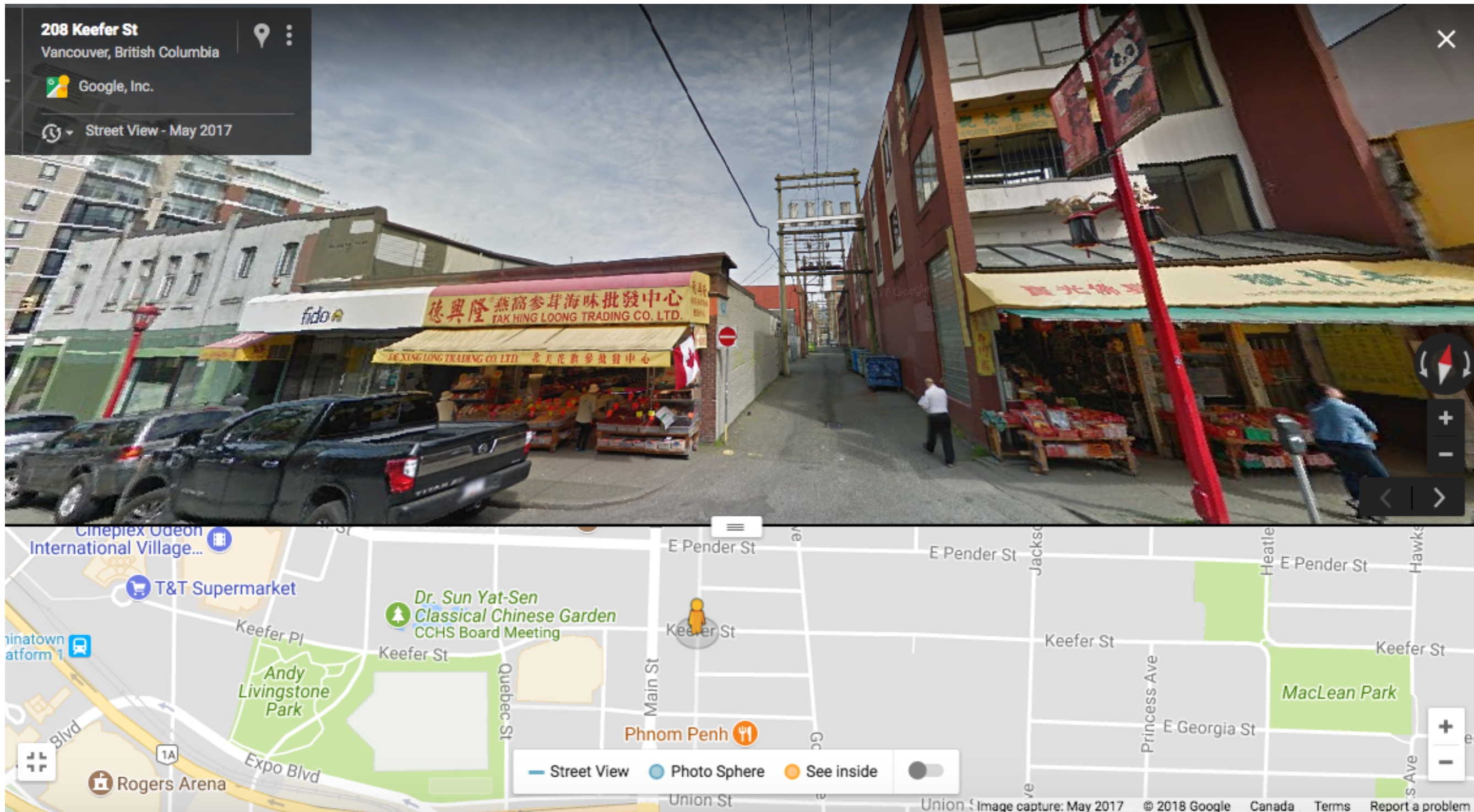
Along with *restaurants* in Chinatown, produce markets as legacy businesses can tell Vancouver's story

Local fresh Chinese produce and storytelling about connections between Chinatown and broad distribution networks of grocery stores on every corner and farms all up the Fraser river (HY Louie Co., links to Musqueam, Burnaby and Richmond)



Nishiki Market, Kyoto

Alleyway activation

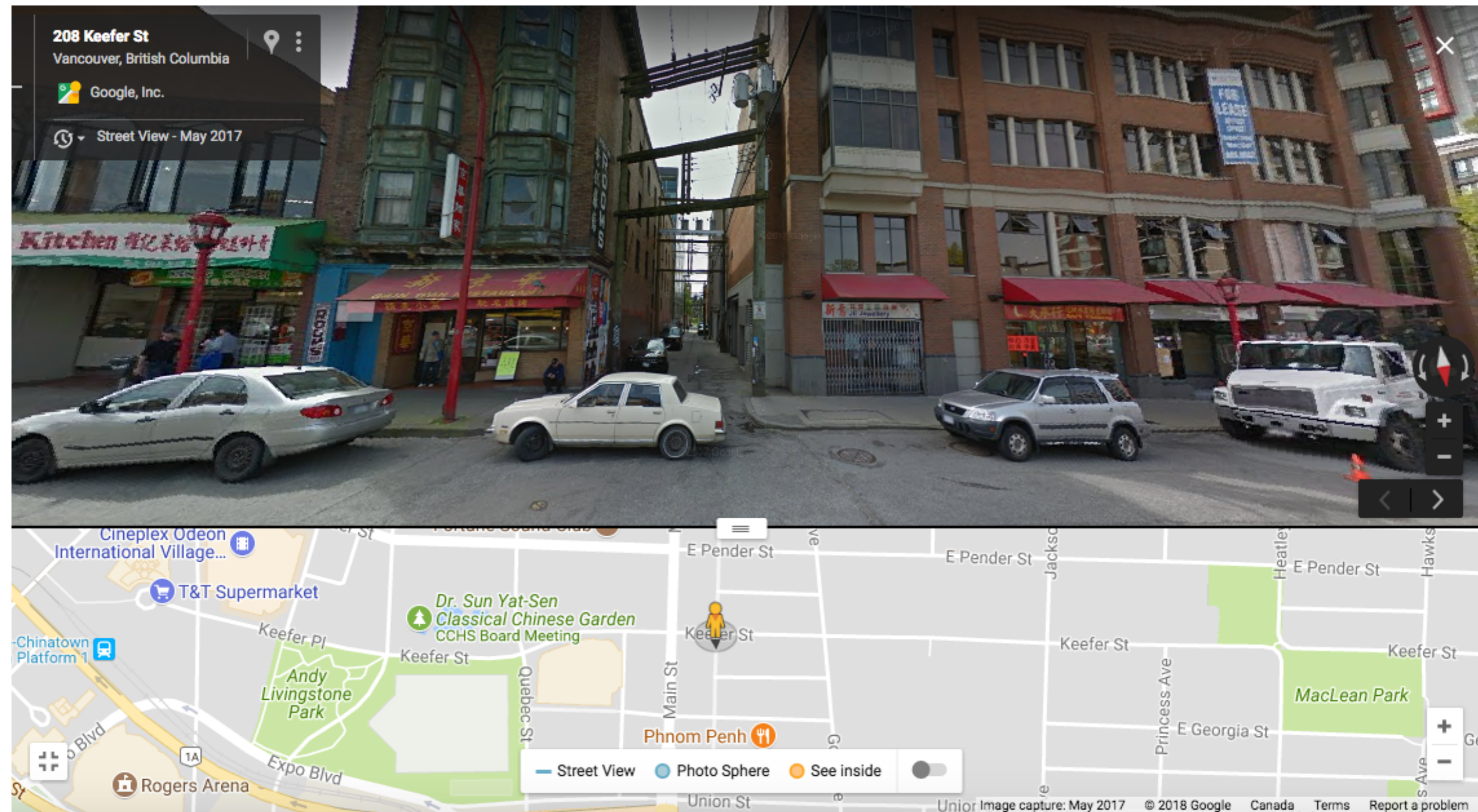


North-South laneways between Pender and Union – 3 blocks

Rain covers using existing distinctive “Vancouver heritage wooden utility poles”

Intangible character of “produce” and goods spilling onto sidewalks

Alleyway activation



100+ small stalls with electrical and water hookups—bury electrical underground
Nurturing Youth entrepreneurial spirit— 50% food, 50% creative/innovative
Easy entry, Easy failure: short-term, low rent, high turnover, youth oriented

Studies and Reports Cited

COV “Historical Discrimination Against Chinese” Advisory Group Final Recommendations, 2017 (Priority Action C)

COV Chinatown Neighborhood Plan, 2012 (Alleyway and public realm spaces, seniors housing)

BC Provincial Government “Chinatown Heritage Cultural Values Mapping Study, HeritageBC 2015 (food, streetlife, youth/seniors culture)

Affordable Housing Needs of Ethnic Seniors Study, UBC 2011 (3300 affordable spaces needed by 2025)

BC Provincial Government “Vancouver Chinatown Seniors Housing Study,” Weldon 2015

Vancouver Chinatown Food Security Report, Hua Foundation, 2017

Protecting CoV Heritage Businesses, Heritage Vancouver Society, Youth Collaborative for Chinatown, Modus, 2017