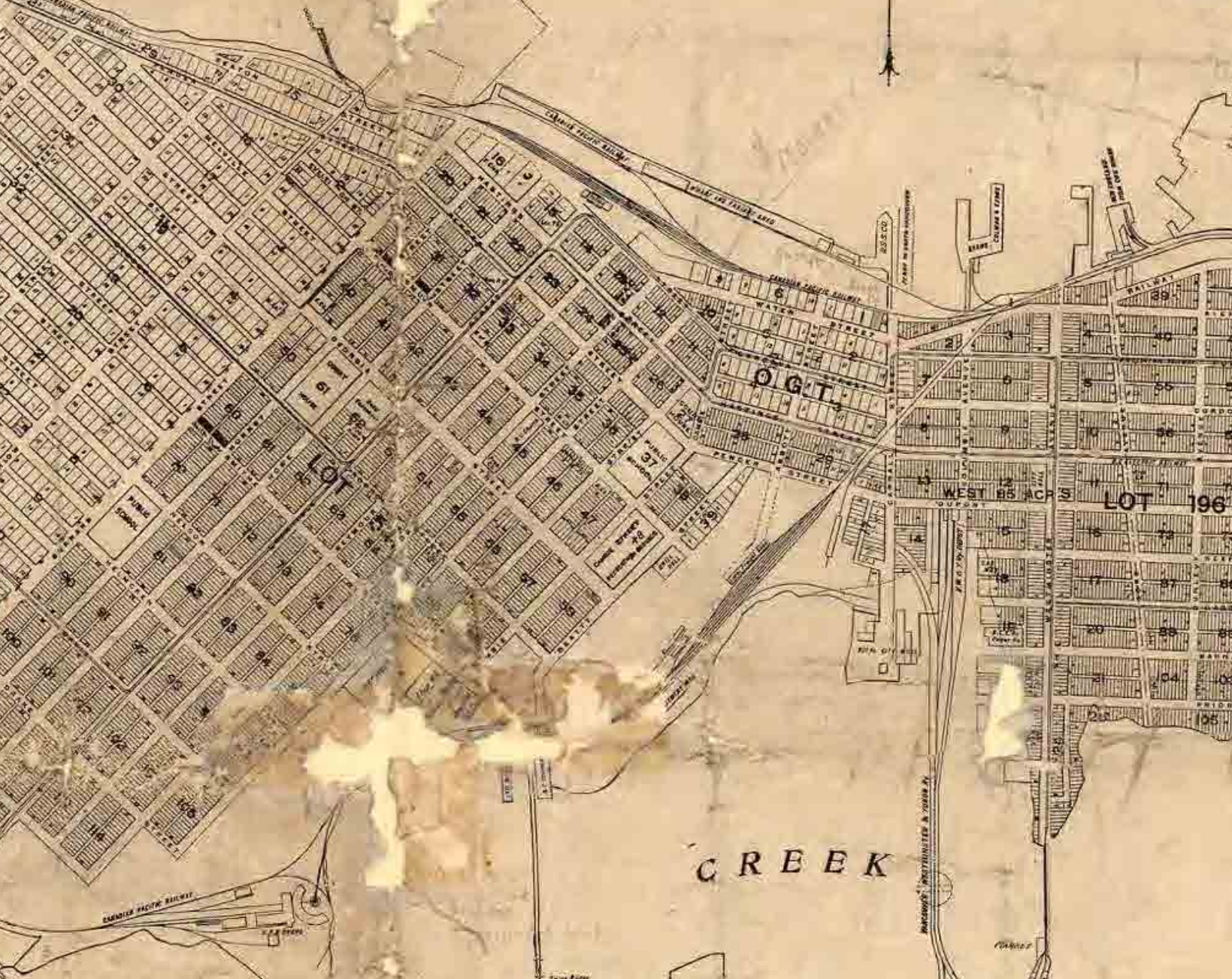


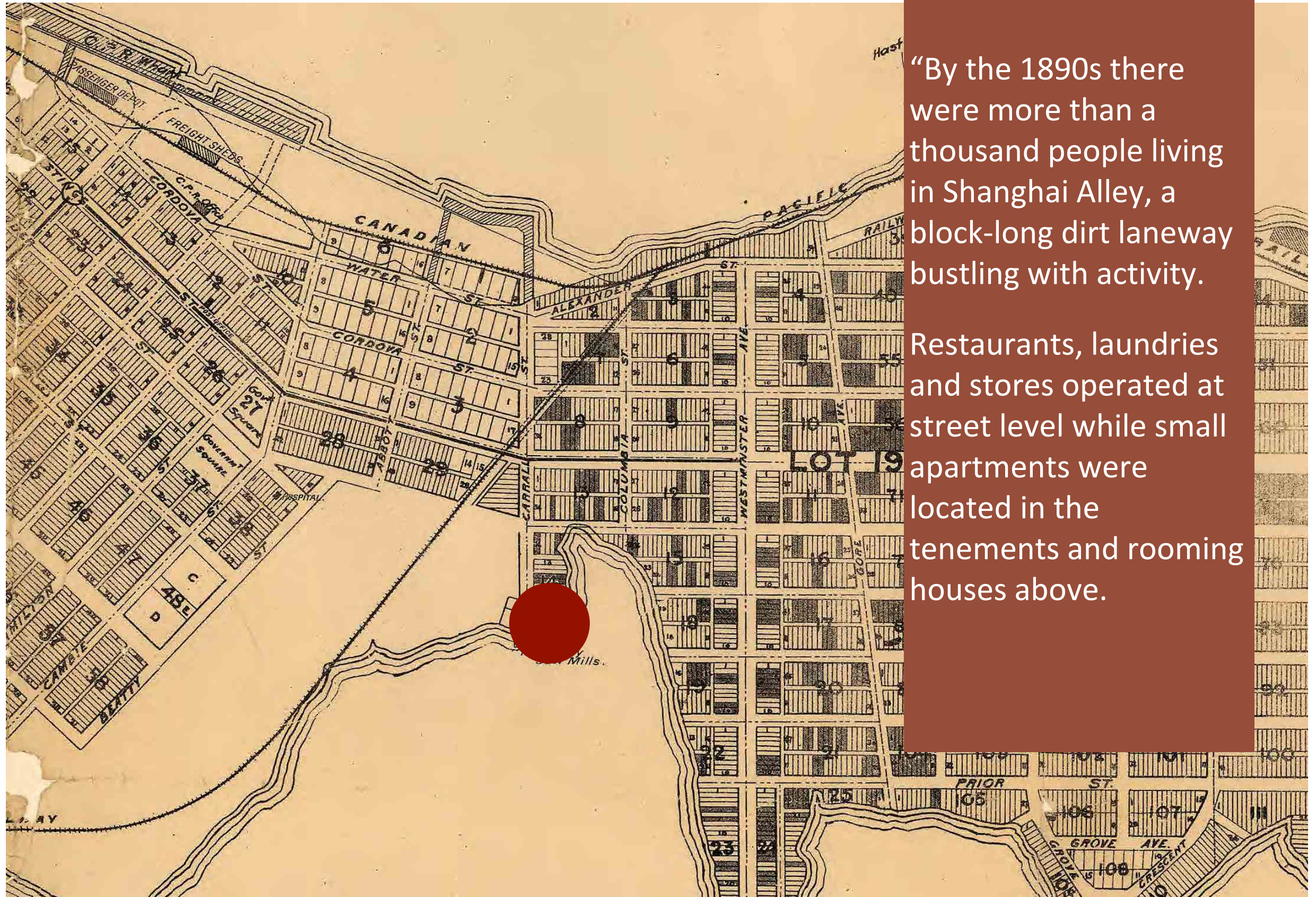


THE MYTH OF SHANGHAI ALLEY

And a Brief History of Vancouver's Chinatown



IN THE BEGINNING...



“By the 1890s there were more than a thousand people living in Shanghai Alley, a block-long dirt laneway bustling with activity.

Restaurants, laundries and stores operated at street level while small apartments were located in the tenements and rooming houses above.

IT STARTS WITH A SAWMILL

ROYAL CITY PLANING MILLS CO., Ltd.

NEW WESTMINSTER AND VANCOUVER, B.C.

—MANUFACTURERS AND DEALERS IN—

ROUGH AND DRESSED LUMBER,

LATHS, SHINGLES AND DOORS.

WINDOWS AND MOULDINGS

FIR, SPRUCE, CEDAR, MAPLE, HEMLOCK AND ALDER

Mantles, Carved & Plain--Store & Office Fittings

IMPORTERS OF GLASS

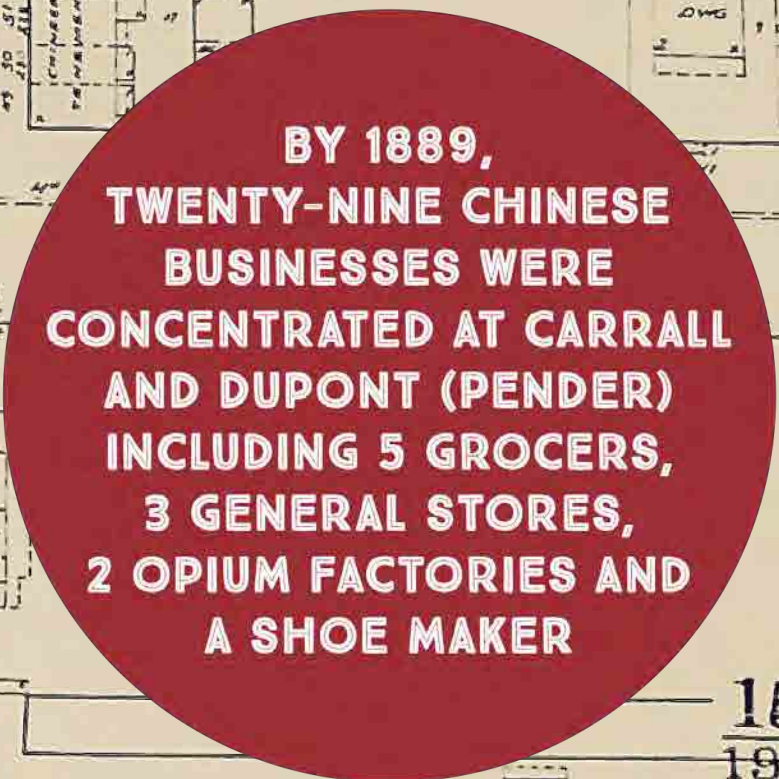
BLACK WALNUT—A carload of above received and for sale at our yards.

WOOD FOR SALE—Good Dry Wood, cut 16 inches long, for \$1.50 per load delivered.

Royal City Planing Mills Co., Ltd.

Vancouver, June 17, 1900.





AN EMERGING DISTRICT...



Pender Street looking east, 1889

HART'S OPERA HOUSE 1887/91



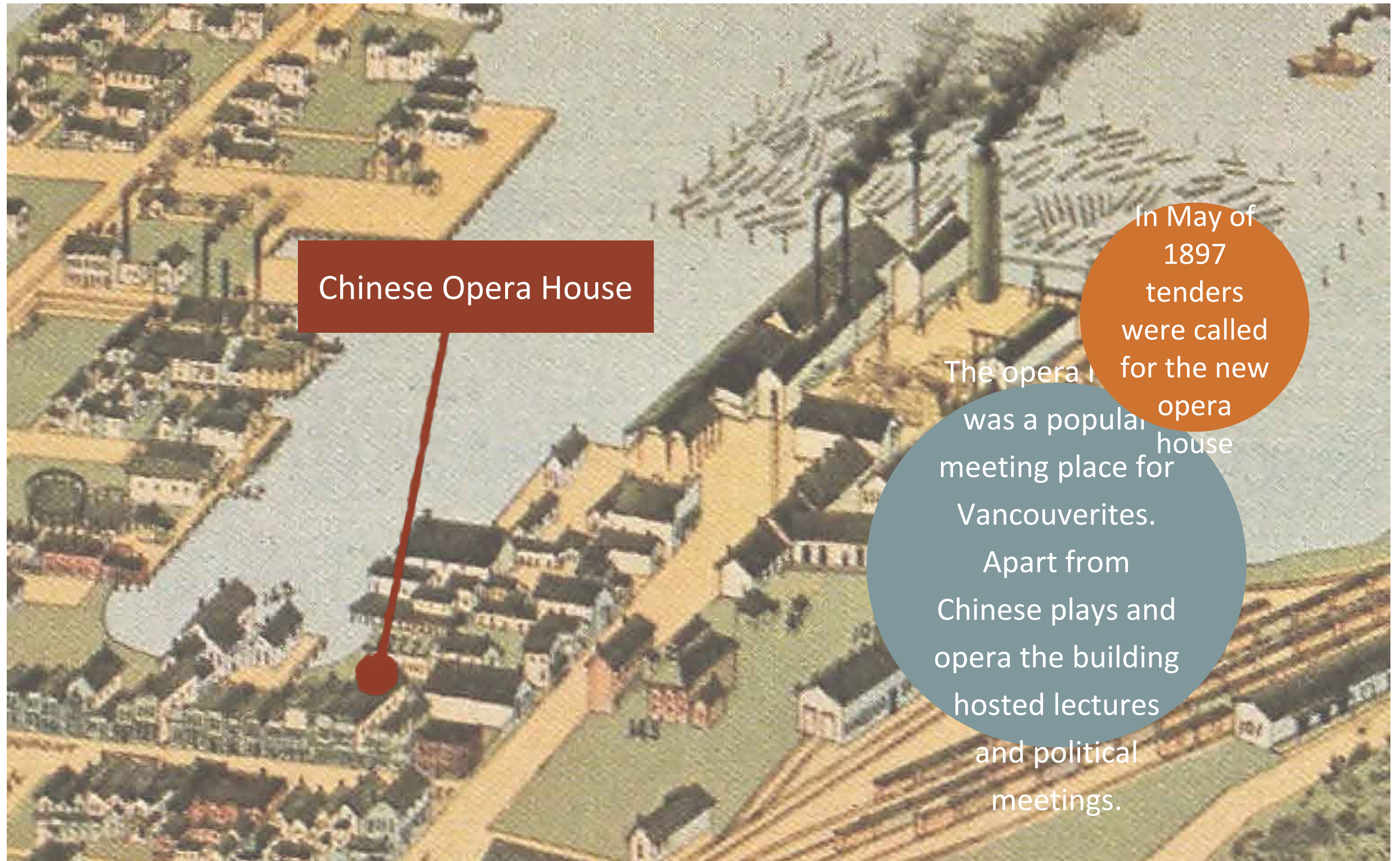
A CHINESE THEATRE.

One of the newest things in town is a Chinese theatre, which has been in full blast in Hart's old opera house, Carrall street. The place has been open since Thursday and has been crowded every night. The manager's name is Tung and he has just returned from a trip to far Cathay. A license from the city for a month has been taken out. Seve-

A NIGHT W' BURNS
GRAND
Scotch Concert
—18—
HART'S OPERA HOUSE
FEBRUARY, FEB. 26th 1888.

HART'S OPERA HOUSE
Two Nights Only
ROLLER'S MAJESTIC
CONSOLIDATION OF NOVELTIES
Joseph Riley & Co., Props. Louis Roller, Mgr.
TUESDAY & WEDNESDAY
Feb. 26 and 27
Engagement extraordinary of the celebrated Musical
NORTH FAMILY
Five in number. The fashion plates of Refinement
McKee & Franks, Andy and Flora
The great favorite eastern duo, MISS DOLLY SHARPE, the acknowledged Champion Skipping Rope and Jig Dancer, Vocalist and Sourette, assisted by the talented Comedian and Author, SAM LANG.
America's representative Vocalist and Balladist, MISS IRENE STOEL. The Comedian par excellence, MR. JOHN CHESTER. The Artist Supreme, MILE. BERTHA. PROFESSOR F. L. BAERNSTEIN, MR. WM. HOOKWAY.

THE CHINESE OPERA HOUSE



Chinese Opera House

In May of 1897 tenders were called for the new opera house

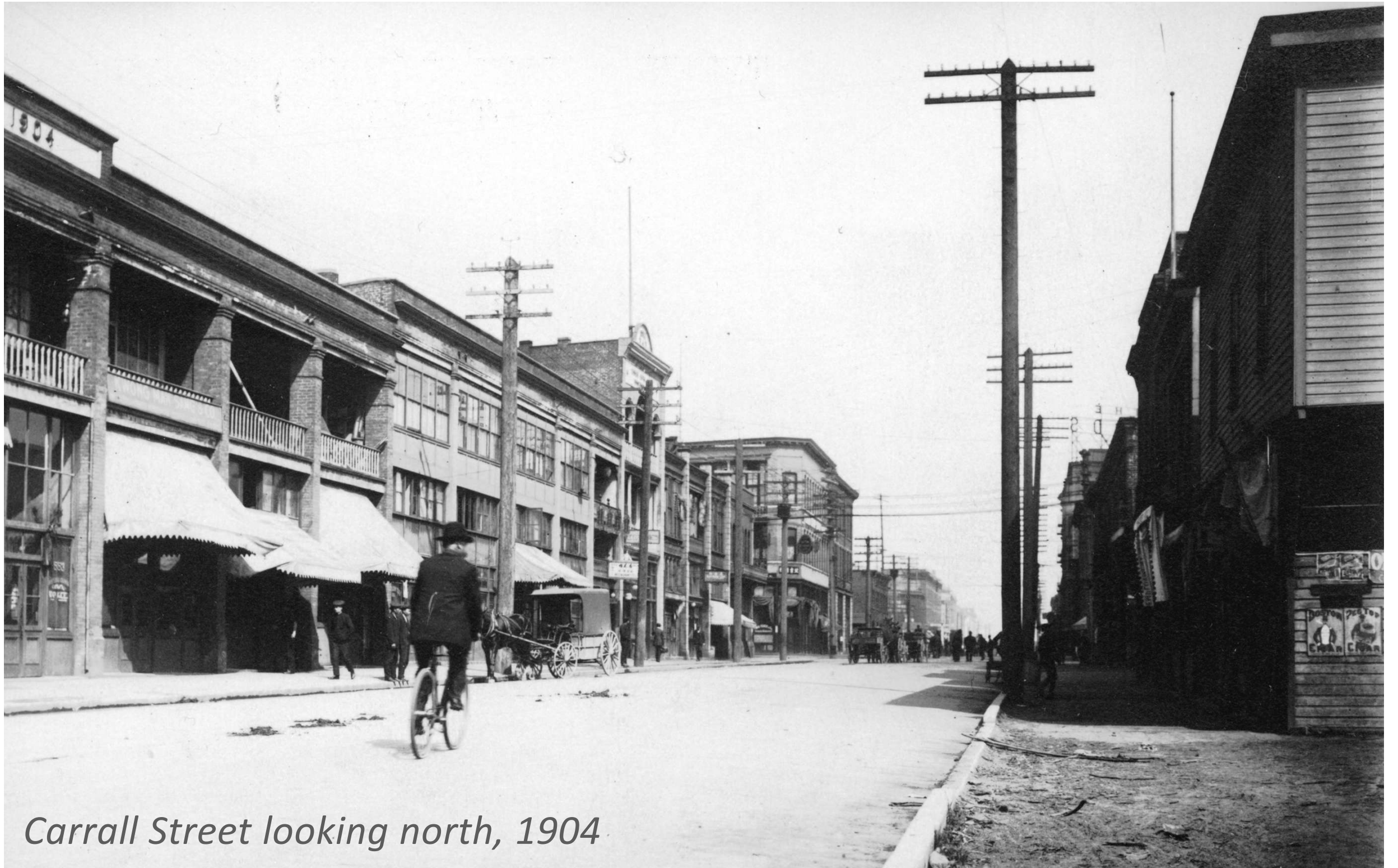
The opera house was a popular meeting place for Vancouverites. Apart from Chinese plays and opera the building hosted lectures and political meetings.

1898 Bird's Eye of Vancouver

A JUMBLE OF USES...

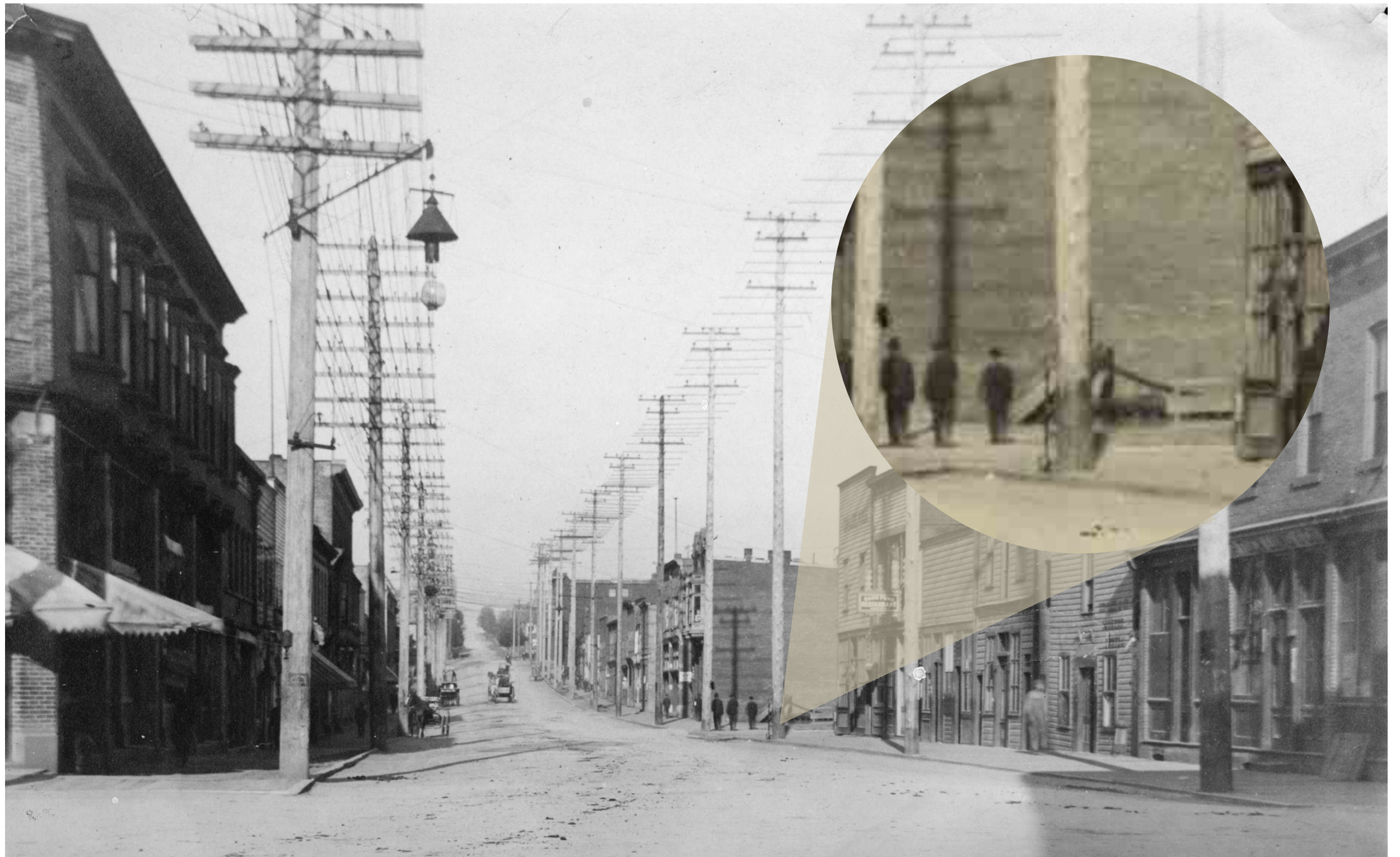


BIG CHANGES ON THE HORIZON...



Carrall Street looking north, 1904

BIG CHANGES ON THE HORIZON...



Pender Street looking east, 1905

GNR FREIGHT AND PASSENGER SERVICES



The station and track took up most of the south side of Pender from Carrall to Columbia

GNR FREIGHT AND PASSENGER SERVICES



11

SEE SHEET NO. 6

PENDER WEST

CHINESE STORES 1ST

CHINESE ROOMS OVER

CHINESE (PRIVATE) CANTON

CHINESE

SHANGHAI

THEATRE

Rest. 2nd

Prints Chinese Empire Reform Off. Association of Canada

Rest.

4 & Bust.

Mill Constn.

Wood, Vallance & Leggart

(Wood Encl. Stairs with Fire Doors)

All Windows are with Doors outside

ROADWAY

69

Steel Warehouse

Wood, Vallance & Leggart Limited

WOOD ENCL. STAIRS

WIRE GLASS

DOORS OUTSIDE ARE IRON

Garage

B.C.E. RY. AUTO REPS & GARAGE

B.C.E. RY. C^o

ROAD

PENDER E.

Great Northern Railway Tracks

70

(BLOCK 14 LOT 196)

STORAGE B.C.E. RY. (TEMPORARY) No. 1

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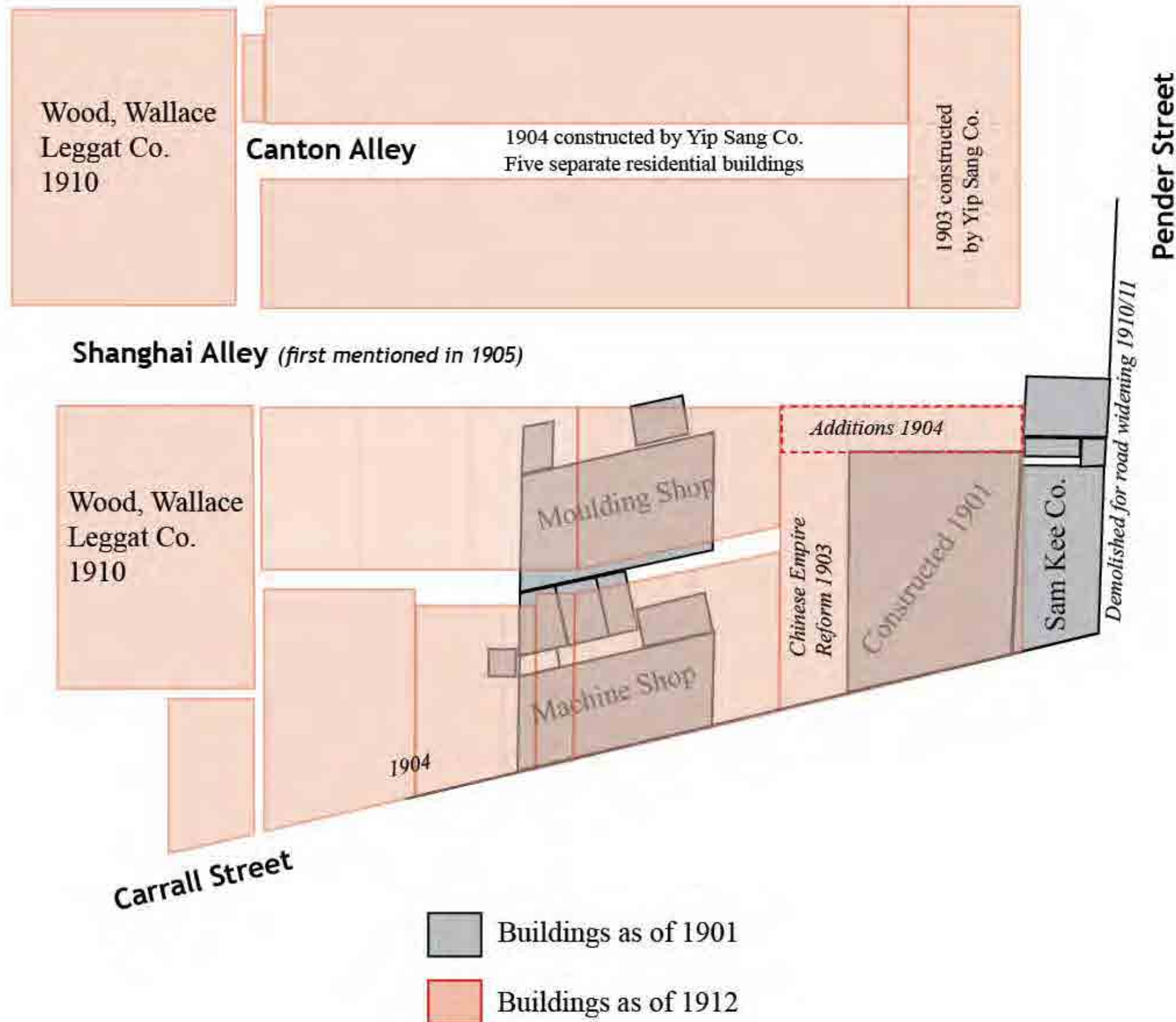
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loading Platform

C. D. R. SIDINGS

THE CREATION OF CANTON AND SHANGHAI



A VISIT BUT NOT TO SHANGHAI ALLEY...



In 1947, Vancouver Archivist Major Matthews recalled his first visit to the Chinese opera house in “precisely how we got to it I cannot tell. We turned off Hastings Street and went south on Carrall Street. Then, at some point, we turned into an alley between old wooden buildings. There were no lights. It was pitch dark and raining. The wooden planks on which we walked were wet... We paid a small entrance fee [and] We found ourselves in a balcony overlooking the "pit" below beyond.”

When Shanghai Alley opened in 1905 the opera house moved there to larger premises which survived until a fire destroyed the building in 1947.

SHANGHAI ALLEY...



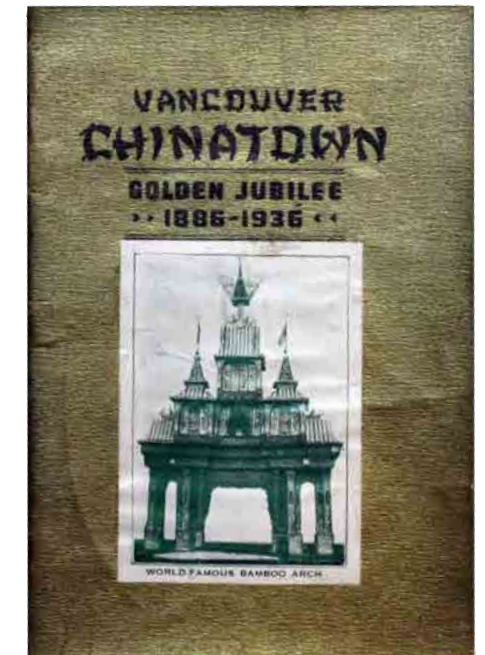
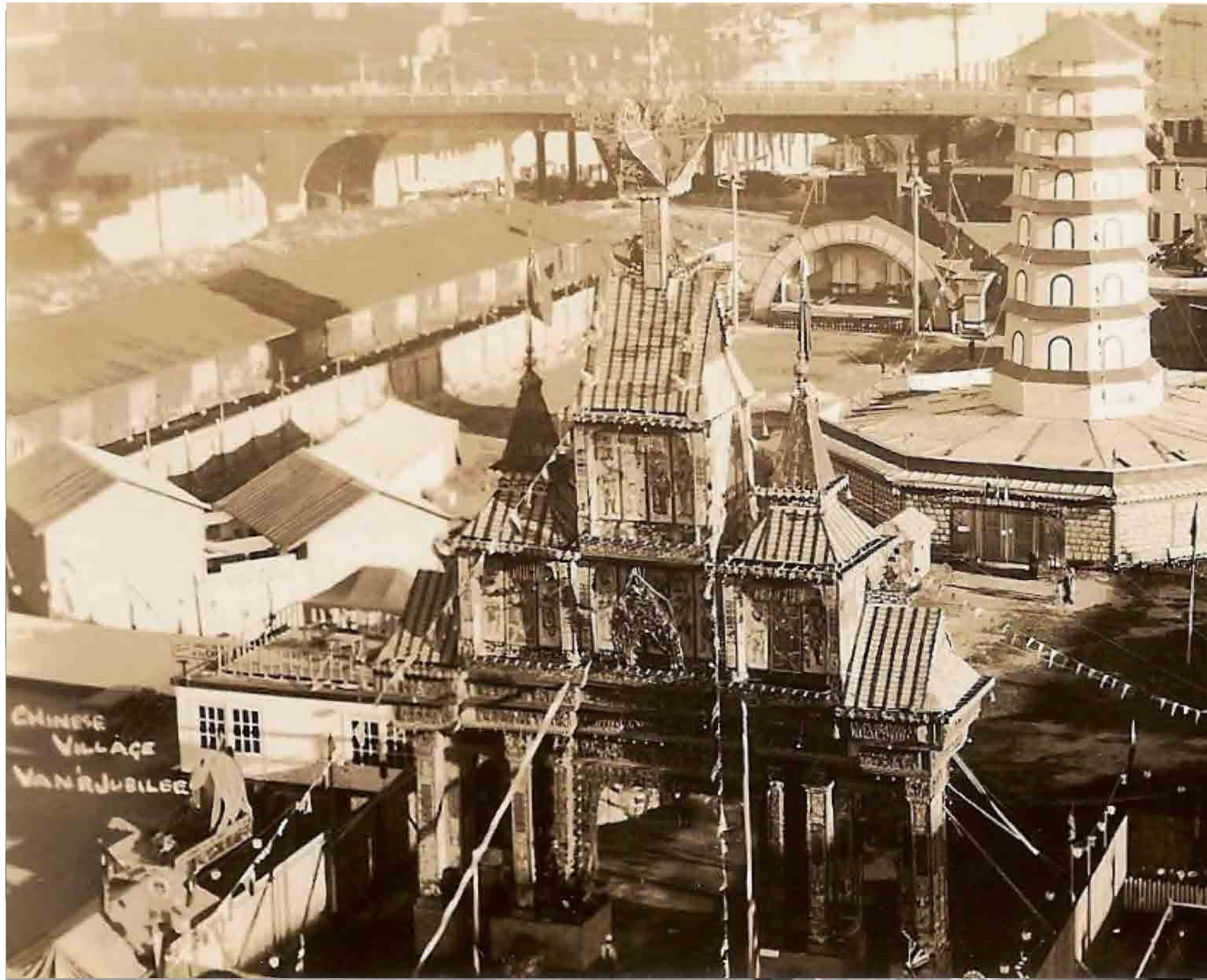
SHANGHAI ALLEY IN THE 1950S...



PLAYGROUNDS, TENNIS, ETC...



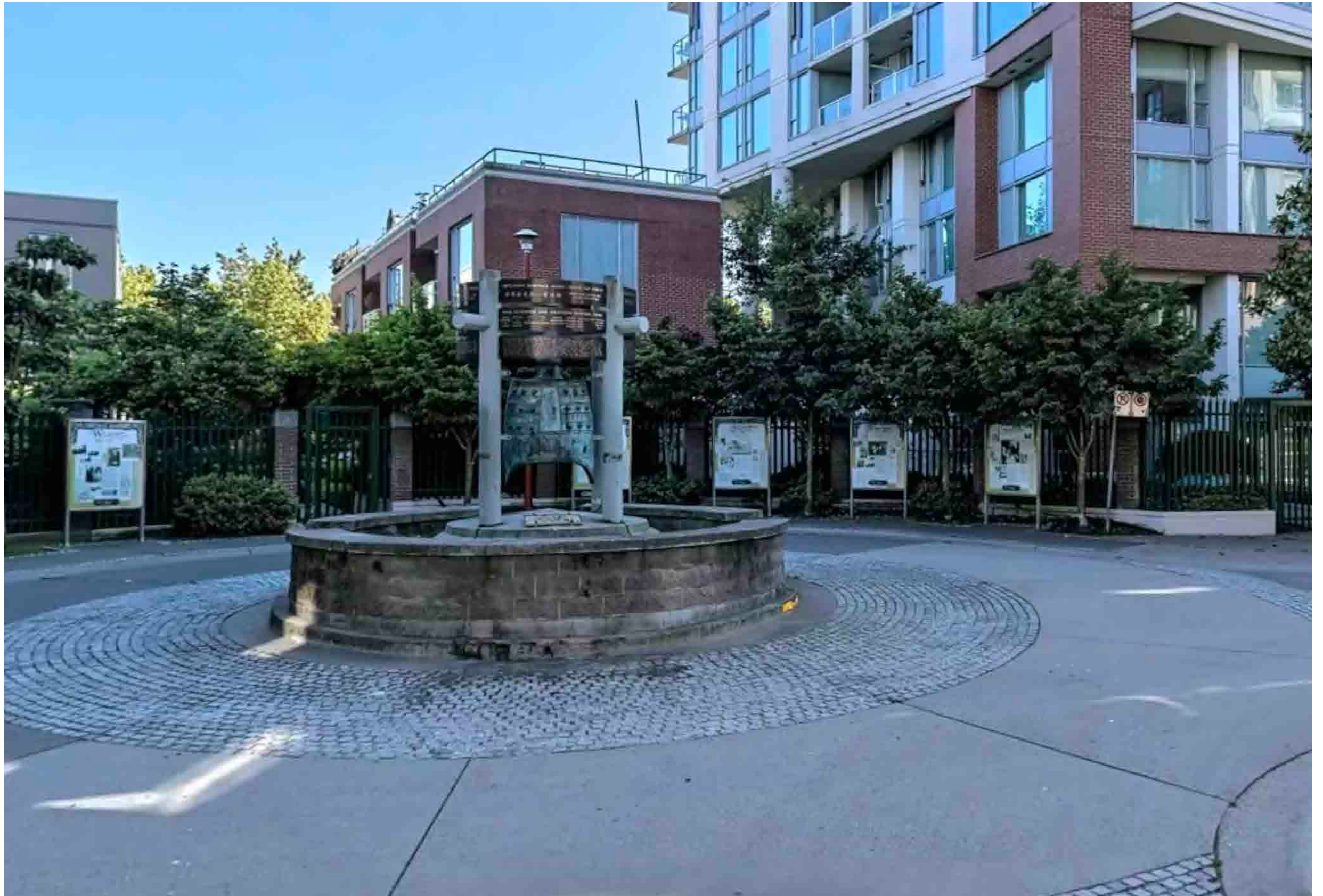
THE JUBILEE...



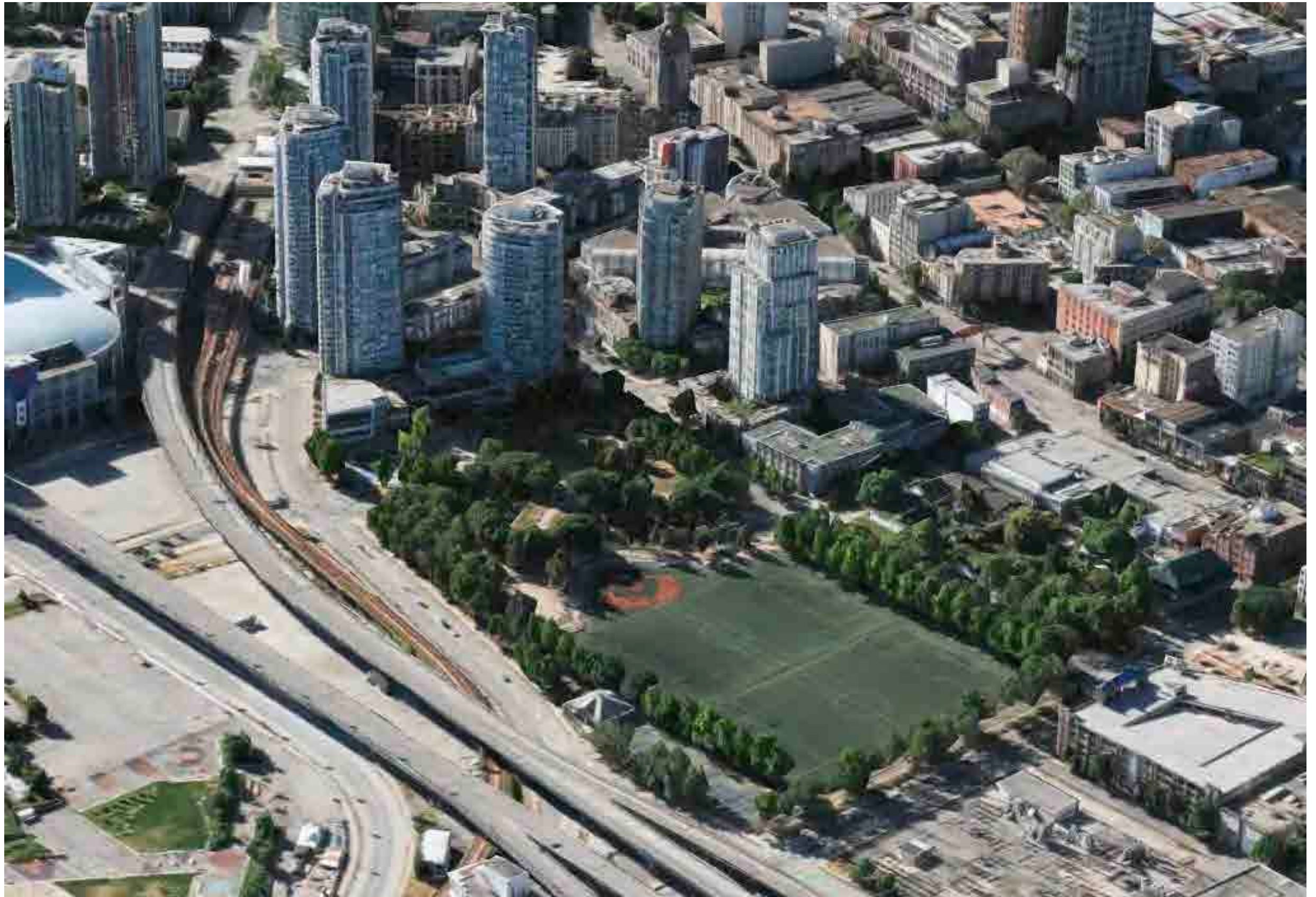
SHANGHAI ALLEY TODAY...



THE “HERITAGE” ALLEY...



CHANGING LANDSCAPE...



A RENEWED INTEREST...

