(Re)assembling "Japantown": A critical toponymy of planning and resistance in Vancouver's

Downtown Eastside

By

Trevor James Wideman

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Abstract

For many, toponyms, or *place names,* appear to provide objective descriptions of locations on the earth. But for geographers, names and naming practices are imbued with meaning, and a recent literature of *critical toponymy* has emerged that studies and recognizes place names as discursive agents of power and resistance that perform active roles in the ongoing production of place. However, the critical toponymy corpus had produced very little theoretically rich empirical research focusing how *urban planning and policymaking processes* mobilize place names, or how residents fight against such activities. This thesis fills that lacuna, first by generating a novel theoretical framework (*toponymic assemblage*) that describes the emergent, relational, and spatially grounded properties of place names. It then outlines a robust, extended, and mixed method case study approach that uses archival/newspaper documentation, discourse analysis, and interview data to form a historically based, theoretically driven, and structurally aware study of toponyms in relation to planning and policymaking. The thesis then presents two empirical case studies based in Vancouver, Canada's impoverished Downtown Eastside (DTES) that are centred around the name "Japantown," a toponym that recalls the neighbourhood's long-time inhabitation by a community of Japanese Canadians who were forcibly uprooted from the Pacific coast during World War II. Specifically, this thesis situates contemporary neighbourhood conflicts within a historical context by constructing an interwoven analysis of toponymic assemblages in the DTES (including "Japantown"), noting how they emerged over time in relation to interventions such as planning, policymaking, the media, and activism while highlighting their fluid, malleable, and potential qualities. It then focuses on a recently enacted Local Area Planning Process (LAPP) in the DTES to illuminate how toponymic assemblages

like "Japantown" were mobilized through planning to change understandings of place at the expense of current low income residents. The thesis concludes by considering the theoretical and positional limitations of the research, then suggests directions for future study and activism by highlighting how a more complete understanding of toponymic power and its limits can inform rights-based engagement among disparate groups.

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List of Abbreviations

BCS - Building Community Society

BIA - Business Improvement Association

CBDA - Community-based Development Area

CCAP - Carnegie Community Action Project

CORE - Course on Research Ethics

COV - City of Vancouver

CPR - Canadian Pacific Railway

DEOD - Downtown Eastside Oppenheimer District

DERA - Downtown Eastside Residents Association

DNC - Downtown Eastside Neighbourhood Council

DTES - Downtown Eastside

ECM - Extended Case Method

GREB - General Research Ethics Board

HAHR - Historic Area Height Review

JC - Japanese Canadian

LAPP - Local Area Planning Process

NVIVO - QSR NVIVO Qualitative Data Analysis software

OAPC - Oppenheimer Area Planning Committee

PSFAC - Powell Street Festival Advocacy Committee

RJ? - Revitalizing Japantown?

SIA - Social Impact Assessment

TCPS - Tri-Council Policy Statement

TOR - Terms of Reference

VJLS-JH - Vancouver Japanese Language School/Japanese Hall

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 What's in a Name?

In the summer of 2013, a group of activists converged upon Cuchillo, a newly opened high-end restaurant at 261 Powell Street in Vancouver, Canada. Located in the low income Downtown Eastside (DTES) neighbourhood (see Figure 1), the Cuchillo protests were meant to highlight the negative socioeconomic consequences of gentrifying businesses on the area's population (Lupick 2013). While protesters referred to Cuchillo as "a knife in the heart of the *Downtown Eastside*" and drew attention to its community impact (Lupick 2013, emphasis mine), the restaurant's promotional materials noted it was located in "*JapaGasRailtown,*" an unusual portmanteau of three place names, or *toponyms* ("Japantown," "Gastown," and "Railtown"), that drew on culture, heritage, and creative class energy to sell "Modern Pan-Latin tapas with unique & classic cocktails" (Cuchillo 2015). But how could one restaurant be located in three places at once? And why did restaurant owners and local resident activists understand and communicate
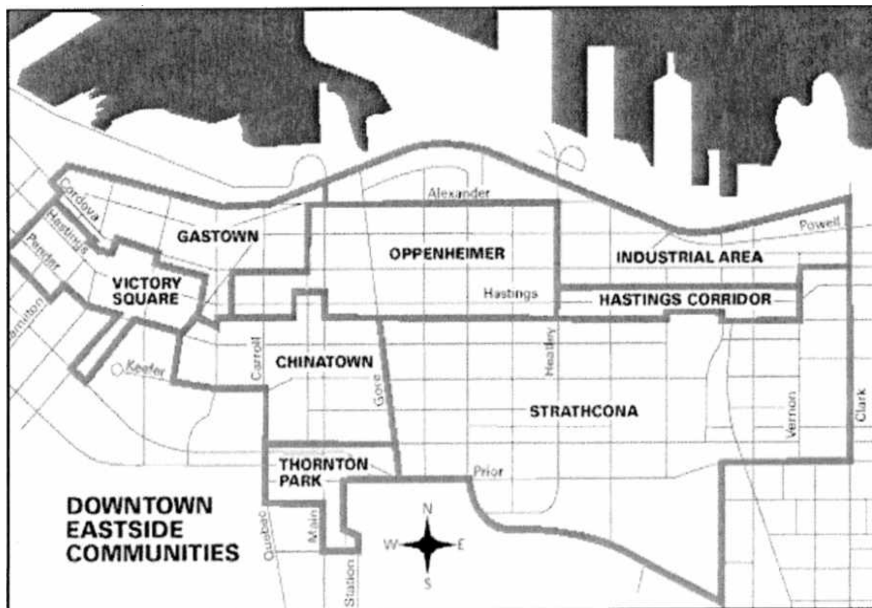
Figure 7: Vancouver's Downtown Eastside planning area (City of Vancouver 2011)

where they were so differently? Clearly, differing political and economic motivations were causing discord between such groups; yet the role of place naming in the conflict was unclear, motivating a larger question: "what's in a name?"

In this thesis, I will make the assertion that a restaurant such as Cuchillo can indeed be located in multiple places – in fact, an "assemblage of places" – even while occupying only one street address. Notably, at the same time as the Cuchillo protests were occurring, a participatory planning exercise known as the Local Area Planning Process (LAPP) had been underway for almost three years, with the goal of deciding the future development of the neighbourhood. Part of a broader effort by the city to encourage economic growth, environmental sustainability, housing development, heritage protection, and cultural recognition (among others, see City of Vancouver 2014), the LAPP's mandate was to intervene in what has long been seen as one of Canada's most marginalized and impoverished neighbourhoods (see Blomley 2004). Adhering to a philosophy of revitalization without displacement, the LAPP would balance economic growth with community interests, ostensibly for the benefit of all residents. Yet in spite the optimistic expectations of those who participated, the LAPP introduced new tensions among interest groups, and the plan that resulted met with accusations from all sides for its inadequacy (see CBC News 2014; Lupick 2014; Wallstam et al. 2014).

Crucially, as the LAPP unfolded over the course of almost 48 months, there seemed to be numerous differences emerging between the ways that the "Downtown Eastside" was being used as a term *within* planning, and the ways that residents were representing the neighbourhood *to* planners. While the area currently known as the Downtown Eastside has had various names as a result of the activities of a succession of groups, since long before the founding of Vancouver in 1886 (see Davis 2011; Gutstein 1975; McDonald 1992), as a label and as a community, it is

often framed by outsiders as an area of deviance, poverty and vice that requires strategic intervention (see Dewiert 2013; Sommers 2001). Yet for the racialized and stigmatized low income community *currently* living in the area, the DTES represents a vital source of support and strength that goes hand in hand with a political demand for social justice (see Blomley 2004; Hasson & Ley 1994; Ley & Dobson 2008), and it fights with encroaching toponyms such as "Gastown," "Strathcona," "Chinatown," and "Railtown" that evoke discourses of heritage, middle class property ownership, economic development, and entrepreneurship (see City of Vancouver 2012; Kumagai & McGuire 2011; Mackie 2008; Millette 2010; Strathcona Revitalization Committee 2008; Symons 2010; Wai 2011). Significantly, the LAPP encouraged a resurfacing of these discursive conflicts by including such names as *part of* the DTES, an act that seemed to downplay and depoliticize long-held toponymic assertions of low income residents.

In addition to names such as "Gastown" and "Strathcona," names like "Japantown," were creeping into the DTES planning process in the form of heritage "revitalization," despite the fact that there was little desire for such an area among LAPP participants. "Japantown" is a reference to a community of Japanese Canadians who lived and worked in the area until the 1940s, when they were uprooted from the area and placed in internment camps under the guise of national security (Adachi 1991; Sunahara 2000). Prior to this racist action, which was instigated by multiple levels of government (see Adachi 1991), the thriving area had a toponymic politics not unlike the current DTES. For outsiders, the area was "Little Tokyo," "Japanese Town" (Morita 1988), and an assortment of other denigrating and racialized names meant to set the neighbourhood apart as "other" from the rest of the city, while residents colloquially referred to the area as "Powell Street" (Kobayashi 1992; see also Marlatt & Itter 2011), a supportive community hub in which Japanese Canadians could thrive as citizens of Canada. While this

community's wartime experience and subsequent legacy in achieving redress and advancing Canadian human and civil rights is an important feature of the contemporary area (see Birmingham & Wood 2008; Miki 2005), its toponymic evocation also has the potential to commodify the neighbourhood by creating a multicultural spectacle aimed at leveraging economic development at the expense of the existing low income community (c.f. City of Vancouver 1981). Significantly, when the City of Vancouver (2014) began to use "Japantown" within the LAPP, Japanese Canadian representatives expressed their displeasure, telling the city that they didn't want their heritage (which included their uprooting in 1942) to be used in any way that might displace residents.

While such naming practices and conflicts may have appeared trivial compared to the "real" problems being addressed within the LAPP, as a geographer, it seemed to me that they were deceptively important. Thus the LAPP provided a useful entry point for an investigation into the role of place naming in relation to planning, policymaking, and resistance.

1.2 Empirical Context and Research Objectives

The concept of the toponym is central to this thesis. Toponyms are frequently spoken without question, and for many they are simply banal, naturally occurring features that provide objective descriptions of locations on the earth (see Vuolteenaho & Berg 2009). But for geographers, names and naming practices have long been understood as being imbued with meaning and power, and a recent literature has developed around the concept of *critical toponymy* (Rose-Redwood et al. 2010). Informed by a poststructural tradition in cultural geography, critical toponymy recognizes that names are discursive agents of power and resistance that perform active roles in the ongoing production of place (see Berg 2011; Medway & Warnaby 2014, Rose-Redwood 2011, Rose-Redwood et al. 2010; Vuolteenaho & Berg 2009).

In particular, toponyms can be used as political tools, as techniques of management and control, as implements of "branding" and commodification, and as mechanisms of popular resistance (see Light & Young 2015; Medway & Warnaby 2014; Rose-Redwood et al. 2010). Yet surprisingly, within the corpus of critical toponymy, very little empirical research has focused on how urban planning processes act as a channel for place names, or how residents resist such activities. This is in spite of the fact that critical scholars have long identified participatory planning as a communicative tool that uses citizen input to facilitate sociomaterial transformations in cities (see Fischler 1999; Gunder 2010; McGuirk 2005; Moini 2011; Purcell 2009).

I became officially involved with this research in the summer of 2013 after having been asked by my primary supervisor to undertake a Master's project in Vancouver. The proposed project would examine how toponyms such as "Japantown" were being mobilized within the ongoing LAPP and in relation to the experiences of the present-day low income community.[1] The assignment was intriguing to me because I had a keen interest in planning discourses and the ways in which they act to transform people's perceptions of place. Having just completed an undergraduate thesis examining planning in Winnipeg, Canada, I was excited to learn more about how planning worked in Vancouver, and I was intrigued to see how the highly organized and expertly facilitated DTES LAPP, instead of democratically mediating tensions between disparate groups, in fact appeared to be agitating them further while turning people against the city. Yet more important than the procedural flaws of the process, toponymic discourses around the "Downtown Eastside" appeared to be changing through the LAPP and inspiring pushback.

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[1] This study responds to the broader goals of a SSHRC-funded research project known as *Revitalizing Japantown?: a unifying exploration of human rights, branding, and place* (RJ?), whose principal investigators provided academic guidance and financial support for the duration of this project. One of the main goals of the RJ? project is to challenge and defragment some of the oft-repeated narratives of the Downtown Eastside in the hopes that common understandings might arise between previously separated groups. See details in Chapter 3.

However, for casual observers and participants alike, the sheer complexity of the process made it difficult to see why or how such changes were occurring or why they mattered.

These ongoing contestations around naming and planning formed a background for my study as I began to interrogate how the various toponyms of Vancouver, Canada's Downtown Eastside emerged over time in relation to interventions such as planning, policymaking, the media, and activism. Furthermore, I sought to provide a robust theoretical and empirical basis from which to expose the hypocrisy of contemporary toponymy and demonstrate the powerful political role of place naming in urban development, noting how toponyms reflect the power relations and structural arrangements among disparate actors. To accomplish this goal, I had the following objectives:

1) To gain a critical understanding of the importance of *toponymy* in *planning* by generating from the respective academic literature of each a novel theoretical framework (*toponymic assemblage*) that describes the emergent, relational, and spatially grounded properties of place names (Chapter 2).

2) To develop an approach for exploring the generation and evolution of contested toponymic assemblages in the DTES, by outlining and operationalizing a robust, extended, and mixed method case study approach that uses archival/newspaper documentation, discourse analysis, and interview data to form a historically based, theoretically driven, and structurally aware study of toponyms in the DTES (Chapter 3).

3) To situate contemporary place conflicts within a historical context by constructing an interwoven (i.e. *defragmented,* in response to the goals of the RJ? project) historical analysis of toponyms in the DTES, highlighting their fluid, malleable, and potential qualities through a review of primary sources, including *newspaper articles* and

planning/policy documents (both historic and current) as well as a critical reading of the

secondary literature (Chapter 4).

4) To illuminate how toponymic assemblages are shaped in relation to contemporary

participatory planning processes and how they might inspire resistance, via 1) purposive

interviews with planners and individuals who were directly involved with the DTES

LAPP, and 2) a discourse analysis that considers the use and impact of toponyms within

the plan and related documentation (Chapter 5).

5) To bolster the activist research agenda of the community based project in which I was

immersed by considering how a complete understanding of toponymic power and its

limits can inform rights-based activism among disparate groups, both locally and across

scales (Chapter 6 epilogue).

1.3 How This Thesis Will Proceed

This thesis is organized into 5 chapters. This chapter briefly outlines the history of my

case study setting and the objectives for the research. Chapter 2 addresses Objective 1 by

providing a review of the literature in critical toponymy and critical planning and briefly explains

their relevance to this thesis. It first outlines how researchers have variously identified toponyms

as branding strategies, political tools, techniques of control, and instruments of resistance. It then

reviews the critical planning literature to demonstrate the ways that participatory planning is

often used by (local) states to manage and reconfigure the urban environment, and thinks through

the ways that planning acts to channel particular toponymic framings. The chapter then attempts

to broaden and enrich the critical toponymy literature by engaging with assemblage theory (in

particular that of DeLanda 2006; and McFarlane 2011a; 2011b) to advance a relational approach

to toponymy that involves thinking through the multiple ways that place names (*toponymic*

assemblages) are produced, or "assembled" in relation to broader sociomaterial forces. Finally, Chapter 2 argues that the critical theorizations of Henri Lefebvre (1991) and Ed Soja (1996; 2010) around the *spatial trialectic* of lived, perceived, and conceived space can be incorporated into a radically open assemblage framework to articulate resistance within critical toponymy, thereby adding an important element of critical spatial theory to what might otherwise be a descriptive and aspatial representation of complex sociomaterial processes.

Chapter 3 addresses Objective 2 by describing the methods used to complete this thesis. I provide further background for the study, reflect on my position in this research, and provide some justification for my methods. I then review my procedures, outline my approach to data analysis, and detail the qualitative strategies used to code and analyze my collected documentation. The chapter also links to numerous appendices further outlining my ethics protocol, data collection techniques, and coding approach. Finally, I reflect on the rigour of my study and review a few of the unavoidable limitations of the methods I have chosen.

Chapter 4 addresses Objective 3 by examining the historical mobilization of toponymic assemblages in the area now known as the Downtown Eastside. This chapter combines insights from both critical toponymy and critical planning while using a toponymic geneaology approach to excavate an ongoing *politics of toponymy* within the DTES*,* making use of the spatial trialectic to reveal how planning, policy, and resident activities have over time mobilized toponyms to generate urban transformations. In particular, this chapter focuses on the ways in which Japanese Canadian toponymies are woven into the fabric of the area. Over a series of five vignettes centred around key events, I examine the ebb and flow of toponyms such as "Japantown," "Skid Road," "Gastown," "Chinatown," and "Downtown Eastside" in relation to each other, show how such toponyms are defined by their malleability and potentiality, and demonstrate some of the

ways they have been mobilized through time. I reveal how abstract and (seemingly) banal toponymic assemblages mobilized through the media, planning, policymaking, and mapping have acted in the interest of power to motivate social and material transformations in the neighbourhood. Furthermore, I demonstrate how such interventions have come into conflict with on-the-ground understandings of the neighbourhood, sometimes in ways that have inspired resistance. The chapter concludes by reflecting on how historical assemblages set the stage for conflicts that erupted during the DTES LAPP.

Chapter 5 addresses Objective 4 by providing a case study that looks at how toponyms were used as a discursive technique within the DTES LAPP. Specifically, this chapter thinks through the ways that toponymic assemblages in the DTES were worked through abstract conceptions of space mobilized by the City of Vancouver, while pointing to alternative (naming) practices that emerged from grassroots claims to the lived space of the DTES. I demonstrate how the LAPP abstracted and channeled the toponymic assemblages of the neighbourhood, and investigate the way that the "Downtown Eastside" (as a low income political claim to lived space) became enrolled into that communicative milieu. I look at how the LAPP generated a normative, city-led policy vision for the DTES by drawing on the toponyms of "Gastown," "Strathcona," "Chinatown," and "Japantown" in ways that can potentially spur gentrification and capital-led redevelopment. The chapter concludes by demonstrating how the procedural flaws of the LAPP generated alliances between disparate actors and inspired resistance (toponymic and otherwise) against the city.

Finally, in Chapter Six I address Objective 5 by providing a discussion of my two empirical chapters in relation to my methods and my theoretical framework. I describe how my thesis has exposed an ongoing politics of toponymy in the DTES. I also provide examples of

how an assemblage approach has allowed me to connect toponymic assemblages to material and discursive urban transformations, while generating a radically emergent understanding of the DTES and expanding the literature in critical toponymy and critical planning. Furthermore, I reflect on some of the theoretical and positional limitations of this thesis and suggest directions for future research and activism. Assemblages are always dynamic, partial, and contestable, and because of these qualities I hope to highlight the nascent potential of toponymy in creating a more spatially just city.

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CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a review of the current academic literature informing my project

and a theoretical background for the empirical work in Chapters 4 and 5. It is organized as

follows. First, to advance an analytical understanding of Downtown Eastside (DTES) place

names that goes beyond simple description, I will review the emerging body of literature in

critical toponymy, a body of research that recognizes place names as being socially constructed

discursive entities that reflect the enactment of power and resistance upon the landscape (see

Rose-Redwood et al. 2010; Light & Young 2014; Vuolteenaho & Berg 2009). Second, I intend

to contribute to the literature on toponymy in the DTES by examining how ongoing and

overlapping processes of place naming have intersected with planning and policymaking

historically, as well as through the recently completed Local Area Planning Process (LAPP). To

do this, I review literature in *critical planning*, which (among other things) discusses the

emergence of *participatory* planning as a technology of neoliberalization[2] which enrolls citizens

into technocratic exercises that mediate and justify capital-led social and material

transformations in cities (see Gunder 2010; Porter 2014; Purcell 2009). Third, I will lay the

conceptual groundwork for my analysis of the DTES by outlining a theoretical framework that I

call *toponymic assemblage.* Here I draw on assemblage theory (DeLanda 2006; McFarlane

2011a; 2011b; 2011c) and place it into conversation with ideas around spatial production

(Lefebvre 1991; Soja 1996; 2010) to advance a relational (yet structurally aware) toponymic

perspective of the DTES.

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[2] In this thesis, I use the term *neoliberal(ization)* to denote a hybridized and variegated *process* of market-generated sociomaterial transformation rooted in place-based competition, privatization, and quick-fix policy regimes (Brenner and Theodore 2002; Peck and Tickell 2002).

2.2 Critical Toponymy

Toponymy, or, *the study of place naming*, has a long academic history within the diverse disciplines of geography, linguistics, anthropology, and philosophy, among others, dating back to the late 19th century (Rose-Redwood et al. 2010; Vuolteenaho & Berg 2009). While early studies in toponymy were primarily descriptive exercises that viewed place names as "objective" features of the landscape, a recent research agenda, identified by Vuolteenaho & Berg (2009) as *critical toponymy*, recognizes place names as being socially constructed and open to contestation (see also Pred 1990; Rose-Redwood et al. 2010). In the latter case, names are revealed as instruments of power that perform specific roles in the production and management of place.

Within critical toponymic studies four mutually constituent research foci can be identified. First, *political toponymies* view toponyms as a technique used by colonial/state powers to communicate hegemonic narratives and/or assert power (see Azaryahu 2006; 2009; Carter 1987; Rose-Redwood et al. 2010); Second, *toponymies of governmentality* draw on the work of French philosopher Michel Foucault to examine how names and coding schemes are used as mechanisms of classification, management, and control (see Rose-Redwood 2006; Rose-Redwood et al. 2010); Third, *toponymies of branding and commodification* examine the place name's role in encouraging capital accumulation (see Berg 2011; Light & Young 2014; Medway & Warnaby 2014; Vuolteenaho & Ainiala 2009); and Fourth, *toponymies of resistance* show how subaltern or groups use naming to counteract designations imposed "from above" (see Berg & Kearns 1996; Herman 1999; Kearns & Berg 2002).

Toponyms, both historic and contemporary, are a *political* technique of conquest and domination, yet they often act to *depoliticize the political* by appearing as "natural" and value-free (Berg 2011; Rose-Redwood et al. 2010; Vuolteenaho & Berg 2009). For instance, toponyms

have historically been used to advance imperialist goals in instances of colonialism. Carter (1987) demonstrates how the Australian state used maps and toponyms to generate a cohesive national identity and justify colonial actions at the expense of Indigenous groups. In a more recent context, both Azaryahu (2006; 2009) and Rose Redwood et al. (2010) have recognized neocolonial tendencies toward toponymic intervention by both the American and Israeli states that act to familiarize incoming groups with a new landscape while imposing regimes of political power. In other cases, such as in Germany and South Africa, nations have used toponymy to modify the discursive landscape after changes in political regimes, thereby promoting an internally-generated narrative of the state (Swart 2008). While such projects do not necessarily entail territorial expansion, they "reflect new power structures and officially sanction a particular version of history" (Swart 2008; p. 120).

State-led political toponymies often operate in conjunction with toponymies of governmentality, which often involve processes of geo-coding the world (see Rose-Redwood 2006) through interventions such as territorial inscription, street naming, and house numbering (in conjunction with other techniques, including maps, statistics, and the law, among others, see Blomley 2003; Harris 2004). Such systems of ordering along modernist and rational lines allow states to consolidate and exercise power through the identification of populations, and the facilitation of systems of infrastructure provision, taxation, and policing in ways that can potentially accelerate capital accumulation (Rose-Redwood 2009; Rose-Redwood et al. 2010).

In the contemporary era, political and governmental toponymic interventions crucially intersect with toponymies of branding and commodification, which expose the role of naming in light of neoliberal urban governance trends which encourage *place competition and urban entrepreneurialism*, *partnerships between public and private actors,* and the adoption of

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"creative class" economics to increase a city's global reputation and attract international capital in an age of austerity (Berg 2011; Light & Young 2014; Medway & Warnaby 2014; Rius Ulldemolins 2014, Rose-Redwood 2011; Vuolteenaho & Ainiala 2009). This growing field of toponymic study demonstrates how toponyms are often used by (local) state or private actors to symbolically affect understandings of place within value-adding processes (see Berg 2011; Light & Young 2014). In cases like these, toponyms become enrolled in the creation of exchange values as they replace and/or overlay outdated, negative, or unmarketable place-based discourses with positive and commodifiable ones (Greenberg 2008; Medway & Warnaby 2014; Rose-Redwood 2011). On the ground, processes of naming can also be embodied within urban inhabitants themselves, who over time are empowered through the merging together of place brands and personal lifestyles to erase, modify, or downplay previous toponymic understandings. In so doing, new toponyms can potentially devalue and ultimately displace the urban poor whose lifestyles and economic capital are inconsistent with brand objectives (see Hwang 2015).

Processes of toponymic commodification are often replete with contradictions. In some instances of development and neighbourhood "revitalization," the apparent neutrality of the intervention makes it seem free of sociopolitical or capitalistic motivations (see Berg 2011; Vuolteenaho & Berg 2009), as opposed to being explicitly implicated in value-adding processes (see Pike 2009). For example, Berg's (2011) research in Vernon, British Columbia, demonstrates how new suburban developments established on the "empty" unceded territories of the Syilx peoples have been given branded toponyms such as "Adventure Bay," and "Seasons in the Okanagan," and notes how these "banal namescapes" (p. 17) acted as an apolitical cloak that obscured processes of accumulation and downplayed the dispossession that took place when British colonists occupied the area 150 years earlier (see also Harris 2002). In a similar vein,

Light & Young (2014) note that European cities like Manchester (among others) have used street naming and aesthetic interventions to associate ordinary toponyms like "Northern Quarter" with cultural signifiers like "hipster-ism, creativity, fashion and music" (p. 10). In other instances, such as in Voulteenaho & Ainiala's (2009) study of Helsinki, Finland, the financialized aspect of the toponym is much more obvious. In this case, an older suburb was toponymically transformed as developers and the city rejected the use of traditional names with literal meanings ("Cold Bay," "Pair of Oars") in favour of implementing ones that evoked exotic locales ("Beach Sand," "Sun Gold") and were more likely to entice investment in the neighbourhood, thereby changing local perceptions while responding to global marketization pressures.

While the modes of inquiry listed above tend to focus on the top-down imposition of toponyms, communities do not always passively accept new names, and in some cases collective challenges to naming processes can arise (Rose-Redwood et al. 2010; Vuolteenaho & Berg 2009). Critical toponymies of *resistance*, drawing on Marxist, feminist, and cultural studies (see Sharp et al. 2005), have demonstrated that toponyms can be used as a technique of symbolic repossession to (re)claim place-identities from the powerful (Rose-Redwood et al. 2010). To date, much of the empirical work on toponymic resistance has shown how place naming has advanced the aims of anti-colonization movements in places such as Zanzibar, Hawaii, and New Zealand, where Indigenous groups have fought back against toponyms that have erased their heritage and/or framed them as "other" in relation to settlers (see Berg & Kearns 1996; Herman 1999; Kearns & Berg 2002; Myers 1996). This process often involves groups challenging systemic marginalization through the use of alternative namescapes, or by ensuring that new toponyms fail to take hold, performing a type of "symbolic resistance" to power (Rose-Redwood et al. 2010; p. 463) that either reinscribes toponyms erased through colonialism, or renames

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places in ways that counteract official designations (Alderman 2002; Kadmon 2004; Myers 1996; Nash 1999). Such interventions occur at multiple discursive levels, with toponyms often emerging informally in spoken dialogue, then being progressively mobilized through more formal techniques such as written articles and alternative maps (Berg & Kearns 1996; Kadmon 2004; Rose-Redwood et al. 2010). Groups may also mobilize place names beyond the abstract space of the map, creating visible indicators on the built landscape in the form of monuments, place markers, and street signs in attempts to assert representational control where they have otherwise been silenced (Alderman 2002; Rose-Redwood et al. 2010).

All four aforementioned aspects of critical toponymic study inform this research, but I expand from the above categories and use a novel theoretical framework that I refer to as *toponymic assemblage* (section 2.4) to advance a fluid and relational approach to toponymy. An assemblage approach still acknowledges the political, governmental, commodifiable, and resistant aspects of place naming identified within critical toponymy, yet it helps overcome the "top-down"/"bottom-up" view of toponymic construction implicit in the literature thus far. A relational approach facilitates a more dynamic, emergent, sophisticated, and multidirectional investigation of toponyms as they actually play out on the ground, intersecting for example with *planning and policymaking* as well as surrounding grassroots resistance. Practically, my study examines the ways that toponymic assemblages have been mobilized and contested historically, while also thinking of place names as elements of an ongoing strategy that privileges particular narratives over others to open the city up to intervention. To more fully operationalize this research approach, I now turn to the critical planning literature to reveal potential intersections with critical toponymy.

2.3 Critical Planning

Since the advent of modernism, and increasingly since World War II, cities have deployed the expertise provided by the profession of urban planning (in conjunction with policymaking) to devise practical solutions to socioeconomic problems through the management, organization, and rationalization of urban environments (see Cochrane 2007; Fischler 1998, Hall 2014). Planning began to play a significant role in the transformation of cities, and recognizing this importance, scholars began to identify trends and activities within the discipline while subjecting it to methodological evaluation. Researchers have pointed to a fundamental transformation within the discipline over the past thirty years, an era roughly coincident with the period of structural readjustment signified by the shift from the Keynesian welfare state to the current era of economic neoliberalization (see Harvey 2012; Innes 1995), which Harvey (2005) suggests is concomitant with the cultural transition from modernism to *postmodernism.* Prior to this turn, scholars note that cities throughout the global north (and often beyond) adhered to a centrally administered model of intervention aimed at alleviating social problems and funded by large-scale infusions of government money (see Berman 1982; Gandy 2002; Harvey 2012). Yet critical academics also demonstrate how cities began to "roll back" programs that intervened in the welfare of the social body during the period of state restructuring beginning in the late 1970s/early 1980s, and shifted their focus toward "rolling out" neoliberalizing policies that emphasized economic imperatives, particularly those aimed at generating "competitiveness" through redevelopment and the creation of urban spectacles like sporting events, cultural festivals, or signature buildings (Cochrane 2007; Harvey 2001; Peck & Tickell 1995; 2002). As numerous scholars suggest, this logic of urban competition created an atmosphere of civic urgency, where cities, having been forced into a situation of self-help, were compelled to marketize themselves, increase revenues, and support flows of capital at the expense of social

welfare promotion (Cochrane 2007; McCann & Ward 2011; Wilson 2004). Planning, both as a

discipline and as a political tool, became instrumental in the achievement of such imperatives,

and centrally funded initiatives began to be replaced by policies and processes that were 1)

generated *in situ,* in response to the needs of the local market, 2) adopted and adapted from other

cities in order to cost-effectively and efficiently incorporate "best practices" (Cochrane 2007;

Purcell 2009, McCann & Ward 2011), or 3) combined the two approaches. Contemporary urban

planning reflects a postmodern adjustment to state control, reflecting a neoliberalizing political

atmosphere by downloading responsibility, decentralizing governance, and moving toward an

individualized and ostensibly democratic model of implementation generated through public

participation in localized planning interventions (see Purcell 2009).

The *first key project* of critical planning focused squarely on the exposing the damaging

consequences of top-down "rational" modernist planning programs, which tended to destroy

community social cohesiveness and devastate the built environment in the name of progress and

broader economic imperatives (see Berman 1982). In response to such critiques, planning

scholars began to promote forms of practical and locally-based intervention based in

Habermasian theories of communicative action, and promoted ethical and emancipatory

engagements between cities and their inhabitants (see Habermas 1984; Hall 2014, Purcell 2009;

Roy 2015). Some scholars viewed this as a transition to a new and inclusive terrain for planning

which would replace the old and ineffective modernist practices. Instead of "telling" citizens

what to do, planners would now be "deeply embedded in the fabric of community, politics, and

public decision-making" through "interactive, communicative activit[ies]" (Innes 1995; p. 183).

Communicative planning practices gradually became the new orthodoxy, and they began to

expand globally during the 1990s (see Hall 2014). Indeed, Forester (1999) points to examples of

city-mediated planning in places as diverse as Cleveland and East St. Louis as well as sites in Israel, Norway, and Venezuela.

While proponents of communicative planning praised its ability to mediate between citizens and the (local) state, some academics such as Fischler (1998) sounded a note of caution, noting that implementation of communicative models in conjunction with the rollback of the welfare state would delegitimize human needs while promoting an illusory promise of prosperity and universal equality. Such analyses spurred a small subset of critical planning scholars to roll out a *second key project* in the early 2000s which exposed how planning processes, documents, and policies that were supposedly community-derived were prioritizing a neoliberal language of progress and efficiency and encouraging economic growth rather than social programs (see Gunder 2010; Purcell 2009; Wilson 2004). These new paradigms were vague and flexible and relied on a series of suggestions for urban development rather than setting explicit goals and rigid targets (see Cochrane 2007; Peck 2012). As McGuirk (2005) demonstrates, cities frame this flexibility as advantageous, since it presumably allows them to respond to changing needs while facilitating "local capacity building" (p. 64). On the other hand, the lack of a clear direction allows cities to decide which policies will be implemented, potentially allowing the social needs of a population to be subordinated to economic goals when tradeoffs become necessary (see McCann & Ward 2011; Winkler 2012). Indeed, as Baker & Ruming (2015) note, though such flexible planning programs may seem far from concrete, "as imaginative enterprises, strategic plan making, like all policymaking, creates political and spatial realities, and in turn these realities have material consequences" (p. 76).

The broader analyses and observations of communicative action described above concided with a *third key project* in critical planning that used procedural critique to describe

how planning was rolled out "on the ground." As numerous scholars noted, despite planning's promise of inclusion, democratic participation was often contained within narrowly prescribed parameters, and designed to make solutions acceptable to the community while appearing to lend credence to residents' concerns (Gunder 2010; Porter 2014; Purcell 2009). Researchers observed how small armies of planners would assess community needs via complex, highly organized, jurisdictionally-specific consultation strategies often involving a long process of project evaluations, reports, round tables, and supplementary exercises that would allow planners to exchange knowledge with the public in very specific and tightly controlled ways (Davison 2011; Davison et al. 2012; Gunder 2010; Parker 2012; Purcell 2009). While in theory participants in such planning programs were free to exercise their right to oppose particular initiatives, in many cases, the process promoted normative interventions while dismissing alternative viewpoints (Huisman 2014; Roy 2015; Winkler 2012).

Empirical studies of the procedural variety generated key insights into the inner workings of communicative planning. For example, McGuirk's (2005) detailed retrospective of metropolitan planning in Sydney demonstrates how planners solicited people's input and participation at the neighbourhood level to bring local interests in line with the microeconomic motivations of the state. In situations like this, planning *appears* to empower communities (Gunder 2010); meanwhile, the adoption of a plan is predetermined within a set of acceptable boundaries, and actions are justified by the public's participation in the consultation process (Huisman 2014; Purcell 2009; Parker 2012). In a more insidious vein, participatory planning processes have also been used to enroll people in their own displacement. Huisman's (2014) study of housing corporations in Amsterdam demonstrates how collective housing is brought into the market through participatory processes that frame property-led financialization as the only

alternative, making resistance difficult and forcing people to participate in their own demise.

Porter (2014) exposes a similar trend in Australia, where she frames participatory planning as a

procedural fix and a colonial technology of gentrification that "divert[s] attention away from the

processes that result in the actual, material transgression of rights through dispossession" (p.

394). The results of such planning programs are often manifested in zoning boundaries and land

use guidelines that technologically "demarcate, evaluate, and commodify the city" (Rogers 2014;

p. 125), render the urban landscape calculable, and produce places according to a capitalistic

discourse of "highest and best use" that attempts to make "progress" inevitable and

"improvements" uncontestable (Leffers & Ballamingie 2013; p. 147).

The literature on participatory planning has generated a substantial volume of empirical

study, yet most research to date has tended to focus on procedural examinations of the ways that

processes engage with citizens, noting that these exercises tend to serve the needs of power at the

expense of people on the ground. What they have not fully interrogated thus far is the way in

which discursive power is deployed in the language used by planners and participating citizens to

generate material interventions into the lived spaces of the city. It is this gap that my thesis

intends to fill.

Wedding the critical planning literature with critical toponymy creates room for a new

interrogation of toponymy itself. As Martin (2003) demonstrates, organizations and groups

operating at the local level will "draw upon and represent experiences of daily life in the material

spaces of a neighborhood" to create a "discourse […] that may be deployed to constitute places

and polities at a number of spatial scales" (p. 731). Importantly, such discursive framings can

challenge and/or support generic neighbourhood narratives created and promoted by planners

(among others), which allows for a deeper (and historically situated) understanding of the

"relationship between activism based on an idea of neighborhood and the material experiences of that place" (Martin 2003; p. 733). While discourses can be selectively used by those in power to create normative place-narratives, particularly within planning processes, local actors still have the power to enact toponymic resistance to the naming practices promoted by planners, policymakers, and developers. With these points in mind, I now outline the theoretical base from which I will 1) integrate the study of critical toponymy and critical planning, and 2) implement a nuanced exploration of the ways that planning, policymaking, and citizen resistance (among others) influence toponymic construction.

2.4 Toponymic Assemblages and the Production of Space

In this study, I contribute a theoretical framework called *toponymic assemblage* to tease out the ways that toponyms ebb and flow socially and materially within the city. Drawing on the work of DeLanda (2006) and McFarlane (2011a; 2011c), this framework places assemblage into conversation with Lefebvre's (1991) and Soja's (1996; 2010) theorizations around the trialectical production of space to think through the ways that toponyms are mobilized and contested around policymaking, planning, and media representation. Assemblage is an appropriate theoretical starting point for my investigation as it is important to remember that toponymy is not always a deliberative strategy, it is often mobilized implicitly and through non-direct means, including ways that remove agency from human actors on the ground.

Assemblages, according to DeLanda (2006) are dynamic entities composed of diverse elements which can brought together and/or torn apart by stabilizing and/or destabilizing processes. Building on the work of Deleuze, DeLanda (2006) states that assemblage can "apply to a wide variety of wholes constructed from heterogeneous parts" (p. 3) and "whose properties emerge from the[ir] interactions" (p. 5). In relation to the urban, McCann (2011) describes

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assemblage as a useful way of thinking through how "key actors, ideas and technologies are actively brought into productive co-presence in cities" (p. 143). McFarlane (2011b) states that assemblage is a "spatial grammar of urban learning" (p. 1) that describes the labour through which history, knowledges, and materialities, among other elements, are contested and aligned. For McFarlane (2011b) the assemblage is always emerging - it is "processual, generative and practice-based" as well as "unequal, contested and potentially transformative" (p. 1).

The use of assemblage theory in a toponymic context allows me to build on the current literature in critical toponymy by imagining place names as operating on a relational continuum, thereby moving beyond many of the implicit dualisms found in Foucauldian and Marxist approaches (see Rose-Redwood et al. 2010; Berg 2011). However, I also recognize that by theorizing toponyms as assemblages, there is a risk that this study will result in a narrow ontological engagement with naming processes that fails to expose broader issues such as inequality, racialization, and class-based injustice, a situation that goes against the principles of critical scholarship (see Brenner et al. 2011; Vuolteenaho & Berg 2009). In particular, both Brenner et al. (2011) and Jacobs (2012) warn against assemblage theorizations that reject the language of scale while leaning toward a "flat ontology," stating that relational networks of scaled political power can potentially get lost in the relentless horizontality and "situated flatness" promoted by such scholars (cf Farias 2011; Marston et al. 2005; Jones III et al. 2007). To mitigate this problem, I draw on assemblage thinkers who include scalar imaginaries as part of their theorizations. DeLanda (2006) describes how assemblages act at multiple scales simultaneously - for example, an organizational assemblage might operate across a wide range of scales, yet such scales always act in relation to each other - the assemblage is a "resulting emergent whole *at any given spatial scale*" (p. 32). McFarlane's (2011b) understanding of scale

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is different, yet resonant: he notes that it is never obvious what scale an assemblage is operating in and stresses that there is a blurring of scale when working with assemblages, preferring to use the word "translocal" (p. 33) to de-emphasize spatial register (see Marston et al. 2005).

Further responding to the critique of Brenner et al. (2011), I attempt to place assemblages into conversation with critical urban theory to advance an understanding of the DTES as a spatiotemporal field through which toponymic power relations can be examined relationally while offering "useful insights for exploring and mapping […] emergent geographies of dispossession, catastrophe and possibility" (p. 237). I draw on Lefebvre (1991) and Soja (1996; 2010) to express the ways in which toponyms respond socially and materially to the dialectical interplay among the perceived, lived, and conceived spaces of the city (also known as the *spatial trialectic,* see below).[3] As Vasudevan's (2015a; 2015b) recent work attests, ideas around assemblage and spatial production can be used productively and in tandem, and as such, I take a critical spatial perspective that moves beyond a historical accounting of the toponymies of the DTES (though it also provides that element) and acknowledge Soja's (2010) call for researchers to seek "spatial justice" by paying attention to the "consequential geographies" (p. 1) produced through inequality while opening up room for resistance.

An assemblage framework recognizes that toponyms such as the Downtown Eastside or "Japantown" are more than just apolitical place-framings, they are networks of meaning that emerge in response to a complex array of discursive, material, and social activities (see Farias 2011), including activism, planning, policy, and the media. Such toponyms are radically emergent, because they are not only fluid in relation to each other, but they are each defined by their malleability and potentiality. This theorization of toponyms-as-assemblages contains the idea that individual toponyms act in relation to processes of *territorialization* (which stabilize

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[3] Or what Soja (1996) refers to as Firstspace, Secondspace and Thirdspace (perceived, conceived, lived.)

particular assemblages) and *deterritorialization* (which destabilize assemblages, see DeLanda 2006; McFarlane 2011a). Assemblages often require reinforcement and legitimation via various forms of intervention, with moments of stability coinciding with the strength of the networks used to support them (see DeLanda 2006). In instances of territorialization, toponymic assemblages can, for example, be sharpened via state appendages, such as through the imposition of jurisdictional boundaries (i.e. interventions in conceived space), defined by the internal homogeneity of class-based, cultural, or organizational networks within lived space, or respond to the material forms of perceived space (see also Cresswell 2011). Deterritorializing processes operate in the opposite manner by blurring boundaries and increasing the heterogeneity of a particular network.

Lefebvre's (1991) theories around the production of space are a valuable tool for understanding how toponymic assemblages can become influenced by (and enrolled in) powerful political projects (such as urban planning). In Lefebvrian terms, spatial production plays out in three moments, also known as the "spatial trialectic" (Soja 1996), which is *set apart* from dualistic, essentialist understandings of the world and *enables* researchers to move toward a more emergent and open epistemology of space. The first moment of the trialectic, *perceived space,* is the visible, material space that is the "objective" result of the relations of the mode of production and the social relations of the mode of reproduction (buildings, roads, etc). Perceived space contains the "realities" that are communicated by urban inhabitants among each other. The second moment, *conceived space,* refers to representational territories often generated in the name of power and exchange value. Conceived space denotes the technical abstractions created and communicated by planners, architects, policymakers, and scientists and the media to demarcate "what is acceptable" in spaces, such as Cartesian coordinates, boundaries, property

systems, and the law (see Lefebvre 1991; Stanek 2008; see also Harvey 1989; Purcell 2002) The

third moment, *lived space*, represents the territories of everyday life and use value as experienced

by inhabitants (see Lefebvre 1991; Soja 1996; Stanek 2008). Soja (1996) and Lefebvre (1991)

suggest that lived space is a radically open space of emancipatory praxis, and grassroots

activities emanating from lived space can potentially provide a unifying umbrella for groups

fighting for social justice locally, regionally, and beyond (see also Soja 2010). While trialectical

thinking is potentially *limited* in its ability to fully excavate the root causes of injustice (due to its

rejection of cause-effect reasoning), it instead provides a way forward for those seeking radical

social transformation. Indeed, the pace at which geographers have taken up Lefebvrian trialectics

since the translation of *The Production of Space* in 1991 demonstrates its critical conceptual

relevance in the contemporary moment of advanced liberal capitalism (see Purcell 2002; Kipfer

et al. 2008).

In this thesis, trialectical thinking adds a new element to assemblage theorization because

it provides a historical, social, and above all *spatial* gounding to what might otherwise be a

purely ontological analysis. Indeed, Lefebvrian space can be thought of as an "assemblage of

assemblages" (Bender 2009; p. 316; Jacobs 2012), a concept thus described by DeLanda (2006):

> *"cities are assemblages of people, networks, organizations, as well as of a variety of infrastructural components, from buildings and streets to conduits for matter and energy flows; nation-states are assemblages of cities, the geographical regions organized by cities, and the provinces that several regions form."* (p. 5-6)

Each assemblage is a component of and constituted by other assemblages, each of which

is dialectically and sociomaterially constructed via the relational interplay of people, processes,

discourses, and places (see Figure 2). Furthermore, spatial trialectics and assemblage
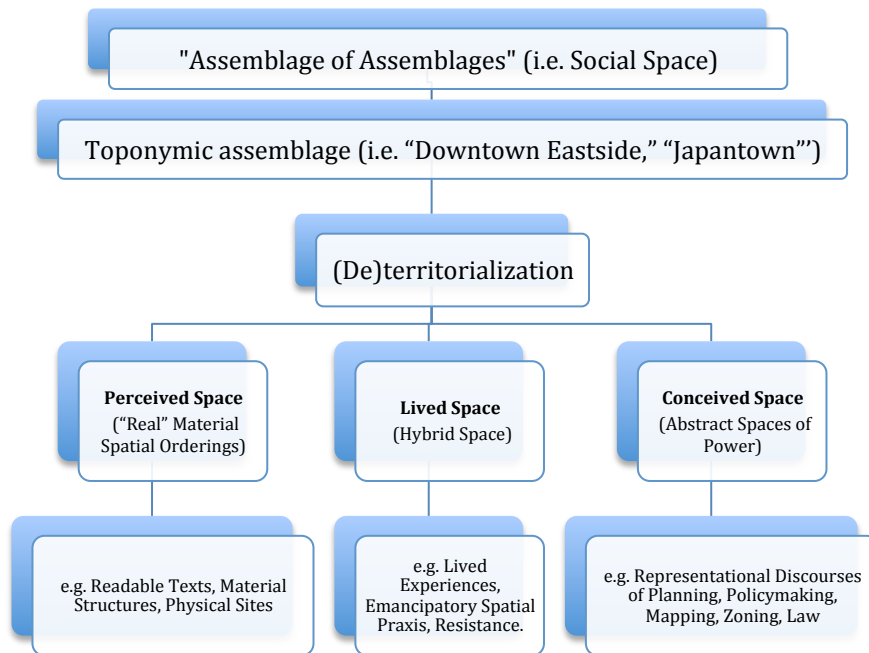
Figure 8: The Toponymic Assemblage (drawing on DeLanda 2006; Lefebvre 1991; Soja 1996; 2010).

thinking both place a high conceptual value on relationality, emergence, and becoming. For Soja (1996) the three spatial moments emphasize a profound coming together. For McFarlane (2011b), assemblages have "compositional unity" yet represent the "unfolding of distinct sociomaterial rationalities and processes through emerging and unequal milieu" (p. 30). Similarly, DeLanda (2006) describes the processes that make up assemblages as a "synthesis of emergent properties" (p. 19) that are functionally interdependent. Clearly, there are distinct similarities between the two conceptual frameworks, and by combining the two, a more grounded assemblage theorization emerges which is well suited to this thesis' examination of toponymy and planning.

By critically reading discursive practices (such as toponyms surrounding planning and policy) through a trialectical, assemblage based investigation of lived, conceived, and perceived spaces, I attempt to ground representations in a "critical epistemology of time and space, history and geography, industry and city" that reveals the "materiality of the immaterial" (Prigge 2008;

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p. 60) and exposes the maneuverings of power. As such, this study deploys a unique approach to toponymy by, 1) generating a detailed description of the toponymic ebbs and flows between the "Downtown Eastside," "Japantown," "Powell Street," "Gastown," "Strathcona," and many others; 2) revealing "key moments" of urban reconfiguration as mechanisms of inequality production, and 3) explaining such moments via a productive toponymic critique that keeps structural processes "in view" (see Brenner et al. 2011). In this study, I view particular key events in the DTES as entry points into history rather than single events in a sequence. For example, events such as the DTES LAPP are made possible through previously assembled and actively contested toponymic circuits, yet they also (re)assemble the toponymic landscape of the community by channeling particular neighbourhood identities and territorial formations (see McFarlane 2011a; Wise 2005). Significantly, my theoretical approach also recognizes the active and mulitplicitous role of lived space as the generator of alternative toponymic interventions (see Lefebvre 1991; Soja 1996; 2010). However, toponymic resistance doesn't simply arise from the ground, nor is there an inherent "authenticity" to toponyms of resistance, they are mobilized politically in response to externally generated, often market-based toponyms (promoted through, for example, planning/policy constructs or media representations) which create friction within the lived spaces of the city. Resistance to such abstract state-sponsored narratives is possible because the toponymic assemblage is more than just a number of adjacent categories in a static formation, it exists in fleeting "key moments" of alignment that can be challenged and disrupted (see Lefebvre 1991; McFarlane 2011c). In this way, my study attempts to reveal pathways toward toponyms that operate in contradistinction to toponyms of power, profit, and exchange.

2.5 Conclusion

Critical toponymy, critical planning, and toponymic assemblages all work together to inform my study of toponymy, planning, and policymaking in the DTES. Chapters 4 and 5 of this thesis will draw strategically on the empirical literatures and assemblage approach outlined above to advance a nuanced examination of the toponymies of the DTES, while Chapter 6 will explain how my thesis contributes to the broader literature. These chapters will examine how toponyms have been (and are being) discursively and materially mobilized through media representations, planning programs, and policymaking (among others), while also scrutinizing the strategic moments where grassroots resistance caused friction within such toponymic regimes. Chapter 6 will also discuss how rights-based activism has provided a fruitful way of thinking through toponymic resistance in the DTES. In that discussion, I will draw on my empirical illustrations in Chapters 4 and 5 and outline some potential ways that naming can generate and reinforce subaltern claims to the DTES in the face of ever-increasing development pressures being placed upon the neighbourhood. I now move on to Chapter 3, where I will describe the methods that I have used to complete this study.

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CHAPTER 3

METHODS

3.1 Community Entry and Research Timeline

This research began in the summer of 2013 as I relocated from Winnipeg, Manitoba to

Vancouver, British Columbia. At the time I was enrolled at the University of Manitoba, and I

had just been recruited to be a part of a larger research project (*Revitalizing Japantown?: A

Unifying Exploration of Human Rights, Branding, and Place*, hereafter referred to as RJ?), and I

was asked by my thesis supervisor (the Principal Investigator of RJ?) to move to Vancouver for

the duration of my Master's degree. RJ? was working with local partners in the Downtown

Eastside (DTES) neighbourhood of Vancouver to shed light on the human rights legacy of that

community amidst its long history of socioeconomic marginalization, political oppression, and

ultimately dispossession and dispersal. As part of this broader research project, I was asked to

explore the toponymic dimensions of the DTES in relation to a recently enacted Local Area

Planning Process (LAPP), particularly looking at how the name "Japantown" was being

deployed as a vehicle for urban transformation within the LAPP.

As a result of my involvement with RJ?, I was immediately able to lay the groundwork

for my project and become embedded in my research site when I arrived in Vancouver in August

2013. Upon my relocation I was given access to a study area at the Vancouver Japanese

Language School, located at 487 Alexander Street in the DTES. I then began to explore the City

of Vancouver Archives for historical planning and policy documents related to the DTES, which

allowed me to begin situating the LAPP in relation to previous interventions in the

neighbourhood. At the same time, through my connection to RJ? I was able to establish myself in

the community and begin building an extensive network of contacts. From the outset I adopted a

reflexive[4] attitude toward my position in the community by recognizing that I was a part of the social milieu that I would be examining, and I strove for a deep understanding of the neighbourhood based in ongoing interactions with residents and allies (see Berg 2001). Such interactions began early on when I participated in a community advisory gathering for the RJ? project in November 2013, which allowed me to present some of my research goals and initial archival findings to a number of community partners. At that event I received valuable feedback from long-time members of the DTES community, many of whom subsequently became valued contributors to my project due to their involvement with the LAPP.

Though the LAPP was entering its final stages when I arrived in Vancouver, I was able to attend several meetings and open houses between August 2013 and March 2014, where I had informal conversations with residents, city staff, and other stakeholders about the LAPP and its procedures. I also observed the contentious City Hall hearings that marked the conclusion of the process in March 2014, and I recorded notes and impressions of events such as these in an academic journal as my research proceeded. Significantly, the housing activists, social enterprise workers, low income advocates, and members of Japanese Canadian groups in the DTES (among others) that I met during this period helped me gain acceptance in the community. These individuals also led me to potential key informants and valuable textual resources as I prepared my research proposal, which was completed in June 2014. I continued my archival research throughout Summer 2014, and in September I moved my degree program to Queen's University. I then prepared and submitted my ethics protocol (see Appendix A), which was approved in November 2014 after minor revisions. It was at this point that I began a purposive interview

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[4] I use the term "reflexive" simply to acknowledge the effect of my presence on my research site. Kobayashi (2003) argues that self-reflexivity in the form of relentless introspection can undermine the ability of a researcher to effect real social change. Following her advice, self-reflexivity played a minor role in my project as I instead strove to make a meaningful and *transformative* contribution to the community based on my embeddedness and interactions.

program, soliciting input from members of the LAPP committee and city planners involved in the creation of the plan.

In addition to my observations of the LAPP, I was also able to build connections within the DTES through volunteer involvement and research assistantships. Through the RJ? project, I was twice able to participate in the annual Powell Street Festival of Japanese Canadian (JC) culture, where I met many members of the DTES and JC communities. I was also able to build broader relationships with JCs through my regular presence at the Vancouver Japanese Language School, and through RJ? connections to the Powell Street Festival Society and the Nikkei National Museum (among others). Furthermore, as a research assistant, I helped organize and document a series of arts workshops in the DTES through the latter half of 2014. My active role in these workshops allowed me to establish trust within the community and became a familiar face to residents and service providers in the neighbourhood.

My ongoing presence in the community gave me several advantages. First, I was able to place my research in the context of the lived experiences of the DTES and build relationships with those who would eventually lead me to intimate knowledge of the community. Second, my willingness to give of my time and make a practical contribution in the neighbourhood helped me gain respect and allowed me to easily progress in my research. Third, my community involvement gave me an advantage when I started my interview program, because I was able to recruit subjects and develop a focused program that drew on my experience and knowledge of the lived spaces of the community. Finally, this embedded understanding of the people and the places of the DTES allowed me an advantage in data analysis, because I was able to grasp subtexts and glean richer results from both interview and archival data.

3.2 Methodological Justification

I approached this project as an extended case study drawing on Burawoy's (1998) Extended Case Method (ECM). As Barata (2010) describes, ECM is a reflexive research method that encompasses "data collection, analysis, and theory building" (p. 374) that requires that the researcher 1) make close observations (through ethnographic case study methods such as interviewing and document analysis[5]) within the research site over an extended period, 2) situate those observations within a local, national, and transnational context, and 3) think about how theory develops and informs the case throughout the research process (Burawoy 1998). I approached my case in this way so that I could contextualize my research within networks of power and knowledge while acknowledging the structural forces that produced such effects.

Drawing on Burawoy (1998), the ECM approach requires that I take the role of participant rather than observer to acknowledge that my existence as a researcher in the field can be seen as an intervention into the lived spaces of people involved in my research. Second, the approach requires that I acknowledge that my empirical observations cannot be divorced from their relationships to the historical and spatial processes that have occurred in my site of inquiry. In my study, I achieve this goal through a rigorous program of archival analysis and media research to reconstruct the (toponymic) development of the Downtown Eastside through time. Third, the approach requires that I acknowledge that the local differences that I observe in my research site are the product of larger external forces emanating from multiple scales, and I bring such forces to light via a careful reading of empirical and theoretical literature relating to my case, as well as by gleaning significant insights from archival documentation. Finally, using an ECM approach allowed me to bring critical social theory into the field, and throughout my fieldwork I remained focused on the ways that theory could be applied to my observations while

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[5] I provide these data collection methods as an example as Burawoy (1998) is not prescriptive about the sources one might use to generate an extended case, he simply urges researchers to remain aware of their influence while collecting data.

remaining open minded as to which theoretical constructs might be appropriate in relation to developing new ideas (see Sayer 1992). While my study period was short, my program of observation was limited, and my ability to make detailed cross-case comparisons was restricted, ECM principles allowed me to move beyond a conventional, deductive, and/or highly-procedural approach and gave me the methodological flexibility to work within a setting where the ethics and politics of research are highly contested (see Burawoy 1998).

3.3 Ethical Reflections

I took a number of measures to ensure the ethical integrity of my research process. First, in compliance with Queen's University policy, I completed the CORE (Course on Research Ethics) training program (see certificate in Appendix B), which outlines the practical application of TCPS 2: Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans (2nd Edition). Second, I worked in close consultation with my primary supervisor, who gave me feedback on my research design to ensure that my presence in the neighbourhood was ethically sound, my project could be completed in a reasonable time frame, and that the study aligned with the goals of RJ? as a whole. Finally, I submitted my ethics protocol to the Geography Unit Research Ethics Board, who, after minor revisions, sent it to the Queen's University General Research Ethics Board (GREB) for expedited review. At the request of the GREB, I made further minor revisions and began my interview program soon after receiving ethical approval (see Appendix C for approval).

Interview participants were given a Letter of Informed Consent that explained their role in the project. In this letter, they were given the choice to conduct the interview either at the Vancouver Japanese Language School, or somewhere that was comfortable and convenient for them. Participants were also given the option to refuse to answer questions if they felt

uncomfortable, or to stop the interview at anytime without negative consequences if they experienced any emotional distress, though no one decided to exercise either option. Participants were made aware at the outset that the interview would be recorded so it could be transcribed and used as data. All recordings were transcribed verbatim and participants were given the choice to review their transcripts for content and accuracy if they desired. While several participants chose to do so, only two requested minor changes. In addition, because of the close working relationships that had formed between committee members and planners during the LAPP process, a few participants expressed concern that their identity might be revealed through the nature of their answers. However, they were assured that all information would be kept confidential and that potential identifiers would be removed in the research results.

For some, including Baxter & Eyles (1997), a process of *member checking* is important for establishing the credibility and validity of an interview program, because it allows participants to check how their opinions and meanings have been interpreted in the final research report. However, I did not include a process of member checking in my ethics protocol, as it would potentially lend epistemological privilege to the participants by allowing them to change or modify how their words had been interpreted, regardless of the fact that they had approved their transcripts for publication (see Baxter & Eyles 1997; Cho 2006). This was a particular concern for me as many of my interviews were conducted with planners and businesspeople that may have wanted to modify interpretations that were critical of their actions. Furthermore, since member checking techniques cannot guarantee knowledge claims (Cho 2006), I decided instead to write in close consultation with my primary supervisor while using techniques such as triangulation between multiple data sources to ensure the credibility of my interpretations.

3.4 Procedures

My analysis of DTES toponymy followed two overarching courses. In the first course, I focused closely the ways that planning, policy, and media discourses have historically defined the area. In the second course, I examined the ways that planning (in the form of the LAPP) is now being used to transform discursive understandings of the DTES. Conducting these courses in tandem allowed me to examine the present depiction of the "Downtown Eastside" in relation to other place names ("Japantown") and in the context of similar place naming histories and practices both within and adjacent to the DTES (such as Gastown, Strathcona, and Chinatown). This idea evolved over the course of the research, but it was fundamentally informed by the broader goals of the RJ? project, the interests of my primary supervisor, as well as my own interest in planning as a technology of urban transformation. I used a mixed method approach to data collection and analysis that would allow me to triangulate my results, drawing from an array of sources to form a cohesive, well rounded, and historically grounded understanding of toponymy and planning in the DTES. My data sources included texts from archival documentation, newspaper articles, and the DTES LAPP, as well as the perspectives of key informants via individual interviews, all of which will be described in detail.

3.4.1 Textual Analysis

Textual, or discourse analysis has become an indispensable ethnographic tool of qualitative social scientists, and it is based on the assumption that language not only acts as a window into social life, but it acts in relation to non-textual social elements (Fairclough 2003). In my study, I performed a textual analysis of historical documentation to place contemporary planning processes and their related toponymies into a broader context, while attempting to identify the key moments in which toponyms such as "Japantown" and "Skid Road" emerged. I

also analyzed the 2014 DTES Local Area Plan as well as documentation released during the planning process. Here, I describe these programs in detail.

3.4.1.1 Archival Documentation

At the outset of my project I engaged in a targeted program of archival research to assess the ways that the area now known as the Downtown Eastside has been toponymically framed within planning, policy, and common vernacular. I began by conducting a search of the City of Vancouver Archives web-based online record system (running on AtoM 2.1), which contains detailed information on records available in the archive. I searched using keywords such as "Downtown Eastside," "Gastown," and "Japantown," combined these terms with the word "planning," and placed all pertinent files into a spreadsheet that was separated by search terms. I then used this spreadsheet to guide the document retrieval process. In the archives, I examined the files deemed most relevant based on the parameters of the study, such as planning documents, policy programs, and letters and reports that described the area. Files that were deemed important to my study were photographed and stored digitally for future analysis. At the same time, another researcher working on the RJ? project was also undertaking a similar program of archival research, and we combined our efforts to ensure that we would retrieve documents that were relevant to both of our projects while making the most of our time in the archives. The 54 individual files that were retrieved were examined for content, and then descriptive information regarding dates, contents, topics, document creation, and retrieval was added to each document for ease of analysis. Furthermore, each file was linked to a spreadsheet (see Appendix D) containing general descriptions of contents as well as reference information. The purpose of this activity was to gain a broadly sequential understanding of how planning and

policy have been rolled out in the DTES while revealing the historic names for the community, allowing me to make longitudinal comparisons.

3.4.1.2 Newspaper Research

My research also included a program of media analysis to reveal how the DTES has been historically represented within public discourse. To achieve this, I first used secondary sources such as Davis' (2011) chronological *History of Metropolitan Vancouver* (among many others) to identify key "events" or "periods" in the history of the area (for example, the 1907 Anti-Asiatic Riots, the uprooting of JCs in 1942, or the formation of "Skid Road" in the 1950s and 60s) while pinpointing specific dates and articles. Because online keyword searches of Vancouver newspapers were not available prior to 1987, I searched the microfilm archives of both the *Vancouver Province* and the *Vancouver Sun* for articles within these temporal parameters to assess their relevance. I retrieved a minimum of five articles corresponding to each event or period, catalogued them in a spreadsheet, saved them in digital format, and cross-referenced them as I proceeded, while also noting the secondary sources that guided the search. I also took descriptive field notes for each article to guide me in my analysis. Searches *after* 1987 were conducted online using keywords such as "Downtown Eastside," "Japantown," and "Gastown," and significant articles were catalogued (see Appendix E for spreadsheet and a summary table of key toponymic framings). A total of 61 articles were retrieved pre-1987, and 115 post-1987. In addition, an online search of the Japanese Canadian publication *The New Canadian* yielded 6 relevant articles, which were catalogued in a similar fashion to that shown in Appendix E.

3.4.1.3 Local Area Plan and Planning Documentation

The final part of my textual analysis involved collecting and organizing documentation related to the 2014 Local Area Plan. The plan itself is easily available online at the City of

Vancouver website, while process documentation was provided to me voluntarily by a member

of the LAPP Committee. Process documents included public documentation such as minutes

from committee meetings, event summaries, executive summaries, presentations, maps,

resolutions, and terms of reference. All such documents (N=194) were organized chronologically

and thematically, and stored in QSR's NVIVO Qualitative Data Analysis software (hereafter

referred to as NVIVO) for analysis. In addition, I created a spreadsheet that showed the timeline

of the LAPP, drawing on the collected documents to highlight key moments in the evolution of

the plan. I then scoured the Local Area Plan and ancillary documentation for toponymic referents

and drew out significant themes to reveal how planners and participants framed the places and

inhabitants of the DTES during the course of the planning process and within the plan itself.

3.4.2 Key Informant Interviews

I began soliciting interviews in January 2015, focusing on individuals who were closest

to the planning process, namely planners and members of the LAPP committee. Committee

members and planners were selected using a purposive sampling approach (Berg 2001). I began

by personally communicating with committee members that I was previously acquainted with,

then I solicited further interviews by contacting individuals that were identified via snowball

sampling (Berg 2001), by e-mailing committee members that were listed on the City of

Vancouver's website (COV 2013b), and by contacting planners listed in the plan itself (COV

2014). In all cases, I attempted to gain access to individuals who I believed would give me

diverse perspectives on naming and planning process in the DTES, the history of the

neighbourhood, and the ongoing transformations occurring in the wake of the LAPP. In total, I

conducted N=14 interviews. These interviews included city planners (N=2), low income LAPP

participants (N=4), representatives of Business Improvement Associations (N=2), Japanese

Canadian cultural delegates (N=2), social development advocates (N=2), the head of a neighbourhood group (N=1), and a service provider (N=1). Interviews were conducted over a one-month span in January and February 2015. Demographically, interviewees (3 women and 11 men), while skewing male, represented a diversity of ages (~25-70), ethnicities (3 with Aboriginal ancestry, 2 with Japanese Canadian ancestry, 1 with Chinese Canadian ancestry, 6 with European ancestry, and 3 with mixed ethnicity), and incomes. Fully half of my participants were current DTES residents, while the remainder had an interest in the neighbourhood due to their organizational affiliations. Furthermore, the majority of participants had a post-secondary education (10 out of 14), a statistic that reflects the power and privilege that existed on the LAPP committee in contrast to the neighbourhood itself, where 61% of residents have a high school diploma or less (see COV 2013a). My sample is *generally* representative of the LAPP committee, which was my target demographic.

Anonymity and confidentiality were ongoing issues with my interview program, particularly because of the small sample size and close relationships between participants. Indeed, the DTES LAPP was a public consultation and memberships in the various committees and participation in meetings is a matter of public record. Furthermore, participants in the LAPP interacted with each other on a semi-weekly basis throughout the duration of the consultation, meaning that research participants could potentially "guess" each other's identities by their responses to particular research questions. Therefore, I have endeavoured to maintain anonymity by identifying participants by a numeric code, and confidentiality by ensuring that direct quotes cannot be attributed to any individual. Demographic information regarding particular participants has also been largely suppressed within the text, though in some cases, I have included a participant's group affiliation to contextualize their statements. The numeric identifiers of

participants are shown in a table in Appendix F along with their group affiliation in order to demonstrate the diversity of the sample.

Interview lengths ranged from 40 to 65 minutes with an average length of 52 minutes. I consciously attempted to keep interviews within the promised length of 60 minutes, and was for the most part successful. While several participants chose to meet at the Vancouver Japanese Language School, I also conducted interviews at city hall, in coffee shops, community hubs, a private home, as well as my own home. I had met 5 out of 14 of my interviewees on previous occasions, which made it easy to establish a friendly atmosphere for our interview. The remaining 9 participants also seemed comfortable with the interview program and were eager to relate their experiences with the LAPP, including some of the more contentious aspects of the process. Interviews were semi-structured and consisted of open-ended questions drawn from an interview guide (see Appendix G), which left me with the flexibility to insert prompts and follow-up on leads during the course of the interview (Dunn 2010). This system allowed me to gather similar information from a diverse set of informants while making the most efficient use of both of our time (Bernard 2006). I began by asking very general questions about the participant and their role in the LAPP, then moved on to a more detailed discussion about the planning process, controversies surrounding the plan, how naming was used in the plan, and the way that policies in the plan might affect the community. As new topics emerged, I inserted probes to elicit further information from participants.

3.4.3 Field Notes

I took *field notes* as I proceeded through my study to work through ideas and record my thoughts regarding the research process. I used a variety of note-taking techniques to accomplish this task. First, Berg (2001) notes that journaling is an important method in ethnographic

research, and I kept an academic journal (both paper and digital) in which I chronicled impressions of events that occurred during the course of my research, including community meetings, lectures, and informal interviews. While my journal was only updated at irregular intervals, it provided a window into my progress and helped me to draw out themes as I began to construct my argument and build my theoretical framework. Second, I meticulously catalogued my archival/media data sources in spreadsheets and took notes regarding my impressions of each document as I proceeded. This procedure allowed me to quickly scan through my list of sources to find ones most appropriate to my argument as I wrote my thesis. Third, I created a descriptive timeline of the LAPP, and catalogued, annotated and took notes on LAPP documentation when appropriate. This timeline proved invaluable as I constructed my interview guide, as I already had an advanced knowledge of how planning proceeded. I was also able to ask educated, probing questions of my participants during the semi-structured interviews as a result of the knowledge I gained from the timeline and field notes.

3.5 Data Analysis

3.5.1 Archival Documentation and Newspaper Analysis

In studying my archival and newspaper documentation I drew on the organizational structure described in sections 3.4.1.1 and 3.4.1.2 to immediately begin writing my research results. All documentation had been organized systematically and chronologically in a spreadsheet and cross-referenced with digital files, and each spreadsheet/database entry included basic information on the contents and key themes of each file. As such, I was able to begin writing my historical chapter (Chapter 4) in an iterative manner, tracking back and forth between documents, analysis, and results while building my database and searching out further documentation when needed or appropriate. Furthermore, the personal connections that I had

made in the community also led me to textual resources and pointed to important historical

events that helped further my investigation. In this way, I believe I was able to build a

comprehensive, nuanced, and well-researched chapter that reveals the historical ebb and flow of

planning and toponymy in the Downtown Eastside.

3.5.2 Local Area Plan and Planning Documentation

As described in section 3.4.1.3, I used NVIVO to navigate the extensive Local Area

Planning Documentation (N=194 documents). First, I examined the Local Area Plan itself,

coding the text to elicit major themes and using NVIVO's note-taking function to mark down my

thoughts as I proceeded. I also coded all toponymic references within the plan with the intention

of describing the ways that toponyms were used and places were represented. Process documents

such as meeting minutes, presentations, and event summaries were read through and coded for

toponymic referents.

3.5.3 Key Informant Interviews

All of my recorded interviews were transcribed verbatim and imported into NVIVO,

which allowed me to distill the information into key themes using codes while taking notes. The

interview analysis involved a series of repeated steps to refine the analysis as themes emerged

from the data (see Appendix H for coding strategy and code families). My approach included

elements of grounded theory because it allowed for an iterative interplay between data and

analysis, and the comparison of emergent variables with empirical findings (see Charmaz 2001).

However, I eschewed the notion that categories and variables would emerge inductively from the

data, because I believe such a position ignores the socially and historically contingent conditions

of research, as well as the normative assumptions that researchers bring to the data (see Burawoy

1998; Sayer 1992). As Harvey (1973) notes: "concepts, categories, relationships, and methods […] are not independent of […] existing social relationships" (p. 125).

To develop my analysis I scoured and coded each interview line by line. In a manner similar to that used for the planning documentation, I coded large blocks of text for toponymic references such as "Japantown" and "Downtown Eastside" to reveal how each interviewee applied and understood such framings. Simultaneously, I narrowly coded the text to reveal the key themes that ran through the interviews. Then I went through each interview again, refining my codes and adding more where appropriate. I then reviewed my coding structure to review instances of similar codes, and merged and/or grouped codes whenever possible to more easily draw out themes. In total, 53 codes were developed, which were then grouped into 8 code families, providing a convenient starting point for my analysis. To a small extent, I used the notetaking function of the NVIVO software to write in detailed descriptions of my findings as I read through my transcripts. However, at this point I found it more helpful to sit down with a pen and paper and write out the key themes to assess how they articulated with my theoretical framework, a process which allowed me to immediately create a draft outline and begin writing my results. As I wrote, I tracked back and forth between my outline, theoretical framework, my document analysis, and my interview findings, a process which allowed me to effectively see the relationships between these elements.

3.6 Rigour

Tracy (2010) argues that processes of rich rigour are at the core of excellent qualitative research. A richly rigorous study is defined as one that "uses sufficient, abundant, appropriate, and complex theoretical constructs" marked by *data and time in the field, sample(s), context(s),* and *data collection and analysis processes* (Tracy 2010; p. 840). For my project, my time in the

field lasted approximately 18 months from August 2013 to February 2015, and the data collected within this period included N=54 archival documents, N=182 newspaper articles, N=194 LAPP documents, and N=14 interviews. While my study was a constant process of learning and re-learning how to do research, the extensive time I spent in the field allowed me to work though many of the difficulties I encountered, and I was also able to collect an interesting and significant quantity of data that I have triangulated and synthesized in a way that I believe sufficiently supports the claims made in my thesis. Given the goal of my study, which was to produce a historically grounded examination of toponymy and planning in the Downtown Eastside with a focus on the LAPP, I also believe that the samples I have chosen are relevant in the context of my study: the archival and newspaper documentation have allowed me to add historical nuance to my analysis, while the planning documentation and the interviews with planning participants were crucial in gaining a deep understanding of the LAPP itself.

According to Tracy, rigor in data collection and analysis can be assessed by asking if the researcher "use[d] appropriate procedures in terms of field note style, interviewing practices, and analysis procedures" (p. 841). More specifically, Baxter & Eyles (1997) identify four key criteria for assessing qualitative research: credibility, transferability, confirmability, and dependability. *Credibility* refers to the ability of participants, academics, and laypeople to understand/recognize the experiences described and interpreted by the researcher. I attempted to promote credibility in this study by working recursively with my primary supervisor while triangulating between multiple sources to ensure that my findings reflected both localized experiences and broader societal trends. *Transferability* is defined by the ability of groups outside the research to "make meaning" out of the findings of the study. In the case of this study, I have provided a detailed contextualization of my study area and a dense accounting of my interpretations to ensure that

the research is meaningful to a diverse audience in a wide variety of contexts. *Confirmability* refers to the importance of research accountability, and it places the onus on the researcher to acknowledge their procedures, biases, interests, and allegiances. In an attempt to ensure confirmability, I have been careful and transparent in my data collection procedures (described in Section 3.5), which involved an ongoing process of reflection, sorting, and management as the material was gradually transformed and organized into my research report. I also took notes in the form of a journal, document annotations, and my descriptive LAPP timeline, among others, to reveal my subjective understandings of the data and the research process. Furthermore, I position myself as an activist researcher working to achieve the goals of a social justice oriented study. Finally, *dependability* helps bolster credibility by minimizing researcher biases and ensuring that interpretations and outcomes are consistent. As with confirmability, I tried to encourage dependability in my study by taking notes, remaining reflexive, collecting data meticulously, triangulating data, and ensuring that my interview procedures were ethical. Using these strategies, I believe I was able to generate a rigorous foundation for my thesis and gain extensive experience in generating quality research procedures, which will give me a solid base for future qualitative endeavours.

3.7 Limitations

To complete this project, I chose methods that would allow me to build a historically grounded narrative of planning and toponymy in the DTES, however, there were a number of limitations to the project that should be addressed. First, my project would have benefited greatly from a more detailed program of participant observation, particularly of LAPP meetings and events. Unfortunately, I arrived in Vancouver too late to observe many such meetings, so my understanding of what planning "looked like" on the ground was somewhat restricted. I

attempted to overcome this limitation by attending and taking notes at what few events I could, coding and analyzing LAPP meeting notes and summaries, and gleaning detailed information about the planning process from participants. Second, because of the vast number of archival and newspaper documents referring to the DTES and related toponymies, my retrieval program had to be limited to particular time periods and significant events, which meant that potentially relevant documents and articles may have been unwittingly overlooked. While this limitation is nearly impossible to overcome due to the size of the archive, I believe that I have mitigated the problem by seeking out high-quality items in significant quantity and scrutinizing each one carefully, allowing for a nuanced and fluid narrative to emerge.

Third, I was initially limited in my ability to recruit participants, as I had not provided an allowance for honoraria in my ethics protocol or my research budget. For many in the Downtown Eastside, particularly among members of the low income community, honoraria are an expected part of participation and failing to provide one can be viewed as disrespectful. For some, offering honoraria to low income participants can be seen as a type of coercion (see Grant & Sugarman, 2004), yet I wanted to honour my participants' contribution to my thesis and compensate them appropriately with the intent of *giving knowledge back* rather than *taking knowledge from* the community. I overcame this obstacle by submitting an amendment to my ethics application that was approved by the GREB (see Appendix I), and I was able to procure funding so that I could offer all participants an honorarium (regardless of their income status) in addition to providing them with coffee or tea during the interview. Finally, the interview program was further constrained by other factors including time, the number of potential participants, and the willingness of interviewees to speak with me. Had time and resources not been a factor, these limitations could have been addressed through a more aggressive data collection program that

revealed an even wider diversity of perspectives. However, I believe that my purposive sampling

approach to both documentation and interviewing allowed me to extract a sufficiently varied

number of viewpoints on my research topic. In particular, by focusing my interview program on

the LAPP committee and the planners who facilitated the process, I was able to extract deep

insights that complemented the understandings gained from my document analysis.

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CHAPTER 4

"JAPANTOWN" AND THE TOPONYMIC ASSEMBLAGES OF THE DOWNTOWN

EASTSIDE

"Let's transform the Downtown Eastside, which has evolved from the original Vancouver 1886-1920s (with many centuries of aboriginal settlements before that), to Skid Road (1930s-1960s), to the Downtown Eastside (1970s-present) into the Old Vancouver, the heart and soul of our city - that we can all be proud of, whether we live in the Downtown Eastside or not." - M. Harcourt in *The Vancouver Sun* (Feb. 2, 2011)

4.1 Introduction

What ever happened to "Japantown"? The selective toponymic history of Vancouver's

Downtown Eastside (DTES) highlighted in the quote above commits a glaring oversight, because

it ignores the 60+ years of Japanese Canadian settlement in the area that literally "built" a large

section of the DTES as we know it today (see Kobayashi 1992). Furthermore, this unproblematic

tale of succession conceals the fact that processes of colonialism, racism, and class violence have

motivated waves of displacement and dispossession that have deprived Indigenous peoples,

Japanese Canadians, low income residents, and others of their right to use, access and inhabit the

area (Blomley 2004). Indeed, the DTES has not simply "evolved" in a series of apolitical

toponymic transformations, it has long been subjected to interventions (often in the form of

planning and policy) aimed at normalizing the community in accordance with the rest of the city,

while also serving as site of struggle where residents have attempted to define their future in the

face of immense social and economic pressures (see Sommers 2001). Unfortunately, while key

texts such as Sommers (2001), Blomley (2004), and Hasson & Ley (1994) do much to illuminate

the social construction of the area, these authors miss the mark by failing to examine the ways in

which Japanese Canadian toponymies and histories have intersected with those of the DTES.

This chapter seeks to remedy such omissions by exposing the ways in which Japanese Canadian

history has operated within the toponymic landscape of the DTES and become implicated in neighbourhood transformations.

In light of the continued transformation and problematization of the DTES, it seems important to reevaluate the histories and toponymies of the area, particularly in light of their ongoing use in media, policy, planning, and academic accounts. By weaving Japanese Canadian narratives into a toponymic history of the DTES, this chapter will attempt to complicate depictions of the "Downtown Eastside." Using the toponymic assemblage approach outlined in Chapter 2, I reexamine the neighbourhood as a *relational* toponymic field within Vancouver, paying attention to the ways that toponymic assemblages have emerged relative to the trialectical interplay between elements in the lived, perceived, and conceived spaces of the city. Drawing on archival documentation, city plans, and media analysis to illuminate how places have historically been represented, this chapter provides a critical toponymic history of the area now known as the DTES, revealing toponymic assemblages as more than banal discursive interventions into the urban environment, but as active entities that have roots in much larger systemic inequalities. Starting from the origins of the city in the mid-19th century and bound within specific events and coverage, I demonstrate how toponymic assemblages have shaped the neighbourhood through time, thereby setting the stage for abstract interventions aimed at transforming the community in ways that support market-based development at the expense of residents. Importantly, this analysis sees toponyms in relation to each other while acknowledging their potentiality and malleability.

This chapter is presented as a series of five vignettes, each of which is centred on a key event that helped define social space in Vancouver's East End. *First,* I demonstrate how the arrival of the Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR) to the west coast anchored a period in which the

toponymic landscape of the city was established, overlaying age-old Indigenous place names while gradually territorializing and toponymically assembling particular racialized and class-based understandings in the area now known as the Downtown Eastside. *Second,* using the example of a neighbourhood debate in 1941 as a flashpoint of toponymic struggle, I briefly examine Japanese Canadian toponymies within Vancouver before World War II, highlighting how naming was invoked in often contradictory ways to serve particular interests. *Third,* I show how the 1965 "Downtown East Side" planning report centred an era where the toponymic assemblage of the area would shift as 1) the East End was framed as a deviant "Skid Road" in the wake of the internment of Japanese Canadians in 1942, and 2) the heritage-based, consumption-led intervention of "Gastown" emerged as a cure for the social ills of the neighbourhood to the exclusion of low income residents. *Fourth,* I highlight how a six-year planning process running from 1976-1982 reterritorialized the "Downtown Eastside" as a low income place while simultaneously attempting to use Japanese Canadian heritage and culture as a tool to revitalize the area. *Finally,* I show how the coordinated tri-government policy intervention known as the Vancouver Agreement (2000) stood at the nexus of a period of increasing neoliberalization, where the toponyms of the Downtown Eastside would be reframed via the media, planners, and policymakers. Included among such toponyms was the nascent framing of "Japantown," which began to be used in conjunction with a cultural politics of recognition to advance a transformation of a section of the Downtown Eastside. As such, this chapter highlights the fluidity and potentiality of naming by revealing toponymic overlap and multidimensionality through time, providing a historical grounding for my thesis and setting the stage for Chapter 5, where I will examine how a recently-enacted city-led Local Area Planning

Process mobilized toponyms to reconfigure the Downtown Eastside within the larger context of the City of Vancouver (COV).

4.2 Early toponymies of "Vancouver"

Some Vancouver histories advance the notion that in the beginning, or at least in 1792, there was Captain George Vancouver (see Davis & Mooney 1986). As the first British explorer of the area that now bears his name, the Captain's arrival is an integral part of many origin stories of Vancouver, which often make it seem as though the city simply "appeared" alongside the arrival of colonizers and the Canadian Pacific Railway (for example, Davis & Mooney 1986; Gutstein 1975; Kluckner 1990). These events, however momentous, often unintentionally erase alternative understandings of the city and valorize heroic pioneer narratives. Toponymy is implicated in these processes, and this section illuminates how toponymic assemblages helped reinforce particular narratives within the social space of the city. In particular, certain areas were named in ways that reinforced white settler ideals, while others were associated with the racialized groups that occupied them, a process that would have social and material consequences for the city at large.

In the mid 19th century, the area now known as "Vancouver" had long been named and occupied by a number of Indigenous groups, specifically the Squamish, the Musqueam, and the Tseil-Waututh First Nations (Macdonald 1992; Schatz 2010). These histories have recently been symbolically bolstered via land claims by First Nations such as the Hwlitsum, and by the Indigenous occupiers of Oppenheimer Park in the Downtown Eastside (see Chapter 6), who have both powerfully asserted property rights within the city on the basis of its status as traditional Indigenous territory (see Judd 2014; McCue 2014). While the removal of Indigenous groups is often generalized as a wholesale and instantaneous displacement at the hands of settlers, the

territorialization of Vancouver in the late 19th century appears to have been more of a gradual encroachment than a sudden rupture (see Blomley 2004). Indigenous settlements in the area remained relatively intact until the 1860s, despite the fact that British settlers surrounded them on all sides, having established Fort Langley, Victoria, New Westminster, Port Moody, and the Hastings Townsite in the years between 1827 and 1860 (Davis & Mooney 1986). According to Blomley (2004, drawing on Macdonald 1992), the south shore of Burrard Inlet was home to numerous named sites that provided use value to Indigenous peoples before colonial incursions began. "Q'emq'emel'ay" (loosely translated as "big leaf maple trees") was located near what is now the intersection of Railway and Dunlevy, "Luk'luk'i" ("grove of beautiful trees" or "maple leaves falling," see Birmingham & Wood 2008; Wallstam & Crompton 2013) was at the foot of present-day Carrall Street, and "Checheelmun" was slightly to the to the east near Hastings and Campbell (see Macdonald 1992).

While the early history of the area demonstrates a tense co-existence between settler and Indigenous toponyms, after 1860, Indigenous names slowly began to be erased and replaced by those of incoming settlers. By 1865, the "big leaf maple trees" at the foot of Dunlevy were slowly being cleared for the construction of Stamp's Mill (later Hastings Mill), which would be the first sawmill in the western portion of Burrard Inlet and the biggest economic driver of early settlement (Birmingham & Wood 2008; Davis & Mooney 1986). Two years later in 1867, "Gassy Jack" Deighton established Vancouver's first saloon at the "grove of beautiful trees" to the west of the mill, and around the saloon grew a settlement known as "Gastown," (see Birmingham & Wood 2008; Davis 2011) which materially and toponymically claimed Indigenous areas for incoming settlers. While the roots of the name "Gastown" are contested, it appears to have been mobilized from the ground up, instigated by the earliest colonizers and

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quickly becoming part of the vernacular landscape. Some claim it originated with Gassy Jack and his boistrous personality (Roy 1972), others say it was named for the workers from Stamp's Mill who came to "get gassed" in the saloon (Davis & Mooney 1986, p. 22). In either case, these seemingly mundane tales of toponymic genesis continue to do important work because they recreate the pioneer myth of Vancouver (cf Hull & Ruskin 1971), while affirming the area's ongoing status as a lifestyle neighbourhood of bars and restaurants where the consumption of food and alcohol is valorized (see Bula 2004; COV 2014).

In 1870, a new townsite bounded by Carrall, Water, Hastings and the Cambie Street "Skid Road"[6] was incorporated, and the unofficial toponym of Gastown was *officially* superceded by the name "Granville" as land surveys inititated a state-sponsored territorialization of the area around Burrard Inlet (Davis & Mooney 1986). However, the government-imposed name of Granville failed to take hold in the public imaginary, with residents preferring to use the moniker of Gastown in popular dialogue while continuing to include it on maps and charts well into the 1870s (Hull & Ruskin 1971). This discursive co-occurrence of Gastown and Granville on the *same site* represents the first recorded instance of toponymic conflict in what is now Vancouver, a situation that persisted for at least the next 15 years, at which time the external forces of government and business combined in an attempt to settle the matter.

In 1884, two years prior to the arrival of the Canadian Pacific Railway on the west coast, William Van Horne, the general manager of the CPR, made his first visit to the Granville townsite as the company decided on the most suitable site for a western terminus (Davis 2011). Viewing the large parcel of land that the company had been given by the federal government, he

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[6] "Skid Road" is a term once used in Vancouver (among other west coast cities) to refer to the corduroy roads used by loggers to skid logs to the harbour. Over time, "Skid Road" became a more generic term used to refer to areas of the city where loggers regularly spent time (with their accompanying saloons, brothels, and gambling houses) (see Sommers 2001).

proclaimed the name of the small settlement to be wholly inadequate for a site that the company had determined would be one of the jewels of the British Empire, noting to his colleague Lachlan Hamilton that "we must see that it has a name that will designate it on the map of Canada. [...] Vancouver it shall be" (Gutstein 1975, p. 12). This was no idle proclamation: the power of the CPR was such that it had been given carte blanche by the nascent Canadian state to name, survey, and settle all the lands that were in its purview, and the conceived spaces of the railway often overrode those of the government itself (Berton 1971). The name "Vancouver" was significant, because it territorialized an imperial presence by venerating the first British explorer of the area (see Davis 2011); and it was familiar and easily locatable on the Pacific coast due to its positive association with widely-known Vancouver Island, thereby supporting travel and migration to the area (Gutstein 1975). Indeed, "Vancouver" provides an early example of what might now be identified as toponymic branding (see Medway & Warnaby 2014), as it was enacted to change perceptions of an area to align with the economic imperatives of the CPR.

The settlement's new name was a rousing success, and it was adopted by the public, the media, and business elites almost immediately in 1884, even though Vancouver was not officially incorporated until 1886 (Davis & Mooney 1986). Newspapers in places as widely dispersed as Portland and Montréal were reporting the city's name as "Vancouver" within a few months, and the *Vancouver Herald* began publishing in early 1886 (Davis 2011). Surveying began in the areas west of what is now Cambie Street in 1885, creating a grid of streets named after colonial figures and imperial heroes (Gutstein 1975). These lands were put up for sale to the public in 1887, the same year as the first train arrived in Vancouver, and the land rush that immediately ensued triggered a gradual abandonment of the residential areas situated near Hastings Mill in favour of the large, bucolic properties west of what is now Gastown/Victory

Square (Davis 2011; Gutstein 1975; Kluckner 1990). This outward movement shifted the scale of the city and slowly freed up room in the areas east of Main Street as the departing landowners subdivided their lots into small parcels to be meted out to immigrants, eventually producing a district intended for the ethnic working classes (see Kluckner 1990).

As the upper classes incrementally departed, toponymic lacunae emerged in the east end of Vancouver, a situation that was soon remedied as racist epithets began to be used as externally-imposed neighbourhood descriptors within the popular discourse of Vancouver. Thus, as the 20th century began, the area known colloquially and collectively as the "East End" by both residents and outsiders (see Marlatt & Itter 2011; The Vancouver Daily Province 1907a), was slowly being racialized and objectified according to a number of overlapping toponyms, even though the area had not been given any *official* toponymic designation (indeed, areas east of Main Street are almost wholly ignored in Vancouver's first comprehensive city plan, see Bartholomew 1928). The area now known as Strathcona was becoming home to a variety of immigrant groups, including Italians (in "Little Italy"), Jews, Ukranians, and Russians (Kluckner 1990; Marlatt & Itter 2011), while "Chinatown" (or sometimes the "Chinese Quarters") was emerging as a highly concentrated and contained area, described in popular accounts as being "all down Dupont [now Pender] street, on both sides of Canton and Shanghai Alleys on Carrall Street and Columbia Avenue" with the main entrance located at Carrall and Hastings (The World (Vancouver) 1907; p. 1,6). Another racialized place was the area occupied primarily by Japanese Canadians, where over time a complex, relational, and highly fluid dialectic emerged between competing and overlapping toponymic assemblages. Such conflicts altered understandings of the neighbourhood and produced cascading discursive effects that continue in the present.

4.3 The conflicting toponymies of "Japanese Town"

"Students Debate Japanese Town" reads the December 24th, 1940 headline of English language Japanese Canadian (JC) newspaper *The New Canadian* (The New Canadian 1940, p. 1). The article beneath it reports that a number of university students would be publicly deliberating the question of whether or not the "Japanese family should move from the centre of concentration usually known as Japanese town" to seek "domicile in the suburbs" (The New Canadian 1940; p. 1). To outsiders, such a debate might seem mundane and even inconsequential, but to insiders, this was a question that elicited passionate opinions (see The New Canadian 1941). Indeed, the discussion sparked outrage among those gathered when one of the debaters referred to the Japanese area as a "slum," a statement that was taken to task in an anonymous letter which questioned why the term would even be used when "such words as Nihonmachi [loosely translated as "Japan Town"], Japanese Community, Japanese, town, district, etc. are all available" (The New Canadian 1941; p. 4). Significantly, the debate highlighted how JCs living in Vancouver before World War II were deeply embedded in a complex toponymic politics, where overlapping discourses were invoked to serve specific interests. This section interrogates why naming was so contentious while highlighting the importance of such debates in the toponymic history of what is now known as the DTES.

The JC "centre of concentration" (see Figure 3) described in *The New Canadian* was known by a wealth of nomenclatures, and framings of the community often changed dramatically depending on the source. What most sources can agree on, however, is that the neighbourhood was located near Hastings Mill, centred along the 300 and 400 blocks of Powell Street and bounded by Cordova, Jackson, Railway, and Main (formerly Westminster) Streets (Birmingham & Wood 2008; Kobayashi 1992; Morita 1988; The Vancouver Daily Province 1907a; 1907b; 1907c). As wealthy Vancouverites abdicated the East End, this area acted as a source of
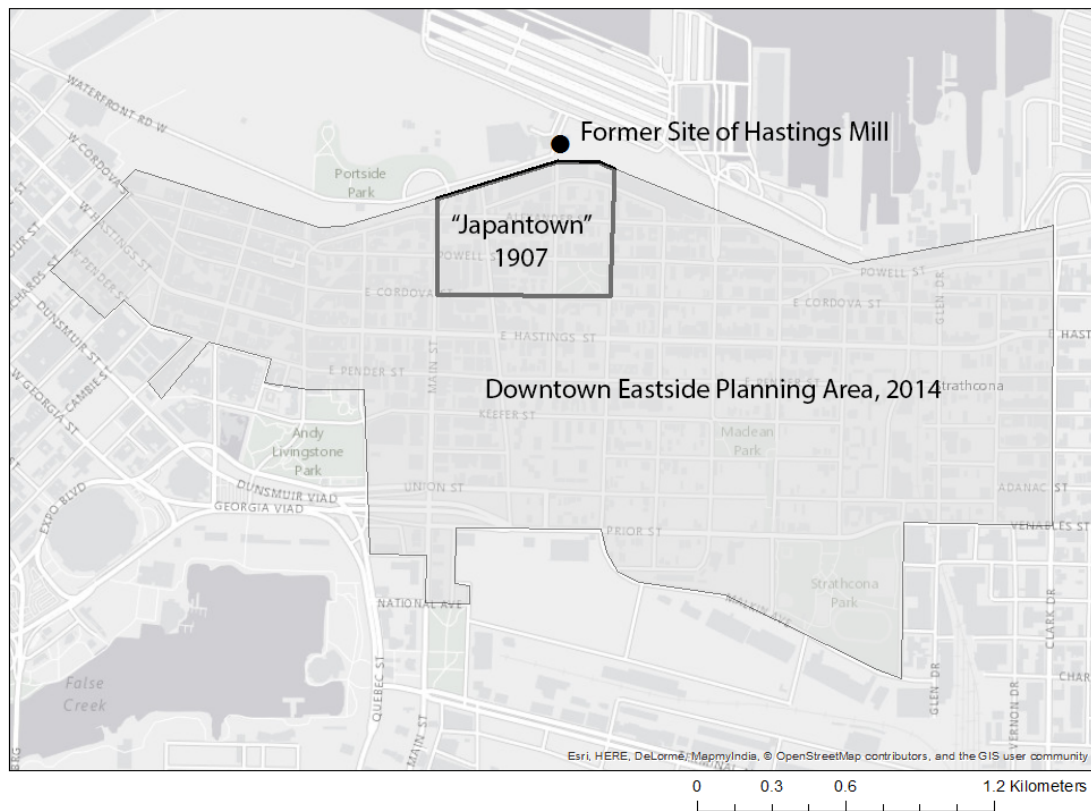
Figure 3: Approximate boundaries of "Japantown" 1907 (Map by Trevor Wideman based on data from The Vancouver Daily Province 1907a; 1907b; 1907c)

affordable housing for workers employed at the mill, and as the years progressed a mass of

residences and services catering to JCs emerged, with many of the properties along Powell Street

being JC owned by the 1920s (see Kobayashi 1992; Morita 1988). So while the site was

relatively well established, its referent was not, and establishing the toponymic assemblages of

Japanese Canadians within Vancouver requires an understanding of the power and motivation

behind particular types of naming.

First, it is important to note that JC toponyms emerged relative to discourses that acted to

either 1) territorialize and define an internally homogeneous community, or to 2) deterritorialize

and increase the heterogeneity of the neighbourhood. Second, toponyms often shifted their

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meaning depending on who uttered them, and there was often a marked difference between how the community was framed by *outsiders* and by *JC residents*. Toponyms uttered by *outsiders* often territorialized the neighbourhood by defining it in relation to the rest of Vancouver. However, toponyms used by *JC residents* contained a complicated mixture of territorializing and deterritorializing effects that stemmed from a generational divide between first-generation immigrants, known as *issei* (see Sunahara 2000), and their second-generation *nisei* children. Indeed, such assemblages reveal a community "defined as much by racism as by internal, spontaneous energy" (Kobayashi 1992; p. 10).

Aside from an explicitly racist term (see Kobayashi 1992), some of the common *outsider* names used for the community by journalists in the early 20th century were "Japanese quarter," "Japanese area," or "Japanese section" (see for example The Vancouver Daily Province 1907a; 1907c; The Vancouver Sun 1938; 1941a; 1941b; The World (Vancouver) 1907). These generic descriptors were deployed in conjunction with territorializing discourses that defined the community's character to the rest of the city. For example, reports of the 1907 Anti-Asiatic Riots in the Vancouver Daily Province (1907a; 1907b; 1907c) perceived the "Japanese quarter" as a tightly-knit, economically productive, and highly organized community that was ready to defend its interests and property; and expressed sympathy and reluctant admiration for the residents who were unwilling to passively suffer at the hands of a mob of white rabble-rousers. However, by the late 1930s, such begrudging respect had begun to turn to outright resentment. While the interests of Japanese immigrants had been tenuously protected in the early years of the 20th century by strategic alliances between Canada and Japan, the onset of Japanese imperialism in the 1930s saw JCs living in British Columbia being regarded with suspicion and fear due to their perceived status as enemies of the state (see Adachi 1991; Roy 2003). Such attitudes begat futher

oppression from Vancouver elites, who were alarmed that JCs were not only gaining social status due to their economic productivity, but they were growing in number and moving outside their territory into areas of the city that were commonly understood to be white (see Wilson & DeGraves 1938). These irrational and racist anxieties eventually resulted in a failed attempt by two City Aldermen to mobilize spatial conceptions through municipal law to "confine Japanese traders to the Japanese area of the city" (The Vancouver Sun 1938, p. 8), which was, according to their report, along the waterfront east of Main Street (Wilson & DeGraves 1938).

While externally mobilized and racialized nomenclatures were used to contain the JC population in the Powell Street area, numerous authors insist that the *internal* naming strategies used for the area were meant to downplay racial discourses (see Kobayashi 1992; Morita 1988; Marlatt & Itter 2011). To many JC residents, the area was simply known as "Powell Street," because the street was the most important site of JC commerical and residential activity. Indeed, Kobayashi (1992) notes that externally-generated toponyms like "Japantown" or "Little Tokyo" were never used by JCs, and that the "entire neighbourhood is 'Powell Street,' the symbolic centre of [JC] collective history" (p. 12). This observation appears to be particularly true within the discourses of first generation *issei* residents of the neighbourhood. The memoir of *issei* resident Katsuyoshi Morita (1988) states that "People [outside the community] call[ed] the Powell Street area of Vancouver 'Little Tokyo' or 'Japanese Town,' but the *immigrant Japanese* of the pre-war era never called it that" (p. 1). According to Morita (1988), some JC residents of Powell Street refused to call the neigbourhood by such anglicized names because they believed that they should "[make] an effort not to congregate and strongly felt they should assimilate and melt into this country called Canada" (p. 1). Former Powell Street resident George Nitta, cited in Marlatt & Itter (2011), recalls that in the pre-war era "Alexander and Powell and Cordova

Streets, from about the 100 to 700 block, was Japanese. *White Canadians* used to call it 'Little

Tokyo'" (p. 41, emphasis mine). In the same text, former *issei* resident Kiyoko Tanaka-Goto

refers to the area simply as "Powell Street," reflecting the commonly used internal terminology.

Importantly, the name "Powell Street" was not used by JCs to denote an officially bounded

construct, it was a toponymic assemblage that reflected the *lived* and *perceived spaces* of

Japanese Canadians. Because of this fluidity, "Powell Street" encompassed more than just

Powell Street and environs, residents also used the toponym to refer to areas in Strathcona where

numerous JCs resided (see Birmingham & Wood 2008).

While the use of the "Powell Street" toponym appears to have been remarkably

consistent within older segments of the JC population, the English-speaking second-generation

nisei residents deployed a contradictory toponymic approach to the area. Having been educated

in the Canadian school system, many individuals in this important subgroup possessed a strong

drive to integrate into Canadian society, often scorning the traditional values of their *issei* parents

while articulating a desire to move away from Powell Street (see Sumida 1935; Sunahara 2000).

Furthermore, many *nisei* were acutely aware that even though they were Canadian-born, they

were being denied the full benefits of Canadian citizenship, and they actively championed for

JCs to be given the full rights and benefits afforded by the state (Roy 2003; 2007). A review of

the *nisei* published *New Canadian*, known as "the voice of the second generation" (see The New

Canadian 1941), reveals that younger Japanese Canadians often invoked disparate toponyms to

serve specific interests, and that their naming strategies were far from instrumental. On one hand,

the *nisei* described Powell Street using names that reflected those of white Canadian society,

including "Japanese Town," and on the other hand, they used names more familiar to JC

residents, such as Powell Street and "Nihonmachi" (The New Canadian 1940; 1941). Such terms

were sometimes used in conjunction with characterizations of the area as a slum, an assessment that caused offense to those with an interest in maintaining an internally cohesive neighbourhood on Powell Street (The New Canadian 1940; 1941). However, for those desiring to expand the community beyond its historic centre, it was important to expose the weaknesses, imperfections and divisions within the community. Sumida's (1935) thesis on "The Japanese in British Columbia" describes Powell Street as a place "where the moral tone is undoubtedly lower than average," and notes that one section of the street contained "about forty percent of the single white men in the city. […] The majority of [which] are frankly failures in life, and many, more or less, degenerate" (p. 442). According to Sumida (1935), the Powell Street area was an unhealthy site that was deteriorating both socially and materially, noting that many JC residents desired to move to more prosperous and less racialized/class-segregated areas of the city. As such, it appears that second-generation JCs mobilized toponyms in contradictory ways, often massaging the *same* toponyms to activate lived space potential and integrate themselves further into Canadian society. However, across generations there was a strong dialectical conflict that inspired processes of territorialization and/or deterritorialization - one toponymic assemblage drew attention *away* from the Japanese character of the neighbourhood so that residents could live on Powell Street without being persecuted, while the other *exposed* the segregated and racialized nature of the area to inspire a movement away from it.

In late 1941, the debate ended abruptly as the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor sent Canada to war with Japan, sending "Japan Town" (Malone 1941; p. 2) into a state of shock (The Vancouver Sun 1941a; 1941b). Soon after, on January 14th, 1942, JCs were declared enemy aliens by the Canadian Government, and measures were immediately taken to place JCs living within 100 miles of the Pacific Coast in internment camps (Sunahara 2000). The next day, on

January 15th, the Vancouver Daily Province (1942) reported the event by mundanely noting that "From Powell street in Vancouver […] thousands of Japanese may be moved to other points" (p. 8), a statement that represents one of the last times print media associated the 'Powell Street' area with Japanese Canadians before they were uprooted from the social space of the city. This traumatic act of state violence quickly left a gaping toponymic void, insofar as the name of the area was, up until this point, a referent *to* its inhabitants (i.e., the Japanese "quarter" or "area") or *created by* its inhabitants ("Powell Street"). In the years subsequent, naming strategies were used by the *outside* population to fill the referential vacuum. Indeed, the uprooting of JCs from Powell Street plunged the racialized names used to describe the area into dormancy, generating an atmosphere of toponymic ambiguity and contestation that contrasts sharply with the continuity of surrounding areas such as Chinatown, whose name has persisted through time. However, the persistence of such toponyms should not be mistaken for permanence of meaning, as such nomenclatures might potentially designate a racialized underclass ghetto (see Lai 1988), or a cultural spectacle aimed at drawing tourists and encouraging economic development (see Birmingham & Wood 1968; COV 2012). Indeed, such names are highly malleable, and even though they long responded to the territorialization and ghettoization of JCs before World War II, in recent years such toponymic assemblages are being uttered for alternative purposes. In the 1940s, however, the racially-motivated toponymies of "Japanese Town" momentarily disappeared and gave way to the class-based toponym of "Skid Road."

4.4 "Skid Road" vs. "Gastown" and the erasure of Japanese Canadians

    In 1965, the Vancouver Planning Department released a report simply entitled "Downtown East Side" (COV 1965). The report attempted to address the physical and social problems of an area commonly known as "Skid Road," which it described as a "backwash in the

westward drift of downtown" (p. 19), plagued by poorly-maintained buildings that housed transient men often in search of alcohol and cheap accomodations. The release of this report is momentous, because it marked the first time that the toponym "Downtown East Side" had been officially used within planning - and intentionally or not, it rendered the area synonymous with the more denigrating toponym of "Skid Road," territorializing it as a site of dereliction and vice that required strategic and normative interventions solve its myriad problems. This section examines how the literal and discursive deterritorialization of Powell Street/"Japanese Town" as a Japanese Canadian area helped make the emergence and problematization of "Skid Road" possible. Furthermore, it demonstrates how the long-dormant toponymic assemblage of "Gastown" re-emerged to motivate the sociomaterial transformation of Skid Road in the wake of the "Downtown East Side" report.

4.4.1 The "Square Mile of Vice" and Skid Road

There are very few popular or scholarly accounts describing the area *immediately following* the removal and internment of the JC population, and those that exist often downplay or ignore the uprooting in their assessment of the neighbourhood. Yet in 1947, a mere five years after the internment, the Community Chest and Council Health Department released a report that contributed to a new toponymic assemblage in the absence of a racialized descriptor, framing the area bounded by Powell, Gore, Abbott, and National Streets as a "Square Mile of Vice" (The Vancouver Sun 1947, p. 1; see Figure 4). The statistically-based report describes the area as transient, overcrowded, filthy, and diseased, containing high levels of drunkenness, drug use, prostitution, and delinquency (The Vancouver Daily Province 1947; The Vancouver Sun 1947).

It appears that the stark conditions described in the health report did not happen overnight. The 1965 "Downtown East Side" document reports that the area north of Hastings

between Cambie and Heatley began to assume a transient character in the 1930s as unemployed

individuals began to move in during the Great Depression (COV 1965). These new residents

were often single men who were unemployed, sick, and poor, and the area gradually began to

experience a physical and social transformation (COV 1965; Hein et al. 1966). This assessment

appears to support those of Sumida (1935) and the New Canadian (1940; 1941), which suggest

that concentrated poverty was emerging within and near the JC area east of Main Street and

north of Hastings throughout the 1930s. However, the City of Vancouver (1965) also
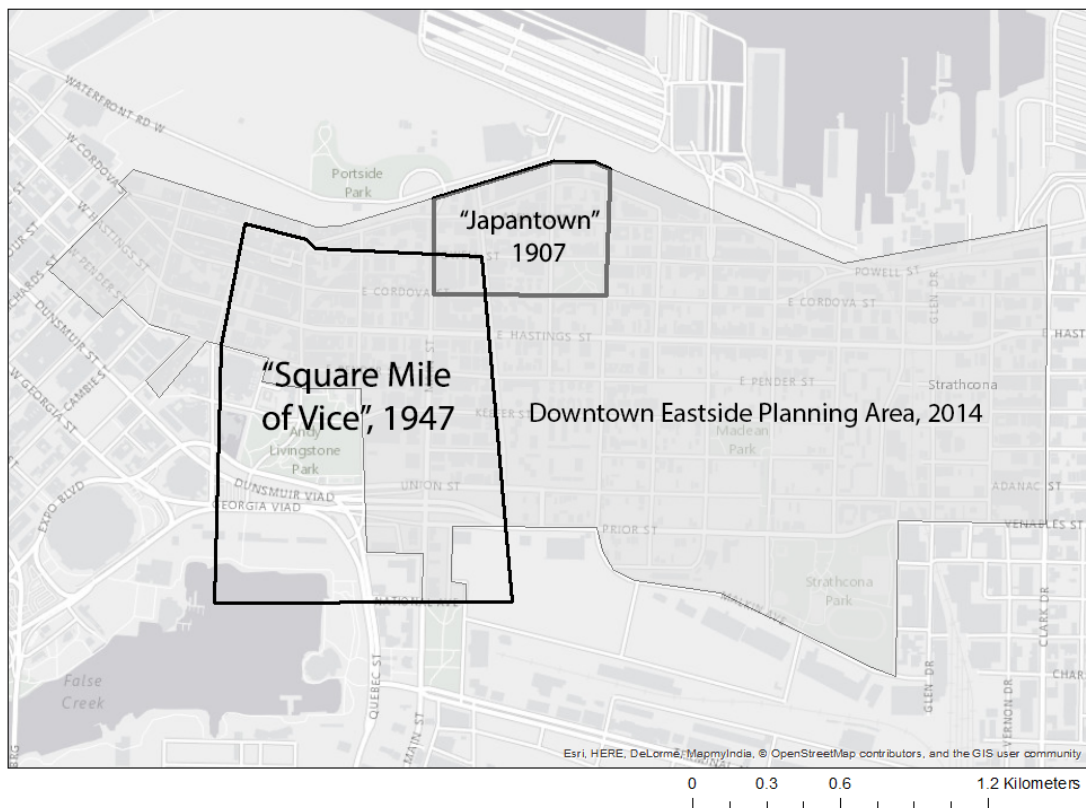
Figure 4: The "Square Mile of Vice," the former "Japantown," and the current boundaries of the DTES (Map by Trevor Wideman based on data from The Vancouver Sun 1947)

acknowledged that "the departure of the Japanese population after the Second World War" (p.

21) did much to change the demographics and hasten the decline of the area around Alexander

and Powell Streets (see also Hein et al. 1966). Kobayashi (1992) agrees, stating that the removal of JCs from Powell Street created "an area of low-cost rental units, often poorly maintained by absentee landlords" (p. 9). This area was now "economically prepared to provide the basic amenities at bare subsistence levels" to even greater numbers of impoverished and marginalized residents (COV 1965; p. 20), Indeed, the testimony of residents Yip Ting Yuen and Garson Yuen (see Marlatt & Itter 2011) corroborates this. They state that residents in the area three years after the Japanese Canadian internment, while primarily pleasant folks, included many "single people who had struck out on their own" (p. 168), as well as "dope addicts" and others who would "hide their misery behind their drunkenness" (p. 169). While slum clearance was cited as one possible solution to the square mile of vice, it was seen as undesirable because rooming houses were needed to alleviate an acute housing shortage in the city (The Vancouver Daily Province 1947; The Vancouver Sun 1947). Instead, the report proposed a policy of containment and control, enforced via registration of tenants, increased police presence, targeted health interventions, and citizen reporting of "indecency or immorality" (The Vancouver Sun 1947, p. 1). Despite these recommendations, problems persisted in the coming years, and as the 1950s began, the fluid "Skid Road" assemblage began to be territorialized within Vancouver (see Ryan 1952b).

In 1952, the *Province* published a four-article exposé on "Vancouver's Shame," an area referred to as "Skid Road" that was located in the areas around Carrall and Cordova Streets (c.f. Ryan 1952a; 1952b). The series describes an area similar to the "Square Mile of Vice," calling it a "slum" where "90 percent of crime originates," "the heart of the city's drug traffic," and the "core of what prostitution is left in Vancouver" (Ryan 1952b, p. 1). The "Skid Road" was presented to the public as an *urgent problem* that needed a solution beyond simple recommendations, not only because the wayward morality of its residents might infest the rest of

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the city, but because "Vancouver ha[d] no plans to do anything" (Ryan 1952b, p. 1) about an area of social disorder that the taxpayer was being forced to subsidize. The testimony of service providers confirmed the long-time presence of the territory. Canon Wilberforce Cooper of St. James Anglican Church on Cordova (on the edges of the former JC settlement) declared the skid road district to be infested with bootlegging, drugs, and immorality, noting that in his 31 years of ministry not much had changed (Ryan 1952b). Herbert Fiddes of Central City Mission stated that skid road caters to the "lowest in humanity" (Ryan 1952a, p. 28), noting that the problem had existed for the entirety of his 42 years of service in the area. According to *The Province,* "skid road [was] here to stay" (Ryan 1952b, p. 1), and the most realistic solution would be to segregate the skid road population while enacting a program of rehabiliation for those who desired it.

> *"There is no answer to the skidroad. There's no solution, so the only thing to do is to confine it to as small an area as possible. The skidroad isn't buildings, it's people. And as long as you have people with the mentality of these, you'll have skidroad."* - Herbert Fiddes, quoted in Ryan (1952a, p. 28)

Meanwhile, the newspapers continued to report the sensationalized activities of the Skid Road area well into the next decade, reporting incidents of gang activity (The Province 1964a), as well as prostitution, drunkenness, and crime of all types (The Province 1964b). Though Skid Road was ostensibly an informal, class-motivated assemblage, the toponymic characterization of the area frequently went hand in hand with conceptual processes of boundarymaking, which made it *seem* as though the area had been formally defined. For instance, The Province (1964b) called Skid Road a "concentrated criminal area [...] those sections of Hastings, Carrall, Columbia, and Cordova from Main to Abbott" (p. 28), while later the same year, the Vancouver Sun (1964) states that the "generally-accepted definition for Skid Road in recent years has been a 28-block area bounded by Abbott, Pender, Dunlevy, and Powell" (p. 10). Naming and bounding processes were legally enforced as well - as one case from 1964 demonstrates, the law exercised its power to define where Skid Road "was" in order to exclude certain activities (in this case,

prostitution) from specific parts of the east end (see The Vancouver Sun 1964). In this way, the Skid Road assemblage was mobilized by external actors through perceived and conceived space to describe where the poor people were to the rest of Vancouver (see Sommers 2001). In addition, early descriptions such as "Square Mile of Vice" and "Skid Road" are important because they have been incredibly persistent and pliable, and have clear resonances with more contemporary descriptions of the Downtown Eastside like "Our Nation's Slum" (Globe and Mail 2009), which continue to characterize the area as a site of deviance (see Sommers 2001).

Concomitant with the toponymic problematization of Skid Road, the spectre of demolition began to loom over the east end in the form of massive urban renewal schemes brought about by modernist planning, including the construction of a new civic centre and a system of freeways and parking facilities (Sommers 2001). While some citizens were in agreement with the plan to "demolish Skid Road" (see The Vancouver Sun 1962, p. 1), the dominant attitude toward the community continued to be a gentle, paternalist logic of rehabilitation and resignation that involved advocating for strategic interventions into the social body, where "deviant" individuals would be reoriented toward societal values (Sommers 2001). Significantly, Vancouver's relatively young planning department (which was established in 1952 to deal with the increasing complexities of the city, see Vancouver City Planning Commission n.d.) tended to agree with the latter view, despite being embedded in a city hall motivated to enact large-scale modernist-style urban renewal (Gutstein 1975; Sommers 2001).

The mid to late 1960s saw the planning department's role shift from being a "top-down" arbiter of the urban form to an organization that engaged with citizens on a neighbourhood level (Vancouver City Planning Commission n.d.), and as such, they shied away from proposing the complete destruction of Skid Road, instead choosing to focus closely on the neighbourhood to

assess the population's needs in context (see COV 1965; Gutstein 1975; Sommers 2001). Within

this milieu, the "Downtown East Side" (COV 1965) planning report emerged as the first city-

produced document to propose solutions to Skid Road, and the planning concepts in the report

clearly demonstrate the planning department's intentions for the various neighbourhoods of the

east end. Indeed, the Carrall Street corridor, Chinatown, and Strathcona were cordoned off for

urban renewal, while Skid Road would be *rehabilitated* via the work of a centralized social

service agency (COV 1965; Gutstein 1975). This soft rhetoric towards Skid Road was

simultaneously applauded and critiqued: while it was acknowledged that care and compassion

were required in dealing with the "problem," it was also noted that the area was an ideal site for

slum clearance, as long as adequate housing was secured for residents before such projects were

enacted (Hein et al. 1966). When many of the destructive urban renewal schemes for such areas

failed due to the resistance of property owners throughout the 1960s (Gutstein 1975), a gentler

strategy of heritage-based neighbourhood revitalization began to be adopted. Within this new

scheme, the toponym of "Gastown" began to be worked through the conceived spaces of

planning and policy, and in relation to the lived space of "Skid Road" residents.

    4.4.2 Exhuming Gastown

    "Heritage" has long been a factor in discussions around neighbourhood planning and

preservation in Vancouver (see Davis 2011, p. 337; Kluckner 1990; Ward 1989), yet the original

motivation for the heritage revitalization of Vancouver's Skid Road did not come from the

residents of the area, rather it came from the business community. In 1966, a partnership of

various businessowners in the "East Downtown" area resolved to "halt the skid," using a

program that would prioritize "renovation and restoration of existing buildings" (McKenzie

1966, p. 23). The section of the city in question was located west of Main Street and north of

Hastings and it overlapped part of the nebulous "Skid Road" territory (see Figure 5), though not

the section formerly occupied by Japanese Canadians. The business partnership brought

significant attention to the old warehouse district, and despite City Hall's insistence that a new

freeway would have to utilize the Carrall Street corridor to access the waterfront (Hesse 1966;

Peloquin 1967), popular support for the freeway waned as the idea of heritage restoration as a

solution to Skid Road gained traction, even though many realized that social problems would

simply move elsewhere (The Vancouver Sun 1968).

The revitalization scheme got a boost in 1968 when the Community Arts Council began
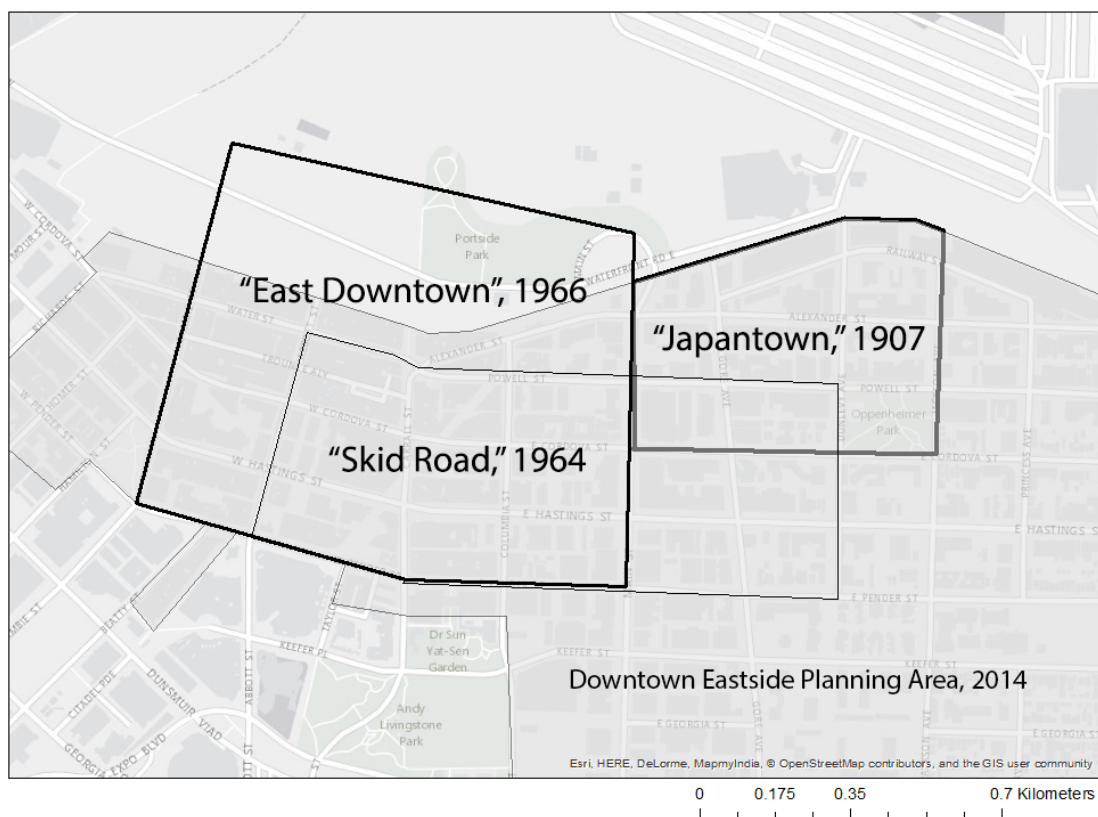
Figure 5: "East Downtown" and "Skid Road" in 1966 (Map by Trevor Wideman based on data from McKenzie 1966; The Province 1964b).

to conduct heritage tours to re-introduce the public to the derelict beauty of the area, eschewing

the generic moniker of "East Downtown" and instead using the long-dormant toponym of "Gastown" to describe the as-yet unbounded territory (see Davis 2011). In the same year, business interests and the city commissioned a report (*Restoration Report: A Case For Renewed Life In The Old City*) that called for a wholesale redesign of the "Old Granville Townsite," or "Gastown" (Birmingham & Wood 1968). The report did little to address the underlying structural issues of the community, and instead it abrogated responsibility to social agencies while promoting tenuous concepts such as heritage, diversity, aesthetics, design, and "distinctiveness" as curative measures (Birmingham & Wood 1968). Furthermore, the report states that the transient, misunderstood, and unwanted population of Skid Road *will* be displaced through the Gastown renaissance, exposing the toponym as part of a consumption-led revitalization project (Birmingham & Wood 1968). The Gastown proposal marked an intriguing shift in the logic of Skid Road revitalization, because unlike earlier plans which problematized *people* as the target of intervention in the name of charity and public health, now the area itself became the problem, a shift that went hand in hand with the arrival of a new planning ethos.

Though the plan's stated goal of "minimizing the physical contact between the shopper and the destitute" (Birmingham & Wood 1968, p. 37) was far from a solution to the social issues of Skid Road, media response to the Gastown restoration plan was positive. Indeed, the absence of popular support for urban renewal and freeway construction, combined with the approval of powerful commercial and development interests, ensured that the recommendations of the Birmingham & Wood report were swiftly enacted. *The Province* lauded the report for its visionary stance, and was particularly enamoured with the redesign of Maple Tree Square, "Vancouver's birthplace at the foot of Water and Carrall" (McKenzie 1969, p. 27). The paper also highlighted the possible trickle-down effects of Gastown revitalization to the formerly

Japanese Canadian areas east of Main, noting such schemes could potentially "give rise to new life in adjacent weak areas, such as […] Powell Street" (McKenzie 1969, p. 27). As Blomley & Sommers (1999) reveal, the Gastown renewal plan was particularly successful because it was "articulated as a benefit to the citizens of the city" (p. 9) that would have far reaching effects beyond Skid Road. This strategy has clear resonances in the present, as planning interventions into the modern "Skid Road" of the Downtown Eastside frequently stress the benefits of aesthetic revitalization in relation to the city at large (COV 2011; 2014). As the "Gastown" assemblage began to be reterritorialized, Skid Road residents of hotels in the economically invigorated area began to be gradually displaced as a result of renovations and upgrading (Sommers 2001). In addition, hippies and young, middle class Vancouverites began to stake claims to the lived spaces of low income residents (Ley 1996; Mettrick 1971), a fact that is highlighted by the sensationalized and infamous Gastown Riot on August 7, 1971, which occurred as the police attacked marijuana users at a "smoke-in." The riot helped cement Gastown as the symbolic centre of Vancouver's artistic counterculture and place it in contradistinction to its nebulous Skid Road neighbour (see Davis 2011; Ley 1996).

In 1972, Gastown was designated an official heritage district, and it assumed an increasingly consumer-oriented aesthetic quality as various beautification schemes for the area were completed (COV 1972; Davis 2011; Sommers 2001). Drawing on disciplinary transformations occurring at a much larger scale (see Jacobs 1961), the redevelopment of Gastown marked a significant shift in Vancouver from a modernist planning philosophy of slum clearance and urban renewal to a postmodern program that prioritized beautification and preservation in the name of heritage (see Sommers 2001). Yet even as Gastown *presumably* superceded its status as an extension of Skid Road (see Gastown Guardian 1976), a fluid

relationality between the two class-dependent and overlapping assemblages remained apparent, as they were often used to refer to the same places in oppositional contexts. For example, the Rainier Hotel at Carrall and Cordova was located in Gastown on an official planning map (COV 1972), yet it was portrayed in the media as being a part of Skid Road (Hunter 1971). "Gastown" reflected the normative values of the middle and upper classes and was associated with design, business, heritage, shopping, and youth; while "Skid Road" was used by the same class groupings to designate an underclass ghetto full of dilapitated buildings and their poor, alcoholic, and drug-addicted residents (see Sommers 2001). Even as separation between the overlapping "districts" increased, Skid Road was not erased, it was *displaced* and it began to migrate toward the former Japanese Canadian area east of Main Street as the civic goal of placing physical distance between poor residents and consumers came to fruition (Birmingham & Wood 1968; MacLachlan 1970; Sommers 2001).

Throughout the 1960s, the conceived spaces of planning were used to territorialize particular toponymic assemblages within the east end of Vancouver. By officially framing the east end as a "Skid Road" full of dereliction and transience, the 1965 "Downtown East Side" report helped valorize interventions aimed at bringing the area in line with the rest of the city. The Gastown report, released just a few years later, re-energized a long-dormant toponym to mobilize a heritage-based revitalization strategy to attract new residents and commercial activity to Skid Road, regardless of the effects on the lived space of residents. These two documents set the stage for complex planning mediations in the decade to come, the most important of which focused on areas east of Gastown where Japanese Canadians once made their home.

4.5 The Downtown Eastside versus the "Japanese Village"

In 1982, a planning document entitled the "Downtown-Eastside/Oppenheimer Policy

Plan" was released, an event which cast significant toponymic effects upon the East End of Vancouver (see COV 1982b). Created in consultation with local residents over a span of six years, this mundanely titled policy was the first major planning intervention in the area since the release of the 1968 Gastown report. The document demonstrates the powerful role of planning as a toponymic channel in the area, and despite the fact that place names are presented within the plan in a matter-of-fact and apolitical manner, their banal appearance belies the depth of struggle inherent in the document's creation. In particular, two toponyms occupying the same place came into relational conflict: that of the "Downtown Eastside" as a low income resident claim to rights in the community, and "Japantown/Japanese Village" as a heritage-led framing aimed at both economic revitalization and cultural recognition. This section highlights this moment of toponymic instability and reviews the factors that led to the implementation of a new planning regime in the years following the Skid Road and Gastown programs.

As early as 1971, the city's Social Planning Department began to be concerned with the adverse effects of redevelopment on the peaceful and relatively stable low income community of Skid Road (COV 1971). In 1967 (just after the release of the "Downtown East Side" report) Social Planning had been split off from the Department of City Planning, and it was given a mandate to "plan, develop, coordinate and integrate health, education, welfare, recreational, and community renewal programs" and "foster self-help and community-betterment programs" for the citizens of Vancouver (COV Archives 2006). While City Planning was still responsible for the technical minutiae of zoning, development, and beautification, Social Planning was established to provide advice to council on how to intervene in localized social, cultural, and community issues, particularly within impoverished areas of the city (COV Archives 2006). In late 1972, Social Planning appointed a local area coordinator for Skid Road to form a "People's

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Aid Program" to empower residents to create change in their community (Cameron 1996; Griffiths 1973). This program evolved into a more permanent organization known as the "Downtown Eastside Residents Association" (DERA), whose mandate was to resist the paternalistic interventions of outsiders through community advocacy (Cameron 1996; Mitchell 1975). Under the direction of Bruce Eriksen, a former ironworker who had been recruited by Social Planning as a People's Aid, the group took direct action against those seen to be oppressing the community, such as the police, government, slumlords, unscrupulous bar owners, and drug dealers (Cameron 1996; Mitchell 1975).

DERA had a profound influence on the toponymic landscape of Vancouver, and it helped mobilize the "Downtown Eastside" through the lived space of low income residents. While some community historians suggest that DERA *created* the name "Downtown Eastside" (cf Cameron 1996), the city had already released two reports by 1971 that used the name as a neutral and official sounding descriptor for the informal area of Skid Road (COV 1965; 1971). However, DERA latched on to the name "Downtown Eastside" as an act of resistance to transform outsider perceptions of the community and create a new area where people could generate change, noting in a letter to the Social Planning Department that "we are poor people who have come together to act collectively as we see fit and best to get rid of this noxious term, Skid Road" (Bantleman 1973). Furthermore, DERA mobilized a spatial conception of their own by placing administrative boundaries around the DTES, thereby solidifying its location while recognizing low income residents, commerce, industry, and culture as vital forces that helped maintain the community (Blomley 2004; Mitchell 1975). Here, residents channeled elements of the lived, perceived, and conceived spaces of the city into the malleable "Downtown Eastside" assemblage and re-framed the area as a site of emancipatory potential.

DERA did much more than simply insert a novel and transformative understanding of the DTES into the unofficial everyday language of the city, it also worked to have the community *officially* recognized by City Hall. In 1974, the City of Vancouver requested funding from the federal and provincial governments through their "Neighbourhood Improvement Program" to support planning and community-led improvement in neighbourhoods that it felt were in need of upgrading (COV 1974; Hasson & Ley 1994). The Downtown Eastside was conspicuously absent from the list, yet DERA successfully mobilized the community and the group was given funding to plan an area it titled the "Oppenheimer District" that it presented as valuable to low income residents (Bantleman 1974; COV 1978; Eriksen 1974).

In 1976, City Council formally approved three years of funding for the Downtown Eastside and the Oppenheimer Area Planning Committee (OAPC) was formed, chaired by members of DERA and consisting of city planners, social planners, city engineers, and representatives of Japanese Canadian and Chinese Canadian cultural groups (COV 1976c; 1978). Early meeting minutes indicate that DERA exercised substantial authority within the committee, and they advocated for interventions that would improve the living conditions of residents (COV 1976b; 1976c). While low income residents appeared to be the OAPC's primary concern, the committee also acknowledged the value of the Japanese Canadians living in the area, recommending "that encouragement should be given to the Japanese community to preserve and expand their culture and facilites in the area" (Oppenheimer Area Planning Committee 1976, p. 3). As Izumi (2005) writes, these new planning imperatives were partially fuelled by calls for multicultural recognition by the Canadian state, and the late 1970s represented a key historical juncture "where ethnic and governmental politics intersected" (p. 309) to allow JCs to advocate for themselves within local area planning. Still, this recognition of the JC community in the

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DTES seems a bit out of place, especially considering that the area had been framed as an exclusively low income neighbourhood for so many years previous. It is important to note, however, that with the exception of the internment, Japanese Canadians never really "left" Vancouver, and some had returned to the coast as early as 1946 (Roy 2007).

Significantly, the late 1970s also marked the onset of a new JC activist agenda, one that was a part of a much broader Asian-American/Canadian civil rights movement that called on the federal state to provide "redress" as a way of directly addressing the injustices of the internment and uprooting (see Aoki 2011; Izumi 2005; Lai 2013; Miki 2005). Embedded within redress was a general movement toward a recognition of the Powell Street area as the spiritual home of JCs in Greater Vancouver (Aoki 2011). Indeed, from 1977 onward, this history was performed on an ongoing basis via the yearly Powell Street Festival in Oppenheimer Park, an event that provided a forum through which JCs could "showcase, dialogue about and celebrate Japanese-Canadians arts and culture" [*sic*] in the neighbourhood (Aoki 2011, p. 43; Izumi 2005). Aside from the festival, there were also sufficient numbers of JC residents, organizations, and businesses in the area in the late 1970s to establish "Powell Street" as a minor hub of JC culture (see Blain 1980; Marlatt & Itter 2011; Wakayama 1980). In particular, organizations such as Sakura-So (a senior's residence) and Tonari Gumi (a drop-in centre) existed to serve and care for the aging *issei* returnees that resided on Powell Street, and businesses like Fujiya Grocery Store and Aki Restaurant attracted JC visitors to the area to shop and enjoy traditional cuisine (Blain 1980; Wakayama 1980). Significantly, these ongoing cultural performances on Powell Street did not go unnoticed by the planning department, who recognized the importance of strengthening JC symbolic presence for the benefit of the DTES and the city as a whole, particularly in light of their former uprooting (COV 1976a).

By 1979, JC influence within the OAPC had grown significantly, and many participants had become invested in the idea of beautifying a section of the Downtown Eastside to pay tribute to the area's oft-forgotten Japanese Canadian heritage (see Izumi 2005). Representatives from the Japanese Canadian Society of Greater Vancouver, the Japanese Canadian Citizen's Association, and the Vancouver Buddhist Church, along with other JC businesses and cultural groups in the Powell Street area, expressed strong support for Japanese theme beautification on Powell Street, even offering to contribute funds to the scheme (see COV 1979a; 1979b; COV Archives 1982). However, there was an overriding concern among JC interests that the city had reserved the Oppenheimer District as an area of "institutionalization" for low income individuals displaced by the Gastown revitalization, and they gave the city an ultimatum, stating that "a decision has to be made whether Powell Street will be Japanese or hard-to-house" (COV 1979b, p. 2-3). Though DERA vehemently objected to this "either-or" proposition, the city quickly reassured JC stakeholders that Powell Street would be designated as an institution-free "character area" within the Downtown Eastside with its own design guidelines (COV 1979c, p. 3; 1979d). Powell Street was to be a *culturally-specific* aesthetic intervention into the Downtown Eastside neighbourhood where "Japanese banners and lantern-style pedestrian lighting" would tie directly into the economic revitalization of the area (COV, 1979d, p. 1). Unlike in Gastown ten years previous, there was no serious attempt to mobilize toponyms within the early planning stages, but as the plan grew in scope, the planning department's draft conception of a "Japanese-Canadian Commercial/Cultural Area" in the DTES referred to the "proposed beautification scheme for *Japantown* on Powell Street" (COV 1979a, p. 2, emphasis mine), a name that massaged the racialized framings of the early 20th century for alternative purposes.

While JC members of the OAPC immediately reacted to the term "Japantown" and

suggested that "Japanese Village" would be a preferable way of describing the Powell Street area (COV 1980b), the city continued to use the "Japantown" name in planning meetings and official reports (see COV 1980a; 1980c). In late 1980 the City Manager recommended to Council that Japantown would benefit greatly if it were constituted within city bylaws as a "special area" with a "particular ethnic nature," noting that this designation "could provide a stimulus to revitalization activity similar to that provided by the city's work in the [Gastown/Chinatown] Historic Area in the early 1970's" (COV 1980a, p. 3). Furthermore, the earliest drafts of the Downtown Eastside/Oppenheimer Policy plan historicized and legitimated the restoration of the name within official discourse by stating that "by 1930 the Oppenheimer area was settled almost entirely by Japanese people and became known as 'Japantown'" (see COV 1980d, p. 4).

"Japantown" was also being communicated to the public via the media. On September 20, 1980, the *Vancouver Sun* ran two full-page articles related to the city's JC community. One article supported the idea of Japantown as an acknowledgement of human rights and redress activism, first by relaying the oft-forgotten history of the internment to the public and highlighting the area of "Little Tokyo" on Powell Street as a historic centre of JC activity in Vancouver, then by chronicling the community's struggle for justice (Wakayama 1980). The other article emphasized the city's beautification plan, noting that despite the dearth of JC businesses or residents, many people were excited at the prospect of "creating a major Japanese tourist area" (Blain 1980, p. B1). The second article also exposed deep anxieties over the area's social problems: business owners were palpably concerned about visible poverty, and JC cultural interests expressed their revulsion at the state of the community, stating that "there is no way that the Japanese community would want to identify with that kind of group" (Blain 1980, p. B1). Meanwhile, DERA felt like they had been sidelined during the process, and they were upset that

decisions affecting low income residents were being made by people living outside the neighbourhood, stating that it would be irresponsible to revitalize Japantown without helping the area's residents first (Blain 1980).

The Downtown-Eastside/Oppenheimer Policy Plan was adopted in 1982, thereby officially inscribing the name "Downtown Eastside" on the city landscape and setting aside a portion of the community for "Japanese Village" style restoration, in spite of the potential impacts of heritage revitalization on low income residents (see Birmingham & Wood 1968; COV 1971; 1982a; 1982b; see Figure 6). The city also responded to JC concerns and discouraged
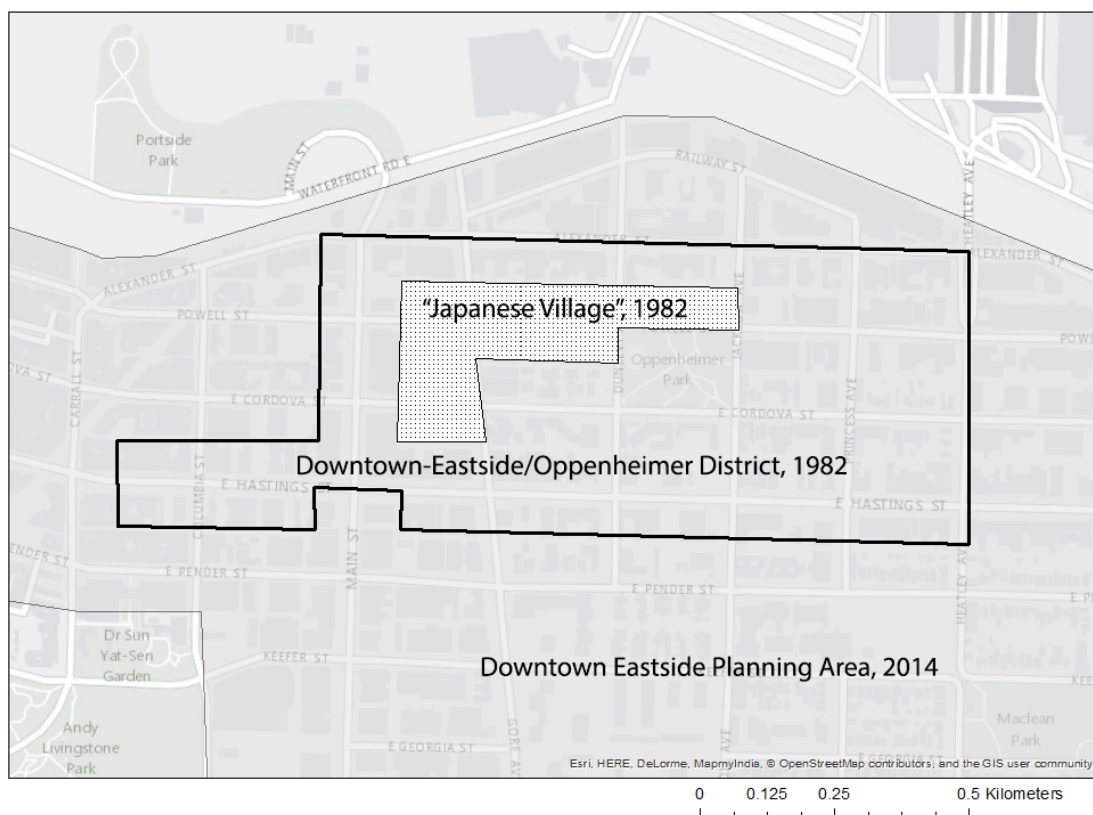
Figure 6: The "Downtown Eastside" and the "Japanese Village" (Map by Trevor Wideman based on data from City of Vancouver, 1982a; 1982b).

the creation of new social housing in the neighbourhood, urging businesses to return to the DTES

at a time when subsidized development was required and market demand was non-existent (see COV 1982b; Matsune 1982). Indeed, both the city and JC participants appeared comfortable with endorsing an intervention that would allow JCs to return to the Downtown Eastside as a policy of "revitalization," as long as it meant that the "institutional ghetto" that acted as a sanctuary for low income residents was dismantled in the process (COV 1982b, p. 21).

For JC organizations to be so supportive of the active displacement of individuals from the neighbourhood that they were physically removed from forty years previous appears to be heavily ironic, especially considering that early JCs were also "ghettoized" and cohabited the area with transient white labouring classes (see The New Canadian 1941; Sumida 1935). However, tacit community support for the planning program did not translate into visible action on the ground, and most of the commercially-oriented aesthetic promises of the 1982 Japantown beautification scheme never came to fruition. While the renovation of Oppenheimer Park in 1977 had included the planting of *sakura*[7] trees and several other material enhancements, the most direct benefits to the JC community came in the form of city funding for property improvements (Izumi 2005). Despite these small scale interventions, JC presence on Powell Street appears to have declined after the conclusion of the Downtown Eastside/Oppenheimer planning program in 1982. While the "Japantown" assemblage made a brief appearance within the social space of Vancouver, its widespread adoption was relatively unsuccessful, and it once again slipped into dormancy as the Downtown Eastside remained the preferred nomenclature for the area.

It is worth noting that the arrival of the 1982 Downtown Eastside Oppenheimer Plan provides another significant example of the use of toponyms, as in Gastown ten years previous. It also demonstrates how the city was willing to adapt and mobilize toponymic assemblages through planning policy in an attempt to mitigate/downplay social problems, specifically by

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[7] Cherry.

reworking "Japantown" to facilitate social and economic mixing. This new planning strategy was also consistent with the beginning of a broader neoliberalization of the city, elucidated in the following section.

4.6 Toponymies of transformation in the Downtown Eastside

The planning process that shaped the 1982 Downtown Eastside plan demonstrated that city planning could be used to intervene in the DTES while mobilizing novel toponymic framings. However, it was not until almost two decades later that planning truly emerged as the *de facto* solution to the social problems of the area. The ongoing rollback of the welfare state in the 1980s and 90s, combined with Vancouver's increased reliance on market-based solutions to urban revitalization, had produced a series of events and descriptions that were used by the media to (re)territorialize the DTES assemblage within Vancouver by shaping it as site of deviance that required immediate social and material intervention. In response to such ongoing pressures, groups began to call for cooperation and consulation to create a safer and healthier community and address structural socioeconomic barriers (see Carnegie Community Centre Association 1995; COV 1998; Harcourt 1995). In response, a coordinated government program known as the *Vancouver Agreement* was enacted in 2000, and at the core of the agreement was a call for planning (Vancouver Agreement 2000). Throughout the 2000s, planning programs worked in conjunction with (and responded to) media narratives to advance social and material transformations in the DTES. Implicated in this milieu were toponyms such as Gastown, Chinatown, and Japantown, which were used fluidly and in contradistinction to marginalized areas of the DTES. While the Vancouver Agreement was highly touted as a therapeutic policy solution to the ills of the community, socioeconomic pressures increased during its tenure, and in its wake came *more planning*, this time in the form of a Local Area Plan aimed at appeasing the

concerns of low income and marginalized residents.

4.6.1 Identifying the problem: (re)territorializing the DTES

The 1980s and 90s marked a time of neoliberal-style structural transformation in Vancouver, and policy prescriptions began to be directed toward altering the material form of the city in the name of capital while abrogating governmental responsibilities for the social welfare of communities (Hugill 2010; Mitchell 2004). The era found the City of Vancouver working in conjunction with the Provincial and Federal governments to generate schemes whereby it would attract international capital and transform itself into a "global" city, thereby placing enormous development burdens on communities such as the DTES (Hasson & Ley 1994; Mitchell 2004). In addition to such pressures, the social and demographic character of the area began to shift dramatically as hard drugs such as heroin and crack arrived on the streets along with hundreds of mentally ill patients displaced by the provincial government's deinstitutionalization of the Riverview mental health centre, which meant that the DTES "problem" was no longer an issue of benign dereliction, but of overt fear and violence (see Birmingham & Wood 2008; Sommers 2001). Within this milieu, the image of the moral working class DTES that was carefully curated in the 1970s began to crumble in the face of the glittering future promised by planners, politicians, and journalists in the 1980s (Blomley 2004; Sommers 2001).

The DTES assemblage throughout the 1980s and 90s was highly malleable, and the community was presented according to both positive and negative framings depending on the actors mobilizing it. For example, as late as 1983, Mayor Mike Harcourt commended the Downtown Eastside Residents Association for its advocacy efforts on behalf of low income residents, noting that it had helped transform the public's understanding of "Skid Road" from the ground up by reaffirming the social value and material identity of the neighbourhood and

renaming it the "Downtown Eastside" (Cameron 1996). By contrast, Mayor Art Phillips took full credit for the renaming, noting that *city hall* had used the toponym as a top-down problem-solving technique (Mulgrew 1998c). In a way, both parties were correct. Though this toponymic mediation was used as a resident-led resistance strategy, the name was also a part of official policy discourse via city planning process both before and after DERA, an act that ensured that it could be understood in relation to the rest of the city. These two discursive uses acted dialectically in an ongoing process of inclusion and segregation that defined the DTES and put it "in its place." However, contrary to the assertions of some activists and politicians, "Skid Road" (as a toponymic framing) had never been completely erased or replaced. Sommers (2001) demonstrates how policymakers and the media in the 1980s recast the Downtown Eastside as a neighbourhood full of broken bodies who were "incapacitated by circumstances beyond their control" (p. 246). The unofficial name of "Skid Road" continued to appear: between 1987 and 1996, *The Vancouver Sun* and *The Province* referenced "Skid Road" 227 times, and it was often used fluidly and interchangeably (or in conjunction) with the name "Downtown Eastside" (see for example Bohn 1984; Hume 1986; Sarti 1985). Of critical importance, however, is that despite DERA's efforts to normalize the "Downtown Eastside" by inserting the neighbourhood into the city's official planning logics, the toponym was then able to be repoliticized as a deviant "skid road" due to its non-conformity with other parts of the city (Sommers 2001). Indeed for some, the positive aspects of the "Downtown Eastside" had been erased, and they lamented the fact that the neighbourhood was as socially and materially destitute as ever:

> *"We, as a community, want protection from the misery, hopelessness and despair that resides in what is now euphemistically call[ed] the downtown eastside. It is as if some would have us believe that a change in name is a change in condition."* - McKay and Hinton (1997, p. A21)

The resurrection of "Skid Road" discourse was not passively accepted by many community residents, who continued to activate lived space in relation to such framings. One

letter to the editor of *The Province* asserts that "'Skid row' is a state of mind found in some media people. […] In informed circles it is called the "Downtown Eastside. We are proud of our reborn community and prefer others to call it what we do, the Downtown Eastside" (Chalmers 1989, p. 26). Residents attempted to constitute the Downtown Eastside as an internally-cohesive community and rejected Skid Road as an externally-imposed moniker that represented problems generated by outsiders (Armstrong 1989a; 1989b).

While low income advocates bristled at the Skid Road label, the changing sociomaterial and economic conditions of the area helped affirm the neighbourhood's "backward" status in relation to the city. For example, the closure of Woodward's department store in 1993, a long-time bastion of retail on the 100 block of West Hastings, left an important section of the neighbourhood devoid of commercial activity, and the block slowly became an open-air drug market beset by gangs (Aird 1993; Bula 1998a; Ley & Dobson 2008). In light of this decline, the city began to distance the Woodward's area from the problematic Downtown Eastside moniker via a small scale city planning program that mobilized the name "Victory Square," an intervention that encouraged high-end condo developments and creative industries to establish themselves in the neighbourhood (Blomley & Sommers 1999; COV 2005b; Sarti 1993). Simultaneously, incoming merchants, along with the media, began to refer to the Victory Square area as "Crosstown" to denote its location as a juncture point between newly-established Yaletown and well-entrenched Gastown (Roberts 1994; Wanless 1999).

The Gastown assemblage also began to be reframed as a condominium-based, heritage-centric, mixed-use community that was fluidly and relationally set apart from the Downtown Eastside. As in the 1960s, business interests and the city viewed residential development and beautification as the key to a new Gastown renaissance that could spread and help "fix" the

DTES (Bula 1995). Indeed, the 1990s signposted the arrival of a new middle-class discourse of social upgrading that combined with the material transformation of the area in the form of gentrification, a process that did not go unnnoticed by DTES residents and community activists (see Blomley 2004; Sommers 2001). Though activists and academics warned that gentrification would displace residents (see Bula 1995; Sarti 1995), condo developments proceeded apace, and by the end of the 1990s, Gastown contained a community of property owners who aggressively defended their territory via policing tactics and securitization (Mulgrew 1998a). In Chinatown to the south, merchants and residents banded together to hire private security guards that would defend businesses and homes from Downtown Eastside residents by "nudg[ing] along the poor, the homeless, the disturbed, the loitering" (Mulgrew 1998a, p. A15). Toponymically, Chinatown and Gastown were framed as defensible and exclusionary territories full of upstanding citizens and tax-paying business/property owners, while the DTES continued to be represented as a deviant and unproductive area that had to be monitored and contained lest problems leak into adjacent communities (see Bula 1998b; Mulgrew 1998a; 1998b).

But what of Japantown? There was no significant action taken to establish the 1982 "Japanese Village" beautification scheme, even after Japanese Canadians achieved redress from the federal government in 1988 for the injustices of World War II (see Miki 2005; Sunahara 2000). While "Gastown" and "Chinatown" remained highly active and pliable assemblages, the name "Japantown" remained dormant except when being used to describe the distant history of the Downtown Eastside/Oppenheimer Area (see Boyd 1989, Ward 1989; Hawthorn 1992; Mulgrew 1998c) or to promote the annual Powell Street Festival that took place in Oppenheimer Park (see Garber 1991; Hanna 1992). Boyd (1989) notes that the planned version of "Japantown" was unsuccessful because tensions between Japanese and non-Japanese business owners made it

difficult to raise funds for revitalization. Furthermore, the number of JC residents and

businesspeople on Powell Street was dwindling as the elderly passed on, and there was little

interest from the JC community in relocating to the downtrodden area (Boyd 1989). Heritage

writer Robin Ward lamented the area's failure, stating that "Japantown is a disappointment.

There's no 'Little Tokyo' here today. […] This area could have developed the bustle and

enterprise of nearby Chinatown. Instead it's on its knees" (Ward 1989, p. E2). It was evident that

JC organizations were not interested in (re)claiming the Oppenheimer Area following the 1982

plan. The National Nikkei Heritage Centre was established in South Burnaby, while soon after,

volunteer organization Tonari Gumi chose to relocate outside of the Downtown Eastside (see

Berry 2000), ensuring that Powell Street remained a historic point of interest and leading Brook

(2000) to observe "there is no 'Japantown,' nor the inclination to rebuild one" (p. B3).

While "Japantown" remained a toponymic artifact, Gastown and Chinatown were being

worked and remobilized through new residential and commercial developments that overlapped

with places long considered part of the Downtown Eastside. The immanent threat of community

loss inspired the Board of Directors at the Carnegie Centre (a community centre aimed primarily

at serving the low income population of the DTES) to act on behalf of their constituents and

petition the city for a comprehensive planning program that would address the needs of local

residents (Carnegie Community Centre Association 1995). The planning proposal drew on the

toponymic assemblages of the community to reenact low income territorial claims, stating that

residents had "fought to dispel the 'Skid Road' myth and renamed their community the

Downtown Eastside" (Carnegie Community Centre Association 1995; p. 1), and noted that

planning and co-operation could "create a clear and renewed vision for the community *we* know

as the Downtown Eastside" (p. 4, emphasis mine). Prominent politicians expressed their support

for the community-generated approach to problem solving, and it was the first step toward

developing the *Vancouver Agreement* (see Carnegie Community Centre Association 1995; City

of Vancouver 1998; Harcourt 1995; Vancouver Agreement 2000). As noted above, the

Vancouver Agreement provided a framework for administration to deal with the problems of the

Downtown Eastside, and it presided over the transformative decade that was to come.

4.6.2 Fixing the problem: deterritorializing the DTES

"Vancouver's Downtown East Side (DES) is about 16 square blocks squashed between Chinatown, Gastown and Strathcona. Its definition is not so much in its geography or locale as it is in its reputation as a drug-infested, crime-ridden zone of poverty: Canada's poorest postal district." - Fairchild (2005, p. A58)

While the discourse of "Skid Road" never really disappeared, a new framing emerged in

the 2000s that associated the "Downtown Eastside" with its statistical status as "Canada's

Poorest Postal Code" (Boddy 2006, p. B2). This emergent discourse was significant for two

reasons. First, it was crucially distinct from the "Skid Road" designation as it drew attention

away from the ostensibly derelict and vagrant *individual bodies* of DTES residents and

mobilized a new framing that classed the *entire population* as poor and destitute. Second, by

placing the DTES outside of conventional society and framing residents as irresponsible and

unproductive economic citizens, such discourses opened up the DTES to new types of

intervention aimed at managing the population in an increasingly restrictive and punitive

manner. These observations are significant in light of the increasingly neoliberalized policy

frameworks that were being adopted by the City of Vancouver throughout the 2000s (see

Mitchell 2004). As part of this onging project, the Vancouver Agreement (2000) helped organize

the actions of the municipal, provincial, and federal governments work together "with

communities in Vancouver to develop and implement a coordinated strategy to promote and

support sustainable economic, social, and community development" (p. 1) as well as

multiculturalism, mixed housing, and heritage preservation. While the Vancouver Agreement

(2000) applied to the entire city in principle, its first focus was on intitating a program of strategic intervention into the "well-known section of Vancouver called the Downtown Eastside" (p. 5). In the agreement, the DTES was a loosely-bounded, fluid, and relational assemblage that existed wherever the need for development was greatest, and the document stated that it would support interventions outside commonly-defined boundaries as long as they "contribute[d] to the goals and objectives of the Downtown Eastside strategy" (Vancouver Agreement 2000; p. 5). Key principles of the strategy were to be enacted via planning programs (Vancouver Agreement 2000), and the first in a long series of such programs, the *Downtown Eastside Revitalization Program* (see COV 2000), was activated almost immediately. Indeed, by the end of the decade, Clague & Zipursky (2010) had identified a marked increase in the number of planning and policy programs being applied to the DTES during the Vancouver Agreement era, noting that there were no less than 15 separate documents in circulation. Such management policies were unified by normative goals that fit loosely under the concept of "balance." First, they all strategized ways that safety, housing, health and the local economy could be improved to the benefit of everyone; and second, they all espoused a social mixing rhetoric that would allow residents to remain in the DTES while it was being (re)developed (Clague & Zipursky 2010).

Post-2000, the Downtown Eastside reflected a contradictory logic of social mix and dispersal, and much of the discourse placed the blame for the area's troubles on the systematic deficiencies of multiple governments, institutions, and neighbourhoods, while framing residents as failures who needed to be rehabilitated and housed in diverse areas (Boddy 2002). Opinion columnists longed for a time when the area "wasn't even known, familiarly, as the Downtown Eastside" (Fralic 2004, p. B1), blaming both DTES activists and west side NIMBYs for the area's problems and proposing a solution of resident diffusion (Boddy 2002). To complicate

matters, the problems of the Downtown Eastside had begun to flow into neighbouring areas such as Gastown, adding an extra layer of expediency to planning initiatives. While Gastown had long been used by planners, business owners, and the media to denote a heritage district with unique social, economic, and aesthetic qualities separate from the DTES, the carefully constructed discursive and material veneer of the early 1970s was slowly beginning to crumble, despite the recent addition of condominium developments in the area (Mackie 2002a; Mulgrew 1998a). In response to the concerns of residents and businessowners who feared the territorial incursion of the DTES, the city instigated the *Gastown Heritage Management Plan* (COV 2001), providing tax breaks, density bonuses, and improvement grants to property owners who were willing to upgrade their buildings to heritage standards (Mackie 2002a). However, many Gastown business owners refused to accept city incentives and handouts until social problems were dealt with, touting the economic benefits that would accrue if the city simply enforced "the laws of the land" (Mackie 2002a, p. B1). Indeed, Gastown interests operationalized a punitive management framework for the area, and began using revanchist policing strategies as they fought to "limit social housing, move social services for addicts and alcoholics away from Gastown, and crack down on panhandling" (Bula 2004, p. B1).

Such strategies seemed to work. By the mid-2000s, much like in the early 1970s, the presence and visibility of low income individuals in Gastown had markedly decreased. Fear of the impoverished other subsided as Gastown gained strength in contradistinction to the DTES, and Gastown residents and businesses began to embrace a softer management style that echoed the city's message of tolerance, inclusion, and mixing. For many, a successful social mix strategy for the area required the revitalization of the 100 block of West Hastings and the still-empty Woodward's building, which in 2005 began its conversion into a mixed-use social housing,

condominium, and commercial complex that promised to bring socioeconomic benefits to the area via a logic of "revitalization without displacement" (see COV 2005a; Ley & Dobson 2008; Mackie 2002b). Significantly, such programs intersected with a larger drive to "clean up" the Downtown Eastside and beautify Vancouver in advance of the 2010 Olympic Winter Games (Dewiert 2013; Drury & Swanson 2011). City politicians held up Woodward's as a keystone project that would spearhead a revival of the Downtown Eastside to its former glory, insisting that it would attract pioneering businessmen and restaurateurs (Bula 2005). According to Boddy (2006), the reintroduction of market housing and business activity to the DTES was a chance for it to "pull itself up by its bootstraps" and become "integrated into the rest of Vancouver for the first time" (p. B6). Even though it didn't occur overnight, the Woodward's redevelopment introduced market forces and middle class residents to the ailing neighbourhood and initiated a material and discursive expansion of "Gastown" in relation to the Downtown Eastside.

As social mix strategies became the new orthodoxy, developers, architects, and businesspeople that associated themselves with Gastown were able to take advantage of Vancouver Agreement funding, city heritage incentives, and large pools of private capital to ensure that high end restaurants, creative live-work spaces, and boutique businesses would move in to the area, while denying entry to those that didn't fit the new aesthetic (Bula 2004). Developers were also quick to note that DTES residents would not be displaced, claiming that the neighbourhood's diversity was what made it attractive (Bula 2004). For Gastown business interests, the coordinated efforts of residential and commercial property owners had allowed for a gritty yet balanced neighbourhood to emerge where the middle and upper classes were able to live, work and play side by side with the low income Downtown Eastside population without fear of being overwhelmed by them (The Vancouver Sun 2005). At this point, Gastown had been

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transformed by young entrepreneurs who were reclaiming the "birthplace of Vancouver" (The Vancouver Sun 2005), with one business owner claiming that "the stigma and frankly the root of the social problem itself is going to be significantly improved by interaction between people" (Brook 2005, p. C1). Such interactions resonate with what Burnett (2014) describes as poverty tourism, where carefully-managed middle-class contact with the "othered" residents of the DTES becomes "a form of voyeuristic encounter" that helps reinforce normative discourses (p. 162). Such everyday encounters intersected with the deliberate, contested, and punitive remobilization of "Gastown" as a hip and funky socially-mixed/mixed-use community within Vancouver, while at the same time, the area's transformation was able to be touted as a *natural* and organic evolution by its proponents (see Mackie 2008a).

Gastown was a toponymic success, and its territory began to expand discursively through the efforts of the media, organizations, and business owners who latched on to the name to associate themselves with the brand. For example, the Pennsylvania Hotel at Carrall and Hastings was now located at "the intersection of Gastown and Chinatown" (Mackie 2008b, p. F18), while a block away, the brand-new Woodward's building was touted as a bold experiment "pulled off by the sort of people who have made Gastown vibrant" (Millette 2010; p. E5). The 100 block of West Hastings was now a lynchpin in "the overall rejuvenation of Gastown and the Woodward's district" that would bring diversity to the DTES (Symons 2010, p. E6). Here, Gastown was reworked as a well-balanced (i.e. gentrified) community explicitly associated with entrepreneurialism, business, heritage, and the creative class, while the the lived spaces of the DTES suffered a concomitant deterritorialization justified by the neighbourhood's status as incomplete, transitory, and in need of change. This process continues in the present, as the example of Cuchillo restaurant in Chapter 1 attests.

In stark contrast to Gastown, "Japantown" was almost completely non-existent by the 2000s, and with the exception of the yearly Powell Street Festival in Oppenheimer Park, there were very few sociomaterial threads left keeping the toponym alive (see Moscato 2007). However, the situation changed dramatically in 2007, when the Heritage Vancouver Society placed "Old Japantown" on their list of "Top Ten Endangered Sites" in the city, and called for a review of the area's heritage resources to incentivize Chinatown or Gastown style building restoration (Heritage Vancouver Society 2007; Moscato 2007). In response, the City of Vancouver, armed with funding from the Vancouver Agreement, commissioned a historical and cultural review of "the Powell Street area commonly known as Japantown," which would provide a context for planning processes that would be undertaken in the future (COV 2007; p. 1). This report was completed in early 2008 with Birmingham & Wood Architects (the same firm that produced the Gastown heritage revitalization plan in 1969) as lead authors in consultation with members of the DTES community, and like the Gastown Plan written nearly 40 years previous, it recommended that the "Japantown" area be designated a culturally-distinct heritage neighborhood in relation to the DTES so that it could be protected and revitalized (Birmingham & Wood 2008). Speaking to the media later the same year, British Columbia Premier Gordon Campbell referred to Japantown as one of Vancouver's founding neighbourhoods, and promised revitalization funding to help "restore and reestablish the sense of community" (Bula 2008b, p. B7) in this older area of the Downtown Eastside. For the first time since the 1980s, the name "Japantown" was becoming more than an artifact, it was being re-molded through conceived space as an area that could be "revitalized" in the name of multiculturalism and heritage.

However, the discursive resurrection and manipulation of Japantown was more than a city-led process - as in 1982, JCs were involved in the revitalization scheme as well.

Stakeholders (many of whom were Japanese Canadian) that contributed to the Birmingham &

Wood (2008) report "generally supported approaching Powell Street/Japantown as a historical

and cultural district in the future redevelopment of Oppenheimer" and "spoke in favour of

preservation and rehabilitation and suggested the neighbourhood should […] form part of a new,

unified, larger heritage district encompassing Gastown, Chinatown, [and] Hastings Street

corridor" (p. 79). These discourses fed into other programs aimed at materially reinforcing the JC

character of the area. For example, in 2008, the Vancouver Parks Board was preparing to

renovate Oppenheimer Park, and the original proposal included the removal of the

commemorative *sakura* trees that had been planted by *issei* elders in 1977 to honour the historic

JC presence in community (see Izumi 2005; Oikawa 2009). This potential loss of community

heritage caused immediate outcry from the *nisei* veterans of the early JC activism and redress

movement, as well as their *sansei* children, who protested by pointing to the cultural and social

value of Oppenheimer Park as the heart of the former Powell Street neighbourhood and a site of

meaning for the existing low income community (Oikawa 2009). In response to such protests, a

stakeholder group known as the "Japantown Commemoration Committee" was formed to ensure

that "legacy of the trees and respect for the Japanese-Canadian elders would be an integral part

of the revitalization of Vancouver's Downtown Eastside" (Oikawa 2009, p. A13).

A mass of support for "Japantown" was building, and in early 2009, organizers from

various JC and Downtown Eastside groups banded together to produce the first "Japantown

Multicultural Neighbourhood Celebration," a one day festival that connected the Japanese

heritage highlighted in the recently published *Historical and Cultural Review* with the

multicultural and artistic community of the present (Oikawa 2009; Powell Street Festival Society

2009). Despite Japantown's location in the centre of the DTES, festival organizers downplayed

the existing toponymic assemblage and enrolled neighbourhood artists and organizations into

Japantown by referring to it as if it were an autonomous community (see Powell Street Festival

Society 2009; p. 2). In addition, the festival program merged the well-known histories of the

DTES low income community with the history of Japantown, creating a seamless and apolitical

narrative that made it appear as though the community (and the toponym) had always maintained

a strong presence in the area (see Powell Street Festival Society 2009; p. 5-7). Similarly, the

Vancouver Heritage Foundation, armed with funding from the city, produced a map and walking

tour that detailed the history of Japantown while only once mentioning the DTES (The

Vancouver Heritage Foundation 2009). While the festival was a one-off event, it reinscribed and

performed Japanese Canadian culture within Vancouver and made Japantown "real" to both

residents and onlookers.

Drawing on this momentum, the City of Vancouver allocated $150,000 to "Japantown

revitalization," citing four city-sponsored initiatives, namely the Historic and Cultural Review,

Oppenheimer Park redevelopment, the protection of the legacy *sakura*, and the Japantown

Neighbourhood Celebration as key projects that had brought the community back from the brink

of extinction (COV 2010). In the wake of such projects, a new round of funding was allocated to

the Vancouver Japanese Language School and the Powell Street Open Door Project, a

multidimensional intervention that included commemorative signage within the public realm, as

well as walking tours and street-level engagements to coincide with the Powell Street Festival

(COV 2010). According to the city, the restoration of Japantown would connect the past, present,

and future of the community, "help achieve DTES community-building and economic

revitalization objectives," and "inform future planning work in the Downtown Eastside

Oppenheimer District (DEOD)" (COV 2010; p. 2-3). The city, by supporting JC and DTES

community partners through strategic funding allocations and planning interventions, cultivated "Japantown" in the name of heritage, bringing the area and the toponym into its own plans for DTES transformation (see Luba 2010).

Concomitant with the fluid remanipulation of toponyms like Gastown and Japantown in relation to the DTES, a frenzy of speculative real estate activity led by some of the city's most prominent developers was beginning, and many believed that the still-underdeveloped sections of the DTES could be restored as a balanced community via strategic capital investments, planning incentives, heritage zoning, and density bonuses (Chan 2010; Kumagai & McGuire 2011; Penner 2006). As these pressures increased, tensions emerged between community advocates and developers, and the need for conversation and planning between opposing groups in the neighbourhood appeared increasingly important (O'Connor 2009). At the forefront of the planning strategy was the Building Community Society (BCS), a volunteer community development organization made up of property developers such as Milton Wong, planners Ray Spaxman and Larry Beasley, former British Columbia premier Mike Harcourt, and long-time director of the Carnegie Community Centre Michael Clague (see BCS 2008; 2010). The powerful membership of the BCS, using logics that dovetailed nicely with the imperatives of the Vancouver Agreement, believed that collaborative planning between business and community interests was the key to building a mutually beneficial and socially mixed neighbourhood (BCS 2010; Bula 2008a; Harcourt 2011). In 2008, the BCS published a comprehensive report making a case to the city for a local area plan, (see BCS 2008), and by 2010, support for a local area planning process had reached its peak as groups with disparate agendas asked the city to draw up a comprehensive plan for the DTES. This request was granted by city hall, and planning was pushed forward, utilizing a widely popular communicative and participatory model that was

already well established in Vancouver (see Davison 2011; Parker 2012; Purcell 2009). This planning process emerged as a field where toponymic assemblages would be contested, and its effects will be more fully elucidated in the following chapter.

4.7 Conclusion

This chapter has demonstrated the ways that the East Vancouver locale, long referred to as the "Downtown Eastside" has been toponymically framed over the past 150 years. The histories of the DTES are often recounted as a series of punctuated turning points that led to the neighbourhood that we know today, and many narratives of the community have reached the status of unquestioned truth, often at the risk of concealing the lived and perceived spaces of inhabitants. Some stories have done important work for the state, and others work to counteract hegemonic practices and inspire resistance. Furthermore, these histories are inherently *geographical*, because they often frame particular areas and places as needing intervention or deserving of protection. By considering the DTES as a toponymic assemblage, I have paid attention to the processural aspects of naming, revealing how it has acted as an expressive element mobilized via planning, policy, and the media as well as residents. Here, toponyms are *fluid* because, they interact, coalesce, and overlap with each other across places and through time, while they are each *malleable* and *potential* because their meanings change in relation to ongoing discursive contestations. Such processes are often subsumed beneath the depoliticized veneer of toponymy itself, yet upon close examination, toponyms often help guide powerful, politically-motivated interventions into the lived spaces of communities while simultaneously reinforcing resident-led grassroots resistance. These insights are further discussed in Chapter 6.

In Section 4.2, I examined the genesis of the DTES, revealing how certain toponyms emerged with the arrival of colonizers and the Canadian Pacific Railway. Such toponyms were

channeled through the perceived and conceived spaces of the city, as discursive and material interventions such as marketing, media representation, mapping, building construction, and infrastructure development confined particular groups and functions within the city. Section 4.3 revealed the ways in which the material presence of Japanese Canadians helped motivate "Japanese Town," and it demonstrated how internal debates over community representation intersected with media narratives and policy to territorialize JCs within the social space of Vancouver. Section 4.4 interrogated the emergence of the "Skid Road" toponym in the wake of the wartime internment of JCs, and it examined how discursive interventions in the form of media, planning, and policy documentation responded to the social and material decline in the built form of the neighbourhood to territorialize poverty in the East End of the city. Furthermore, Section 4.4 also demonstrates how similar mediations were used to motivate the material restoration of a problematic section of "Skid Road" to reterritorialize the long-dormant toponym of "Gastown" as a middle-class area within the DTES.

Section 4.5 examined how activism, planning, policy, and the media intersected with the material presence of impoverished residents and declining buildings to stimulate the emergence of the "Downtown Eastside" assemblage, and revealed how this name conflicted with the motivations of JCs who called on their cultural heritage to advocate within planning for a "Japanese Village" style aesthetic intervention in the area. Finally, Section 4.6 revealed how the DTES once again became contested in an era of increasing neoliberalization. Once again, planning, policy, and the media were inportant discursive vectors by which understandings of the neighbourhood were transformed, while the material presence of hard drugs, poverty, and a physically declining built environment helped advance market-based "revitalization" as a solution to the community's ills. As intense concerns over development, gentrification, and

displacement in the DTES emerged among residents, the city became motivated to undertake a comprehensive local area planning process for the area. This process would became a site of toponymic contestation, the effects of which are elucidated in the following chapter.

This chapter has examined the toponymic history of the DTES as it "existed" at the onset of the Local Area Planning Process, and revealed the ways that naming has been discursively normalized, (de)politicized, and contested in ways that delineated individual and group actions in relation to the trialectical production of urban space. While the "Downtown Eastside" is seen by many as simply another neighbourhood within the social space of "Vancouver," it is a product of multitudinous historical relations - it is not total nor is it essential. In is in this spirit that I now examine the DTES LAPP as a conjuncture through which the toponymic assemblages of the neighbourhood were remobilized strategically through the conceived spaces of planning and policymaking. In this way, the LAPP emerged as a discursive field where toponyms were contested in ways that have consequences for residents, while also leaving room for resistance.

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CHAPTER 5

TOPONYMIC ASSEMBLAGES AND THE DOWNTOWN EASTSIDE LOCAL AREA PLAN

5.1 Introduction

On March 14, 2014, after almost four years of negotiation, consultation, and writing, the

City of Vancouver (COV) formally approved a brand-new Local Area Plan for the Downtown

Eastside (see COV 2014a). Planners and politicians immediately hailed the plan, stating that it

reflected the needs of residents, provided a broad-based solution to the socioeconomic problems

of the complex neighbourhood, and promoted balance in the area through a mixture of housing

and business development strategies (see Cole 2014, Mackie 2014). While the plan was touted as

an unprecedented achievement, as Chapter 4 demonstrates, it simply represented the most recent

in a long line of civic interventions in the area. Indeed, over the past 100+ years, citizens and

politicians in the City of Vancouver (and beyond) have repeatedly tried to come up with ways to

"fix" the area now known as the DTES, which has long been viewed as full of urgent "problems"

that needed to be contained lest they seep into the rest of the city. While such issues were often

the result of much larger societal forces, they were frequently problematized at the local scale,

and strategic external interventions into the DTES were often used to normalize the

neighbourhood in relation to Vancouver as a whole. Most recently, the forces of market capital,

facilitated by government policy interventions, have begun to bear down on the DTES in the

form of residential and commercial redevelopment. By the late 2000s, these processes were

generating conflict between development interests, many of whom who wanted to socially and

materially remake the area in the interests of consumers and social mix; and low income

activists, who desired social housing and a supportive environment for existing residents. Actors

on both sides of the divide began to call on the COV to act as a mediator to quell the contentious

atmosphere, and in 2010, the city heeded these requests and instigated a participatory Local Area

Planning Process (LAPP) to help envision the future of the DTES.

In this empirical chapter I use the LAPP as my object of investigation, yet unlike many

studies of participatory planning, this chapter is not simply meant as a procedural critique. While

my analysis indeed reveals some of the procedural flaws of the LAPP, I instead focus on how the

LAPP emerged as a discursive arena wherein the toponymic assemblages of the neighbourhood

were channeled, contested, and transformed. I draw on a purposive interview program conducted

with planners and members of the LAPP committee (N=14) to assess how the toponyms of the

DTES shifted via the LAPP, using the city's official planning definitions at the outset of the

process as a benchmark (COV 2011b; see Figure 7). This is not to reify these toponyms or take

them for granted; it is to show how the DTES assemblage was reconfigured in relation to the
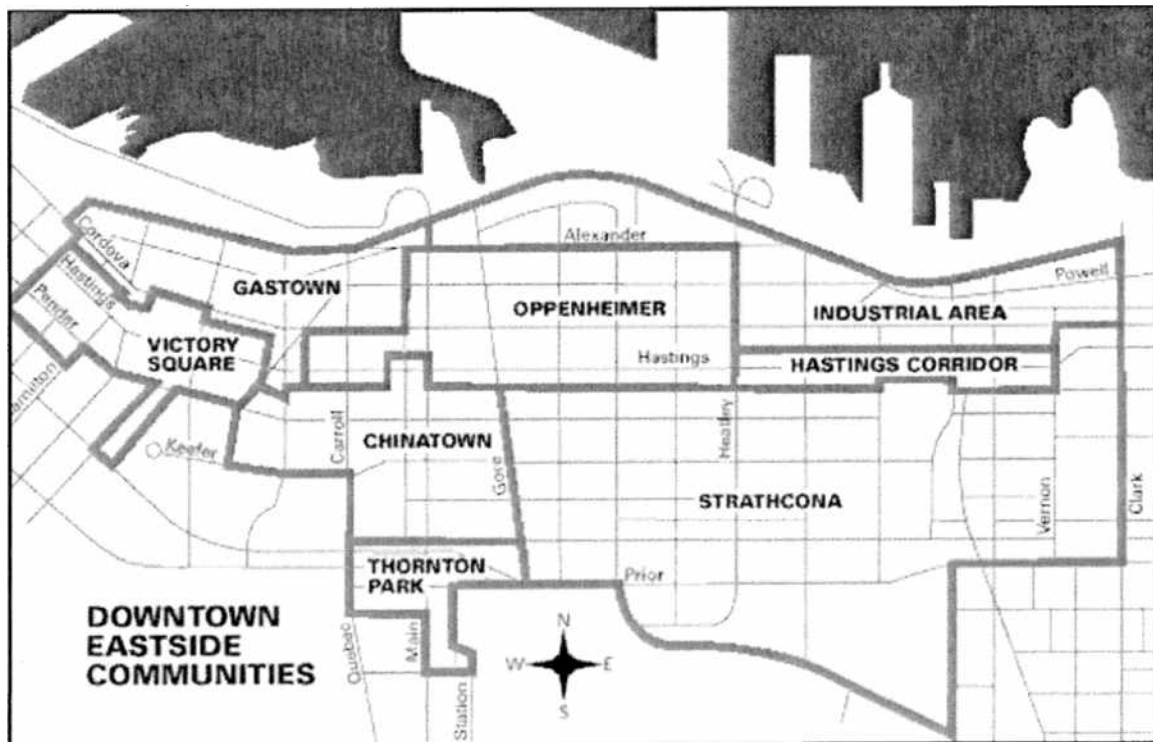
Figure 7: The Downtown Eastside Planning Area, including sub-areas (COV 2011b)

LAPP, as well as demonstrate the dissonances between the sociomaterial cartographies (i.e. *lived and perceived spaces*) of residents and the way that the neighbourhood was represented within the *conceived spaces* of planning (see Blomley & Sommers 1999; Hugill 2010, Lefebvre 1991).

This chapter is presented in five sections. First, in section 5.2, I briefly review the conditions that led to the inception of the LAPP and examine the early conflicts that arose around the setting of the Terms of Reference (TOR) and the implementation of a governance structure. Second, in Section 5.3 I demonstrate how the LAPP worked the toponyms of the DTES through the conceived spaces of zoning, mapping and boundary making in ways that deterritorialized and fragmented the area. Third, in Section 5.4, I show how those same techniques were used to territorialize a low income area for strategic intervention while ensuring that other areas in the planning district remained stable and open for development. Fourth, in Section 5.5, I provide a further example of two and three by examining how the LAPP channeled "Japantown" as a heritage-led, culturally-specific redevelopment strategy at the expense of current residents, contrary to the desires of many Japanese Canadian (JC) activists. Finally, in Section 5.6, I look at how the LAPP inadvertently forged strategic alliances between unlikely groups, fostering forms of (toponymic) resistance. This chapter is meant as a continuation of the DTES narrative that I began in Chapter 4, because it continues to present toponymic assemblages as relational, malleable and full of potential, and it draws on that historical knowledge to examine how the toponyms of the neighbourhood were (or were not) transformed in relation to the LAPP.

5.2 Origins of the LAPP

The year 2010 marked a significant turning point in the history of planning in the DTES as actors with previously very disparate agendas, including social justice, community development, and business (see CCAP 2009; BCS 2008) began to align in their demands for the

establishment of a Local Area Planning Process for the Downtown Eastside in light of the

enormous development pressures converging on the area. According to my interview

participants, there were several significant moments that led to the establishment of the LAPP.

First, the opening of the Woodward's mixed-use complex in 2009, as part of the lead-up to the

2010 Olympic Winter Games, initiated a new wave of real estate speculation, redevelopment,

and gentrification (following on previous waves in other neighbourhoods such as Gastown,

Kitsilano, and Yaletown, to name a few; see Ley 1996) that negatively affected the availability

of affordable housing in the DTES (Dewiert 2013).[8] Second, DTES advocates were concerned

that they would experience a loss of overarching support for community-based initiatives with

the expiry of the Vancouver Agreement in 2010, which would create a need for a new

comprehensive management protocol to coordinate social service provision in the DTES.[9]

Finally, for nearly all interviewees, the tipping point for planning in the area was when the city

held hearings on the Historic Area Height Review (HAHR) in March of 2010, a plan that would

raise the allowable building heights in the Chinatown sub-area from 50-70 feet to 120 feet (see

COV 2010). The HAHR sparked immediate protests from low income residents and advocates in

the DTES, who believed that such density would increase development pressures in the area. As

one activist stated:

> *"we started to insert ourselves and say 'no, we don't think you should raise the heights in buildings, because then you're going to speed up gentrification', so when they [City Council] [...] had the big hearing for the Historic Area Height Review [...] they sprung this decision on us that basically they said 'we're so sorry, but we're going to gentrify Chinatown.'" (013)*

It was within this heated atmosphere that Vancouver City Council capitulated to the

longstanding requests for a LAPP, thereby generating a platform for dialogue between

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[8] To protect the confidentiality of participants, interviewees are cited using a numeric code in the footnotes. For example, this sentence reflects the input of participants 001, 004, 009, and 013. Direct quotes in the body of the text are italicized. A full list of participant affiliations can be found in Appendix F.
[9] 007, 009.

competing voices in the area (see CCAP 2010).[10] Several interview participants stated that the

LAPP made a set of concessions to the needs of low income residents, giving them the authority

to co-chair the process, populate the LAPP committee, and set the Terms of Reference (TOR) in

consultation with the city.[11] While such allowances follow the broader logic of communicative

planning, which calls for equitable participation from all affected parties (see Huxley 2013;

Purcell 2009), the LAPP appeared progressive because its governance structure mandated that

marginalized residents would have equal say in the future of the neighbourhood (COV 2011b).

The finalized TOR emerged after seven months of negotiation between the co-chairs - the

Building Community Society (BCS; a social development group, see Chapter 4); the Downtown

Eastside Neighbourhood Council (DNC; low income advocates) - and the City of Vancouver

(BCS 2010; DNC 2014; COV 2011b). Interview participants who were involved in the

negotiations described them as heated and lengthy, noting the pushback from the city as activists

fought to prioritize the needs of the most marginalized residents of the DTES within the LAPP.[12]

The wording of the TOR reflects these advocacy efforts, producing a laudatory participatory

governance scenario that reassured DTES residents by stating that the process would "improv[e]

the lives of those who currently live in the area, particularly low income people and those who

are most vulnerable[,] which will benefit the city as a whole" (COV 2011b, p. 1-2; 2012a). The

TOR also mandated the creation of a *LAPP Committee* that would act as the *de facto* arms-length

forum by which residents could voice their concerns to the city. Half the committee seats were

given to low income residents & groups, while the other half were given to business advocates

(such as Business Improvement Associations or BIAs), social services (such as Vancouver

Urban Core), and cultural stakeholders (such as the Powell Street Festival Society) (COV 2011a;

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[10] 003, 008, 009.
[11] 003, 012, 013.
[12] 004, 007, 013.

2011b; 2013c; see Table 1 for committee composition).[13] While this 50/50 split represented an

Table 1: LAPP co-chairs and committee members (Table by Trevor Wideman from data in COV 2013c)

Co-Chairs	Low-Income Committee Members	Non-Low Income Committee Members
Building Community Society	Aboriginal Front Door Society	Strathcona BIA
Downtown Eastside Neighbourhood Council	ALIVE (Seat held open)	Gastown BIA
	Carnegie Community Action Project (CCAP)	Hastings Crossing BIA
	VANDU: Vancouver Area Network of Drug Users	Chinatown Merchants Association / BIA
	DTES Neighbourhood Council	Chinatown Society/VCRC
	DTES Power of Women	Powell Street Festival Society
	DTES Women's Centre	Strathcona Residents Association
	Gallery Gachet	Building Community Society
	Survival Sex Workers	Strathcona Parents Advisory Association
	WAHRS: Western Aboriginal Harm Reduction Society	VUCCWA: Vancouver Urban Core Community Workers'
	Chinese seniors	City Liaison
	Low-Income Residents At Large (4x)	Non-Low Income Residents at Large (3x)

ostensible balancing of democratic power, it also represented a very tactical fragmentation of

discursive power by allowing business interests and middle to upper income residents to also

"have their say" over the primarily low income area. Furthermore, the governance structure gave

ultimate authority to the City Manager and City Council, who would ensure that resident goals

aligned with city hall (see Figure 8).
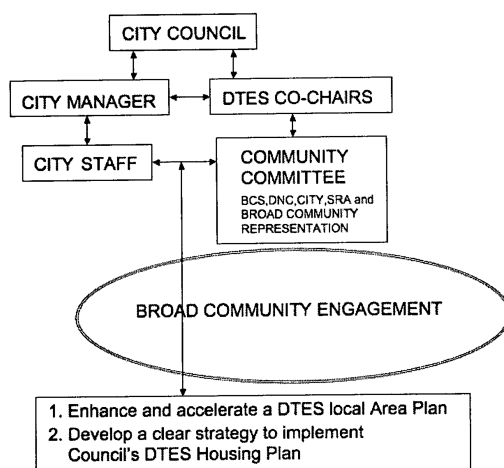
Figure 8: Governance structure of the DTES LAPP (COV 2011b)

While the TOR clearly defined the governance structure of the LAPP and gave the

appearance of being socially just, it also initiated a new definition for the DTES. The following

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[13] 009.

section will describe how this arrangement set in motion a deterritorialization of the DTES that placed toponyms in opposition to each other.

5.3 Deterritorializing the Downtown Eastside

The LAPP TOR contains an important map that divides the neighbourhood into several distinct sub-areas, including Chinatown, Gastown, Victory Square, Strathcona, and the Oppenheimer district (see Figure 7, p. 123), which discursively fragmented the area into interest groups with competing agendas. While such realignments had been ongoing within planning for quite some time (see COV 1998; 2005a; 2005b), city planners stated that this abstract definition of the DTES had never been used in a comprehensive participatory process, and it differed significantly from definitions of the community as experienced by residents (see Blomley & Sommers 1998; COV 1982; Hugill 2010).[14] Indeed, the previous plan from 1982 had defined the "Downtown Eastside" only as the Oppenheimer District (COV 1982), and it was often represented as a *neighbour* to communities like Gastown, Strathcona, and Chinatown (see Chapter 4). As I will demonstrate, this emergent politics of scale (which Tucker & Rose-Redwood (2015, p. 3) refer to as "toponymic rescaling") was presented in a way that appeared to reflect the lived space of the community, yet took advantage of the malleability of the DTES to reinforce a city-led conception of space to achieve a political effect. Even the media noticed the difference between the planning definition and the generally held view of the community, noting: "The Downtown Eastside, as defined by the city, goes beyond the traditional low income neighbourhood around Main and Hastings, which is plagued by poverty, addiction and mental health issues. The city's definition includes Strathcona, Gastown, Victory Square and Chinatown - areas that have attracted middle-class residents, young downtown workers and thriving businesses" (Ward 2012, p. A1).

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[14] 009, 010.

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The city's new definition belies an immense difference of history, geography, people, and place, and it encircled the shifting and relational micropolitics of these areas within a single boundary, repositioning the DTES as a diverse, fragmented and heterogeneous entity by pointing to the uniqueness of each territory and noting that each sub-area had a role to play in the future of the area as a whole (see COV 2012b). Planners went out of their way to frame the DTES as an all-embracing planning construct that would account for diversity while strengthening relationships between neighbourhoods. As a participant from a BIA stated:*"The way the community was sort of discussed in the planning process, we often heard that the DTES was a 'community of communities' because we had Strathcona, Chinatown, Japantown, Victory Square Park, even Oppenheimer. [...] a lot of talk about communities and about the DTES being very diverse."*[15] Furthermore, the reconceptualized planning area allowed the city to more easily support "the continued development of a mixed-income community in the DTES" (COV 2014a; p. 23), because it included middle-to-upper income areas like Gastown and Strathcona.

By moulding the DTES into a loosely bounded and evolutionary collection of neighbourhoods that had naturally coalesced over time, planners effectively depoliticized their representation of the planning object as a technical construct that could now be defined by zoning boundaries.[16] This new arrangement advanced a diverse vision of the DTES that was unfamiliar to some LAPP participants, yet many accepted the planning boundaries because they described, at least at the surface level, a reciprocal relationship between neighbourhoods that resonated with lived experience.[17] For example, some committee members described the sub-areas of the LAPP as being integrally connected, even as they remained distinct entities within

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[15] 002

[16] 009, 010.

[17] see 003, 006.

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the city.[18] The wider definition of the DTES was even acceptable to some residents and

advocates because the "Downtown Eastside" was a political claim to low income space, and low

income people could be found in all the sub-areas:

> *"There's low income people that live in Strathcona, we could take care of the low income people's need in Gastown and Victory Square, so we do share the city's view that whole area is the DTES, and our low income people are everywhere." (013)*

> *"It's like the heart of the people is down here. [...] it includes Strathcona, it includes Gastown, it includes Railtown, it includes Thornton Park, it's like, for me the DTES is where people who are like family are. You know, it's like. It's where I go when I'm having a hard time, or it's where I hang out at Carnegie, or, it's where it's okay to be mentally ill or it's okay to be homeless." (004)*

At the outset of the process, activists believed that the expanded DTES would allow them

to achieve influence over the wider area and fight against encroaching gentrification, yet the

actual effect of the new boundaries was much different.[19] For example, some LAPP committee

members from Strathcona resisted being lumped in with the DTES because it had a negative

association with a sub-group of residents and activists that they believed were in opposition to

their interests, preferring instead to use the terms "inner city" or "East End."[20] At the same time,

some LAPP participants felt that the city was diluting participation through a strategy of "divide

and conquer" by pitting neighbourhoods and class groupings against each other and setting up a

scenario where finding commonalities might be difficult.[21] As the quotes below attest, both BIA

representatives and low income residents described how Strathcona, Gastown, and Chinatown

were included in the planning area, yet they distinguished themselves from the "DTES" during

the process and territorialized themselves in relation to it:[22]

> *"I think largely they try to differentiate themselves and not be included, or lumped in, as being in the DTES. They've tried to be something distinct, I think, something that stands out. [...] When you think of Gastown you don't think of the DTES - you think like, cobblestone streets and high-end fashion, great coffee shops [...] They don't want you to think IV drug users and Insite [supervised injection clinic] or like, people selling blocks of cheese and old jackets on the street." (002)*

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[18] 007, 011.
[19] See 004.
[20] See 008, 014.
[21] 001, 002, 013, 014.
[22] Other participants had similar observations, see 001, 005, 008.

"But even the areas like Chinatown and Gastown and Strathcona really don't want to be included in that DTES label, you know. I don't know much about it, but it's just, like, we all fight amongst each other, you know, territories? You know, Gastown don't really want us in their area, Chinatown, same thing. They all want to be just their own little - their own area." (006)

In addition to its inclusion of diverse toponyms like Gastown and Strathcona, the LAPP also increased the heterogeneity of the DTES by including toponyms that had only been vaguely defined in older planning documents. For instance "Railtown" (a toponym which some participants identified as being a business and developer-led place branding exercise) has now been territorialized in the Local Area Plan as a creative district, a technology hub, and "special area" to be "marketed" (COV 2014a; p. 44), yet Railtown's inclusion in the plan is surprising, particularly because it is ignored in meeting notes (N=112), and it was rarely (if ever) discussed in the consultation process.[23] Likewise, the toponym "Japantown" was inserted into the plan and applied to a section of the Oppenheimer District as an acknowledgement of Japanese Canadian history in the DTES, thereby framing the Powell Street area as an appropriate place for cultural revitalization (COV 2014a).[24]

The abstract planning definition used for the DTES in the LAPP presents a heterogeneous and diverse toponymic assemblage ostensibly unified by heritage, proximity, and the long-time "evolution" of neighbourhoods relation to each other, yet the definition also splits the area into a number of diverse toponymic groupings (see COV 2014a; p. 25).[25] By dividing the DTES into sub-areas, the LAPP definition drew attention away from the "Downtown Eastside" as a political claim for social justice, and used it to describe a broadly-defined area that allowed business and property representatives from neighbourhoods long held to be toponymically distinct from the DTES to exert influence over the planning area. As the next section will demonstrate further, this

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[23] 002, 003, 004, 005, 014.

[24] 009, 010. The assembling of "Japantown" within the LAPP is discussed further in Section 5.5.

[25] See also 005.

redefinition created the potential for material transformations to occur with the planning area, as it pitted toponyms against each other within the planning process and strategically reterritorialized the "place of the poor" (Sommers 2001, p. 260) within the DTES.

5.4 Reterritorializing the Poor

> *"what some of the people in the planning process were concerned about was that this was like a 'containment strategy' where we're going to develop up Strathcona and we're going to develop up all around Victory Square Park, and all the poverty is going to be squished and squished and squished into the DEOD/Oppenheimer area[.]" (002, BIA Representative)*

The LAPP reframed the DTES as a heterogeneous planning concept and simultaneously *reterritorialized* a new assemblage within the DTES based on its perceived homogeneity as a low income area. In Section 5.4.1, I show how the LAPP retained existing planning policies in middle-to-upper income areas of the DTES, leaving the low income area known as the Downtown Eastside Oppenheimer District (DEOD) open to intervention. In Section 5.4.2, I demonstrate how the LAPP valorized the toponymic assertions of non-low income participants (particularly those from Strathcona) to affirm the DEOD as a low income area. Finally, in Section 5.4.3, I show how the city solicited participation via a Social Impact Assessment to identify the location of marginalized residents and reinforce a planning-led low income territory.

5.4.1 The Territorial Intervention

From the earliest stages of the LAPP, the process focused on sub-areas that were "considered to be in need of the greatest planning attention" to "address pressing social issues, place-making opportunities and other on-the-ground activities" (COV 2012b, p. 22). So while the officially defined DTES encompassed multiple neighbourhoods, in actuality, the primary site of intervention corresponded with the Downtown Eastside Oppenheimer District (DEOD), a place where social issues were highly visible, and which statistically had the largest concentration of low income residents in the DTES (see COV 2014a). Despite having been

subjected to coordinated planning and policy intervention for the ten-year length of the

Vancouver Agreement, the DEOD had stubbornly refused to "revitalize," a situation that once

again put the area under the planning microscope. Accordingly, the DEOD was framed in the

plan as a place that needed to be socially and materially transformed, and it was designated a

"key focus area" for the LAPP (COV 2012b, p. 5). Concomitantly, the LAPP took a much more

laissez-faire attitude to the sub-areas surrounding the DEOD because many of the constituent

neighbourhoods of the DTES fell outside the direct purview of the LAPP (COV 2012b).

Chinatown was exempted from the LAPP because it already had land use and development

guidelines (COV 2010; 2012a).[26] Gastown planning was still directed by the *Gastown Heritage*

Management Plan and the HAHR (COV 2001; 2010). Victory Square had been planned in the

1990s and again in the 2000s (see Blomley & Sommers 1998; COV 2005b). Strathcona had a

city-led plan from the early 1990s as well a recent plan funded by businesses and residents

(Strathcona Revitalization Committee 2008).[27] As one city planner stated:

> *"Gastown, we didn't change the policies. Victory Square we absorbed those same policies. Chinatown underpinned the LAPP with their existing plan, Strathcona similarly we made no changes[.] And Hastings Corridor, which is a major change area, we brought in the 1990s council decision to let go of that industrial land and allow residential by rezoning to take place. So effectively, what it's done is it's gone out there and it's collected all the views. But it's also collected the existing policy documents and brought them in. The major change to the area in terms of policy is the DEOD, which was the original DTES." (009)*

According to a BIA representative, "*a lot of [the planning] was around the DEOD and a*

lot of it was on Hastings Corridor, I feel that's where the majority of the change happened."[28]

This planning structure meant that while low income and marginalized participants were given

equal say within the LAPP committee, their power to enact change was limited to the area in

which they were already most highly concentrated. Simultaneously, surrounding neighbourhoods

had little to fear because their own policies would remain unchanged. Indeed, once the city

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[26] 009, 013.
[27] 005, 008.
[28] 005, see also 013

affirmed that the LAPP would have no immediate effect on neighbourhood policies in Gastown and Chinatown, stakeholders representing these areas reduced their attendance at committee meetings, though they paid close attention to the proceedings (COV 2012d).[29] Furthermore, whenever events occurred that could potentially disrupt such neighbourhoods, their representatives circumvented the LAPP by airing their grievances directly to city hall:

> "they [Gastown] did not participate as active participants in the plan. We well know that they were actively in touch with city hall through much of the process, which is fine, anyone can deal with city hall, but they were there I think […] to ensure that they were watching out for their interests[.]" (012)

> "They [Gastown and Chinatown] hardly ever came, but they had tons of influence, they could just pick up the phone, call, and say "We hate this thing you've written" […] They didn't enforce them to come. There was no "you have to show up or you lose your seat" - there was none of that, it was "you come if you want to or not." (013)

One particularly large group, the Strathcona Residents' Association, boycotted the process from the beginning because they felt that participation was a waste of time and energy, yet planners were unwilling to accept the non-participation of such powerful stakeholders, often going directly to them instead of requiring them to sit in on community consultation meetings:[30]

> "They got frustrated and they sat out. So what we did then was we went to them. […] We did that with Gastown, we did that with Chinatown, we did that with some of the Strathcona groups as well. Just to make sure that they also had a voice." (009)

> "The people that weren't engaged, nevertheless we still consulted with them, we still met with them, we met with the business bureau, we met with Strathcona Residents group as well, and then the BIA." (010)

The opinions of stakeholders from higher-income sub-areas of the DTES were crucial to give the process a sense of legitimacy, yet such actors withheld participation because their interests were protected.[31] However, the city's strategic remobilization of the DTES made it important for citizens of all neighbourhoods to participate and set a transformative agenda for the area.

5.4.2 Affirming the Place of the Poor

> "The DTES is more a metaphysical term for a geography around Main and Hastings." (014)

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[29] 005, 007, 011, 012.
[30] 008.
[31] 008.

As the quote from the social service provider above suggests, the abstract planning conceptualization of the DTES is somewhat misguided, because it failed to resonate with the lived space potential of the community as understood by residents. While LAPP participants had to use the city's new definition of the DTES for the purposes of planning, the new framing was not easily accepted, and older, community-based uses of the term often took precedence. As highlighted in Chapter 4, the toponym had long been synonymous with poverty and/or resistance, and such associations continued during the LAPP. Low income participants and advocates noted that the "DTES" was a political claim to wherever they were:

> *"this community is not just a postal code, or an address, it's in the people, it's in the lived experience of the people here. It's in the hearts and minds of the people who have seen the highest of highs, the lowest of lows, and not only have survived but are trying to thrive." (001)*

> *"[The DTES is] associated with the people." (004)*

> *"[The DTES is] where my peeps hang out, you know, my family hangs out there. That's where a lot of people live, on the streets and in these icky SROs [Single Room Occupancy Hotels]."(006)*

> *"the DTES I think is in every spot where low income people either live or gather" (013)*

City statistics, aggregated from census data and other primary research conducted in the community (see COV 2013b), showed that low income people were highly concentrated in the DEOD (COV 2014a), and many non low income participants affirmed the DEOD as a low income area by territorially obfuscating it with the DTES: [32]

> *"You know, more broadly speaking I think most people think of the DTES as being from Oppenheimer Park to where Pigeon Park is." (002)*

> *"I'm far more aware of the Oppenheimer District, the DEOD, which is often referred to as the "heart" of the DTES, geographically as well as where the "living room" of the community is." (003)*

> *"I would say it's really around the DEOD, the Main and Hastings area. And the reason why I say that is because I think if you look at […] the mapping of the social assets, because I think that the social assets really speak to the assets in the community." (005)*

> *"Oppenheimer, which conventionally many people know as DTES because it's the DTES Oppenheimer District, is like, the official name." (009)*

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[32] The 2013 City of Vancouver area profile for the DTES states that the DEOD contains 34.7% of the total population of the planning area, and that 70% of its residents are considered to be low income.

In particular, a boundary incursion that occurred within the LAPP helped to territorialize the DEOD as a low income area. For participants claiming *Strathcona,* the planning boundaries were inadequate, because they cut out a large area that residents and the BIA claimed as their territory (see Figure 9).[33] In addition, some participants felt they needed to draw a *"line in the*
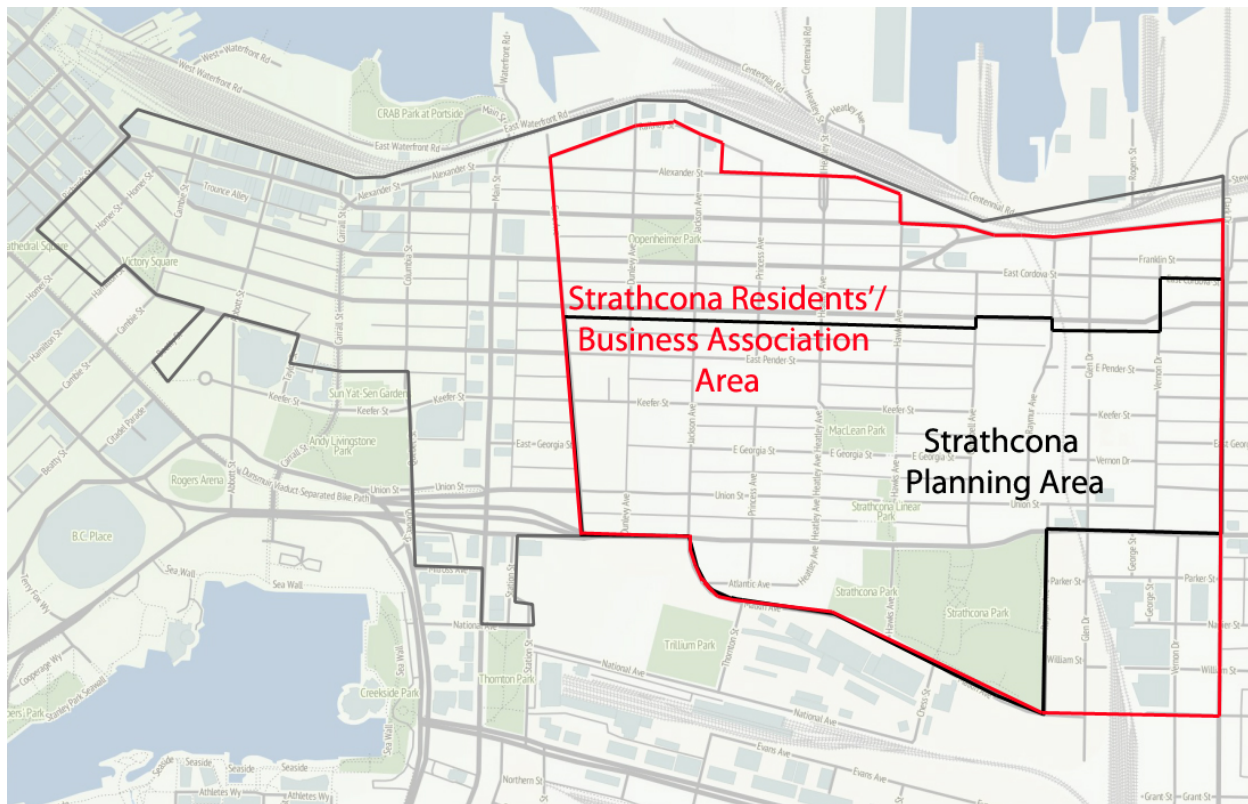
Figure 9: City of Vancouver boundaries for Strathcona juxtaposed with Strathcona Residents' Association/Business Association boundaries (Map by Trevor Wideman based on data from COV 2011b; Strathcona Residents' Association 2014)

sand" at the 400 block of East Hastings to defend Strathcona from the social problems of the low income DTES.[34] Finally, many Strathcona interests saw themselves in opposition to low income residents because their respective neighbourhood visions for housing, business, and social development were viewed as incompatible.[35]

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[33] 003, 004, 005, 012.
[34] 002, also 014.
[35] 006, 008, 014.

> *"one of the things that they came up with in this "Vision for Strathcona," I think it was 2010 or something like that, was that this area be defined as Strathcona and not necessarily as the DTES." (005)*
>
> *"There will be people who are on polar ends that they are not part of the DTES, they don't want to be labeled as the DTES, like some people that are living in Strathcona[.]" (010)*
>
> *"the low income activist groups […] pushed hard for the DTES name, and that kind of got the backs up of others in Strathcona and other places, so… name and territory were contentious[.]" (012)*

On the other hand, for those claiming the *DTES,* Strathcona's claims were invalid because they were incompatible with the city's planning definition, and they channelled a toponymic assemblage that would erase or transform the places low income residents called home.[36] Furthermore, Strathcona business interests had provoked ill will among low income activists by putting up "Strathcona" banners in the DEOD, which made it seem as though outsiders were encroaching upon the area.[37] Finally, for DTES advocates, Strathcona needed to accept that they were a part of the DTES because many low income people lived in Strathcona. As one low income LAPP participant stated, *"every time we see a map that has Strathcona listed as not part of the DTES then we sort of want to argue it and say, no, Strathcona IS part of the DTES."*[38] For DTES claimants, the relationship with Strathcona was somewhat paradoxical: Strathcona had the right to be *part of* the DTES, but they were not allowed to impose themselves *upon* the DTES.

Notably, the final plan imagines Strathcona and the DTES as separate territories with unique populations and futures in an attempt to negate their fluidity and relationality, in contrast to the planners' vision of *"close and intertwined"* neighbourhoods that were *"working and serving with each other"* (see also COV 2014a).[39] In the end, city policy toward Strathcona is aimed at preserving the material form of the area (i.e. early 20th century architectural heritage)

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[36] 001, 002, 004, 012.
[37] 002, 004, 007.
[38] 004.
[39] 009.

rather than transforming it (COV 2014a; p.43).[40] On the other hand, policy for the DEOD

promotes strategic change and a constrained notion of where low income people ought to be.

5.4.3 The (Re)production of Low income Space

One of the more significant ways that the DTES LAPP used toponymy was through the

use of a Social Impact Assessment (SIA) process, which was intended to "determin[e]

community assets and gaps, asses[s] the potential social impacts of new development (both

positive and negative) and develo[p] a framework to mitigate, monitor and evaluate assets and

impacts in order to maximize the positive effects and minimize the negative effects of

development on the community" (COV 2014c, p. Executive Summary). The SIA was a city-led

activity aimed at gathering information from low income and marginalized groups in the DTES

(COV 2014c, see Figure 10), and it was instigated in response to calls from activists who wanted

Figure 10: Clusters of social assets identified by planning participants and the City of Vancouver (COV 2014a; 2014c).

to understand the impact of developments such as Woodward's on the community.[41] While the

city's stated goal in the SIA was to "identify the vulnerable hot spots [and] assess the social

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[40] 005.

impact of change on those communities," a planner noted that the process also allowed the city to identify "assets" in the area via participation:

> *"One of the very interesting components of that [SIA] was mapping community assets, the intangibles and the tangibles as far as possible. And what became apparent to us when we were starting the planning process [...] there were clusters of assets that were identifiable." (009)*

The SIA drew a red line around a territory within the DTES where the low income population predominates, an area coincides almost exactly with the DEOD (see Figure 11). Significantly, this "Community-based Development Area" (CBDA) introduced *yet another* toponymically defined set of planning boundaries in an attempt to delineate a scaled-down place

Figure 11: Community-Based Development Area/DEOD - a low income territory of the DTES (COV 2014b)

of meaning for low income residents within the scaled-up DTES planning area. Arguably, it also "contained" low income people within a particular area even though their discursive claim to the lived space of the community encompassed a much broader geography. According to

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[41] 008, 004.

participants, the CBDA amalgamated three overlapping interventions: the social asset mapping

provided by the low income community (COV 2014c), an activist plea for a 100% social housing

"Social Justice Zone" for low income residents (CCAP 2013), and a call from the business

community for a *"special economic development zone."*[42] For some stakeholders, the city's

massaging of the *"social economic justice zone"*[43] into the CBDA was typical of the normative

and conciliatory approach the LAPP took to community ideas. One BIA participant stated: *"we*

had these competing ideas of what sort of a special zone we wanted to see created. And

[planners] kept on putting forward 'well why don't you call it a community based development

area.' Trying to like, you know, find the middle ground in this discussion over what type of zone

we wanted."[44] Furthermore, by changing the language around the DEOD from that of "social

justice" and community action to "community-based development" the plan attempted to

transform a resistance-based claim to lived space (see CCAP 2013) into a technical concept that

could be subjected to external intervention.[45] Indeed, planners presented the CBDA as a

depoliticized planning tool that would serve the interests of marginalized residents in the DTES:

> *"What we proposed was to call it a Community Based Development Area because being the official development plan, there is a legal opportunity to intervene in applications for development or rezonings, or business purposes, in a way that can serve the interests of the low income community and the residents in that area [...] some members of the community call it their Social Justice Zone, and so they may indeed, why not? [...] we're just labeling it for the purposes of administratively building people around common interests as best we can. And some people use different words, you know, to achieve the same end." (009)*

Through planning policy, the lived space of the DTES, as an open-ended and relational

low income claim, was transformed into a heterogeneous collection of communities, and the

toponymic vacuum that was left behind in the "heart" of the community was replaced by the

DEOD/CBDA nomenclature, which in planning language then became synonymous with a low

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[42] 002, 009.

[43] 004.

[44] 002

[45] "action" vs. "development" has long been debated by academics (see Craig & Mayo 2004).

income and marginalized population. This new legal and administrative assemblage then became enrolled into city-led interventions, and while the DEOD/CBDA planning area has some significant policy protection from rampant real-estate development, the area is now marked as a site with "strategic development and heritage rehabilitation opportunities" tied to Japanese Canadian and Indigenous culture (COV 2014a; p. 38). In fact, the "Japanese Village" beautification scheme enshrined in the 1982 DTES plan (see Chapter 4, COV 1982) had never gone off the books, and through the LAPP, the toponymic assemblage of "Japantown" was reterritorialized *within* the DEOD, opening up room for "revitalization" in the name of heritage.

5.5 Reanimating Japantown

5.5.1 Japanese Canadians and the LAPP

By the time the LAPP was instigated, "Japantown" was beginning to enjoy a renaissance in the DTES in response to concerns over the erasure and loss of Japanese Canadian heritage in the area (see Chapter 4; Birmingham & Wood 2008), and the name was increasingly being mobilized to entrench JCs as an important part of the cultural fabric of the neighbourhood (COV 2011a; 2012c). As such, the opinions of Japanese Canadians were solicited from the earliest stages of the planning process, and representatives from the Powell Street Festival Advocacy Committee (PSFAC) and the Vancouver Japanese Language School/Japanese Hall (VJLS-JH) became the designated JC stakeholders on the LAPP committee because of their ongoing social and material presence in the DTES (COV 2011a; 2013c).[46] Representatives from these two groups acted as a bridge between the city, the LAPP committee, and the wider JC community, and they attended committee meetings while holding consultation meetings of their own to discuss how Japanese Canadian heritage could be honoured within the existing DTES.[47] Minutes

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[46] 009, 010.
[47] 003, 008, 009, 011.

from consultation meetings reveal that a number of JCs were cautious about using their cultural influence to "revitalize" the neighbourhood, noting that there was a large disconnect between their desire for a restored cultural area in the DTES and the basic housing needs of low income residents, with one person stating that "often, unintentionally, our work becomes a gentrifying force and many of us want to ensure that what we create builds the existing community rather than displaces it" (PSFSAC 2013b, p. 1).[48] In particular, for some, the use of heritage as a revitalization tactic in the midst of potential displacement was an affront, particularly in light of their own uprooting from the neighbourhood.[49] Instead, many JC participants wanted to help build a socially just presence that would support the existing community, with one participant stating, *"we just want the people who are facing hardships that in principle, are similar to what our people experienced in 1942, to have homes and to be dignified."*[50]

At the same time, however, such discussions intersected with an emergent politics of recognition that was being forged between the COV and some members of the JC population. Other JC organizations operating outside the LAPP began negotiations with the COV, demanding and eventually receiving an apology from the city for the role it played in the 1942 removal and internment of JCs from Powell Street (see Lee 2013). While this apology was seen as a moral victory for some JC advocates, it also drew increased attention to the place in which JCs resided in the pre-war era, giving it a renewed importance as a site of commemoration where recognition would go hand in hand with restoration and revitalization (Lee 2013). Even the mayor approved of the idea that the apology should go hand in hand with the physical and

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[48] Many of the JC activists that participated in the LAPP process subsequently became valuable allies to myself and to the *Revitalizing Japantown?* project in realizing our goal of connecting JC community members with DTES allies and activists. See Chapters 1 & 3 for more on the RJ? project.
[49] 008, 009.
[50] 011.

discursive transformation of the neighbourhood, noting that current street names didn't reflect reality, and that they should be renamed for former JC residents (Lee 2013).

These differences of opinion among Japanese Canadians frame the contentious discussions that emerged around naming, boundary making, and the re-emergence of culturally specific, heritage-led material interventions into the DTES. For example, the use of the name "Japantown" became particularly controversial because it was unclear to many participants whether the neighbourhood was ever referred to as such, and many JC stakeholders took umbrage with the term, preferring to use terms such as "Poweru Gai" ("Powell Street") to reflect the commonly known historical nomenclature (see PSFSAC 2013b; Chapter 4).[51] Indeed, within its consultations, the PSFSAC downplayed the use of the term "Japantown," instead asking participants questions such as "What do you hope to see in the area that was historically the heart of the Japanese Canadian settlement in the current context of the Downtown Eastside?" (PSFSAC 2013a; p. 3), being careful not to erase the low income claim while leaving the JC area unnamed and unbounded. At the same time, even within the LAPP consultations, some participants recalled the "Japanese Village" interventions of the past by expressing a desire to demarcate the Japanese area by restoring buildings, creating maps, placing signs, and building gateways to indicate to pedestrians and motorists "that [they] are going through a community" (PSFSAC 2013a; p. 5). City staff mediated between these divergent views by advocating for social mix strategies and assuring participants that low income residents and JCs could co-exist if JC heritage was used to leverage funding from upper levels of government to create an opportunity for restorations with a social housing component (see PSFSAC 2013a).

Despite some divisions among JCs, planners and committee members generally viewed JC participants as supporters of the existing population:

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[51] 003, 005, 011.

"there was definitely more of a social justice activist thread was representing the Japanese community. [...] Less on, sort of like, lets bring Japantown back to what it was. [...] the Japanese history of you know, displacement, I think that probably has a huge bearing on their cultural sensitivity to the same notion of it happening today to a different subset of the population[.]" (008)

"What connected for us was with the Japanese Canadians that we were sitting with in these various workshops around Powell Street and Japantown was they also support the principle of non-displacement."(009)

"The representatives from the Japanese organizations were stellar in saying 'we're respecting what the community has now become in terms of it's population' as well, 'and we want to ensure this planning process means there's a community for the most marginalized.'" (012)

While most non-JC interviewees had similar views about Japanese Canadians and their intentions toward the DTES, their understandings of "Japantown" as a toponym were flexible and contradictory. For some participants, "Japantown" was enrolled in a city-led strategy of economic revitalization (see COV 2014a).[52] For others, it was a 'natural' toponym that had evolved over time, stating, *"there's no mystery about why it's called 'Japantown.'"*[53] Still others saw it as a historical artifact or heritage designation that had never really gone away.[54]

While non-JCs had diverse understandings of "Japantown," JCs were explicit in their communication with the city regarding their uneasiness with the term,[55] and they were adamant that the use of the term within planning was inappropriate, noting that its use could potentially impose a transformative agenda at the expense of existing residents:

"the reason that we don't want to use 'Japantown' for example is because its co-opting Japanese Canadian [...] history to give appeal to a neighbourhood for a different group of people than the group of people that live there now." (003)

"We don't want Japantown to be in that plan [...] from day one, naming was a big issue for us and that was something we shared with the committee and the planners who were acting as liaisons to the city[.]" (011)

In light of such sentiments, it was particularly surprising for JC advocates to find "Japantown" included multiple times in the first draft of the plan, and they communicated their displeasure to

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[52] 002

[53] 007, see also 002.

[54] 006, 008, 010, 014.

[55] 003, 011.

the city (see COV 2013a).[56] As in 1982, JC stakeholders requested that "Japantown" be changed

to something less contentious, yet the toponym that got included in the final plan was the

hybridized term "Powell Street (Japantown)" (COV 2014a), which only partially respected the

wishes of participants.[57] Furthermore, the city did not offer to remove such toponyms from the

plan, and they failed to acknowledge the flaws in the planning process that allowed for

"Japantown" in the first place, instead defending the term by stating that they had simply drawn

on previous reports (see Birmingham & Wood 2008) when considering its use. In light of such

attitudes, JC participants felt slighted because they felt their input had been disregarded, and

were left wondering why they had participated in the consultation at all.[58] Though most JCs felt

it was important that the city honoured their history and contribution to the DTES, there was still

a concern that the LAPP would use their heritage in an exclusionary manner by reanimating the

"Japantown" assemblage. With this community input in mind, I now consider the ways that the

2014 Local Area Plan uses "Powell Street (Japantown)" to produce a JC presence within the

DEOD/CBDA, the so-called "heart" of the low income community.

5.5.2 *"Japantown" in policy*

"[the goals] are seemingly inconsistent, right? Like how can you have cafes and sushi shops supported by welfare rate housing?" (011)

On the surface, the city's plan for Japantown simply appears to be a nebulous collection

of aspirational goals and imaginative planning images (COV 2014a).[59] However, upon closer

examination, "Japantown" has been reworked as a nascent heritage designation tied to the

economic revitalization of the DEOD/CBDA, and it is represented as being almost synonymous

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[56] 003, 011.
[57] 009, 011.
[58] 003, 011.
[59] 005, 007, 012, 014.

with that same low income area (COV 2014a).[60] As previously noted, the city had long included

Japantown in its list of neighbourhoods with potential for revitalization (see Chapter 4),[61] and the

LAPP confirms this by once again linking Japantown's potential to the existing successes of

Gastown and Chinatown (COV 2014a; p. 128) while listing it as an area that "provides potential

to promote [a] mixed-use commercial environment […] in an authentic heritage context" (COV
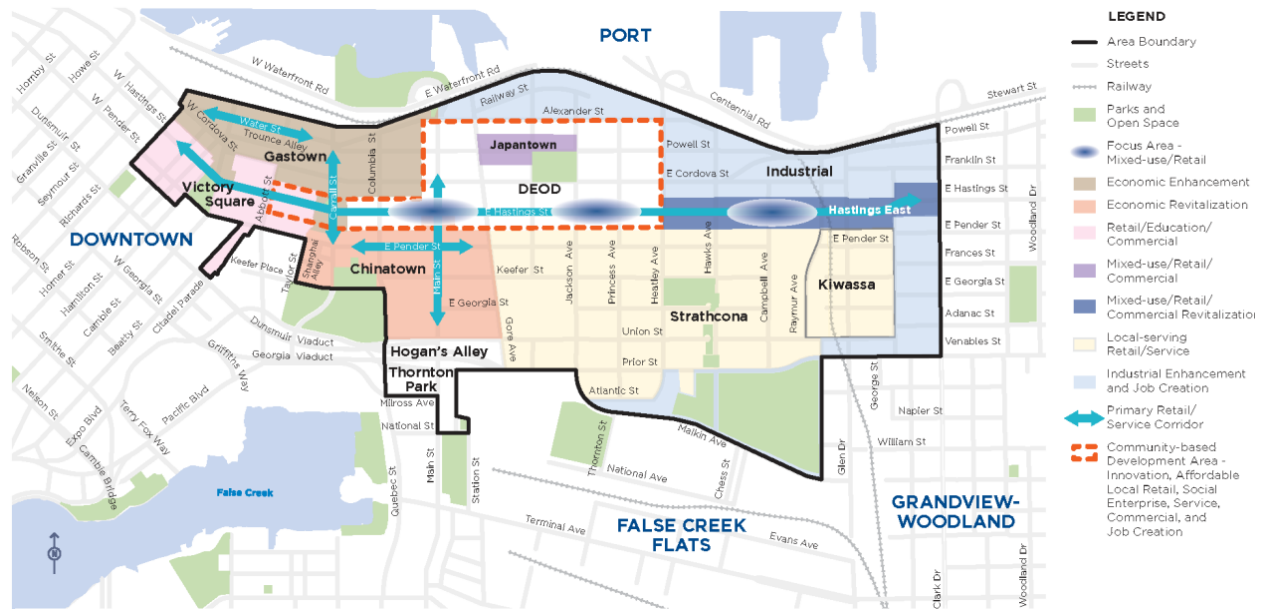
Figure 12: "Japantown" as a "Mixed Use/Retail/Commercial" area within the DEOD (COV 2014a).

2014b; p. 12). Specifically, Japantown, which takes up the majority of Sub-Area 3 of the DEOD

(See Figure 12; COV 2014a; p. 105), will be "revitalized as a retail centre to reflect the unique

heritage character of the area" (COV 2014b; p. 16). Furthermore, according to the plan, the

potential restoration of Japantown as a site of consumption will go hand in hand with a shifting

materiality of the community rooted in a Japanese Canadian aesthetic (see Figure 13), including

"public realm improvements, public art, events and programming and strategic development and

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[60] Notably, the LAPP's "Japantown" boundaries also fail to express the former lived space of JCs, which historically extended into areas such as Strathcona and South False Creek. They also exclude vital contemporary spaces such as the Vancouver Japanese Language School and Japanese Hall, located on Alexander St. outside the DEOD.
[61] 009, 010.

heritage rehabilitation opportunities" (COV 2014a; p. 38). It also encourages future developments to pay tribute to JC heritage by maintaining and enhancing the cultural, architectural, and historical character of the site. However, while beautification initiatives commemorate a historic Japanese Canadian *presence* in the DTES, the plan only once acknowledges the *forced uprooting* (see COV 2014a; p. 11), thereby downplaying a dark chapter

Figure 13: A concept drawing of a revitalized Japantown during the Powell Street Festival (COV 2014a).
in the city's history. The plan lists "raising the stature of Japanese-Canadian heritage," and "Prepar[ing] a Statement of Significance for the Powell Street (Japantown) area and its character buildings" among its quick-start/short term planning activities (COV 2014a; p. 185-186), while in the longer term, Japantown is to be included in the Heritage Building and Heritage Facade Rehabilitation Programs, which would incentivize the aesthetic transformation of the neighbourhood. While such aims resonate in the context of the "Japanese Village" plan from 1982 and the city's long-held heritage revitalization goals in the DTES (see Chapter 4),[62] they

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[62] 002.

were largely incompatible with the community-led vision for the area.[63] Furthermore, there is a

danger that heritage and cultural inducements in "Japantown" could potentially mobilize retail

gentrification (a trend that has been ongoing in other areas of the DTES, see Burnett 2014; Hyde

2014) via a new planning policy that allows property owners to add additional density to

commercial and industrial buildings in the DEOD without having to provide social housing

(COV 2014a; p. 38).

The use of the term "Japantown" within the 2014 DTES Local Area Plan is problematic.

First, it goes against the wishes of JC contributors to the planning process, who not only

expressed their displeasure at the conceived planning space of "Japantown," but had explicitly

communicated to the city their desire for a socially just presence within the DTES that

harmonized and supported initiatives in the lived space of the existing community. Second, even

though planners clearly understood and listened to the concerns of JC stakeholders during the

LAPP (see PSFSAC 2013a; 2013b),[64] numerous contradictory policies and nomenclatures were

carried forward from previous planning programs at the expense of contemporary concerns for

the well being of the community. Furthermore, though the city claimed to want to work with JC

interests going forward, the "Japantown" policies in the plan used JC heritage in ways that

resembled revitalization programs that had been implemented in the rapidly gentrifying Gastown

and Chinatown in years previous, and bore little resemblance to the input provided by JC

participants who desired an unobtrusive and supportive coexistence (PSFSAC 2013a; 2013b).[65]

Finally, the Japantown assemblage helped generate a new heritage-led planning area within the

DEOD/CBDA that has the potential to further deterritorialize the DTES and disassemble the

lived space of low income and marginalized residents. However, while such commodified policy

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[63] 003, 011.
[64] 009, 010.
[65] 003, 011.

prescriptions appear to be set in stone, they also leave room for allegiances, contestation, and resistance to emerge, a point that I will expand on in the final section.

5.6 Planning, alliances, and resistance: mobilizing subaltern toponymies?

The LAPP used public consultation to engage disparate neighbourhoods, class groupings, and special interest groups in a conversation that transformed the discursive landscapes and material form of the DTES. While in some cases, this process pitted participants against each other to contest the respective futures of their neighbourhoods,[66] in many others, it had the unanticipated effect of galvanizing opposition against the city as participants began to realize the inadequacy of planning in mediating between the complex issues in the DTES. Echoing much of the critical planning literature, many interviewees noted that their participation felt *tokenistic*, observing that the city appeared to be listening to the community, yet planning failed to take their views into account. Other interviewees (low income and non low income) felt that their participation was distorted to *legitimate* a city-led agenda, making it seem as though their voices mattered and that they had agreed to the city's plan for the neighbourhood, when the outcome was, for the most part, a foregone conclusion.[67] Other participants stated that the LAPP was a *distraction* to the point where one interviewee stated that *"by participating in the LAPP process the neighbourhood gave up all their power."*[68] The procedural flaws of the LAPP led many to believe that planning was being managed from the top-down, not in community partnership as suggested by the TOR.[69] Several stated that though they respected the planners facilitating the process,[70] a deep mistrust of the city developed as the planning process wore on.[71] Even though

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[66] 007.
[67] 003, 006, 007, 008.
[68] 003
[69] 002, 005, 007, 008, 013.
[70] 002, 007, 008.
[71] 002, 005, 011.

fundamental differences of opinion remained between committee members, stakeholders were able to find commonalities as the COV emerged as an object of resistance.

5.6.1 Unlikely Alliances and Deeper Understandings

"I think the city did what was considered impossible by most, and they actually united the DTES as they described it. Unfortunately they united them in opposition to the city[.] [laughs]" (008)

As the LAPP proceeded, alliances began to emerge between groups that were previously at odds, and the disparate membership of the LAPP committee began to work together to counteract the policy prescriptions and toponymic interventions that were being facilitated by the city. One BIA participant noted that the LAPP *"changed my opinion of what the neighbourhood was capable of, perhaps, in terms of communicating and working together,"* observing also that *"the community politics have changed post-LAPP I think to a degree."*[72] In addition, diverse participants (including activists and business representatives, among others) were able to have conversations that led to deeper relationships after the conclusion of the LAPP:

"In some respects the planning process was able to get us together talking, [...] Talking to social justice activists, talking with developers, talking with businesspeople and having discussions that were sometimes awkward but were sometimes actually quite constructive. [...] I think the dialogue in the planning process had something to do with people's willingness to sit down together, you know, improving." (002)

"[...] there's a more open line of communication. It doesn't mean we change where we stand, or they change where they stand, but at least we're seen in the same places sometimes. [...] There's more, a little bit more cohesion that we know each other as people in the neighbourhood" (004)

"I think I made connections with people that would probably never made those connections beforehand. […] I know a lot of those guys were all like, looking at me sideways as I came in the door 'cause they were like 'oh, fuck, this guy man, he's going to throw it down' and stuff. And I think by the end of it we were all like, 'hey man, you're alright'" (008)

In some cases, alliances produced positive effects for the most marginalized people in the DTES,[73] and the planning process allowed social justice advocates to engage with a diverse group of people that they may not have interacted with otherwise, drawing them in as allies and

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[72] 002.
[73] 001, 003.

supporters of the *Downtown Eastside* when communicating their demands to the city, not just their own neighbourhood or class grouping.[74]

One of the most powerful instances of alliance forming within the planning process occurred between Japanese Canadians and low income advocates, and significantly, it was forged in relation to the toponymic politics of each group. Japanese Canadians were reluctant to assert themselves toponymically through "Japantown" because the term was controversial and exclusionary, and many participants wanted to ensure that their heritage wasn't used to promote further human rights violations or displacement among the current population (PSFSAC 2013a).[75] Indeed, the JC participants in the LAPP noted that it would be inappropriate to advocate for an area of their own without addressing current social issues, and they saw their participation as "a chance to connect with individuals and groups in the DTES" while noting that "our concerns may be specifically cultural/historical/artistic but we must keep in mind the broader concerns of the DTES community" (PSFSAC 2013a; p. 1). As such, JC participants envisioned themselves not as "apart from" the DTES, but as "a part of" a diverse group that recognized the role of the DTES as a site of support for the city's most marginalized. Participants and planners also recognized the allegiance of JC and low income groups:

> *"[the Japanese Canadians] were just so good at […] establishing their alliance and comradeship if you will. Which was a huge plus for the low income activists to know that."(012)*

> *"a lot of the people that represented the Japanese Canadian, they do have very strong social consciousness. So they are moving forward in a way that is very respectful, with empathy of who lives there now and who lived there before[.]." (010)*

Low income activists also saw JCs as a group that would *"speak on behalf of the low income community"* rather than one that would carve out a revitalized and exclusionary "Japantown,"[76] and cited the LAPP as the forum through which the relationship developed. As one activist

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[74] 002, 004, 005, 008.
[75] 003, 007, 009, 011.
[76] 001, 004.

stated: *"I think our connection to the Japanese community wouldn't have happened if we hadn't reached out to them to get them on the committee […] we're all working together […] so I think we made some positive relations and new connections out of the LAPP."*[77]

The procedural shortcomings of the LAPP and a mutually wary relationship with the city opened up room for alliances to form between low income advocates and middle-class actors from disparate neighbourhoods and backgrounds. Furthermore, low income residents were also able to build strategic relationships with Japanese Canadians who desired a socially just presence in the DTES. Activists then used these unlikely alliances to assert their rights in the neighbourhood, despite the LAPP's toponymic reassembling of the DTES.

5.6.2 Holding Back the Wall

"this Oppenheimer District, […] it's going to unfold really slowly now for the next 30 years, so we bought ourselves some time. […] over the next 30 years really we should be pushing back the wall and disregarding the decisions of the LAPP, just take what we've got and keep pushing." (013)

Though the planning process bureaucratically transformed the DTES into a fragmented collection of neighbourhoods and turned the DEOD/CBDA into the most appropriate place for low income people to be, it did not *erase* supportive, resistance-based toponymic understandings of the DTES among residents, activists, and advocates. In fact, as the quote from the advocate above attests, the process inspired low income participants to assert claims to lived space in defiance of planning conceptions. As Light & Young (2014) note, "place names can be very significant for grounding local senses of place, identity, belonging and memory" (p. 14), and low income participants were still able to claim the DTES as their own regardless of where they were, noting that the area was still *"inside the hearts and minds of the people that claim that proudly."*[78] Even though activists understood that their ability to make broader claims to the city

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[77] 013.
[78] 001.

had been limited by the LAPP, they were now given substantial freedom to assert their rights within the "Social Justice Zone" of the DEOD[79] while still being able to proclaim the "Downtown Eastside" label outside of that confined area.[80]

Significantly, even though the plan imagines "Japantown" to be an exclusive area within the DEOD, low income people claiming the area understood that they could draw on the "Japantown" narrative as a source of strength because the actions of JCs made it clear that they had no intention of erasing the Downtown Eastside. In addition, the legacy of the Japanese Canadian uprooting from Powell Street was important to advancing the ongoing narrative of resistance in the DTES, and it helped bolster a low income political claim for human rights and non-displacement.[81] Subsequently, when the city or the business community invoked "Japantown," it was understood by activists to be *"a perversion of history for the purposes of marketing"*[82] that was out of line with how JC participants wanted to be understood.[83]

The LAPP facilitated and reinforced toponymic resistance in unexpected ways, yet it also provided participants with a depth of knowledge regarding planning and the bureaucratic procedures of city hall. For one participant, this newfound understanding led them to become politically active and encouraged them to run for civic office,[84] while another became more attuned to the gentrification and development that was going on around them, stating *"I can't walk past a development permit application sign without reading it intently. Something which I*

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[79] 009.
[80] 001, 003, 006, 013.
[81] 001, 006, 013
[82] 001.
[83] 004; 013.
[84] 008.

can assure you never, ever interested me before this LAP process."[85] Many others, particularly

low income residents, felt they were given a voice with which to engage the city:[86]

> *"some of the low income people on that committee, some of them just grew […] into terrific and knowledgeable advocates for their community, and they just have this whole new kind of language that they can fall into when they need to." (001)*

> *"I didn't know anything about city politics, politics just in, you know, different organizations here in the DTES, but it's made me, I think, a stronger person and a stronger voice. And I'm ready to fight the city on everything that we were fighting for in the LAPP." (006)*

> *"I think the low income people […] became experts in this tool of planning. And planning is like learning a law, it's like learning another language. So they know what zoning is now, you know? And they know the significance of zoning, and that that's the mechanism of displacement in the colonial state apparatus. […] So people are well aware of that now, and that wouldn't have happened if it wasn't for the LAPP."(013)*

If the LAPP reframed the DTES to serve a broader development agenda, it also

inadvertently provided a set of tools for the low income community. It brought new attention to

the "Downtown Eastside" as a toponym of resistance, and it reinforced alliances between JCs

and DTES activists through its use of "Japantown" as a cynical toponymic incursion into low

income territory. Furthermore, the LAPP educated participants on the nuances of planning,

which allowed them to more effectively oppose city and developer-led interventions.

5.7 Conclusion

Naming matters. In the Downtown Eastside of Vancouver, toponyms help define the

social and material life of the neighbourhood, and they are wrapped up in memory, identity and

meaning in thoroughly complex ways. Throughout the history of the neighbourhood, larger

structural forces, working through the abstract spaces of planning and policymaking, have shifted

the toponymic assemblage of the DTES and transformed how the area has been perceived and

represented. The circumstances surrounding the instigation of the LAPP in 2010 were no

exception to this long-term trend, as enormous development pressures, brought about by an

increasingly neoliberalizing city and state, once again began to place burdens upon the low

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[85] 001.
[86] See 004.

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income DTES. In the hyper-contentious atmosphere that emerged, conflicts erupted between those claiming the "Downtown Eastside" as toponym of lived space, and those claiming that the DTES was a "community in need of balance" (see Kumagai & McGuire 2011). As a result, the city finally capitulated to long-time requests for a comprehensive planning process and initiated a participatory forum where the future of the DTES would play out.

This chapter has demonstrated how the LAPP intervened in the lived space of the DTES by bureaucratically enrolling the toponymic assemblages of the neighbourhood into a city-led agenda. In the first section, I demonstrated how the TOR for the LAPP brought residents of the DTES into a participatory process that appeared equitable, yet was ultimately controlled from the top-down via the City Council and the City Manager. Furthermore, the TOR mobilized a new, comprehensive planning definition for the DTES that set in motion an abstract spatial vision that was, in many cases, incongruous with the lived toponymic understandings of the neighbourhood. In the second section, I showed how the planning definition of the area deterritorialized the DTES as a "community of communities," thereby drawing attention away from the toponym as a fluid and relational low income political claim while giving middle-class actors and business interests an opportunity to strengthen their influence and economic position within it. In the third section, I noted how the LAPP reconstituted the low income DEOD as a site of intervention known as the "Community Based Development Area" 1) by allowing neighbourhoods like Gastown and Chinatown to retain their own planning policies, 2) prioritizing the toponymic assertions of middle-class actors in Strathcona that affirmed the DEOD as a low income area, and 3) enrolling marginalized residents in a Social Impact Assessment that used consultation and community mapping to assess "where they were" in order to project "where they ought to be." Following this, I noted how the local area plan attempts to territorialize "Japantown" within the

CBDA as a heritage-led toponym associated with economic revitalization and cultural recognition, contrary to the input of many vocal Japanese Canadians who desired a socially just presence in the area that was inclusive of the existing low income community. Finally, I demonstrated how the flaws and top-down structure of the planning process revealed fundamental disjunctures between city-led and community visions for the future of the DTES, resulting in the formation of unlikely alliances between middle-class residents, low income activists, and Japanese Canadians against the COV. Solidarity between Japanese Canadians and low income activists helped expose "Japantown" as a toponymic incursion within the DTES assemblage, which subsequently inspired a re-entrenchment of the "Downtown Eastside" as a toponym of resistance. Furthermore, the LAPP also gave DTES residents a new set of tools for resistance because it educated them on the technical aspects of planning, and alerted them to the ways that participation could be distorted or ignored when used to serve the city's interests. Indeed, while the LAPP filtered place names through the abstract conceived spaces of planning and zoning to transform the social and material form of the DTES and align the neighbourhood within a broader development agenda, the process also empowered the community, made room for alliances to form within the lived space of the neighbourhood, and allowed for the remobilization of the "Downtown Eastside" as a toponym of resistance that asserted resident rights in the face of displacement and gentrification.

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CHAPTER 6

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

6.1 Summary

A multidisciplinary agenda of critical toponymy has exposed how *names* play a vital and

dynamic role in the ongoing creation of place (see Rose-Redwood et al. 2010; Vuolteenaho &

Berg 2009). At the same time, a great deal of critical scholarship has demonstrated how

participatory variants of planning and policymaking act to transform cities (see Gunder 2010;

Moini 2011; Purcell 2009), yet few, if any, have examined place naming as a specific technique

of discursive power within such transformations. In this thesis I provided a unique contribution

to this nascent area by broadening the literature on critical toponymy and advancing the

framework of *toponymic assemblage*, which frames place names as fluid and relational entities

that are territorialized through the lived, conceived, and perceived spaces of the city (or, the

spatial trialectic). By exploring the intersections between crtical toponymy and critical planning,

my thesis reveals how toponymic techniques play a co-constitutive role in the assembling of

urban spatialities. This manoevre, I believe, has allowed me to move beyond the rejection of

proceduralism so prevalent in the critical literature on participatory planning while

demonstrating the importance of place naming within a local politics of urban revitalization and

counter-gentrification activism. Specifically, as one part of an activist geography project, my

work contributes to calls for a wider configuration of urban activism that unites seemingly

disparate groups in a coalesced struggle for rights in the city.

In Vancouver's Downtown Eastside (DTES), I have shown how toponyms have been

deployed in planning, policymaking, and the media to frame the area as "other" in relation to the

rest of the city. Within the recently completed DTES Local Area Planning Process (LAPP),

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toponymic assemblages were reworked in complex ways as planners and actors with diverse political agendas attempted to exert control over places. In this discussion, I revisit my research objectives from Chapter 1 and demonstrate how I have achieved these goals by reviewing some of the key arguments of the preceding chapters. *First,* in section 6.2, I look back at how Chapter 2 addresses Objective 1. Here, I made a substantial theoretical contribution to the critical toponymy literature by identifying gaps in the literature, articulating the importance of place naming in relation to planning, and by generating the critical framework of *toponymic assemblage,* which includes elements of the *spatial trialectic. Second,* in section 6.3, I review how Chapter 3 addresses Objective 2 by demonstrating the methodological contribution of this thesis, showing how my mixed-method case study approach has provided a robust way of studying the toponyms of the DTES. *Third,* in sections 6.4 and 6.5, I show how I have addressed Objectives 3 & 4, first in Chapter 4 by providing a nuanced historical review of the toponymic assemblages of the DTES, then in Chapter 5 by showing how such assemblages were channeled through the LAPP and how they inspired resistance. Furthermore, I demonstrate how my toponymic assemblage framework, in conjunction with a trialectical understanding of conceived, perceived, and lived space, has allowed me to excavate a politics of toponymy within the DTES. *Fourth,* in Sections 6.6-6.8, I address Objective 5 by briefly looking at how toponymic practices have been and might be deployed within rights-based activism, discuss the broader implications of this work, and review a few of the theoretical and positional limitations of the thesis before concluding with some thoughts for future research.

6.2 Theoretical Contributions

In Chapter 2 I addressed Objective 1, first by reviewing the literature in critical toponymy and critical planning, then by using that knowledge to build a theoretical framework through

which I could combine these literatures and think through my empirical data. I first reviewed the literature in critical toponymy, and I maintained that despite having clear resonances, the four research foci within that nascent corpus (*political toponymies, toponymies of governmentality, toponymies of branding and commodification, and toponymies of resistance)* were often used independently from one other in the existing literature. I also advanced an important critique, arguing that the critical toponymy literature to date tended to analyse place names as tools of political economy or governmental control that might happen to arouse resistance, often making it seem as though toponyms were simply mobilized either from the "top-down" or "bottom-up."

I then moved on to review the critical planning literature, which I framed as a series of three key projects: 1) a large-scale rejection of modernist planning in favour of grassroots, democratic, participatory processes; 2) a general analysis of participatory planning as a communicative conduit through which neoliberalizing policies could be implemented; and 3) a procedural critique of locally based planning projects that exposed how citizen input was being strategically aligned with the imperatives of the state. Here, I claimed that these key projects downplayed the specific ways that planners and citizens deployed discursive power, and noted that they failed to explore the ways that toponyms were used in conjunction with planning.

To address the aforementioned research gaps, I generated a theoretical framework that I called *toponymic assemblage,* which would allow me to explore the ways that toponyms are mobilized through and affected by processes of planning, policymaking, and citizen resistance while making a unique contribution to the geographical literature (see Figure 14). Drawing specifically on the assemblage work of DeLanda (2006) and (McFarlane 2011a; 2011b),
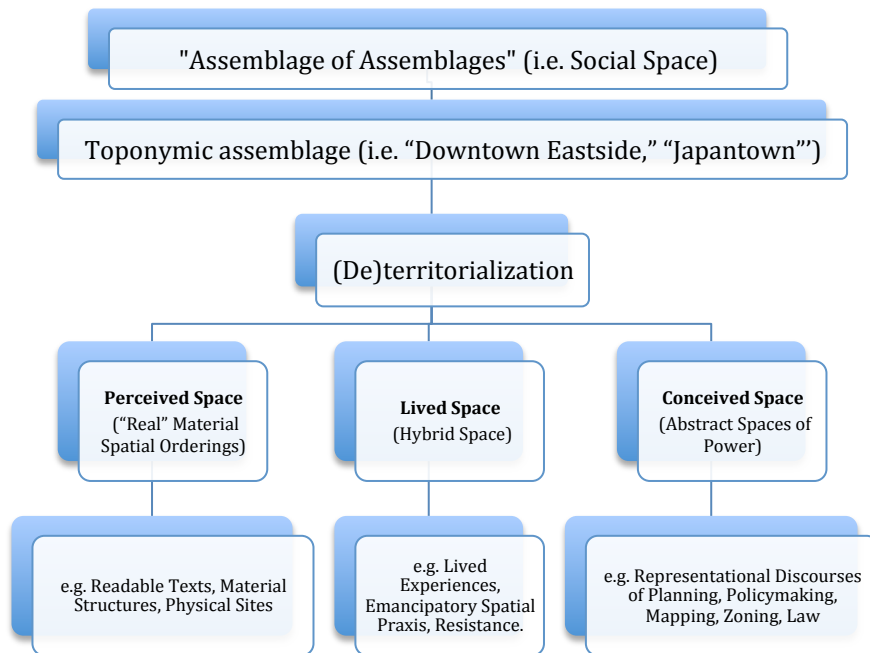
Figure 14: The Toponymic Assemblage (from DeLanda 2006; Lefebvre 1991; Soja 1996; 2010).

I built on the critical toponymy literature by presenting a framework that imagines toponyms as dynamic networks of meaning composed of a multiplicity of elements operating in relation to each other. I argued that this approach would allow me to move beyond the often-dualistic tales of toponymic construction in the empirical critical toponymy literature to date, while also allowing me to see the four toponymic research foci listed above as mutually constituent and inseparable. At the same time, I remained acutely aware of Brenner et al.'s (2011) warning that assemblage thinking can also lead down an ontological path that ignores scaled networks of power and downplays issues of race, class, and inequality. To avoid such a trap, I specifically drew on assemblage theorists who recognize the importance of scale, and I highlighted how toponymic assemblages are generated via territorializing (stabilizing) and deterritorializing (destabilizing) processes, which according to DeLanda (2006), are the result of a complex array of state and citizen-led activities (among others). I also brought the critical spatial theories of

Lefebvre (1991) and Soja (1996; 2010) into my assemblage to draw attention to geographies of inequality and make room for grassroots resistance to emerge.

Here, I noted how toponyms play out in the three overlapping and interdependent "moments" (also known as the *spatial trialectic*) of *perceived space* (visible, material space)*, conceived space* (imagined spaces of planners and policymakers), and *lived* space (the emancipatory spaces of everyday life). Though they are rarely used in tandem in geography (Vasudevan 2015a and 2015b being the only recent theoretical articles of note), both trialectics and assemblage place a strong emphasis on relationality and becoming, and by combining the two I argued that the three Lefebvrian moments (together known as *social space*) could be thought of as an emergent "assemblage of assemblages." In addition, I showed how trialectical thinking adds a new and important element to assemblage theorization, because it keeps structural processes in mind while grounding assemblages *in place.* Most significantly, however, I maintained that toponymic assemblage is a solid framework through which to examine place names, because it shows how toponyms can be channeled through the perceived and conceived spaces of citizens, the media, urban planning, and policymaking (among others), while also acknowledging the role of lived space as a conduit for toponymic resistance. Here I made an important contribution to the literature in both critical toponymy and geography by re-theorizing toponyms as relational, and arguing that they cannot easily be subjected to cause-effect reasoning. Furthermore, assemblage suggested a way that the critical planning literature might further highlight the importance of discursive power in generating urban transformations. Significantly to the thesis as a whole, toponymic assemblage considers the multiple ways in which toponyms emerge in order to maintain a stance of radical openness and possibility, in the hope that spatial justice might emerge.

6.3 Methodological Contributions

In Chapter 3 I addressed Objective 2 by outlining the mixed-method case study through which I studied the toponyms of the DTES. I first asserted that my association with the *Revitalizing Japantown?* project provided me with a valuable entry point into the DTES community and gave me access to their extensive network of partners (including DTES housing activists and members of Japanese Canadian organizations, among others), allowing me immediately to establish research relationships and gain acceptance in the community. I maintained that careful and thoughtful entry into the research site provides a significant advantage to the researcher in terms of recruiting research participants, developing a focused interview program, and analyzing data in relation to the ongoing lived experiences of residents.

Inspired by Burawoy's (1998) Extended Case Method, I developed a historically grounded research program inspired by my participation in my research site, allowing me to proceed in an iterative manner where I moved between my outline, my interview findings, my emerging assemblage framework, and my ongoing document analysis to effectively "build" my chapters as I proceeded. I asserted that this approach allowed me to generate theory while recognizing the influence of broader forces on local observations. After a brief reflection on my ethics, I detailed the rigorous procedures through which I excavated and analyzed the toponyms of the DTES. First, I outlined the program of textual analysis that made it possible for me to identify the historical toponymies of the DTES and place them in relation to contemporary planning activities. Second, I showed how a series of key informant interviews with members of the LAPP committee allowed me to gain important perspective on how place names were implicated within planning, as well as how the process was rolled out "on the ground." Third, I demonstrated how an ongoing process of note taking (which included journaling, document

annotation, and timeline creation) allowed me to build on my knowledge of the neighbourhood, reflect on my progress, and build my theoretical framework. Fourth, I showed how I used Qualitative Data Analysis Software (NVIVO) to code and analyze my interviews and the LAPP documents according to toponymic narratives, and how my extensive notes on newspaper and archival documentation informed my historical chapter. Finally, I reflected on the rigour of my study, demonstrated how it fit with both Tracy (2010) and Baxter & Eyles' (1997) criteria for qualitative research assessment, then outlined a few of the limitations in terms of participant observation, document analysis, time, and resources. Despite these limitations, I argue that Chapter 3 effectively addressed Objective 2 and made an important and rigorous methodological contribution to the study of planning and place naming.

6.4 Empirical Contribution 1: Historical Toponymies of the Downtown Eastside

In Chapter 4, I achieved Objective 3 by genealogically excavating a historical politics of toponymy in the DTES from newspaper, planning, and policy documents, among others, to highlight the *fluid, malleable* and *potential* qualities of toponymic assemblages as they emerge through trialectical space. Given the DTES' long and well-known history of displacement and equally rich history of solidarity and resistance in the face of external interventions, I contend that my research provides a fresh perspective and a new emphasis to a well-worn story by revealing important insights previously obscured by more instrumental politics. To wit, my study has demonstrated how names and naming have played a powerful role since the establishment of the City of Vancouver in shaping the reputation of this neighbourhood.

My media and archival analysis exposed the *fluidity* of toponymic assemblages as I presented a series of five key moments that showed how multiple toponyms could coalesce, overlap, and interact with each other in the same place across time. I claimed that competing and

co-occurring colonial toponymic assemblages such as "Gastown," "Granville," and "Vancouver" emerged in the late 19th century as the result of state and business-led strategies such as marketing, media representation, mapping, building construction, and infrastructure development. Here I was able to argue that such toponyms not only encroached upon (and co-existed with) existing Indigenous toponyms like Q'emq'emel'ay, they were also mobilized by multiple actors in relation to racialized toponyms such as "Chinatown" and "Japanese Town," which acted to segregate marginalized groups and keep them "in their place." Furthermore, my analysis asserted that "Japanese Town" itself was over time generated through a number of instrumental and non-instrumental toponymic effects, as it was also variously known as "Powell Street," "Japanese Quarter," "Little Tokyo," and the "East End" in response to competing political projects of oppression, resistance, and existence channeled by disparate actors. I was then able to highlight how these discursive contestations ended with the abrupt uprooting of the Japanese Canadian population from the west coast during World War II, and I argued that this uprooting left a toponymic vacuum that was filled by the attendant class-based assemblages of "Skid Road," and the "Downtown Eastside" which planning and policy actors used to frame the area as problematic and aberrant in relation to the rest of the city. However, my interpretation revealed that "Skid Road" did not simply appear at the moment of Japanese Canadian uprooting, and I maintained that the social and material elements of the "Skid Road" assemblage (namely a transient and impoverished population inhabiting an abundance of cheap lodging) had existed in the area since before the 1930s, even before the toponym itself. I then insisted that denigrating toponyms like "Skid Road" and "Downtown Eastside" saw significant overlap in the decades to come, and I noted that while "Skid Road" residents eventually attempted to reclaim the "Downtown Eastside" toponym to assert their agency, the area has been continually threatened

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by a number of overlapping public and private sector toponymic interventions aimed at "revitalization." In particular, I claimed that toponymic assemblages such "Gastown," "Japantown," and "Chinatown" became increasingly mobilized by planners, policymakers, the media, and businesspeople from the 1980s onward to encroach upon and deterritorialize the DTES, as a neoliberalizing city and state began encourage market-led development strategies in the Downtown Eastside under the auspices of "social mix."

My content analysis in Chapter 4 also revealed the *malleability* and *potentiality* of multifaceted toponymic assemblages by showing how individual toponyms are subject to ongoing contestation and change, using the spatial trialectic as a framework to ground the assemblage and link it to discursive and material transformations through time. "Japantown" and the "Downtown Eastside" provide two key examples of this process, though many others could be excavated from the chapter, including "Gastown," "Chinatown," and "Skid Road." For example, my genealogical study demonstrated that "Japantown" simultaneously recalls (among many others): 1) the racist political toponymies mobilized through the perceived and conceived spaces of the media and policymakers to segregate Japanese Canadians from the rest of Vancouver; 2) a failed attempt by young Japanese Canadians in the 1940s to mobilize lived space resistance, inspire a move away from Powell Street, and make claims to the broader social space of Vancouver; 3) an abstract public and private sector strategy of branding and commodification from the 1980s conceptually activated by planners and Japanese Canadian residents and businesspeople looking to motivate economic development, and 4) a nascent conceptualization from the 2000s used by planners and heritage activists looking to preserve and the long-lost neighbourhood and draw attention to the area with the goal of "revitalization."

Another key example of assemblage concerns the "Downtown Eastside." Drawing on policy, planning, and media materials, throughout the chapter I contended that the DTES toponym has been alternately manipulated and deployed through 1) the abstract planning conceptions of the 1960s which rendered it synonymous with a decrepit, poverty-ridden Skid Road; 2) the lived and perceived spaces of low income residents from the 1970s onward, who politically asserted their rights in the face of external intervention and resisted displacement to secure social benefits for their community; 3) the media reports and policy recommendations of the 1980s-2000s that continued to frame the area as "unproductive," thereby opening it up to socioeconomic interventions encouraged by three levels of government, and 4) the calls of public and private sector organizations for balance, cooperation, and social mix, which motivated strategic planning throughout the 2000s.

The relational toponymic geneaologies advanced in Chapter 4 are significant. First, they demonstrate that the DTES cannot be fully understood without thinking through the ways in which it has emerged in response to structural forces and in relation to toponyms like Gastown, Skid Road, Powell Street, and Chinatown, because all have exerted (and continue to exert) agency at various times, often being used to refer to the same areas depending on who or what was being referred to. I hold that this is an important contribution to the literature because it draws attention away from the individual toponym as something that can be observed in static moments or confined to boundaries on a map, and it acknowledges that toponymic power can reach across particular places and times to inform political projects far beyond their original intent. Second, while my geneaology is far from exhaustive, and while some of these tales are well-worn, I maintain that they are immensely important because by presenting them as elements of a toponymic assemblage, my study reveals individual toponyms as multidimensional entities

that are the result of overlapping historical discourses. This moves far beyond the idea that individual toponyms are the singular result of either political, governmental, commodifiable, or resistant motivations. Third, I argue that my trialectical analysis allowed me to identify key periods in the history of the DTES where lived space toponymic resistance and existence has remained possible, and where toponyms motivated by planning, policy, and media conceptualizations have reinforced normative/transformative agendas. This is an important insight because it illuminates historical successes as pathways of possibility for contemporary actors looking to contest ongoing interventions in the neighbourhood. Future research needs to attend to toponymic assemblages to advance a theoretical understanding of the place name as an emergent entity that materializes in response to overlapping political narratives, further revealing how they operate and can be contested.

6.5 Empirical Contribution 2: Toponymy and the Local Area Planning Process

In Chapter 5, I drew on the in-depth toponymic knowledge of the DTES generated in Chapter 4 to present a nuanced critique of the highly complex LAPP process. I achieved the *first* part of Objective 4 by drawing on interviews and discourse analysis to demonstrate how toponyms such as "Downtown Eastside," "Gastown," "Strathcona," and "Japantown" were deployed through the abstract conceived spaces of the contemporary DTES LAPP. Here, my analysis provided significant insights into the ways that toponymic assemblages move through the conceived spaces of planning in relation to the activities of residents, planners, and private sector stakeholders, and in response to broader economic forces aimed at market-based transformation. For example, interview transcripts and planning materials allowed me to make the argument that the LAPP brought DTES stakeholders "to the table" to negotiate a terms of reference that *appeared* to prioritize the lived spaces of low income residents, but instead

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fragmented and *diminished* the discursive power of that population and ultimately empowered the City of Vancouver, thereby laying the groundwork for toponymic mobilization and policy intervention in line with city-wide development imperatives. I then synthesized insights from my document analysis and interview program, asserting that the LAPP used the conceived spaces of the map to present the "Downtown Eastside" as a fragmented and depoliticized "community of communities" that included places like "Gastown" and "Railtown" (that are strongly associated with the business and development sector), thereby drawing attention away from the long-held definition of the DTES as a low income claim to the lived space of the community.

Drawing on interviews and planning materials, I then argued that the LAPP used a "Social Impact Assessment" to identify the lived and perceived spaces of low income residents and enroll them into the conceived spaces of planning. Subsequently, the "Downtown Eastside" toponym was channeled in relation to toponyms such as "Strathcona" to territorialize a "Community Based Development Area" that defined where low income residents "should be" while leaving surrounding areas untouched and open for development. Finally, in line with the larger goals of the RJ? project, I contend that the LAPP mobilized the "Japantown" assemblage as a heritage and culture-led economic development scheme, in spite of the input of Japanese Canadian stakeholders who were opposed to the name. Combined, I claim that such moments had the effect of removing agency from the marginalized population, placing it in the hands of stakeholders from primarily middle class neighbourhoods, and setting the stage for market-led redevelopment under the guise of "revitalization."

I achieved the *second* part of Objective 4 by using interview and document analysis to provide important insights into the ways that toponymic mobilization within planning can activate toponymic *resistance* within lived space. While my study was not meant as a procedural

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critique, my interview analysis nonetheless showed that the *procedural flaws* of the DTES LAPP generated strong dissonances between resident understandings of the neighbourhood and the planning-led DTES assemblage, making it *seem* to participants as though the planning process was being solely managed from the top-down. I argue that the LAPP then became a forum through which dissatisfied stakeholders such as low income activists, businesspeople, Japanese Canadians, and middle class residents (among others) were able to initiate dialogue and form alliances against the city. In particular, I contend that important relationships formed between Japanese Canadian stakeholders and the low income activists who were working to reclaim and *re-entrench* the Downtown Eastside as a rights-based "Social Justice Zone" in opposition to depoliticized and fragmented planning conceptualizations. Tracing the lineage of this nascent bond through interview transcripts and planning documentation, I found that Japanese Canadian stakeholders (in response to the influence of the RJ? project) were actively opposed to the LAPP's use of "Japantown" because they did not want to use their heritage to gentrify the neighbourhood or negatively affect the lives of Downtown Eastside residents. Instead, Japanese Canadians used terms like "Powell Street" and "Poweru Gai" to recall and repoliticize the human rights legacy of their uprooted pre-war community. At the same time, low income activists were able to count Japanese Canadian participants among their allies, and they were able to see "Japantown" as a cynical rebranding tactic that could potentially erode their lived space.

This chapter makes several important and novel contributions. First, I assert that it broadens the literature in critical planning and sets forth an important direction for future research, because it clearly demonstrates the importance of discursive power as deployed by through participatory planning processes. As in Chapter 4, the use of assemblage theory is important here, because planning critiques need to present planning processes as more than top-

down/bottom-up, planner vs. resident scenarios, and while my analysis shows that these contestations are indeed important, discursive agency is often much more dispersed and is enacted through multiple overlapping strategies. Second, and relatedly, my analysis challenges a prevailing trend in the literature that tends to see planning processes as hegemonic procedural exercises aimed at bending citizen input toward the neoliberalizing will of the state, further suggesting that a new agenda for critical planning research might be in order. Third, it provides important insights into the ways that toponyms are actively worked through planning processes to motivate on-the-ground social and material transformations, demonstrating the ongoing importance of combined research in critical toponymy and critical planning. Fourth, it shows that the critical toponymy literature needs to pay more attention to toponymic resistance as an *emergent* process of mobilization that draws on rights-based activism and alliance building to actively oppose both *deliberative* and *non-deliberative* toponyms that remove agency from people on the ground. Finally, it reveals the ongoing potential of toponymic activism in the Downtown Eastside, thereby providing encouragement to those who might want to use naming practices to oppose agendas that seek to transform the area according to economic interests.

6.6 Resistance, Occupation, and the "Right to Remain"

For the remainder of this chapter, I address Objective 5 by further considering how toponymic power might help enhance and align activist/research agendas, and I outline some of the limitations of the research. I led this thesis by providing an example of nascent toponymic resistance as low income activists took direct action against Cuchillo Restaurant, a consumption-led private-sector incursion into the "heart" of the community that rejected its association with the Downtown Eastside and claimed to be simultaneously in "Japantown," Gastown, and "Railtown." While this occurrence seemed unusual to me upon first glance, my research has

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since highlighted how such implicit contestations are fact commonplace. Toponymic assemblages have long played an important role in the discursive construction of the DTES, and even as Cuchillo continues to market their high-end tacos to a middle class clientele in "JapaGasRailtown," likewise low income activists continue to rally around the "Downtown Eastside" in the wake of the Local Area Planning Process to advance an inclusive vision and claim a collective right to the neighbourhood. Indeed, many DTES activists and residents simply disregard the results of the LAPP, recognizing that their participation did little to prevent ongoing dislocation. While in some ways, the low income "community" associated with the DTES was divided by the LAPP, the flaws of the process also made room for cross-class and cross-cultural alliances to form between previously disparate groups, providing a hopeful outcome in a situation that might have been wholly negative.

Significantly, the LAPP unwittingly created a venue where low income residents and Japanese Canadian activists could find commonalities, and individuals who previously had little understanding of each other began to realize that by calling on their shared histories of displacement within the DTES, they could work together to defragment their narratives and organize around a justice-based claim to human rights. These new alliances did not die with the completion of the LAPP. The ongoing influence of the Revitalizing Japantown? project has been integral to the strengthening of these bonds. Though the LAPP ended in March of 2014, RJ?, in partnership with several DTES organizations and Japanese Canadian cultural groups,[87] has been fostering conversations between the two communities to bring about a broader recognition of the human rights legacy of the area while supporting residents as they fight for a "Right to Remain" in the neighbourhood (see Masuda & Franks 2014).

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[87] Including Gallery Gachet, Powell Street Festival Society, and the Nikkei National Museum, among many others.

The Right to Remain draws on the experiences of Japanese Canadians and the low income population (among others) to provide current residents with a counter-narrative with which to resist the exclusionary development tactics that are forcing them out of the neighbourhood, and it has helped inspire a re-mobilization of the "Downtown Eastside" and "Powell Street"/"Poweru Gai" as toponyms of resistance. Significantly, the extreme injustices committed by Canada during the Second World War against its Japanese Canadian citizens are experiencing a renewed importance in the present, and they are contributing to an ongoing conversation around human rights in Canada and elsewhere. The JC community's achievement of redress in 1988 from the Canadian government (see Miki 2005), as well as the subsequent apologies from the Province of British Columbia (McCulloch 2012) and the City of Vancouver (Lee 2013) represented momentous events in the history of human rights in Canada. Yet these apologies were not static moments, and they point to the *translocality* (McFarlane 2011b) of injustice, as three levels of government were forced to admit their implication in a vehemently racist action. The JC narrative still holds power because it points to a broader understanding of the ways that the injustices of the past are being revisited in the present. This applies particularly in the DTES, where the racialized and class-denigrated residents of the neighbourhood are being pushed out by processes that are being facilitated by activities at every level of government.

The power of the Japanese Canadian story is exemplified in an event that happened four months after the conclusion of the LAPP, when a small group of homeless, underhoused, and primarily Indigenous residents of Vancouver, citing a lack of adequate and available housing in the city, began to set up tents and occupy Oppenheimer Park, one of the most important places in the Downtown Eastside and the core of the historic Japanese Canadian Powell Street neighbourhood (see Baker 2014; CBC News 2014). Soon after, on July 16th, 2014, the

Vancouver Parks Board served an eviction notice to the occupiers, giving them 24 hours to vacate the park or face confiscation of their belongings (Baker 2014; CBC News 2014). Seeing as the City of Vancouver had promised that the LAPP would address homelessness, and considering Vancouver's recent acknowledgement that the city was located on unceded Indigenous territories (Austin 2014), the notice was seen by many of the campers as an affront to their right to occupy the land as long as homelessness remained and claims remained unsettled (CBC News 2014; McCue 2014). A national news agency, paraphrasing Audrey Siegl of the Musqueam nation, noted: "as long as the land's title remains unceded, the homeless and the First Nations protesters have a right to occupy it and the city needs to treat them with respect" (CBC News 2014). In the wake of the eviction notice, existing campers entrenched themselves and the tent city began to grow, eventually taking over the majority of the park (Sinoski 2014).

The sheer size and duration of the occupation were significant determinants of its political magnitude, yet so was its timing. On the first weekend in August, Oppenheimer Park was slated to play host to the Powell Street Festival (PSF), the annual celebration of Japanese Canadian arts and culture and a partner on the RJ? project. Concerns began to mount as to what would happen to the campers if the PSF were to go ahead as planned (see Smith 2014). Indeed, the festival might potentially have used their influence to motivate the city to take action against the protesters, particularly considering the PSF's longstanding use of the site. Instead, in an incredible show of solidarity between low income residents and Japanese Canadians, the festival decided to move out of Oppenheimer Park and into the streets surrounding it, stating:

> *"we acknowledge and respect the concerns of the homeless and community residents in the Oppenheimer Park area, located on unceded Coast Salish territory. For this reason, the Powell Street Festival Society will not use the area of Oppenheimer Park where the protest is taking place and does not support the removal order or the threat of removal of residents in the park in any way."* (Powell Street Festival Society 2014)

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Furthermore, the festival linked the current situation in the DTES to the injustices inflicted upon

Japanese Canadians during World War II:

> *"The Japanese Canadian community has significant ties to Oppenheimer Park [...] During WWII the community experienced the confiscation of their homes and businesses, detention, relocation and internment. As such the Powell Street Festival Society has empathy for the current situation. [...] We understand that while we have celebrated the Japanese Canadian community in the historically significant location of Oppenheimer Park for the last 37 years, there are many other issues at stake that create challenges for a timely resolution."* (Powell Street Festival Society 2014)

By vacating the park, the PSF placed the concerns of the *Downtown Eastside* above those

of Japanese Canadians (and implicitly, any specific territorial claims to the area), in so doing

seamlessly linked the spatial injustices of the present to those of the past. This singular act

provided a stark and symbolically significant rebuke to the long habit of city officials to proclaim

the area as "Japantown," signposting the refusal of Japanese Canadians to be implicated in such

official brand practices. In addition, the festival respected residents' right to protest and right to

remain in place, even as the city was exerting enormous pressure on campers to leave the park.

The act of solidarity draws attention to the potential power of toponymic assemblages in relation

to resistance and alliance-building, and it also points to the significant influence and agency that

activist researchers (such as myself and the RJ? team) have had on producing socially just

outcomes where antagonistic situations might have erupted. Furthermore, the newfound alliances

between current residents and the broader Japanese Canadian community hold significant

potential toward building a deeper understanding of human rights legacy of the DTES far beyond

Vancouver. Already the JC experience is also being used to point to injustices against other

racialized groups such as Muslims, who in the present are being constituted as "terrorists" and

"threats to society" by the Canadian government, a situation not unlike the discourses leveled

against JCs during World War II (Drimonis 2015). By mobilizing a "right to remain" from the

lived space of the city and connecting the ongoing gentrification of the DTES to the broader

experiences of Japanese Canadians (among others), there is potential to "take control of the

trialectic" to contest the individualistic, abstract, capital-led conceptualizations of space promoted by the city and developers while challenging narratives perpetuated by the state.

6.7 Study Limitations

While this study has a number of limitations, there are two that stand out in particular as ones that require addressing: one theoretical and one positional. First, the relationality of my approach makes it impossible to identify all the elements that could potentially compose a toponym, and though this thesis has attempted to provide a detailed and historically grounded reading of place names, its analysis will always be incomplete (see Pierce & Martin 2015). I recognize that this limitation is nearly impossible to overcome due to the nature of assemblage thinking, yet what this approach does offer is an opportunity to explore a few of the myriad components that make up a place name while still recognizing the influence of broader forces on its construction. It is also valuable because it does not negate the idea that toponyms can be co-constituted by actors with varying agendas, which helps explain how a toponym such as "Downtown Eastside" can be simultaneously denigrating and hopeful depending on who utters it. Finally, assemblage approaches to toponymy are important because they do not point to any one group or actor as an ultimate "source" of injustice or motivator of resistance, thereby inspiring a move away from a smoking gun approach to activism.

Second, my position as an outside researcher "coming in" to one of Canada's most marginalized (and most relentlessly researched) urban communities might, for some, be viewed as problematic. For example, my activist representation of the DTES might unwittingly glorify poverty via a positive and whitewashed vision of the neighbourhood as a unified imagined community of low income residents, which might even *pave the way* for other residents like myself to move into the area and motivate displacement. However, I have attempted to combat

this problem by maintaining an empathetic stance, recognizing that the ongoing injustices perpetrated against DTES residents are a part of the same system of injustice that I (and many others) face in the highly polarized, unequal, and unaffordable city of Vancouver. Issues of representation apply to research with Japanese Canadians as well, because there is a danger in presenting this group as a cohesive "community" who are all on the side of low income residents, when in fact they, like any other group, contend with stark political divisions among members. Indeed, as demonstrated in Chapters 4 and 5, there are some Japanese Canadians who disparage the current residents of the DTES and would be happy to either ignore the area altogether, or to implement a commodified cultural spectacle which situates injustices *in the past*. Despite such challenges, I remain thankful that I have been afforded the opportunity to build relationships, listen to, and work together *with* low income residents and Japanese Canadians to challenge prevailing views of the neighbourhood (past and present) and help them build the community *they* want. Furthermore, I have done so not by fetishizing difference or through a navel-gazing exercise of self-reflexivity, but by attempting to promote alliances through an engaged and potentially transformative research praxis (see Kobayashi 1994; 2003).

6.8 Conclusion

If the activists and academics that rally around the DTES wish to promote social and spatial justice for the community, then they must understand the ways in which seemingly banal discursive framings such as toponyms, mobilized through planning and policymaking, can fundamentally transform the city. Confronting power will require a rejection of such toponyms and a more nuanced understanding of the power of naming as a dispossessive force that may be opposed to promote alternative and repossessive visions based in the lived space of residents. Unfortunately, the longstanding history of racism and class antagonism in the DTES has

contributed to a series of fragmented narratives of injustice that instead need to be seen as part of

a systematic, ongoing attempt to normalize and even erase the various communities living in the

area from the social space of Vancouver. Combatting such hegemonic accounts will require a

collective effort by advocates to move away from factionalization toward the building of

alliances across agendas and at multiple scales. While toponyms have consequential effects at the

local scale, they are constantly shifting in response to broader political forces, and need to be

seen as part of a wider system of sociospatial injustices that have denied DTES residents full

access to basic human rights. Importantly, this perspective reflects the efforts of other DTES

scholars who are working at the intersection of rights and place on topics such as food (see

Miewald & McCann 2014), housing (see Blomley 2004), and a healthy environment (see

Masuda & Crabtree 2010).

Rights struggles are occurring in cities on a nationwide and global scale (Vasudevan

2015a; 2015b), and though the Downtown Eastside has an important history as a site of

resistance, the "Right to Remain" cannot truly be mobilized without moving beyond the DTES,

and activists (and activist researchers) must take up the challenge of connecting projects

occurring in disparate locations. A multiscalar project of toponymic resistance needs to be

assembled to contest urban policies and programs that have roots in national and global

neoliberal agendas (see Cochrane 2007), in particular against naming and "branding" policies

that have spead rapidly across sites to become part and parcel of city-building agendas (see

Vanolo 2015). Yet movement building requires perseverence *within* the grassroots and an effort

to coalesce around a belief that there is "something more," to be achieved by the "construction of

solidarity across difference" (Iveson 2014, p. 1010). Without this type of progressive action, the

toponymic successes of individual groups remain part of a series of fragmented moments of

quasi-justice that alleviate local problems within a political economic status quo. Indeed, for such a project to work, it must "go viral" against the loosely integrated and highly mobile policies that it seeks to transform (see Peck 2011; Temenos & McCann 2013) spreading across networks and adapting to local needs without losing fidelity to its radical core principles.

The contentious toponymic atmosphere of the DTES reflects a long litany of processes aimed at mitigating surface effects while failing to account for the deep internal wounds inflicted by over 100 years of state-led, state-sanctioned, and state-condoned structural violence. Toponymic assemblages, when worked through planning and policy, often represent a way of managing problems, delegitimizing community needs, and legitimating interventions in ways that potentially strip the political significance of lived space. Operating within such structural limitations, planning and its associated toponymies have ultimately failed to provide an emancipatory solution to the injustices of the DTES, because they cannot account for the contradictions that arise when community needs conflict with the market-based logics of capitalism. Indeed, city-led communicative planning, with its narrow logic and relentless reliance on the "procedural fix" provides a poor vehicle for transformative grassroots resistance, as opposed to toponyms, which act as fluid and relational assemblages of meaning through which social justice goals can be mobilized. Yet resistance does not require the outright rejection of such planning processes, as toponymic activism might be deployed within and against them to expose their faults and hidden power. By integrating toponymy with a focus on the collective right to occupy lived space, there is immense potential for resistance against framings aimed at fundamentally transforming communities. Such resistance requires that naming practices and discursive understandings emerging from lived spaces of the city must take precedence over those mobilized within the abstract spaces of planning and policymaking to promote toponyms

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that are *revolutionary* and inspire the creation of alliances between groups working for a

common cause of social justice across sites.

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APPENDIX A: ETHICS PROTOCOL

General Info

File No: -1
Title: Urban Planning and Place-Naming in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside
Start Date: 01/09/2014
End Date: 01/09/2015
Keywords: Geography,Urban Geography,Social Geography,Political Geography,Planning/Policy Studies,Urban Planning/Policy,Social Welfare Planning/Policy,Placemaking,Resistance

Project Members

Principal Investigator

Prefix: Mr.
Last Name: Wideman
First Name: Trevor
Affiliation: Faculty of Arts and Science\GREB\Unit REB Geography
Rank: Master's Student
Gender: Male
Email: trevor.wideman@queensu.ca
Phone1:
Phone2:
Fax:
Mailing Address: 401-350 E. Pender St. Vancouver, BC V6A 3X4
Institution: Queen's University
Country: Canada
Comments:

Others

Rank	Last Name	First Name	Affiliation	Role In Project
Professor	Kobayashi	Audrey	Faculty of Arts and Science\GREB\Unit REB Geography	Supervisor
Associate Professor	Masuda	Jeffrey	Faculty of Arts and Science\School of Kinesiology and Health Studies	Supervisor

Common Questions

1. 1. CORE Completion

#	Question	Answer
1.1	Applicant: CORE Completion *Students and staff submitting ethics applications must also attach their CORE certificate. To complete CORE go to http://pre.ethics.gc.ca/eng/education/tutorial-didacticiel/ If desired, CORE can appear on your transcript as SGS804. (Click Info tab for further details).	YES
1.2	Co-Applicant I - CORE Completion	

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#		
1.3	Co-Applicant II - CORE Completion	
1.4	Co-Applicant III - CORE Completion	
1.5	Co-Applicant IV - CORE Completion	
1.6	Co-Applicant V - CORE Completion	
1.7	Co-Applicant VI - CORE Completion	

2. 2. Project details

#	Question	Answer
2.1	Level of Research	Masters thesis
2.2	If you are a student, please add your Supervisor's name in the box below. Also, make sure to add you Supervisor to PROJECT INFO TAB under Other Project Member info. If you are a Faculty member indicate N/A in the field below.	Kobayashi, Audrey; Masuda, Jeffrey
2.3	Abstract (300-500 words) See Info tab for further details.	This thesis will interrogate the role of toponymy (or place naming) within participatory urban planning in Vancouver, Canada's Downtown Eastside (DTES) to reveal the ways in which toponyms act as a technique for promoting particular spatial understandings via the wider discursive technology of community-based planning processes. I will do this by conducting a retrospective analysis of the DTES Local Area Planning Process (LAPP) that took place between 2011 and 2014. The DTES is Vancouver's most visibly impoverished community, yet it is both a home and a vital site of services and support to its stigmatized inhabitants. This community is now under threat of displacement through gentrification, and implicated in this process is the Local Area Plan, a document ostensibly created in the interest of residents, yet according to some, fails to adequately protect the most vulnerable. Within the plan a contentious politics of place-naming is apparent, pitting the "Downtown Eastside" as a grassroots claim of past and present low income community activists against multiple toponyms, one of which, "Japantown," represents a pseudo-historical recollection of the neighbourhood's pre-WWII inhabitation by Japanese-Canadians. This discourse is further complicated by the recent expansion of two other toponyms: "Railtown," a creative-class rebranding of former industrial lands; and "Gastown," a heritage-based toponym that has recently been used to describe areas long thought to be the heart of the Downtown Eastside. Project goals will be achieved through the accomplishment of three specific research objectives. My first objective (Objective 1) is to develop a historical record of toponyms through a document analysis of newspaper articles and planning/policy documents (both historic and current) that refer to the community, paying particular attention to the use of toponyms and spatial identifiers during the procurement process. My second

		objective (Objective 2) is to illuminate the use and impact of toponyms within participatory planning through a discourse analysis of a recently completed community plan, considering how naming acts to promote and reinforce representations of space within planning documents. The third and final objective (Objective 3) is to conduct a purposive interview program to reveal how communicative urban planning processes mediate between contested toponymic understandings to create normative visions of space that provide a vehicle for long-term neighbourhood alteration. Secondary sampling will be conducted via a snowball sample that will be obtained through the first round of interviews (see section 3.11 for a more detailed description of the recruitment process). By proceeding in such a way, I hope to achieve a greater understanding of the ways in which toponyms are representative of a discursive power that operates within yet transcends the procedural and instrumental processes of participatory urban planning, with the ultimate goal of illuminating how neighbourhood transformation might proceed in an equitable manner. Specifically, this thesis will focus on the outcomes of a participatory Local Area Planning Process (LAPP) that took place between 2011 and 2014 in the DTES, and it will contextualize these outcomes by examining historically embedded toponymic discourses as being techniques of power that impacted public views of the community and made this recent planning intervention possible.
2.4	Method (Explain protocols in 1000 words) See Info tab for further details.	My extended ethnographic case study will illuminate the unfolding of toponymic discourses in the Downtown Eastside over time while tracing how such discourses have been captured within media, participatory planning and policy interventions in the present. I will create a detailed interview guide that will place emphasis on the motivations behind recent planning policies in relation to the usage of toponyms in the DTES, querying individuals about the contradictions between toponymic strategies of the past and those used in the Local Area Plan to reveal how the neighbourhood was discursively framed within the planning process. I will conduct approximately 10-15 interviews with individuals who were directly involved with the creation of (and provided input to) the DTES Local Area Plan, namely city planners and LAPP committee members (see section 3.11 for a more detailed description of the recruitment process). These key informants will be purposively sampled for three reasons. First, members of these two groups (planners and committee members) had the most power to influence the direction and outcomes of the planning process. Second, interviews with city planners are essential to gain an understanding of the official city perspective on the creation of the plan and its use of particular namings. Third, conducting interviews with members of the LAPP committee will ensure that a diverse cross-section of individuals representing a variety of stakeholder interests

		in the community (for example, low income residents, representatives of social organizations, businesspeople, and members of artistic and cultural groups) are represented in my sample. Interviews will be semi-structured and consist of open-ended questions, leaving me with the flexibility to insert prompts and follow-up on leads during the course of the interview to elicit thick descriptions of local circumstances from my participants. This will also allow for similar types of information to be gathered from a variety of informants, while making the most efficient use of both mine and my respondents' time. These interviews will be digitally recorded with the full knowledge of the participants, then transcribed and subsequently coded for analysis. Interview outcomes will them be combined with the results of the document analysis to reveal new insights into the discursive construction of the community over time and in the present day. Interviews will take place primarily at the Vancouver Japanese Language School (487 Alexander St.), where I have access to a quiet and private space that is almost completely free of interruptions. However, if this location is inconvenient or uncomfortable for participants, I will meet them at a site of their own choosing. Rather than taking notes during the interview, it will be recorded using an Olympus digital recorder and a high quality external microphone to ensure that dialogue is clear and intelligible for accurate transcription. Furthermore, this will allow me to focus my attention solely on the interview without concerning myself with missing any important details in the dialogue, and it will also provide an opportunity for me to probe themes while allowing for informal conversation to emerge. I will also take notes directly after the interview concludes (while maintaining the privacy and confidentiality of participants) to record ancillary information that may be of use to the study or the subsequent interview transcription, including facial expressions, body language, power relationships, intervening or distracting events, and general impressions of candidness and honesty, including an evaluation of my own personal influence on the setting of the interview. I will also record my reflections of the research process, including any relevant insights into methodological process that might be of use to other researchers intending to undertake similar work.
2.5	Conflict of Interest (COI)	NO
2.6	If YES above, please explain	
2.7	Funding	Funding Received
2.8	Sponsor agency	SSHRC
2.9	Location - Will the data be collected on Queen's campus or affiliated hospitals? (Web-based surveys are considered on campus)	NO

2.10	If NO above, please describe. (NOTE: all off-campus activities require OCASP clearance (See https://webapp.queensu.ca/safety/ocasp).	The data for this research will be collected in Vancouver, British Columbia, in the Downtown Eastside neighbourhood. Interviews will take place primarily at the Vancouver Japanese Language School (487 Alexander St.). However, if this location is inconvenient or uncomfortable for participants, I will meet them at a site of their own choosing. Alternate locations will be assessed for their safety and suitability so as not to put myself or my participants at potential risk.
2.11	Are other approvals or permissions required? e.g. Off Campus Activity Safety Policy (OCASP), School Board Approval, Community or Institutional Approval.	YES
2.12	If YES, above, please identify and describe the necessary authorizations.	This research will be undertaken according to the protocols of the Off Campus Activity Safety Policy (OCASP). Please see the approved low-risk Emergency Support Program application associated with this research project. (Trevor Wideman, Net ID: 14tjw, ID#: 10161140)
2.13	If you will be using archived data from a previous research project, please describe the data source and identify the custodian of the database (if known).	

3. 3. Recruitment

#	Question	Answer
3.1	Number of participants	10-15
3.2	Sources of Participants - Check all that apply	Businesses/Industries/Professions|Other
3.3	If OTHER above, please describe. If you selected SCHOOLS above, please identify the School Board(s) from whom permission will be sought.	This research involves recruiting individuals who were directly involved with the Local Area Planning Process. While some of these individuals will be City Planners (professionals working for the City of Vancouver), the main Local Area Planning Committee was comprised of a variety of community stakeholders, including representatives of social agencies, low income residents, health services, cultural organizations, business improvement associations, and more. The "other" described above refers to members of this committee or its various subcommittees, all of whom come from a variety of stakeholder groups in the Downtown Eastside.
3.4	Description of Study Participants	This research will be conducted with approximately 10-15 individuals identified as having been involved in the creation of the DTES LAP (membership in which is a matter of public record) including city planners, community organizers, businesspeople, and cultural representatives. Eligibility will be limited to those who are of adult age who attended meetings and participated on committees during the LAP process. Participants will be identified and recruited using both purposive and snowball sampling techniques. Participation will be fully voluntary and can be terminated by the participant at any time.
3.5	Will vulnerable population(s) be recruited? (See	YES

	info (i) tab for description).	
3.6	If YES above, please describe the population and any special measures that will be needed to address their vulnerable status	While no specific effort is being undertaken to recruit members of vulnerable populations, it is well-recognized that the Downtown Eastside is home to many low income and stigmatized individuals, many of which deal with mental health issues. Furthermore, the neighbourhood also contains the largest urban Aboriginal population in Vancouver. As individuals representing these particular groups were present on the Local Area Planning Committee, they will be included in this study. However, the low income and aboriginal individuals that participated on the LAPP committee were also among the most vocal and articulate participants in the process, an observation that challenges their vulnerable status and recognizes them as powerful. Though I recognize that Aboriginal peoples will be included in my study, I do not I recognize that my institutional status may create an imbalance in both real and perceived power relationships with participants in the study. To address this imbalance, I will attempt to conduct research non-hierarchically, meeting people in a neutral venue, addressing participants by their first names, and drawing attention away from my institutional affiliation to lend credence to the expertise of my participants lived experience. Furthermore, accessibility and safety will be considered when selecting a space for interviews/meetings. In the unlikely event that participants need to extend the interview over multiple sessions due to time, mobility, or health constraints, this option will be given. A list of local resources that can offer emotional and/or psychological support to participants has been created as a preventive measure in case adverse effects arise from participation in this research at a later date. However, it is highly unlikely that such an event will occur, as participation in this research project is low-risk.
3.7	Will Aboriginal peoples in Canada be recruited or Aboriginal communities studied?	YES
3.8	If YES above - Has band approval been obtained?	NO
3.9	Will the findings be reviewed by an Aboriginal community before dissemination?	NO
3.10	If NO to 3.8 and/or 3.9, please explain	Though I recognize that Aboriginal peoples will be included in my study, I do not intend to recruit Aboriginal peoples exclusively. In accordance with section 9.2.7 of TCPCS 2, the portion of the research involving Aboriginal peoples is "incidental rather than scheduled," therefore community engagement is not required, and I have answered "no" to section 3.7.
3.11	Describe how and by whom potential participants will be recruited.	I will recruit approximately 10-15 persons directly involved in the creation of the Local Area Plan for the ethnographic portion of the research being proposed. A recruitment letter and information sheet will be emailed to potential participants identified through the purposive

sample. The email addresses of planners involved with the LAPP are publicly available on the City of Vancouver's website, which also lists the names and organizational affiliations of committee members. If members email addresses are unavailable from the city, they will be procured from the organization that they represented on the LAPP.

The recruitment letter will also be used in generating my snowball sample, as I will either 1) ask my initial participants to forward it to individuals who might be interested in participating, or 2) send the letter myself to individuals who the original participants have identified as possible interviewees. In the case that a potential participant does not have email (as is the case with some transient low income residents of the Downtown Eastside) I will either 1) send the recruitment letter via regular mail, or 2) leave a copy of the recruitment letter for the participant at the front desk of the Carnegie Community Centre (a popular and important means of communication in the DTES). However, these activities will be dependent upon the approval of this ethics protocol. Furthermore, informed consent will be required of potential participants, and will be confirmed by their signature. In the unlikely event that a person cannot provide a signature due to injury or disability, verbal confirmation will be documented with an audio recorder.

3.12	Please describe procedures should someone wish to withdraw?	In the letter of informed consent, participants will be informed that they are not obligated to participate in this research, and they may decline to do so at the outset or terminate their involvement with the study at any time. All data collected up until the time they choose to withdraw will be destroyed. They will also be informed that they do not have to answer any questions they do not feel comfortable with. Furthermore, they will be assured that if they decline to participate in the study or answer questions, they will not face any negative consequences.
3.13	If remuneration or compensation will be offered, please provide the details. Indicate N/A if not applicable.	N/A

4. 4. Risk Assessment

#	Question	Answer
4.1	Will this study involve any of the following (Check all that apply)	Psychological or emotional risk|Economic risk|Social risk
4.2	Please describe risks selected from above or any other risks. Indicate N/A if not applicable.	There are no immediate economic, social, psychological, and/or emotional risks involved in partaking in this study. However, this case study deals with subject matter that may be potentially sensitive to some participants due to contentious role that planning process and community naming have played the ongoing transformation of the Downtown Eastside neighbourhood. While the questions asked are designed to avoid triggering traumatic

#	Question	Answer
		memories, these may emerge as a result of the semi-structured nature of the interview process. Furthermore, city planners may feel an economic or social risk in speaking with a researcher regarding their role in planning the DTES, whether it be from stigmatization from co-workers, or from fear of job-related penalties from superiors.
4.3	Please describe your plan to minimize these risks and describe how you will provide support to participants in the context of these risks. Indicate N/A if not applicable.	To reduce the risk of unintentional emotional stress occurring, participants will be made aware of the types of questions that they may need to answer, both in the recruitment letter and in the declaration of informed consent. Furthermore, a list of local resources that can offer emotional and/or psychological support to participants has been created as a preventive measure in the unlikely event that adverse effects arise from participation in this research at a later date. To reduce economic and social risks, participants will be assured of their anonymity throughout the process, and all identifiers will be removed from dissemination materials (unless participants request otherwise, see Section 6.2). The recruitment materials will also be explicit about the role that participants will play in the research, allowing them to decline participation at the outset. In addition, if the economic and social risks are deemed too great at any point in the participation, the interviewee may withdraw from the study.

5. 5. Benefits

#	Question	Answer
5.1	Please describe the potential benefits of the research to the participants in your project, the research community and/or to society at large	This study will offer participants an opportunity to reflect on their personal involvement with a highly complex urban planning process, allowing them to candidly discuss and record their experiences in a judgment-free setting. Sharing their story with a third party who was not involved in the planning exercise may allow them to be more open about their involvement without fear of reprisal from the city or from other members of the community. As there is very little empirical literature describing how naming is implicated in planning process, or on how involvement with city planning process *affects those involved*, filling this research gap makes a valuable contribution to people and organizations looking to have an influence on how cities plan and develop neighbourhoods.

6. 6. Privacy and Confidentiality

#	Question	Answer
6.1	Please check all that apply to your project for: (1) data collection, (2) data processing and (3) data storage. For definitions of each category, click the Info (i) tab.	De-identified/coded information (i.e., remove direct identifiers using code names or numbers)

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6.2	Based on 6.1, explain if and how you intend to protect the privacy of your participants. If not, why not?	Because government employees or members of particular organizations may feel uncomfortable about participating due to their organizational roles, the personal identities of participants will be kept confidential throughout the proposed research. Throughout the analysis process, participant data will be recognized through the use of pseudonyms, and all interview transcripts and notes will be identified with this pseudonym and not with the participant's real name. Furthermore, all research findings will be reported and disseminated using these pseudonyms to ensure ongoing confidentiality. I will maintain a private database with participant contact details that will be cross-referenced with pseudonyms. It is possible that due to the public nature of the LAPP, some participants might wish to be identified and acknowledged as research participants by name. If this is the case, then in accordance with TCPS2 section 5.1, I will negotiate consent with the participant to determine the extent of their identification in the project. However, individuals will not be identified if it affects the anonymity of participants who wish their identities to be kept private.
6.3	Will information about the participants be obtained from sources other than the participants themselves?	YES
6.4	Will the information on individual participants be disclosed to others? (Disclosure could be during data acquisition, data reduction or publication).	NO
6.5	If you answered YES to 6.3 or 6.4, please explain	In reference to 6.3, the individuals being interviewed are known to have been involved in the Local Area Planning Process. These participants are being selected due to their status as planners or as members of the LAPP committee. Since participation in the planning process is a matter of public record, cursory information on the participants and their roles will be known to myself at the time of interview, and will be gleaned from planning and process documents that are easily available to the public on the City of Vancouver's website. However, the interviews will allow me to go beyond this very surface-level identification to reveal people's actual lived experiences with naming and planning.
6.6	Will the participants be made aware of this disclosure?	N/A
6.7	Will the confidentiality of the participant's identity be protected to the extent possible?	YES
6.8	If you answered No above, please explain	
6.9	Could publication of the research allow participants to be identified?	YES
6.10	If you answered YES above, please explain	Since the Downtown Eastside Local Area Planning Process (LAPP) was a public consultation, memberships in the various committees and participation in meetings is a matter of public record. Furthermore, participants in the LAPP interacted with each other on a semi-weekly basis

		throughout the duration of the consultation. Therefore, it is possible that research participants might be able to "guess" who people are by their responses to particular research questions, even if they are not easily identifiable to the general public. However, respondent identities will never be willingly revealed unless specifically requested (See Section 6.2), and individuals will only be identified by pseudonyms. Care will also be taken to ensure that direct quotes cannot be easily attributed to any particular individual.
6.11	Will anyone other than the principal investigator or co-applicants listed on the application have access to the data during collection or processing?	NO
6.12	Please identify who will have access?	
6.13	Will the person identified above (e.g. translator, transcriber, RA, etc.) sign a Confidentiality Agreement?	N/A
6.14	Will the data or aspects of the data be encrypted:	YES
6.15	Provide specific details about security procedures for the data, methods of data transcription as well as plans for the ultimate disposal of records/data.	Research materials, interview transcripts, field notes, contact details, and all other digital data will be under my strict supervision, encrypted, and stored securely in a password-protected folder on my computer and on an external hard drive. This drive will be stored in a secure location under lock and key in my home office, of which I am the only key-holder. My laptop computer is password protected and in the unlikely event that it is stolen, the computer is registered on Apple's iCloud "Find My Mac" service, which allows me to locate, lock, or erase the computer remotely, thereby ensuring that the data does not fall out of my hands. Data will be transcribed, coded, and analyzed on my computer using QSR's NVivo Qualitative Research Software. NVivo provides a secure environment for analysis as it allows for encryption and password protection of all files in one bundled software package. All research data, both digital and paper, will be destroyed within two years of thesis approval to allow for further publication and dissemination of findings. This includes all correspondence with participants, the contact database, transcripts, interview files, and field notes.

7. 7. Informed Consent

#	Question	Answer
7.1	Will participants be given a written Letter of Information (LOI)?	YES
7.2	If you answered NO above, please explain	
7.3	Will participants be asked to sign a written consent form (may be combined with LOI)?	YES
7.4	If you answered NO above, please explain:	
7.5	Does the research project involve deception of the participant?	no deception
7.6	Describe the deception of the participant	

#	Question	Answer
7.7	Describe the debriefing procedure for the participant, if applicable	
7.8	If participants are not in a position to give consent to participate, will written permission be acquired from a person with legal authority?	N/A
7.9	If participants are children or other population unable to legally provide consent, what procedure will be followed?	N/A

8. 8. Checklist

#	Question	Answer
8.1	Copy of the completion certificate for the CORE Course for each participant.	Attached
8.2	Letter of Information	Attached
8.3	Consent Form	Attached
8.4	Questionnaire, sample questions, interview guides, verbal scripts, letter scripts, research stimuli.	Attached
8.5	Copies of your recruitment notices, emails, scripts, advertisement, and/or information sheet as well as any information for participants provided by a sponsor or supportve organization, as may be applicable	N/A
8.6	Confidentiality Letter (for translater, RA's, etc)	N/A
8.7	Debriefing Letter	N/A
8.8	Other support information (e.g., sponsor or supportive organization)	N/A
8.9	If you are a student in the Principal Investigator's role. Did you add your Supervisor's name on the PROJECT TEAM INFO tab?	YES
8.10	If your Department has GREB Unit REB, you have to select Unit level as your affiliation on the PROJECT TEAM INFO tab. Make sure to SAVE this tab. Departments with Unit REB are: Business, Cultural Studies, Education, Gender Studies, Geography, Global Development Studies, Kinesiology and Health Studies, Music, Policy Studies, Political Studies, Psychology, Sociology, Urban and Regional Planning. Did you select Unit REB affiliation on Project Team Info tab?	YES

**PANEL ON
RESEARCH ETHICS**
Navigating the ethics of human research

TCPS 2: CORE

Certificate of Completion

This document certifies that

Trevor Wideman

has completed the Tri-Council Policy Statement:
Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans
Course on Research Ethics (TCPS 2: CORE)

Date of Issue: **20 June, 2014**

APPENDIX C: QUEEN'S UNIVERSITY ETHICS APPROVAL

November 26, 2014

Mr. Trevor Wideman
Undergraduate Student
School of Kinesiology and Health Studies
Queen's University
28 Division Street
Kingston, ON, K7L 3N6

GREB Ref #: GGEO-184-14; Romeo # 6014278
Title: "GGEO-184-14 Urban Planning and Place-Naming in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside"

Dear Mr. Wideman:

The General Research Ethics Board (GREB), by means of a delegated board review, has cleared your proposal entitled **"GGEO-184-14 Urban Planning and Place-Naming in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside"** for ethical compliance with the Tri-Council Guidelines (TCPS) and Queen's ethics policies. In accordance with the Tri-Council Guidelines (article D.1.6) and Senate Terms of Reference (article G), your project has been cleared for one year. At the end of each year, the GREB will ask if your project has been completed and if not, what changes have occurred or will occur in the next year.

You are reminded of your obligation to advise the GREB, with a copy to your unit REB, of any adverse event(s) that occur during this one year period (access this form at https://eservices.queensu.ca/romeo_researcher/ and click Events - GREB Adverse Event Report). An adverse event includes, but is not limited to, a complaint, a change or unexpected event that alters the level of risk for the researcher or participants or situation that requires a substantial change in approach to a participant(s). You are also advised that all adverse events must be reported to the GREB within 48 hours.

You are also reminded that all changes that might affect human participants must be cleared by the GREB. For example you must report changes to the level of risk, applicant characteristics, and implementation of new procedures. To make an amendment, access the application at https://eservices.queensu.ca/romeo_researcher/ and click Events - GREB Amendment to Approved Study Form. These changes will automatically be sent to the Ethics Coordinator, Gail Irving, at the Office of Research Services or irvingg@queensu.ca for further review and clearance by the GREB or GREB Chair.

On behalf of the General Research Ethics Board, I wish you continued success in your research.

Yours sincerely,

Joan Stevenson, Ph.D.
Chair
General Research Ethics Board

c: Dr. Audrey Kobayashi and Dr. Jeffrey Masuda, Supervisors
        Dr. Joyce Davidson, Chair, Unit REB
        Ms. Joan Knox, Dept. Admin.

APPENDIX D - EXAMPLE ARCHIVES RETRIEVAL SPREADSHEET

Example spreadsheet. One of ten pages containing over 400 records with descriptive information on archival documentation, including search terms, date of creation, general descriptions of contents and topics, document creator(s), and retrieval/reference information.

Title	Type	Date	Reference	Box	Description			
[Miscellaneous newspapers]	Text	197-		Box: 623-D-2 folder 2	Various Community Newspapers from the 1970's			
[Sectional map of portion of downtown and eastside Vancouver]	Map	1929	AM1594-: MAP 427		Map shows city streets and blocks from Commercial to Kaslo and Yale...	TW-NU		
B.C. Housing Foundation	Text	1984		Box: 717-A-4 folder 3	housing proposal for the SW corner of Alexander and Princess			
Carnegie Building	Text	1976-1977		Box: 103-G-4 folder 2	minutes of the Carnegie Planning Advisory Committee, etc...			
Civic grants files	Text	1967-1986			Social Planning: allocation of social, cultural, recreational, & other grants			
Community seek out survey : Vancouver 1978	Text	1978	PUB-: PD 2343		12 p. : map, graph: DTES Resident's Assn.	TW	TW	TW
Council meetings held January 1977	Text	1977			Submissions from Downtown Eastside Residents' Association, etc.			
Development permit files	Text	1971-1989	COV-S178		Series: Social Planning Dept.: Development Permits etc.			
Downtown East Side	Text	1971	PUB-: PD 899		34 p. : plan, tables: Community Development Department	TW	TW	TW
Downtown east side : a preliminary study	Text	1965	PUB-: PD 115		50 p. : maps, ill., charts	TW	TW	TW
Downtown Eastside - planning	Text	1973-1975		Box: 103-E-3 folder 8	Vancouver (B.C.), Social Planning Department	TW	TW	TW
Downtown Eastside community monitoring report : Chinatown, Downtown Eastside, Gastown, Strathcona, Victory Square	Text	2002	PUB-: PD 3036		42 p. : ill., maps: Central Area Planning			
Downtown Eastside community monitoring report : includes Chinatown, Gastown, Strathcona, and Victory Square	Text	1996-2001	PUB-: PD 2520		Multiple items: 1996-2001			
Downtown Eastside newsletter	Text	1976	PUB-: PD 2381		4 page newsletter			
Downtown Eastside Oppenheimer public information meeting	Text	1980	PUB-: PD 2280		1 leaf (folded) : maps			
Downtown Eastside: Planning	Text	1980		Box: 941-E-4 folder 5	Vancouver (B.C.), Economic Development Office	SM	SM	SM
Downtown street scenes photographs	Photo	1974	COV-S587		349 Photos: Series consists of photographs of downtown, Gastown, etc.			
Downtown-Eastside Oppenheimer official development plan schedule A	Text	1980	PUB-: PD 2286		"	SM	SM	SM
Downtown-Eastside/Oppenheimer design guidelines	Text	1982	PUB-: PD 1835		30 p. : plans, ill.: Adopted by City Council 1982.			
Downtown-Eastside/Oppenheimer policy plan	Text	1981	PUB-: PD 1371		63 p. : ill., plans: Planning Department	SM	SM	SM
Downtown-Eastside/Oppenheimer policy plan	Text	1982	PUB-: PD 1779		73 p.: Planning Department	SM	SM	SM
Draft housing plan : Downtown Eastside, Chinatown, Gastown, Strathcona	Text	1998	PUB-: PD 2695		Published by The Housing Centre			
Grandview Woodland	Text	1968-1991		Box: 623-C-7 folder 11and 13	File includes records pertaining to Adanac Co-op and Ray-Cam Co-op, MORE			
Help in the Downtown Eastside	Text	1992-2000	PUB-: PD 2228		Vancouver (B.C.), Carnegie Centre			
Housing plan issues : Downtown Eastside, Chinatown, Gastown, Strathcona	Text	1997	PUB-: PD 2685		Published by The Housing Centre			
Land use and development : policies and guidelines	Text	1991	PUB-: PD 2091		City planning--Zoning, rezoning and subdivision			
Non-Market Housing lodge and residence files	Text	1972-1992	COV-S166		Admin and operation of the City of Vancouver's social housing facilities			
Planning - Downtown Eastside	Text	1990-1995		Box: 942-F-3 folder 7	Vancouver (B.C.), Office of the City Manager			
Planning - general (Downtown Eastside, Mountain View Cemetery)	Text	1973		Box: 76-B-2 folder 5	Vancouver Park Board. Superintendent			
Planning - housing	Text	1985-1987		Box: 86-A-6 folder 2	Impact of Expo 86 on the downtown eastside community, etc...			
Planning - housing - standards of maintenance	Text	1980-1982		Box: 86-A-6 folder 5	report by Susan Harris of the DERA, Imp. of Building Safety Standards Act			
Property planning and development - downtown/eastside Strathcona master plan	Text	1986-1987		Box: 745-B-1 reel 22	Vancouver Park Board			
Property planning and development- Downtown Eastside master plan	File	1988-1989		Box: 722-F-1 folder 3	Vancouver Park Board			
Property planning and development- Downtown Eastside master plan	Text	1988		Box: 722-G-4 folder 16	Vancouver Park Board			
Public amenity photographs	Photo	?	COV-S544		Series: Social Planning Dept.: Can be viewed online			
Reports for public discussion	Text	1998	PUB-: PD 2609		Downtown Eastside - building a common future, etc.	TW	TW	TW
Schedule A : Downtown-Eastside/Oppenheimer official development plan	Text	1980	PUB-: PD 2016		28 p. : plans. Draft plan.	SM	SM	SM
Schedule A : Downtown-Eastside/Oppenheimer official development plan	Text	1981	PUB-: PD 674		[32] p. : plans, ill.: Planning Department	SM	SM	SM
Side by side : an introduction to the Downtown Eastside Revitalization Program	Text	2000	PUB-: PD 2761		Publisher: Vancouver (B.C.), Corporate Communications	SM	SM	SM
Social housing policy files	Text	1975-1985	COV-S570		Social Planning: relating to planning activities for low income housing			
Social Planning - Downtown Eastside Development Plan	Text			Box: 92-F-6 folder 5	Vancouver (B.C.), Permits and Licenses Department			
Social Planning Department administrative and operational subject files	Text	1964-1996	COV-S571		Series of social planning documents, descriptions of Local Area Planning			
Summary draft housing plan : Downtown Eastside, Chinatown, Gastown, Strathcona	Text	1998	PUB-: PD 2684		Published by The Housing Centre			
The Downtown-Eastside Oppenheimer policy plan	Text	1980	PUB-: PD 2285		Downtown-eastside/Oppenheimer official development plan schedule A	SM	SM	SM
Victory Square concept plan : draft	Text	1995 & 1998	PUB-: PD 2383		2 reports			

APPENDIX E - EXAMPLE NEWSPAPER RETRIEVAL SPREADSHEET

Search Term	Reference Info	File Name	Date Created	Notes
01 Downtown Eastside	3829 Total Results (Province and Sun)			
	The Vancouver Sun, May 26, 2007, "downtown eastside shopping spree; Did the provincial government overpay? Defenders of the deals just blame a hot market", p.B1	01-05-001-2007.pdf	05-26-2007	Article complaining about government overspending in the DTES. The strange thing is that some of the hotels they are complaining about are on Granville and Richards Streets?
	The Vancouver Sun, Dec. 15, 2007, "Taming Vancouver's eastern 'war zone'; As the downtown club scene loses live music venues, Skid Road bars take on a hipper edge", p.B1	01-05-002-2007.pdf	12-15-2007	About the Astoria Hotel and its gradual transformation by incoming hipsters looking for "edgy" spots to hang out.
	The Vancouver Sun, May 3, 2008, "Common vision; Businessmen, activists join forces to help developers find solutions for Downtown Eastside" p.B1	01-05-003-2008.pdf	05-03-2008	In 2008, Milton Wong, Michael Clague, and Michael Geller set about championing a new approach for the DTES that got businesspeople and activists talking in these little "planning exercises" - "unique mechanisms [...] are needed because the Downtown Eastside, the traditional inner-city home for more than a century to the city's poorest residents, is facing its most severe development pressures ever."
	The Province, June 26, 2008, "Downtown Eastside offers up its ghosts" p.C3	01-05-004-2008.pdf	06-26-2008	This article mentions the former Japanese Canadian community without saying "Japantown"
	The Vancouver Sun, Nov. 18, 2008, "From commercial hub to heart of the Downtown Eastside; Home to some of Vancouver's coolest bars, a stone's throw away are junkies, crackheads" p.H8	01-05-005-2008.pdf	11-18-2008	An article on the history of Carrall Street. Really good info here talking about its importance. "It was the first street surveyed for the Granville townsite in 1870, the place where Gassy Jack Deighton built his infamous saloon. For much of Vancouver's history it was a commercial hub, the connection between Gastown, the Hastings Street shopping area and Chinatown." talks about the Native presence in the area and uses for Carrall.
	The Province, Feb. 3, 2009, "Opposing ideas battle it out on the streets; Does the neighbourhood need its own community plan?" p.A8	01-05-006-2009.pdf	02-03-2009	Talking about the need for a community plan because of increased development pressures. Jon Stovell is quoted as saying that everybody gets along in Gastown, all incomes - then talks about all the high end businesses.
	The Province, Sep. 28. 2009, "Local residents map scary, favourite areas; Study to fight gentrification" p.A17	01-05-007-2009.pdf	09-28-2009	Regarding a CCAP exercise that got residents to map their faourtie and scary places in the neighbourhood (interesting how this was happening BEFORE an official planning process happened - but because it wasn't facilitated by planners, the results are irrelevant)
	The Province, Oct. 5, 2009, "Winds of change come to Hastings; Street scene now 'breezy' thanks to city clampdown and construction, says store owner " p. A8	01-05-008-2009.pdf	10-05-2009	This article mentions "Japantown" in the context of city planning and plans for the DTES.
	The Province, Dec.1, 2009, "Change must be led by the people; Government alone can't solve the Eastside's problems, says neighbourhood champion Milton Wong" p.A12	01-05-009-2009.pdf	12-01-2009	Championing a more democratic way forward for the DTES - saying the area is everyone's responsibility - the Building Community Society is really the driving force behind all this new talk, and it's led by powerful politicians and developers! What does this mean? Now planning is being talked about in earnest - and we know that planning is a tool of neoliberalization!

Summary of key toponymic framing words from newspaper headlines: 1987-2014

Toponym	1987-1991	1992-1996	1997-2001	2002-2006	2007-2011	2012-2014
Downtown Eastside	welfare, arrests, evictions, skid road, development, neighbourhood	downtrodden, revitalization, ghost town, low-income, skid road, gentrification	skid road, poorest postal code, drugs, despair, worst block in vancouver, angry, containment, antagonism, hope, creative, reform, changes	Woodward's, social problems, historical significance, artificial slum, poorest postal code, city's most disadvantaged, new life, skid road, revival, hope, pioneers	hot market, war zone, skid road, businessmen, activists, solutions, "hipper edge," "coolest bars," junkies, crackheads, battle, gentrification, construction, change	higher priced, lack of diversity, managing growth, collaborative, planning, investment, poor, common ground, practical, renew, revitalize, normalize, conflicts, mental illness, social housing, addictions, ghetto, cooperation, coordination
Gastown	merchants, business, police, deaths, heritage	ugly, decay, condo, gentrification, modern, evolution	upscale, businessmen, middle-class, on guard, frustrated, merchants, revival, grit	heritage, restoration, upscale, challenges, "getting there"	design, collaborative, interesting, talent, original	history, hope, revival, vibrant, heritage, merchants, patrols, Vancouverism
Japantown	encounter, creative, community, injustice	anger, food, celebration, multiculturalism	politics, forgiveness, squalor, history, accomplishments	interned, Powell Street, new vision	heritage, "cracktown," play, vibrancy, improve, historic, changing communities, renewed, foodies	tastebuds, demolition, internment, lost neighbourhood, historic

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APPENDIX F: NUMERIC IDENTIFIERS AND PARTICIPANT GROUP AFFILIATIONS

Number	Affiliation
001	Low income member
002	Business Improvement
003	Japanese Canadian Delegate
004	Low income member
005	Business Improvement
006	Low income member
007	Social Development
008	Neighbourhood Association
009	City planner
010	City planner
011	Japanese Canadian Delegate
012	Social Development
013	Low income member
014	Service Provider

APPENDIX G: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR PARTICIPANTS

Part A - Preliminary materials

Before starting interview:
1) Review the recruitment letter and allow the participant time to go over the Letter of Informed Consent before they sign. Read or paraphrase consent form if participants have difficulty understanding in any way.
2) Set up and test the digital recorder and the microphone.

Convey this information in a colloquial and friendly way to begin the interview:

I want to thank you for taking time out of your schedule to be here for this interview. Your time is valuable and I appreciate your participation. I want to make it absolutely clear that you are under no obligation to be here. You may leave at anytime, you can refuse to answer particular questions, and you don't have to provide a reason if you decide to do so.

I also want to remind you that I'm going to be recording the interview. Since we're going to be discussing a lot of things today, recording the interview allows me to focus my attention on our conversation instead of being distracted by note-taking. Please be assured that your participation will remain confidential, and that you'll be given a different name when I transcribe the interview. You will also be given the opportunity to review the transcript if you want to.

The interview should take about an hour. I have some specific questions, but I also really want to hear from you, in your own words, about the Downtown Eastside Local Area Plan in light of the many changes that are happening in the community. I'd also like to talk about the many different ways that the community is spoken about in the plan, and how the policies that have been implemented will affect the future development of the area. I recognize that when I refer to the "Downtown Eastside," that means a lot of different things to different people. For the purpose of this interview, I am speaking about the area that the city defined as the Downtown Eastside during the planning process, which includes communities like the Downtown Eastside/Oppenheimer District, Strathcona, Gastown, and Chinatown for example. You are welcome at any point to add anything you feel is important for me to know. We'll start with some very general questions about you and your role (as a member of the LAPP committee; as a city planner). We'll then move on to more detailed questions about the plan and the way that policies in the plan will affect the community's built form, social composition, and neighbourhood character over the next 30 years. I'd also like to find out why the DEOD, which since 1982 has been considered by the city to be a cohesive neighbourhood with its own community plan, is now being divided between the various neighbourhoods of Railtown, Japantown, and Strathcona. I would also like to hear your thoughts on why a plan created in consultation with so many stakeholders could cause so much controversy and disagreement. Does this sound okay?

Do you have any questions before we get started? Okay, I'm going to start the recorder now.

Part B - Interview

[start recording]

1) <u>Background</u>

    a) To get started, I'd like to ask you to tell me a little bit about yourself and your role in the Downtown Eastside LAPP.

    b) Can you tell me how the LAPP relates to previous planning in the area?

    For Planners:

        Why was there a need for more planning?

        [probe] Tell me if there was a need for planning in the wake of the Olympics and the expiry of the Vancouver Agreement in 2010.

    c) Tell me about the different boundaries and areas in the Downtown Eastside.

        [probe] For example, the planning process encompasses a number of neighbourhoods like Strathcona, Gastown, and Chinatown that some people might not consider to be a part of the Downtown Eastside.

2) <u>Planning Policies in the LAP</u>

    For Committee Members:

    a) How is your input reflected in the Local Area Plan?

    b) The length of the plan is 30 years. At that time, what will the neighbourhood look like?

    For Planners:

    a) How difficult was it to achieve consensus within the planning process?

    b) How will the city ensure that the LAP's objectives are achieved?

3) <u>Subdividing the community</u>

    For Committee Members:

    a) Has your involvement in this planning process changed the way you think about the neighbourhood at all? And by "the neighbourhood," I'm referring to both people and places in the Downtown Eastside.

        [probe] Why or why not?

b) The LAP contains references to a lot of areas that previous plans did not. For example, the DEOD is part of a "Community Based Development Area," while names like Railtown and Japantown are now being used. Drawing on your experiences with the LAPP, can you comment on why these new labels are being used?

[probe] Are these new names significant?

For Planners:

c) The LAP contains references to a lot of areas that previous plans did not. For example, the DEOD is part of a "Community Based Development Area," while names like Railtown and Japantown are now being used. Drawing on your experiences with the LAPP, can you comment on why these new labels are being used?

a) Do these labels have anything to do with the planning process or the plan itself?

b) What made it important for them to be included in the final plan when these areas already had official names?

[probe] Are these new names significant?

4) <u>Controversy</u>

For Committee Members:

a) As an outside observer, the planning process and the plan itself seemed to cause a lot of controversy. As an insider with a privileged understanding and voice within the process, can you comment on why the plan was so contentious?

[probe] if everyone was able to make their opinion count, why were so few people satisfied?

b) Were there tensions between people representing different neighbourhoods within the process?

For Planners:

a) As an outside observer, the planning process and the plan itself seemed to cause a lot of controversy. As an insider with a privileged understanding of the process, can you comment on why the plan was so contentious?

[probe] if everyone was able to make their opinion count, why were so few people satisfied?

b) Were there tensions between people and interests in the various neighbourhoods within the Downtown Eastside?

c) Why did the planning process encompass all these neighbourhoods instead of giving each neighbourhood their own distinct plan?

5) <u>Participant Understanding of the Downtown Eastside</u>

For Both:

a) Where is the Downtown Eastside?

Part C - Wrap up

This brings us to the end of the prepared questions. Is there anything that you feel we have missed and should talk about regarding the planning process or about changes in the community? Or is there anything you would like to add to the conversation that you think is important for me to know?
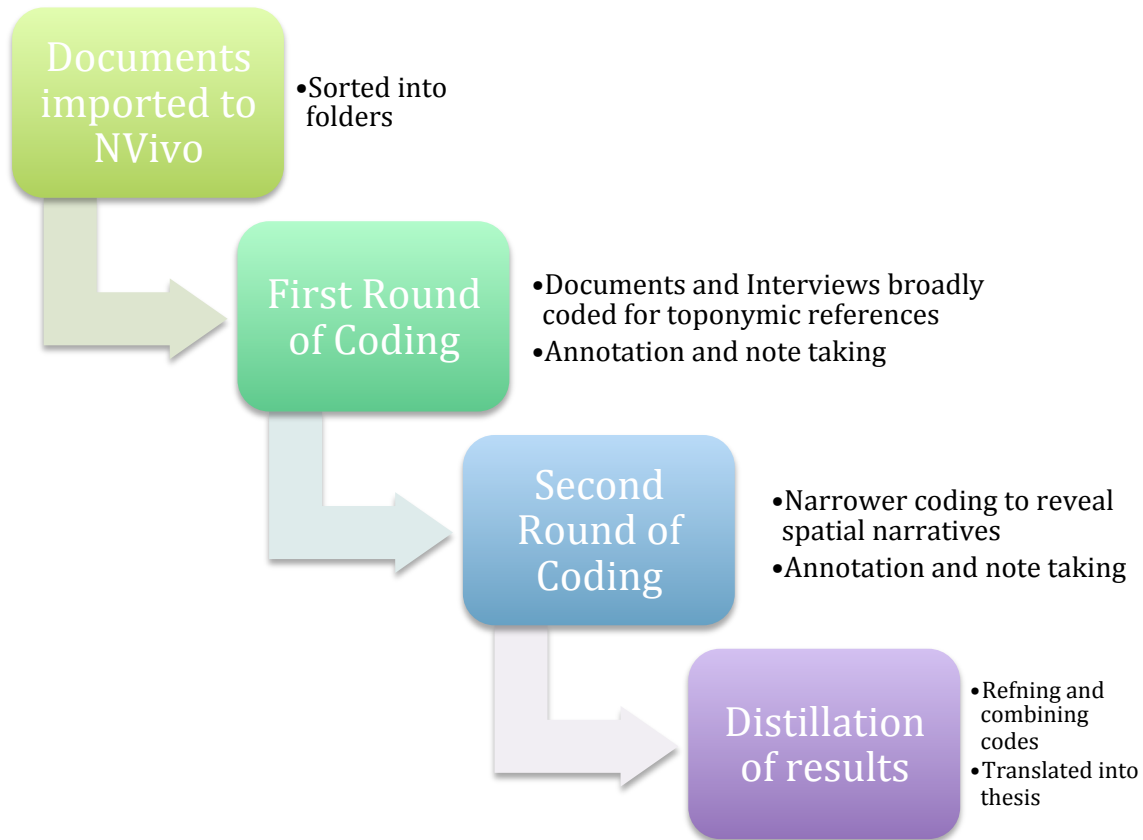
I would like to end by thanking you so very much for sharing your thoughts and insights. This has been an extremely valuable conversation for me and I am very happy we were able to get together and chat.

Thank you

As a token of my appreciation and respect for your time, I'd like to offer you this small honorarium as gift for taking part today (participant will be given the chance to accept the honorarium).

If there are any other questions you have for me regarding the study, or about some of the things that we've talked about today, please contact me at (778) 996-4937 or at trevor.wideman@queensu.ca. That information is also included on the informed consent sheet that I've provided you.

APPENDIX H: OUTLINE OF CODING PROCEDURES

Documents imported to NVivo
•Sorted into folders

First Round of Coding
•Documents and Interviews broadly coded for toponymic references
•Annotation and note taking

Second Round of Coding
•Narrower coding to reveal spatial narratives
•Annotation and note taking

Distillation of results
•Refning and combining codes
•Translated into thesis

There were eight code families that emerged from my interview analysis. Family 1,

Divisions, described the conflicts and divisions that either existed or emerged between

participants and/or the city within the LAPP process. In particular, it demonstrates antagonisms

between various class groupings and neighbourhoods within the DTES planning area, and

reveals how such divisions affected the process and outcomes of the LAPP. Family 2, *LAPP*

Origins, looks at the events and processes that led to the inception of the LAPP, including

previous planning programs, the 2010 Winter Olympic Games, the expiry of the Vancouver

Agreement, and the catalyzing moment that occurred with the instigation of the Historic Area

Heights Review in 2010 (see Chapter 5). Family 3, *Planning and Participation Issues,* highlights

the procedural problems that were identified by participants, including (but not limited to) the

amount of work involved, the top-down nature of the process, governance issues, and concerns that participation was tokenistic, distracting and served to legitimate a wider civic agenda. Family 4, *Positive Effects of the LAPP,* reveals the positive achievements that participants and planners believed came about through the LAPP, primarily in the form of greater conversation and dialogue between participants and the generation of strategic alliances between particular groups working to achieve similar ends. Family 5, *Special Interests Within the LAPP,* looks at how specific agendas (such as Heritage, Business, or Japanese Canadian interests) were communicated through and within the planning process. Family 6, *Toponymic Themes,* looks at how participants understood the various toponymies of the DTES, examines processes of boundarymaking, and looks at how toponyms were seen in relation to each other, politicized, depoliticized, and/or framed as evolutionary and natural. Family 7, *Transformative Processes,* looks at the processes of change that happened during and after the LAPP, including containment, displacement, resistance, and social mixing. Finally, Family 8, *Toponyms,* simply codes the various points where participants used toponyms such as Japantown, DTES, Strathcona, or Gastown (among many others) to discuss the neighbourhood and particular areas within it. By coding in this way, I was able to use NVIVO's *Matrix Coding* function to perform complex queries where I could cross reference particular toponyms with the more specific themes that emerged during the data analysis.

APPENDIX I: QUEEN'S UNIVERSITY ETHICS AMENDMENT APPROVAL

January 30, 2015

Mr. Trevor Wideman
Master's Student
Department of Geography
Queen's University
Kingston, ON, K7L 3N6

Dear Mr. Wideman:

RE: Amendment for your study entitled: **GGEO-184-14 Urban Planning and Place-Naming in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside; ROMEO# 6014278**

Thank you for submitting your amendment requesting the following changes:

1)   To provide participants with an honorarium;

2)   To add the following question to the interview guide: "Where is the Downtown Eastside?";

3)   Revised Letter of Information (v. 2015/01/29);

4)   Revised Interview Guide (v. 2015/01/29).

By this letter you have ethics clearance for these changes.

Good luck with your research.

Sincerely,

Joan Stevenson, Ph.D.
Chair
General Research Ethics Board

c.:   Dr. Audrey Kobayashi and Dr. Jeffrey Masuda, Supervisors