

Innovation Systems Research Network

**The Inner City as Zone of Innovation  
“Precarious Reindustrialization” and the New Geography  
of Talent and Creativity**

**Presentation to the ISRN – MCRI II  
9<sup>th</sup> annual meeting: Vancouver**

**May 3 – 4 2007**

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## Presentation Context:

# **The changing urban condition in the 21<sup>st</sup> century city**

1. New Urban development trajectories: the technology-driven ‘New Economy’ and the future of cities (Graham); the ‘cultural economy of the city’ (Scott) and the rise of the ‘creative class’ (Florida); ‘transnational urbanism’ (Smith); emergence of the ‘knowledge-based’ economy, society and city (Gertler, Morgan)  
Q: how ‘new’ are these trajectories of urban development?
2. Theoretical implications and disjunctures: impacts of change, perceptions of increasing developmental volatility, complexity, interdependency: how robust are the ‘received’ or ‘foundational’ theories of the late 20<sup>th</sup> century? [post-industrialism and the ‘new middle class’ (Bell, Ley, Hamnett); post-modernism (Harvey, Jencks, Soja); post-Fordism (Scott, Barnes, Peck); narratives and discourses of the global city]

## The Changing Urban Condition of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century

### 3. Experimentation and Innovation in Urban Planning and Local/Regional Policy

- Legacy of structural change and the late 20<sup>th</sup> century urban crisis
- Framing of ‘macro-level’ choice/conflict in urban policy values:
- Globalization (‘competitive advantage’: *destabilization*)
- Sustainable development (‘ecological and social values’: *preservation*)
- Notions of the ‘entrepreneurial city’ (Harvey) vs ‘management-regulation’
- ‘New Urbanism’ and ‘neo-traditional’ planning styles (Duany et al)
- Experimentation in urban design, site planning (better ‘place-making’)
- Collaborative urban development approaches (common in the EU)
- Policies and programs in support of the knowledge-based economy
- More radical models: participatory planning, community activism

## Outline of Research Programme

- ❑ Series of articles in *Urban Geography*, *Urban Studies*, *Cities*, *Environment and Planning A*, *Dialogues in Urban & Regional Planning*
- ❑ Special theme issue for *Urban Studies*: comparison of inner city economy
- ❑ [e.g. Evans, Pratt + Foord, London; Indergaard, NY; Leslie, Toronto; Pallares, Barcelona; Gospodini, Athens; Ho, Singapore; Turner, Hanoi]
- ❑ *The New Economy of the Inner City: Restructuring, Regeneration and Dislocation in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Metropolis* (Routledge 2007)
- ❑ Social Dynamics of Innovation and Creativity in the City-Region (Meric Gertler and David Wolfe PIs), partnered with Trevor Barnes
- ❑ Urban Transformation in Canada (SSHRC National Research Cluster)
- ❑ [convergence and divergence in the Canadian urban system]
- ❑ Services, industrial restructuring and urban change in the Asia-Pacific
- ❑ [2005 book for Routledge: *Services Industries and Asia-Pacific Cities: new development trajectories*; P W Daniels, K C Ho, T A Hutton, Eds.]

## Focus of Research on Inner City – Metropolitan Core

### Research on new / reconstructed production territories in the inner city

Saliency of the metropolitan core as zone of experimentation, creativity and innovation  
(20-30 years following collapse of Fordist manufacturing and labour)

Key roles for the inner city in the 21<sup>st</sup> century economy:

- cultural economy and creative industries (Clerkenwell [Evans and Foord], 'neo-Bohemia' in Chicago (Lloyd))
- exemplars of the 'New Economy': Multimedia Gulch (San Francisco), 'Silicon Alley' in Manhattan (Indergaard),
- characteristic 'institutional thickness': universities, art schools, NGOs and CBOs
- examples of 'sticky labour markets' (Markusen)
- linkages between production and consumption (amenity-seeking firms)-
- transnational cities and role as sites of inter-cultural fusion, production, transmission
- examples of services-production interface across sectors and industries

- **Why “precarious” reindustrialization in the inner city?**

1. effects of ‘abbreviated restructuring’ episodes since early 1990s, dislocative force of the ‘next big thing’
2. increasing competition in design services and product lines: higher quality from low-cost producers ( e.g. fashions; note also example of out-sourcing of drawing for video game producers)
3. localized factors including property markets: revalorization of inner city property markets (London, New York, SF and Vancouver)
4. influence of up-scale housing a particular issue
5. local labour sub-markets may be ‘sticky’ but young workers may have problems accessing housing ( = labour stability issues)

## ISRN – MCRI II : 2007

- Program of survey work : cities and sites 1997-2006
- **London: Clerkenwell, Hoxton-Shoreditch, Bermondsey**
- **Florence: San Spirito Artisanal District, Oltrarno**
- **Singapore: Telok Ayer (Chinatown) and Far East Square**
- **San Francisco: South Park – SOMA**
- **Vancouver: Yaletown, Victory Square False Flats**
- **[graduate student thesis research on Liberty Village (Toronto),**
- **Belltown (Seattle), Suzhou Creek (Shanghai)]**

## ISRN – MCRI II : 2007

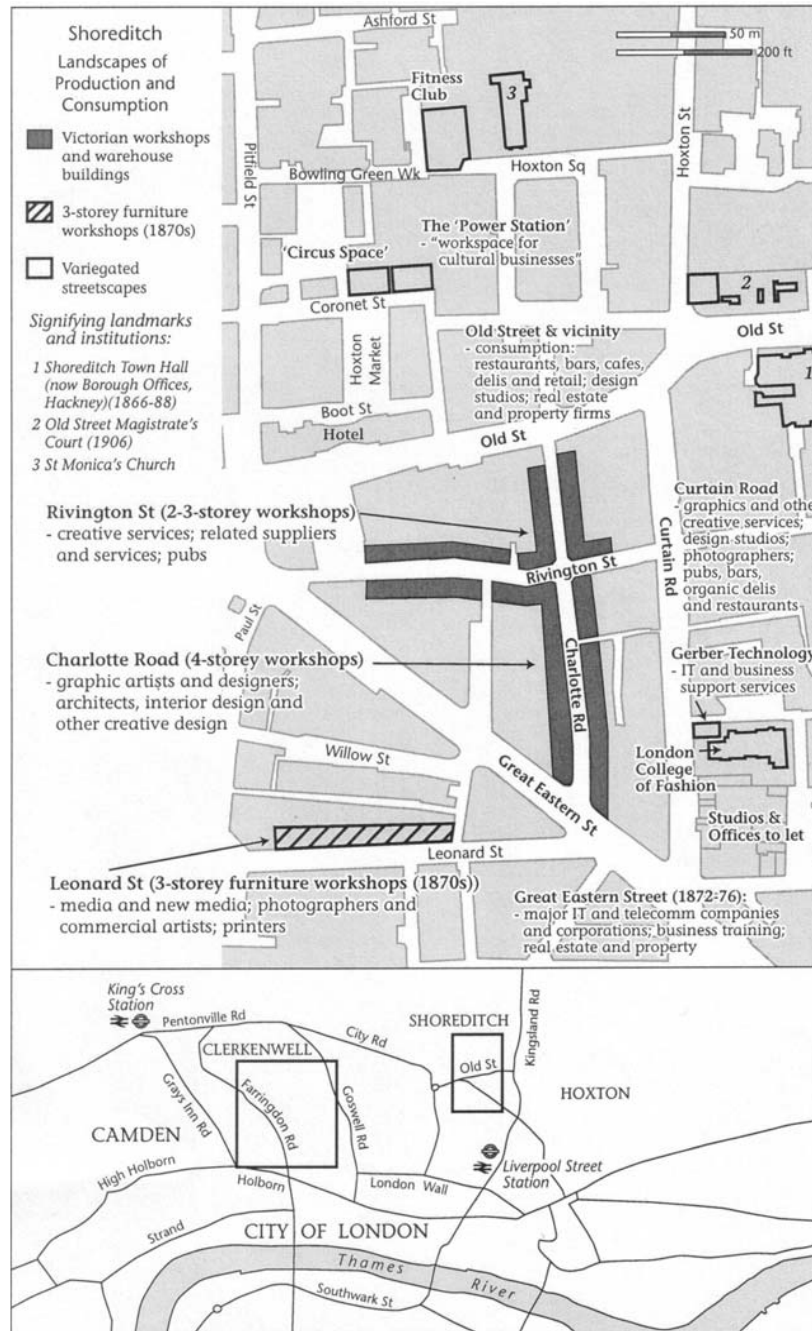
- London: production regimes in the inner city
  - I. Pre-Fordist 'relics' (engravers, enamellers, musical instrument makers, book binders)
  - II. Fordist 'residuals' (bakeries, breweries, garment production)
  - III. Dominant Platforms of Post-Fordist industries
    - **A. Intermediate services: banking, finance, producer services**  
**(Canary Wharf, 'inner edge cities' e.g. Paddington basin, LT nodes)**
    - **B. Cultural economy of creative industries: graphic design, film and video production, fashion + industrial design**  
**(City Fringe districts, Soho, Bankside and Bermondsey)**











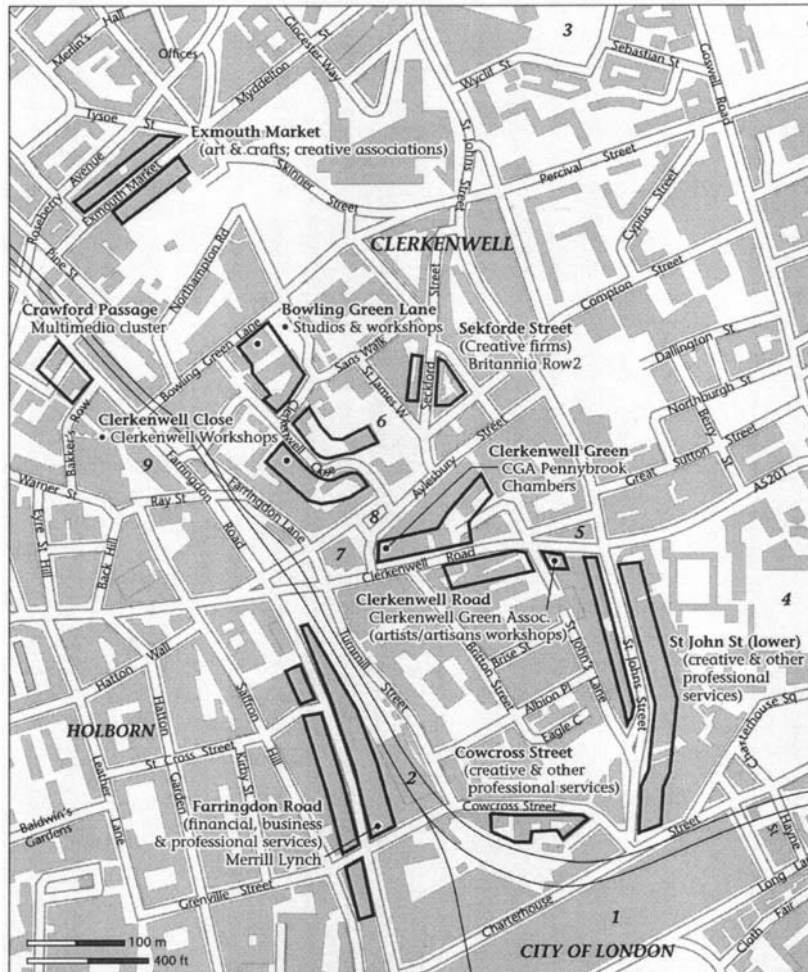
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- Sequences of change in Hoxton-Shoreditch Triangle
- Emergence of world-scale artistic and cultural production in the 1990s
- Expansion of creative services in Shoreditch Triangle
- Mainstream producer services (banking, IT and telecomms) along major arterials  
Great Eastern Street, Old Street
- Displacement effects over last period: 'industrial gentrification' (Pratt)
- Drawn into larger ambit of commercial development in the City Fringe




## ISRN – MCRI II : 2007

- Clerkenwell: multiple production sites in inner city ‘new industrial district’
- Tradition of precision trades in 19<sup>th</sup> century
- Banking and producer services on s. crescent, near City, Smithfield, Farringdon
- Significance of consumption and amenity (Evans + Foord)
- Housing dominates in northern areas
- Shift from ‘artisanal production’ to contemporary, high-value creatives: architects, film and video production, music, consulting, corporate branding and design
- Pressure from high-end housing, revalorization of property market



Clerkenwell  
 Landscapes of Production and Consumption:  
 Principal building types and land use

 Industrial precincts and clusters

*Signifying landmarks and institutions:*

- |  |                                     |
|--|-------------------------------------|
| 1 Smithfield Central Market  | 5 St. John's Church                 |
| 2 Farringdon Station   | 6 St. James' Church                 |
| 3 City University  | 7 Middlesex Sessions House (former) |
| 4 Royal London School of Medicine<br>(St. Bartholomews & The Charterhouse) | 8 Marx Memorial Library             |
|  | 9 The Guardian (newspaper)          |







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- **Bermondsey Street Conservation Area (Southwark)**
- Just s. of London Bridge Stn, Bankside Global cultural space
- Historic leather and spice warehouse district in 19<sup>th</sup> century
- Designation of Conservation Area attracted arts and design activities
- Major sites include Zondra Rhodes textile salon, Kurt Geiger Shoes, The Leathermarket Workspace': example of induced 'churn' of firms
- New high-end residential conversions exerting pressure on firms; significantly more housing and fewer firms in 2006 vis-à-vis 2003



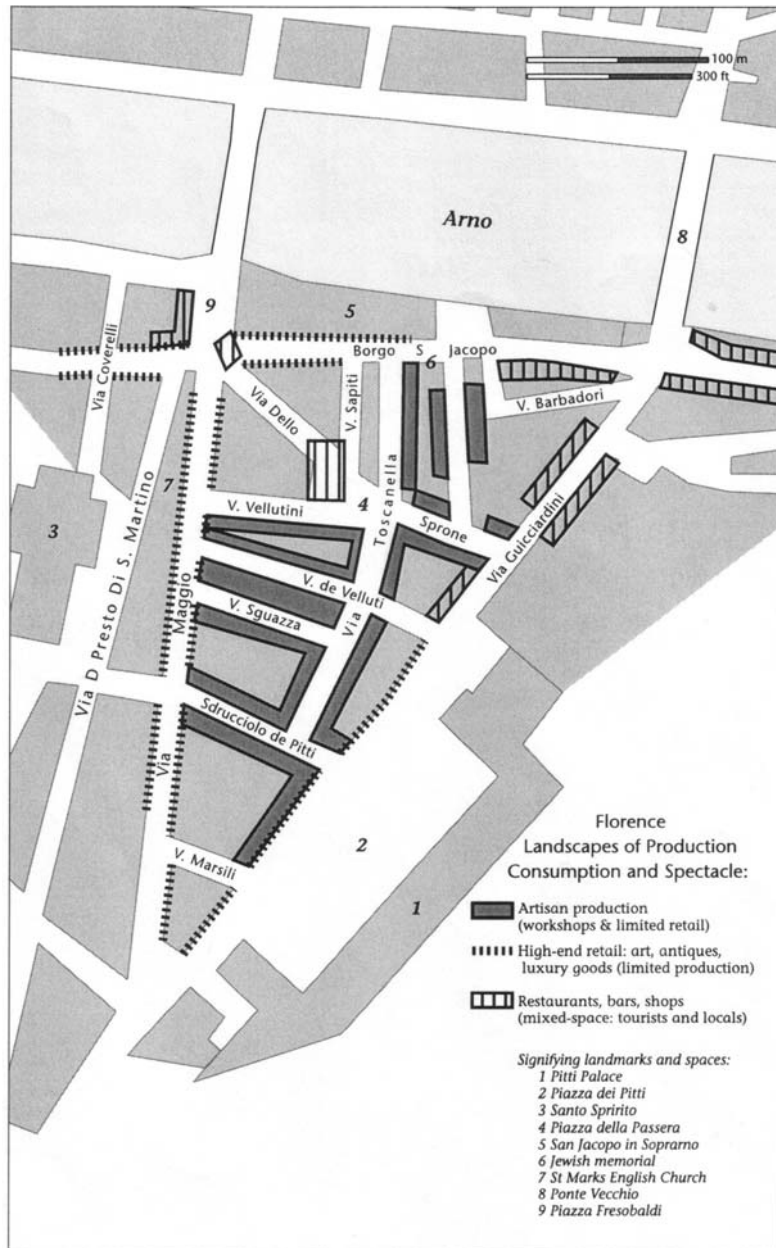




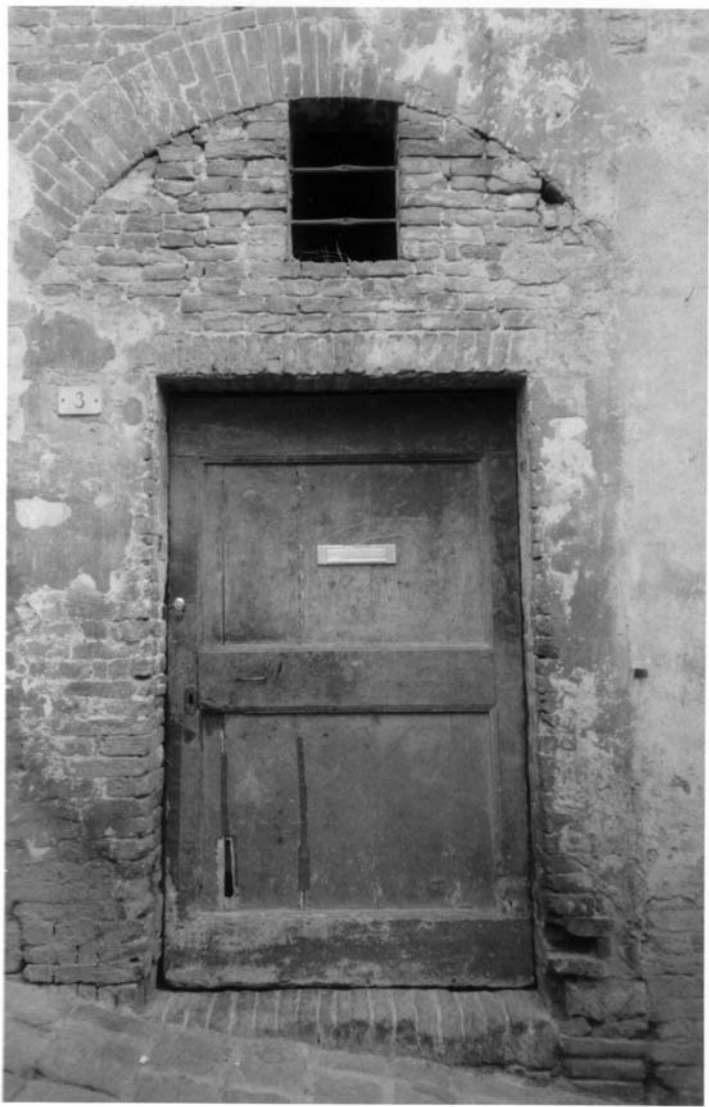
## ISRN – MCRI II : 2007

- Florence: San Spirito Artisanal District, Oltrarno
- Four centuries of artistic and crafts production in workshops
- 21<sup>st</sup> century image of vitality
- Recent emergence as site of tourism and spectacle
- Introduction of English language apprenticeships and training
- Observation of young Chinese apprentices in workshops







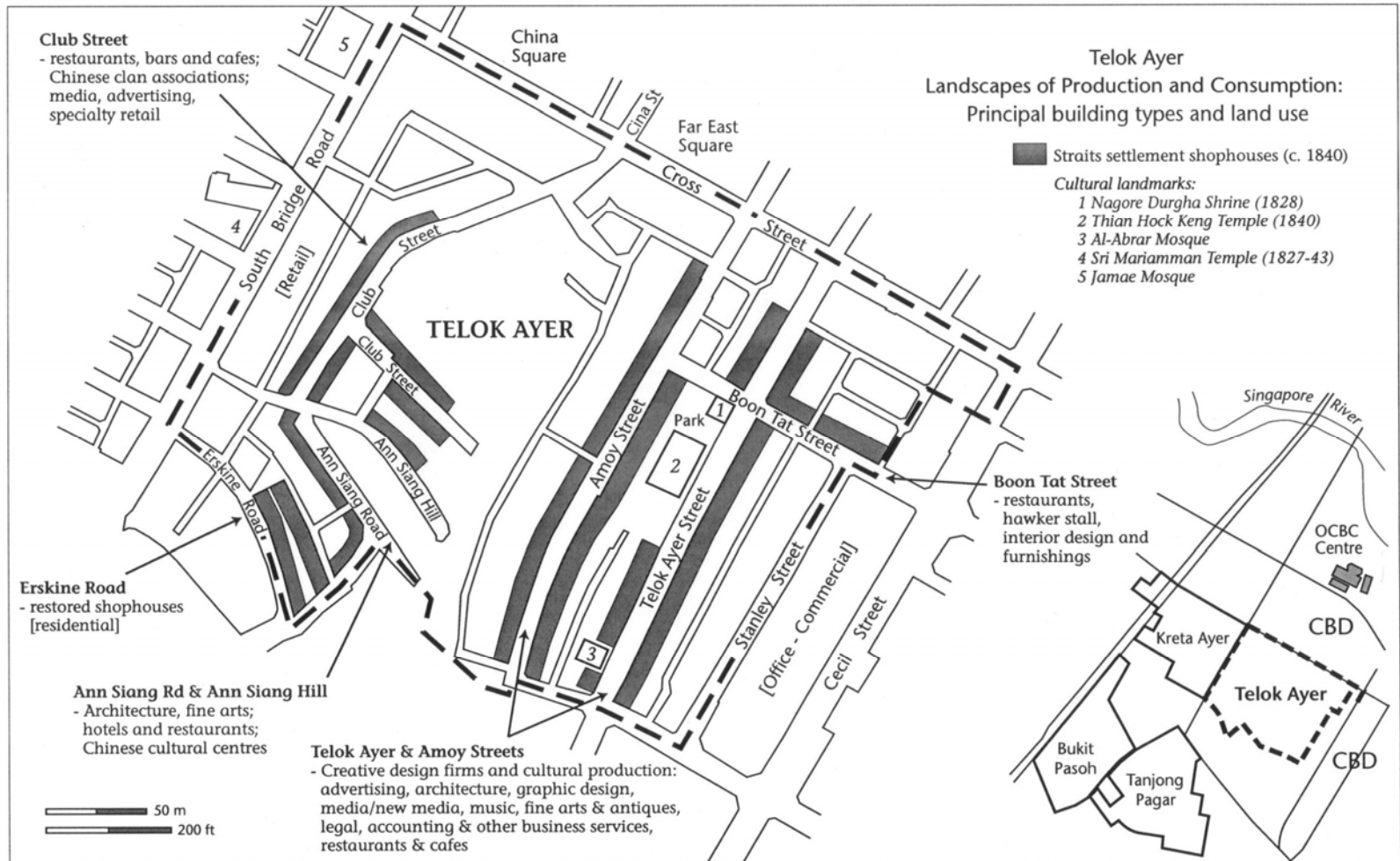




ISRN – MCRI II : 2007

**Singapore's Chinatown: 'global village' of creativity, spectacle, and restructuring**

- **case study of Telok Ayer ('water' 'bay')**
- **Site of spiritual landmarks, traditional shophouses (1840s)**
- **Recreation as site of New Economy and cultural production, 1999-2006**
- **Legible inscriptions of 'abbreviated restructuring' sequences**









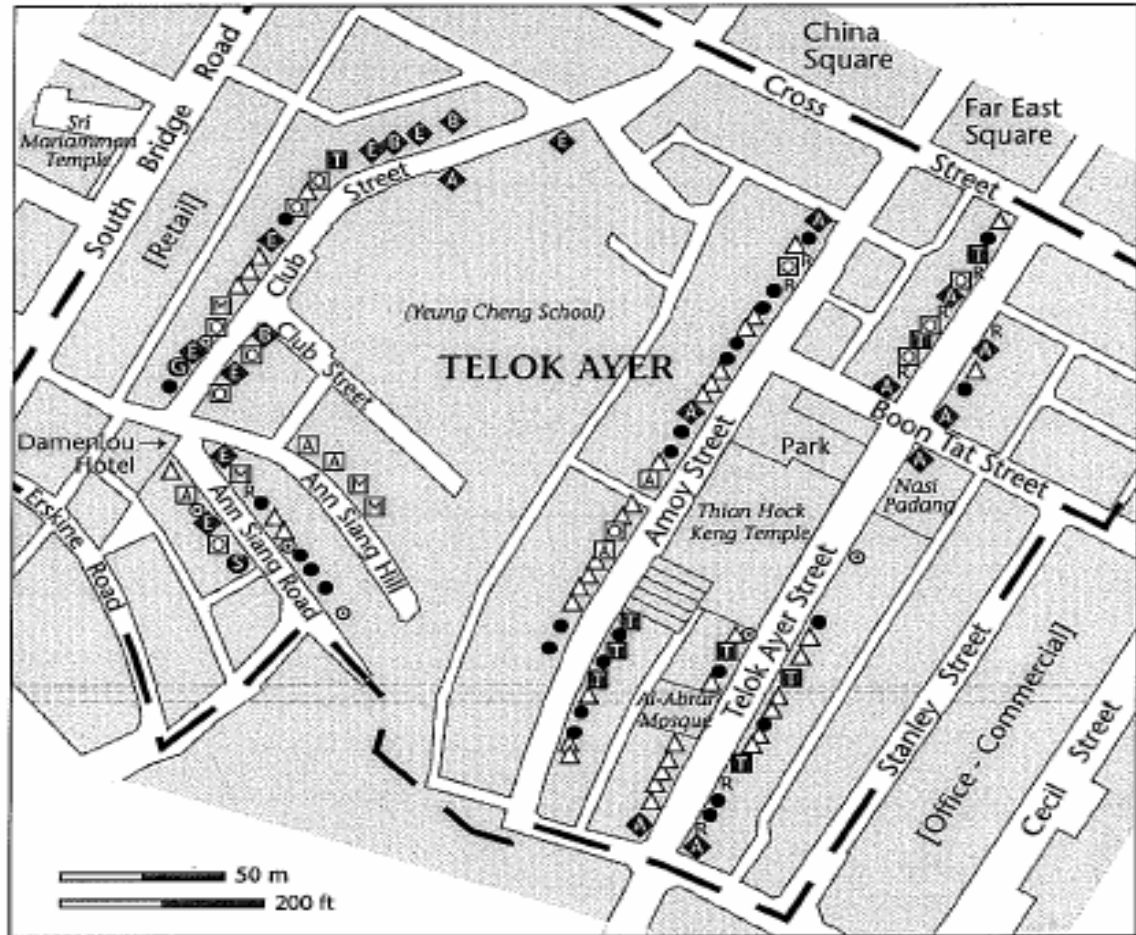






### Distribution of Firms

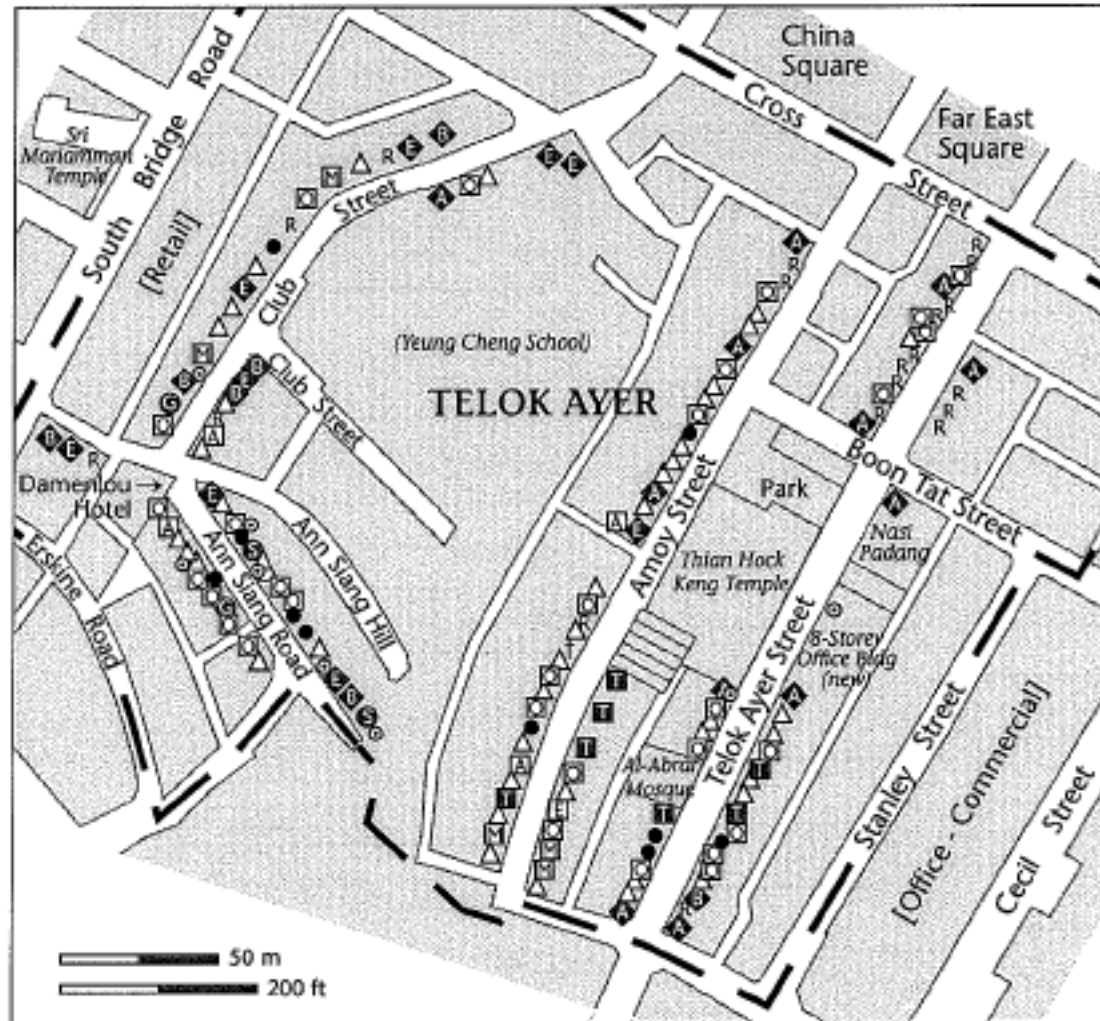
- 'New Economy' firms: Internet, web design, multi-media and dot coms
- ▣ Media, publishing
- ▢ Architects
- ▣ Other design firms
- △ Business and professional services
- Trading companies
- ◆ Traditional restaurant (East & South-east Asian)
- ◆ European restaurant
- ◆ Bar
- R Retail/personal services
- ⊙ Sports facilities and gyms
- ⊙ Galleries
- ⊙ Chinese clan association



Telok Ayer 2000

### Distribution of Firms

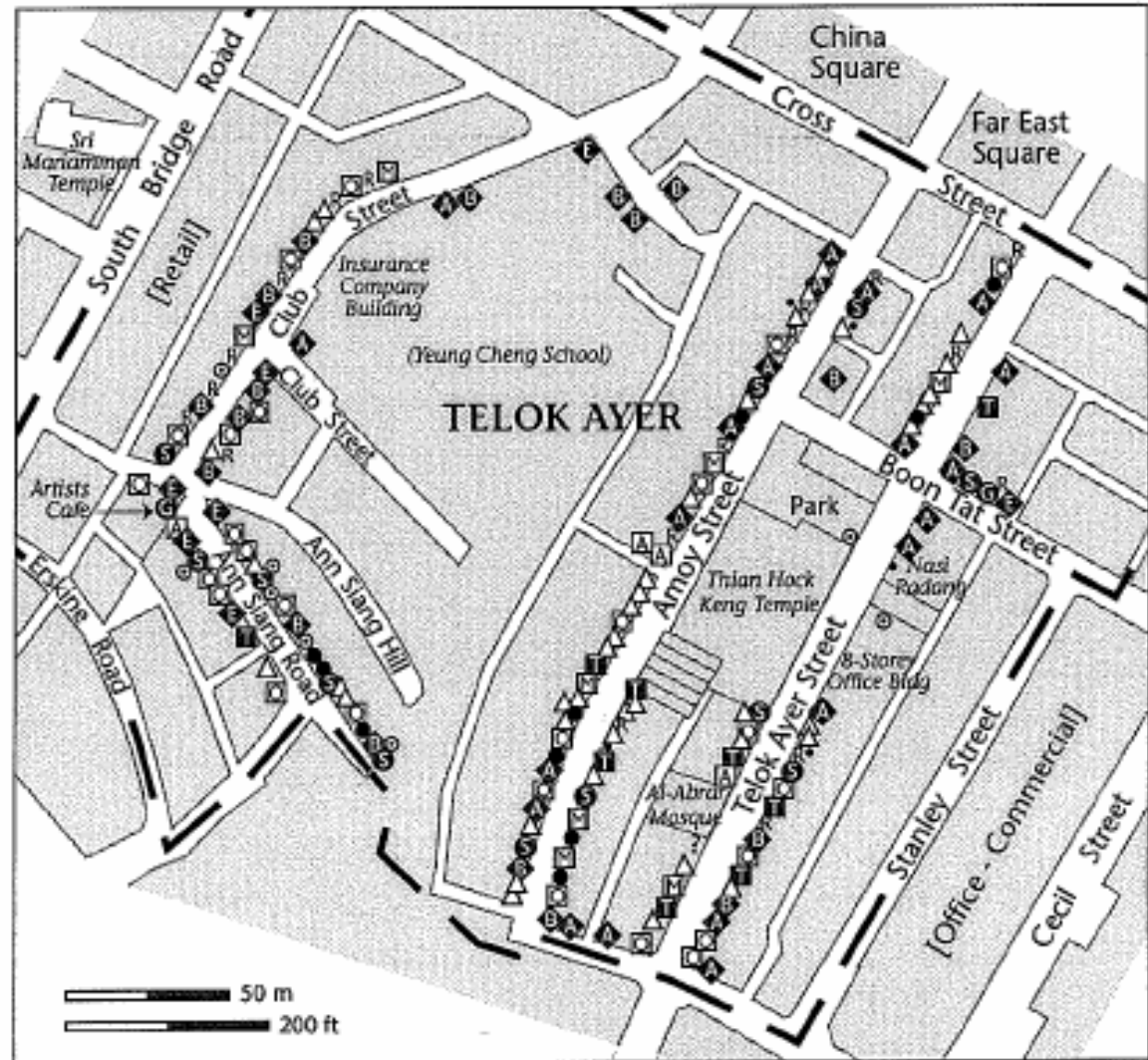
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Telok Ayer 2003

## Distribution of Firms

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- ⊙ Sports facilities, gyms and spas
- ⊙ Galleries
- ⊙ Chinese clan association
- Coffee shop



Telok Ayer 2006

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- South of Market and the ‘New Economy’
- Emergence of ‘Multimedia Gulch’ last half decade of 20<sup>th</sup> century
- Influence of long-standing arts community, spatiality and built form of SOMA, proximity to Silicon Valley
- World-scale New Economy site: new media, software development
- Effects of the crash and its aftermath, 2000-2002
- South Park as ‘epicentre’ of SOMA’s New Economy: sequence of changes marking larger processes: slow recovery as centre of applied design, 2003-2005; 2006: ‘New Economy II’ based on broadband technologies
- Exemplar of volatility of inner city production districts and sites





WHITNEY  
CRESSMAN  
FOR LEASE  
415-229-8888

SHER

35

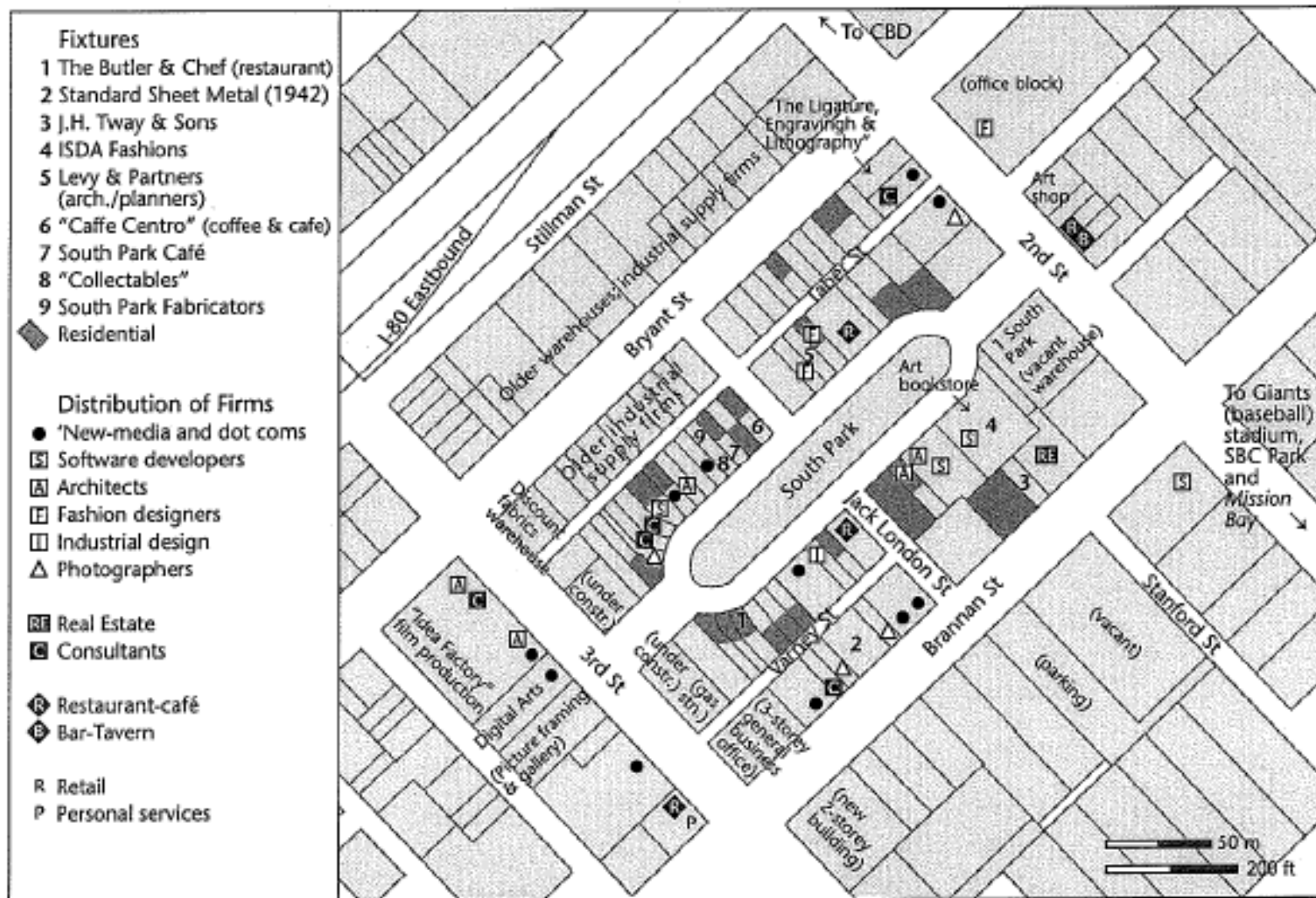
FOR SALE  
THE  
Commercial  
Real Estate Group  
415-268-2277

Whitney  
Cressman  
FOR LEASE  
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*Live-work Studio, South Park, SOMA: San Francisco*

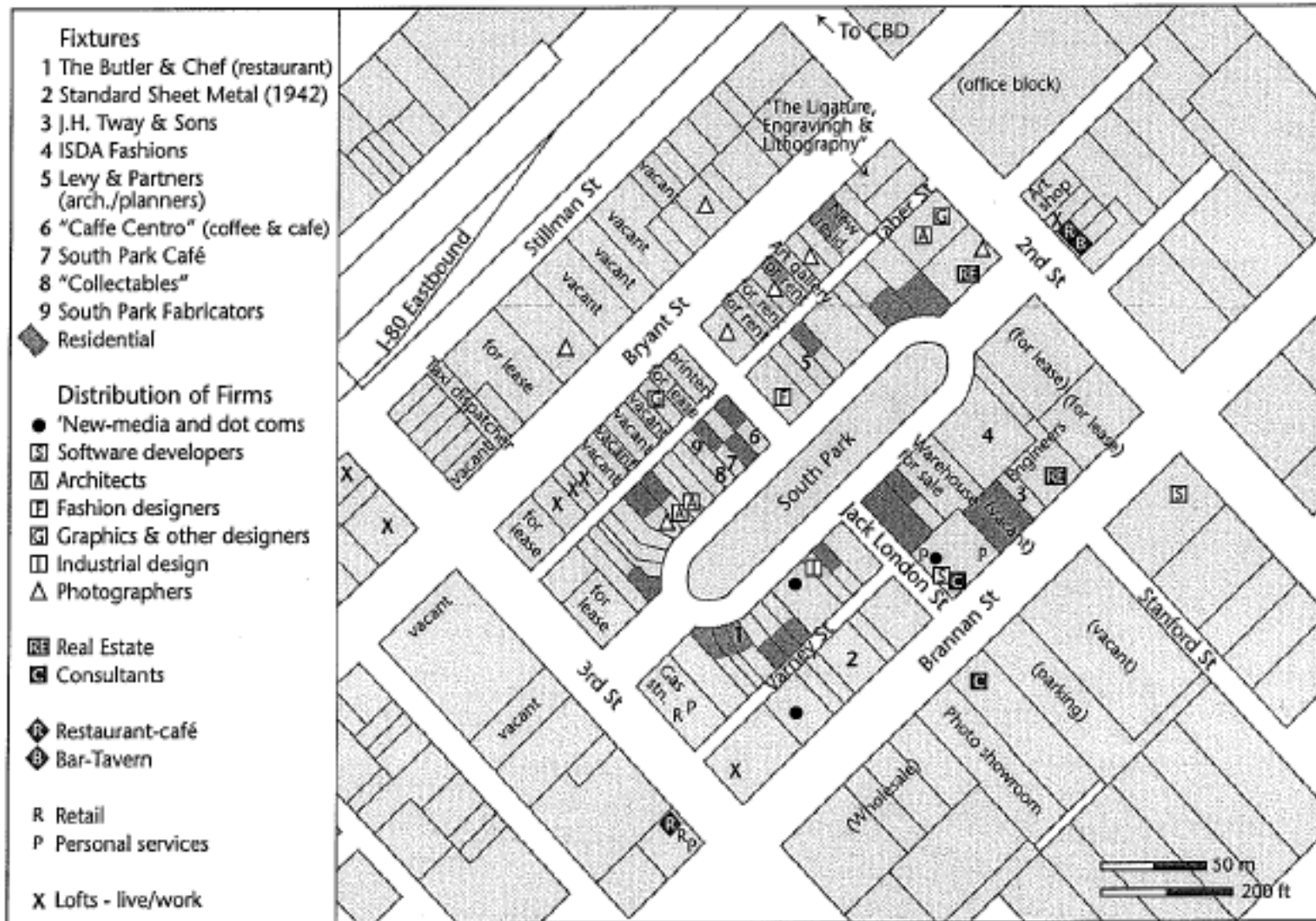




South Park 2000







South Park 2003

## Domains of Vancouver's Knowledge Economy

“Scientific Knowledge” (links to Bell's post-industrial model): universities, downtown; leading firms; other epistemic communities

“Commercial – Financial Knowledge” : concentrated in downtown office complex, but also embedded within suburban RTCs; institutional

“Entrepreneurial Knowledge” : embedded within Vancouver's transnational communities, bilateral business associations, shared via local and diasporic networks

“Cultural Knowledge” : embodied within key institutions and also within Vancouver's multicultural society, NGOs and CBOs

“Environmental Knowledge”: affirm Vancouver's international role: Greenpeace, Sierra

## ISRN – MCRI II : 2007

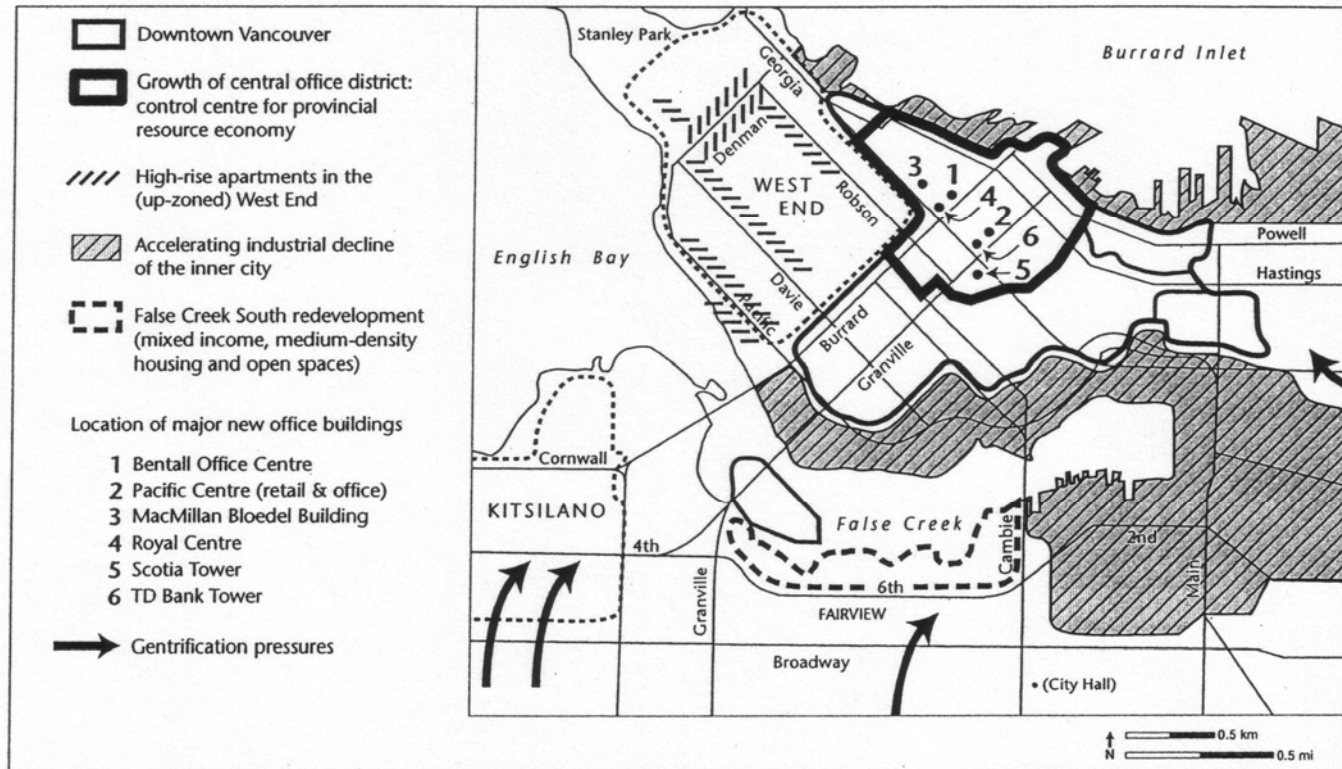
- Lead Sectors and Industry Groups in Vancouver's Economy
  - 1. Intermediate ('producer') services
  - 2. 'Gateway' roles: Vancouver International Airport, Port of Vancouver
  - 3. Tourism and conventions
  - 4. Intermediate financial functions
  - 5. Higher education: universities and colleges
  - 6. 'Niche-level' advanced technology industries and firms: telecommunications  
biotech, aerospace and marine industries
  - 7. Cultural production + creative industries

\* **List demonstrates centrality of SME-based Knowledge Economy \***

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## Policies and Programs for Building the Knowledge Economy In Vancouver

1. Urban structure and land use policies
2. Heritage policies and programs; cultural planning
3. Amenity planning and the 'public realm'
4. Universities and higher education: knowledge dissemination
5. Institutions and special-purpose agencies
6. Business agencies, including bilateral associations



Industrial restructuring, social upgrading, and new modernist landscapes in Vancouver's metropolitan core, c.1972-1985

# Evolution of Vancouver's Central Area

## Globalization of the Central Area 1980s

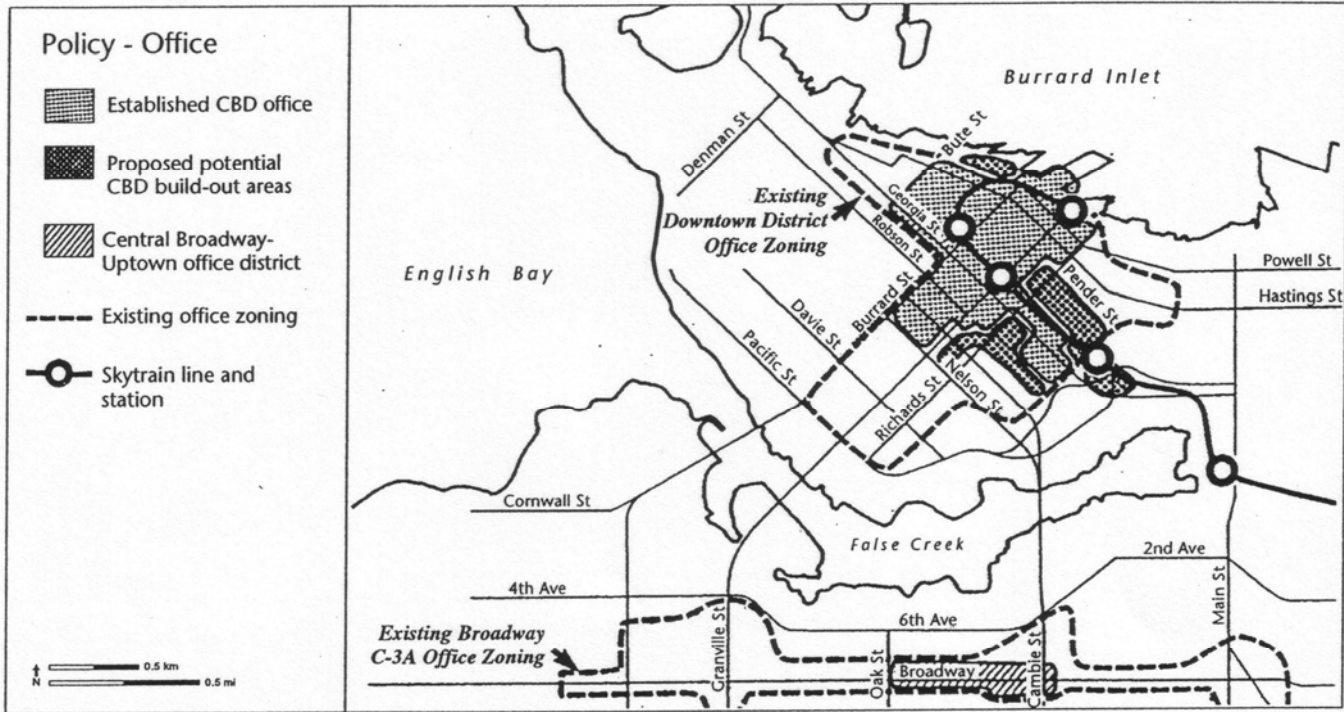
- ❑ Major recession in early 1980s: City seeks new external markets
- ❑ Vancouver firms seek new opportunities in the Asia-Pacific
  
- ❑ Expo '86: international 'hallmark event' and global imageries
  
- ❑ Purchase of Expo '86 site by Li-Ka Shing of Hong Kong
- ❑ Concord Pacific Place 'Urban mega-project' (Olds 2001)
- ❑ Example of first major 'consolidated' project in the core
  
- ❑ Coincident processes of 'urban transnationalism'
- ❑ International immigration, multiculturalism

# Evolution of Vancouver's Central Area

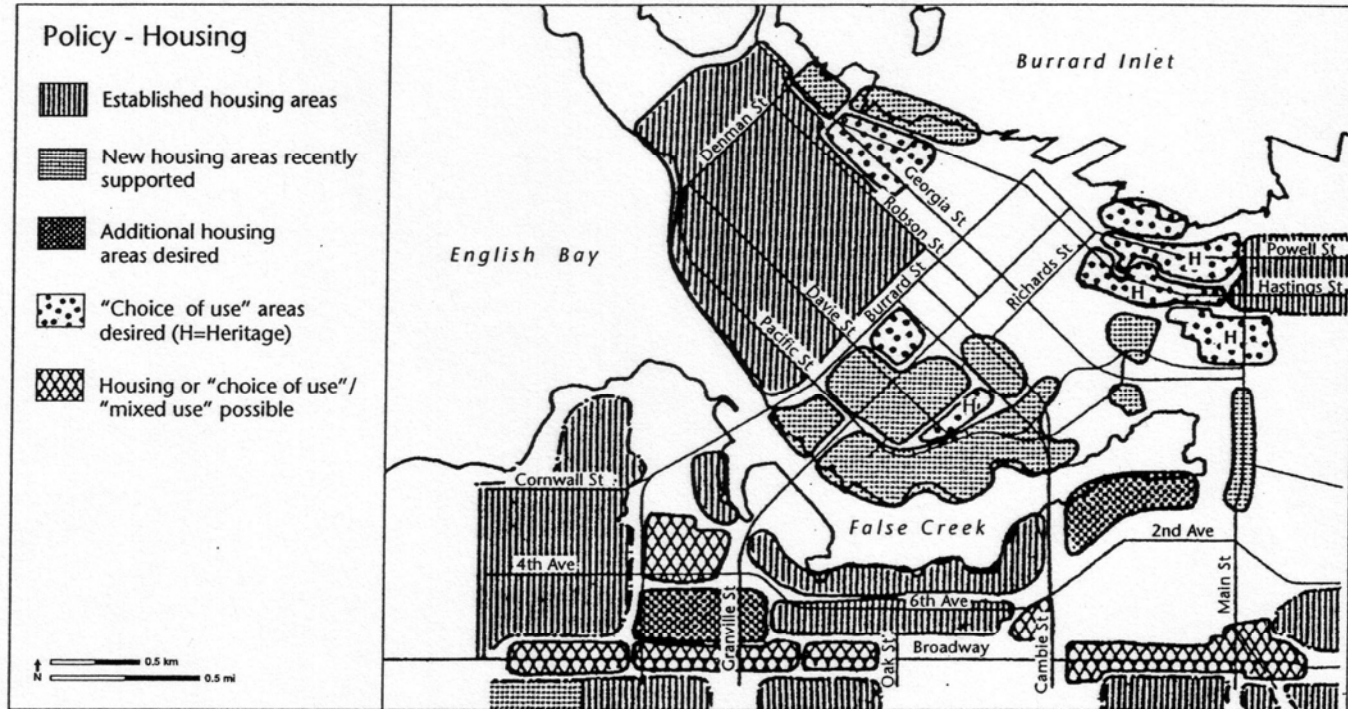
## Planning response: Central Area Plan [1991]

- ❑ Resurgence of growth in post-Expo 86 period
- ❑ Formation of new Central Area Plan process in 1988
- ❑ Approved by City Council December 1991
- ❑ CAP now regarded as 'seminal planning strategy for the core'
- ❑ 'consolidation' of CBD office district in a more compact area
- ❑ 'privileging' of housing beyond the smaller CBD
- ❑ \* see following two slides \*
- ❑ New housing districts include UMPs and smaller projects
- ❑ Emphasis on urban design and improving 'public realm'
- ❑ Principles of livability and post-modern preferences
- ❑ Celebration of diversity, pluralism, community
- ❑ Allowed for new industries in the inner city





Consolidation of the Central Business District in the Central Area Plan, 1991

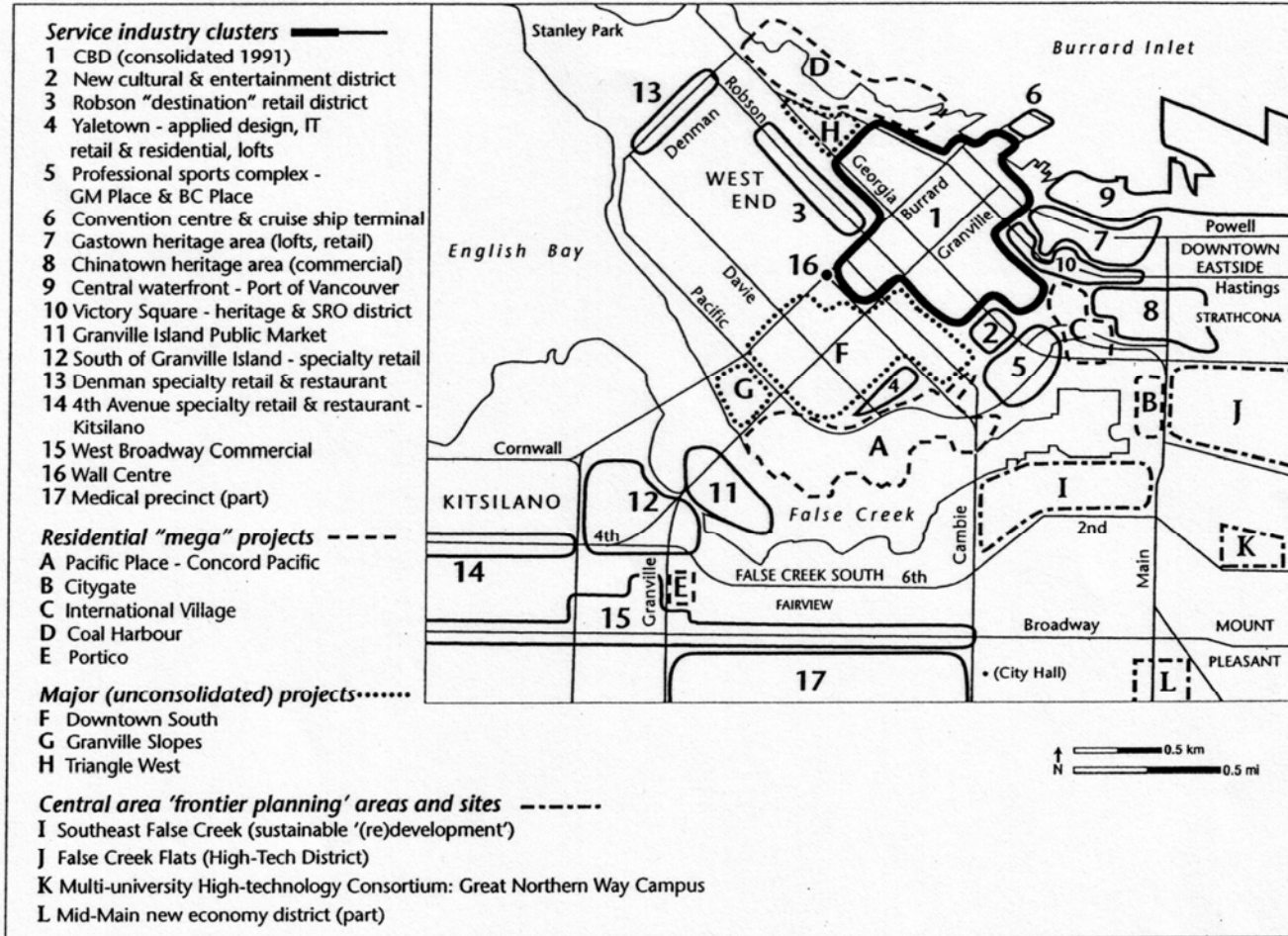


Designation of new housing areas in the Central Area Plan, 1991

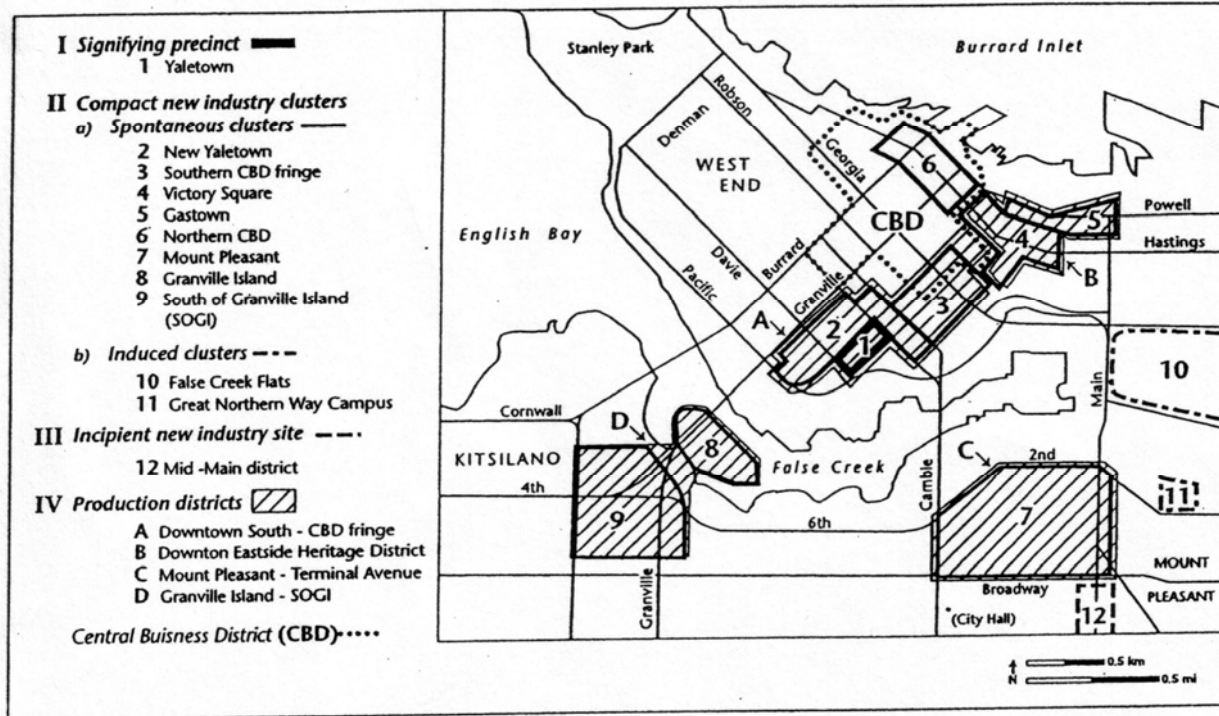
# Evolution of Vancouver's Central Area

## Reproduction of the Central Area, 1991-2006

- ❑ Most comprehensive reshaping of Vancouver's Central Area
- ❑ New residential districts close to maximum 'build-out'
- ❑ > 85,000 residents of the downtown
- ❑ Value of amenity: 'highest quality public realm' (Sandercock)
- ❑ Emergence of a 'post-corporate' CBD (SMEs in the CBD)
- ❑ Vibrant 'new economy' in the inner city
- ❑ Expansion of higher education and the 'knowledge sector'
- ❑ [ new media, film & video production, computer graphics, software]
- ❑ Downtown Eastside remains socially problematic
  
- ❑ Complexity of urban structure and land use; emergence of new knowledge-intensive clusters and sites in the core (\* following slides\*)



21<sup>st</sup> century landscapes of production, housing, and amenity in Vancouver's postmodern metropolitan core



New territorial forms of specialised service industry production in Vancouver's metropolitan core

## Other City Policies Supportive of the Knowledge Economy

### 2. Heritage policies and cultural programs

- preservation of inner city warehouse districts for creative and 'New Economy' industries and firms
- cultural planning: supports for multiculturalism, role of Vancouver as 'site of inter-cultural production' in the arts, design professions and business

[ \* Vancouver a classic 'heterogenetic' city and society\*]

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### 3. Amenity planning and Vancouver's "public realm"

- - acknowledgement of idea that New Economy, creative and other
- knowledge economy industries highly sensitive to environment and
- amenity (Mugerauer + others)
  
- - City investments in amenities, public spaces, environment: especially
- in the central and inner city
  
- - "Vancouver has highest quality public realm in North America"
- [Leonie Sandercock]
  
- - often cited by Knowledge Economy firms: films and video, computer imaging
- and graphic design, technology sector firms, artists and other
- design professionals, as a feature of Vancouver's competitive advantage

## Building Vancouver's Knowledge Economy (cont.)

4. Universities and higher education: knowledge dissemination
  - major initiatives in Vancouver's metropolitan core: UBC, SFU. Emily Carr Institute for Art, Design and Media
    - (a) SFU: Wosk Centre for Dialogue: encouraging collaboration among / within different constituencies and communities
    - (b) UBC: "The Learning Exchange" : efforts to enhance learning capacity and exchange of knowledge in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside (DTES); involves training, co-ops, opportunities for graduate students to share knowledge



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### 4. Universities and higher education (cont.)

#### (c) Great Northern Way Campus: False Creek Flats “New Economy” site

- joint project of UBC, SFU, ECIADM, BCIT
- intent of fostering synergies between technology, culture, and ‘place’ in the Knowledge Economy’\*
- initial program: Professional Masters’ degree in Digital Media

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5. Institutions and special purpose agencies (some examples)
  - (a) ‘Leading Edge BC’: support for technology sector;  
problems and opportunities of Vancouver’s technology  
sector
  - (b) Creative Cities Network: national body supportive of the  
cultural sector and creative industries  
  
[note design vancouver and role in the city]
  - (c) Business Improvement Areas (BIAs): alliances of  
local businesses to share knowledge about markets,  
human capital and hiring, working with the City and other  
government agencies

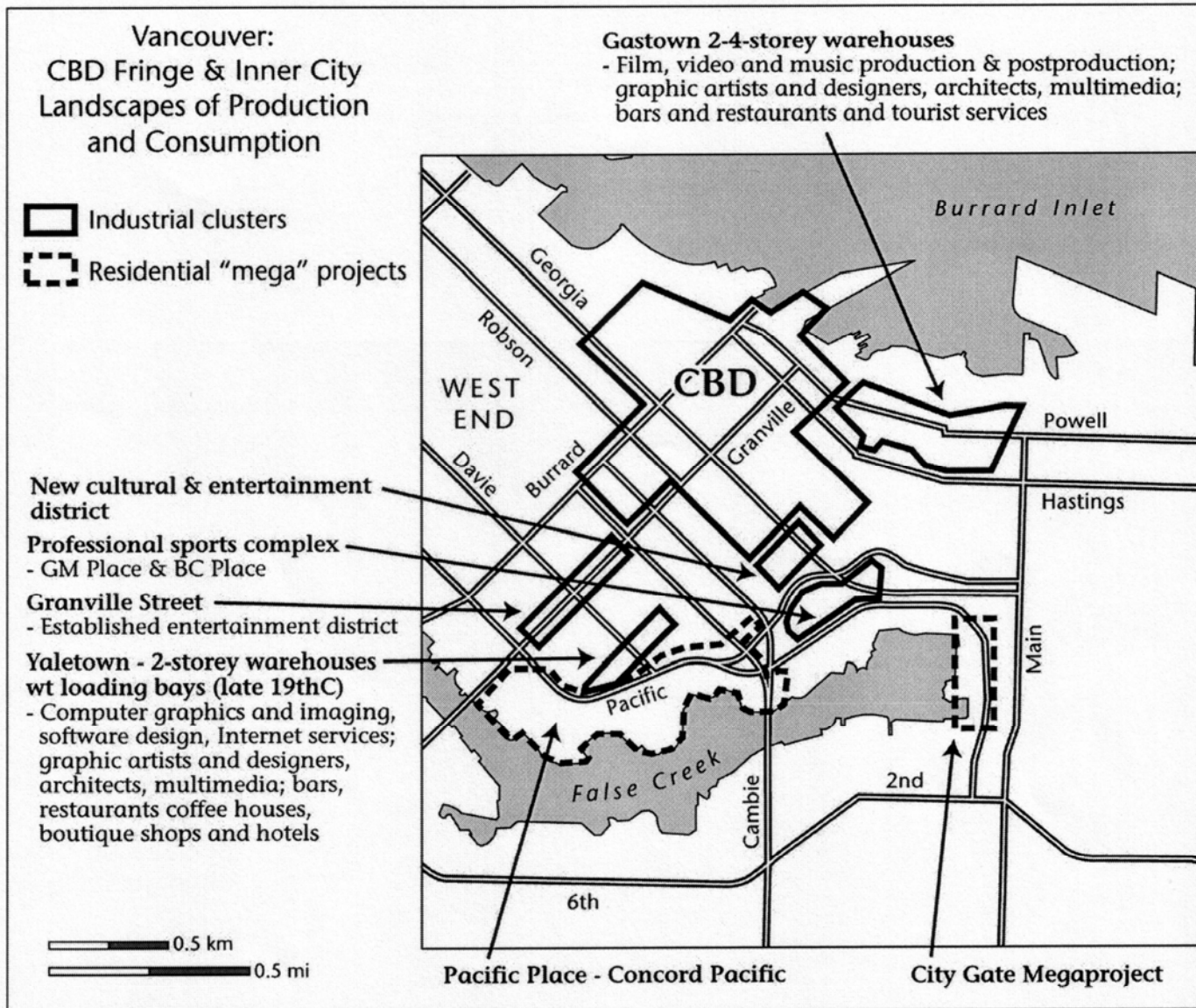
## ISRN – MCRI II : 2007

6. Business agencies, including bilateral associations
  - **key to fostering development of Vancouver's** entrepreneurial sector (Board of Trade,
  - significance of bilateral business associations in the Knowledge Economy: market intelligence, knowledge of export markets, knowledge about business practices in key markets
  - example: Hong Kong-Canada Business Association (HKCBA). Est. 1984 c. 1,000 members, half 'HK' and half 'locals', a vital agency for a trading and trans-national city and city-region

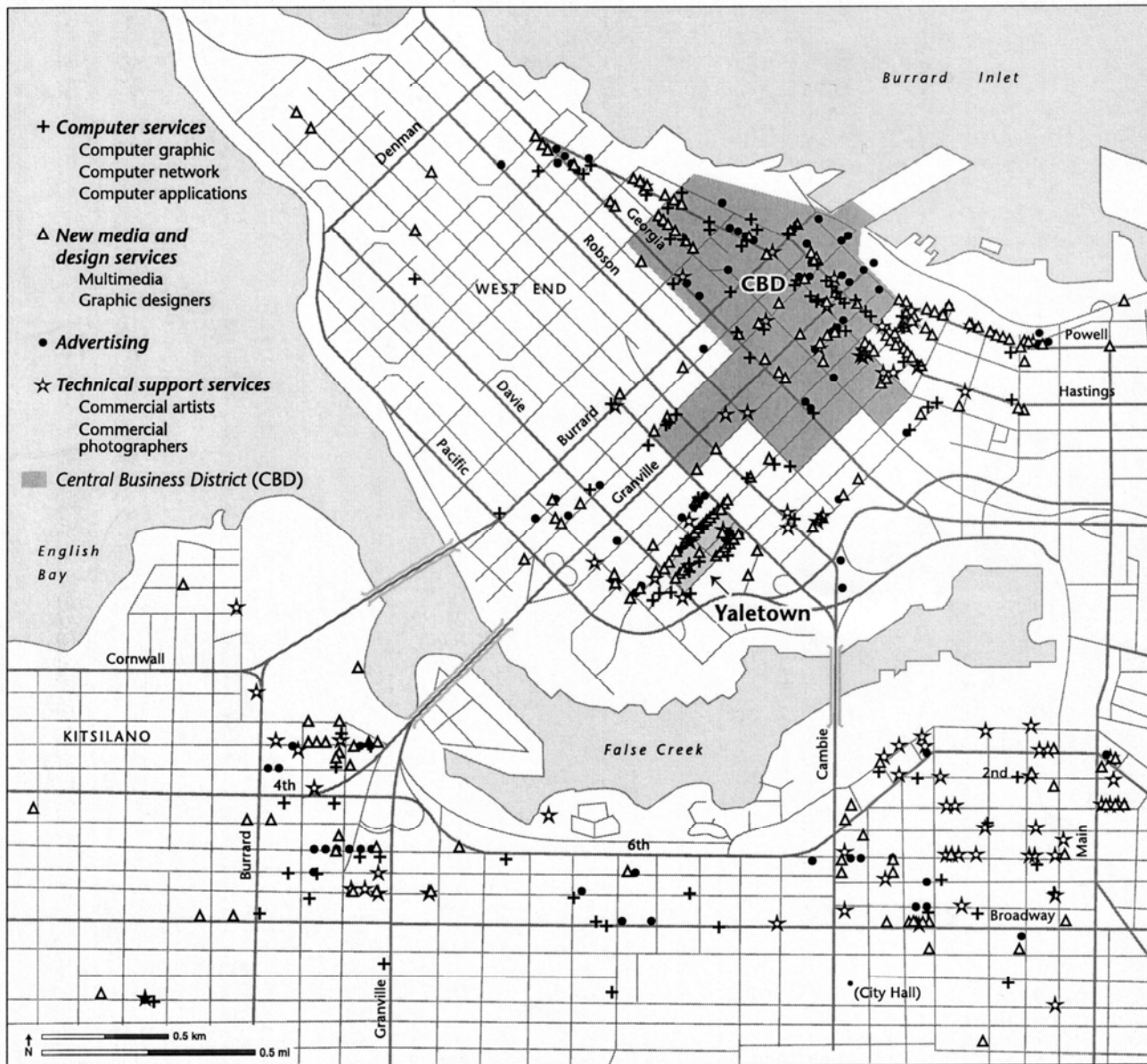
## ISRN – MCRI II : 2007

- Vancouver case: ‘reassertion of production’ versus ‘social reconstruction’ of the metropolitan core, 1991-2007
  - emergence of new production districts with specializations
    - - Yaletown (Computer graphics and imaging, software)
    - - Victory Square / Gastown (arts and film production; higher education)
    - - False Creeks Flats (biotech, video game production, digital arts)
  - New production sites = reconfigured spatial divisions of labour in the core
  - Pressure from property market and housing: office : condo development ratio reversed over last 15 years

Demonstrates ‘precarious industrialization’ even in growth-oriented economy



Spatiality, environment, and creative industries: Yaletown and Gastown, Vancouver



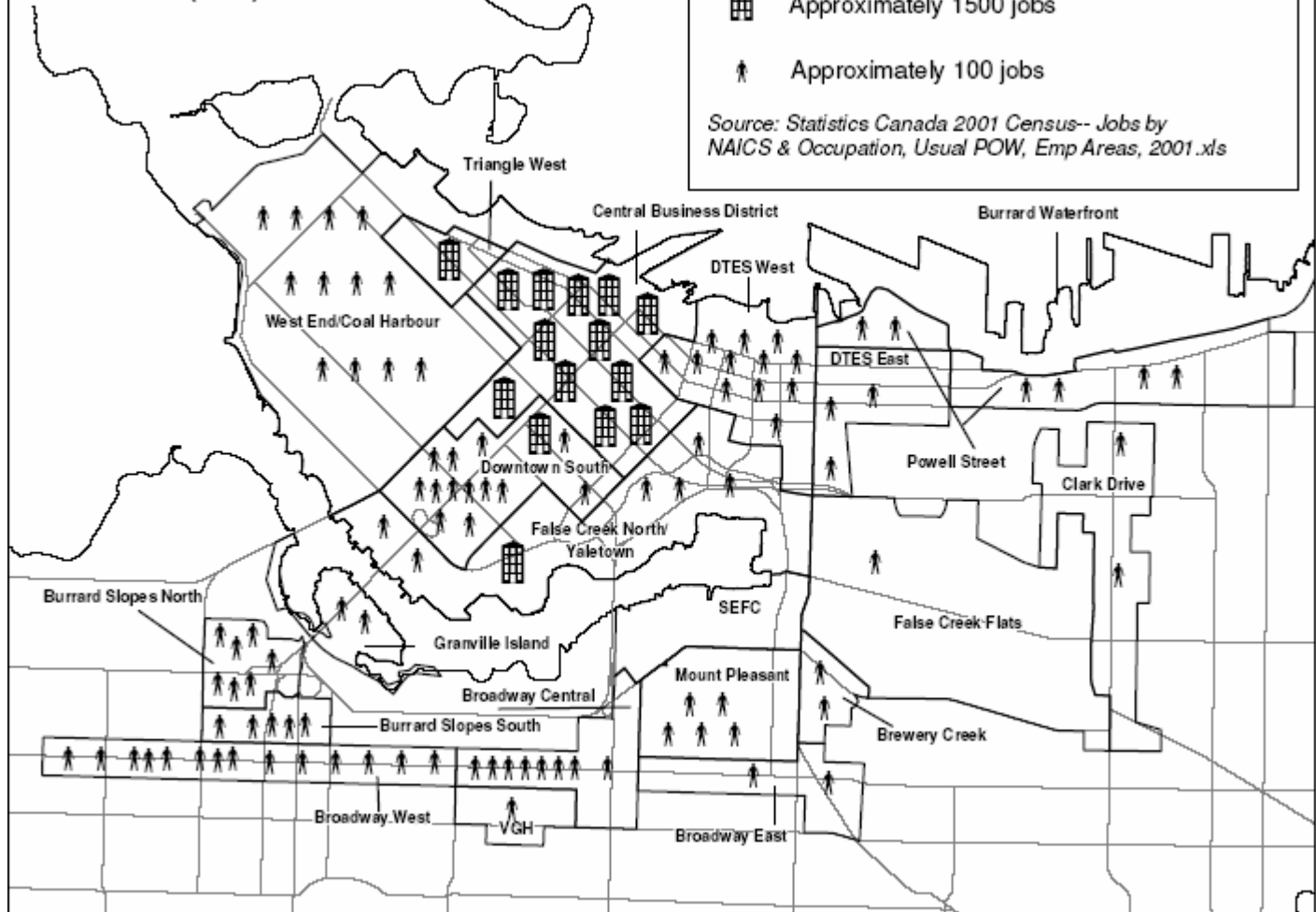
**Metro Core Employment Areas  
Professional Scientific and Technical  
Services Jobs (2001)**

— Employment Area Boundary

🏢 Approximately 1500 jobs

👤 Approximately 100 jobs

*Source: Statistics Canada 2001 Census-- Jobs by NAICS & Occupation, Usual POW, Emp Areas, 2001.xls*











# Implications of the Vancouver Experience

- Implications for planning and public policy
  - ❑ Success of 1991 Central Area Plan: major land use reallocations
  - ❑ CAP bolder, more strategic than typical urban growth management
  - ❑ Role of major projects: Concord, Citygate, Coal Harbour etc.
  - ❑ [ enabled more comprehensive planning, extraction of amenities and public benefits]
  - ❑ Effectively addressed late-20<sup>th</sup> century housing : office imbalance
  - ❑ Tight linking of new housing to amenity provision, public realm
  - ❑ Supported emergent 'Knowledge Economy' in the metro core
  - ❑ Role of confident, experienced planners and planning system
  - ❑ Support for visionary planning from Mayor, Council, public
  - ❑ Success of City's "Living First" central area strategy for housing
  - ❑ Widely seen as "paradigmatic" metropolitan core