

## NEIGHBOURHOODS

This reference guide provides an overview of the types of records from the City of Vancouver Archives that relate to researching local areas and communities, including examples of specific fonds or collections. Please keep in mind that additional records may be found among the total Archives' holdings.

Records may be accessed either through record requests submitted for retrieval from our secure storage, self-serve microfiche access copies in the Reading Room, or, if digitized, viewed as a digital copy from our online database. Record retrievals run Monday-Friday, 10:00-4:30.

General tips:

- The *names of some Vancouver streets have changed* in the past, which may affect searching the address of a particular property. A valuable resource is the book, *Street Names of Vancouver* by Elizabeth Walker which provides an alphabetical listing of streets and avenues. Copies are available in our Reading Room or through the Vancouver Public Library.
- Vancouver is divided into 23 distinct neighbourhoods for which their *names and boundaries* can be identified from the [City's website](#)
- The phrasing "*local areas*" or "local area planning" is a common identifier that can be searched from our database
- Try also searching *local, colloquial or former neighbourhood names* eg. "Tea swamp," "South Granville," or "False Creek Flats"

## CITY RECORDS

## Online &amp; Storage

## ca. 1880s-present

City records used as primary sources related to City operations and development of Vancouver. Search the Archives' database for Departmental records, including maps and photographs.

- City Council Minutes ([COV-S31](#))
- City By-laws ([COV-S36](#))
- Development Permit Files ([COV-S178](#))
- Planning Department Maps, Plans and Drawings ([COV-S445](#))
- Sectional Maps (multiple series, eg. [COV-S508](#))
  - Used for an overview of surveyed areas showing development history of neighbourhoods and to determine legal description of lots
  - Maps for former municipalities of Point Grey ([COV-PG-S247](#)) and South Vancouver ([COV-S674-: MAP 871](#)) are also available
- City Publications Collection ([PUB](#))
  - Includes the publication series "Community Profiles", 1994 with demographic data ([PUB-: PDS 139](#))

## PRIVATE SECTOR HOLDINGS

Storage

ca. 1870-1980

Private records used as primary sources on community organizations, businesses, individuals and families, and other topics related to neighbourhood development and events in Vancouver. Our holdings of private records, identified as “AM” (or formerly “Add. Mss.” for “Additional Manuscripts”) can be searched using our online database. Suggestions of related funds are:

- **Alexandra Neighbourhood House funds ([AM420](#))**
  - Consists of business and operational records of this neighbourhood house that was initially run by the Women’s Christian Temperance Union for orphans, 1891-1972
- **Community Planning Association of Canada, British Columbia Division funds ([AM683](#))**
  - Consists of board minutes, reports, maps and other records related to regional planning, 1949-1978
- **Dunbar History Project funds ([AM1533](#))**
  - Consists of research and project records created through the Dunbar Residents Association, 1998-2010
- **Lower Kitsilano Ratepayers’ Association funds ([AM928](#))**
  - Consists of Association records, 1946-1971
- **Strathcona Property and Tenants’ Association (S.P.O.T.A.) funds ([AM734](#))**
  - Consists of Association records that began out of community activism against the City’s urban renewal program in the late 1960s, 1966-1971
- **Sunset Community Association funds ([AM68](#))**
  - Consists of Association records, including fundraising efforts and a time capsule, 1937-1956
- **Major Matthews Collection ([AM54](#))**
  - See Series 22 - Street and Place Names, Vancouver Area ([AM54-S22](#))
  - See Series 23 - Topical and Categorical Files ([AM54-S23](#)) for records related to businesses, individuals, and other subject files
  - Files contain compilations of notes, correspondence, pamphlets, and ephemera

## PHOTOGRAPHS

Online & Reading Room (photo binders)

ca. 1860-1990

Used for images of local communities. A large number of photographic material has been digitized to search, view, and download directly from our database. Try searching street names, intersections and landmarks. Also, searching “aerial” or “oblique” will bring up any overhead aerial views. Suggestions of related records are:

- **Major Matthews Collection ([AM54-Series 4 - Collected Photographs](#))**
  - Photographs available online from the Archives’ database or a smaller amount of access prints can be viewed in the Reading Room
- **City of Vancouver Archives Photograph Collection ([AM1376](#))**
  - Photographs available online from the Archives’ database; a smaller amount of access prints can also be viewed in the Reading Room
- **City of Vancouver Heritage Inventory 1986: Photograph Survey ([COV-S639](#))**
  - Photographs showing buildings, schools, parks, and monuments from various neighbourhoods

## PAMPHLETS

Storage & Reading Room (microfiche)

ca. 1880-present

Used for information about a range of events or issues from various sources. Pamphlets can be searched through our online Archives' database.

- City of Vancouver Archives Pamphlets Collection ([AM1519](#))

## NEWS CLIPPINGS

Reading Room (microfiche)

ca. 1860-2005

Used for information about individuals, families, businesses, and other organizations, industries, events and issues etc. Clippings are accessed by microfiche and can be searched by either card indexes or finding aids available in the Reading Room. There are four sets of microfiche, each with its own alphabetical sequence:

- Major Matthews Collection (AM54-Series 17- News clippings) 1860-1970
  - [See card index](#)
- City of Vancouver Archives News Clippings Collection 1972-2005
  - [See card index](#)
- Pacific Press I and II ca. 1930-1985
  - [See finding aid binder](#)

## CITY DIRECTORIES

Reading Room

1860-1996

Annual directories produced by private firms listing names of residents, properties, and businesses (some years are B.C. directories and include other regions). Please note that directories were compiled by private firms for business purposes so they are convenient and broad in scope, but not authoritative and there are demographic omissions. Directories can be reviewed as bound books as well as on microfilm in the Reading Room.

See also our reference guide on city directories for more a more detailed overview. City directories for the years 1860-1955 have also been digitized and [can be viewed online](#) through the Vancouver Public Library.

## BOOKS

Storage

ca. 1920s-present

Secondary sources used for historical overviews of the development of Vancouver and neighbourhoods. The Archives' has its own reference library collection that can be accessed when visiting the Archives. Some general suggestions are:

- City of Vancouver Archives Library Collection
  - *Vancouver Book* (FC 3847.3 V35 1976): contains neighbourhood maps and histories (1976)
  - *Vancouver: A Visual History* (G 1174 V3 S1 M32 1992): gives cartographic snapshots of Vancouver every decade from 1850's to the 1980's
  - *Vancouver: The Way It Was* (FC 3847.4 K59 1984)
  - *Heritage Walks Around Vancouver* (FC 3847.7 K68 1992): contains neighbourhood histories

BOOKS continued

Storage

- City of Vancouver Archives Library Collection

- *Collingwood Pioneers: Memories of a Vancouver District* (FC 3847.52 N53 1990)
- *False Creek* by Robert K. Burkinshaw (FC 3847.4 B87 1984)
- *Gastown: The 107 Years* (FC 3847.52 B355 1974)
- *Inventing Stanley Park* by Sean Kheraj (FC 3847.65 .K44 2013)
- *Mount Pleasant Early Days: Memories of Reuben Hamilton Pioneer, 1890* (FC 3847.49 R48 M68 1957)
- *Saltwater City: An Illustrated History of the Chinese in Vancouver* by Paul Yee (FC 3847.9 C5 Y43 1998)
- *Strathcona: Vancouver's First Neighbourhood* (FC 3847.52 A84 1994)
- *The Drive: A Retail, Social and Political History of Commercial Drive, Vancouver, to 1956* (FC 3847.25 .K56 2011)
- *Early Vancouver* by J.S. Matthews (FC 3847.49 M37 E2 1932): a seven volume account of conversations between Matthews and early residents. An index to all volumes is available in the Reading Room. *Early Vancouver* has also been transcribed and can be searched online from our website: [Major Matthews' Early Vancouver](#)

Search our holdings: <https://searcharchives.vancouver.ca/>

Please contact the Archives for further questions about our holdings  
or to discuss a research topic with an archivist

City of Vancouver Archives  
604-736-8561  
archives@vancouver.ca  
1150 Chestnut Street, Vancouver B.C. V6J 3J9