

The highest readership Vancouver Magazine put out awards to 50 most influential individuals in the province, including politicians, artists, educators, professionals and businessmen.

This is the 14th consecutive years Thomas Fung received the honors, only second to the Li Ka-shing equivalent financial magnate Jim Pattison. The annual ranking and the theme of this year differs from the past, which only picked the most powerful people in the cities and province. In 2017, VM chose those who shape the city and make waves in the world beyond it, and put more emphases on people with impeccable credentials that offered opportunities and lent helping hands to the underdogs and the underprivileged.

The two distinguished Chinese immigrants named in the Power 50 is Terry Hui #13 (Concord Pacific) and Thomas Fung #23 (Fairchild Group). Below is the edited short version for your reference.

**COVER STORY**

# POWER FIFTY

From wealthy philanthropists to astute politicians, rabble-rousing activists to savvy developers, it's our annual ranking of Vancouver's most powerful people—those who shape the city and make waves in the world beyond it.

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## VANCOUVER MAGAZINE December 2017



**POWER50**  
John Horgan and Andrew Weaver  
Mayor (#10, 2016) & Premier (#1) of BC  
BC PREMIER, LEADER, BC GREEN PARTY

**The Unlikely Partnership** It wasn't supposed to end like this. May's provincial election should have been a cakewalk for Christy Clark, with Canada's top-performing economy at her back and an untested NDP leader as her opponent. And yet, when the final vote was tallied, Clark's Liberals ended up with a bare minority—and Andrew Weaver's Green Party, winning a historic three seats, holding the balance of power.

What would Weaver do? That was the question that hung over the province for three weeks after election day. On May 29, after the results were confirmed, Weaver and NDP leader John Horgan announced a power-sharing deal that brought an end to 16 years of Liberal Party rule.

Some observers wondered whether a deal was possible, given the animosity shown between Weaver and Horgan in the legislature and on the campaign trail. But according to Justine Hunter, the Victoria-based legislative reporter for the *Globe and Mail*, there was little doubt who Weaver would support.

"Both of these men have long-term goals that require that they get along—and so far, they are showing they are far more pragmatic than those public exchanges would suggest," says Hunter, who has covered provincial politics for almost 30 years.

While it's clear what Horgan gets out of the deal—the long-coveted premier's seat—for Weaver, the arrangement represents a step in a longer-term game: bringing electoral reform to B.C. and, with it, a solidified position for his insurgent party. "The Greens want British Columbian voters to see that a minority government can work, and then they want to actually change the voting system," says Hunter. "If that remains their central driving force, then I think this could easily last beyond the average shelf life of a minority government in Canada."



**2**  
Geoff Meggs (#37, 2013)  
CHIEF OF STAFF, NDP

**Local Rep** There was some high-fiving around Vancouver City Hall when the news came that Geoff Meggs—city councillor for almost a decade, one-time communications guy for former premier Glen Clark—was going to be chief of staff for new premier John Horgan. Meggs knows intimately the city files that require co-operation from the province: transit, housing, Uber, Airbnb. Meggs, who was on the NDP's election platform committee with Carole James, helped draft a pro-cities platform, so he'll know how to carry it out. He's also seen as a straight shooter—even by the Liberals.



**3**  
Ian Gillespie (#6, 2016)  
CEO, WESTBANK PROJECTS

**Skyline King** Next year, one of the most remarkable additions to the Vancouver skyline since the Woodward's *W* resurfaced atop that namesake development in 2010 will rise from the foot of Granville Street Bridge. It's no surprise that the developer behind both is Westbank Corp.'s Ian Gillespie. Gillespie has built a reputation as a singular builder (and savvy political operator) in a city full of brash cookie-cutter developers—and the shimmering, twisting Vancouver House, by Danish starchitect Bjarke Ingels, promises to be the jewel in his crown. Next up for Gillespie: an ambitious plan to reimagine the Bathurst/Bloor intersection in Toronto, where iconic retailer Honest Ed's ruled for almost 70 years.



**4**  
Gregor Robertson (#2, 2016)  
MAYOR, CITY OF VANCOUVER

**Civic Icon** The election of NPA councillor Hector Bremnar in the recent by-election shows a city-wide slip in confidence for Robertson's Vision Vancouver and a slip in his position on this list. But of all the crises Gregor Robertson has had to navigate in the nine years he's been mayor, the opioid crisis has likely been the most urgent. In June, when the city projected 400 lives would be lost by the end of the year (it's now over 1,000), Robertson called it a "bloodbath" and pleaded with Ottawa for a federal response. He's had the prime minister's respect and attention, but he gained significant new allies when British Columbians elected the NDP.



**5**  
David Eby (#4, 2016)  
B.C. ATTORNEY GENERAL

**Letter of the Law** As the NDP's housing critic, David Eby was a force to be reckoned with. Thanks to his hounding, the Liberals implemented the foreign-buyer tax, and they practically surrendered the Point Grey riding to Eby during the May election. Now that he is B.C.'s attorney general, Eby's potential for power is tremendous, but we may have to wait to judge his effectiveness. He took his time drafting legislation to ban corporate and union political donations, saying he wanted it to be "bulletproof."



**6**  
Aquilini Family (#7, 2016)  
AQUILINI GROUP

**The Dynasty** If you're an attentive watcher of the Aquilini family's conglomerate, with assets in real estate development, hospitality and entertainment, then you've likely picked up on a trend in their investing in the past few years. Unique among private-sector players, the Aquilinis have emerged as powerful backers of Aboriginal business ventures, from the proposed Eagle Spirit pipeline in B.C.'s northwest to the mega-redevelopment of the 38.8-acre Jericho Lands in Point Grey.



**7**  
Dr. Mark Tyndall (#NEW)  
EXECUTIVE MEDICAL DIRECTOR,  
BC CENTRE FOR DISEASE CONTROL

**Health Crusader** It is the greatest tragedy to hit B.C. in years—claiming more than 1,000 lives in the first eight months of 2017—and for Mark Tyndall, executive director of the BC Centre for Disease Control (BCCDC) and deputy provincial health officer, the need to take bold action on the opioid crisis is now. In an August report, the BCCDC made 10 recommendations for tackling the fentanyl epidemic, including providing free access to pharmaceutical-grade opioids for addicts and, more controversially, decriminalizing illegal drug use and moving toward legalization and regulation.



**8**  
Bob Rennie (#5, 2016)  
FOUNDER & DIRECTOR, RENNIE GROUP

**The Collector** Bob Rennie's departure from his role as chief fundraiser for the BC Liberals four months before the election marked an end of an era: in the past four years, the party raised a \$32-million chest under him. Out of politics, he's poured his resources into less controversial endeavours: art and philanthropy, donating \$12 million dollars' worth of art in 2017 to the National Gallery of Canada. Rennie, however, hasn't entirely strayed from the political spotlight. At the height of the debate of 105 Keefer Street, Rennie was a vocal supporter of the project, even lending his voice in favour of it before city council.



**13**  
Terry Hui (#14, 2016)  
PRESIDENT & CEO, CONCORD PACIFIC GROUP

**City Shaper** Having built much of Vancouver's skyline over the past three decades, Concord Pacific Group has turned some of its attention to projects in Calgary, Toronto and London, U.K. Yet as Hui's company branches out into new markets, it's also reinventing itself right here at home with an overhaul of its tower-and-podium model that's synonymous with Vancouver—at least at its upcoming redevelopment at False Creek North. That yet-to-be-named project will be built in a "completely new style of architecture for the area," according to Joe Hruda, an architect on the project, in comments to the *Globe and Mail*.



**23**  
Thomas Fung (#26, 2016)  
CHAIRMAN & FOUNDER,  
FAIRCHILD GROUP

**Dollar Tycoon** One of the hottest categories in retail right now is the "value-priced" model—the dollar-store—with a flurry of competitors entering the Canadian market in recent years. Thomas Fung houses one of them, Daiso, at his Aberdeen Centre mall and holds North American franchise rights for the Japanese chain. Daiso is just one piece in a diverse—and increasingly recession-proof—portfolio for Fung's Fairchild Group, which includes everything from Chinese-language TV and radio stations to real estate holdings to an import/distribution arm.