

CONDOMINIUM AMENITIES AND COMMUNITY BUILDING  
The Role of Condominium Amenities in Community Building

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## **ABSTRACT**

Many Canadian cities are facing densification through the condominium-boom. Planning policies and neoliberalism are encouraging this form of housing. The term “community” is recognized in legal and land-use planning processes through a political lens, but it does not consider the sociological aspect. Residents make the community by developing relationships. Research is needed to identify if residents enjoy their condo amenities and if they feel it has an impact on community building. By researching this matter, planners, policy makers and condo board members can make certain changes that may improve the residents’ sense of community. This study consists of a mixed methods approach: quantitative and qualitative. Data on condo amenities has been collected from a real estate website, for data on an inner city (Downtown Toronto), an older suburb (Scarborough) and a new suburb (Vaughan). This provides data on the types of amenities available to condo residents. Residents from these areas also described their experiences. Both of these methods inform the condo residents’ perspectives. As there is a rise of feeling lonely in today’s society, cities need to plan for the psychological wellbeing of inhabitants. The narratives of cities are changing, which means that definitions of community are also changing. It is important to make structures that satisfy the psychological and physical needs of residents.

Keywords: Community, High-Rise, Condominiums, Amenities, Planning

## FOREWORD

I did my Bachelor's in English and have always enjoyed reading. I was inspired by graphic novels that focused on the way capitalism alienates individuals, and the image of high-rise buildings caught my attention with this theme. Specifically, the increasing number of condominiums in my neighborhood intrigued me. I came across the field of environmental studies during my undergrad and was attracted by the diverse approach of the program. My constant observation of the condominium boom made me want to research this topic.

For research purposes, I want to explore the reasons behind this development of condos in the past few years and explore the issue of the so called "condominium boom." The existing literature focuses on the political, legal and economic issues around the condominium, and this sets the framework to understand the sociological push for condo gentrification. In turn, I want to understand the way a specific form of the built environment can create better health conditions and an improved society. My goal is to present results that help in condominium planning, as planners can understand what humans want rather than creating high-rise condominiums for the economic benefit of the city.

This paper is part of my Plan of Study (POS) for completing the Master in Environmental Studies Program. My Area of Concentration is "Social Ecology and Planning of Condo Towers." My POS examines the relationship between the increase of high-rise condominiums and the meanings people attach to these places.

This paper aligns with the three components of my POS and helps me fulfill a number of Learning Objectives, which are as follows:

1. Urban Planning

Learning Objective 1.3: To understand the degree to which planning is for the community and if the built form promotes a sense of community.

2. Urban Densification into the Inner City

Learning Objective 2.3: To obtain knowledge on how urban densification impacts the built environment and if these practices are sustainable.

### 3. Social Ecology of Space

Learning Objective 3.1: To understand the rationale behind humans attaching certain meanings to places and how this affects the built environment.

Learning Objective 3.2: To note how lifestyle changes in people's lives affect urban planning procedures.

Learning Objective 3.3: To gain knowledge if people are finding a sense of community in condo towers.

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I just hope that everyone who has a dream is able to accomplish it. It is important to stay focused and then all of life's hurdles become pathways for success.

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract	ii
Foreword	iii
Acknowledgements	v
<b>Chapter 1 Setting the Context</b>	
1.1 Introduction	1
1.2 Goals and Organization of Paper	2
1.3 Methodology	6
1.4 Community vs. Sense of Community	8
1.4.1 Historical Scholars on Community and Sense of Community	10
1.5 Existing Condo Research and A Presumable Condo Community	14
1.6 Amenities	16
1.6.1 Policy on Amenities	20
1.7 Neighbourhood Design Characteristics	21
1.8 Summary of Literature Review	24
<b>Chapter 2 Case Study Areas</b>	
2.1 About the Three Areas	25
2.1.1 Toronto Downtown	25
2.1.2 Scarborough	27
2.1.3 Vaughan	28
2.2 Justification for the Selection of these Three Areas	29
<b>Chapter 3 Data Collection from Condos.Ca</b>	
3.1 Statistical Analysis	31
3.2 Sport Facilities	40
3.3 Common Areas for Different Events	41
3.4 Self-Therapeutic	42
3.5 Possible Link Between Price Per Square Foot and Amenities	42
3.5.1 Downtown Toronto	43
3.5.2 Scarborough	45
3.5.3 Vaughan	46
3.6 Summary of Findings	47
<b>Chapter 4 Parallel Perspectives</b>	
4.1 Interviews	49
4.1.1 High-Rise Condo vs. Single-Family Home	49
4.1.2 High-Rise Condo vs. Loft in Downtown	52
4.1.3 Downtown vs. Scarborough	53
4.1.4 Low-Rise Condo vs. High-Rise Condo in Vaughan	54
4.1.5 Independent Experiences in High-Rise Condos	55
4.2 Summary of Responses	56
<b>Chapter 5 Analysis</b>	58
<b>Chapter 6 Conclusion</b>	63
<b>Appendix</b>	
Appendix A	67
Appendix B	68
<b>References</b>	

Interviews with Condo Residents  
Bibliography

69  
70

## CHAPTER 1 SETTING THE CONTEXT

### 1.1 Introduction

Currently, there is a lot of high-rise condominium development occurring in Toronto and in other Canadian cities. There has been a condominium boom in Toronto since the 2000s, and it is mainly profit-driven. It has also been due to a demand for shelter, new immigrants, lifestyle changes and providing housing for people of different income levels. Condominiums have been successful in boosting economic activity, but have also created urban problems, such as gentrification, spatial inequalities, displacement and social exclusion (Lehrer & Wieditz, 2009; Rosen & Walks, 2013).

Condominiums provide a form of double ownership where individual units are owned and registered under the buyers' name along with shared ownership over residential common property (Harris, 2011). Common property can consist of lobbies, hallways, gardens, elevators, streets and recreation facilities (Rosen & Walks, 2015). Residents can use these areas through a condominium corporation, also known as the condo board, that is elected and responsible to condo owners (Rosen & Walks, 2015). This built form represents a form of community governance through a private club realm, where condominium boards are given the authority to collect fees for maintenance of amenities and collective areas (Rosen & Walks, 2013). The common places, known as amenities, are places where residents can enjoy the services available along with possibly engaging in social interaction. It is worth mentioning that condo is not a "physical edifice," but rather "an invented legal and social relationship among property owners and other key constituents centred on a defined space" (Lippert & Steckle,



2016, 133). Condo board members do have governance, since they have authority to set rules, and this can also affect residents as they try to foster a sense of community in condos. The main goal of this paper is to evaluate the impact condo amenities can or cannot have in community formation for the residents.

Studies on the effect that architecture can possibly have on people is a topic of current interest in the scholarly canon. Formal study of the social and psychological effects of architecture began from the Chicago school (Park, 1925 qtd. in Gifford, 2007, 2) whose members studied the social ecology of cities that led to further sociological studies of housing and community (Gifford, 2007, 2). These studies allowed policy makers, government officials and residents to understand the realities behind constructed buildings. This paper explores if residents enjoy their condo tower amenities and their thoughts about the role they may or may not play in community building.

Most condominiums in various Canadian cities have amenities that residents have access to inside and outside their building. In Canada, condo towers are being built in inner cities and suburbs as well. But is this structure benefitting residents socially? Are condos building a beneficial community for residents?

## **1.2 Goals and Organization of Paper**

My goal with this work is to determine if high-rise condo amenities can affect community building for residents. This paper explores:

1. What kind of amenities can be found in high-rise condos that are currently (March 19, 2019) on the market?
2. What can we learn from it? Is there a difference between the three selected areas (Toronto Downtown, Scarborough and Vaughan)? If so, what?
3. What do inhabitants of condos have to say about their use/attitude toward amenities?

Existing literature on condos has been on the political and economic factors. There is a need to research the use of condo amenities and to determine if it has an effect on community building. It is beneficial to reflect on residents' views about their condo experiences. This will provide avenues to comprehend and respectively improve their experiences. The point to discover is if residents are taking advantage of this situation where they have various amenities in the same building.

As the goal of this paper is to determine if condo residents believe amenities can function as a vehicle for community building, it is fundamental to comprehend various scholarly theories on "community" and "sense of community." Alongside this theoretical concept, another important concept to research on is the effect amenities may or may not have on residents in different neighbourhoods.

However, since there has not been much research conducted on the link between amenities and community building, I use a case-study approach to conduct primary quantitative research on high-rise condo amenities. I gather data on three geographic

areas: an inner city – Downtown Toronto, an old suburb – Scarborough and a relatively new suburb – Vaughan. More details on how the research is conducted is presented in the “Methodology” section (1.3). In Chapter 2, I explain why these three areas are chosen and how they are interesting examples in the context of amenities and community formation.

A website, “condos.ca,” provides a platform to people trying to rent out and sell condos both in Ontario and British Columbia. The Real Estate brokerage – “condos.ca” consists of three highly-trained teams focussing on houses, condos and lofts. Condos.ca has MLS listings of new condos in the market and also condos for resale. I collected the data on amenities for these three areas to see the current trends in amenities. How are the amenities similar or different within these areas? Chapter 3 presents the statistical analysis of condo amenities in the three areas. It consists of charts and graphs that compare and contrast the figures.

Then in order to give the quantitative figures perspective, residents’ responses will be discussed to understand how they find their amenities. The condo residents are from high-rises, low-rises and lofts. The interviews were semi-structured where residents were asked a set of questions (see Appendix B) and then they were asked more questions based on their responses. For instance, if a resident said that they enjoyed the “gym,” they were asked to explain how and why.

Most of the residents' stories are parallel perspectives where they are comparing their condo to another form of housing or to a condo in another area based on their experiences, which informs their perspective of amenities. Chapter 4 consists of stories from residents of the three areas that inform the potential link between amenities and community building. Residents also suggest ideas on how the social interaction between residents can be improved. The responses are analyzed based on the possibility that amenities can encourage community building amongst residents. The statistical analysis of the amenities in Downtown Toronto, Scarborough and Vaughan along with the interviews both inform the possible link between amenities and community building. The findings are then analyzed in Chapter 5 to see how residents can use condo amenities for community building. Current condo projects are seen in light of the link between condo amenities and community building.

Along with concluding this research in Chapter 6, limitations and next steps for future research purposes are discussed. Can condo amenities be used as spaces to stimulate community within residents? A discussion is presented based on the findings.

Recommendations will also be given on how residents' experiences can be improved in these quality spaces based on the statistical analysis of the three geographical areas and residents' responses. A summation of the possible connection between a sense of community and common areas is given to determine the results of this study.

### **1.3 Methodology**

Through this paper I want to explore if residents are satisfied with their condo amenities and if they feel it has an impact on community building. I have used a mixed methods approach with quantitative and qualitative components.

Firstly, I researched the topic of community to understand this ambiguous concept. I also noted the existing scholarship on the effect amenities such as physical design can have on people's wellbeing.

Then I used a case-study approach where I conducted a quantitative analysis of the condo amenities in Downtown Toronto, Scarborough and Vaughan. The database "condos.ca" has a list of the condos in various Canadian cities along with the amenities in each building. It is a website that provides buyers and sellers with assistance in finding condos or residents to sign the respective deal. Condos.ca has agents who help buyers and sellers with finding a condominium (high-rise, mid-rise, low-rise, lofts and apartments).

I went on the website and under the tab "Neighbourhoods" I chose "All Downtown" for Toronto. For Scarborough and Vaughan, I chose the entire area from the "Neighbourhoods" tab. After this selection the website shows the condos for sale. I used their filters where I set condo type to "high-rise" and the price to "unlimited" so that the website generates a list of the high-rise condos in Downtown Toronto, Scarborough and

Vaughan as of March 19, 2019. These numbers change every day on condos.ca based on the current condo market listings.

I chose these three areas because Downtown Toronto is an inner city that is known as the hub of high-rise condos. This area is continuing to face densification. Then I chose Scarborough because it is an old suburb that is also undergoing densification through the building of high-rise condos. Vaughan is a relatively new suburb where a lot of high-rise condos are being built currently. A downtown is also planned in Vaughan which is known as the Vaughan Metropolitan Centre. These three areas are interesting to compare as they are three different types of areas that are all undergoing high-rise condo construction.

I entered the amenities data according to condos.ca for the high-rise condos in Downtown Toronto, Scarborough and Vaughan on an excel sheet (see Appendix A). I also entered the following for each condo in the three areas on the excel sheet: postal address, link to website on condos.ca, price per square foot and maintenance fees. This allowed me to analyze the condos with information that is related to the amenities. Then I used the “auto sum” function on Excel which counted the number of amenities in each area. Condos.ca had a long list of various amenities and I classified the amenities into six categories based on their commonalities: sport facilities, common areas for different events, self-therapeutic, building utilities, transportation and parking. In order to synthesize the data, I calculated the total percentage for each amenity for the three areas (see Figure 11). I also analyzed if the common assumption that more expensive

condos have better amenities in the three areas is true by observing the average price of the “price per square foot” based on the number of condos in the “greater than average price category” to the “less than average price category.”

Afterwards, I conducted interviews, more like conversations (in-person or on phone) with residents of Downtown Toronto, Scarborough and Vaughan. I contacted my friends who live in condos in these areas and used the snowballing technique to get more residents. This allowed me to understand some of the residents’ narratives about how they view their condo amenities. I asked the residents to sign the consent forms and based on their preference, I recorded the conversations. The methods used for this paper speak to each other, since the residents’ responses explain the statistical analysis with a more humane perspective.

#### **1.4 Community vs. Sense of Community**

There has been a lot of debate on the definition of “community” because it is considered an ambiguous concept (Mannarini & Fedi, 2009, 211). People believe in the notion of “community” as an ideal concept or reality or sometimes both are seen simultaneously (Cohen, 1985). The duality of the concept of “community” is the reason for this conceptual confusion in scholarly debates. Scholars have also noted that there are two major uses of the term community: territorial and relational (Gusfield, 1975 qtd. in McMillian & Chavis, 1986). Territorial is considered a geographical notion of community, such as a neighbourhood, town or city (Gusfield, 1975 qtd. in McMillian & Chavis, 1986). Relational is concerned with the “quality of character of human relationship

without reference to location” (Gusfield, 1975 qtd. in McMillian & Chavis, 1986). This shows that people can form community in their local residential areas, but they are also part of other communities, such as religious or based on similar interests (sport, or a certain activity club, etc.). All the condo residents will be part of various communities outside their condos; however, in this paper the plausible residential communities will be of primary focus.

The term “community” has various connotations in different settings. From a theoretical perspective, “community” suggests the belief in an “undifferentiated identity, and emphasizes unity instead of diversity, spontaneity instead of mediation, emotions instead of reasoning, cohesion instead of conflict, and stability instead of change” (Mannarini & Fedi, 2009, 212). This definition seems to contradict current narratives of multicultural and diverse populations in many Canadian neighbourhoods. A study notes that members from political groups and neighbourhoods have a similar experience to researchers when defining “community” (Mannarini & Fedi, 2009). This shows that most people tend to reference “community” as a “noun” as if it is some “construction project that is finished when particular types of communication are practiced” (Jason, 1997, xi). However, community is better seen as a “verb” (Jason, 1997) because it is a continual relationship people work on together. Hence, the term “community building” better defines people’s relationship (Jason, 1997).

Communication is seen as a “medium” of community (Adelman & Frey, 1997, 5 qtd. in Jason, 1997). This shows that communication is the primary step in community building.



Without communication people cannot get to know each other and cannot develop further emotional bonds. For this research, the amenities within condo towers will be seen as possible areas where community can be formed amongst the residents. I believe that community is an ideal concept in people's minds that can bring them together with their multiple perspectives about "community." For this paper, I believe the concept of "community" can be brought into form through the use of spaces available to condo residents where they can interact with each other.

#### **1.4.1 Historical Scholars on Community and Sense of Community**

Two prominent scholars of community sociology and psychology provide some clarification on the ambiguous definitions of "community." Tönnies marked the beginning of community sociology in 1887 where he contrasted two ideal types: "Gemeinschaft" and "Gesellschaft" usually translated as "Community" and "Society." He explained that Gemeinschaft refers to the types of relationships in extended families or rural villages (Lyon, 1987, 7). On the contrary, Gesellschaft refers to relationships found in modern, capitalist states (Lyon, 1987, 7). Gemeinschaft is created on natural will, which includes sentiment, tradition and common bonds as governing forces (Lyon, 1987, 7). The basis for this type is living and working in a common place (Lyon, 1987, 7). Gesellschaft is created by rational will, which includes rationality, individualism and emotional disengagement (Lyon, 1987, 7). The basis for this type is urban and industrial capitalism where most people have little or no identification with each other (Lyon, 1987, 7). This further explains why some condo dwellers tend to be more involved in the activities offered by condos, if any, while others are not as involved. The reason may be that

some people do not have a great interest in meeting their neighbors and forming a community with them; however, they may be a part of other communities outside of their neighborhood. Even within the same building structure, there are people with different personalities, backgrounds and ideologies which essentially affects their relationship with their neighbours and surroundings.

The other scholar, Seymour Sarason, developed the concept of a “psychological sense of community,” which was later termed as “sense of community” (Jason, 1997, 72). He defined it as a supportive network and a stable structure that one can depend on for “psychological significance and identification” (Jason 1997, 72). This refers to the ideal perception of the concept of “community,” in humans’ minds as mentioned above. For this study, residents were asked if condo amenities can help in fostering a sense of community and if amenities can function as a vehicle in community building?

Communities are not a definite object, and therefore the main objective of this study is to discover if the amenities available in condos can operate as a means of community building for the residents.

After Sarason, David McMillan and David Chavis tried to define “sense of community” and proposed a theory of four elements: membership, influence, integration and fulfillment of needs and shared emotional connection (1986, 9-10). Figure 1 explains the details of the four elements of this theory.

**Figure 1**

**McMillian & Chavis' Definition & Theory of "Sense of Community"**

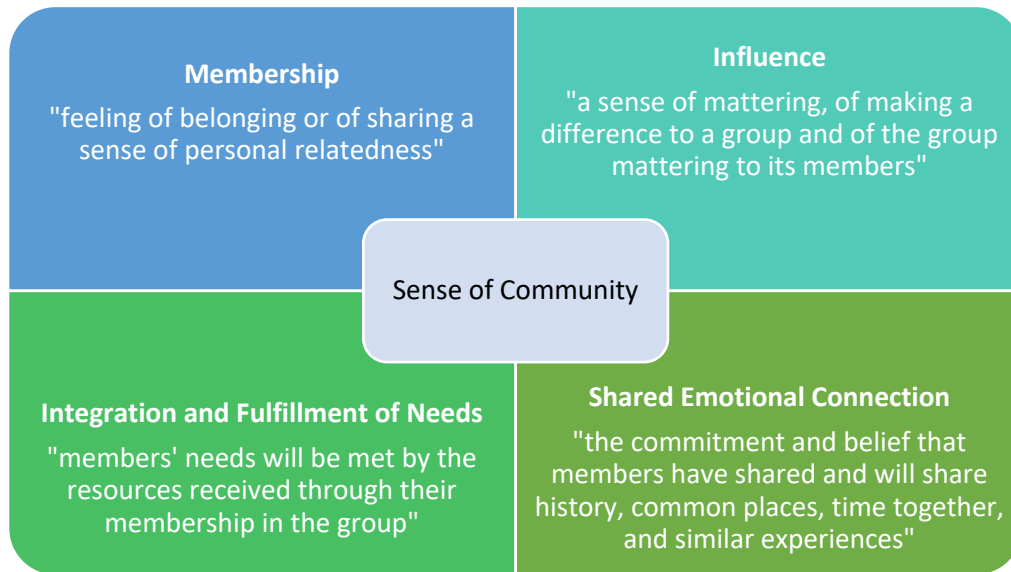


Image created based on: (McMillian & Chavis, 1986, 9-10)

All of these four elements can be related to the amenities in condos and how they have the potential to form a community for the residents. Firstly, residents need a feeling of relating to the common spaces in condos and this can begin by using the amenities that residents enjoy (membership). Secondly, residents can become prominent members of the group by having this feeling that their views matter when they communicate with each other and begin to build a bond (influence). Thirdly, the common amenities are there for condo residents to use to their advantage and mostly condos have areas that meet common needs of residents, such as a gym, party room, barbeque, meeting/function room, games room or sports areas (integration and fulfillment of needs). Fourthly, as residents of a building, they should have this belief that they share common spaces with other residents and can also spend time together by engaging in

various recreational activities (shared emotional connection). Through these steps, residents can form a sense of community in condos, but it is also important to respect their different backgrounds and beliefs. While being part of this plausible condo community, condo residents are also members of other communities and this can impact their relationship with other residents. The communities they are a part of outside of the condo may hold more importance for them; nevertheless, it is crucial to note that based on McMillian & Chavis' definition of sense of community, the amenities can function as a catalyst to initiate a sense of community in residents.

It is a fact that condos are a place where people are sharing a building, but do residents actually feel that it is a community? Clearly, sense of community is seen from a psychological lens, and it does not focus on the meaning of community, but rather on the reciprocal relationship between people and the community that they belong to (Colombo et al., 2001). The feeling of community stems from several different factors and cannot be denoted only through a social structure. A neighborhood's place in a city and the distance people travel affects social relations (Montgomery, 2014, 57). The more time people spend commuting, the less likely they are to play sports, hang out with friends or get involved in social groups (Montgomery, 2014, 57). In turn, this affects residents' perception of sense of community with their homes, as they spend most of their time travelling. Many people living in downtown condo towers tend to be closer to work, yet they still do not spend much time with each other. This means that something is missing from the community formula for condo residents.

## **1.5 Existing Condo Research and a Presumable Condo Community**

Scholarly research on the causes of the condominium boom has mainly focused on the economic aspects. Academics that have not directly researched condominiums argue that there is a relationship between capitalism and urbanization, as economic production plays a pivotal role in the development of cities (Scott, 2008). Based on the economic factors, scholars note that the increase of high-rise condominiums creates spatial inequalities; for instance, in the case of Toronto, there is a clear division between the rich, middle-class and poor in the urban fabric (Lehrer & Wieditz, 2009; Rosen & Walks, 2015; Rosen, 2017, Hulchanski, 2007). The profit-oriented approach of developers also impacts the urban fabric (Rosen, 2017). Alongside this argument, scholars demonstrate that the financialization and gentrification of cities is due to the condominium boom, as it affects the economic and cultural development of the city (Rosen & Walks, 2015). Hence, scholars clearly depict the economic challenges of the condominium boom in the city where capitalism is the underlying force of reurbanization.

The economics of a city are greatly affected by politics, and scholars relate the condominium boom to a neoliberal agenda. Current scholarship illustrates that the condominium boom creates more residential spaces in the city, but the less-advantaged do not have the means to be a part of this new form of living. This creates intensification and gentrification due to the neoliberal housing and planning practices (Lehrer, Keil & Kipfer, 2010). The condominium boom appears in the political economy, which relates to these concepts.

At this point in the scholarly canon where research has spanned the economic and political implications of the condominium boom on society, it is now crucial to observe the relationship residents have with their condos and other residents. Multi-owned property (MOP) communities, such as a high-rise condominium are a “by-product of a material residential purchase or investment, where negotiation is more likely at MOP board meetings, or when owners are in dispute” (Leshinsky & Mouat, 2015, 4). This shows that residents usually have a bureaucratic relationship with the condo board members who can also be residents of the same building. The possibility of a power structure within the condominium may affect residents’ relationship with the condo board and each other.

Further research is needed on the way condo residents and owners feel about their sense of community (Hulse, 2012 qtd. in Leshinsky & Mouat, 2015, 7, Gifford, 2007). This paper researches residents’ experiences with their condo amenities and if they feel it has an impact on fostering a sense of community. Past studies show that “increasing knowledge about community and its needs can promote greater social and sustainable equitable outcomes” (Hulse, 2012 qtd. in Leshinsky & Mouat, 2015, 7). Planners and policy makers need to increase knowledge about the potential needs of a community to provide residents with better environments where they find it easier to form a community amongst their neighbours. Many planners and regulators have understood that acknowledging the diversity of community is crucial in empowering citizens and to address current urban tensions (Bailey, 2010). With the diversity of lifestyles and compact urban development, there is a need to rethink the terms of community

(Sandercock, 2003). The goal of this paper is to understand the missing story of condo residents in existing literature.

## **1.6 Amenities**

Public amenities in the classical sense may refer to libraries, schools and hospitals. In the case of condominiums, the amenities are usually not publicly accessible. Condo owners share a plethora of amenities and high-rise condo towers being built nowadays have amenities such as, swimming pools, barbeques, gym/exercise rooms, basketball/tennis court, media/cinema room, games/recreation room, common rooftop deck and outdoor patio garden among several other amenities. These are created to sell a particular lifestyle (Lehrer, 2012) to residents, as they can enjoy these areas within or in close proximity to their condo. The term “amenity” can also refer to intangible elements, such as “good weather, a shoreline, ethnic diversity (or its absence), options for dining and entertainment, cultural offerings and aesthetically beautiful architecture” (Storper & Manville, 2014, 1252).

Studies have also been conducted on the impact of natural amenity settings, such as a landscape in rural areas (Brehm et al., 2004). Many people have migrated to rural areas because of “non-economic amenity variables” which includes climate, geography and other natural resources, such as water, clean air and forests (Brehm et al., 2004). It is believed that the attraction of these natural amenities may relate to people’s attachment to their place which has the potential to be related to “aspects of community well-being”

(Brehm et al., 2004). Clearly, studies from the past note the possible link between amenities and community wellbeing.

In urban areas of today, such as Toronto, there has been an increase of privately-owned public spaces (POPS) in condo developments. Developers agree to have part of the privately-owned land open to the public, often in exchange for more height and density (Lehrer, 2016). These are usually green spaces or parks (Coyne, 2014 September 8). This can be seen as a natural amenity. However, social practices on POPS are regulated by the owner of the land and further enforced by security (Lehrer, 2016). This discourages community building for people living near the condos in general but also for the residents because they may feel monitored themselves.

Other studies have examined the link between loneliness and the residential environment for people living in deprived areas of Glasgow (Kearns et al., 2015). People who used more amenities were reported to feel less lonely (Kearns et al., 2015). These amenities were a ten-minute walk from the participants' homes, such as a sports facility, pool or gym, social venues and small grocers (Kearns et al., 2015).

Physical characteristics of a place are also noted to possibly increase people's attachment to those places. There are a potential number of physical features such as, natural, architectural or urban that may affect attachment (Lewicka, 2011 217). Also, environmental features that affect neighbourhood attachment are quiet areas, aesthetically pleasant buildings and green areas (Bonaiuto et al., 1999 qtd. in Lewicka,



2011, 217). A survey carried out in forty-two US municipalities noted that “residential satisfaction,” was seen better by “physical features rather than social features” such as “access to nature, housing and neighbourhood quality, sense of safety, home ownership, municipal services, sense of neighbourhood and community and household density” (Fried, 1982, qtd. in Lewicka, 2011, 217). Similarly, a research study showed that environmental features, such as “control and presence of amenities” are part of the place-attachment measure (Harlan et al., qtd. in Lewicka, 2011, 217). This demonstrates that amenities can have an effect on people’s attachment to a place, although all these studies are referring to “natural” amenities. The vast literature available on place attachment has very few studies focussed on a specific theory or were meant to test certain hypotheses (Lewicka, 2011). Most studies are exploratory in nature, which explicates that little empirical progress has been made since the last thirty or forty years (Lewicka, 2011). This paper is also exploratory, as it aims to understand if residents are attached to their condo amenities, and if they believe it has the potential to encourage community building.

For this paper “amenities” will be referred to as the facilities available in high-rise condos. These facilities are areas in condo buildings where residents can spend their time for recreational purposes or physical wellbeing. In a special issue “Cities of the Future,” from National Geographic, an architectural and urban planning firm “Skidmore, Owings & Merrill (SOM)” suggest ideas on how they would design a city of the future. They stated that “shared spaces and amenities increase human interaction and allow for smaller and micro-size homes. Community-wide activities aim to foster a sense of

belonging and social equality” (SOM, 2019, 26). This indicates that amenities can function as places where people can interact, which is fundamental in building a community for residents.

Condo amenities can be seen in relation to creating a sense of community for residents in their building. Ute Lehrer uses John Friedmann’s concept of the “Good Society” in relation to the condominium boom and its connection to public space in two ways: internalizing condo amenities and encroachment into public space during the construction period (2016). Urbanism deals with problems of power and conflicts and this comes into play when dealing with public and private spaces. This is because private space is only accessible to certain individuals at the expense of encroaching into public space. Condo towers in Toronto have a similar role to this phenomenon because these buildings have their own private realm for the condo residents but also encroach into public space. The internalization of amenities creates “splintering urbanism”: where some people have access to social infrastructure and others are excluded from it (Lehrer, 2016). In order to counter this, we need the Good Society: dialogue, visions, possibilities and radical practice where people engage with each other for better living and to balance out power inequalities in society (Lehrer, 2016). This point is important to note and discover if condo amenities are benefitting condo residents themselves. That is why for this paper, I conversed with condo residents to comprehend their perspective on their sense of community in relation to amenities.

### **1.6.1 Policy on Amenities**

The Official Plan emphasizes that the city needs to have communities “where Torontonians are engaged, children are valued, diversity is celebrated and residents have equitable access to housing, support services and recreational opportunities” (Growing Up: Draft Urban Design Guidelines, 2017, 9). Many families live in tall buildings in Toronto and the “Growing Up: Draft Urban Design Guidelines 2017” encourage condo developers to provide indoor and outdoor amenity spaces to support a variety of age groups and activities (32). The guidelines support the hypothesis of this paper that amenities support social interaction and “provides residents with an inclusive space to interact and form community ties” (32). There is an emphasis on having amenities for all age groups, especially children because they are growing up in these buildings. The guidelines repeatedly suggest the importance of having amenities that increase socializing because it can have an effect on community-building. Also, the guideline states to “consider the community-building potential of food by including a functional community kitchen or event kitchen for collective activities like cooking and dining, or for food-based after-school programs” (32). This shows the importance of engaging in activities because it stimulates community building and an activity that involves all age groups will be beneficial for the residents. Parks are not the only amenity that would meet children’s needs. Indoor amenities that bring people of different age groups together in an activity can also affect community building.

## **1.7 Neighbourhood Design Characteristics**

Studies have been conducted that vary from analyzing which neighbourhood design characteristics of typical low-density suburbs in Australia have the greatest impact on residents (Abass & Tucker et al., 2018) to investigating the relationship between four public spaces in residents of new housing developments in Western Australia and acknowledging that the quality of spaces can create a sense of community (Francis et al., 2012). There has also been a rise of common interest communities in America where developers utilize the exclusionary amenities strategy to segregate certain groups (Strahilevitz, 2006). The exclusionary strategy is when developers propose amenities in a new development that would prohibit “undesired residents” from buying a home in the area (Strahilevitz, 2006). Studies in the UK have mainly been conducted on Scotland where the physical and mental health impacts of local swimming pools in two deprived neighbourhoods of Glasgow are discussed (Thomson et al., 2003) along with determining residents’ perspectives on how well-placed they are from everyday amenities in West Central Scotland (Macdonald et al., 2013). Both studies demonstrate that people from diverse backgrounds have different experiences with amenities, which can affect their sense of community.

An older study of Toronto identified that high-rise apartment residents chose friends outside their building from school or work (Michelson, 1977 qtd. in Gifford, 2007, 9). They perceived their neighbours as negative and different from themselves other than the fact that they might be financial equals (Michelson, 1977 qtd. in Gifford, 2007, 9).

This breaks away from Sarason's definition of "sense of community" because residents do not want to keep an interdependence with one another.

Outdoor amenities have been studied as places that increase social interaction. The study mentioned above examines three housing types in: an old neighborhood of low-rise tenement houses, a traditional high-rise housing project and an innovative high-rise housing project, where a creative outdoor design had been added to encourage outdoor use (Holahan, 1976 qtd. in Gifford, 2007, 10). The old neighborhood and the innovative project showed higher levels of outdoor socializing than the traditional project, which suggests that high-rises can discourage social interaction in their vicinity, but it can be outweighed by setting aside an area designed to encourage social interaction. (Gifford, 2007, 10). However, nature seems to be a fundamental aspect that facilitates social interaction (Gifford, 2007, 10), which shows that concepts, such as a gardening club may increase interaction amongst condo residents. This may eventually impact community building in a positive manner.

The best model to balance people's competing views of privacy, nature and convenience is a hybrid model, somewhere between a vertical and horizontal city (Montgomery, 2014, 136). For instance, in Copenhagen suburban and urban attributes have been fused in one building, where a building of eleven stories has patios, a private backyard for everyone and a district dense enough for transit (Montgomery, 2014, 136). An important point to note is that tall buildings are not recommended for increasing

social ties, as it may promote alienation. However, a balance of needed facilities can foster a sense of community for residents, because they will have time and opportunities to trust each other. As they will get to know each other and may want to spend time together, they can begin to form community in their condo towers.

Small, organized events where neighbours get the chance to interact with each other are reported to boost residents' local bond and satisfaction with their neighborhood (Kleinhaus, 2009). This can also positively contribute to the overall health of residents. Contact between neighbours should be promoted through small, low-cost events that allow residents to improve their social ties because this may be the key for policy makers to affect residents' intentions towards moving away (Van Assche et al., 2019). As a result, these events can be a source of improving residents' social ties with one another and their neighbourhood.

Moreover, creating green spaces where neighbours can grow vegetables or flowers together can function as a way to foster positive neighbourhood norms (Ward et al., 2016). These green spaces act as a vehicle for neighbours to increase contact with one another (de Vries et al., 2013). Policy planners can utilize these steps to help "set the stage" for events and opportunities that can bring people together (Van Assche et al., 2019). This creates a positive impact and can enhance residents' neighbourhood satisfaction, which reduces their intention to move from their current dwelling.

Constantly moving can have an impact on residents' chances to develop an attachment with their surroundings: the place and the people.

## **1.8 Summary of Literature Review**

The term “community” is subjective in nature, but there are certain aspects that can improve community building, such as meeting regularly, conversing on topics of interest and engaging in common activities. These elements can form a relationship which can positively affect community building. Clearly, people need to meet often, and they usually meet in common places. Condo towers have amenities that are places where condo residents can come and use for their enjoyment. Studies from the past have touched upon the possible attachment people have to places, and the positive affect that natural amenities (such as landscape) can have on people. Current literature demonstrates a possible link between amenities and community building, but is there an actual link and how? This paper analyzes the kind of amenities available in high-rise condos and asks residents about their experience with amenities.

## **CHAPTER 2 CASE STUDY AREAS**

### **2.1 About the Three Areas**

For this paper the following three areas will be analyzed: Toronto Downtown, Scarborough and Vaughan. Since the database condos.ca is utilized for the quantitative analysis of this paper, the three areas are defined based on the classification of condos.ca (see Figures 2, 3 and 4). Condos.ca is a real estate company that is in the business of selling condos. They have MLS listings of new condos in the market and the condos for resale. Condos.ca presents the following information for condos on their website: price per square foot, maintenance fees, amenities, building age, price history and the respective agent to contact. They connect potential buyers with their real estate agents who are experts on that area. This shows that the amenities are listed with the incentive of selling condos by attracting buyers.

#### **2.1.1 Toronto Downtown**

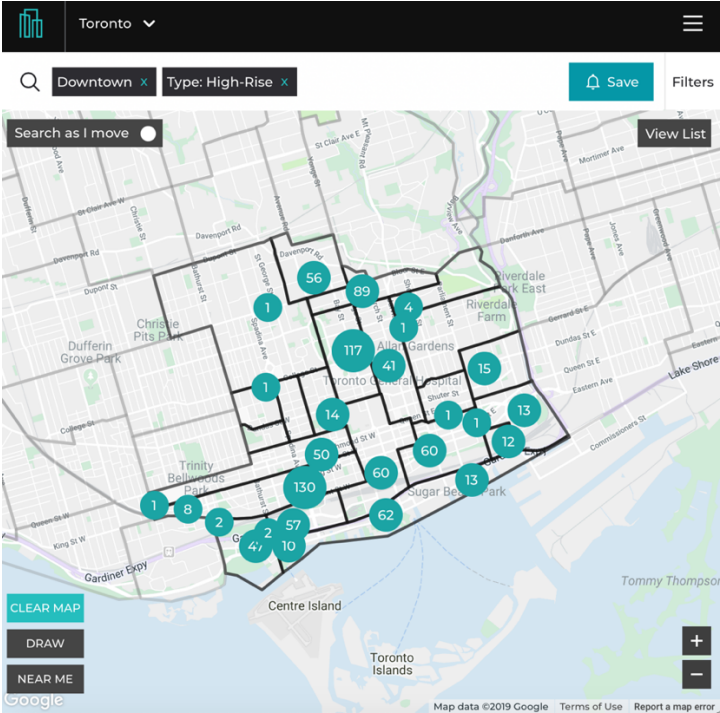
Toronto is Canada's largest city, along with being Ontario's capital. It has a large population of immigrants from all over the world and has become one of the most multicultural cities in the world. The population as of July 2018 is 2,956,024 (City of Toronto, 2019). Toronto has experienced a notable condominium development over the last forty years and especially during the last decade (Rosen & Walks, 2015). The fact that Toronto Downtown significantly consists of condominium towers, functioning as an economic hub with major banks, it is of great importance to analyze the condo market in Downtown Toronto. This will provide a basic understanding of the condominium market in an inner city.



People mainly define Downtown Toronto from Bloor to Waterfront and from Don Valley to Bathurst. However, condos.ca defines Downtown Toronto as a larger area (see Figure 2). The black outline on the map below shows the area condos.ca is classifying as Downtown Toronto. They also included Liberty Village in their classification. This is not the standard definition of Downtown Toronto. The website condos.ca is used for analyzing data on amenities in this paper and that is why their definition is followed.

Figure 2

Classification of Downtown Toronto



Source: Condos.ca

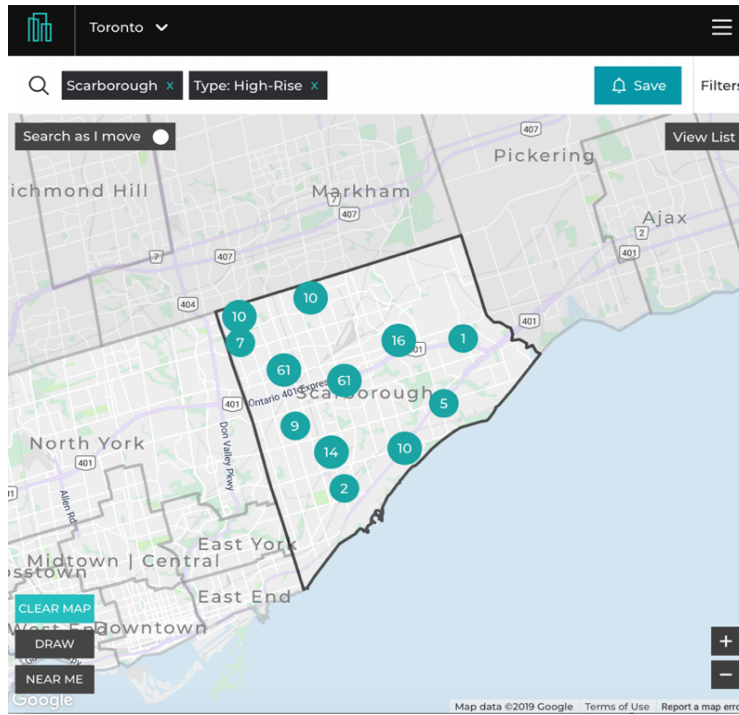
### **2.1.2 Scarborough**

Scarborough has a population of 632,095 as of 2018 (City Planning Strategic Initiatives, Policy & Analysis, 2018). It is sparsely populated in comparison to Downtown Toronto. It consists mainly of low-rises but there are also various condos spread throughout the city. Although Scarborough is a part of the City of Toronto since Amalgamation, the current condo boom occurring in Scarborough is interesting. This is because it was classified as an old suburb that is now facing urban densification through condo towers. In Fall 2018, the City began working on a master plan for the area that states, “Scarborough Centre is envisioned as evolving from a suburban, car-centered commercial hub into a vibrant, urban, pedestrian-friendly, mixed-use community, anchored by transit, an enhanced public realm, and compact development” (Urban Toronto, March 19, 2019). There is currently a lot of residential development in the form of high-rise towers and mid-rise in the city. It is interesting to note the role of amenities in these structures and the different types of amenities in an inner city as compared to an old suburb. Scarborough carries a rich history of “community” and the transformation that it is facing till today is of important value to note if condo amenities are benefitting the residents.

Below (Figure 3) is an illustration of the classification of Scarborough according to [condos.ca](http://condos.ca).

**Figure 3**

**Classification of Scarborough**



Source: Condos.ca

**2.1.3 Vaughan**

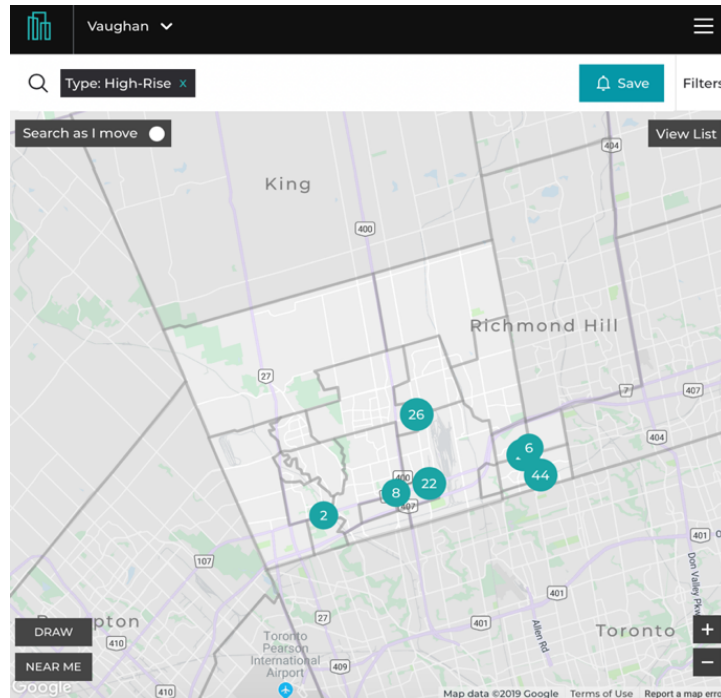
With a population of 323,281 as of May 17, 2019 (UNdata, 2019), the City of Vaughan is one of the fastest-growing communities in Canada (City of Vaughan, 2019). The Vaughan Metropolitan Centre is a 442-acre central business district that is bound by Highway 400 to the west, Portage Parkway to the north, Creditstone Road to the east and Highway 407 to the south (GTA Homes, 2019). Therefore, comparing Vaughan to Downtown Toronto and Scarborough is beneficial to observe the similarities and differences in amenities between a current downtown, an old suburb that is becoming urban and a new suburb transforming into a downtown.

The City of Vaughan consists of the five “constituent communities” of “Maple, Kleinburg, Concord, Woodbridge and part of Thornhill” (The Canadian Encyclopedia). Historically, Vaughan was an agricultural and milling community (The Canadian Encyclopedia). However, it has now transformed into an urban core from a “suburban collection of communities” (Welch et al., 2019). The City of Vaughan is twenty-eight years old and is the first city outside of Toronto to be a part of the subway line (Javed, 2016, January 6). The relative progression of Vaughan compared to other Canadian cities in becoming a downtown identifies the change from a rural community to an urban core with a downtown. Hence, understanding the value of community to such dwellers is significant as compared to other cities.

Below (Figure 4) is an illustration of the classification of Vaughan according to condos.ca. Since the data on amenities for Vaughan is collected from condos.ca, their definition will be used for this paper.

**Figure 4**

Classification of Vaughan



Source: Condos.ca

**2.2 Justification for the Selection of these Three Areas**


The housing market of many Canadian geographic areas is currently undergoing condo construction. Condos have amenities that residents can utilize for their leisure. Can these amenities play a role in community building? This is the central question to investigate in the three areas and this will begin by an analysis of the amenities available and residents' attachment to them. The most prominent condo boom occurred in Downtown Toronto, which changed the cityscape as Figure 3 illustrates. This area will be compared to two rural communities that transformed into suburbs: Scarborough and Vaughan. Each area has common communal comparisons that are significant to make when noting the current role of amenities in community building.

## CHAPTER 3 DATA COLLECTION FROM CONDOS.CA

### 3.1 Statistical Analysis

The website condos.ca is used for this paper to gather data on amenities. Condos.ca is a real estate company that is in the business of selling condos. They receive data on amenities from MLS listings and copy that information on their website. Upon a phone call to condos.ca, a representative clarified that condos.ca gets listings from other brokerages online and puts all the info on their website, which makes condos.ca a secondary source. As a result, the data on amenities from condos.ca has restricted use, which is a limitation of this study. However, the data represents the type of information condo buyers receive on amenities from websites such as condos.ca.

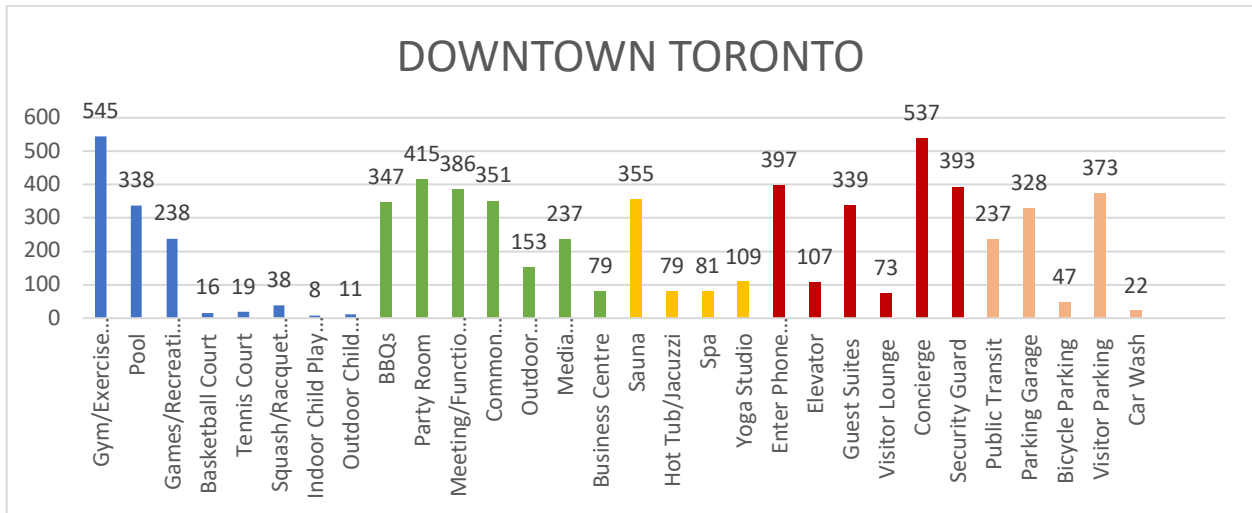
According to condos.ca as of March 19, 2019, in Downtown Toronto there are 553 high rise condos out of a total of 757 condos. In Scarborough there are 175 high-rise condos out of a total of 243 condos. In Vaughan there are 108 high-rise condos out of a total of 155 condos. It can be seen that in all three areas, more than half the condos are high-rises. Below is a visual representation of the data collection from condos.ca (Figures 5, 6, and 7). As mentioned earlier, I categorized the amenities from condos.ca into six categories: Sport Facilities, Common Areas for Different Events, Self-therapeutic, Building Utilities, Transportation and Parking. I will explain later in this chapter why I chose these six categories. For this chapter, the six categories will be color coordinated in all the graphs and charts. Please see the legend below.



Sport Facilities  
Common Areas for Different Events  
Self-therapeutic  
Building Utilities  
Transportation and Parking

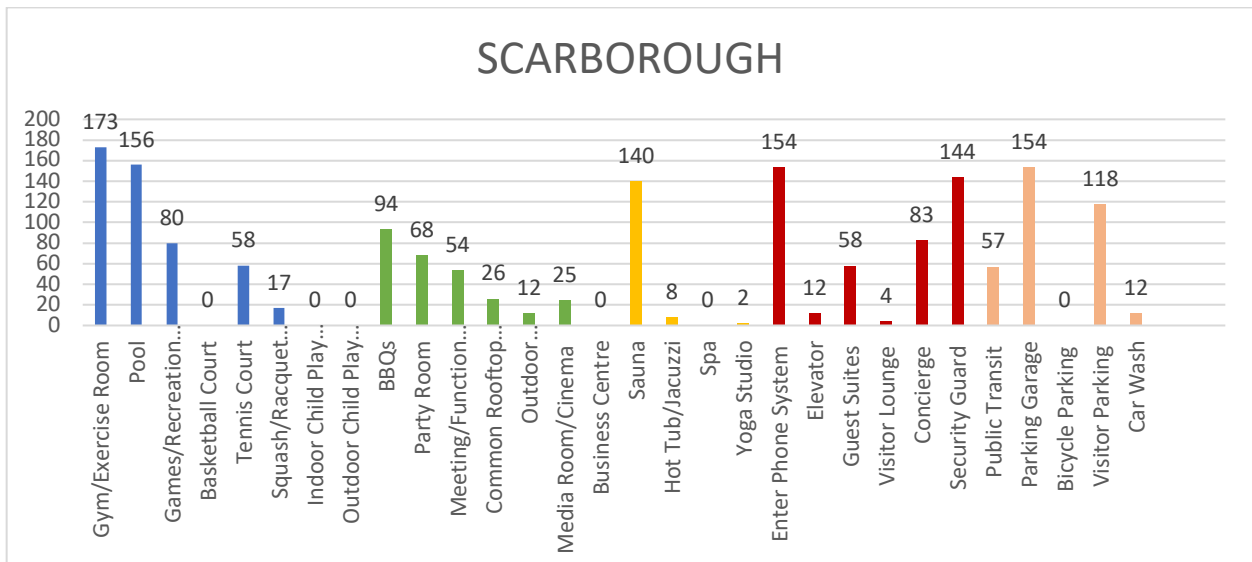
**Figure 5**

Data on Condo Amenities for Downtown Toronto, based on listing in Condos.ca



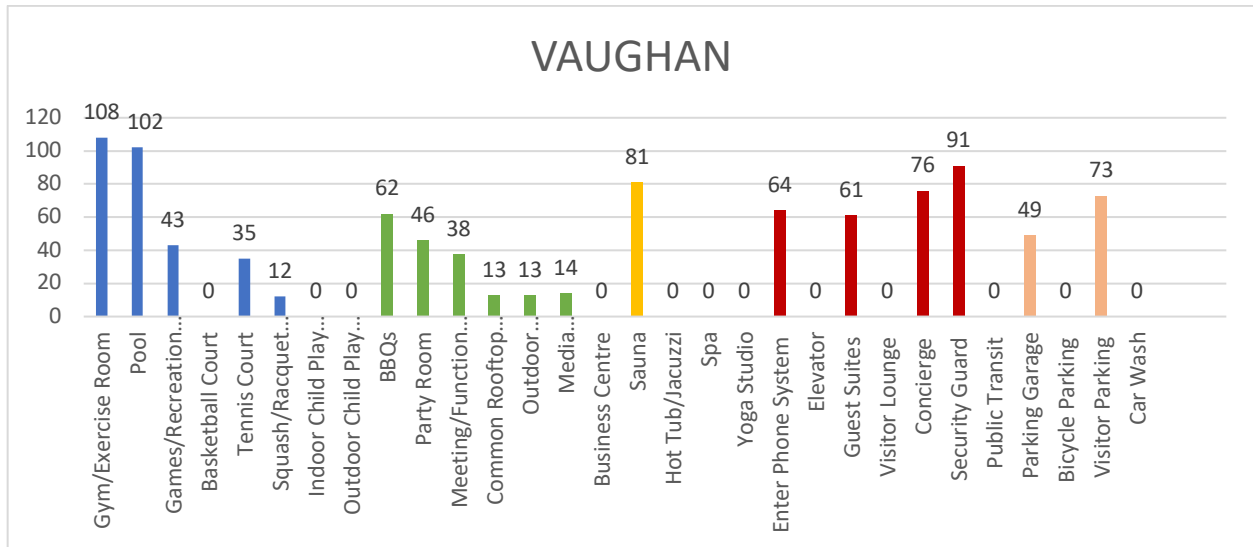
**Figure 6**

Data on Condo Amenities for Scarborough, based on listing in Condos.ca



**Figure 7**

Data on Condo Amenities for Vaughan, based on listing in Condos.ca



The amenities of condo towers in Downtown Toronto, Scarborough and Vaughan will be examined to note if the amenities encourage social interaction and community building. As research has shown, spaces available in housing complexes can encourage residents to meet one another and socialize which can lead to community formation (Lewicka, 2011, Gifford, 2007, Brehm et al., 2004). Condos.ca has a total of thirty-five amenities listed on their website and these amenities will be seen as spaces that can possibly encourage social gatherings or places that may lead to chance encounters. A meeting in the gym can function as an introductory meeting and possibly lead to a friendship which can have an effect on community building in the condo. On a side note, from the amenities on condos.ca, five amenities (Fibre Stream Internet, Beanfield Fibre Available, Beanfield Fibre Coming Soon, Pets Allowed and Pets Restricted) have not been included in the analysis for this paper. Fibre Stream Internet, Beanfield Fibre Available and Beanfield fibre Coming Soon are listed for marketing purposes on the



website and discourages in-person social interaction. These amenities encourage virtual communities instead, which is not related to the hypothesis of this paper. Also, Pets Allowed and Pets Restricted are not included in this paper because there are rules and not amenities.

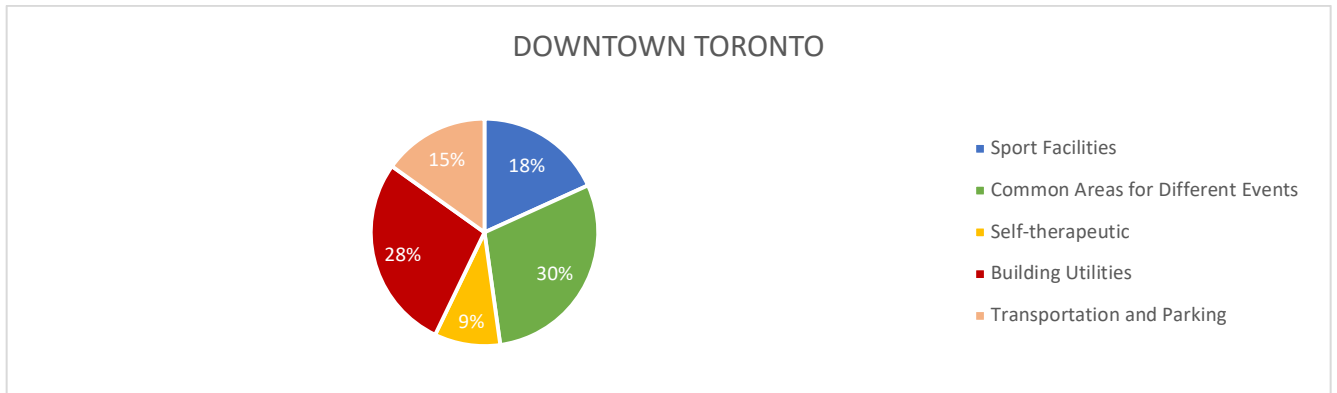
Condos in Downtown Toronto, Scarborough and Vaughan have a variation of amenities. Below I have categorized the amenities for the purposes of this paper. These amenities are not categorized or listed in any hierarchy. I observed the common elements between the amenities and categorized them accordingly. For instance, the “Sport Facilities” consist of any area that can be used for physical well-being. This is a place where residents can play a specific sport or focus on individual workouts. “Common Areas for Different Events” are places where people can get together for professional or personal meetings. These areas are arranged for people to possibly form groups and socialize. Self-therapeutic are the few amenities that people can utilize for personal relaxation. “Building Utilities” includes services provided to residents/visitors to move around in the condo or for general information and other administrative services. “Transportation and Parking” are related to mobility either through personal vehicles or public transit and maintenance of personal vehicles. Downtown Toronto, Scarborough and Vaughan has its own representation of the categories (see Figures 8, 9 and 10).

Sport Facilities	Common Areas for Different Events	Self-therapeutic	Building Utilities	Transportation and Parking
Gym/Exercise Room	BBQ	Sauna	Enter Phone System	Public Transit
Pool	Party Room	Hot tub/Jacuzzi	Elevator	Parking Garage
Games/Recreation Room	Meeting/Function Room	Spa	Guest Suites	Bicycle Parking
Basketball Court	Common Rooftop Garden	Yoga	Visitor Lounge	Visitor Parking Car Wash
Tennis Court	Outdoor Patio Garden		Concierge	
Squash/Racquet Court	Media Room/Cinema		Security Guard	
Indoor Child Play Area	Business Centre			
Outdoor Child Play Area				

<p><b>LEGEND</b></p> <p>Sport Facilities</p> <p>Common Areas for Different Events</p> <p>Self-therapeutic</p> <p>Building Utilities</p> <p>Transportation and Parking</p>
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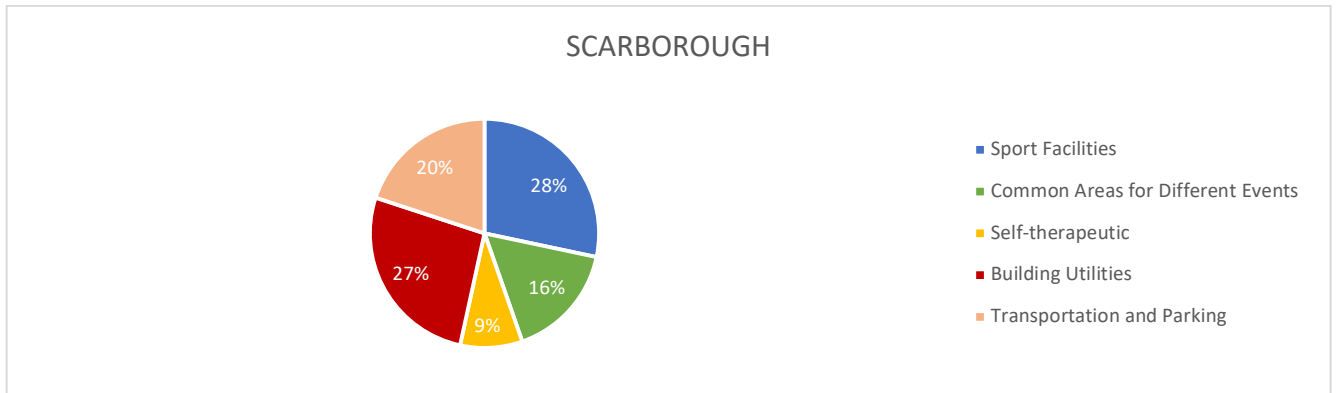
**Figure 8**

Percentage of Amenities in Each Category, Downtown Toronto



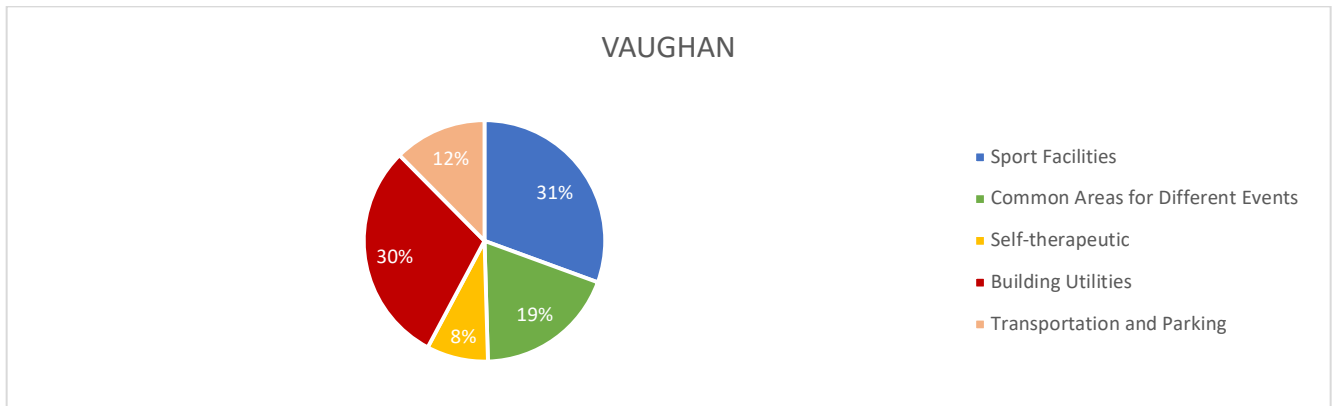
**Figure 9**

Percentage of Amenities in Each Category, Scarborough



**Figure 10**

Percentage of Amenities in Each Category, Vaughan



From this list of amenities, “sport facilities” are places where people usually go to spend individual time with the purpose of working out. However, if members play sports together on a regular basis and get a chance to interact then this may enhance their relationship with one another. This is because communication is the medium for community (Adelman & Frey, 1997, 5 qtd. in Jason, 1997). There is also the possibility of chance encounters in these amenities. The “Common Areas for Different Events” are places where residents can arrange social gatherings. “Self-therapeutic” are also places for individual well-being. “Building Utilities” and “Transportation and Parking” are services that improve the overall experience in a building. By having services that enhance the overall experience in the building, individuals may have a better bond with the building which can encourage them to work on community building in their condos. As a result, these building utilities and transportation services are advantages for residents. The “sport facilities,” “common areas for different events” and “self-therapeutic” facilities are additional amenities that condo residents have access to. For this paper, the “Sport Facilities” “Common Areas for Different Events” and “Self-therapeutic” categories will be analyzed in greater detail in Downtown Toronto, Scarborough and Vaughan.

As mentioned in the methodology section, data from the three areas on condo amenities was collected on an excel spreadsheet (see Appendix A). After categorizing these amenities, the total value in percentage is compiled in a table (see Figure 11) of the amenities in the high-rise condos of Toronto Downtown, Scarborough and Vaughan (according to condos.ca). The number of times each amenity occurred in the area was

divided by the total number of high-rise condos in the specific area to calculate the total percentage. The numbers have been rounded to the nearest whole number. As of March 19, 2019, there are a total of 553 high-rise condos in Downtown Toronto, 175 high-rise condos in Scarborough and 108 high-rise condos in Vaughan.

**Figure 11**

**Total Percentage (%) of Each Amenity in the Three Areas**

	Toronto Downtown	Scarborough	Vaughan
<b>SPORT FACILITIES</b>			
Gym/Exercise Room	98	98	100
Pool	61	88	94
Games/Recreation Room	43	45	40
Basketball Court	3	0	0
Tennis Court	3	32	32
Squash/Racquet Court	7	9	11
Indoor Child Play Area	1	0	0
Outdoor Child Play Area	2	0	0
<b>COMMON AREAS FOR DIFFERENT EVENTS</b>			
BBQs	63	53	57
Party Room	75	38	43
Meeting/Function Room	70	30	35
Common Rooftop Garden	63	14	12
Outdoor Patio Garden	27	6	12
Media Room/Cinema	43	14	13
Business Centre	14	0	0
<b>SELF-THERAPEUTIC</b>			
Sauna	64	79	75
Hot tub/Jacuzzi	14	4	0
Spa	14	0	0
Yoga Studio	20	1	0
<b>BUILDING UTILITIES</b>			
Enter Phone System	72	87	59
Elevator	19	6	0
Guest Suites	61	32	56
Visitor Lounge	13	2	0
Concierge	97	47	70
Security Guard	71	81	84
<b>TRANSPORTATION AND PARKING</b>			
Public Transit	43	32	0
Parking Garage	59	87	45
Bicycle Parking	8	0	0
Visitor Parking	67	66	67
Car Wash	4	6	0

The amenities on condos.ca are listed for the purposes of selling, rather than for the potential that these amenities have in community building. However, since I have a different approach in this paper, I will utilize the data from condos.ca to look at amenities as vehicles that can promote community building. It is important to note that a buyer and seller do not look at amenities with the concept of community when purchasing a condo. Apart from the building utilities and parking areas that condos.ca has classified as amenities, other amenities (“Sports Facilities,” “Common Areas for Different Events” and Self-therapeutic”) seem to be related to a form of enjoyment for residents. This shows that amenities can be used for the residents’ pleasure. At this point when condos are taking over the skylines of many Canadian cities, it is beneficial to analyze if the amenities used for enjoyment also encourage community building.

Now an analysis of the greatest and least number of amenities will be given below based on for Sport Facilities, Common Areas for Different Events and Self-therapeutic in the three areas (see Figure 11). The analysis will compare and contrast the number of amenities in the three areas.

### **3.2 Sport Facilities**

Gym/Exercise Room is the highest occurring amenity in Toronto Downtown (98%), Scarborough (98%) and Vaughan (100%). For “Pool” there is a gradual increase from Downtown Toronto (61%) to Scarborough (88%) to Vaughan (94%) and it is also the second highest occurring amenity. The third highest occurring amenity is Games/Recreation Room with Scarborough having the highest number (45%) and

Vaughan the least (40%); however, the numbers are in the same range. An interesting finding to note is that for “Tennis Court” Scarborough and Vaughan have 32% respectively, but Downtown Toronto only has 3%. This can be because in the inner city of Toronto there are almost no fields for tennis next to a condo and possibly due to the expensive price of land in downtown. The least occurring amenities in Downtown Toronto, Scarborough and Vaughan are an Indoor Child Play Area and an Outdoor Child Play Area.

### **3.3 Common Areas for Different Events**

Party Room is the highest occurring amenity in Downtown Toronto (75%) but it is Barbeque for Scarborough (53%) and Vaughan (57%). However, Downtown Toronto still has more Barbeques than Scarborough and Vaughan. For the Meeting/Function Room Downtown Toronto has 70% while Scarborough and Vaughan have 36% and 35% respectively. This is the second highest occurring amenity for Downtown Toronto and the third highest occurring amenity for Scarborough and Vaughan. For Common Rooftop Garden and Outdoor Patio Garden Downtown Toronto (63% / 27%) has significantly greater numbers than Scarborough (14% / 6%) and Vaughan (12% / 12%). Business Centre is the least occurring amenity in Downtown Toronto (14%) while Scarborough and Vaughan have no Business Centre. The term Business Centre seems to connote professional meetings which may create a sense of community for professionals but not necessarily for all the condo residents with each other. More importantly, the professionals can be non-residents who are attending a business meeting. This can also be the case in party rooms and meeting/function rooms where a



condo resident can invite their family and friends from outside. Clearly someone needs to organize these events where condo residents get a chance to communicate.

### **3.4 Self-therapeutic**

The amenities in this category can improve individual wellbeing which can positively affect residents' relationship with each other. Such amenities that ameliorate the overall physical and psychological wellbeing of residents can function as a catalyst for community building. Sauna is the highest occurring amenity for all three areas (64% / 79% / 75%). Spa is the least occurring amenity for all three areas (14% / 0 / 0).

Downtown Toronto also has the same percentage (14%) for Hot tub/Jacuzzi, while Scarborough has only 4% and Vaughan 0. Similarly, Downtown Toronto significantly has a greater occurrence of Yoga Studio (20%), while Scarborough has only 1% and Vaughan has 0. This shows that condos in Downtown Toronto have all of these amenities, although not in great numbers compared to other amenities. Scarborough and Vaughan do not have as many amenities in comparison to Downtown Toronto.

### **5.1 Possible Link between Price Per Square Foot and Amenities**

Condos.ca lists the price per square foot and maintenance fees among many other facts for each condo. The price per square foot and maintenance fees were also collected and compiled on the excel sheet. Condos.ca identifies that the maintenance fees are not related to their list of amenities, rather it is for items such as "heat, air conditioning, building insurance, water, common element and parking." "Common Element" seems to be referring to maintenance of common amenities such as pools.

There is an assumption among the general masses that the greater the price per square foot, the more amenities in the condo. In order to analyze this supposition, the average of the price per square foot is obtained for each area from the excel sheet. The average of the price per square foot provides a benchmark to compare the data. It also shows the number of condos in each “greater than” or “less than” category of the average of the price per square foot. There are no condos that equal the average of the price per square foot in all three areas. The average of the price per square foot will be observed based on the number of condos in the “greater than” category of the average price with the “less than” category from the amenities in the “Common Areas for Different Events” category and for “Gym.” The 7 amenities analyzed for all three areas are mainly from the “Common Areas for Different Events” because these spaces can possibly encourage community building. The other amenity is “Gym” because this is the highest occurring amenity in all three areas, and it is also a place where residents can have chance encounters.

#### **5.1.5 Downtown Toronto**

The average of the price per square foot is compared based on the number of condos in the “greater than” average price with the “less than” average price. Then 7 amenities are analyzed in greater detail based on the number of condos in the “greater than” and “less than” average price in Downtown Toronto. Scarborough and Vaughan are also analyzed with the same method. There is a total of 553 condos in Downtown Toronto. From this total, there are 280 condos in the “greater than” category of the average price and 273 condos in the “less than” category of the average price.

**Price / square foot Average: \$1022 → 553 condos**

Greater than  
\$1022 → 280 condos

Less than  
\$1022 → 273 condos

Amenities	# of Condos	Amenities	# of Condos
Gym	278	Gym	269
Party Room	143	Party Room	135
BBQ	76	BBQ	67
Pool	66	Pool	56
Meeting / Function Room	115	Meeting / Function Room	106
Common Rooftop Deck	80	Common Rooftop Deck	71
Outdoor Patio Garden	90	Outdoor Patio Garden	64

Based on the numbers above, condos that are in the “greater than” average of the price per square foot category have a greater number of condos for each respective amenity.

The greatest difference is between the figures of Outdoor Patio Garden (90/64).

Although for the rest of the amenities, the difference between the number of condos in the “greater than” and “less than” price category is not significant. Nevertheless, there are more condos in the “greater than” category which seems to support the notion that the more expensive the condos, the greater the number of condos for the amenities listed above.

**5.1.5 Scarborough**

There is a total of 175 condos in Downtown Toronto. From this total, there are 88 condos in the “greater than” category of the average price and 87 condos in the “less than” category of the average price.

**Price / square foot Average: \$442 → 175 condos**

Greater than \$442 → 88 condos		Less than \$442 → 87 condos	
Amenities	# of Condos	Amenities	# of Condos
Gym	88	Gym	84
Party Room	52	Party Room	67
BBQ	49	BBQ	45
Pool	75	Pool	81
Meeting / Function Room	45	Meeting / Function Room	9
Common Rooftop Deck	20	Common Rooftop Deck	5
Outdoor Patio Garden	10	Outdoor Patio Garden	1

In Scarborough there are almost an equal number of condos in both categories. Mostly there are more condos in the “greater than” category, except for Party Room (52/67) and Pool (75/81). The greatest difference is in the number of condos that have a Common Rooftop Deck (20/5) and an Outdoor Patio Garden (10/1). There are two amenities that do not support the assumption of the relation between price and amenities: Party Room and Pool.

### 5.1.5 Vaughan

There is a total of 108 condos in Downtown Toronto. From this total, there are 61 condos in the “greater than” category of the average price and 47 condos in the “less than” category of the average price.

#### Price / square foot Average: \$626 → 108 condos

Greater than \$626 → 61 condos		Less than \$626 → 47 condos	
Amenities	# of Condos	Amenities	# of Condos
Gym	61	Gym	47
Party Room	33	Party Room	13
BBQ	38	BBQ	22
Pool	55	Pool	48
Meeting / Function Room	25	Meeting / Function Room	13
Common Rooftop Deck	11	Common Rooftop Deck	1
Outdoor Patio Garden	12	Outdoor Patio Garden	0

Similarly, in Vaughan there are more condos for each amenity under the category of “greater than” average of the price per square foot. However, there is a significant difference for Common Rooftop Deck (11/1) and Outdoor Patio Garden (12/0). The case of Vaughan also supports the assumption that there will be more amenities when the price per square foot is greater.

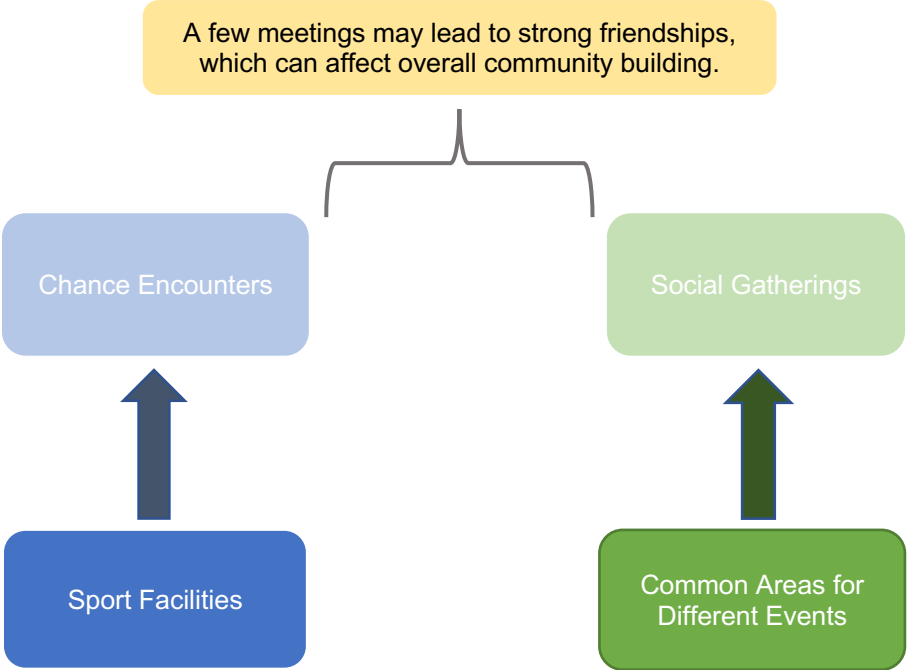
**5.1 Summary of Findings**

It is important to note that a condo owner does not think about all the amenities they have when thinking about community building. Many condos in Canadian cities such as Downtown Toronto, Scarborough and Vaughan have amenities in the “Sport Facilities” and “Common Areas for Different Events” categories. This exemplifies that condos have spaces where residents can interact with each other and engage in various activities on a regular basis which can begin to form a sense of community for residents. Condos also have several other amenities in the categories of “Self-therapeutic,” “Building Utilities,” “Transportation and Parking” as well as “Pets Amenities.” The amenities in these categories can improve the overall living experience for the residents. This can have a positive effect on residents which may encourage community building further.

Figure 12 provides an illustration of these findings.

**Figure 12**

Possible Link between Amenities and Community Building



The common notion of the greater the price of condos the more amenities a condo will have is analyzed based on most of the amenities in the “Common Areas for Different Events” category and “gym” as an example. Apart from two amenities in Scarborough this is true for the 7 amenities in the three areas. The notion seems to be true that there are more amenities in a condo when the price is greater, but it is not just the amenities that make a condo expensive. This finding does not have a direct link with community building. However, when residents are spending a great amount of money and obtaining several amenities, they should utilize these amenities to build community which can possibly affect their overall wellbeing. Nowadays people are suffering from loneliness (Kearns et al., 2015) but having a sense of community in residents’ buildings may improve their lifestyles.

## CHAPTER 4 PARALLEL PERSPECTIVES

### 4.1 Interviews

In this chapter I will use my interviews with condo residents as a method of understanding the possible link between amenities and community building. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with condo residents (see Appendix B). I interviewed seven participants either in-person or by phone. Only one participant was a male and the others were female. The participants were aged between 20-65. I contacted my friends who live in condos and then used the snowballing technique to get more participants. Most of the residents' stories reflect a parallel perspective where they compare their condo to other housing typologies. This comparative aspect informs their experience with condo amenities.

#### 4.1.1 High-Rise Condo vs. Single-Family Home

Katherine, an ex-condo resident lived in a high-rise condo in Harbourfront Downtown Toronto for five years. In her condo, she rarely saw her neighbours, because it was mainly empty. She says

I don't feel there was much of a community. People were friendly. The concierge was always friendly. But I did not feel there was a close-knit community. I remember I rarely saw my neighbours. The amenities were always empty no matter what time of the day. I know they had condo events, but I did not go to them.

Currently she lives in a single-family home and explains "I see my neighbors a lot more now and talk to them a lot more even though we do not intentionally try to meet up. I know my immediate neighbors." This shows that Katherine believes in the importance of communicating with neighbors for community building rather than suggesting a direct link between amenities and community formation.



Most people in condos have similar lifestyles, Katherine explained. They mainly work regular hours and most people do not have children, since they are single, retired or newly-wed couples. This made her feel that life stages make a difference, because when she was living in a condo, she was busy with her professional life and did not get a chance to use the amenities. There were condo events, but she did not attend them because of her busy schedule. Clearly, Katherine's lifestyle had an effect on community building.

The only amenity she saw people use was the gym. However, she felt that people did not interact much in the gym. Katherine did not use the gym herself. "I don't enjoy working out in a room. I would rather go for a walk." Currently, in her house she goes for a walk and gets a chance to interact more as compared to her experience in condos. By meeting her neighbors, she was able to build the basis for a potential relationship. This shows the importance of meeting in-person and the condo amenities are a place where residents can meet and interact.

Katherine moved out of a condo to a single-family home because she has a child. "Raising a child in a condo would be challenging," because in the Harbourfront area there is an island school that is not easy to commute to. Katherine believes that in order to enhance parents' and children's experience in condos there should be amenities geared towards their needs. She also feels that it is the North American lifestyle to usually move out of a condo when you have children.

There are a few condo complexes where she sees strong communities. Katherine gave an example of her husband's parents who are retired and are living in a high-rise condo in Scarborough which is for senior citizens. "They definitely go out to condo events. They are elderly and their social circle consists of the immediate people around them because they can't commute anywhere. The condo residents are Asian, and she believes that does encourage community. This is because they all have the same cultural background and more time, as they are retired. People who are not from that cultural background or at this certain life stage would not enjoy the amenities as much. Katherine concluded that relationships create community, rather than amenities themselves, and she feels it all starts from who the developers or marketers are catering the condo to.

Katherine's responses explain the amenities data of Downtown Toronto obtained from condos.ca. Most people living in this area are busy, as they work full-time, and are mainly single or retired, which means that they use the amenities independently in their free-time. Based on the data from condos.ca as of March 19, 2019, there are 19 condos in the Harbourfront Downtown area and the average price per square foot of these condos is \$1299. All the condos have a Gym/Exercise Room and a Pool, while only 9 condos have a Barbeque, 11 condos have a Party Room, 11 condos have a Meeting/Function room, 16 condos have a Common Rooftop Deck and 3 condos have an Outdoor Patio Garden. More interestingly, 3 condos have an Indoor Child Play Area and 6 condos have an Outdoor Child Play Area. These numbers seem to indicate that the condos in the Harbourfront area are catered more towards singles because

amenities that can be used individually, such as a gym and a pool are greater in number. On the other hand, amenities that can plausibly help in community building are comparatively lower in number.

#### **4.1.2 High-Rise Condo vs. Loft in Downtown**

Condo lifestyle: “Oh we love it.”

A condo resident of Downtown Toronto (Participant B) has lived in a loft for twenty years, which is classified as a mid-rise by developers. Her loft is as tall as a twenty-five-floor high-rise building in Downtown, because “the ceilings are very high.” She loves the convenient lifestyle, as she does not have to shovel snow. Also, she likes the amenities and feels that amenities do have an effect on community building. This is because she has a lot of friends in her condo. “We made friends either through the use of amenities or bumping into other residents in the elevators and hallways.” She even went to the gym every day and made friends there. Chance encounters do lead to friendships as it can be seen with the case of Participant B. “Whenever we bump into each other we plan to get together either in our apartments or the amenities.” Friendships were formed in amenities and now amenities are being used to intentionally get-together. The point to note is that Participant B lived in this condo for twenty years, which shows that the amount of time spent in a residential area can have an effect on friendships and community building.

Apart from the gym, Participant B uses other amenities as well, such as the rooftop where she barbeques and has meals together with her friends. This is their own private

gathering, but they use the amenities to socialize. Formally, they only have two condo events throughout the year, once during the winter, Christmas time and the other one is a summer barbeque party where most of the residents are invited, and they mostly show up. She also explained that their condo has a reading club, but she is not a part of it. Clearly, amenities themselves do not create community, but can be used as places to increase social interaction. Residents need to take time out and utilize the common areas to get to know neighbors and gradually build community.

#### **4.1.3 Downtown vs. Scarborough**

Cecil has been living in a thirty-floor high-rise condo in Scarborough since November 2018. Earlier, he lived in a Downtown high-rise condo for ten years. He has an experience with condos for a while now. Cecil says, “seeing that the kids have moved out, condo living is really good for the both of us, my wife and I.” In the case of amenities, he likes them and uses the gym, pool and sauna very often. However, he rarely sees anybody using the amenities in Scarborough and thinks that may be because the people in the building are older. In Downtown Toronto majority of the people were younger and they used more amenities.

When comparing his experience in downtown with Scarborough, Cecil felt that “because I worked downtown it was excellent.” Now that he is retired, he prefers Scarborough because “of the whole atmosphere, environment, it is much quieter, no ambulance, no fire trucks . . . more country-like” Both areas project different lifestyles based on Cecil’s observations. Clearly, there is a difference of atmosphere between an inner city that has

several young people and an old suburb that has several retired people. He also felt that “people are much friendlier in Scarborough, as compared to Downtown. People chat much more in Scarborough.” This shows that communicating creates relationships. Cecil said that he believes people use amenities depending on their culture, age and personality.

#### **4.1.4 Low-Rise Condo vs. High-Rise Condo in Vaughan**

Cher is living in a thirty-six-floor high-rise condo in Vaughan for two years. She believes “the amenities are quite good. I don’t use them too much, but I know they are accessible to me, which is a good thing.” She does not get to use her amenities too much, because she is busy. Cher explains, “I feel the few amenities I go to I sense a community. I see the same people in the gym, and they are interacting with each other.” Cher does not interact with other people while using the amenities, because she explains “I am a bit introverted that way.” She has also noted that her condo consists of new families, couples and seniors. From these different groups, she finds that seniors enjoy more than young people because they are mostly busy with work. This contradicts with Cecil’s point that many people do not use amenities in Scarborough probably because they are older. Hence, age is not a determinant factor in defining who uses amenities. Ria has been living in her seven-floor low-rise condo in Vaughan for four years and enjoys the condo lifestyle. She enjoys the fact that she does not have to shovel snow, they have their own garbage chute and a balcony. Ria explains “we don’t have swimming pools. We have a party room. I used it twice. It’s really nice. And we have a gym. These are the only two amenities we have.” Although her low-rise condo does not

have as many amenities as a high-rise, she still feels a community in her condo. There is a party every month and she is able to meet many people. When comparing her condo to a high-rise, she believes “a high-rise won’t be as much intimate as a low-rise.” On the contrary, Cher receives weekly emails about events in her high-rise, but she does not attend them herself. This may be because she believes she is introverted.

Based on these responses, it is evident that the relationships, interactions and level of understanding create friendships, which then leads to a community. Residents need to give time in order to build community, otherwise everyone is busy in their own lives. Through this there is a high chance that people will get to know each other which can sow the seed for community building.

#### **4.1.5 Independent Experiences in High-rise Condos**

Kayla, a high-rise condo resident in Downtown Toronto, has been living in her condo for two years. There are thirty floors in her condo, and she has several amenities, such as a gym, a party room and a patio. She often uses the amenities. Although she is a tenant, she does not feel that there is any discrimination between tenants and owners, as they both have access to amenities. There are chances for community building while using amenities for residents. “We met a few people on the patio and in the gym, so I would think there’s a positive impact in community building . . . A fair amount of people use the amenities.” However, Kayla explained that while using the amenities, there is a positive impact if you socialize. For instance, she does not socialize when she is in the gym. She just uses the gym and leaves.

Alisa is another high-rise condo resident in Downtown Toronto and has been living there for four years. She enjoys living in a condo where she does not have to deal with property issues or maintenance, as she is renting. Her condo has various amenities, such as a gym, basketball court, pool, sauna and hot tub. “I use the gym and it’s usually pretty busy.” However, Alisa believes amenities do not necessarily have an impact on community building. “I don’t socialize when I’m using the amenities.” She does believe that planned events and clubs are a good opportunity to build community because residents can socialize with each other. The reality is that “there’s nothing planned to bring the residents together. You can go and use the amenities on your own time.”

Both Kayla and Alisa’s responses support the Downtown narrative that many people living in these areas are young and busy with their jobs. When they use amenities, they do not get a chance to interact with other residents either due to their personality or schedule. However, some condos do not have any planned events to bring residents together. They both have noticed that amenities themselves cannot create community but can be used as places to bring residents together. This can have a positive impact on community building in the long run.

## **4.2 Summary of Responses**

Residents from different types of condos in Downtown Toronto, Scarborough and Vaughan indicate that amenities cannot form community. However, they believe amenities can work as a vehicle for residents in building relationships and ultimately friendships. The key to such an accomplishment is through communication. If residents

interact with each other while using the amenities, they will begin to build community. As Chavis and Davis (1986) identified membership is a key factor where residents need a sense of belonging. This can be possible when residents engage in activities with other condo residents in various amenities available to them (see Figures 5, 6, and 7).



## CHAPTER 5 ANALYSIS

Condo amenities can function as a catalyst for community building based on the way residents utilize these areas. There are several spaces available in many high-rise condos for the residents (see Chapter 3). Many people use these amenities independently where some interact, and others do not (see Chapter 4). Amenities can function as places for chance encounters, since people see each other, and this can lead to friendships. They may also use other amenities that are meant for social gatherings. Interacting is fundamental to encourage community building for condo residents, as explained in the literature and interviews.

There are ways that amenities can motivate more residents to interact. One example is through the design of amenities. Design can create a positive impact in community building. For instance, High Park Lofts in Roncesvalles has indoor balconies and a courtyard (see Figure 13) that fosters community (Ngabo, 2019, July 12). Nowadays people can feel lonely even with neighbours in close proximity, but the inner courtyard helps residents to connect (Ngabo, 2019, July 12). A retired resident says that she feels it is “like a small community” (Ngabo, 2019, July 12). This is an example of creating amenities that encourage social interaction. As mentioned at the beginning of this paper, communication is the medium of community which shows that social interaction is key in developing community. Design appears to work for a few residents because some may not enjoy talking to strangers as they find it a breach of privacy. Everyone has their own personality; however, the design of amenities can definitely encourage residents to communicate with each other.

### Figure 13

#### High Park Lofts – Indoor Balconies

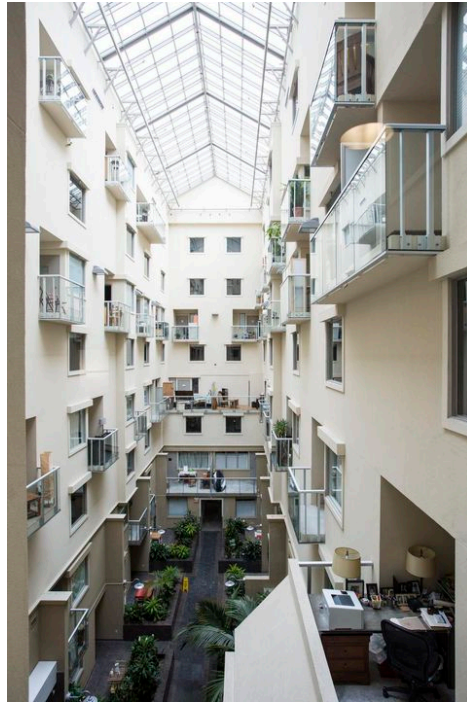


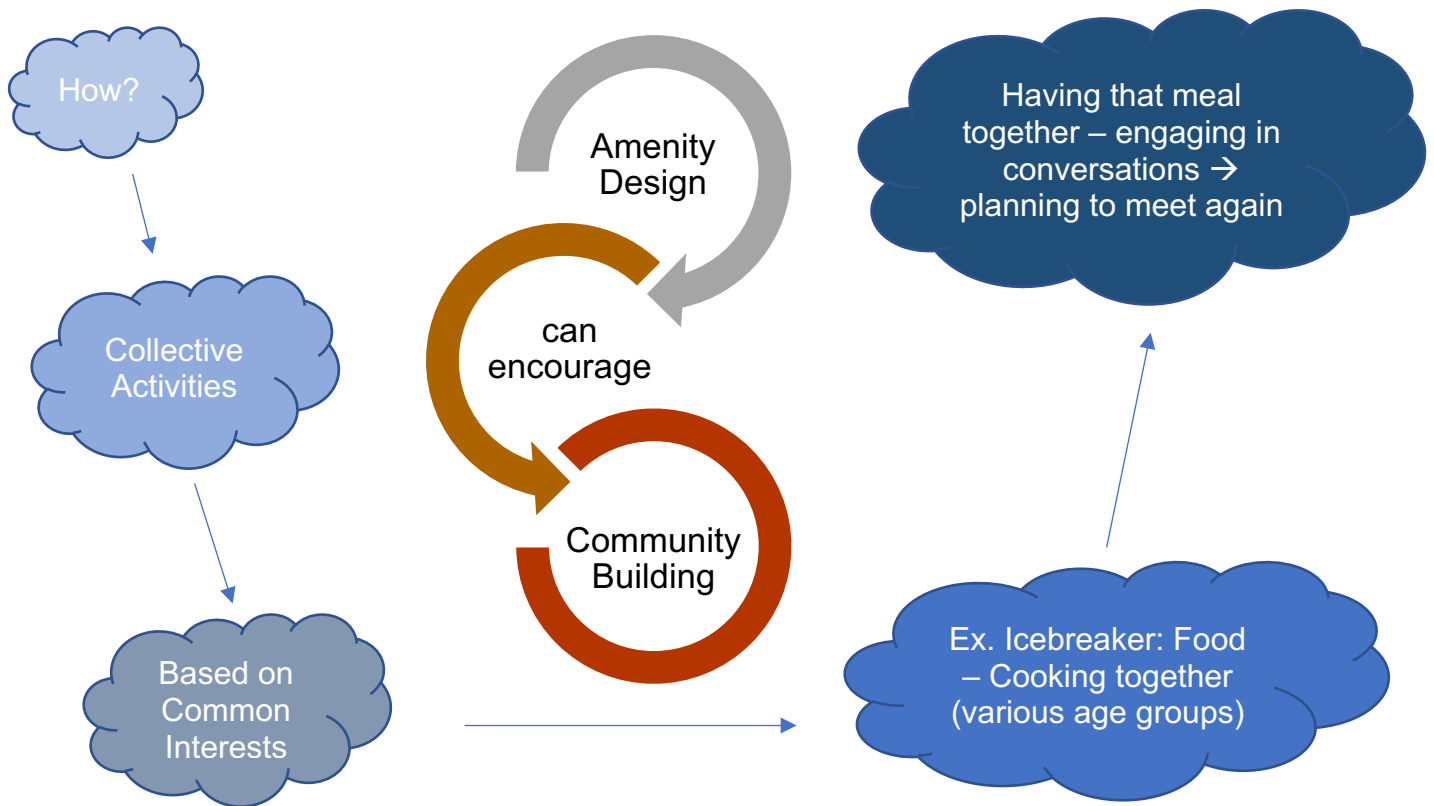
Image Source: (Ngabo, 2019, July 12).

In policy amenities are recognized as spaces that can encourage community building amongst residents (see *Growing Up: Draft Urban Design Guidelines*, 2017). There is a common tendency for residents to move out of condos as soon as they have kids (see Chapter 4). This may be because there are not enough amenities for children and the condo apartments are not that spacious. On [condos.ca](http://condos.ca) they have two amenities listed for children: “indoor child play area” and “outdoor child play area.” There is either a low percentage or nothing at all for both these amenities in the high-rise condos of Toronto Downtown (1/2), Scarborough (0/0) and Vaughan (0/0) (see Figure 11). However, amenities listed as “play areas” are not the only place where children can enjoy.

Amenities that bring people of all age groups together in collective activities creates chances for a greater community. This is because people of different personalities, backgrounds and ethnicities may come together for planned collective events. A condo complex in Vaughan Metropolitan Centre, “Mobilo Project” is planned to have a mix of housing types along with park space and amenities on one side. The complex is going to have condominiums in the form of high-rises and townhomes. “Mobilo Project” is designing the amenities to allow residents to escape from their units and interact with one another (Deveau, 2019, June 25). A design with amenities that makes people interact with each other and caters to peoples’ needs at all life stages can encourage community building for residents (see Figure 14).

**Figure 14**

Possible Relation between Amenity Design & Community Building



Developers include several amenities in condos for marketing. These are common areas that all the residents can utilize. Since condo apartments are not that spacious, amenity spaces, such as a kitchen can be used to cook a meal together once in a while. However, the kitchen can function as a place where residents can learn about the cooking of food from different cultures. This can be an icebreaker between residents. Also, children can engage in these activities where they learn how to cook with other condo residents (Growing Up: Draft Urban Design Guidelines, 2017). The activity of cooking food in a common amenity, such as a kitchen can connect people of different age groups and cultures. Moreover, having that meal together can create a further opportunity to interact with one another. There are several amenities in a condo and residents can have chance encounters which will develop their sense of community. However, community building is possible through planned events / activities that residents can enjoy together. If a resident does not like cooking and has no interest in food, then they will not enjoy such activities. Therefore, it is necessary to have more than one type of activity, which would lead to various groups and clubs of interest for most residents.

Building strong communities makes residents feel a sense of belonging. This makes them members of a group and combats feelings of alienation that many people face nowadays in tall buildings. Common spaces are meant to be used by the residents. The current trend has been for residents to use amenities independently and head back to their apartments (see Chapter 4). Chance encounters are fundamental in getting to know one another, but it is planned events that can build community. Policies also

outline “community” as an ideal concept just as developers use this word to sell condos, but in order to bring this concept into form, socialization is necessary. People perceive space differently, as human psychology and cultural values lead to various interpretations of the same space (Lehrer, 2006). Nevertheless, design can help residents in developing attachment to spaces (Lehrer, 2006). This is where amenity design can be planned to encourage community building amongst residents by having opportunities to meet and discuss over common interests. The important point to note for policy makers and condo board members is that if events are hosted where condo residents can get together and socialize with one another then they can have a greater chance of developing community. This initiative can mainly be implemented by condo residents, but condo developers may begin by creating amenities with design that encourages interaction.

## CHAPTER 6 CONCLUSION

As planning policies and economic factors have led to the condo-boom in various Canadian cities, it is now important to research if these buildings are effective housing models for residents. Do residents feel a sense of community in their condos? Do they use the amenities on a regular basis? Do they believe these spaces can have an effect on community building? These are all the questions that have guided this research.

A community is possible through regular interaction with other residents. This allows residents to develop a sense of community, as they feel they belong. The amenities are spaces where residents can regularly meet if they like. Chance encounters do create a sense of community, because they can function as introductory meetings. However, when residents take part in events of common interests, they will work on building community together. Community will not just be a concept in theory; instead it can be brought into practice by residents trying to get to know each other. People come from different cultural backgrounds and have unique personalities but having planned events based on common interests can create sub-groups in condos. It is a fact that with the current situation of high-rise condos in Toronto Downtown, Scarborough and Vaughan, not all residents can know each other. Nevertheless, sub-groups / clubs of interest provide residents with a point of connection that can positively affect community building. This can have an overall positive effect on community building.

The three areas analyzed in this paper: Toronto Downtown, Scarborough and Vaughan have various kinds of amenities based on the data collected from condos.ca (see

Figures 8, 9, 10). The amenities that are built for common events are places where residents can get together and have an opportunity to interact, while participating in an activity that the amenity area offers. For instance, planned games in a party room can allow residents to get to know one another and it may be the first step in ultimately building a relationship. The condos in the three areas analyzed for this paper have several amenities that can be used to encourage social interaction. Nevertheless, many residents do not know other residents in their building because of the lack of interaction even if they may feel lonely. This shows that it is crucial to break the animosity between residents so that they converse with each other and begin to build a bond.

The design of amenities can have an effect on who uses the amenities and for what purpose. Most commonly, many young couples move out of condos once they have a child because they do not find amenities that are beneficial for their children along with the small square footage of the condo (see Section 1.6.1). This is why there are many singles and retirees living in condos. Nonetheless, policies are now recommending kid-friendly amenities so that the demographic in between singles and retirees are not leaving condos. Condo complexes such as the “Mobilo Project” seem to address all these concerns as they have mixed types of residences: condos and townhomes. The towers connect and have shared amenities in these areas so that residents are encouraged to interact with each other, along with a playground where parents also get a chance to socialize while their children can play together. This type of condo design allows residents to use the amenities and possibly interact. If residents communicate

with each other in these common areas of their building, they can surely build community or take steps toward it.

It is important to note that residents' lifestyles and personalities play a great role in their interaction with their amenities, as seen in the conversations (see Chapter 5). One point is clear that amenities themselves cannot create community; however, they can be used as spaces to stimulate, and foster a sense of community amongst residents. In high-rise condos, residents do not have much of an opportunity to meet the same people, as there are several residents in a high-rise. Scheduled events can bring residents together, as it will be an event that residents will know about and can plan to attend based on their schedules. However, as some residents have explained they do not attend these planned events. This depends on their personality because they may not prefer to interact with their neighbors, just like people in single-family homes may not necessarily want to interact with their neighbours. Nevertheless, planned events are important in condos, because there is not a high probability that the same people will bump into each other. That is why when most residents meet regularly, it will create opportunities for community building within the condo.

The assumption that expensive condos have better amenities is not true, because land prices define the price. However, the main finding of this research is that amenity design can encourage community building. It can increase resident's attachment to their homes which will positively affect their sense of community. While it may be impossible to gather all the condo residents together, there can be groups formed based on common



interests. A club based on common interests can consist of people that find that particular activity interesting. This can be a similar concept to the extracurricular clubs in schools. Clearly, condos have several facilities that residents can practically utilize to strengthen bonds and enjoy the community that is theoretically so close to them.

Through the case studies in this paper, a number of factors emerge to explore some questions in more detail: how to improve community interactions, what makes a stronger community? With the help of more detailed studies those questions can be answered, using various types of data and along with the scope of many scholarly fields. This paper has opened discussion about the crucial factor of exploring links between condo amenities and community building for residents. The concept of condo amenities and community building is seen as a whole; a specific condo tower has not been analyzed as an example. That is a limitation of this study and future prospects can be to examine specific condo complexes with certain amenities from an inner city and a suburb. As a result, it will become clearer how a certain number of residents use these amenities and their attitude towards it.

# APPENDIX A

A Screenshot of the data from condos.ca collected on an Excel sheet

The screenshot shows an Excel spreadsheet titled "Condos (version 1).xlsx - AutoRecovered". The spreadsheet contains a list of condos in Vaughan, Ontario. The columns include various amenities and features, and the rows list individual condo units with their respective prices and square footages.

Address	Gym	Public Transit	Parking	Security	Pool	Party Room	Guest Suite	Intercom	Concierge	Bicycle Parking	Walking	Meeting Room	Storage	Yoga Studio	Media Room	Gymnasium	Laundry	Basketball Court	Tennis Court	Car Wash	Common Deck	Hot Tub	Spa	Outdoor Pool	Business Centre	Elevator	Fibre Internet	Reserved Parking	Reserved Parking	Price per Sq Ft	Master Fee
1000 SHEPPARD AVE. E. UNIT 1001			X		X				X		X																			\$826	\$383
2000 SHEPPARD AVE. E. UNIT 1001			X	X	X			X	X				X																	\$571	\$906
1000 SHEPPARD AVE. E. UNIT 1001		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X					X	X														\$753	\$368
1000 SHEPPARD AVE. E. UNIT 1001		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X					X															\$652	\$578
1000 SHEPPARD AVE. E. UNIT 1001		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X					X															\$609	\$639
1000 SHEPPARD AVE. E. UNIT 1001		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X																				\$778	\$470
1000 SHEPPARD AVE. E. UNIT 1001		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X					X															\$516	\$785
1000 SHEPPARD AVE. E. UNIT 1001		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X					X															\$532	\$906
1000 SHEPPARD AVE. E. UNIT 1001		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X					X															\$795	\$357
1000 SHEPPARD AVE. E. UNIT 1001		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X					X															\$730	\$439
1000 SHEPPARD AVE. E. UNIT 1001		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X					X															\$588	\$855
1000 SHEPPARD AVE. E. UNIT 1001		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X					X															\$826	\$1,054
1000 SHEPPARD AVE. E. UNIT 1001		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X					X															\$709	\$443

## **APPENDIX B**

### Semi-Structured Questions to begin Conversations with Residents

1. What are your experiences before moving into a condo? (Trying to get background information)
2. What are the advantages of living in a condo?
3. How are your condo amenities?
4. What aspects do you like about your condo amenities?
5. How often do you use your condo amenities?
6. Are there any amenity sub-groups in your condo? (Based on their answer: do you belong to any sub-groups?)
7. How do you find your condo community?

## **INTERVIEWS WITH CONDO RESIDENTS**

Katherine: April 3, 2019, Ex-high-rise condo resident in Downtown Toronto

Participant B: May 14, 2019, Current loft condo resident in Downtown Toronto

Cecil: May 19, 2019, Current high-rise condo resident in Scarborough and ex-high-rise condo resident in Downtown Toronto

Cher: May 12, 2019, Current high-rise condo resident in Vaughan

Ria: May 11, 2019, Current low-rise condo resident in Vaughan

Kayla: May 18, 2019, Current high-rise condo resident in Downtown Toronto

Alisa: May 24, 2019, Current high-rise condo resident Downtown Toronto

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