**Affordability, Transit, and Housing: A case study of *Vivanext* on Yonge Street in Richmond**

**Hill and Newmarket**



**by**

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**A Major Paper submitted to the Faculty of Environmental Studies**

**in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master in Environmental Studies**

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**Date**

**November 30, 2016**

**Abstract**

The GTA has experienced population growth in the past decade, and the majority of this growth is attributed to immigration. As municipalities push for more sustainable ways to travel, it is crucial that it is done in a just and equitable manner that caters to the diversity in cities. This includes cost effective means of travel for children, the elderly, families, low income communities, people with disabilities, and also the working population. There are many overlaps in these groups and they should not be considered as separate groups, for instance a working woman may have low income or high income. To fully harness the benefits of transit systems, walkable, compact and mixed use developments in proximity to transit stations have been suggested in the form of Transit-oriented Development (TOD).

Transit and housing are big indicators of affordable neighborhoods. TOD has added to the equation of affordability in YR because of the low numbers of affordable housing along major transit corridors and Stations. York Region is becoming highly unaffordable, especially for low and moderate income earner. Policy solutions should not only cater for low income families but also alleviate the challenges of moderate income earners who spend more than 50% of their household income on housing. Affordability affects overall livelihood of families especially those with high risk of homelessness.

Through a case study of the environmental justice implications of *Vivanext* bus rapid transit Yonge Street - Richmond Hill and Newmarket in York Region, it is evident that there is a connection between transit, housing and poverty, a connection that does not get much attention in urban planning in Canada. Environmental Justice (EJ) offers a framework to analyse the current transportation planning practices. Environmental justice incorporated in planning for transit is usually applied to communities with low income or those with minorities, but is it applicable in the mostly affluent York Region? The paper explores the tenets of power in urban planning and unconventional avenues for negotiating power and the sources of power. The Right to the City framework uses "rights" to fight injustices that are usually dictated by minority elite. Claiming one's right in place making creates avenues to challenge power, contest decisions and realizing the right to the city. All these frameworks are insufficient independently but can inform one another to understand and challenge current power relations that claim invincibility.

## Foreword

Through the Environmental Justice lens, I will explore the impact of transportation planning decisions on minority communities or communities with low income. In particular, through environmental justice critique of systematic and procedural limitations of place making, this study questions the power relations and between the people who occupy the city and those that plan for it. Urban transportation systems are planned with the intent of communities growing together; however, some community members benefit more from the goods than others while some suffer more from the "bads" than others.

Component 1 of my Plan of Study (POS) is about inclusive urban planning. This paper questions the process of transportation planning and the eventual distribution of costs and goods. It also investigates who plans the city for whom and how much power they have over the planning process. This paper is a contribution to better understanding equity in planning decision and builds up on the work that was started in Strategies 1.1.1, 1.1.2, 1.1.3. And 1.1.4.

Component 2 of my POS explores Environmental Justice. This research had given me the opportunity to engage in literature in environmental justice and its applicability in Canada where there is no clear definition of environmental racism. Through this paper, I have explored EJ beyond environmental "bads" and questioned the more abstract forces leading to disparities such as social exclusion.

Component 3 of my POS explores the interdisciplinarity of environmental justice and urban planning and the implications of this amalgamation on the general livelihood of people in urban areas in relation to where they live in the city. This research is an intersection of transportation planning and Environmental Justice.

## Acknowledgements

I would like to thank all the people that have been there for me physically, mentally and spiritually as I have journeyed through this program.

To my Supervisor, Jennifer Foster, thank you for your patience, guidance and understanding at every step of this paper. I would like to thank my Advisor Jin Haritaworn for guiding me through the program and for encouraging me to seek for my place in the planning world.

To my family and friends, especially my husband, Peter Masembe Mpaka, I will always be grateful for the love and encouragement during this program.

To my colleagues and professors, it was great learning from each other. And finally to everyone who contributed to this research thank you for your insightful contribution.

Table of Contents

## List of Abbreviation

EJ – Environmental Justice
GTA – Greater Toronto Area
GTHA – Greater Toronto and Horseshoe Area
RTTC – Right to the City

YR – York Region

**Chapter 1: Introduction**

I was fortunate to have lived both the privileged and underprivileged experiences in Toronto. Listening to some well-intentioned people discuss issues surrounding race, gender, class, and ethnicity in Toronto made me realise that I was hearing a different story from many low income residents of Toronto. Statistics indicate poverty is on the rise in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) and the middle class is stretching thinner to keep up with the high standard of living. Equity issues surrounding class, gender, and race are clustered together as a category that needs to be catered to after planning for the general population. This categorization of people as "these people", "these neighborhoods", objectifies populations and creates stigmatization where it is not needed. Planning is a crucial and integral process of resource allocation yet when race, class, and gender are brought up, they are clustered as a group that needs special attention under the "diversity" umbrella. This kind of attention feeds back into the mechanism that creates the disparities in the first place. That is why Right to the City approach is employed in this paper, to accentuate every citizen's right; whether rich or poor.

While there are talks of inclusivity and diversity in planning, transportation planning has stayed shielded from the debate about the share of costs and benefits of planning decisions as discussed by environmental justice scholars. Multiculturalism in planning debates have been on-going since the last decade; however, planning language has not significantly changed to reflect the multiple schools of thought that advocate for more race, class, and gender inclusivity in transportation planning. It is usually assumed that planning decisions are for common benefit of the community, but with the changing demographics of York Region (YR), who is planning for whom? Who has the rights to the city? And who makes that decision? Should main transit corridors that transport residents in and out

of the region take priority? Or would people benefit more from interconnected regional transit given the forecast job growth in the region? These are some of the inquiries explored in this paper.

This research concentrates on individuals with a low income status and how they experience the connection between transit and housing affordability, especially those who want to access areas with good transit. An Environmental Justice (EJ) framework and the Right to the City (RTTC) approach are employed to unpack equity in the process of planning for transit. The guiding question of this research is: For whom and by whom? Who benefits from increasing prices and who is excluded from areas with high housing costs yet have the best transit? This paper investigates the connection between transit, housing and poverty, a connection that does not receive much attention in urban planning in Canada. Transit Oriented Development (TOD) has added to the problem of affordability in YR because of the low numbers of affordable housing along major transit corridors and stops. As York Region moves towards active transportation and transit–oriented development, what are the potential benefits and risks for low income residents, given the already high housing costs in the region?

## 1.1 Research Methods

### 1.1.1 Choice of Study Area.

York Region is a growing municipality. The social, economic, and political profiles surrounding any transit system determines its eventual use. Although, my initial interests were focused on transportation equity, as I talked to more community members, my research evolved to include the diminished availability of affordable housing in York Region and TOD. Embedded within my research is the goal of preventing further loss of affordable housing, protect current stock, and

watch for potential hikes in rental prices due to construction of transit facilities along Yonge Street from Richmond Hill to Newmarket.

### 1.1.2 Literature Review

A literature review was conducted to inform my analytical interpretation of TOD in York Region. This literature review focused on the intersection between environmental justice and transportation planning with other frameworks that address powerlessness in decision making as well as the history of development interests in the area and the housing costs after the development. My literature review accomplished these goals:

1) To become familiar with the basic tenets of TOD;

2) To understand the different critiques on the limitations and promises of transit planning in York Region and how that affects policy development; and

3) To explore EJ and RTTC analytical lens and examine its applicability in this case study.

### 1.1.3 Planning Policy Analysis

I reviewed policy documents from all levels of government and conducted basic content analysis on transit development. In addition, I incorporated demographic data for York Region, as well as map-based and graphic record of policy and planning processes.

### 1.1.4 Media Analysis

I also engaged media resources on my case study, such as archived local newspaper articles. Researched for debates on inclusion, how difference is taken into account, and public opinion on transit facilities in York Region.

### 1.1.5 Interviews

Semi-structured interviews with relevant stakeholders who were purposefully sampled with variation in role to gain varied points of view were conducted (DiCicco-Bloom and Crabtree, 2006). The interviewees were selected after careful background information gathering on local community organizations whose work was related to affordability, homelessness, and housing and overall wellbeing. I interviewed one community member who was recruited through a snowball interview technique (Trumbull, 2005) after talking to the community organizations. An invitation letter that communicated all of the information pertinent to informed consent, asked potential respondents to participate in the research. With permission from the interviewees, the data was gathered through a voice recording device. It was later stored on a dedicated USB drive and the interviews were transcribed and analysed for this research purpose only. Twenty organizations were invited to participate in research study. There was no reply from some, some declined to participate in the study, and some agreed to take part in study. In total, five respondents were interviewed.

Other secondary data sources include interviews from Vaughan Mayor Maurizio Bevilacqua by Adam Martin-Robbins, of *Vaughan Citizen,* on December 31, 2014 and interview with York Region Transit Corporation President Mary-France Turner and Chief Engineer Paul May by Lisa Queen of *Newmarket Era* on June, 01, 2015. These interviews were obtained from online newspaper databases. Additionally, participatory observation was used when I attended the *Make Rental Happen: Creating the Conditions for Private Market Rental Housing Symposium* on Friday June 20, 2014 in Richmond Hill. It was organized by YR and representatives from York region, developers and community organisations discussed the future of rental housing in YR

**1.1.6 Interviewee Profiles**

Because the respondents are anonymous here is a brief profile for each respondent.

Interviewee 1

Interview 1 works with an organization that offers housing assistance to low-income and moderate income families. The interviewee has more than 20 years' experience in helping clients find rental market housing or subsidized housing. They serve the youth, seniors, and everyone in between. They are located along Yonge Street.

Interviewee 2

Interviewee 2 works with a food bank and food organization that serves 40 to 50 families a week. The interviewee has worked for more than 5 years with the organization. They serve all families that come and have programs for youth and seniors. They are located off Yonge Street in a route with transit only available in the mornings and evenings.

Interviewee 3

Interviewee 3 works with an organization that provides emergency and long term shelter for youth. Their services include finding affordable housing for youth and other resources that they may need such as mental health help. They are located along Yonge Street.

Interviewee 4

Interviewee 4 is a young mother who lives near one of the major intersections in York Region with her husband and son. She is looking to move from her expensive one bedroom apartment but does not want to miss out on the transit facilities she now enjoys.

Interviewee 5

Interviewee 5 works with a faith based organization that serves a multicultural congregation. They have community outreach programs, such as a day camp for children during the summer. They are located close to Yonge Street.

**1.1.7 Ethical Consideration.**

For this research, I paid particular attention to the ethical implications of my position as a researcher, my actions towards the participants, data collected, its analysis, and eventual usage. My interest in this research topic has resulted from my continual observation of processes around me and stories from friends and relatives. Having lived through this experience, it places me as part of this research and thus imperative to bring forth that this passion may impact my research. While I cannot undo my epistemologies, I can be open to new learning and give room for investigation and discovery. The results of data collected will be used to inform the ongoing TOD planning in relation to the affordable housing crisis and homelessness. Also the participants will be informed about the eventual outcome of their contribution.

**1.2 Chapter Organisation**

The paper starts out with Chapter 1 as the introductory section that introduces the research question, background and research methods used.

Chapter 2 is composed of a literature review on TOD and housing affordability. It also includes a section on sustainable transportation.

Chapter 3 discusses environmental justice with special emphasis on the Canadian context, Right to the City theory and finally a discussion on power and negotiation in planning.

In Chapter 4, York Region is contextualised as a case study. The chapter introduces the housing crisis in York region and some of the transportation challenges in the region. It also discusses the compounded effect of transportation and housing on affordability in the region. The chapter also explores policy documents that directly impact transit-oriented development in the region.

Chapter 5 presents the findings from the research and the conclusion. The results are discussed plus

excerpts from individuals who were interviewed about their experience with transit and housing in

York Region.

**Chapter 2: Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) and Affordable Housing: Equity and Planning in the GTA**

This chapter examines the relationship between transit, housing, and affordability. Transit-Oriented development links land-use policy and transportation planning policies. The resultant dynamics from this interaction are explored in this chapter. Also sustainable transportation is examined because it is an integral part of TOD. Quantitative studies have been conducted on affordability in different Canadian cities (Moore and Skaburskis, 2003). They show correlation between the growth of affordability problems and respective rental prices to city size. This indicates that rent and housing prices are major contributors to the spatial distribution of populations.

## 2.1 Transit-Oriented Development (TOD)

As the street ways and expressways in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) are getting more congested, active transport and transit systems have been considered as alternatives to car travel to alleviate congestion, pollution, and environmental dilapidation. The GTA has experienced population growth in the past decade and the majority of this growth is attributed to immigration. As municipalities push for more sustainable ways to travel, it is crucial that it is done in a just and equitable manner that caters to the diversity in cities. This includes cost-effective means of travel for children, the elderly, families, low-income communities, people with disabilities, and the working population. There are many overlaps in these groups and they should not be considered as separate groups. For instance, a working woman may have low or high income.

To fully harness the benefits of transit systems, walkable, compact, and mixed-use developments in proximity to transit stations have been suggested in the form of TOD (Transit Cooperative Research

Program, 2004). TOD has been defined as high-density construction located within walking distance to a transit stop. It is mainly characterised by compact development that prioritises pedestrian access to services without a personal vehicle (Crowley et al., 2009). Despite the popularity of TOD, it has led to health, economic, environmental and social concerns, such as gentrification and lack of affordable housing.

Increasing housing prices are closely linked to eventual gentrification and homelessness (Grube-Cavers and Patterson, 2009). For gentrification to occur, an area has to be defined as "gentrifiable" (Freeman, 2005). It must have poor and working class population before a noticeable change in income, rental values, education, as attributes of socio-economic status need to change faster than the rest of the city (Grube-Cavers and Patterson 2009; Freeman, 2005). Most studies about transit corridors have included evidential data and indicators of gentrification as the eventual displacement of low-income people by more affluent occupants (Walks and Maaranen, 2008; Lees, 2008; Slater, 2004). This research concentrates on low-income people, not necessarily those who lived there before, but those who want access to areas with good transit. Therefore, gentrification will not be at the forefront of this paper, since most of York Region has been built as a bedroom community for affluent suburban residents and gentrification is not the best conceptual fit for understanding the dynamics occurring across the community.

TOD offers more options in terms of movement of people. The compact design enables active transportation, efficient transit design, and improvement of the public realm as witnessed in Community Improvement Plans (CIPs), such as *The Promenade* in the Town of Aurora. However, TOD needs a high density for it to be successful. Growing suburbs have embraced this type of development but it is still a challenge because of evident ongoing sprawl. While automobile

proponents point to the economic benefits of highways and car efficiency, they forget to point out the environmental ramifications of these developments and also government intervention that has been instrumental in promoting this kind of development. On the other hand, advocates for TOD under the smart growth umbrella ignore the reality of the difficulty involved in breaking habits such as auto usage and the ideal of a single detached home in good school districts in the suburbs (Grube-Cavers and Patterson, 2009).

**2.2 Sustainable Transportation**

Timothy Beatley (1995) defines sustainability as a collective recognition of using the earth's finite resources in a holistic manner that is equitable and just to ensure everyone, including future generations, has access to the city. City planning should strive to create "sustainable communities" that are inclusive both in their physiological and social makeup. When a city is planned to sustainably accommodate its respective population, urban form greatly dictates the quality of life that its residents would enjoy. Sustainable urban form fosters a harmonious space that nurtures both individual and community identities in healthy living conditions. Cities would be meaningless without form or structure. Community and individual identities are imprinted on every structure in the city. "Public images" such as districts, streets, landmarks, and intersections mentally orient people in cities and create some form of cultural bonding (Lynch, 1960). Furthermore, an individual needs to be able to spatially connect the different areas of the city to get their orientation. Transit systems, paths, bridges, define the city form that a resident becomes acclimatized to. Using streets, even when they mimic a maze, to find one's way around the neighbourhood creates a locality that can be connected to other localities to build a city that is easy to navigate. Directing a city's activities and settlement to a centre can permit construction of plazas, transit routes, and other social activities that are easily accessible (Lynch, 1960).

Spread out cities are cumbersome and costly to navigate thereby frustrating people through commuter traffic jams, use of automobiles which all culminate to increasing environmental degradation, and pollution. Additionally, unplanned cities, such as "ruralopolises" (Qadeer, 2004), reaffirm the need to plan for sustainable urban forms that can cater for high density without compromising liveability. Stephen Wheeler (2003) explains new urbanism as a form of city planning that is starting to take root in cities like Toronto. New urbanism calls for a revitalization of downtown cores and equipping streets with walkable spaces that are sought from suburbia (Wheeler 2003). It is a chance to restructure the city so that urban sprawl and destruction of additional natural space is reduced in an effort to achieve sustainable cities. Due to car dependence to get around, people in the suburbs are less likely to have community connections that those that do not drive may enjoy. Increased sprawl and current land use patterns have been tailored to auto usage and it is proving costly to make such neighbourhoods walkable. According to Forsyth and Southworth (2008), the "cul-de-sac or loop" pattern in residential areas is not pedestrian friendly. This is exacerbated by high-speed freeways and rails that have broken the intimate walking patterns that existed before motorised transportation.

Kennedy et al. (2005) define a sustainable transportation system as one that includes "the provision of accessibility and the generation of wealth by cost-effective and equitable means while safeguarding health and minimising the consumption of natural capital and emissions of pollutants" (Kennedy et al., 2005:394). Sustainable transportation is attainable through good governance, effective funding mechanisms, investment in infrastructure, and vibrant local communities (Kennedy et al, 2005). It is important to articulate that good governance is an important part of a sustainable transportation model because certain transportation choices have had detrimental

outcomes for some communities such as limiting access to life needs, increasing pollution and introducing health hazard, as well as reducing the proportion of funds and resources available to equity seeking groups. Also, municipalities may be pressured by development opportunities and fail to visualise the broader consequences of their planning decisions.

As urban centres around the world grow, there is increasing concern over the widespread use of the motor vehicles. In many ways, motor transportation has advanced the human race and improved the conditions of living through improved access to food and medicine thereby improving the well-being of humankind (Button, 2010). On the other hand, motorised transportation has had negative impacts on overall human health and the environment. For instance, nearly 80,000 adults in European cities are estimated to have died from illnesses related to long term exposure to traffic related pollution (Button, 2010). Noise from traffic has been associated with decreased sleep and overall decrease in mental health. Not to forget, there is also a reduction in physical activity with increased car usage. The lack of physical activity can be a gateway to diseases such as diabetes, and coronary heart disease (Button, 2010).

**2.3 Walkability**

Forsyth and Southworth (2008) elucidate that the term "walkability" does not have to only infer physical activity. It can be expanded to include other elements that make walking a desirable choice over other means. According to transportation planners, an ideal walkable environment should be cost effective compared to driving or transit and there should be a short distance to destination or other means of transport. Additionally, the walkable distance should be accessible to people of all ages and lifestyles. To encourage people to walk, pedestrians should feel safe; therefore, streets should be well lit and crime free. Furthermore, the architectural community emphasises the presence

of mixed uses such as condominiums, low rise apartments, and coffee shops that are pleasant to the eye, especially to upper middle class residents who tend to prefer the car as a means of transportation (Forsyth and Southworth, 2008).

In neighbourhoods that are designed for walkability, people tend to walk, cycle, or use public transit more in comparison to less walkable neighbourhoods (Perotta, 2012). People in more active neighbourhoods tend to be more physically active than their less active counterparts and this implies that people in walkable neighbourhoods are less likely to suffer from chronic diseases such as obesity (Perotta, 2012). The social equity issue is that less walkable neighbourhoods are found to be more common in poor neighbourhoods. Thus they will suffer more from the health consequences of inactivity and have higher transportation costs. Additionally, people that live in walkable communities weigh 6-10 pounds less than those in sprawled out suburbia (International Making Cities Liveable, 2014).

The reasons why people walk are varied. Some do so for leisure, others for physical activity while others have no choice. Different indices have tried to measure why and how far people walk but it is unreliable since people travel to different places at different frequencies (Alfonso 2005). Alfonso, using the socio-ecological model, elucidates that there is a hierarchy of walking needs where some factors are more influential than others in a decision on whether to walk or not. "These needs progress from the most basic need, feasibility (related to personal limits), to higher-order needs (related to urban form) that include accessibility, safety, comfort, and pleasurability, respectively" (Alfonso, 2005: 818). For this hierarchy to work, a higher order component is not feasible if a lower one is not satisfied. That is to say, comfort comes after safety – meaning that one would not walk comfortably if they do not feel safe. The most basic of these levels of walking is feasibility. This level

determines if a person will or not walk for strolling trips and whether they will walk or take other modes of transportation for destination trips. Availability of time to walk; physical impediments; such as weight, age and responsibilities; such as taking care of children and the elderly can all affect a person's decision to walk (Alfonso, 2005). Time has proven to greatly affect what mode of transportation people use, especially middle-aged individuals caring for children and the elderly.

Manaugh and El-Geneidy (2011) infer that while measuring walkability, a distinction has to be made between residents of a community that walk out of choice and those that have no other alternative. The different indices used should take into account the reason why people travel a certain way. Manaugh and El-Geneidy discovered that wealthier communities are more vigilant about walkable streets in their neighbourhoods but their pedestrian numbers are still lower than those in lower income neighbourhoods. Additionally, different indices explain different land use patterns differently so great care should be taken in choosing the appropriate index. For instance, walk score community rankings are used by real estate to give buyers an option to buy a house in a walkable community for those that prefer to drive less (International, Making Cities Liveable).

Communities with poor socio-economic status experience an overlap of the risks and health problems associated with motorised transportation. According to Hertel *et al.*, (2016) the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area (GTHA) has been subjected to structural inequities that have resulted from decisions concerning where private and public capital is invested. Although, there is an overall growth for the region, not all residents benefit equally from these investments. As the general population enjoys the benefits of transit developments, increased businesses, and growth, a percentage of the population faces the negative impacts of these developments. Consequently, some

transit investments have benefited the already powerful and perpetuated the status quo of socio-spatial inequities.

## 2.4 Equity in Transportation

Equity in transportation planning is an immensely contested issue because there are different definitions of equity that can be interpreted in different ways. Equity theory has been used to elucidate on some inequalities in transportation planning. Equity is not synonymous to equality. It calls for fair treatment of people given the fact they have different backgrounds through planning for appropriate systems that serve their needs best (Hertel *et al.,* 2015). Equity can be defined in terms of opportunity, market-based or basic needs (Duthie *et al.*, 2008). Opportunity equity provides everyone equal access to the planning process and transportation means to travel to the event. Equality is the equal distribution of benefits. Although benefits are different, equality can be achieved for instance in the allocation of funds. Market-based equity dictates that a group gets what they contribute in tax or resources. Finally, basic needs equity draws from opportunity and equality and whatever is left if distributed by market value (Duthie *et al.*, 2008). These definitions present challenges because they are not individually complete or absolute so it hard to rely on them as markers of environmental justice. According to philosopher John Rawls (1971), not all inequalities are unjust. An inequality becomes an injustice when it does not benefit everyone, especially the poor. There are ways to correct unjust inequalities.  While scholars that write about injustice tend to call for justice, those who write about inequality rarely call for equality. They instead suggest ways of reducing inequality or they call for equity (Rawls, 1971).

Mainstream transportation planning tends to prioritise environmental and economic objectives such as increased travel speeds and habitat protection, but social equity issues are usually not standardised

and only arise in political debates and forums (Litman and Brenman, 2012). Transportation

networks transform neighbourhoods depending on the allocation of the resources. Citizens should

be vigilant in the monitoring of transportation funds allocation because public resources such as tax

funding are used on transportation facilities (Litman, 2002). Transport facilities greatly affect

economic development and consequently, property values and overall income in any area. Different

neighbourhoods suffer differently from the impacts of pollution, congestion, and road accidents.

Also, transportation planning decisions affect employment trends and therefore income (Litman,

2002). Equity planning requires that people be categorised demographically and geographically to

find out who are more disadvantaged.  Figure 1 explains the different levels and ways that social

equity can be monitored. From cost-based pricing to basic mobility provision, equity indicators can

be used to gauge if a system is just or not.

**Figure 1 Indicators of Transportation Equity**

| Criteria | Comments |
| --- | --- |
| Horizontal equity | Whether otherwise comparable people and groups are treated equally |
| Cost-based pricing | Whether consumers bear the costs they impose, excepting where subsidies are specifically justified |
| Progressive with respect to income | Whether a policy or project benefits or harms lower-income households |
| Benefits transportation disadvantaged | Whether a policy or project benefits or harms transport disadvantaged people (with disabilities, low incomes, or legal constraints that limit their mobility) |
| Improves basic mobility | Whether a policy or project favors more important transport (emergency response, commuting, basic shopping) over less important transport |

Source: Todd Litman (2002)

Studies have shown that suburban destinations have more comfortable and enjoyable transit than

city centres.  Some city centres tend to possess unreliable and usually overcrowded transit options

that make trips uncomfortable. Yet, people commuting  from the suburbs are responsible for auto

congestion, sprawl, and pollution.   Steve Kupferman (2012) describes an experience of a York University student who takes that 36 Finch bus, one of the crowded routes in Toronto. It is an undeniably frustrating experience. Kupferman comes to a conclusion that political will is lacking in solving the problem. When buses reach ridership capacity, Light Rail Transit (LRT) should be used on these routes; however, there is no political will for the construction of LRT on Finch as evidenced by Mayor Ford's prioritising of the construction of the Scarborough subway extension (Kupferman, 2012).  Although, the residents that use this route feel the discomfort of overcrowded buses, their lives are overtaken by the need for work and survival to make ends meet. Busy labour jobs keep them from voicing their concerns and attending town meetings because they simply do not have the time. Are their councillors responsible for their needs? And if funds for the LRT on Finch are transferred to another project, is it equitable and just? Planners need to be asking such questions in order to expose the inequities of any decision made.

In the 1960's, Paul Davidoff wrote that the "world was in turmoil over the way in which the resources of the nations were to be distributed" (331) and that debate continues today. Technical allocation of these resources does not solve the underlying issues related to the disparity of wealth, skills, and other social amenities (Krumholz, 1982). Making a transparent decision is difficult because most planning assumes a universal public opinion which in most cases, especially for a diverse city like Toronto, is not true. Geographical inequities can result from the spatial outcomes of planning decisions. By prioritising certain areas of urban regions, for instance, as transportation hub centres or transportation corridors, there is a subtle yet powerful definition of who benefits from these locations. The important considerations around accessibility and equity could be employment or faster access to services, such as hospitals. It is not a coincidence that some communities receive more enhanced basic services compared to others.

Under the 2011 Ontario Ministry of Transportation (OMT) transit supportive guidelines (s.3.5.2), changing demographics should be considered when planning for transportation in any community. Some communities have ageing populations while others have new immigrants; therefore, some communities are growing while others are shrinking. The number of people in a community, the gender, household composition, income, and ethnicity should dictate what type of walkable community is planned. Seniors may not be able to walk long distance, but they rely on transit so transit should be a short walk to and from social amenities. Low-income households may not afford a vehicle; therefore, they would need to use transit or walk more. Different ethnicities have different cultural practices so they should be accommodated in a walkable community (OMT, 2014). Environmental justice concerns emerge when the ramifications of TOD affect different groups of the population in different ways (Button, 2010).

**Chapter 3: Environmental Justice and Right to the City: Power and Negotiating consensus planning**

Because equity definitions are not enough to address the different facets of procedural inequities, especially if a lack of access to power and resources inform decisions, an Environmental Justice perspective could elucidate on the channels for more equitable outcomes. EJ framework bolstered by Right to the City theory and ability to negotiate power can fill in equity gaps. This chapter defines EJ, and its applicability in Canada to identify strengths and weaknesses in current transportation planning. The chapter further explores the intricacies of governance in Canada and possible methods municipalities could use their power. Negotiation is one way for any oppressed group to voice their opinion in the planning process.

**3.1 Environmental Justice**

Environmental justice (EJ) is usually associated with toxic waste and its lens of analysis is rarely applied to the analysis of built form and other health promoting environmental amenities (Cutts et al, 2009). Environmental justice is a way to monitor disproportionate negative environmental ramification of economic active by both public and private entities, especially to minority groups and to people of low income (Environmental Protection Agency, 2014). According to the US Department of Transportation, Transportation planning should aim to integrate the principles of environmental justice that seek

> "to avoid, minimize, or mitigate disproportionately high and adverse human health and environmental effects, including social and economic effects, on minority populations and low-income populations; to ensure the full and fair participation by all potentially affected communities in the transportation decision-making process and; to prevent the denial of, reduction in, or significant

delay in the receipt of benefits by minority and low-income populations" (US Department of Transportation, 2014).

Environmental justice offers a framework to analyse the current transportation planning practices. Environmental justice incorporated in planning for transit is usually applied to communities with low income or those with minorities but rarely used to explain why affluent communities enjoy environmental goods.

Environmental justice was rooted in the United States towards the end of the 1970s. As an appendage of the Civil Rights Movement, the grassroots movement was mainly pioneered by women. Benjamin Chavis Jr. former head of National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) first used the terms 'environmental racism' and 'environmental justice' during the protest against toxic dump in Warren County North Carolina (Massard-Guilbaud and Rodger, 2011). Toxic waste dumped in Love Canal in 1976 by Hoover Chemicals and the subsequent complete evacuation of the site was the genesis of the environmental justice movement. The term was used to define the disproportionate share of Locally Undesirable Land Uses (LULUs) by African Americans and other minorities, who thereby suffered more environmental health issues. This definition challenged the mainstream environmental movement and instigated a national debate on the place of race and class in the mainly eco-centric movement (Massard-Guilbaud and Rodger, 2011)

Robert Bullard has extensively published on environmental justice in the 1990s. Together with other scholars, he points out that it is not enough to study the racial, social and economic makeup of communities in proximity to toxic waste; but, it is imperative to study the changes that ensue after a facility is constructed (Reed, 2011). When wealthy people can afford to leave the area, a void is

created and is mostly filled by low-income residents. Environmental justice is an amalgamation of the relationship between class, race, education level, location (whether rural or urban), and economic factors (Been, 1995).That is why race and class are intrinsically tangled and one cannot discuss one without discussing the other.

Bruce Mitchell (2002) defines environmental justice in terms of the process, programs, and research in support of a safe, healthy, productive and sustainable environment for all (Reed, 2011: p.557). This can be achieved through a manner that empowers communities and individuals to freely preserve their identities and fulfil their needs through three basic components of environmental justice discussed by David Schlosberg: distribution, recognition, and participation. These components are further defined as fairness and equity in the distribution of environmental risk, recognition of the diversity of affected communities and also acknowledging that unrestricted access to the political processes that create and manage environmental policy respectively (Reed, 2011 p.517). The Environmental justice movement has expanded to include a wider multi-faceted struggle beyond social symptomatic indicators to include workplace safety, transportation, urban sprawl, sustainability, and climate justice (Agyeman and Evans, 2004). The way in which Environmental justice is envisioned, embodied, and manifested in Canada differs from the United States. EJ discourse in Canada is from primarily a Euro-centric background (Agyeman et al., 2009).

## 3.2 Contextualizing Environmental Justice in Canada

Agyeman *et al.* (2009) raise questions that are driving this paper. EJ is about the power dynamics of who gets to raise questions, whose input is valued and the amount of attention directed to questions or issues raised. Which issues are considered important to be researched or tackled and who makes this decision? In the case of public transportation, who decides that public transportation is a

common good and if so, who benefits from this decision? Should it matter? Who defines EJ matters because most communities argue that transit corridors will improve transit for people who cannot afford cars; but, they end up benefiting street business, commuters that work in downtown core and the high cost of this transit system still leaves low-income people struggling.

The Canadian Environmental Protection Act states that the protection of the environment is essential to every Canadian's well-being. Well-Being encompasses the provision of and access to Environmental benefits, such as air quality, safe water, access to parks, natural spaces, public transit options, quality housing, and reclamation of First Nations' traditional lands and territories (Agyeman *et al.*, 2009: p 7). Environmental well-being means access to aesthetic and healthy environments rather than just the avoidance of deprivation or harm. Although the definition of Environmental Justice has expanded over the years to include other social struggles beyond race (Environmental racism), the struggles that are described under environmental justice existed before the term was coined in the 1970s. For instance, since European occupation, First Nations have been vocal on injustices pertaining to loss of land and loss of different life forms (Agyeman *et al.*, 2009).

The definition of EJ evolves as it is interpreted within the social, political, and economic dynamics of a particular geographical region. Therefore, the definition expands beyond race and colour to include other forms of environmental good and bad. So place-making is a significant component of the definition of EJ (Schlosberg, 2004). There is no overarching universal definition of EJ (Debbané and Keil, 2004). Local context is key in creating a more suited form of activism to upset an injustice (Williams and Mawdely, 2006). Debbané and Keil (2004) transfer the EJ framework from its usual association to environmental "bads" and instead apply it in scrutinising sustainability and municipal processes in allocation of resources. This way, they were able to navigate the different topologies of

localised forces that converge to create injustice beyond the site of study. This way, EJ is not an abstract concept but one that is socially constructed and can be redefined to have meaning within a particular geographical entity.

The EJ framework has been applied to research conducted on demographic indicators as they relate to toxic dumping sites, mostly about Aboriginal people. It further recognises aboriginal differences and explores different ways of knowing (Agyeman *et al.*, 2009). Canadian EJ research has also explored race, industrial sites, health and safety and connection of local EJ issues to global forces such as capitalism. (Haluza-Delay, 2007). The EJ approach has rarely been used in the explanation of outcomes of urban planning. There is hesitation in Canada to acknowledge environmental injustice in Canadian urban centres and even more lethargic in recognizing the necessity to restructure wealth and resource distribution and access to decision making (Rahder, 2010). EJ has been used in health studies, but what about the social and invisible inequalities?  Evidence and proof in form of scientific and technical data have been widely used to document EJ; however, it is equally important to focus on the fairness of the processes that create inequality.

Distributive injustice is commonly described in EJ literature; however, other forms of injustices within the EJ framework have been identified that can help define the entanglements and different levels that influence the manifestation of physical injustices (Schlosberg, 2013). In Eurocentric legal theory, procedural justice is where the oppressed have no access to decision-making engines. Most influence comes from bodies of power such as the government (Agyeman et al., 2009). It is difficult to create change through procedural justice because it is abstract and brings into question the process of democratic participation and the effect that social hierarchies have on environmental

injustices. The lack of knowledge or resources puts some participants in a disadvantaged position compared to other entities, such as corporations or governments.

Keil *et al.* (2009) investigate environmental justice in Toronto and assert that there is no significant EJ movement in Canada as compared to the USA or if it exists, it is not comparable to the deep race dominated movement in the USA (Jerrett et al., 2001). According to Keil (2004) and Teelucksingh (2004), simply pasting the American EJ patterns and study methodologies onto the Canadian context may not work. With immigration, there is increased variation in living experience in Toronto. This has seen the evolution of environmental racism analysis into racialization to produce environmental inequalities.

In comparison to the American context, Canadians present an image of multiculturalism and diversity. Both of these terms were strategically coined to serve political agendas that actually segregate instead of unite the masses. Teelucksingh's (2001) writing on Toronto's context, proposes the term "racialization", a fluid terminology, more subtle than racism, and place-bound. It expands beyond the confines of colour and accounts for the overlapping layers of oppression that exist in Toronto, such as income and immigrant status (Teelucksingh, 2001). These layers have been changing over time due to the changing demographics of Toronto, unlike the USA where certain races are associated with distinct geographical areas.

Mohammad Qadeer (2003) discusses the concept of spatial segregation that explains the underlying social and economic profiles in urban areas. He argues that although overt discrimination due to people's appearances has been receding, economic and social discrimination is driving the cityscape (Qadeer, 2003). According to Qadeer, people tend to drift to areas that serve their economic

standards and also their cultural identity. The result is a proliferation of businesses and amenities

that cater to different ethnicities, thereby creating "ethnic enclaves". This not only attracts more

people of the same cultural background but also displaces or secludes people of different

backgrounds. In fact, Sherene Razack (2002) maintains that spatial segregation has less to do with

ethnicity and more with the unequal economic relations and poverty that result from capitalist and

patriarchal hierarchies of domination. Similarly, Greenstein et al. (2000) discuss the coercive and

voluntary forces of spatial segregation that result in residential segregation of people according to

race or income. Apart from a few mixed cities such as Amsterdam where social programs assist the

underprivileged in catching up with their counterparts, cities tend to display disparity in accessibility

of resources in different areas (Greenstein et al., 2000).

In her seminal book Demonic Grounds, Katherine McKittrick (2006) presents black women's

bodies as objects in place making as opposed to the subject role that has historically been

constructed. Even within their oppressive confinements, their enactments exuded power over their

oppressors. The new world was

> "economically, sexually and socially non-black; therefore, this new world suppresses the possibility of
>
> black geographies by invalidating the subject's cartographic needs, expressions and knowledge"
>
> (McKittrick, 2006: 3).

In contrast, McKittrick centres the experiences of these bodies, which she argues provide new

geographical imaginations and new maps. Discourses of ownership as discussed by McKittrick

empower an individual, gives them a voice, defines their placement in a community, and a reason to

struggle to obtain an identity.  Stereotypes and structures that can be traced back to slavery and

colonisation influence identity, humanness and the placement of value on black bodies and their

geographies. Identifying black bodies as continually lacking and always seeking becomes naturalised

and normalised. Dispossession influences the importance given to black bodies both socially and economically (McKittrick, 2006). This is enabled by hierarchical struggles that include imprisonment, welfare, and other stereotypes. McKittrick traces these processes of displacement and dispossession back to slavery and colonisation, which transplanted the black body onto a new land that had already been mapped by the colonial masters (Agyeman *et al.*, 2009).

Harris S. Ali (2010) argues for the analysis of processes that control and shape the accretion of externalities. Structural Inequality eventually leads to the uneven distribution of environmental risk and goods. The forces that influence the Canadian political economy are expansive and date back to the relationship between white settlers and the colonised nations. The colonised communities produced raw materials and resources that fed the settler colonies and Great Britain in what was called a staple economy. Therefore, Canada's economy invested in staples extraction and less in manufacturing. This is evidenced in the construction of infrastructure such as railroads to support staple-based industries. This strategy discouraged trade between Canada and other countries but supported domestic trade. Subsequently, regional disparities and dependency ensued among different regions and provinces. Central Canada (Toronto and Montreal) are serviced by the Western and Atlantic provinces (Ali, 2010). This relationship is reflected in the relationship of the City of Toronto the surrounding municipalities in the GTA. Both human resources and goods are supplied to Toronto, thereby influencing the construction of transit facilities. Most transit facilities are constructed to transport people in and out of Toronto instead of transporting them within York Region.

National and regional decisions impact the local environmental justice issues. Usually, the vulnerable groups are interviewed and asked question that focus on relationship among themselves and

altogether ignore the unjust socio-political structural decisions that are the basis of a particular environmental injustice. Social justice the mainstream route of questioning power. It is about authenticating formation of social hierarchies and symbolisms and the subsequent formation of power attached to these constructions. Whoever decides these concepts of legitimization plays a big role in defining the basis for justice and the parameters and frameworks through which injustices are viewed. In Canada, a mostly Eurocentric notion of justice dominates the legal and social constructions and interpretations of social justice (Ali, 2010).

Ali (2010) concludes that it is imperative to understand the political-economic forces behind local environmental issues. In most instances, these issues are symptoms of broader forces that need to be addressed. For instance providing transit passes to low-income people does not change the fact that transit is still too expensive for some. The historical context of why some injustices persist should be explored to kerb the problem at the source. Also, local problems should be compared to other places and identify if occurs anywhere else, from there the broad cause could be addressed. These issues do not happen in a vacuum, they are a consequence of a decision or action elsewhere (Ali, 2010).

Kurtz (2010) points out the role of state and policies in the creating limitations within which EJ can be defined and addressed. For instance, is it limiting to advocate for change within the confines of current policies and statutes, therefore, major restructuring to accommodate minority representation is needed. Kurtz identifies the battle between race and class, between expert forms of knowledge and other epistemologies and between abstract and particular knowledge. Specifically, Kurtz discusses the long-standing debate in EJ whether there is prejudicial intent in disposing toxins near people of colour. Kurtz argues that the mere definition of race derived from census narratives is

questionable because there is more to race dynamics than what is represented in the census. If government bodies are using this definition then they are not only reinforcing racism tendencies but also limiting the response to such injustices. Hence the state maintains power (Kurtz, 2010).

**3.3 Right to the City**

Alongside the EJ framework, there is the Right to the City lens of analysis that can help explain the current state of transit corridors. City structures such as transit lines play a crucial role in defining cityscapes, their rhythm, composition, and eventual image. Most often, cities are defined by their economic geography because it is quantifiable but the human experience is often lost. Yet, the creation of "place" and sense of belonging is a constant tag between the social and economic fabric of the city (Hayden, 1997). The organic process of place formation should be incorporated in place analysis to complement quantifiable research. Technocratic analysis of transportation facilities excludes the other story of space production. Class, gender, race, and ethnicity each map differently on the cityscape and these interweave to form the city fabric. It is not only about who rides transit buses, but also about who cleans the buses, who drives the buses, and who plans the routes.

Henri Lefebvre (1968) threads together the identifying features of a capitalistic space and identifies them as non-random occurrences that stemmed from the process of place creation (Hayden, 1997). Therefore, social histories of city amenities are a good start in the analysis of the production and reproduction of social space and how it is accessed by different community members. The "Right to the City" (RTTC) analysis coined by French geographer Henri Lefebvre in 1986 questions the notion of who has accesses to the city and different movements that feel excluded from certain aspects of the city have employed the phrase as a slogan in search for justice (Marcuse, 2010). Who has access to the space created by a transit corridor? There have been avoidable unswerving

systematic limitations on the rights of certain groups of people through the inability to accesses certain places. These invisible boundaries are a key feature of analysis to expose the disproportionate burdens carried by low-income people under the guise of collective benefit to the community.

The Right to the City is connected to Marxist Philosopher Henri Lefebvre's early publication, Le droit a la Ville, with the main argument of "the city is an *ouvre* - a work in which all citizens participate" (Mitchell, 2003, p. 17). Unlike rural areas where isolation is seemingly acceptable, cities are an amalgamation of inhabitants that have immigrated from various parts of the globe. They are characterized by heterogeneity, therefore struggle among different projects by different groups of people to determine the shape of the city, how to access the public realm and the definition of citizenship are going to take place. The current city form, the Bourgeois city, has no room for heterogeneous projects and constructions. Rather, it is a city created for the people by a dominant group of elites instead of a city created by the entire populace where urban design is increasingly prioritizing the needs of the wealthy and businesses while excluding the views of the "other" who in this case are the majority (Attoh, 2011). This not only concerns with the utility and physical or property aspect of the city but also to the need for expression, symbolism and imagery and participation in a city instead of being passive inhabitants. "Simply guaranteeing the right to housing may not be sufficient to guaranteeing a right to the city but it is a necessary step" (Mitchell, 2003: p.19).

The discussion of "rights" as is used in the Right to the City is a gateway to strengthening the EJ discussion earlier. "Rights are at once a means of organizing power, a means of contesting power, and a means of adjudicating power, and these three roles frequently conflict" (Mitchell, 2003, p. 22). Although it has been contested by Marxists, rights to some degree are vitally integral to social life.

They are key components of organizing social relations and definitions of justice within societies. As such, rights are protected by social institutions and even dictate how the state uses violence or not to protect rights, sometimes to protect the interest of some at the expense of others (Attoh, 2011).

The counter argument on rights by progressive law scholar Mark Tushnet contend that rights talk merely shifts the attention away from pertinent social justice issues such as the lack of food and shelter (Tushnet, 1984). Tushnet further elucidates that pushing for a rights agenda can undermine the struggle and instead serve the opponents of struggle. Rights can be challenged; they are not universal truths. They also can are open to interpretation depending on the language used hence can be used to serve not intended interests. Under the rights guise, the rich and privileged are protected in actions that undemocratically influence social outcomes, such as funding one political candidate over another. Furthermore, rights reduce complex realities into a simplistic argument of "it's my right." Tushnet therefore argues that negative rights mar the progressive good of positive rights, thereby situating the rights argument in a vacuum devoid of social context. So the movement loses meaning and needs such and food and shelter are lost in the definition of what is a right (Mitchell, 2003, p. 22).

What Tushnet and his fellow critics of the rights movement leave out is the power of capital under the free trade umbrella that pushes for causes claimed to be inherently just yet only cater for a few. This kind of domination can mostly be counteracted by rights. Rights provide a framework and language, although imperfect, challenge the powerful. It also creates space for attaining social goals if they are viewed as relationships instead of possessions. Possessing rights makes them redundant. In other words, they are tools that can be used to build relationships with other members of society to bridge or deter actions.

**3.4 Power: Fragmented Regional Governance**

The GTA has a three-tiered governance system comprised of the municipality, region and province. The economic, infrastructural, and social concerns of the GTA transcend regional and municipal boundaries. As the region grows, the provincial government is finding it harder to keep up with regional challenges and is becoming less committed to empowering regional governments. With the City of Toronto as the economic center, the GTA is bigger than the region tier yet much smaller than the province; therefore, a provincial government would need an impartial level of government to link local interests with provincial interests. According to Donald F. Norris, metropolitan reformers argue for the creation of regional governmental organizations that have the power to create policies and also oversee the unwanted outcomes of regional growth. For instance, smaller agencies such as, Metrolinx would be more efficient in promoting provincial policies and interests in a localized regional way that will push municipalities to work together to further reduce disparities and competition.

The biggest problem with Canadian municipalities is that they are creatures of the province and are disjointed by different planning documents (Wheeler 2007). The Ontario provincial government and federal government have the ability to restructure and alter municipal governments without the consent of the local voters and this affects a lot of the regional politics. From past lessons in Toronto, senior governments have the authority to restructure regions; however, the outcomes have not always been popular because higher governments usually have their own political and economic agendas that may conflict with municipal interests. The province, under much resistance, created

the current city of Toronto by reducing the thirteen Metro Toronto municipalities to 6

municipalities that are now the City of Toronto and the surrounding four regional municipalities

(GTA) (Frisken, 2001).

New regionalists have opted to use governance to describe the possible interrelationships among

regional governments. Governance, unlike government, is less formal and structured therefore, the

relationships formed result from cooperation among the municipalities. Cooperation is the weakest

link to connect local governments because it does not guarantee that formal decisions will be made

especially on controversial topics. Furthermore, cooperation does not define who is to finally carry

out any agreed upon form of action (Norris, 2002). Therefore, for new regionalists to use the term

governance, it has to be associated with authoritative control as an outcome of cooperation or

working together of local governments to some to a consensus on how to govern. Cooperation is

needed but it should lead towards some form of governance. According to Frances Frisken (2001),

the province has rarely made any decisions without first consulting the regional and municipal

governments and other regional bodies because it relies on these entities to implement the policies it

creates.

Regional governance is usually ambiguous and it is challenging for governments to create just bodies

of governance across fragmented jurisdictions and communities. The geographical expanse of any

region matters because grassroots political manoeuvres become almost impossible with increased

regional area. Communities within regions not only differ in population and therefore tax base, but

also in political and economic priorities (Wheeler 2007). One of the biggest threats to regional

coalitions is the pressure from capitalistic land developments that push local officials to undermine regional coalition initiatives (Wheeler, 2007).

According to Williams, there is a tension between the GTA and the provincial government due to fear of loss of power and autonomy by the province (Williams, 1999). As the debate unfolds, there is an increased geographical fragmentation and some local governments have been slow to catch up with the current economic development trends that mostly transpire through informal connections between investors and local governments (Williams, 1999). According to Wheeler (2007), regional sustainability should foster sustainable city growth that is sensitive to equity, economic development, growth management and mobility. Places within urban regions have cross-jurisdictional and require cross-jurisdictional solutions, especially in relation to governance. The purpose of the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (The Growth Plan) is to promote sustainability at a regional level.

Burby and May (1998) discuss collaborative and coercive planning among different levels of government. Planning legislation in Ontario is both prescriptive and cooperative and municipalities may be reluctant to collaborate if they think that the legislation does not promote their best interests. Some have contested that new policy is preferable to new regional governments in order to solve regional problems.

### 3.5 Power: Is there room for negotiation?

Through both formal and informal negotiations, the planning profession shapes spaces and controls the allocation of resources. Because there are both positive and negative ramifications of planning decisions, the ways in which negotiations unfold matter. Given power dynamics, what is a fair

negotiation outcome? How come outcomes from negotiations are not always collectively viewed as just? These questions are an effort to understand the interrelation between urban planning outcomes and the environmental justice movement that implies that there is a systematic (whether intentional or unintentional) structural deficit that dumps disadvantaged communities with the bigger burden of many urban planning decisions.

In contemporary sustainable urban planning, inevitable conflicts, and clash of priorities could arise from what Godschalk (2007) terms as the "sustainability conflict triangle." The triangle vertices are comprised of ecology, equity, and economy and conflicts arise from the friction that results from the competing interrelations of the vertex points; which one is prioritized over the other and to what extent one should be considered over the other. Consequently, development conflicts (from clash of equity and ecology), property conflicts (from clash of equity and economy) and resource conflicts (from clash of ecology and the economy) are a prevalent occurrence in planning. Godschalk (2007) Constructs a sustainability or livability prism in an attempt to reconcile the vertices of conflict; however, it is agreeable that the perfectly sustainable and livable community is almost unattainable and more so utopian (Godschalk, 2007: 8). Henceforth, negotiation and mediation becomes an integral component of urban planning.

Conflicting interests and plans for the same space, and resources are often sources of conflict.  We live in a democratic state where we assume that fair and just decisions arise from open voting systems and debates. Contrary to that assumption, factors such as power influence negotiations and debates and alter perspective so that desired outcomes are achieved. There are many forms of power that may have different sources but not all power can influence the same results. It sounds incorrect to state that some powers has more influence than others; albeit, I believe that even when different

parties have the same access to power, a pseudo- even playing field exists. If all is fair in

negotiations, then there would be no advocates trying to challenge outcomes of many consensual

decisions that usually culminate from fair negotiations.

Communicative theory and other planning theories support the idea of consensus building; however,

they also question the placement of power in consensus building (Forester, 1985). It is known that

both formal and informal power relations play a role in negotiations because discussion of interests

does not happen in a vacuum. There are multiple sources of power in a negotiation. A strong Best

Alternative To a Negotiated Agreement (BATNA), money, knowledge, expertise, and time are some

examples of power sources. Usually, if there is no physical display of power, power distribution is

presumed through assumptions and biases that we have created. Roger Fisher (1983) discusses the

different dimensions of power that can be used to one's advantage. There is not one form of power.

Hence, a negotiator could rely on other factors such as skill, communication, a good BATNA, and

commitment to empower themselves (Fischer, 1983). In actuality, power is created, not assigned.

Whether rich or poor, knowledgeable or not, if there is a party represented at the negotiating table,

their stake in whatever negotiations are taking place should not be taken for granted. If any

negotiator can attain power, what determines fairness in negotiation? Fairness and power are

interrelated and cannot be separated because one perception affects the other.

Distributive and procedural perceptions of fairness define the way negotiators interact with each

other or respond to other parties' interests and offers (Welsh, 2003). If negotiators believe that the

negotiation process was fair, then they believe that the outcomes are also going to be fair.

Perceptions of fairness often rely on fairness measures (benefits principles) as defined by Welsh

(2003); equality – where everyone benefits equally from the negotiation; need- one who needs it

more benefits more from the one who needs it less, equity – one who contributes more benefits more from the negotiation and generosity- one person's benefits should not exceed the others. Welsh elucidates on the challenge of choosing which benefits principle to apply especially if the contributions of the parties cannot be evaluated on the same scale. "Equitable redistribution, it seems, is in the eyes of the self-interested negotiator" (Welsh, 2003:758).

The discussion above on power and fairness points to the negotiator or planner as a pivotal part of negotiation. They choose the course of negotiation and its progression. The individual is the master puppeteer of the negotiation; therefore, their actions dictate the process of negotiation. "In negotiation, the messenger is very much part of the message" (Welsh, 2003: 759). Negotiation in planning is set to happen within the limitations of class, gender, and race. How then is a fair outcome achieved when the structure is already biased? A "fixed-pie" (Bazerman, 1999) mental block assumes that negotiations are unnecessary if there is no room to adjust expectation and subsequent results. Interestingly, there is room to circumvent the structural barriers and limitations by building a professional profile that looks at the bigger picture.

An Integrative and distributive combination enables parties to formulate value and share benefits after adjusting expectations accordingly. Stalemates are minimized with this kind of approach. Assuming that important issues are obvious, universal and important to all negotiating parties is inaccurate. What is important to me may not be important to another party hence the necessity of negotiation. "Fixed-pie" presumptions arise from the win-lose mentality of negotiation. "Win-lose" mentality is bolstered by social and structural systems such as courtrooms and impending lawsuits in case the negotiation fails (Bazerman, 1999).

Previous studies have used a linear or proximity to area of study to study the relationship of demographics to the site. This study recognizes that EJ is beyond the location of census blocks. A mapped out distributive analysis of EJ, may identify the presence of injustices, but it ignores responsibility, recognition and participation (Walker, 2010). The lack of access to participation in the decision making process also is a procedural concern of EJ. Lack of knowledge or time due to work demands and other commitments should also be examined.

# Chapter 4:  Case Study: York Region (YR) and *Vivanext*

This chapter profiles the relationship between TOD and housing in York Region.  The case study incorporates planning and policy documents, initiatives towards sustainable growth. This section is meant to analyse the planning policy documents on transit development in York Region.

## 4.1 A Profile of York Region (YR)

**Figure 2 Map of GTA showing York Region (blue)**
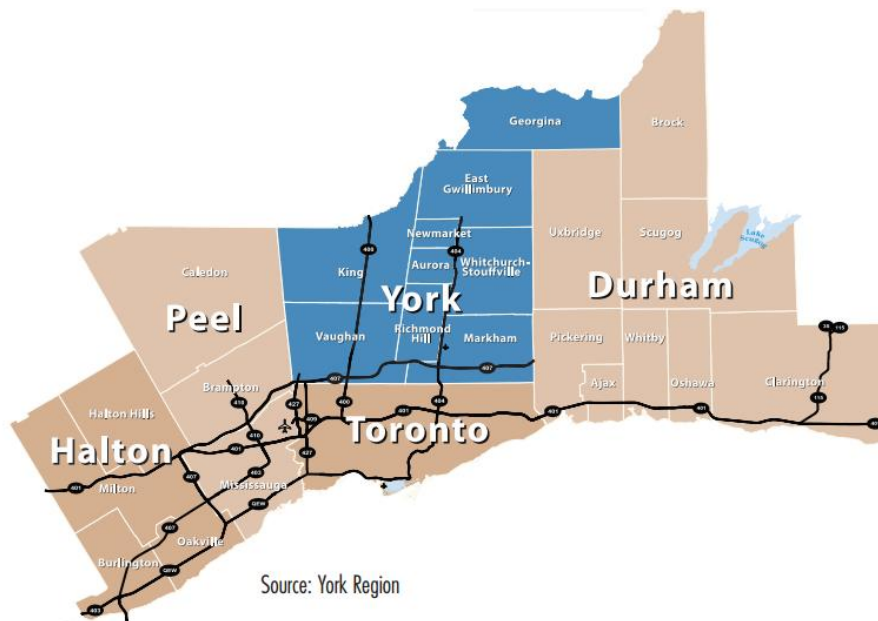


Source: York Region, 2016

York Region is located north of the city of Toronto. It is one of the five regional municipalities that make up the GTA. York region is made up of nine municipalities; Vaughan, Richmond Hill, Markham, King, Aurora, Whitchurch-Stouffville, Newmarket, East Gwillimbury and Georgina. It is more urbanised in the south and its northern municipalities are mostly rural. York Region is home to approximately 1.2 million people and is one of Canada's fastest growing urban municipalities (York Region, 2016). As the region grows, there is a silent increase of homelessness and concerns for affordability in the seemingly affluent region where the median household income is $89,177 (Statistics Canada, 2006). Housing prices have also risen and there is increasing concern for affordable housing for seniors, families and young couples. Only 1% of all new housing construction in York Region between 2003 and 2013 is rental (York Region, 2014).

York region is mostly suburban and while TOD will benefit the region as a whole, it could also have the opposite effect on groups of people with low income and accessibility concerns. David Hulchanski (2010) reveals that Toronto's wealthiest people live close to transit lines, in particular, subway lines and the same occurrence is unfolding in York Region, where housing prices along transit lines are growing thereby pushing low-income people further and further away from transit lines. York Region is mostly auto-dependent with sprawl-like development; whether one decides to drive or use public transit, there is an added expense to total transportation cost due to living further away from accessible transport.

By 2031, an estimated 55% of residents in York Region will be newcomers to Canada (Ontario Non-profit Housing Association (ONPHA), 2011). According to ONPHA, the population of York Region grew by 15.7% between 2006 and 2011, mostly from immigration. As newcomers continue to settle in York Region, they all do not have the financial capability to afford a comfortable life.

Other problems spring from either overspending on housing and less is left for other necessities or being forced to live in overcrowded conditions. The mental and social ramifications of these conditions are not going to be pleasant. How will the new transit plans for York Region contribute to the already stretched housing costs in the region?

**4.2 Vivanext**

Section 4 of York Region's Official Plan outlines transportation corridors and centers as the focus of future development (York Region, 2010). The Yonge Street/ Richmond Hill and Newmarket Viva bus rapid transit as a solution to the lack of transit options has caused excitement in the mostly auto-dependent York Region. The project is expected to be completed in 2018 (Vivanext, 2016). There are expected new developments and vibrant streets along the completed corridor. Business along Yonge Street will bolster the economy of the region. York Region is in much need of transit development; however, it should be done in a way that does not further alienate the low income people, those who do not drive, the elderly, and those with disabilities. Will this transit line exacerbate the housing crisis that already plagues the region?

**Figure 3 Current Viva Transit Network**
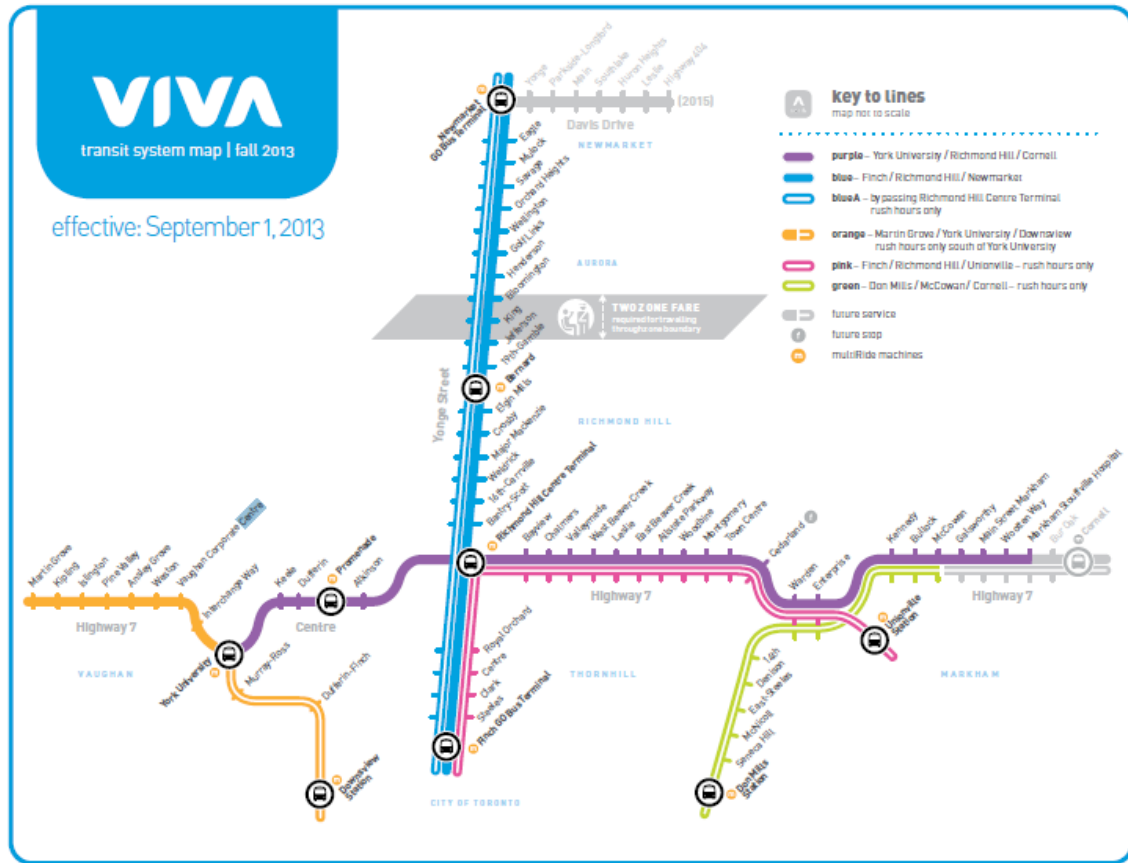


Source: York Region Rapid Transit Corporation, 2016

**Figure 4 Vivanext Bus Rapidway Project on Yonge Street in Richmondhill and Newmarket**



Source: York Region Rapid Transit Corporation, 2016

*Vivanext* plan is a continuation of the bus system that was started by York Region in 2005 to boost mass transit in the region. The buses are expected to travel in rapid-ways that will have right of way. The fleet will be composed of 197 vehicles that will run on Yonge Street and Highway 7. The new bus rapid-ways will connect to the new subway extension and also to Downsview, Don Mills, and Finch Stations. The project will receive provincial funding through Metrolinx, the body in charge of easing congestion in the GTA. 1.3 billion dollars has been invested and it is expected that the system will improve transit ridership from 14% in 2006 to 30% in 2026, thereby decreasing the number of car trips (Kalinowski, 2009). Planners hope for a change in culture, especially from one of car dependency to a more transit oriented form of travel. They hope that especially young people can

recognize the other options available to curb congestion and sprawl (Kalinowski, 2009). Mary-Frances Turner, Vice President of the York Region Rapid Transit Corporation, explains that transit is only part of the equation. More incentives such as parking regulations are needed to encourage people to choose transit over driving (Kalinowski, 2009).

The Growth plan anticipated the City of Toronto would absorb most of the growth from newcomers into the province; but, it is the regions around the city that are growing. Toronto does well in economic growth and smart growth but is not so good in liveability because of high child poverty levels, and low levels of affordable housing. York region has 75% of housing in detached form therefore lacks in affordable housing and rentals (Toronto Star, 2007).

## 4.3 A brief history of York Region Transit

Yonge Street is one of the busiest transportation corridors in York Region. It dates back to 1788 when the then Lieutenant Governor, John Graves Simcoe permitted the construction of a military route from the Town of York to Lake Simcoe(Toronto Transit, 2016). The Town of York was part of the Upper Canada colony formed in 1788 by United Empire Loyalists that were escaping the United States. This street, named after Sir George Yonge (Simcoe's friend), would become a major connection between Toronto and the resources from northern Ontario (ibid). York County was founded in 1792 and some of YR's oldest towns such as Aurora and Richmond Hill were founded in 1795 and 1794 respectively. Stage coaches running between Toronto and Barrie were the first form on transit to cater for York County with electric railroad reaching Woodbridge in 1914. The Expansion of the City of Toronto has a big impact on the on the formation of YR. With major transportation catering to people moving north or south of Toronto, Steeles Avenue became a

major division between the rapidly urbanising areas close to Toronto and the then more rural towns of Markham and Vaughan. This led to the division of York County into York, North York and East York in the early 1920s (ibid).

*GO* Service was launched in 1967 by the Ontario government to manage the transportation challenges in addition to what the TTC was offering, as the growth in the City of Toronto spilled over Steeles Avenue onto areas along Yonge Street in YR and eventually in the inner pockets. Eventually, the municipalities of York close to Yonge Street took over transit from the Ontario government and run separate services (ibid). As YR grew and expanded into larger communities, there was demand for transit within the region; instead, of the customary north to south (Toronto route) hence the demand for an east to west route in Highway 7 in 1990 in Vaughan. In February 2001, YR amalgamated all the regional transport commissions, Markham Transit, Newmarket Transit, Vaughn Transit and Richmond Hill Transit to form York Regional Transit (ibid).

With York Region in charge of transit, it was easier to plan for transit even for the rural areas that could not afford transit before. On September 4, 2005, *VIVA* network to connect Richmond Hill, Vaughan and Newmarket was launched. With growth in YR, VIVA was promoted as a preferable means of travel that would reduce congestion.

**4.4 Policy Analysis of Relevant Policy in York region**

To direct growth and infrastructure expansion, Plans such as The Green Belt Plan, Oak Ridges Moraine Plan, and The Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (The Growth Plan), show the overall commitment of the provincial government to regional management. However, all these plans need successful implementation and reinforcement which may be achieved through

cooperation. The growth plan has intentions of sustainable urban growth where land use, resources, transportation, and population are managed to create vibrant and healthy communities in the region.

### 4.4.1 Places to Grow Act

The Places to Grow Act 2005, provides a framework to manage growth and infrastructure renewal in Ontario. The province can coordinate growth plans from local authorities to designate growth area to accommodate future population growth, ensure efficient economic development and promote infrastructure for healthy communities. The Act calls for growth plans that promote intensification and density to kerb urban sprawl while preserving the local natural environment (Government of Ontario, 2005).

### 4.4.2 The Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (GTHA)

The Growth Plan by the province of Ontario is an intersection of prescriptive government policies together with encouraged collaboration between governments to tackle regional challenges. This intervention has come with attempts to mitigate the fragmentation in local governments through initiatives such as integrated revenue sharing, and integrated transit system through Metrolinx, and also fair share of rental housing and education funding (Frisken, 2001). The Growth Plan came into effect in 2006 under the Places to Grow Act that was established in 2005 (Ontario Ministry of Infrastructure, 2016). The Growth Plan is policy guideline for municipalities to revitalise downtowns and create complete communities; kerbs sprawl and reduce the traffic gridlock (Provincial Policy Statement, 2005). The current form of land use promotes sprawl, increased car use and environmental degradation and if unchanged, the consequences will be dire. The Growth Plan is sustainable because it encourages small scale community development that is unique to every

community and balanced development in the form of integrated communities that includes homes, jobs, and a sense of place would cater for the bigger problem of regional mobility and reduce sprawl (Ontario Ministry of Infrastructure). In other words, the current structure of local governments can be used to effectively manage small scale projects that can impact the entire region.

One of the purposes of the Growth Plan is to reduce the traffic gridlock and provide more options for transportation, and this has been the driving force towards the creation of Metrolinx. Metrolinx, formerly called Greater Toronto Transportation Authority, is an agency that is mandated to coordinate and integrate transportation in the Greater Toronto and Hamilton area (Metrolinx, 2008). Its duties are supported by the transportation policies prescribed in the Growth Plan.
The other components of the Growth Plan such as providing housing to satisfy people of all ages and needs more coordination among municipalities so that there is even spatial distribution amenities such as rental housing. This should all be complemented by financial and technical assistance from higher governments (Burby and May, 1998).

The Growth Plan is one of the few documents by the provincial government of Ontario to address the regional concerns of the area. The Province attempts to create uniform growth and development across the region. The growth plan is a milestone for planning in the GTA because it is mandated that all municipalities "conform" to the Growth Plan in an effort to steer the region towards a more coordinated form of sustainable development (Ontario Ministry of Infrastructure, 2016). The Growth Plan is an elaborate plan on how to integrate land use and infrastructure such as transportation in order to create healthier and livelier communities in the region. The language in the plan reinstates the provincial role in municipal politics by being stronger and more direct than that in the Provincial Policy Statement (PPS). Therefore the kind of power and flexibility to municipalities

in the PPS is scaled back in the Growth Plan. Although it seems like the Growth Plan is coercive and prescriptive in nature, the province avoids a backlash and reluctance in implementation from the municipalities because it developed the plan over a number of years and had the opportunity to consult with the municipalities and the public on the plan (Ontario Ministry of Infrastructure, 2016). This is an example of how communication between higher levels of government, municipalities, and the public can create stronger plans that represent the priorities of the region.

The big question is whether the municipalities would implement the growth plan strategies religiously. Municipalities are required to include the Growth Plan in their official plans but it is possible to negate the official plans since they are not policies. This is going to be challenging, especially for the transportation portion of the plan because there is no straightforward plan on how each municipality can implement their transportation adjustments. The Growth Plan mandates for the revitalization of urban centres and preservation of historical and ecological landmarks. This sense of identity preservation can be used to rally the public to promote what is best for the region. The more the public is aware of what is going on in their neighbourhoods and its impact on the whole region, the more they will support ideas that promote the success of the region as a whole. As the region moves towards more sustainable growth, the provincial government should take on a firmer role to act as the link among all municipalities through creating policies such as the Green Belt Act and the Places to Grow Act that encourage coordination among municipalities.

### 4.4.3 The Big Move

Metrolinx's The Big Move is an example of a regional transportation plan that might help to fulfil the policies of the Growth Plan.  It was developed in 2008, with the aim of improving public transit and integrate regional transit services and fare systems for smoother travel experiences. According to

the Big Move, only five percent of work trip are attributed to walking and cycling and it plans to increase this percentage through strategies that municipalities could implement. Under strategy #2 of the Big Move, a plan to implement bicycling and walking trails networks in the GTHA in an effort to improve the active transport experience in the region is outlined. This network is an effort to make trails and sidewalks accessible so that most residents of the GTHA are within one kilometre of a walkable trail. Inexpensive incentives such as bike sharing, installation of bike racks at subway stations and improved cycling experience on city streets are some of the ways that the plan is suggesting to promote active transport. This would all be complemented by safe cycling lessons and also the incorporation of active transportation on municipal transportation plans. Bikelinx is a program introduced by Metrolinx to fund municipalities in the implementation of bike-friendly transportation in their transportation systems.

The Big Move is planning on encouraging municipalities to utilise existing policy provisions to enhance active transportation experience in the GTHA. For instance, bonusing in the Planning Act could be used to require developments to include walking and biking facilities, such as racks and showers. Also, mobility hubs are to be included in transit systems as a way to link different part of the city, and municipalities should take advantage of the available financial and development tools. Looking into parking strategies should also be adapted to encourage vehicle users to engage in active transport and transit.  Community improvement plans, increased taxes, development charges, and public-private partnerships are encouraged to fund these initiatives. The Big Move is a comprehensive plan towards sustainable transportation and emphasises the connectivity of active transportation to an efficient transit network. Incorporating transit hubs and well-sheltered bus stops with bicycle racks is a way to provide a more equitable form of transportation.  If successful, the Big Move is one of the first regional plans to connect land use planning to transit ridership and

active transportation. In other words, complete communities can be achieved through a vision that incorporates different aspects of community life. Connecting intensification on transit corridors to improved public realms, to walkable streets, to cycling friendly strategies, to transit accessibility is what planning for complete communities entails.

### 4.4.4 Transportation Master Plan (TMP)

Create a world class transportation system that is efficient and seamless with rapid-ways and mixed use building.  The plan also aims to create a network of transit within the region that is supportive of active transportation to make the last mile count. There is an increase in transit ridership from 6 Million in 2001 to 22.4 Million in 2014 with a majority of trips to be within York Region by 2014 as opposed to outside York Region.

Demographic change in the suburbs should drive the change in the way we think about transportation planning. The suburb makeup has changed. Young families have moved to the region, what kind of jobs are the corridors inviting?

### 4.5 Municipal Initiatives

### 4.5.1 Homelessness prevention

There were multiple responses to the cause of homeless in YR.

In October 2016, YR released the report on homeless in YR from combined efforts of the Regional Municipality of York and United way of Toronto and York Region. The report presents data from two studies conducted. The data shows that the number of low-income residents in YR is increasing, and also an increase in Households and risk of homeless (York Region, 2016). This is topped by unreliable employment sources and the lack of availability of affordable rental houses. In an

employment survey by YR, 13% (4035) of households in YR spend more than 50% of their income in housing. That means that they cannot afford the homes they live in. They could lose their homes in case of loss of a source of income. Additionally, 43 % of workers in Richmond Hill, Vaughan, and Markham have unreliable jobs (York Region 2016).

### 4.5.2 Rent and Utility Assistance

When in a crisis, YR residents can apply for the assistance with their rent, mortgages payments, and utilities through The Housing Stability Program and The Homelessness Prevention program (York Region, 2016). These programs were launched in 2011.

### 4.5.3 Walkability, Cycling and Transit

Municipalities in Ontario are encouraged to consider walkability in their plans. One approach is for a municipality to concentrate on the revitalization of key transit corridors to make them walkable. According to Metrolinx (2014), "All transit corridors in the regional rapid transportation network shall be assessed for their potential for higher density mixed-use development and for their suitability as intensification corridors as defined in the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe." The Town of Aurora is working on the Promenade Community Improvement Plan to revitalise its key transportation corridors.  The Promenade consists of the Yonge and Wellington Street intersection, one of Aurora's main nodes. The Promenade features the intensification of mixed uses with increased density in conjunction with heritage preservation and social spaces throughout the area. With the already existing trail network in Aurora, revitalization of the downtown public realm will encourage people to actively engage in the provided social spaces and improved public realm and city identity. Additionally, the Viva and York Regional Transit systems make this area accessible thereby encouraging people to use their cars less often.  As Viva plans to

expand its services along the Yonge Street corridor, there is more opportunity for a municipality such as Aurora to maximise intensification, active transport alternatives and retail opportunities that will gear the area towards a complete community.

The Promenade plan details how transportation planning, public realm in the downtown core and land use can be integrated to create walkable streets. The downtown core is going to be enhanced with a mix of residential uses, education, and entertainment. This is all geared towards creating a one-stop destination that people could go to socialise and participate in communal events. The town is also planning for the downtown core to be a complete community that supports walkability and public transit. It would consist of affordable housing, an attractive public realm with recreational, and cultural facilitates. The Town of Aurora is generally planning towards an urban form that is accessible to the public. This, in turn, is going to encourage residents and visitors to engage in the different activities that are accessible either through walking or use of transit. This way, people may be less inclined to use their cars in the downtown core. Pedestrian walkways, open plazas, and natural features are some of the components of the complete community (Town of Aurora, 2016). This is reinforcing city identity and community amid all the hustle and bustle of the area. For a walkability agenda to succeed, it ought to work hand in hand with a reliable transit system that is safe, accessible, and reliable.

### 4.5.4 New affordable developments along Yonge Street by YR

Belinda's Place is a new construction along Yonge Street in Newmarket that opened in 2015. The facility provides emergency and transitional shelter for homeless women until they can find housing that they can retain in the community. Operated by the Salvation Army and owned by York Region, the 28,000 square foot facility contains 28 emergency bedrooms and 9 transitional housing suites.

There is also commercial space for over 50 services that are provided by the Salvation Army (York Region, 2016).

**Figure 5 Belinda's Place, Newmarket**



Source: Facebook

YR has invested in affordable housing projects that are located close to transit, shopping, restaurants, schools, and parks. Richmond Hill hub is a 202 unit mixed-income dwelling along Yonge Street. This building houses 360 kids, an organisation that provides youth services that include; a drop-in centre to assist youth with any crisis that they may be facing, it also houses 14 emergency housing rooms and also runs Supportive Transitional Housing for Youth (STAY). 360 kids corporate offices are also located in a commercial space in the same facility (York Region, 2016).

**Figure 6 Richmond Hill Hub**



Source: Facebook

## Chapter 5: Results and Discussion

This chapter presents information from interviews with key informants from organisations that deal with housing and affordability in order to get a deeper understanding of issues of interest. The study finds that there is a link between poverty, transit and housing affordability. Furthermore there is social exclusion in the demographic make-up of YR. The current state of TOD in YR is inequitable since only a handful of affordable housing has been developed along Yonge Street corridor. Most of the condos built cannot be accessed by low or moderate income earners. Some organisations benefit from their proximity to Yonge Street.

### 5.1 Social Exclusion/inclusion

Todd Litman (2003) defines social exclusion as deterrence that hinder people from fully engaging in social activities such as education, employment, and public services. YR is mostly auto-dependent therefore the transportation system becomes a barrier to access to public services. From observation and census data, there are less black residents in the mostly suburban region.  While there is a high immigrant population in YR, there are low numbers of black immigrants. There are numerous explanations for this occurrence; some of them were raised by some of the interviewees. For Instance, Interviewee 3 mentioned that new black immigrants tend to settle in Toronto because it is relatively cheaper than York Region.  YR is spread out so it is expensive and difficult to access transit and affordable housing. Therefore, most new black immigrants gravitate towards Toronto. Additionally, low rental rate and high home ownership prices eliminate low-income immigrants that wish to live in YR. Some immigrants have asset wealth to afford buying houses; however, many new black immigrants cannot afford a down payment and the additional costs of home ownership. Some municipalities such as Aurora are still highly priced for low-income families and lack the rental stock

to accommodate people of low income. Interviewee 5 asserts that more and more black people are inching their way into YR with Richmond Hill seeing a growth in the community although slower than other groups.

While YR is planning to grow and attract new immigrants, if it does not address affordability concerns, it faces a danger of discriminating against people who cannot afford to settle in the region. This relates back to Lefebvre's query (Mitchell, 2003) of who has the right to the city especially if certain populations do not have access to some parts of the city.  Inclusive policy making plays a role in determining where people live. Municipalities in YR should aim to be inclusive to people of mixed incomes. According to Interviewee 1,

> "…...the majority of people when they come to set up, they tend to first settle in Toronto then as they get more established they tend to migrate out here….. So YR is starting to catch up and there is no infrastructure in place… people are catching up, which is some of the problems you see with transit, YR only became one transit system in the last few years…."

Cheryl Teelucksingh (2007) uses racialization to describe the subtle yet present form of discrimination that occurs in Canada under the blanket cover of multiculturalism and diversity. Racialization is a way of describing the unintentional injustices that affect minorities as opposed to environmental racism where the risks are directed to spaces already occupied by minorities. Racial discrimination in Canada is deeply rooted in the "othering" of immigrant communities. There is no uniform manifestation of discrimination because different racial groups have suffered low-income and other challenges as they immigrate to Canada, there have been multiple forms of discrimination towards people of different racial backgrounds. Therefore, race and immigrant status are greatly correlated mediums of discrimination in Canada. By focusing on the outcomes of environmental

decisions, systematic discrimination latently lingers in decision-making processes and institutional policies resulting in dominant social ideologies (2007).

Depending on who you talk to, racialization is experienced differently in Canada. In YR, even the organisations available for research should be examined as part of the racialized institution mentioned by Teelucksingh (2007). YR is a municipality, not a neighbourhood in a municipality so people of all backgrounds should be able to able to live comfortably here. The new subdivisions with gigantic houses and new condos in downtown centres and along transit facilities are not affordable to moderate and low-income earners. That is systematic discrimination in itself. Some people have admitted to moving out of YR because they cannot afford it. Municipalities can create tools to harness the power to implement inclusive policies that can allow for affordable housing.

In the event, *Make Rental Happen: Creating the conditions for Private Market Rental Housing Symposium* (2014), organized by YR, representatives from York Region, developers and community organisations discussed the future of rental housing in YR to fulfil the mandate of the 10 year rental plan that indicates that "all income level people can live, work and play in YR." Valerie Shuttleworth, Director of Long Range Planning YR, pointed out the need for diversity in housing stock along Yonge Street that can attract all kinds of people since the existing condos are expensive. Shuttleworth further asserted that rent for these properties is higher than average mostly because of walkability due to proximity to centres and transit corridors. There was a conversation on how to solve the challenge of expensive rentals along centres and corridors with good walkability. Suggestions included basement apartments for low-income residents and expansion of second suite strategy; however, these suites are not on Yonge Street. Some basements are located in transit-poor neighbourhoods and only serve a small portion of renters. Interviewee 1 intimated that it is close to

impossible to find housing for their clients along Yonge Street in YR so they are forced to get shared accommodation or basement apartments, most of which are not close to Yonge Street.

According to interviewee 1,

> "Average one bedroom apartment is $1000, there are places that are cheaper but the average is $1000…..lots of people want to be in an apartment building, they do not want to be underground but basement apartments tend to be out and available in YR. Basement apartments tend to go cheaper than apartments in apartments buildings. So if I am looking for an apartment in an apartment building, I am probably going to look at $1200 and the basement apartment is going to start at probably $750, $800 and cheaper ones tend to be ones I would not want to even consider a dog living in because they are pretty bad".

The Regional goal is to have affordable rental housing along Viva lines.
Affordable housing growth for low-income residents is affected by transportation, health, social services, and immigration.

## 5.2 The Struggling Moderate-income Earners

While YR has responded with services for low-income residents, there is a hidden group of moderate earners that are struggling to afford to live in YR. Social inclusion is more relative than absolute. For instance, "a particular income level may be considered wealthy in one community and poverty in another" (Litman, 2003, p.2) Interviewee 1 mentioned that moderate income families use their services too.

> " ……...they have also included moderate income earners because moderate income earners are also struggling. All you have to do is look at people who are accessing food banks. There are food banks that are serving people with double income…….".

Interviewee 4 has a stable moderate household income but still struggles to afford rent on her one bedroom apartment and transportation costs.

> "I pay monthly $1350 a month not including electricity. I pay electricity around $50 a month. I don't have a car so if you want to get a car that's extra $165 for parking. We prefer to live in this area because close to Transit. But they say along Mississauga or Keswick up north is a little bit cheaper than here but I prefer because it is accessible to everything, so that is one reason I prefer to stay here even if it is a little bit higher".

*Interviewee 5* mentions the need to look beyond appearances in order to identify the morph that poverty takes on in the suburbs of Richmond Hill.

> "I think that poverty looks very different in Richmond Hill……...so i have encountered some homelessness but is usually accompanied by mental health issues".


Long term solutions for struggling families are crucial because programs by YR for moderate income earners as the Homelessness Prevention Program are only short term. Interviewee 1 asserts that,

> "……..property on Yonge Street is extremely costly….. The dollar dictates… people don't build houses because it is the right thing to do, if that was the case, then we would not have 12,000 on the waiting list to get a house……"

Edward Heese (York Region, 2014) Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) Senior Market Analyst, GTA, described the demographics of renters in YR; there are a few people in YR in the rental ages, young adults 20-29 are living with their parents, and any other young renters are moving away from YR. This is evidenced by the increased number of young renters in Toronto. This can be explained by the lack of affordable rentals in YR and the cost of transit in YR. He presented that immigrants support rental demand in YR. If more immigrants are coming into the region, there should be demand for rentals but why is there a lack of interest in rental housing?

Many explanations are plausible including, the difficulty in shifting the market to make housing affordable and NIMBYism as unpacked by Andil Gosine and Cheryl Teelucksingh (2008).

## 5.3 The Network - Location and land use

### 5.3.1 Spatial Segregation

There are numerous causes of spatial segregation but transportation and housing costs have a fair contribution to this phenomenon. People of low income, usually minorities, cannot access certain neighbourhoods and they miss out on the goods in those neighbourhoods. Unintentional planning policy created avenues that accelerated "white flight" away from areas occupied by immigrants to suburbs and exurbs. Relatively cheap land and limited regulation of land use made building on the periphery a sensible choice for developers and gave home buyers seemingly high value for their investment (Environmental Justice, 2016). The impending extension of the subway plus the good schools in Richmond Hill are driving people to pay exorbitant prices for housing (Toronto star, 2007). Good education directly impacts the quality of life.

Racial Segregation Canada is not as apparent as American style racialized neighbourhood or ghettos. This is attributed to the unpredictability of immigrant settlement patterns in Canada. Although, there are specific racial neighbourhoods such as China Town where people tend to live for cultural reasons, more economically well off immigrants usually have a wide range of options for housing including affluent neighbourhoods dominated by white residents (Gosine and Teelucksingh, 2008). Additionally, mixed housing suburbs in Canadian suburbs and cities contribute to income group segregation instead racial pockets. Low-income spaces are usually dominated by more than one racial group and they usually face systematic discrimination through media representations and resource allocation such as transit. On the other hand, affluent neighbourhoods such as York

Region attract investment opportunities and "protect their NIMBY interests via exclusionary practices" (Gosine and Teelucksingh, 2008: 51). This kind of racialization goes unnoticed or even unmentioned because they are embedded in and reinforced in land use policies and regulations. According to a general overview on newspaper articles on YR transit, who rides transit tends to take a back seat; instead, newspapers are concerned about congestion and who is paying for transit. Also, there is a big challenge in getting people to give up driving and use transit. In turn, YR aims to make a world class transit system that is fast, comfortable, and accessible.

The following section is going to be analysed in three critical strategies of addressing "equity issues"; the network - where do the transit lines extend?; the service - are the services accessible?; and the price - is the system affordable? (Hertel *et al.,* 2015, p. 11). Although it was applied to transit, its applicability in TOD on Yonge Street will provide a clear analysis of who uses Yonge Street and who benefits from it. Todd Litman (2003) offers a similar analysis that involves, access needs, location and land use, as well as mobility options and mobility substitutes.

### 5.3.2 Location away from Yonge Street

A food bank that provides food to people in need is located 15-20 minutes' walk from Yonge Street and is not served by transit throughout the day. There is transit bus in the mornings and evenings and clients have to find a way to get to the pantry any other time of day. There is a shuttle program (dial-a-ride) that people can book an hour before use to get to the pantry; however, there are only two vehicles, so there are some wait times. Being located on Yonge Street would bring in more people who need the service or easier accessed by people who need it because it is a major transit route with buses every few minutes. Most clients they serve have cars and Interview 2 speculated that may be because those who have cars can come here and those that do no can not come here.

## 5.4 The Service - Access Needs and Mobility Options

First and foremost, York Region is a large sprawled out municipality. The kind of development marginalises and/or excludes people who do not own cars. That is a major Environmental Justice issue and a good example of how land use policy affects where people eventually live. Prioritising auto usage encourages sprawl and is a disservice to people who do not own cars. Interviewee 3 said that they do not use transit to look for houses in YR. They are so spread out that they have to drives clients to the different locations. They also encourage clients to sacrifice a half hour of sleep in the morning in order to get housing they can afford.

Transportation policy in YR has mainly favoured development along major roads and highways. Most of York Region's transit efforts have concentrated on major corridors; however, it is near impossible to find affordable housing along these routes. The more transit-oriented they become, the harder it becomes to find housing nearby. Another alternative is for people to move into areas away from the major corridors but these areas have no transit. York Region needs to find ways to solve this impasse.

Transit Oriented Development can contribute to slowing sprawl but it requires transportation and housing decisions to work together to ensure the policy created protects affordable housing in the new and improved mixed use era. And by affordable housing, it does not mean only government run facilities but also housing in the free market that is available to renters, first home buyers, and lower rate buyers. Interviewee 2 stated that

> "If it was in the outskirts of YR away from transit, people would still come because they will need these services. So it is really convenient to have it close to Yonge Street".

Some residents feel like transit corridors are built for commuters and ignore other needs such as going to pick up children from day care or school. One Newmarket resident writes in the "*Your View"* section in the *Newmarket Era;*

 "I am a Newmarket resident with two young adult children who do not yet have vehicles of their own and, therefore, rely on alternative transportation to get to and from work and access local shopping.

I would like to suggest one factor that may greatly influence the amount of people utilizing public transit in York Region, is the lack of frequent buses actually running, not to mention that on weekends the available buses are almost non-existent.

My family happens to reside in the Mulock Drive/Bayview Avenue corridor, which has no buses running north or south Sundays and I believe Saturday's schedule is rather limiting.

As a result of such limited transit access, both my children now frequently use *Uber* or will coordinate rides with their peers.

I believe that if York Region wants to see an increase in residents utilizing public transit, than public transit needs to become a much more feasible and appealing option.

I believe this can be achieved by increasing the frequency of all bus routes, so that citizens can count on the YRT and VIVA as a means of reliable and consistent transportation, much in the same way that the Greater Toronto Area operates its transit system.

Should one require a bus in the GTA, one can be assured that it is only a matter of minutes before the next bus is scheduled to arrive." (Monica Bouhs, 2016)

Interviewee 5 stated that,

"Yonge and 16th has always had a stop for us so we have always been accessible and now they have a viva stop closer so that makes it easier for their clients to come in. With improved transit, people are

coming in as far as from Barrie unlike the past where it was only Richmond Hill. So Viva has less stops and so is faster than the regular buses……If were not located close to yonge Street or if we were further in, I think we would be lost. I don't think people would get to us….. accessibility would be an issue.  Because when you get off the bus, you will have to walk to far in."

## 5.5 Affordability

### 5.5.1 The Transit Impasse in York Region

New urbanism calls for investment in transit and mixed used planning to kerb sprawl but new developments along transit corridors are either displacing low-income residents that relied on transit and are pushing them further and further away from amenities or leading to hiked property value in the surrounding areas. Living near transit comes at a cost now; therefore, the people who need transit the most pay extra to access transit. Interviewee 1,

> "……..property on Yonge Street is extremely costly….. The dollar dictates… people don't build houses because it is the right thing to do, if that was the case, then we would not have 12,000 on the waiting list to get a house……"

From the interviews conducted, YR is stuck in an impasse that will require major shifts in transportation and housing policy to create change. Under the status quo, most people do not have to access to transit because they live in sprawled out suburbs that do not have enough density to support a transit system. So, only people who own cars can afford to live in these highly priced neighbourhoods with detached homes, thereby eliminating people of low income. Also, new transit investments circumvent the major problem and invest in already developed corridors such as Yonge Street that do not support multiple activities, but instead serve commuters. New improvements are leading to increases in property value along the corridors and areas near them. So transit is not accessible to low-income families who want to live, work and play in the areas.

According to interviewee 1,

> "…..anybody looking to rent, majority of our clients don't own a car, so they want to be near the transit line, they wanna be accessible to a bus, they don't want to be in the middle of nowhere. So, majority of people when they talk, need to be on the Yonge Street corridor, they don't want to be out in the more rural communities. For a couple of reasons, First, the cost of transit but also the options for housing are not great in the rural setting as they are in the urban setting, so people tend to want to be more situated along Highway 7 and Yonge Street because they have more options available. …...if they have to rely on transit because they don't have a car, then the other factor is how close they might be to the bus line. So in suburbs where the services are more sporadic….."

There have been numerous uses of the term affordability in the literature. In YR, like many cities, houses that cost less are located at urban outskirts that are poorly serviced by transit hence dependent on car travel. Moderate and lower income households are faced with a trade-off between affordable housing and higher transportation costs (Litman, 2003). Interviewee 4 admitted to making that trade-off. Her family chooses to live near a major intersection in Richmond Hill. They pay a relatively high rent but she is happy with how convenient and accessible the transit is. Additionally, other amenities and services such as grocery store, church and parks are also accessible. She prefers that location over one that would be cheaper and away from transit. She also concurs that she would probably not save much if she lived in a place without transit because then she would drive a car and would have more expenses.

Some interviewees (1, 2) shared that they think that Transit is not related to housing prices. Interviewee 1 responded,

> "No, I don't think transit has anything to do with the cost of houses. The cost of the houses is based is based on the fact that ………..it's a seller's market…….because people that are buying those homes, the cheaper ones, are using them as investment"

Through their different versions and definitions of affordability, all interviewees agreed that YR is not affordable. Not everyone can afford to live here. There is a high need for subsidised housing and even transit. Affordability is not only about low-income earners or those that need social assistance but it also extends to include moderate income earners that are struggling to live in YR. Interviewee 1 said,

> "Affordability in terms of housing would be, well the standard would be anybody who is paying one third of their monthly income towards housing. That is the standard that people use. So for people that are living on low income, if your income is 1000 dollars a month, you looking at rent being only 333 dollars, you can't even rent a room for that amount of money…..."

Interviewee 2 said,

> " …….Well I guess if you have enough income to cover all your outgoing, that is a good start, and then a margin over that .,.... That would be okay,..... If every last dollar is required each month or each week, then that is tricky when need tyres for the car or something like that….".

For Interviewee 3

> "Affordability everyone has access to, regardless of your income regardless of what other barriers you may face, whether it is your culture or family make up, it's just something that is accessible to all regardless, that's affordability. I feel like if we can all afford it, then its affordability".

Interviewee 5,

> "Can I afford it? …...With my income that I have can i afford to buy something, can I afford to live comfortably and feel like I am not overwhelmed?"

So some sort of cushion is required to feel secure in times of emergencies. When asked about affordability, interviewee 4 answered,

"No, not really, other people is complaining, it is getting high each year, so they say in my (case), because I am doing financial services, yeah, so everything now is getting high especially the grocery, right? So it is hard to, they say it is hard to buy a house here nowadays.  If you do not have a household income of $100,000, you cannot get a condo. Because we were planning to get a condo for now, we were just planning to buy a condo but my friend said it is better to rent than owning a condo or house because of their experience. So now they move to renting. They sold the house, they rent."

Interviewee 5

"It absolutely expensive to live in Richmond Hill. There are pockets of coops and subsidized housing but for the majority, the cost of living is very very high…..I connected with a lady who immigrated to Canada from Persia, ….I don't exactly remember where, but she is a refugee, she came and she was staying at the condo across the street from the church. She said,… I can't afford to live here anymore, I am renting and I could not find a roommate. She is a single parent, she came here with her daughter and so she had to go to Montreal to live with her sister. It is that expensive. There was also a language barrier problems. The cost of living is so high that people have to go further East to find housing."

Dave Kerwin, a veteran ward 2 councillor was perturbed by the empty buses along Davis Drive. There was an ongoing debate about the lack of ridership on the new Davis Drive Bus Rapid Viva buses. Since only 40% of transit comes from fares and advertising, the counsellor felt that the balance is burdened on homeowners in form of tax and are forced to rent out their basements. The Transit Corporation replied by asking residents to give it more time. As the region grows, the buses will fill up.

**5.5.2 Transit Fare**

Lisa Queen (2016) from the Aurora Era reports that there are proposed transit fare hikes that are due for approval by council of November 17, 2016, This will increase an adult monthly pass from current $145 to $154 by 2019, an adult ticket from $3.50 to $3.88, youth from $3.70 to $4.03 in 2019 and a youth monthly pass from $105 to $118 in 2019. Seniors' fare will increase from $2.20 to $2.40 in 2019. It costs YR taxpayers 56.3% contribution to transit. For one interviewee all the youth she worked with use public transit.  None of them had a personal car. So they rely heavily on transit to get around. Dues to the zones up nature of transit fares in YR, it adds up especially for youth that do not have big financial resources. In some places, buses do not even ride there, so that limits the areas where they have to find housing for the clients. In 2015, YR suggested a property tax hike of 2.85 % to support its budget with most of the funding going to transportation projects that will get 44% of the budget. That will be an additional value of $63 to a house at an average price of 547,000. $2223.19 is what is paid by an average household in regional taxes.


Interviewee 3 asserted that her clients are fined by Viva enforcement officers because they do not have bus fare and they are ticketed more than 100 dollars for a ticket they cannot afford. Some have accumulated a number of these tickets.  Although, Viva enforcement works with youth without bus fare and connects them to services so that they can get the help they need, the youth do not have money for it. Additionally, new people to YR fall victim to the system, not knowing that they have to validate their tickets and are fined due to not knowing how to navigate the system.

Interviewee 4 stated that,

> "They should not increase all the time, I think every six months they increase, before it was 136 dollars, now they increase by six bucks to 140 per monthly pass, so it is getting higher and higher,

yeah? And the salary is still in the minimum wages. It is 25 cents raised up, a little bit but it still does not cover for everything. So, it's not enough"

Renters and homebuyers looking to lower housing rates have been forced to areas far from transit hence increasing their overall transportation costs. This seems right in a capitalist framework but, public investments should be distributed in a way that corrects the disproportionate share in burdens. The policies do not alienate individual but entire groups of people. Even when one chooses to live near transit, the cost of transit is high in York region. Interviewees 1, 3, and 4 assert that the cost of bus travel is high. Interviewee 1,

"…….a lot of people live in YR but commute to Toronto……... I can use my presto card to pay for YR but I have to pay another fare when I get to Toronto….."

Interviewee 2 interviewee thinks that the high price of rent is one of the leading causes of homelessness in YR. There is not much available. Not many choices. And like any market economy, when the demand is high, the prices are high. Therefore, people with higher income can afford these houses and people with lower income cannot afford it. Also in case one becomes unemployed, there is not much money from benefits to cover expenses, so housing is the first item lost. Interviewee 2 also thinks that the mostly private infill development along Yonge Street is not going to help with the housing crisis. He also mentions the traffic load that will accompany all the new developments. So maybe a more rigorous transit network is necessary. Although, he wished to be on Yonge Street to be able to reach more people, he was happy with their current location because the rent was low and they could continue the services they offer.

In an interview with York Region Transit Corporation President Mary-France Turner and chief engineer Paul May, both focused on the role of transportation transformation in the GTHA. Turner

acknowledges that by developing the buildings that have sprung up along Highway 7 and Warden Avenue they have made informed choices to construct high-rises along transportation centres to increase density and transform the way people move around. However, she did not mention that these new constructions are market value and only affordable by a few people.

"May: Or having to adjust your schedule to fit a transit schedule. If the transit is rapid enough and frequent enough, it serves your needs.

May: "Land use planning and transportation planning really have to go hand-in-hand. They can't be done separately, they have to be done at the same time. The region quite a while ago developed the whole centres and corridors plan. There are four regional centres in Markham, in Richmond Hill, over in Vaughan and one up in Newmarket. The regional corridors are across Hwy. 7 and north-south on Yonge Street. The Viva rapid transit connects these centres together along Hwy. 7 and Yonge Street.

Turner: It supplies the necessary capacity to accommodate that development. The roads were congested before the high-density showed up on the scene. ……..put transit into those corridors, you make it rapid, you build out so many lanes and the rest is about how people move around and in that space. It needs to be a pleasant place to be. We really are in this transformation from where we we've been. In one direction (along Hwy. 7), we have no sidewalk and ditches and this is a highway and in the other direction there is an avenue. This is a place where people can live and work and play and walk, have a patio, have a restaurant and a café, a whole different vision of how we live and work. That investment is being made, in large part, in response to the fact that we have created capacity in the system to accommodate the density through rapid transit investment."

Walker (2009) concurs that to acquire outcomes from EJ research and data, the fight for political power is part of the process of realising change. There are frameworks that seem egalitarian that transit and subsequent TOD is for the common good but if the city is planned for a particular

demographic with a certain amount of money, then, there is a procedural concern in the decision making. There is a silent majority that will enjoy the planning outcomes but they pay high prices because people with power (planners, politicians, councillors, architects) decide that it is best for them. Even through town hall meetings, the most public input is not about the type of developments they want to see coming to Yonge Street, but about the design and public realm of already chosen developments. So, political representation for minority ideas is lacking especially in YR.

**Recommendations and Future Research**

According to Gordon Walker (2009), environmental and social differences are experienced unevenly. Most importantly is that some have the access to power and power to influence outcomes and benefits while others do not have access. This study has not unearthed any obvious disparities but Gordon calls for an EJ analysis that looks beyond the results for a more multi-dimensional analysis and looking at other forms of exclusion. The fact that there were few communities of colour, not enough rental stock and few new rental constructions shows a form of subtle but realistic discrimination through conditions such as a lack of rental housing stock that is affordable to people of low to moderate income. Solutions such as the creation of basement apartments should be scrutinised to ensure that tenants are not subjected to substandard living conditions.

Interviewee 1 stated that,

> "we are in a housing crisis, When you look at housing in YR, 85% tend to be homeownership, which means that the remaining 15% is apartments, and when I say apartments, these include basement apartments. Lots of people don't want to be in a basement apartment, seniors definitely don't want to be in basement apartments because of accessibility issues".

Walker (2009) further elucidates on the importance of research methods through which conclusions are drawn. Through this experience I reached out to organisations that worked with women in order to include a gender perspective in my analysis; however, some were not interested while others did not think that transit affected their activities. One particular candidate was not interested in transit because private transport was provided to girls should they not have access transit. If certain members of the community do not have to think about issues such as transit, probably there should be a desire to examine their privilege in the ability to travel freely and whether everyone has that privilege. I also could not get to interview organisations that served minorities of colour.

Further research would be to investigate grass roots activity that demand for policies to control increasing housing prices. If they exist, who are these people and what progress have they achieved. If the movement is weak, how can they be strengthened to demand for their right to the city? There is resistance against intensification in the suburbs, especially if it is rental houses in the proposed development. Viewing transit as a right can enable activists to challenge the disutility of current policy to benefit the already privileged. Additionally, policies to slow house price growth could lead to more renting.

**Conclusion**

There is a relationship between transportation policy and housing. For instance, transit policies impact the availability (quantity), location, and eventual access to affordable housing. And it also feeds into economic and racial segregation as a result of unequal distribution of benefits. Going beyond the distributive EJ spatial analysis, this research looked into the interplay of affordability and transit and how this affected overall social inclusion in societal services and activities. Municipalities have the power to create an affordable market for all income types.

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**Appendices**

**Appendix A: Letter of Invitation to Participate in Research**

Recipient Address

<div align="right">Date:</div>

Dear

I am writing to request your participation in research for a Masters in Environmental Studies. I am a graduate student in the Faculty of Environmental Studies at York University. I would like to interview you some time in the next month about your knowledge and experiences with transit oriented development as it relates to housing in York Region.

This research seeks to understand: As York Region moves towards active transportation and transit–oriented development, what are the potential benefits and risks for low income residents, given the already high housing costs in the region?

The methodological approach of this research combines diverse sources of information, including:

> Publications related to the scientific and socio-cultural dimensions transit-oriented development

> Documents released by governments, non-government organizations and industry associations; and

> Interviews with people who may have insight into transit corridors and housing crisis in York Region.

The length of the interview would be about one hour or less. There are no risks or benefits to you associated with this research, and you may withdraw, not answer questions or terminate participation at any time without prejudice. Unless you agree otherwise, your confidentiality and/or anonymity will be maintained.

Your insights into this case study are valuable to my research, and I do hope that you will agree to an interview. I will telephone you within the next week as follow-up to this letter. Alternately, you may contact me by means listed below to set up an interview time or seek clarification about the research.

My research supervisor is Professor Jennifer Foster, who may be contacted by email at jfoster@yorku.ca or by telephone at 416-736-2100 x. 22106. If you have any questions about York's research policies concerning human participants, please feel free to contact Lisa Dennis of the Faculty of Environmental Studies at (416) 736-2100 x.22640.

I look forward to speaking with you soon.

Sincerely,

Goretti Mpaka
Candidate in Masters in Environmental Studies
York University
gnamuli@yorku.ca
647 773 9632

# Informed Consent Form

**Date**:

**Name of Participant:**

**Study Name**: Environmental Justice Implications of Transit-oriented Development (TOD) in York region: A case study of *Vivanext* bus rapid transit Yonge Street - Richmond Hill and Newmarket.

**Researchers**: Goretti Mpaka
72 Springfair Avenue, Aurora, ON. Email: gnamuli@yorku.ca  Tel: 647 773 9632

**Purpose of the Research:** As York Region moves towards active transportation and transit–oriented development, what are the potential benefits and risks for low income residents, given the already high housing costs in the region?

**What You Will Be Asked to Do in the Research**: I would like to interview you to gain your insight in transit-oriented development risks and benefits to low income residents of York Region. The length of the interview would be about one hour or less.

**Risks and Discomforts**: We do not foresee any risks or discomfort from your participation in the research.  You have the right to not answer any questions

**Benefits of the Research and Benefits to You**: This research will contribute to better holistic planning for transit facilities in York region so that they cater to the diverse needs and make up of York Region.

**Voluntary Participation**: Your participation in the study is completely voluntary and you may choose to stop participating at any time.  Your decision not to volunteer will not influence the treatment you get the researcher or nature of your relationship with York University either now, or in the future.

**Withdrawal from the Study**:  You can stop participating in the study at any time, for any reason, if you so decide.   Your decision to stop participating, or to refuse to answer particular questions, will not affect your relationship with the researchers, York University, or any other group associated with this project.  In the event you withdraw from the study, all associated data collected will be immediately destroyed wherever possible.

**Confidentiality**: Unless you choose otherwise, all information you supply during the research will be held in confidence and unless you specifically indicate your consent, your name will not appear in any report or publication of the research. The data from interviews will be collected using a digital

audio recording device plus hand written notes. Your data will be safely stored with password protection and only research staff will have access to this information. The information collected will stay stored on the device for up to two years the deleted. Confidentiality will be provided to the fullest extent possible by law.

**Questions About the Research?** If you have questions about the research in general or about your role in the study, please feel free to contact Goretti Mpaka either by telephone at 647 773 9632, or by e-mail gnamuli@yorku.ca. This research has been reviewed and approved by the FES Research Committee, on behalf of York University, and conforms to the standards of the Canadian Tri-Council Research Ethics guidelines. If you have any questions about this process, or about your rights as a participant in the study, please contact the Sr. Manager & Policy Advisor for the Office of Research Ethics, 5th Floor, Research Tower, York University (telephone 416-736-5914 or e-mail ore@yorku.ca).

**Legal Rights and Signatures**:

I, *(fill in your name here)*, consent to participate in *(insert study name here)* conducted by *(insert investigator name here)*. I have understood the nature of this project and wish to participate. I am not waiving any of my legal rights by signing this form. My signature below indicates my consent.


**Signature**_____     **Date**_____
Participant

**Signature**_____     **Date**_____
Principal Investigator


Use this section if imagery (photographs or video) will be taken of participants and used in teaching or dissemination of research.

I, *(fill in your name here)*, agree to allow video and/or [digital images or photographs] in which I appear to be used in teaching, scientific presentations and/or publications with the understanding that I will not be identified by name. I am aware that I may withdraw this consent at any time without penalty.


**Signature**_____     **Date**_____
Participant

**Appendix B: Sample Questions**

**Non-Government Agency working on homelessness/rental Assistance**

1. In your opinion why are housing costs going up
2. What should be included in transit planning for it to be equitable?
3. Is there an increase in homelessness, if so, do u know why?
4. Is transit a necessity for your clients?
5. Are they in proximity to transit? Has it been easy/difficult finding housing close to transit?

**General Public.**

1. What do you think about TOD?
2. Do you think housing affordable?
3. Is homelessness connected to transit?
4. Do you live close to transit? Why or why not?
5. Would you wish to live close to transit?
6. How do you envision equitable transportation?
7. Are there any changes you would like to see in current transit practices?

**Appendix C: Document Interviews**

| DATE | NAME | ROLE |
|---|---|---|
| July 12, 2016 | Interviewee 1 | Executive Director of organization that provided housing assistance to residents of York Region |
| September 07, 2016 | Interviewee 2 | Food bank facilitator who works with other programs by the organization |
| October 14, 2106 | Interviewee 3 | Works as a housing aide with a youth organization to assist clients in finding housing within the community. |
| October 14, 2016 | Interviewee 4 | A young mother who lives near one of the major intersections in York Region with her husband and son. |
| October 25, 2016 | Interviewee 5 | Family Ministries Pastor of multicultural organization |