

Territorialisation of Public Housing: The Case of Lawrence Heights

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Abstract

This major paper examines the socio-spatial political process that produces public housing neighbourhoods in Toronto as dominated geographies, demarcating them - and their residents – along stark lines of class, race and poverty. It reaches beyond the imperatives of neoliberal capitalism and historically examines underlying notions of neo-colonialization. It specifically analyzes revitalization practices as a continuation of the same process, and presents Lawrence Heights Revitalization project as a form of post-war suburban extension and an urban policy of pacification. The aim of this research is to highlight the social norms underlying mainstream planning arguments and practices around public housing.

Foreword

This research fulfills the requirements of a Master in Environmental Studies degree and presents the end of my Plan of Study in which I focused on planning for spatial justice.

During the last two years, I have studied planning for spatial justice through three components. These are (1) urban planning as a process of space production, both physical and social (and thus political), (2) contemporary political economies and their role in the production of urban space, and (3) spatiality of justice as an insight that can empower social activism and community organizing in its pursuit of justice.

This research links to all three components as it addresses contemporary planning practices of public housing in Toronto, name revitalization, within a neoliberal capitalist context of city building. It also traces the historical shift of the Canadian state and its public housing policies from Keynesianism to neo-liberalism. It further uncovers the normative assumptions that inform dominant planning ideas and

design practices such as social mixing and New Urbanism. My paper also examines the role of society, including mainstream media and politicians, in the revitalization of Lawrence Heights.

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To all my friends at MES, I've always looked forward to our discussions and our study sessions. And my family: Our journey has taken us half way around the world and I cannot be more grateful for all the opportunities it has presented. Stay positive, stay loving and stay strong. We've got this!

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Introduction

Toronto is home to the first Canadian public housing project, built between 1948 - 1957. The city has also accumulated through the years the largest number of public housing units in the province of Ontario. Almost seven decades later, these projects are considered sites of deep poverty, violence and crime. While some neighbourhoods face neglect and closure, a few are targeted with several policies that are claimed to be solutions to these complicated problems.

My research examines how public housing neighbourhoods in Toronto have become known as spaces of deep poverty and immorality, that are continuously positioned at the social peripheries of society, and left to struggle with economic, social, political and cultural disadvantage. My intent is to understand how these spaces become associated with social narratives of fear and threats, and how the supposed solutions of total demolition and social mixing are justified and implemented. Through a lens of territoriality, which highlights socio-spatial zones of influence and dominance, I try to reach beyond the economic imperatives tied to neoliberal capitalism and historically examine underlying notions of neo-colonialization that have re-affirmed dominance over these sites.

First, I start with unpacking theoretical conceptions of territorialisation, neoliberalism and social mixing. Then, through a brief historical review, I track territorialisation in Toronto with a focus on public housing. I explain how public housing neighbourhoods have always been dominated by mainstream political, economic and social narratives, and how certain processes of neoliberalism and neo-colonialization have segregated and pathologized them by demarcating them – and their residents- along stark lines of class, race and poverty, affirming their dominated position, increasing their stigma and producing an aggressive negative, even revanchist stance against them.

In the last section, I explain how social mixing and revitalization continue to serve neoliberal capitalist accumulation purposes and neo-colonialization, and this despite the rhetoric of social inclusion. I also present the case of Lawrence Heights as the third revitalization project in Toronto. I analyze why it was prioritized over other TCH projects, and how it can be considered an extension of public housing revitalization practices into Toronto's post-war suburbs and a neo-colonial response to the supposed threat to the safety and security of Toronto in the early 2000s.

Research Methods

Providing an understanding of territorialisation of public housing, and its role in the production of public housing neighbourhoods in Toronto as dominated geographies of disadvantage and social injustice requires a multifaceted approach. This research employs a qualitative approach and primarily uses three methods; a literature review, case analysis, and semi-structured qualitative interviews.

With a literature review, I begin addressing socio-spatial analysis of urban spaces including scholarship on territorialisation and social mixing, in addition to neoliberal urbanism in Toronto. The review also incorporates literature on the development of public housing and its history in the city, including its recent social mixing and revitalization planning practices. This review helps build a framework to understand the territorialisation of public housing and construct a brief outline of its history in Toronto.

The second method includes a case study in which I focus my analysis on Lawrence Heights neighbourhood. The analysis of this case study is based on a review of governmental and institutional plans and documents, in addition to media (newspapers and online blogs) that address its history up to, and including the revitalization project.

The third method includes seven in-depth semi-structured interviews with City and TCH planners and a community organizer. The interviews were conducted in person and via phone. These generally address Lawrence Heights Revitalization Project and examine concepts of social mixing and revitalization planning practices in Toronto. I interviewed the following persons:

- John Van Nostrand: senior planner and partner in Planning Alliance (now SvN) who led the development of Lawrence Allen Revitalization Plan. Mr. Van Nostrand has a long career in planning in Canada and worldwide.
- Jason Chen: Senior Development Director with Toronto Community Housing responsible for the Lawrence Heights Revitalization Project. Mr. Chen previously worked as a development manager in the revitalization project of Regent Park in Downtown Toronto.
- Kyle Knoeck: Manager of the East Section, Community Planning- Toronto and East York District in City Planning Division in the City of Toronto. Mr. Knoeck was previously the senior planner responsible of the development of the Lawrence Allen Secondary Plan; he also worked on preparing the planning framework of the revitalization of Regent Park in Downtown Toronto.
- Seanna Kerr: Senior Planner in the West Section, Community Planning – North York District in the City Planning Division in the City of Toronto. Ms. Kerr is the lead planner on the development approvals for Lawrence Heights - phase one project.
- Steve Da Silva: Community organizer and a writer with Basics, a media project and community newsletter that was involved and organizing in Lawrence Heights during the early years of the Lawrence Heights Revitalization Project.

- Anonymous senior planning consultant (SPC) who is involved in the development of the Lawrence Allen Revitalization Plan that was prepared for the City of Toronto in 2010.
- Anonymous development Manager (DM) with Toronto Community Housing who is involved in the development of phase one of Lawrence Heights Revitalization Project.

Theoretical Conceptions

The positioning of public housing neighbourhoods in Toronto at the social peripheries of society is not random or fixated. It is a result of a territorialisation process that fragments and organizes the city's neighbourhoods in a hierarchy between affluent, rich and dominant, and impoverished and dominated. Through this process, public housing neighbourhoods are continuously produced as advanced urban margins, territorially stigmatized and racialized, and presented as threats to the city's landscape and way of life. With such framing, these neighbourhoods become targets of urban policies that promote demolition and redevelopment on the basis of "proper" social mixing. While these policies are framed in terms of social inclusion, they serve purposes of neoliberal and neo-colonial capitalism.

Before I delve into the details of the case, several theoretical conceptions need to be explained. These include territorialisation, neoliberalism and social mixing.

Territorialisation

Territorialisation generally follows the scholarship that seeks "to think space politically, and to think politics spatially" (Dikeç, 2005, 171). It is employed as a critical analytical notion to examine multi-scalar forms of spatial organization. Territorialisation focuses on socio-spatial constructs that organize relationships of dominance over community and geography. In its breadth, territorialisation addresses class and race-based struggle and the role of power, often manifested in the state, in the production of

fragmented hierarchal urban space (Kipfer, 2012). The notion is process-oriented and rejects the affixation and the pre-given status of spatial and temporal inequalities (Kipfer & Dikeç, 2019; Kühn, 2015). It connects directly with concepts of advanced marginality (Wacquant, 1996, 1999), social peripheralization (Kühn, 2015), and neo-colonialization (Kipfer, 2012; Kipfer & Dikeç, 2019; Kipfer & Petrunia, 2009).

Following Lefebvre, Kipfer and Goonewardena (2007) argue that colonization exists the moment power is tied to a territory, where an inferior group is subjected to a superior one, and consequently, a dominated space to a dominant space. Lefebvre suggested, with reference to postwar France and its colonies, colonialism was transported from the external markets of the colonies to the interior of imperial countries to manage and regulate areas of working class and new immigrants. Once reformulated and recast with the help of anti-colonial theory, this insight can be used to understand the links between colonies and metropole in fields such as urban planning. Territorial relations of domination between central and peripheral spaces can thus be said to be (neo-)colonial in part provided their racialized dimensions are tied to colonial realities, past or present (Kipfer & Goonewardena, 2007). This holds true for contemporary Paris and, in paradoxically more direct and more nuanced ways in settler colonial contexts like Toronto (Kipfer, 2019; Kipfer & Petrunia, 2009). Racism with (neo-)colonial inflection can be one force (next to class and gender dynamics) determining the social and territorial conflicts that regulate the relationships between centres and peripheries in contemporary times (Kipfer, 2012). It is important to note here, however, that peripheries are understood less as a physical and mathematical concept based on distance (from the centre) and more as the positions in which subaltern social groups are placed (Kipfer & Dikeç, 2019; Kühn, 2015). Through a process of social peripheralization, these groups are continuously dominated and excluded from access to resources and goods, and from powers of decision-making and agenda setting (Kühn, 2015 [Brent & Colini 2013; Kreckell 2011]).

Wacquant (1996) argues that unlike the dispersed working-class neighbourhoods of the Fordist era, urban margins and peripheries are increasingly being pushed into deeper poverty, ethno-racial division, public violence and concentration in the same distressed urban areas. This new modality of peripheries, which he refers to as advanced marginality (Wacquant, 1996, 1999), are produced by four factors: the first is a macro-societal drift towards inequality which refers to the increased polarity and inequality between communities despite the overall economic growth and increase in Gross Domestic Product (GDP). This indicates that urban margins are long-term disconnected from macro-economic trends. The second factor is the mutation of wage labour, which refers to the dissolution of Fordist labour relations and the growing trend of precarious jobs and labour: having a job doesn't save one from poverty. The third is the reconstruction of the welfare state, by which Wacquant highlights the role of the state (that was transforming to neoliberalism at that time) and its policies in driving and directing neighbourhood decline through housing and city building policies. He argues that dependent on a political process, the state chooses what, how, when and where to roll-out policies that remove or mediate the consequences of poverty or inequality (Wacquant, 1999).

As for the fourth factor, Wacquant (1999) argues that advanced marginality is produced through the spatial concentration and territorial stigmatization of poverty. Stigmatization, he explains, is the discourse of demonization that associates concentrated urban margins with negative social narratives of deprivation, immortality and violence. Affirming this stigma on top of the burden of poverty and the resurging prejudice against ethnic minorities results in sharp diminution of the sense of community that once characterized working class communities. Thus, advanced margins become less of a familiar space and more a battle field of dispute and violence, pitting not only outsiders against the community, but the community against each other (Wacquant, 1999). Interestingly, this results in the dissolution of "place" into void "space" (Wacquant, 1996 [Smith, 1987]), and the loss of a locale that marginalized urban populations identify and feel secure in.

It is important to note that Wacquant's conception of advanced marginality is strongly class-based. He does, however, underscore the role of racism in advanced marginality and the production of hyperghettos in the United States of America, and has alerted us to the importance of analyzing racism in their comparatively distinct forms (Wacquant, 1999). Even so, Wacquant has been criticized for underestimating the current role of neocolonial racism in places like metropolitan France (see Tissot, 2007; Kipfer, 2012). In this context that it makes sense to pay close attention to the ways in which racialization can be 'strategically' deployed, sometimes in and through seemingly colourblind claims and policies (Mele, 2019). Mele (2019) argues that race is becoming less about the demographic and structural characteristics of a group, and more an ideological form of fabricated and mobilized impositions that allow political economic processes to reshape cities. In some cases, racialization can happen through ideologies of migration. According to Saberi (2017a), the contemporary socio-racial construct of the "immigrant" not only hides, but lumps together the heterogeneity of ethnic groups and further produces them only as homogeneously opposite to the Whiteness.

Whiteness in this context refers to the normalized qualities of race that are structurally and institutionally embedded in the Canadian state (Peake & Ray, 2001 [Calliste 1993-1994, Simmons, 1998]). On this basis, people are positioned in or outside society, in or outside the Canadian nationality, within interiorized and exteriorized landscapes of absence and presence (Peake & Ray, 2001). This understanding allows us to extend analysis beyond extreme acts of hatred, and address relations of dominance and subordination between racialized groups. Interestingly, Kobayashi and Peake (Peake & Ray, 2001 [2000]) argue that Whiteness largely ignores or even denies racist intentions and occupies central ground by normalizing common events and benefits, giving them legitimacy as part of a moral system depicted as natural and universal while simultaneously excluding others. For example, it normalizes the highly segregated and exclusive white suburbs while associating African communities in Canada with ghettos (Peake & Ray, 2001). Whiteness also over-exposes people of color (especially to the

penal system) and depicts their neighbourhoods as problematic while simultaneously rendering them invisible (to social justice) (Peake & Ray, 2001 [Mukherjee, 1981]).

The history of racism in Canada is long and complex, extending from centuries of indigenous dispossession and assimilation to relationships between European migrants (English, French, Irish, Jewish and so on) and, most importantly for our purposes, relationships between Europeans and European-dominated institutions and non-European inhabitants. In Toronto's recent history, racialization connects strongly (but not exclusively) to the emergence of "non-traditional immigrants" of color in the 1960s, as opposed to the traditional immigrants of European descent that arrived before and that are now considered to be mostly white (Peake & Ray, 2001 [Mukherjee, 1981]). Through this labelling, Toronto's Whiteness produced an "other" identity for people of color that not only positioned them outside the nation but considered them as negative disruption to Canadian, and Torontonians landscape (Peake & Ray, 2001). In several incidents during the 1990s and early 2000s, including the so-called Yonge Street riots in 1992, Torontonians, especially the non-white inhabitants and immigrants, were reminded of their place in Toronto, whose allowed in and whose excluded, and what roles are assigned to insiders and outsiders (Peake & Ray, 2001; Saberi, 2017a). Even contemporary "multiculturalism" policies in Canada, including Toronto's motto "Diversity is Our Strength", continues to position white Anglo-European culture as the ethnic core culture of society, hierarchically arranging and peripheralizing other cultures around it (Goonewardena & Kipfer, 2005; Saberi, 2017a [Bannerji, 2000]).

Saberi (2017) argues that non-white immigrant neighbourhoods become perceived as actual threats to the social order. In these moments of fear, she explains, solutions to the threats posed by 'advanced' marginality cannot be limited to coercion and the punitive state. The mobilization of consent becomes important in urban policies aimed at pacifying populations. In targeting seemingly dangerous neighbourhoods, these policies become concerned with reforming potential threats in order to produce

territorialised and racialized ideology of security¹, development, stability and participation. These policies vary in form from policing, to training and employment and community regeneration initiatives (Saber, 2017a). A perfect example is the Toronto Anti-Violence Intervention Strategy (TAVIS). It includes an annual civilian intervention summer program in targeted “Priority Neighbourhoods”, which in turn aims to empower community and engage its members (Saber, 2017a).

It is important to stress that an integral part of contemporary pacification, is the concept of participation (Saber, 2017a). Saber (2017a, 59) argues that “participation becomes a selling point of state-led strategies of urban intervention”. Thus, even if these interventions prove to be genuinely democratic, participation in this context continues to support and sustain ‘the police’ (the established social order), rather than produce moments of true ‘politics’ where the supposed ‘natural’ arrangement of things is disturbed or questioned (Dikeç, 2005 [Rançière, 1994]; Kipfer & Dikeç, 2019).

It is also worth noting that continued territorialized power struggles, which escalate crisis levels for the existing social order or socio-political stalemate often pave the path for populist regimes. Their rise (especially recently in Ontario and Toronto) re-affirm and cement territoriality, and result in further neo-colonialization and racialization of low-income non-white neighbourhoods (Kipfer & Saber, 2014).

¹ “The ideology of security has been crucial in justifying violence to facilitate a form of liberal order-building in the name of freedom” (Saber, 2017, 11 [Bell, 2011; Neocleous, 2008]). “Security is the freedom of capital and private property; it’s about the security of socio-spatial relations of domination and accumulation under imperialist capitalism” (Saber, 2017, 11).

Neoliberalism

Pinpointing the definition of neoliberalism is a challenging task. As Peck and Theodore (2019, 245) describe: “ [Neoliberalism is] an always mutating project of state-facilitated market rule, propelled not least by its own limitations, contradictions and reactionary tendencies”. Emerging from distinct historical conjunctures, neoliberalism aims at liberating the flow of capital and usually refers to a political economic philosophy that extends market rules and corporate freedom (Peck & Theodore, 2019; Peck & Tickell, 2002).

Neoliberalism is both a dominant ideology and a policy model that inspires and imposes state restructuring and rescaling across a wide range of national and local contexts (Peck & Tickell, 2002). As a set of policies and a political strategy, neoliberalism first appeared in the 1970s and was aggressively deployed in the 1980s by Margaret Thatcher (in the U.K.) and Ronald Reagan (in the U.S.A.) to replace the Keynesian welfare state (Peck & Tickell, 2002). The latter was based on an understanding of modest, social democratic egalitarianism and collective social responsibilities, and believed in the state’s role in reducing and mitigating the inequalities of the capitalist system through some economic regulation of the market.

On the other hand, early visions of neoliberalism were mainly centred on three ideas. First, the individual is the centre of society, and an individual’s value is based solely on their economic contribution. Second, collective and social responsibilities are negated for the benefit of individual freedoms understood in terms of property rights and individual market choices. Third, the market is presented as most effective means for individuals to achieve their utility functions. Any state intervention, no matter its purpose, that interferes with the individual or the market is not welcome (Hackworth & Moriah, 2006). However, Brenner and Theodore (Hackworth & Moriah, 2006 [2002]) highlight that a non-interventionist state contradicts the neoliberal premise of a minimalist state form.

Neoliberalism is a new form of state intervention, not a simple withdrawal of state functions. Furthermore, it does not produce better efficiencies or true ideal type neoliberalism (Hackworth & Moriah, 2006), nor does it protect economies around the world from “freefalling” like they did in the Wall Street crash in 2008 (Peck & Theodore, 2019).

Nevertheless, neoliberal rationality has grown to be the “common sense of the times” - a hegemonic ideology² (Peck & Tickell, 2002, 399). Its strong discourses not only present its rules and prescriptions as a reflection of the state of nature, neoliberal ideologies are themselves produced and reproduced through institutional forms and political actions, giving them a self-actualizing quality (Peck & Tickell, 2002). Bourdieu (Peck & Tickell, 2002, 382 [1998, 95]) explains that neoliberalism is strong “because it has behind it all the powers of a world of power relations which it helps to make as it is, in particular by orienting the economic choices of those who dominate economic relations and so adding its own – specific symbolic- force to those power relations”.

As for the policy model, the era of neoliberalism had its destructive and creative moments. Neoliberalism is impressively flexible and has a remarkable capacity to adjust to crisis (Peck & Tickell, 2002). In simplified periodization, its agenda has shifted from (1) roll-back neoliberalism which was actively concerned with the destruction and retrenchment of the Keynesian welfare state, to (2) roll-out neoliberalism concerned with economic policy that minimizes state forms, deregulates the market and encourages privatization and entrepreneurship, and, finally, (3) a second phase of roll-out neoliberalism that reactivates social policies targeting those racialized, marginalised and disposed from earlier stages

² The argument follows Gramsci’s conception of hegemony (Gramsci, 2000).

of neoliberalism³ (Coulter, 2009; Peck & Tickell, 2002). The last responded to the increasing social polarization by the late 1990s. As Wacquant (Peck & Tickell, 2002, 389 [1999, 323]) explains, these policies became needed “to mask and contain the deleterious social consequences, in the lower regions of social space, of the deregulation of wage labour and the deterioration of social protection”.

However, this time around, social policy was activated on the premise that poverty can be blamed on personal choices by which individuals withdraw from the capitalist labour market (Saberri, 2017a). Furthermore, poverty was criminalised and an ideological construct of race was employed (partly by overemphasizing the race problematic and by coupling blackness with anti-market behaviour) in order to establish an ‘other’ identity, and accordingly identify seemingly stubborn and dangerous neighbourhoods (Heroux, 2011; Mele, 2019; Roberts & Mahtani, 2010 [Wilson, 2006]; Saberri, 2017a; Wacquant, 1996, 1999). Targeting social exclusion, crime and violence within these neighbourhoods justified increased state expenditure and intervention, and opened up geographical areas that the state had previously avoided (August, 2014 [Hackworth, 2002]; Peck & Tickell, 2002;).

Policies around poverty and poor neighbourhoods became increasingly concerned with policing (Heroux, 2011; Saberri, 2017a). As Peck and Theodore (2019, 249) explain: “projects of neoliberalization [...were] coupled with an expansion of right-arm roles and capacities [of the state] in areas like policing and surveillance, incarceration and social control”. Neoliberal social policies also became concerned with education and job training (in order to rehabilitate potential workforce) (Peck & Tickell, 2002), and socially mixed redevelopment, especially within public housing neighbourhoods (in order to develop

³ The reactivation of social policies was closely connected with Third Way Neoliberalism which called for transcending both “old Left” approaches and neoliberal market fundamentalism by merging “prudent financial management” with concerns for “social inclusion” (Coulter, 2009, 191).

community policing and release valuable real estate and maximise its economic potential) (August, 2014; Kipfer, 2019; Kipfer & Dikeç, 2019; Kipfer & Petrunia, 2009; Mele, 2019).

Revitalization of public housing in Toronto operates under the same logic of neoliberal capitalist accumulation; it promises to re-connect isolated and excluded low-income neighbourhoods to the city and to society, for example by offering scholarship and training programs to their residents⁴. Most importantly, revitalization is similarly concerned with maintaining neoliberal imaginaries of social order and the containment of the poor (August, 2008, 2014, 2016; August & Walks, 2012; Heroux, 2011; Kipfer & Petrunia, 2009). However, in addition to neoliberal logic, revitalization in Toronto employs processes of neocolonialization, territorialisation, and strategic racialization. It rearranges the spaces, both social and physical, in order to create a desirable social mix that attracts capital while also increasing surveillance and intensifying social control of the poor (August, 2014; Kipfer, 2012; Kipfer & Petrunia, 2009; Kipfer & Saberi, 2014; Saberi, 2017a). Neoliberalism claims colorblindness and ignorance to disproportionate implications on ethnic communities, including risks of displacement and increased social conflict (Mele, 2019).

After the 2008 Wall Street crash and the subsequent Great Recession, already existing neoliberal states embarked on yet another and more intense wave of austerity in what Peck and Theodore (2019) call “late neoliberalism”. This wave targeted already retrenched social security and services, focusing on those needed by the poor and marginalised. Late neoliberalism, Peck and Theodore (2019) argue, produced reactionary forms of politics such as those promoted by authoritarian populists who picked on

⁴ Limitless Heights scholarship offers Lawrence Heights and Neptune residents financial support for post-secondary education or training as part of the Lawrence Heights Revitalization project (Toronto Community Housing, n.d.).

unrestrained currents of racism, misogyny, and nativism. As Brown (Peck & Theodore, 2019, 257 [2018, 75]) describes: “Behold the aggrieved, reactive creature fashioned by neoliberal reason and its effects, who embraces freedom without the social contract, authority without democratic legitimacy, and vengeance without values or futurity. Far from the calculating, entrepreneurial, moral, and disciplined being imagined by Hayek and his intellectual kin, this one is angry, amoral, and impetuous, spurred by unavowed humiliation and thirst for revenge. The intensity of this energy is tremendous on its own, and also easily exploited by plutocrats, right-wing politicians, and tabloid media moguls whipping it up and keeping it stupid”. Once empowered with populist support, authoritarian regimes continue to target the poor and marginalized, especially immigrants of color to affirm their “other” identity and sustain their domination.

Social mixing

Social mixing is a contested concept that is deeply immersed in issues of class and race. Planners and urban theorists struggle with finding the appropriate scale and balance, and with negotiating the claimed benefits and liabilities of heterogeneity (Sarkissen, 1976; Sarkissian, Forsyth, & Heine, 1990). The term typically means an “income or socio-economic mix, sometimes with ethnic or racial mix as a subtext” (August, 2008, 83 [Rose, 2004, 280]). In addition to nostalgic notions of the pre-industrial English village, social mixing generally serves utopian visions of social harmony, and/or utilitarian functions of diverse employment base and economic stability (Sarkissen, 1976).

Social mixing went through several, and quite different phases that drove it to the frontiers of town planning discussions throughout the years. The early ones, developed between the mid 1800s and early 1900s, were mostly experimental in new industrial cities, concerned with combining the functional need of all classes of workers (Sarkissen, 1976). Notions of social mixing in that era were strongly paternalistic and adopted condescending views of education and betterment opportunities to the poor and the

working class (Sarkissen, 1976). Most importantly, they were deeply concerned with “[The city] destroying the neighbourly values and easy social communications which were the crowning virtues of the small town” (Sarkissen, 1976, 234 [Quandt, 1970]).

Urban planning in the mid 1900s, under modernism and functionalism, shared the same anti-urban sentiments of these experiments (Sarkissen, 1976). However, it was concerned with the creation of the efficient scientific city machine (Irving, 1993) rather than social mixing per se. It acknowledged the need to provide a range of workforce resources and skills (and thus pay grades), and the need to mix consumption and production areas (Sarkissen, 1976), yet, functionalist urban planning aimed at arranging both physical and social space on the basis of separate and functional zones where different activities do not mix, and thus do not interfere with one another. In this sense, segregated land uses and functional zoning produced both large-scale, deconcentrated and homogenous suburbs on one hand, and high-density city cores of distinct and divided zones of residential skyscrapers and office towers on the other. Both connected by boulevards and major highways (Irving, 1993). After War World II, some state policies adopted social mixing as a utopian goal in the U.K. and the U.S.A. (Sarkissian et al., 1990), but the continuation of exclusive suburbanization, the decline of poor inner-city neighbourhoods and urban renewal programs paid little normative attention to *in situ* social diversity.

The inner suburbs that expanded around Toronto at the time did not follow the same simple duality of city and suburbs. In the postwar suburbs, isolated and segregated pockets of middle and low-income high-rise apartment buildings were developed to suggest a “large scale social mixing” (See Social Planning Council of Metropolitan Toronto, 1979; Suttor, 2007). In this case, the mixing of functions and multiple residential classes becomes evident from the perspective of city-wide or regional planning, not at the neighbourhood scale.

During the 1960s and 1970s, social mixing became a reaction against postwar planning (August, 2008; Sarkissen, 1976; Sarkissian et al., 1990). Jane Jacobs (1961) and Oscar Newman (1972), both advocates of fine-grain mixing, had captured urban theorists and planners' interest with promises of city viability, better livelihood and safer environment. Interestingly, their mix did not advocate residential cross-class or cross-race mixing specifically, but rather focused on creating a diverse neighbourhood of fine-grained mix of uses (residential, commercial industrial... etc.) and of building types (detached houses, apartment buildings... etc.) (Jacobs, 1961; Newman, 1972). Mixing uses and building types can suggest the production of socially mixed communities based on family size, lifecycle, and income, but it pays no attention to the class and race-based social realities that shape the relations of physical proximity between different social groups.

In Toronto, a resurgent local welfare state, and a growing GPD allowed the government to respond to resistance against urban renewal programs and highway projects (Suttor, 2016). The reformist City Council of 1972 adopted the notion of social mixing in the development of St. Lawrence neighbourhood and the advocacy for community-based public housing model, or the "co-op model" (August, 2008; Suttor, 2016). Both examples received international appreciation and were known as the preferred Canadian public housing model. More importantly though, both reflected the presence of a community in Toronto - at least in the Old City, that was concerned with equity and social integration (Keil, 1998; Suttor, 2016).

The neoliberal turn in the Canadian state that followed resulted in an interesting transformation of the term social mixing; At first, the state had dumped the notion of social mixing to be destroyed with the rest of the welfare state and collective social responsibility, and drew support and funding of the co-

op model citing fiscal concerns ⁵ and the need to free the market and the individual (August, 2008; Suttor, 2016). But when this largely resulted in increased homogeneity and social polarization, social mixing was revived and used to justify social policies that target marginalised racialized communities (Kipfer, 2007) supposedly suffering from the poverty concentration and the neighbourhood effect (while ignoring highly segregated and exclusive middle and high-income suburbs) (August, 2008; Darcy, 2010).

The neighbourhood effect assumes that an augmented and more complex order of social problems occurs with higher concentration of “problematic” individuals or households within a certain geography (Darcy, 2010 [Wilson, 1987]). In simpler words, poor neighbourhoods make their residents poorer (Friedrichs, 1998). This environmental deterministic stance directly and exclusively ties the cause of poverty, disadvantage and marginalization to the geographical concentration of poor, disadvantaged and marginalized population. It disguises and ignores the social and political forces, including structural racism and the role of the market and the state in the production of this concentration and its consequences (Wacquant, 2003). Thus, it reduces the causes of poverty to the spatial distribution of poverty as well as inadequate neighbourhood design instead of governmental underfunding, disinvestment and neglect (August, 2008, 2014, 2016; August & Walks, 2012; Darcy, 2010).

Contemporary social mixing is also part of a bigger wave of planning logic that includes Smart Growth, Transit Oriented-Development, New Urbanism, and the Creative Class (August, 2008; Suttor, 2016). This wave largely dominates normative planning discourse, embedding social considerations within broader concerns of economy, urban design, and growth management, thus paying little attention to social justice (August, 2008). After the amalgamation of the City of Toronto in 1998, both

⁵In 1983, the co-op model was deemed too expensive (August, 2008; Suttor, 2016). By 1985, annual subsidies to co-op exceeded that of public housing projects for fewer low-income targeted units (Browne, 2013).

provincial and city plans became mostly concerned with revitalization initiatives to increase economic competitiveness and its image as a tolerant, diverse and orderly city (August, 2008; Kipfer & Keil, 2002; Kipfer & Petrunia, 2009; Saberi, 2017a) In this context, social mixing policies become a means to prioritize the right to space and social visibility of some (by adding more middle-income residents to poor neighbourhoods at higher densities), while taking it from the poor and dispersing them throughout the city (August, 2008 [Cole & Goldchild, 2001]).

Within the context of neoliberal city building, state policies pair social mixing with the combined imperatives of promoting private real-estate investment and building private-public partnerships in public housing redevelopment (August & Walks, 2012; Sarkissian et al., 1990). This suggests that targeted social mixing is used to increase neoliberal capitalist accumulation – in the sense of releasing valuable real estate (Saberi, 2017a); in fact, one can interpret it as a mere a by-product of this larger goal (Sarkissian et al., 1990).

State-led revitalization policies in Toronto largely adopt social mixing. In public housing neighbourhoods, these policies become heavily influenced by real-estate value and development potential (rather than social needs) and are often paired with large-scale demolition of existing neighbourhoods. In doing so, public housing revitalization policies contribute to the erasure of past and present racialized spaces from the physical landscape and from memory (August, 2014 [McCann, 1999]; Peake & Ray, 2001). They largely ignore and destroy the positive features of concentrated impoverished communities, which may include a strong sense of community, networks of survival and a (admittedly circumscribed) political monopoly over space (albeit limited) (August & Walks, 2012; Darcy, 2010). They dismiss the sense of place, belittle nostalgia and heritage value even as they promise to create space through good planning, new urban design and high-quality material (Pitter, 2016a).

Despite being reconfigured and combined with other theories and conceptions, contemporary calls for social mixing still use some of the paternalistic and condescending social norms of its early years embedded in self-help, self-respect and social pressure (Sarkissen, 1976 [Hill, 1875]). In the following section, I highlight and discuss a few characteristics that most relate to the revitalization of public housing in Toronto and the case of Lawrence Heights.

The first and most important assumption of contemporary social mixing is that the physical proximity of low and middle-class residents is beneficial to low-income population. This suggests that contemporary mixing is only based on socio-economic characteristics and largely lacks racial and ethnic consideration. This strongly connects with strategic racialization (Mele, 2019) and systemic, colorblind racism (Peake & Ray, 2001). Additionally, social mixing is largely limited to physical planning. It focuses on the spatial allocation of houses and apartments, giving secondary importance to social planning and programming. And even when social planning is incorporated, it often is limited to facilitate the transition to social mixing rather than target the true reasons of poverty and marginalization (August, 2014 [Crump, 2002]). This assumption also limits the benefits of redevelopment to low-income residents assuming that within this exchange of benefits middle class residents are in a superior position.

The second assumption holds that the benefits of social mixing accrue passively as the inhabitants whose social spaces are subject to social mixing absorb the practices and norms of the new inhabitants. In public space, the soft surveillance principle 'eyes on the street' is assumed to help reshape behavioural norms to discourage what are assumed to be criminogenic practices. In addition, existing residents are assumed to benefit from social mixing by actively interacting with new inhabitants who possess social capital, higher income and connections to employment networks. The overall result? Safer communities and better neighbourhood design, infrastructure and facilities.

These assumptions automatically position middle-class and/or white residents as superiors - they represent the civil, even civilizing force, and lower-income residents are considered inferior, and as such it is up to the poor to assimilate and change to reap the benefits of social mixing (August & Walks, 2012; Darcy, 2010; Mele, 2019; Sarkissen, 1976; Sarkissian et al., 1990). This very assumption reaffirms the hierarchies in existing territorial relationships, while reproducing them in a more fine-grained fashion within socially mixed neighbourhoods (Kipfer, 2019; Kipfer & Petrunia, 2009). In addition, low-income residents' aspirations are thought to be limited to becoming middle class (Newman, 1972), which makes them willing participants in condescending and racialized narratives of individual upward mobility that treat their neighbours as the social and moral benchmark of success (Mele, 2019).

The other passive adaptation existing inhabitants are meant to make within socially mixed communities is to the social pressures exerted on them when their more resourced or respectable neighbours keep an eye on them in the expectation that they conform to accepted behavior (Jacobs, 1961; Newman, 1972). Not only does this limit accepted behavior to middle-class standards with all their racializing and stigmatizing undercurrents, it also normalises heightened surveillance of low-income residents. One can call this a form of passive policing that adds to the institutional monitoring by social workers and the police. These forms of surveillance increases a sense of inferiority on the part of existing inhabitants (August & Walks, 2012).

Most importantly, Newman (1972) alerts us that there is a step between the eye-on-the-street and the actual intervention, the action, the enforcement of accepted behaviour. This step, he argues, is taken only when residents feel responsible for their spaces and develop an increased sense of propriety. This might explain why ill-defined spaces can promote crime despite the locals' watching since these spaces are considered a kind of no-man's land where responsibility falls outside the purvey of the local residents. Following this logic and given the neoliberal identification of citizenship with private property,

it is safe to assume that inhabitants without home ownership will fall short of the standards of propriety even in a situation of social mixing. These standards will continue to be upheld by owners and inhabitants of market rent units.

What about the assumption that social interaction in a mixed context provides existing inhabitants with access to employment and social capital? It completely ignores the political dimensions that are inherent in mixed communities, and generates multiple for lower-class residents (August & Walks, 2012). To start, Jacobs (1961, 63) admits that in area that lack trust (in our case due to racialization and criminalization) and natural organic public life (in contrast to imposed), middle class residents are faced with two options: either to over-share with their neighbours, or to share too little. They usually do the latter. Thus, middle class residents who have the ability to control and select their interactions define the terms of mixing and its benefits. Those benefits become connected to, and to a degree controlled by middle-income residents, including access to labour networks and social capita. Furthermore, this access might be compromised when the interests of middle-class residents and the interests of their poor neighbours don't align (August & Walks, 2012). So, in asking middle class residents to activate their labour network, and tap into their social capital, or even act as unpaid social workers (Sarkissen, 1976), the social mixing approach ignores power imbalances between inhabitants, including the capacity of middle-class to shape, even dominate local politics (August & Walks, 2012). In addition, the argument that a 'proper' social mix requires densities high enough for owners and market rent occupants to achieve majority status has obvious implications for electoral politics. It threatens to drown out the voices of low-income residents, most of whom inhabitants of colour (August & Walks, 2012).

It is worth noting that not enough empirical evidence has been found to prove the benefits of social mixing⁶ (August & Walks, 2012; Darcy, 2010). Nevertheless, social mixing continues to occupy the centre stage in the state's social planning and public housing policies, leaving little room, attention, and funding for larger-scale and universal policies that could have some bearing on the root causes of poverty like building more public housing, improving employment and working conditions, targeting racial discrimination and creating more public employment.

Territorialisation in Toronto: A Brief History

Post-War Era

Traditional low-density, auto-dependent expansion dominated Toronto's suburbs in the early post-war era. In 1951, only one rental apartment unit was built for every 10 houses (Social Planning Council of Metropolitan Toronto, 1979). Once the Municipality of Metropolitan Toronto (Metro), an upper tier municipality, was established in 1953, it adopted a poverty deconcentration approach to suburban growth (Social Planning Council of Metropolitan Toronto, 1979; Suttor, 2007). The latter was strongly advocated for by the Old City in order to relieve Toronto's core from low-income demand pressure to avoid the decline of its inner neighbourhoods like other American cities, and maintain its commercial and business attractiveness (Friskin, Bourne, Gunter, & Murdie, 2000; Rose, 1964, 1972; Social Planning Council of Metropolitan Toronto, 1979; Suttor, 2007). However, when Metro adopted a fair share policy of distributing low-income housing among its several townships, its modernist planning approach produced isolated, ill-serviced pockets of middle and low-income apartment buildings in the form of

⁶ The Prince report of 1995 stated that within the co-op public housing model, no evidence was found to prove that social mixing was beneficial to the residents of public housing units (August & Walks, 2012).

“tower-in-the-park” following logics of “Garden City” and “Cities in the Suburbs” (Suttor, 2007). While this logic claims that design of high-rise buildings around central open space is symbolic to leaving the city and its vices behind, a socio-spatial analysis uncovers the territorial relations that separated and contained the working poor and low-income population and isolated society from their everyday struggle (Kipfer & Goonewardena, 2007; Kipfer & Petrunia, 2009).

Generous governmental funding and a regional infrastructure plan that included watermains, sewers, major roads and expressways facilitated a private rental apartment boom in the years between 1955-1975 and a surge in public housing development in the suburbs (Suttor, 2007, 2016). By 1976, rental units accounted for 43% of all dwellings within the suburbs (Social Planning Council of Metropolitan Toronto, 1979), which by then accommodated more than two thirds of Metro’s population (Friskin et al., 2000). These rental units had successfully satisfied a large part of the demand for low and middle-income housing in Toronto. Since the immigration policy reforms in the 1970s, a growing proportion of this demand came from immigrants from non-European countries.

Despite the relative isolation of these low-income pockets, their mere presence in the suburbs was not welcomed by rural and rich white suburban residents (Rose, 1972; Suttor, 2007). Residents’ opposition continuously framed them as threats to the suburban way of life while smaller local municipalities viewed them as political power plays forced upon their communities (Rose, 1964, 1972; Suttor, 2007). In fact, before subdivision approval was transferred to Metro, several townships and municipalities restricted and occasionally halted approval of high density development in the years between 1948 – 1951 (Rose, 1972). Even in the early 1960s, Etobicoke opposed public housing because “placing low-income families in a relatively well-to-do municipality like Etobicoke were viewed by them as more serious [problem] than in the case of a working-class community like Scarborough” (Rose, 1972, 77). The limited technical and fiscal capacity of local municipalities, and their unwillingness to offer

adequate social services and welfare provisions to low-income residents only added to the social tension (Rose, 1972; Social Planning Council of Metropolitan Toronto, 1979). For example, North York struggled with increased demand of education and recreation services in Lawrence Heights, and social tension resulted from the residents' usage of near-by facilities (Rose, 1972). Etobicoke also argued that since its rich, and mostly white residents were "not in the habit of using public facilities" (Rose, 1972, 77) it did not need to fund services and physical spaces for low-income residents.

Additionally, in 1979, the Social Planning Council of Metropolitan Toronto highlighted the high electoral abstention rate among tenants and the need to include middle and low-income residents in suburban politics in order to avoid what later became to be known as the suburban paradox (Social Planning Council of Metropolitan Toronto, 1979). The paradox refers to tension-filled coexistence of two realities in Toronto's postwar suburbs: a narrow, fiscally conservative form of municipal politics centred on services to private property and a remarkable, quickly growing social heterogeneity of social life (Kipfer and Wirsig cited in Kipfer & Saberi, 2014).

Public Housing Focus: Within a general international Keynesian consensus, Canadian spending levels on social programs during this period outstripped that of a liberal-welfare regime (Suttor, 2016). Family Allowance, Unemployment Insurance, and Old Age Security pensions signified expanding social welfare services that excluded, until the late 1940s, public housing programs (Oberlander & Fallick, 1992; Suttor, 2016). Federal responses to the housing crisis that faced most Canadian cities focused on stimulating market housing development for mainstream populations, including the lower middle and working class, rather than interfering with the provincial jurisdiction over housing or competing with the private market (Oberlander & Fallick, 1992; Suttor, 2016).

Growing advocacy that called for considering housing as social welfare rather than commodity, along with rapid population growth, increasing family formation rates, and continuing shortage of

housing resulted in the creation of the Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) in 1945 (Suttor, 2016). While the main focus was on private housing financing programs, the CMHC was the first to lay down the institutional arrangement that allowed for the development of public housing in Canada that started after the 1949 National Housing Act (NHA) amendment. This amendment introduced a cost sharing model, where the federal government would fund 75% of the project, to be met by 25% funding from the province. In the case of Ontario, the provincial government further downloaded 7.5% to municipalities (Oberlander & Fallick, 1992; Suttor, 2016). This, in addition to the 1968 NHA amendments that realigned the federal-provincial relation in housing matters allowed for the surge in construction of large-scale public housing projects (Oberlander & Fallick, 1992; Suttor, 2016). However, the driver of public housing development in Toronto in that era and up to the 1970s lies within the political forces and dynamics between CMHA, Metro, and the Ontario Housing Corporation.

In creating the institutional arrangement and technical capacity, CMHA dominated the scene of public housing in terms of advocacy, public housing debates, technical planning and design expertise, in addition to acquiring cost sharing and adequate funding (Oberlander & Fallick, 1992; Suttor, 2016). Even though Metro was carrying the burden of the municipal cost-sharing at that time, the distribution of functions between it and the local governments gave both equal responsibility in development and housing. This meant that little public housing was built due to local municipal resistance and little interest in sponsoring low-income housing (Frisken et al., 2000; Rose, 1964, 1972). In 1964, only 3,700 public housing units were built in the metropolitan area. More than half of it was built before 1954, and that included the Regent Park Project that was unilaterally initiated by the City of Toronto, and Lawrence Heights (Oberlander & Fallick, 1992; Rose, 1972; Suttor, 2016).

Nevertheless, Frisken et al. (2000) explain that Metro was successful in convincing local municipalities to identify or agree to potential sites. Once the Ontario Housing Corporation was

established in 1964 and further supported by the 1968 NHA amendment, it allowed Metro to sideline local opposition and adopt a “builder’s proposal” model, where developers were invited to build using ready-to-go zoned sites and plans (Suttor, 2007).

By 1973, 5,000 units were being built annually. 60% of the province’s family public housing units were built within Metro, two thirds of it in the post-war suburbs (Suttor, 2007). However, most of these units were mixed with private rental units and located within isolated clusters of high-rise apartment buildings (Suttor, 2007, 2016). Once the development was completed, they were mostly ignored and under-serviced by local municipalities (Rose, 1972; Suttor, 2007). The lack of services became a worsening problem when public housing agencies shifted to 100% low-income targeted with RGI units (compared to the pre-1964 mix with cost-recovery units) (Suttor, 2016).

The negative stance of suburban local communities and municipalities towards public housing development (and to rental apartment high-rises in general) was not seen by Metro as a legitimate neighbourhood concern, but rather as a politics of suburban exclusivity driven by class prejudice and incipient racism against the emerging presence of non-European tenants resulting from the reform in immigration policies in the late 1960s (Rose, 1972; Suttor, 2007), or what was called non-traditional immigrants (Peake & Ray, 2001 [Mukherjee, 1981]). Yet, dismissing these issues only made opposition to public housing projects grow. In the years between 1967 and 1969, Toronto witnessed several protests against large scale public housing development (Suttor, 2016).

The 1970s – 1980s

Increased construction costs and rising real estate prices and interest rates resulted in the collapse of the private rental apartment boom (Suttor, 2016). When added to the growing resistance of local suburban communities, the rising costs meant the discontinuation of rental construction and development of public housing in the suburbs (Suttor, 2007, 2016). Interestingly, this discontinuation of

development did not apply to the whole of Metro. The election of a reformist liberal city council in the Old City in 1972 indicated a general political shift towards social inclusion and tolerance, and towards a stronger welfare state, including social housing (August, 2008; Keil, 1998). In fact, the right to housing came into the media and mainstream politics in Toronto for the first time in that era, and this issue concerned local elected officials and their constituencies, in addition to organized tenants' groups and activists (Suttor, 2016). The left-liberal or Social Democratic political shift was associated with a larger cultural "back to the city" movement that originated from the U.S, along with the rise of fine-grain social mixing wisdom that came as a solution to American cities that suffered from white flight, the decline of central city neighbourhoods and the devastating results of segregated urban renewal projects (Suttor, 2016). In Toronto, the political shift manifested in the re-development of the St. Lawrence neighbourhood as a true model of ideal social mixing and the reconfiguration of public housing model into the co-op model (August, 2008; Suttor, 2016).

Public Housing Focus: The planning wisdom of social mixing of that time claimed that a mix of public and market units could avoid the social problems that resulted from concentration of poverty and could assist in the viability of housing projects (August, 2008). The successful lobbying of Toronto's reformist council with the federal government helped in recasting public housing policies (Suttor, 2016). The NHA amendment of 1973 opened up funding to non-profit sector and co-operative organisations to own and operate mixed-income housing projects. Accordingly, community-based organizations led public housing development in Toronto in that era and produced 43,000 units by 1995 (Suttor, 2016). They succeeded in positioning housing issues at the neighbourhood level and framed the role of government as a provider of resources, subsidies and fiscal support (Oberlander & Fallick, 1992; Suttor, 2016). Most importantly, their leadership limited stigmatization of public housing within their projects. In Metro, most of these were built in the Old City of Toronto (Suttor, 2016). Support for social housing

did not extend to other large-scale public housing projects, especially those in post-war suburbs. There, social housing continued to struggle against municipal opposition, funding cuts and community resistance (even to new mixed-income cooperative housing projects) (Suttor, 2016, also see Oberlander & Fallick, 1992, 87-90).

The negative sentiments meant that the political fall-out was low when the government slowly stepped away from developing, owning and operating large-scale public housing projects (Suttor, 2016). With the seeping calls for neo-liberalism from the U.K. and U.S.A. and the turbulent economy of 1980s, the federal government limited public borrowing and constrained expenditure on social programs, including public housing (Hackworth & Moriah, 2006; Suttor, 2016). That, associated with the decentralization of the Canadian government, incrementally transferred public housing responsibility onto provincial authority, which meant limited public capital funding for development and repairs, stricter low-income targeting, and a higher percentage of RGI units within mixed communities (60-100% for targeted special needs) (Hackworth & Moriah, 2006; Suttor, 2016).

It is important to note that up to the mid 1990s, government policy considered public housing development only as stimulus to private and market housing sector and a larger urban development strategy, especially low-income rental housing, but never as social welfare (Oberlander & Fallick, 1992; Suttor, 2016). Such consideration can be noted in the complex relationship public housing shared with the private rental apartment boom in 1955-1975, and in the enthusiastic support of mixed income communities in the early 1990s. The latter responded to the drastic reduction of private rental development in the city, just as demand was rising (Oberlander & Fallick, 1992; Suttor, 2007, 2016). Indeed, 91% of rental production in Toronto between 1991-1995 was by non-profit programs and only subsidies to middle income population in mixed income projects could sustain political support for public housing (Suttor, 2007).

Neoliberalizing Toronto

The neoliberal turn of the Canadian state between the mid 1980s and the 2000s was paired with turbulent economic dynamics, deindustrialization and labour market restructuring (Suttor, 2007). In Toronto, this turn hugely affected income levels, increased racialized polarization⁷, and reconfigured the spatial distribution of poverty (Hulchanski, 2007; Suttor, 2007). A greater number of low-income neighbourhoods appeared in post-war suburbs to the east (Scarborough), north (North York), and west (Etobicoke). With dropping income levels and rising rent costs, low-income residents became squeezed into high-rise pockets of rental apartments and public housing projects. These neighbourhoods formed a U shape around Toronto's increasingly gentrified city core and the already affluent Yonge Street axis. (Hulchanski, 2007; Suttor, 2007).

In addition, the moment of radical neoliberalism (Kipfer & Saberi, 2014) that the Harris government had brought on the city and its inner suburbs during its "Common Sense Revolution" in 1995 had forcefully restructured the municipal authority and amalgamated the Old City with its five inner suburbs, into one 'megacity' (Keil, 1998; Kipfer & Saberi, 2014; Suttor, 2007). This forceful amalgamation fired the conflict between very different approaches to urban governance in the Old City and post-war suburbs. The Old City had continued, to an extent, on the track of the 1970s progressive politics, and cared about social inclusion of the marginalized and tolerance towards diversity, while the latter's politics were conservative, pro-development, based on the shallow suburban politics of property that had little

⁷ Changing labour trends affected those at the lower social order most, but hit low-income immigrants disproportionately. This is due to the historic structural racism of Canadian colonial capitalism, which has been very dependent on the cheap labour of non-white immigrants (Galabuzi, 2005; Gordon, 2006).

consideration, or acknowledgment of its poor residents (Keil, 1998). The successful election of Mel Lastman in 1998 marked the rise in suburban politics and a win over the politics and civic regime of reform in the Old City (Keil, 1998). When paired with the “U” shape of poverty, this drew the broad lines of contemporary territorialisation in Toronto – where power, politics, and social narrative became strongly tied to geographies.

Interestingly, while the urban poor and non-white immigrants played only a small role in the power struggle between the downtown bourgeois and suburban elites, they were well represented on one side of a quasi-colonial relationship which various branches of the state continued to sustain between dominant social spaces and an sprawling array of “outlying districts populated by an un-civilized, non-white underclass of real potential thugs and gang members” (Kipfer, 2007, 29). This representation of low-income non-white immigrant neighbourhoods facilitated efforts that aimed to contain and confine them, even when articulated through a Third Way rhetoric of social inclusion (Kipfer, 2007; Kipfer & Saberi, 2014; Saberi, 2017a, 2017b). In fact, during the summer of 2005, or what became to be called the year of the gun, when non-white immigrant neighbourhood witnessed a rise in gun-related incidents, the fear of non-white transgression, or the threat of the “other” to white Torontonians landscapes of privilege became heightened (Kipfer & Saberi, 2014; Saberi, 2017a, 2017b).

Coinciding with international unrest, especially the riots in the banlieues of Paris, several local politicians, in addition to mainstream media commentators drew links between the two cities and forewarned of a looming “Paris Problem” in Toronto (Kipfer, 2012; Saberi, 2017a [Valpy, 2005, Jouanneau, 2005]). Building on an earlier panic following the so-called Yonge street riot of 1992, the fear of race riots resurfaced with intensity in the conjuncture of the mid-2000s (Kipfer & Saberi, 2014; Saberi, 2017a, 2017b). In response, sweeping arrests of non-white immigrants that year were followed by several place-based urban policies focused on policing, social policy, community development and

regeneration projects. These include Strong Neighbourhoods initiative, TAVIS, the Priority Neighbourhood Strategy, the Tower Renewal Strategy and public housing revitalization projects that followed the Don Mount Court and Regent Park model to promote the demolition of existing neighbourhoods (Saber, 2017a).

Continued territorialized struggle and the perceived threat to the ruling class of Toronto have facilitated the arrival of a “deeply racialized form of authoritarian populism to Toronto City Hall” in 2010 (Kipfer & Saber, 2014, 129). Among other things, the arrival of Rob Ford in the Toronto mayor’s office augmented a territorial divide between the core city and its inner suburbs, and solidified territorial imaginaries of political conflict between “bourgeois urbanisms in central and suburban Toronto”, indigenous Toronto, and socially and racially “stigmatized neighbourhoods” (Kipfer & Saber, 2014, 143). The recent election of Doug Ford as Premier of Ontario signals the continued rise of hard-right politics in the province (Albo, 2019) and another round of radical neoliberalization with a combination of social cutbacks and socially regressive and racist policies. So far, the Ford provincial government has cancelled minimum wage increases (Loriggio, 2018), attacked basic workplace rights, and implemented harmful cutbacks in education and health care (“The Conservatives Have Been in Government for One Year: Here’s What They’ve Done,” 2019). They have deregulated planning controls further, pushing suburban expansion further while taking steps to further criminalize immigrants, refugees, and public housing residents (McLaughlin, 2019; Sme, 2018).

Public Housing Focus: As Canada turned to neoliberalism during the 1980s and early 1990s, its social policy in general (and public housing in particular) was caught between the pre-existing logics of welfare provision and the neoliberal imperatives of spending control, work incentives and targeted social services (Hackworth & Moriah, 2006; Suttor, 2016). During the following years, the public housing narrative was successfully reframed: public and rental housing is an exclusively problem of the poor,

housing affordability is now considered an income problem which should be solved by free choice and the market, state intervention in low-rental housing supply as a stimulus to the housing sector is strongly opposed not matter its reasoning (Suttor, 2016), and the private industry now takes on the sole responsibility for housing and urban development at all scales of the state (Keil, 1998).

The neoliberal roll back policy of public housing in Canada can be traced back to the Mulroney government in the mid 1980s, when spending restraints and tighter income targeting were followed by programs cuts (Suttor, 2016). In 1990 large-scale projects ceased to be built. By 1993, new public housing commitments were eliminated from the federal budget altogether, and in 1995 federal devolution strategy was set in motion giving the management of all programs to provinces and territories (Suttor, 2016). The Harris conservative government in Ontario continued further with the roll back; It downloaded public housing to 47 local housing providers (Hackworth & Moriah, 2006; Suttor, 2016). In what was a radical form of neoliberalization, the Ontario initiative was the most extreme case of public housing devolution in any affluent country (Suttor, 2016).

While the Common Sense Revolution claimed that the government should be out of the housing business, it actually took an interesting stance towards housing development: on the one hand, public housing was seen as a boondoggle that should be contained with retrenchment in institutions, programs and funding, on the other, suburban expansion should be facilitated by the state; any major regulatory obstacle for the private house-building industry should be eliminated (Hackworth & Moriah, 2006 [Shapcott, 2001]; Keil, 1998; Suttor, 2016). This stance was supported by a fierce landlord-developer campaign that rejected public housing and the co-op housing model and saw it as taking market share with privileged access to public funding (Suttor, 2016). Additionally, dropping house prices and lower mortgage interest levels, followed by growing income levels made it possible for higher income renters to own houses. The 30,000 households who became homeowners annually between 2001-2006 became

the driving force behind Toronto's Condo Boom, the growing gentrification of the Old City and further suburban expansion (Suttor, 2016). All this intensified the commodification of housing into real estate. Long gone were the policies for the right of housing, and "housing as social welfare", as public housing became detached from middle-class housing issues and the political mainstream in Toronto (Suttor, 2016). Private rental housing in general became permanently and exclusively a low-income sector, and public housing targeted very low-income and special needs populations. Housing affordability became a bigger problem and homelessness became a crisis in the city. Emergency shelter usage doubled every five years over two decades. By 2000, almost 4,000 Torontonians were staying in shelters nightly (Suttor, 2016). And public housing could no longer ride on mainstream concerns with housing affordability; instead, it stood out as an expensive public program in a market system that was claimed to benefit most people (Suttor, 2016).

Since the late 1990s, the neoliberal roll-out of public housing policies manifested itself in temporary forms of federal-provincial engagement in issues of affordability and housing. These forms relied heavily on privatization, and combined with a Third Way discourse of social inclusion, especially under Ontario's liberal government of the 2000s (Coulter, 2009; Kipfer, 2007; Kipfer & Petrunia, 2009). They included several urban policies that targeted public housing neighbourhoods with policing, social management and revitalization initiatives (Kipfer & Petrunia, 2009; Kipfer & Saberi, 2014; Saberi, 2017a). The last was facilitated by the Social Housing Reform Act of 2000, which reconfigured the role of local providers and set a model based on entrepreneurship that would allow them to sell land, rent at market rate, rent for commercial uses and behave more like businesses (Hackworth & Moriah, 2006; Suttor, 2016).

Hackworth and Moriah (2006) explain that while these initiatives opened space for creating more affordable housing, it risked (or encouraged, depending on one's perspective) privatization. While this was a concern for smaller housing providers in the province, the then newly-created Toronto

Community Housing Corporation (TCH), was able to rely on its valued real estate assets - through mixed-income revitalization, it found a way to tap into the middle-class housing market.

Nevertheless, with increased fiscal deficits and a deteriorating housing stock, closing public housing units became subject to a larger debate, especially during the Mayoral election campaign of Rob Ford in 2010 (Spurr, 2014). Ford had a contradictory relationship with public housing and its residents. While the populist mayor tried to recruit tenants to his anti-establishment stance, he also targeted them with condescending and racist statements (Kipfer & Saberi, 2014). In fact, Rob Ford was the only city councilor to vote against the adoption of the Lawrence Allen Revitalization Plan (City of Toronto, 2010a), supporting opposition voices against the projects, especially those coming from the neighbouring community Lawrence Manor (Reynolds, 2010). His vision was to deconstruct public housing and adopt a rent-subsidy model based on the U.S. American rent voucher system (Suttor, 2016).

The return of hard-right politics in Ontario in 2019 and the election of the Conservatives under Doug Ford encouraged additional pathologizing and criminalizing of public housing neighbourhoods and communities (for example Braun, 2018). Under this government, the province and the city advanced policies based on a territorialised framing. These include doubling the number of constables in TCH neighbourhoods (Smee, 2018), the potential return of TAVIS (Gillis, 2018), and the approval of a policy to disqualify repeat criminals from applying for public housing units (McLaughlin, 2019; Smee, 2018).

Territorialisation via Revitalization

The Toronto Community Housing Corporation is the largest public housing provider in Ontario. It is responsible for 58,126 units, almost 45% of all public housing units in the province (Hackworth & Moriah, 2006). Quickly after its creation in 2002, TCH adopted a social-mixing revitalization approach through public private partnerships that would either develop market units on TCH property, or sell TCH

land assets to cover fiscal deficits (August, 2008, 2014, 2016; August & Walks, 2012; Hackworth & Moriah, 2006; Moore & Wright, 2017). The Portfolio Redevelopment Study of 2002 was the first report to identify areas for potential revitalization (Toronto Community Housing, 2006). The following year, TCH began exploring opportunities in 15 study sites which were chosen based on “community needs and issues; short- and long-term capital repair needs; the potential real estate value of excess density; redevelopment opportunities (such as underuse developable land); and proximity to strong market locations” (Toronto Community Housing, 2006, 1-2).

Accordingly, public housing revitalization is generally driven by deteriorating housing stock. Yet, site selection and revitalization priorities are heavily influenced by a neoliberal capitalist consideration of the sites’ real estate value and development potential.

Since 2003, 11 neighbourhoods has been selected for revitalization (Toronto Community Housing, n.d.). Eight are located within Toronto’s core where property value is higher than in the post-war suburbs. Examples include Don Mount, Regent Park and Alexandra Park. This makes Lawrence Heights, Don Summerville (at Queen East and Coxwell), and Firegrove (at Jane and Finch) interesting exceptions. Revitalization in Lawrence Heights and Don Summerville commenced in 2006 and 2017 respectively. Firegrove experienced units closure in 2017, and was only recently been added to the revitalization list (Toronto Community Housing, n.d.). Lawrence Heights was further prioritized due to existing interest of private developers in the area and high development potential due to its proximity to two subway stations (City of Toronto, 2007b, J. Chen, K. Knoeck). This suggests that the neoliberalization of public housing (Hackworth & Moriah, 2006) have made private market interest and enthusiasm a more crucial criterion to TCH than dire social needs and the need to prevent shutting down housing units for reasons of disrepair (August & Walks, 2012).

Private-public partnership make public housing redevelopment dependent on private market forces and the risks they carry (Moore & Wright, 2017). In Dublin, several public housing communities collapsed when their revitalization projects failed in the 2007-2008 recession. This, Moore and Wright (2017) explain, was due to a market-dependent funding model that failed when real estate market collapsed. In Toronto, TCH had moved through several public private partnership models in order to mitigate such risks. The current model is based on TCH selling its land to private developers in order to fund revitalization of RGI units, which are also designed and built by the same developer (Moore & Wright, 2017). Under this model, TCH starts demolition only after a substantial portion of market units are pre-sold (Moore & Wright, 2017). This means that in a less enthusiastic housing market, revitalization projects risk being halted or cancelled all together.

It is important to note that a selective revitalization of select public housing neighbourhoods means that some projects are prioritized over many others, especially in a context of senior government underinvestment. Even if TCH is to revitalize all of its units, the corporation's prioritization and phasing can still produce a hierarchy between public housing neighbourhoods based on housing conditions and renewed community facilities. This hierarchy suggests further fragmentation and territorialisation within public housing communities. Purdy (2003, 101) notes that even before the revitalization of Regent Park, "many of its inhabitants actually elaborated a spatial "micro-hierarchy" between the North and South sections". This spatial territoriality often served as a factor when social conflict rose, like the wave of racism that hit Regent Park in the 1970s (Purdy, 2003). Such internal hierarchies can resurface in revitalized and revitalizing public housing neighbourhoods. Even Lawrence Heights has an "American" side, located west of Allen Road near the shopping mall, and a "Canadian" side, located east of Allen Road where all the social services can be found (Lorinc, 2008). These names imply that in west side, American neoliberal capitalism prevails and that residents struggle with the privatization of services presented by the mall. Meanwhile the east side still maintains some of the Canadian notion of social

security, where residents can find support from different local non-governmental and governmental services.

TCH presents revitalization to tenants as a progressive solution to poverty concentration (August, 2014; Kipfer & Petrunia, 2009) and the only choice other than neighbourhood decline (August & Walks, 2012, J. Van Nostrand). TCH also strongly advertises revitalization as tenant-oriented when in fact, tenants' consent to revitalization in principle is contested (August, 2016; August & Walks, 2012). In considering the timeline of the decision to revitalize Lawrence Heights, for example, it is unclear if tenants' consent was acquired in 2002 when the Portfolio Strategy Study was developed, or in 2003 when TCH listed the neighbourhood as one of 15 neighbourhoods to be studied for potential revitalization, or in 2006 when TCH initiated a consultation process about revitalization (Toronto Community Housing, 2006). Interestingly, in its reports to the board of directors in 2006, TCH states that "programs and events [of the consultation process] have proceeded to assist tenants in organizing and building leadership capacity to help create a healthy community through revitalization" (Toronto Community Housing, 2006, 7). This suggests that by the time of the report, TCH's decision to revitalize Lawrence Heights had already been made.

Additionally, August and Walks (2012) identified several tenants' control measures that were activated during public engagement phases in Regent Park, Don Mount and Lawrence Heights. These include the lack of meaningful choice due to urgent need of better housing conditions, the manufacturing of tenants' consent and support, the tight control of consultation sessions by limiting open questions (August, 2016), the silencing or co-optation of any local opposition, and the paternalistic imposition of community concerns which framed the latter as unreasonable expressions of fear, misinformation, and lack of emotional control on part of the uneducated unsophisticated urban poor.

Furthermore, the way the steps of revitalization are laid out and phased in Toronto's land use system has prolonged processes of community engagement (25 years at Lawrence Heights for example). Faced by the different roles and complex relationship between the City, TCH, planning consultants, and developers, tenants usually struggle with confusion, consultation fatigue (SPC, S. Kerr), burnout, loss of interest in participating, and detachment (August, 2016; August & Walks, 2012). When asked about the expectation of the community to sustain a certain level of engagement throughout a multi-decade project in Lawrence Heights, Knoeck explained: "that's just the way the world works. It is also exhausting to live in a neighbourhood with an unacceptable condition of its housing stock, and a bunch of other social challenges that are not being reasonably addressed, and can't be reasonably addressed because of some of the unfortunate planning decision that were made early on. That's also exhausting. So, whether you become exhausted by building your capacity to engage in a redevelopment scheme or you become exhausted by consistently engaging or dealing with that issue or this issue that will come up in your community over the course of your residence there, it is either way".

It is important, Knoeck adds, not to under-estimate the capacity of the community in Lawrence Heights to overcome these challenges. According to TCH, this capacity is built by TCH's robust public consultation and tenant engagement process (Toronto Community Housing, 2006, J. Chen). I believe this capacity remains stuck at a tokenistic level (following Arnstein's ladder (Arnstein, 1969) as long as central and core issues are avoided and pre-decided, like the consent to revitalization. The tokenistic engagement might change some features of the project, but cannot change the main features, let alone the principle of revitalization. In this way, revitalization reorders inhabitants' roles and functions from above, akin to the "police" function of the state (Dikeç, 2005 [Rançière, 1994]). Following Saberi (2017a, 59), community engagement in revitalization resembles participation in pacification initiatives: "Today's participation is increasingly functioning as a counter revolutionary strategy for cultivating political domination from the bottom up".

Revitalization operates on the premise that public housing neighbourhoods are poor and crime-infested territorialised 'spaces' (following S. Smith (L. Wacquant, 1996 [1987])). Revitalization largely ignores or underestimates the landscape value of public housing districts and the sense of place shared by public housing residents (Pitter, 2016, J. Van Nostrand). This image is facilitated by several years of strategic criminalization and racialization of public housing neighbourhoods and their low-income, mostly non-white residents (Mele, 2019). In Regent Park, Purdy (2005) explains that the dominant narrative of the project in the 1980s and 1990s became an increasingly racialized image of criminality. In Lawrence Heights, undercover police operations about drug use resulted in the arrest of many black male youths (S. Da Silva). Over-exposed to the penal system, the criminalization of non-white residents in Lawrence Heights became a dominant narrative and practice, widely accepted and promoted by the media and political pundits (especially during 2005 and the appearance of the "Paris problem" in Toronto (Kipfer, 2012; Kipfer & Saberi, 2014; Saberi, 2017a). This means that little resistance was expected once revitalization required total or partial demolition of these sites. As Pitter (2016b, 176) explains about Regent Park: "the notion that someone would feel nostalgic about an apparently notorious public housing project runs counter to all dominant narratives".

Demolition has been an important part of the public housing revitalization practice in Toronto, which largely follows the "American deconcentration by demolition approach" (August, 2008, 92 [Crump, 2002]). Debates about selective revitalization that would maintain and renovate parts of these projects, and revitalizing and intensifying other parts appeared in the early 2000s within the planning and city building professional community (J. Van Nostrand). However, TCH was preoccupied – and thus limited – by the yields and funding equations deemed necessary to attract private developers. Within the 11 revitalized and revitalizing communities, either partial or total demolition of existing neighbourhoods have been required in order to make room for re-development (Toronto Community Housing, n.d.). That means that during the period of revitalization – between 5 – 25 years - tenants have

to be relocated to other public housing units in Toronto even as they are promised the possibility of returning to new units.

In this context, tenant displacement from their communities is not limited to the inconvenience of new house, new schools and new transportation arrangements for the tenants and their families; it also includes destroying existing tenants networks and social capital, the dilution of tenants' political power, and the dis-organization of local opposition to the project (August, 2008 [Arthurson, 2002]; August & Walks, 2012). In Lawrence Heights, angry and unmanageable local opposition to revitalization (Vincent, 2007, SPC) rejected re-location of tenants and resulted in TCH committing to a "Zero Displacement" policy (August, 2014, J. Chen, DM, SPC). The policy dictates "that tenants have the right to stay in their community during and after revitalization. Tenants will be given the opportunity to remain in Lawrence Heights during construction through temporary accommodation in existing vacant social housing units" (City of Toronto, 2011a, 25). TCH takes pride in such commitment. As a planner in TCH (DM) explains, it comes at an additional cost of temporary infrastructure, revenue loss, constraints on the timing of construction and the financial burden of upfront construction of RGI units. One can appreciate the Zero Displacement policy when considering "the priorities driving TCHC's approach are rooted more in a desire to be entrepreneurial and to capitalize on its landholdings than in concerns for tenants' outcomes" (August, 2008, 95).

However, as Da Silva suggests, the effects of the Zero Displacement policy on the larger picture of public housing should be considered with a critical eye. The policy limits the capacity to accept new families in vacated units within revitalizing communities. This adds to the prioritization of local tenants over others in different public housing neighbourhoods (some of whom are facing closure), and even those on the waiting list. Revitalization of select neighbourhoods, in and by itself produces hierarchal and fragmented communities within public housing neighbourhoods. In a context where demand for

social housing vastly outnumbers stagnant, even shrinking supply, the Zero Displacement policy might only add and increase conflict among public housing tenants.

To replace the demolished neighbourhoods, TCH and the developers rebuild socially mixed communities. They replace public housing units following a one-to-one and a like-to-like policy (S. Kerr, SPC) while adding new market units in the process. As expressed by the Vice president of Metropia (developer in Lawrence Heights), revitalization offers an opportunity “to create a sense of place” (Hume, 2018). This new sense of place is territorialised, based on new spatial hierarchies and the erasure of existing social spaces. Contemporary and dominant planning logics and neoliberal city building practices ensure the development of a desirable social mix and a neighbourhood that follows the principles of smart, transit-oriented growth and New Urbanist design.

A desirable social mix translated to additional 13,000 market units in Don Mount, Regent Park, Lawrence Heights, Alexandra Park, Allenbury Garden, 250 Davenport, and Leslie Nymark – to name a few. In this mix, market housing residents form the demographic majority in these neighbourhoods (with exception of 250 Davenport) (Toronto Community Housing, n.d.). Such extreme demographic change is one of the reasons why revitalization is accepted and sometime welcomed by neighbouring communities for its potential to facilitate gentrification (August & Walks, 2012). In Regent Park, Walks and August (2012, 292) explain, “the promise of poverty dilution in east downtown Toronto is raising property values and attracting real estate investment”. Several residents’ associations and taxpayer groups have advocated for the need of an even higher proportions of market residents (August & Walks, 2012). Not only does this have obvious implications for electoral representation (August & Walks, 2012), but is also “a recipe for class war” (August & Walks, 2012, 293 [John Clarke]).

Post-revitalization studies in Don Mount and Regent Park (August, 2014, 2016; August & Walks, 2012; Pitter, 2016a) highlight restricted cross-class relationships and social interaction, continued

racialization of black male youth, and an increase in social conflict and struggle especially about the use of public and open spaces. This is partially due to the primary focus of revitalization on physical development, giving only secondary importance to social planning and programming. Social programs, even when they exist, are designed to serve either short-term and transitional social purposes (August, 2014), or neoliberal capitalist goals (to rehabilitate potential workforce). In Lawrence Heights, the latter includes a scholarship program (Toronto Community Housing, n.d.) and an employment plan that would “provide local residents with enhanced opportunities to find job, access employment services and participate in employment and training opportunities” (City of Toronto, 2010b, 3).

In Don Mount, a social development program had operated for two years following revitalization to help the community, both tenants and market residents, reach social harmony (August, 2014). While it highlighted and touched upon the deep social conflict in the new community, it could neither solve several dilemmas nor bridge the conflicting interests of market housing residents with those of public housing tenants. Politically active market residents dominated community sessions and committees, refused to acknowledge the neighbourhood’s heritage, opposed ways of accommodating public housing tenants, created an exclusive virtual space to discuss local issues, promoted an agenda that created divisions in the community, and criminalized tenants over use of open space (August, 2014).

In this context, the newly designed open space became caught between what it was claimed to do (cure the community from its modernist physical and social isolation) and what it became (a tool for increased surveillance, social isolation and domination). In conflict over laneways between TCH units and private houses in Don Mount, market residents forcibly regulated the use of space on their terms. They prohibited children’s play, limited use to cars only, strongly frowned upon tenants sitting on the stoops of their units and strongly discouraged community BBQ’s (August, 2014). Any violation of their ‘rules’ resulted in a call to the police, whom market residents then invited to lead a walkabout

throughout the neighbourhood (August, 2014) in an act that can only be explained as a show of power. This act built on the work of another committee which was also dominated by market residents. The latter supposedly addressed security concerns, identified problems, reported incidents and built a rapport with the police (August, 2014). Thus, in defining a “proper” use of space, increasing surveillance (naturally supported by the New Urbanist design to maximize eyes on the street) and forcing it on community residents, market residents successfully produced TCH tenants, especially black male youth as ‘object’ bodies (August 2014 from Mitchell 2004). They “asserted that their ‘right’ not to be made uncomfortable, afraid, or irritated by the sight and sounds of tenants ought to be elevated above the rights of tenants to use the space behind their home” (August, 2014, 1171).

The Don Mount story is replicated in most revitalized public housing neighbourhoods in Toronto; middle-class residents operate on their increased sense of propriety, their high standards of proper social behavior, and their entitlement to control space, while public housing tenants become more policed, highly – and naturally surveilled and limited in their use, and presence in public and semi-private spaces (August, 2014, 2016; August & Walks, 2012).

Additionally, market residents’ ability to choose and control their social interactions and connections (Jacobs, 1961) affects their presence in and their entitlement to those spaces. In Regent Park, Costain (Pitter, 2016b, 178) reported that market residents and public housing tenant “are using the space at the same time, but not together”. Even in St. Lawrence (a socially mixed, non-revitalized community), the unwillingness of market residents to share spaces and services with public housing tenants had pushed some to suggest exclusive programming for market residents’ kids (see Browne, 2013, 34). Not only does this negate the stated purpose of mixing, it also adds strain to the funding and programming, of community centres and libraries, which now have to cater to new market residents

and their different social needs. Time, space, and funding limitations have thus become an added challenge for local tenant-oriented programming and services (Pitter, 2016b).

The Revitalization of Lawrence Heights

Background

The Lawrence Heights public housing project was the first and largest public housing project undertaken by the government of Metropolitan Toronto. It was built on almost 100 acres of vacant public land in the township of North York (Rose, 1972). It was one of the few projects that were planned and built with federal funding prior to the 1968 amendment, the amendment that allowed Metro to sidestep local municipalities.

At that time, the Township of North York and its local communities strongly opposed low-income public housing projects. Old-time rural residents and new suburban dwellers considered these projects as threat to their traditional way of life (Rose, 1972). So, in order to make Lawrence Heights public housing project more acceptable, Metro had to move away from a 100% low-income targeting towards a blended model with substantial units rented on a full recovery basis⁸ that would attract middle-income and lower middle-income residents. Only then did the Township consent to the project. However, local communities continued to reject the residents of Lawrence Heights (Rose, 1972).

⁸ A full recovery housing model is similar to the break-even model where rent is charged to cover all operating costs and mortgage payments related to the cost of building (Hulchanski & Shapcott, 2004; Suttor, 2016, 42). This financing model is targeted towards middle-income and moderate-income earners (Suttor, 2016).

Different phases of the project were built between 1959 and 1962. Most residences took form of row houses, maisonettes and a few apartment buildings. Larger detached houses were constructed at the east end as a buffer strip that helped transition the neighbourhood towards the private subdivision in Lawrence manor (neighbourhood north west of Eglinton and Yonge) (Rose, 1972). The neighbourhood followed a modernist design where a central open space was surrounded by several cul-du-sac's along a ring road. Houses were oriented away from the road, which in turn offered limited connection to the rest of the city.

Prior to Lawrence Heights project, the Township had very limited experience with welfare expenditure; it had no social welfare administration and very few social services. When the demand for educational, health and recreational services, as well as public assistance payments presented itself, the Township's efforts fell short (Rose, 1972), and subsequently, social conflict heightened. For example, the Township was unable to develop an adequate local community centre, and thus opened the pool of a nearby school for the recreational use of Lawrence Heights' youths. Alarming racial conflict between the black youth of Lawrence Heights and the white residents of that area rose, and segregationist voices suggested reserving specific times for these youths to access the pool (Rose, 1972).

While the general sentiment about public housing in the 1960s was that more is needed, Lawrence Heights was suffering from negative sentiments and stigma. In one stance, it was publicly compared to a concentration camp ("300 Scream North York Spying," 1960; O'Sullivan, 1960). During the late 1960s and 1970s, the reform of immigration policies and tighter income targeting only added to that stigma and increased racism towards non-white immigrant tenants. One resident describes the demographic change. He notes that there were only two black families when he arrived at Lawrence Heights in the 1970s. He says "As the white families moved out, the Jamaicans moved in. Now the Jamaicans are

moving out and the Somalis are moving in” (Lorinc, 2008). At the same time, Jamaicans were suffering from racism, stigmatization and even violence in Regent Park as well (Purdy, 2003)

While public housing development shifted towards the co-op model and social mix planning ideas became accepted and preferred in Toronto, the large-scale projects composed of low-income residents became more stigmatized. On April 23 1974, Lawrence Heights was described as a ghetto (Janigan, 1974) and by 1975 the Toronto Star was using the term “Jungle” to headline news of the neighbourhood (Graham, 1975; Hakala, 1975). In these articles, the term did not refer to the neighbourhood’s layout and its many cul-de-sac’s, but connoted the apparent social dis-order of the community. Interestingly, the term was also used to describe Regent Park in late 1968 as a “crime-infested human jungle” (Allen, 1968, 1).

The neoliberalization of public housing and other social services in Toronto since the mid 1980’s meant continuous housing stock deterioration and deeper concentrated poverty within Lawrence Heights. Transitioning towards neoliberal ideology, the “metropolitan mainstream”⁹ in Toronto detached the urban poor from society due to their supposed disconnection from the neoliberal capitalist system (Saber, 2017a; Suttor, 2016) while the state actively pursued their criminalization (Heroux, 2011). Thus, the urban poor, including low-income public housing tenants were successfully reproduced

⁹ Following Christian Schmid and Daniel Weiss, Kipfer (2007, 28) describes the metropolitan mainstream as “a social milieu rooted in mostly white central city class fractions; liberal-professional gentrifiers, “urbane” developers, artists and hipsters. The metropolitan mainstream is politically ambiguous. It may be progressive in terms of consumption choices, and is at least superficially supportive of cultural and sexual diversity. Yet it is open to neoliberal economic tendencies. It is prone to punitive impulses with respect to the homeless, youth of color and radical activists”.

as “others”, an ideological construct closely related to non-white immigrants (Saber, 2017a). In Lawrence Heights, a civil action suit and a crowded community meeting highlighted police brutality and racism in two incidents in 1986 and 1987 (Cheney, 1987; DiManno, 1986). In 1994, the neighbourhood was put in an unwelcome spotlight after a local black resident murdered a white woman in a mid-town café (Gonda, 2005; also see Peake & Ray, 2001; Saber, 2017a). Ten years later, a series of gun related incidents and murders in the following years landed the neighbourhood on the City’s list of Priority Neighbourhoods in 2005 (City of Toronto, 2006; Gonda, 2005). This designation was the cornerstone upon which the City’s revitalization decision built. Interestingly, in the City’s preliminary planning report, none of Lawrence Heights’ social challenges were mentioned except for this designation (City of Toronto, 2007b). Saber (2017a, 111 - 112) explains that the Priority Neighbourhood Strategy became a known and dominant territorialized strategy that built on an implicit connection between non-white poverty, violence and postwar suburbs. Thus, referring to the strategy was sufficient to imply the problematic of race and class (and to a certain degree, gender) in the neighbourhood.

The Strategy particularly focused on the idea of prevention as a more progressive solution than police enforcement (Saber, 2017a). Yet, Da Silva notes that police enforcement and active criminalization of Lawrence Heights was also heightened in the years prior to revitalization. It followed a general trend towards responding to drug use and gun control in Toronto in ways that criminalized whole neighbourhoods and was more about interfering in non-white immigrants’ public space and communities than about substance or gun control per se (Gordon, 2006; Rankin, Quinn, Shepard, Simmie, & Duncanson, 2002). Media representation of these incidents fed into the dominant stigmatized and racialized image of Lawrence Heights (S. Da Silva) and the fear of race riots (Saber, 2017a). It eventually justified deep state intervention in the neighbourhood and increased community and monetary investment.

In parallel, TCH identified Lawrence Heights as “a prime site with excellent potential opportunities for development” (Toronto Community Housing, 2006, 1) due to its location along the Spadina Subway line, its low densities, and an existing interest of the private market and real-estate developers, including RioCan (owner of Lawrence Market) (City of Toronto, 2007b; Toronto Community Housing, 2006). As the City’s preliminary planning report states, “even with all of these challenges [of crime, violence, and disconnection to the city], there are signs that the interest and will exists to revitalize this community. The area is served by two subway stops (Lawrence West and Yorkdale) and is framed by three major arterials (Lawrence, Bathurst and Dufferin) and has major highway access (401). TCH’s expressed interest in redeveloping their sites [...] Private land owners have expressed interest in redevelopment and are in the process of undertaking studies to support their submission of a planning application.” (City of Toronto, 2007b). In fact, Lawrence Heights is envisioned to be a catalyst for larger social and economic change in the north-west part of Toronto (City of Toronto, 2007b; Toronto Community Housing, 2006). In 2007, City Council endorsed the revitalization of the neighbourhood (City of Toronto, 2007a).

The selection of Lawrence Heights to be the third revitalization project in Toronto is very interesting because (1) it was prioritized over other TCH projects, and (2) it indicates the extension of public housing revitalization practices into Toronto’s post-war suburbs. The former can be explained by private market interest and enthusiasm; however, the second invites more critical consideration.

Several planners and architects have discussed how Lawrence Heights represent a different case than previous revitalization projects, especially Regent Park (Lorinc, 2008, K. Knoeck). They emphasize that it has a distinct physical form; it is a low-density suburban neighbourhood rather than a high-density downtown site (K. Knoeck). In terms of costs and benefits, the revitalization of Lawrence Heights requires city investment of more than \$200000 just to update and replace existing infrastructure and

community facilities (City of Toronto, 2011a). It is also possible that it has lower land value than downtown TCH sites. And even after revitalization, densities at Lawrence Heights are still projected to be lower than in Regent Park (Moore & Wright, 2017, 69). Thus, while I believe that revitalizing Lawrence Heights aims at releasing valuable and publicly-owned real estate, and driving gentrification (disguised as economic and social change) in Toronto's north-west post-war suburbs, I find it interesting that the large costs and relatively lower benefits of redevelopment did not deter the City or TCH (K. Knoeck).

This, I believe, is due to the political pressure that City government was under in the early 2000s. The pressure was caused by the political unrest that Toronto was experiencing in relation to the poor pockets in its post-war suburbs, whose threat to Toronto's security was emphasized repeatedly (Saber, 2017a). Thus, I consider the revitalization of Lawrence Heights more of a pacification project aimed to control, prevent and rehabilitate the threat its low-income non-white residents pose to the Torontonians' way of life. As Guslits, the TCH head of development, states: the goal is to re-establish Lawrence Heights as "a fairly typical Toronto neighbourhood" (Lorinc, 2008).



Figure 1 Context Plan of Lawrence Heights.

Source: Urban Design Guidelines – Lawrence Heights North-East District, February 2018

The New Lawrence Heights

The revitalization project includes a complete overhaul of the Lawrence Heights neighbourhood; this includes the demolition of the existing 1,208 public housing units (City of Toronto, 2011a). The project is supported by several planning studies and documents including the Lawrence Allen Revitalization Plan, the Lawrence Allen Secondary Plan, Urban Design Guidelines, the Public Realm Master Plan, Social Development and Employment Plans, the Heritage Interpretation Plan and several development application documents. All these ensure that the new Lawrence Heights follows contemporary planning wisdoms of Smart Growth, Transit-Oriented Development, New Urbanism and Social Mixing.

The City plans to develop the Lawrence Allen area as “mixed-income, mixed-use neighbourhood which is park-centred, transit-supportive, and well integrated with the broader city” (City of Toronto, 2011a, 1). However, the new Lawrence Heights will continue to be predominantly residential. Some of the non-residential land uses that include retail, offices, services and community facilities will be located in a central community common space in the new neighbourhood. The rest will develop outside the neighbourhood along Dufferin Street, Bathurst Street, Lawrence Avenue West, and the Yorkdale shopping centre (City of Toronto, 2011a).



Figure 2 Illustration of The New Lawrence Heights.

Source: TCH webpage. Retrieved on July 14, 2019

Between 2015 – 2035, the project is planned to replace 1,208 RGI units and add 4,092 new private market units to the site (Toronto Community Housing, n.d.). This means that tenants of public housing units in Lawrence Heights will become a demographic minority in their own neighbourhood, forming only 22.8% of total households. The new public housing will be built in the form of a few mixed-use mid-

rise buildings located along main roads and around transit and community nodes, in addition to townhouses, stacked townhouses and detached individual houses. The Secondary Plan states that for each public housing unit removed due to redevelopment, another unit will be built on site. The replacement will provide the same number of rooms, be of similar size, and maintain the grade-related status of the unit it replaces (City of Toronto, 2011b).

Ideally, public housing units would be “pepper potted” throughout the site to ensure fine-grained mixing (Browne, 2013 [Tunstall & Fenton, 2006; Rowlands et al., 2006]). However, phase one of the revitalization project does not include any mixed buildings; market units are located in separate buildings, and with separate indoor amenity spaces. While one planner explains that this is due to a ‘business decision’ taken by TCH, another planner refers to the legal structure of condominium agreements in Ontario which requires separate entrances for market and public housing residents (SPC, S. Kerr). Additionally, the approved zoning by-laws for the lower density areas included in phase one set minimum and maximum measures that cluster houses. For example, townhouses located at the block south of Renee Avenue will have a minimum lot frontage and a maximum number of units that limit the number dwellings to seven units (City of Toronto, 2008). The City has tried to keep that clustering at a minimum of six public housing units (S. Kerr). Kerr explains that demolition control measures in Toronto’s Official Plan are only activated when six or more rental units are proposed to be demolished. This means that clustering public housing units together will protect them from being demolished without replacement in the future. Although this small-scale clustering can potentially create zones of stigmatization, both TCH and the City consider that they successfully spread public housing units throughout the site and thus managed to overcome spatial separation (J. Chen, S. Kerr).

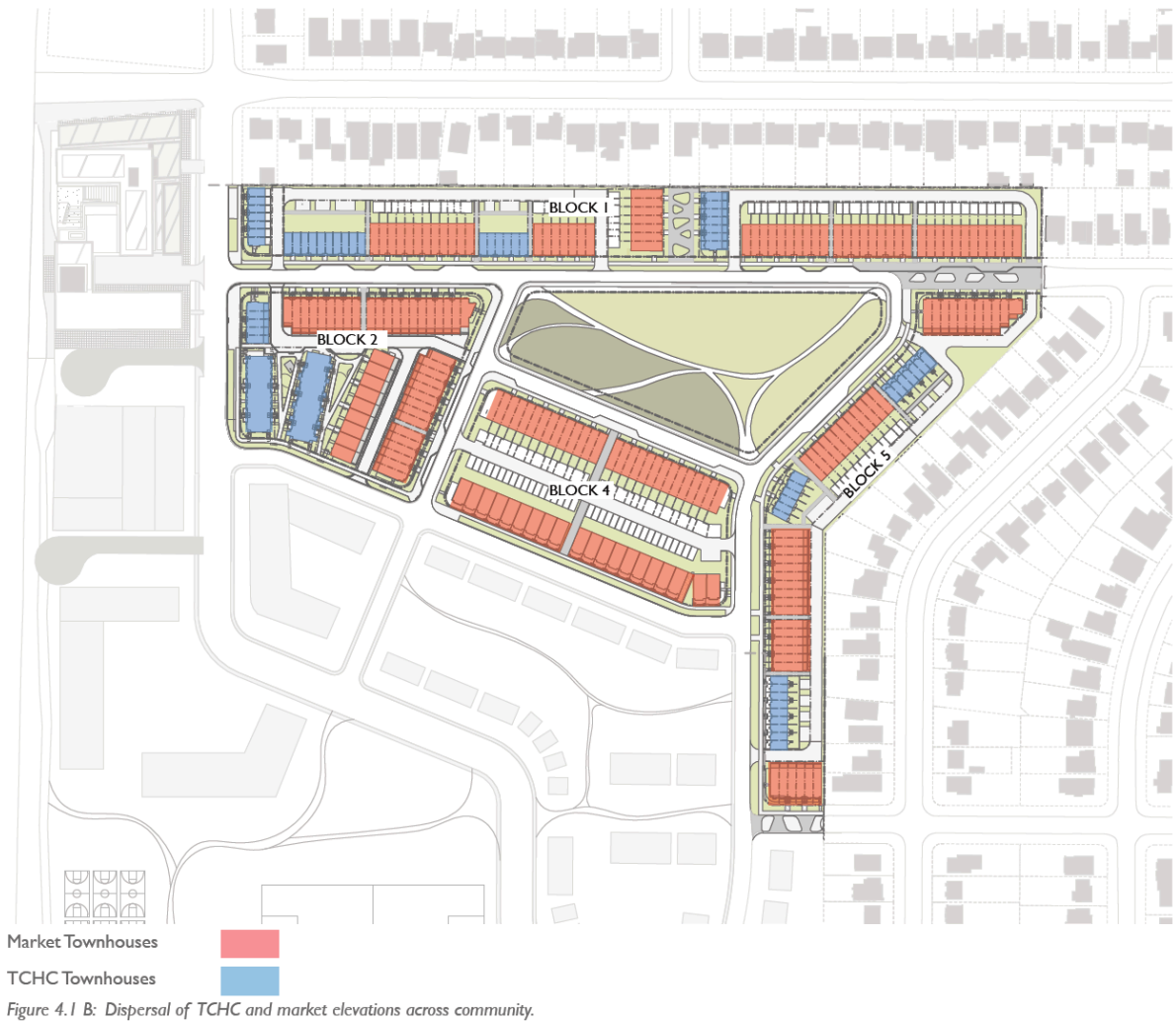


Figure 3 Spatial Distribution of TCH and Market Residences in The Northeast Part of Phase One.

Source: Lawrence Heights Urban Design and Built Form Guidelines- Northeast District, December 2018

The City and TCH are also committed to build public housing units that are indistinguishable from market units in building material and architectural design. In developing indistinguishable houses, the City and TCH seek to offer public housing residents a certain invisibility, which the tenants requested (J. Chen). They also help people with different incomes occupy the same neighbourhood as equals rather than being distinguished by their income level (K. Knoeck). A TCH planner also notes that

indistinguishable houses would ensure equal housing opportunities in the sense that market residents do not have better quality and more beautiful houses than public housing tenants do (DM). One may argue, however, that the invisibility created by the similarity of physical appearance will only apply to visitors and passers-by. It will be easy for residents to know which units belong to TCH; in particular, homeowners, who are invested in maintaining or increasing their equity, will be keen to find out. Thus, this invisibility might only be temporary. It will not ensure protection from stigmatization or racialization which, I believe, is what public housing tenants actually desire (also see Kipfer, 2019, 149). Additionally, the relationship between residents of socially mixed communities will be characterized by inherent power imbalance. Offering them indistinguishable units does not address this imbalance, however, it might disguise it. More importantly, offering indistinguishable units as equal opportunities to politically unequal residents does not ensure fairness and equality in housing. In fact, it ignores or dismisses that in the larger picture, revitalization drives gentrification, which actually affects the housing market and housing affordability. Also, after a while, market residents would probably ensure proper maintenance for their houses. The lack of adequate TCH funding for needed maintenance will push public housing units into deterioration. This would be rather ironic given that the lack of funding and maintenance is one of the reasons why TCH is revitalizing Lawrence Heights in the first place.

Interestingly, the revitalization project is meant to replace, but not add any public housing units. In fact, the City had dropped its policy requirement of new affordable housing, which usually applies to projects larger than five hectares under Section 37 of the Planning Act. The City reasons that replacing existing RGI ensures the public benefit desired for the site (K. Knoeck). Instead, "Section 37 will be used within the Focus Area to secure the terms of the replacement of social housing and tenants assistance, as well as public art on development sites" (City of Toronto, 2011b, 36). Additionally, any new public housing units (or even affordable housing originally required by Section 37) can only be financed with additional market units to meet developers' profit expectations. The additional densities required for

this purpose are not supported by planners in TCH and the City (J. Chen, K. Knock). Nonetheless, TCH planners hope to include the whole spectrum of ‘affordable housing’ (J. Chen, DM); they have implemented an Affordable Home Ownership Program¹⁰ within phase one and hope to start discussions to develop affordable rental and market rental units with private developers during subsequent construction phases.

The City describes that “the 1950’s layout of existing streets, parks and buildings in Lawrence Heights was an experiment in building modern neighbourhoods” (City of Toronto, 2011a, 13). It isolated the neighbourhood, fostered social relationships around parking lots, and was hard to navigate. Allen Road, once constructed, further bisected Lawrence Heights into its east and west side. Accordingly, the houses in the new Lawrence Heights are designed to front a street network, and new east-west bridges are planned to minimize the divide. However, no other significant changes to Allen Road are suggested, as the proposal to deck it was deemed unfeasible (PSL Group Inc., 2016) . On the east side, the existing curvilinear street layout is maintained, and offers limited connections to Lawrence Manor, while the west side assimilate the grid network of the larger area and reconnects the neighbourhood and its residents “back” to the city (Planning Alliance & City of Toronto, 2011). It is interesting that the existing ring road and curvilinear street layout in Lawrence Heights are similar to the close-loop street network in Lawrence Manor. While the former supposedly isolated Lawrence Heights from the rest of the city, the latter offers exclusivity to the rich white residents of Lawrence Manor.

¹⁰ The program offers TCH tenants a no interest, no payment City-funded second mortgage as a down payment to allow them to buy their first house at market price (Toronto Community Housing, 2014).

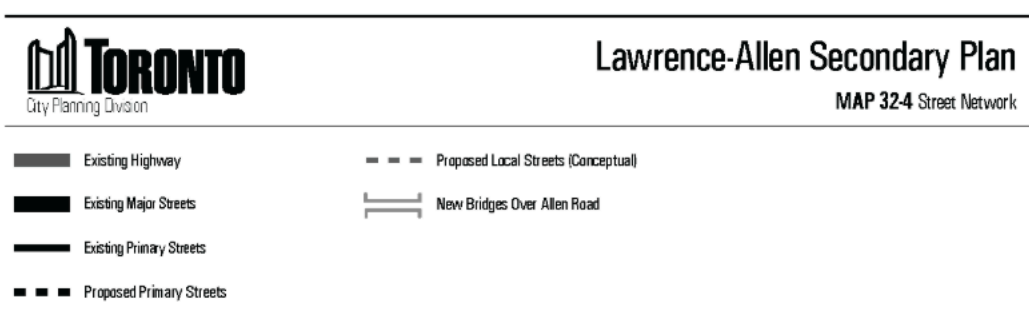


Figure 4 Street Network in The New Lawrence Heights.

Source: Lawrence Allen Secondary Plan 2011

Designing a curvilinear street network on the eastern side of the new Lawrence Heights is planned to reflect the old ring road. It is one of the landscape heritage elements identified by the Heritage Interpretation Plan and partially maintained by the Secondary Plan (City of Toronto, 2011b; Lawrence-Allen Revitalization Study Consulting Team, 2010). The other elements are the central open space and the heavy tree coverage. The rest of the community's heritage is to be represented by public art in open spaces (City of Toronto, 2011b), though early discussions don't seem to seriously commit to it (personal observation – open house April 10, 2019).

Open space in the new neighbourhood will be anchored in a central park, several community parks located at strategic locations, a "Greenway" along Allen Road that will help "civilize" and utilize the road, and a network of sidewalks and mews. The mews offer limited or no vehicular movement, but support active transportation options like walking and cycling (City of Toronto, 2011b). This open space network, in addition to public buildings will "provide the setting for *civic* life and activity and social interaction among residents and visitors. The quality of public spaces will contribute to the strengthening of community identity, *promoting public safety*, and fostering vibrant public activity" (City of Toronto, 2011a, 4 emphases added). In other words, the physical design and quality of public spaces will factor in the quality of cross-class, cross-race social interaction in the new Lawrence Heights, and potentially promote safety. A detailed reading of planning and design controls over this space show that they follow New Urbanist concepts of crime prevention through urban design (see City of Toronto, 2011b, p. 14, 16, 18, 19, 2012). For example, hedges, low fences, building material and tiling, and other physical design elements will be used to create a hierarchy of public, semi-public and private spaces (City of Toronto, 2012). Such hierarchies are considered important to create "defensible space" (Newman, 1972).

Additionally, policy 3.1.5 of the Secondary Plan specifically states that "New development will have strong regard for the enhancement of community and personal safety by providing casual overlook from

development to public spaces and by including building entrances, appropriate active ground floor uses, and transparent building matters along edges of public spaces” (City of Toronto, 2011b, 16). Unobstructed sight lines from residences and mixed-use buildings encourage soft surveillance and continuous eye-on-the-street as well as well-lit walkways. The surveillance of some residents is supposed to exert social pressure that discourages ‘other’ residents from doing what are assumed to be criminogenic practices. In particular, the capacity of local residents (a majority of whom will be market housing residents) to engage in surveillance is thus supposed to deter un-accepted and criminal behavior and promote public safety. Given the historical record and the experience of other revitalized housing projects, such surveillance is a recipe to continue criminalizing certain bodies, notably those of black male youth tenants. This, to me, raises a series of questions: what is accepted behavior for the new residents of Lawrence heights? Do both tenants and market residents agree on what is not accepted? How will that behavior be enforced? by who? Will the opinion of one side dominate the other? Why?

These questions, I believe, should be answered generally by robust social planning and programming in the new mixed community. Otherwise residents of market housing will dominate the new Lawrence Heights, socially and spatially, just like in Don Mount, and Regent Park. However, the Social Development Plan does not address any of these questions. Instead, it fights another challenge as it attempts to maintain the existing tenant-oriented social services and programming as market residents move in (SPC).

The Plan states that only with adequate funding will local community facilities continue to respond to the needs of existing tenants (Toronto Community Housing & City of Toronto, 2012). This is particularly important because community services constitute the only explicitly ethnic-racial programme elements in the revitalization planning of Lawrence Heights. While the official narrative

maintains a claim of colorblindness by asserting that social mixing only means mixed-used and mixed-income (City of Toronto, 2011a, J. Chen, DM), non-profit community-based services and some of TCH social programming become the only tool that recognizes the cultural diversity and heterogeneity of the community in Lawrence Heights. And even these are expected to adapt as the neighbourhood grows (DM). This means that community services and facilities will not only serve three times the existing population, but will also need to stretch in funding, space and timing to serve tenants and residents' very different social interests. It is interesting that one of the most-referenced characteristics of successful de-stigmatization in large-scale revitalized public housing neighbourhoods is popular demand of local community services and facilities. For example, planners consider Regent Park de-stigmatized because the Pam McConnel Aquatic Centre, Regent Park Community Centre and Daniel Spectrum receive users from all over the east of Toronto's Downtown (SPC, DM).

The construction of the new Lawrence Heights is planned to be done in four phases in order to coordinate housing construction with needed municipal infrastructure and open space, and avoid severe disruption of tenants' lives. The first phase has started in 2015 and is planned to finish by 2021. In this phase, TCH has partnered with Context and Metropia and has successfully developed 233 RGI units (S. Kerr, J. Chen). TCH's contract with these developers is limited to this phase only. The development of other phases will require new calls for proposals (DM). Financial equations and profit calculations will thus be adjusted in each phase. Accordingly, the number of market units required to ensure profitability for the developer in question might change depending on the phase. The built form will be reconsidered for this purpose as well. Already in phase one, TCH and the developers replaced a mid-rise condo building identified in the vision plan with a cluster of stacked townhouses (S. Kerr), which can generate a higher land rent (J. Van Nostrand).

As in most revitalization projects in Toronto, when TCH and the City approached communities within Lawrence Heights and the surrounding area, they adopted a robust, and very long community engagement process. Supporting and opposing voices appeared in the process, but nothing grew to the level of organized community mobilization except in Lawrence Manor (K. Knoeck, SPC). This might be due to social control measures taken by the City and TCH that limited open questions in community open houses (SPC), or co-opted opposition into roles of community animators working for TCH, or even appointed a public relation company with its own political agenda to “sell” revitalization in principle and manage tenants’ opposition (S. Da Silva). Nonetheless, the largely white and rich community at Lawrence Manor found ways to organize against the project and formed Save Our Streets Coalition. In so doing, Save Our Streets Coalition were supported and profiled by the City Councilor and mayoral hopeful candidate at that time, Rob Ford, the MP Joe Vlope, council candidate Ron Singer and the media (Grant, 2010; Queens, 2010; Reynolds, 2010). Local community organizers in the neighbourhood avoided confronting them to avoid accusations of anti-Semitism against the largely Jewish community (S. Da Silva).

The Save Our Streets Coalition successfully escalated Lawrence Manor’s opposition to draw concession from TCH and the City. They demanded that the project be stopped, the densities lowered, and the connections between Lawrence Heights and Lawrence Manor remain blocked¹¹. The latter became the “hill that the plan will die upon” (SPC). They claimed traffic and infrastructure concerns (Grant, 2010; Queens, 2010), but in reality, their fear was more about keeping Lawrence Heights contained and about avoiding disruption of their community by Lawrence Heights residents (J. Chen).

¹¹ Currently, connections between Lawrence Manor and Lawrence Heights are bare paved paths that are permanently blocked by physical barriers.

Eventually, city councilor Howard Moscoe, City and TCH planners and animators all agreed to lower densities (less by 1,000 units than what was initially proposed) and to keep the roads between the two neighbourhoods blocked to vehicles (City of Toronto, 2011a). Instead, the City and TCH packed the issue with progressive language. The blocked roads thus became to be called 'mews' in the Lawrence-Allen Revitalization Plan and the Secondary Plan. They are planned with beautiful landscape as part of the open space network to promote active transportation; walking and cycling (City of Toronto, 2011b; Lawrence-Allen Revitalization Study Consulting Team, 2010). Several planners explain that once development in Lawrence Heights is complete, the new neighbourhood and renewed recreational community facilities will attract the residents of Lawrence Manor. Then, planners believe, the decision can be revisited by an Official Plan Amendment (SPC, J. Chen, K. Knoeck, S. Kerr). Kerr also notes that she has witnessed a shift of attitude towards this issue, although she confirms that City planners will not revisit the decision anytime soon.

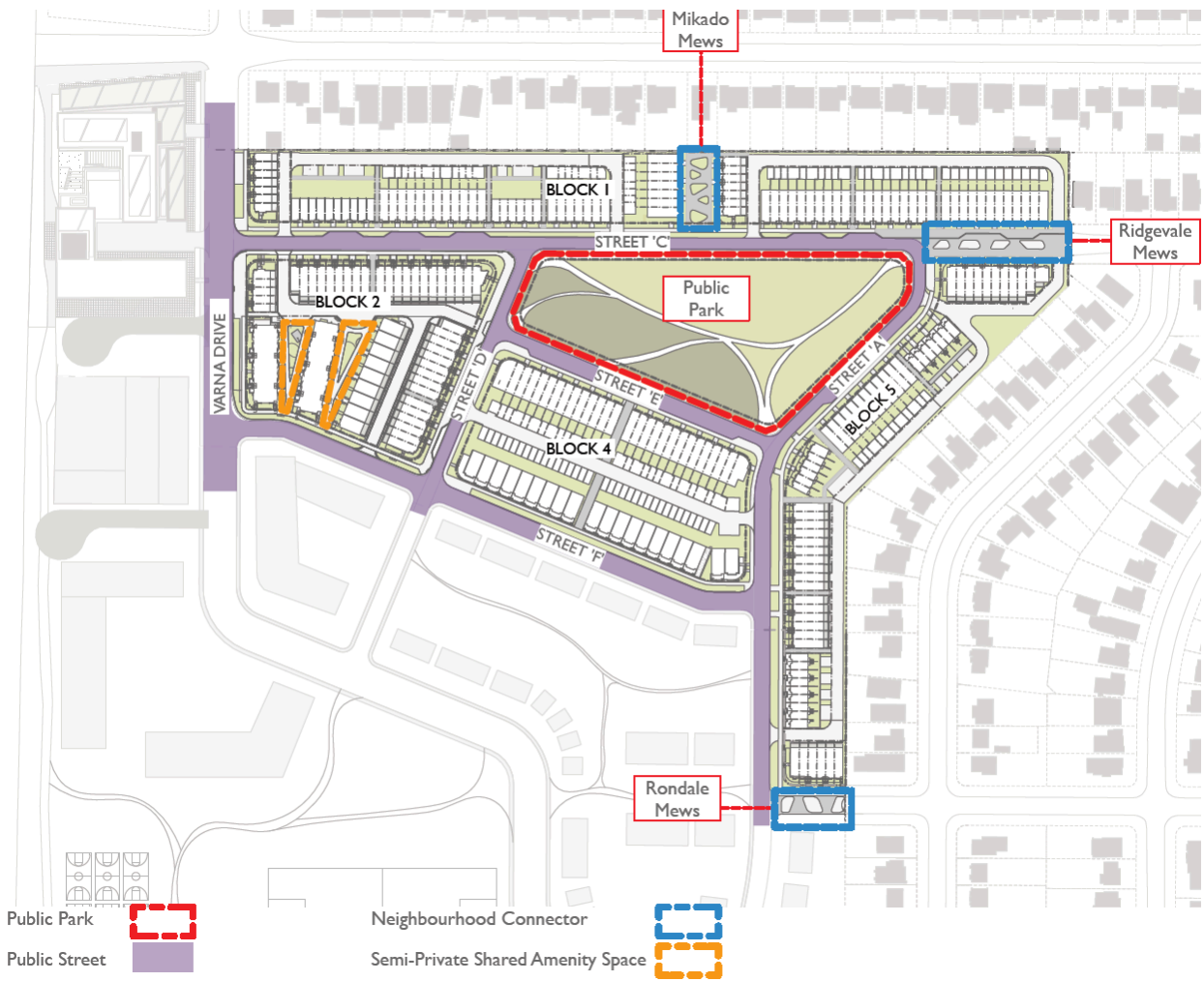


Figure 5 Parks, Open Space and Mews in The Northeast Part of Phase One.

Source: Lawrence Heights Urban Design and Built Form Guidelines- Northeast District, December 2018

The media described the opposition in Lawrence Manor as NIMBY-ism, while Maria Augimeri, Chair of the North York Community Council, called them racist (Grant, 2010). The several planners whom I interviewed did not agree with the opposition. However, their criticism of the issue took a paternalistic stance as they called the concerns and fears of Lawrence Manor residents as misinformation (K. Knoeck, J. Chen, SPC). What is evident is that there is a deep social conflict between the residents of Lawrence Manor and the residents of Lawrence Height. One that will remain un-addressed by any social plan or

otherwise. It is also clear that the former activated their social capital to maintain real disconnections and physical barriers between them and their poor neighbours. Ironically, it is the same social capital envisioned to help the low-income residents of the new mixed community. Residents of Lawrence Manor affirmed their dominance not only over the roads or mews, but over several access points to the whole neighbourhood. They also affirmed their dominance over the political process of revitalization, casting doubt in the mind of observers about the real intent of TCH and the City and their support for Toronto's urban poor and marginalized residents.

Also ironically, the same revitalization plan, that strongly retains social mixing rhetoric to turn public housing tenants into a minority community within their own neighbourhood and promises them an oversimplified solution to their deep poverty by reconnecting them to the city, the same one has transformed 'good planning' principles of easy access and reconnection to the need for strategic decision making, and for holding softer positions to community voices (SPC, K. Knoeck).

Conclusion

The positioning of public housing neighbourhoods and their residents at the social peripheries of society is not random. It is a result of a territorialisation process that fragments and organizes the city's neighbourhoods in a hierarchy between affluent, rich and dominant, and impoverished and dominated social spaces. Insofar as it is tied to social peripheralization, racialization, stigmatization, and political domination, territorialisation continues to produce public housing neighbourhoods as sites of political, social, economic and cultural disadvantage, and demarcates them and their residents along stark lines of class, race and poverty. This process asserts their exploitation for purposes of neoliberal capitalist accumulation and affirms their dominance with neo-colonial connotations.

Historically, public housing development and its policies have always been dominated by political, economic and social narratives of the mainstream, and mainly directed to serve as stimulus for the private housing market and development industry. Projects of the post-war era followed a modernist planning rationale that produced ill-serviced, isolated, racialized and politically marginalized high-density pockets of low-income residents within prominently rich, white, low-density suburbs. Even the much-praised co-op model and its finer social mixing wisdom influenced the marginalization and the stigmatization of large-scale public housing clusters and played a role in the territorial divide between the central city and its post-war suburbs. While the political divide between Downtown bourgeoisie and the suburban elite cuts across public housing neighbourhoods and their residents (who can be found on both sides of the divide), it definitely feeds upon their continued territorialisation and the augmented problematization of their issues around poverty, race and crime, especially within the recent rise in hard-right politics and populist authoritarian regimes.

Additionally, the neoliberalization of public housing succeeded in reframing the narrative around housing affordability, limiting governmental funding and directing development towards the private market and the development industry even more than was the case in the postwar period. It promoted individual responsibility and blame for housing and income woes, making public and rental housing an exclusive problem of the poor, disconnected from mainstream politics. It produced an "other" identity which the state largely criminalized. Neoliberal policies then used the rhetoric around social inclusion and mixing to justify targeting areas of real estate and workforce potential to promote further capitalist accumulation and respond to perceived threats to contemporary security ideology through process of neo-colonialization and pacification.

The recent revitalization practice that promotes total demolition undervalues landscape heritage and communities' sense of place. Instead, it promises to rebuild smart, transit-oriented, new urbanist,

socially mixed and attractive neighbourhoods that reconnect the residents back to the city, society and the capitalist system (assuming, strangely, that these neighbourhoods were separate societies).

Furthermore, it successfully represents the challenges faced by public housing in terms of physical decay and in-efficient urban design instead of governmental underinvestment. It rearranges the social and physical space to ensure the continued power imbalance between residents; the domination of the higher class, and subsequently the territorialisation of public housing tenants.

Revitalization planning efforts in Toronto aim for real change in the lives of public housing residents and improvements for the better. However, these efforts readily rely on strong neoliberal discourse and mainstream planning practices with little consideration given to underlying social realities and perceptions. The most crucial aspects of revitalization planning in Toronto are the following: First, they are limited in their focus on the development of an ideal physical environment; a set of architectural and urban design elements that are claimed to yield utopian social harmony, economic stability. This not only risks the creation of a paradox when these elements are used to suppress public housing residents like in Don Mount, it also makes social planning and social development plans in public housing revitalization projects merely an addition, temporary, post-facto programs aimed to foster social inclusion. In this context, planners learn lessons only in relationship to certain aspects of the physical design, not in relationship to social realities and struggles of mixed communities within the revitalized sites.

Secondly, the planning process is blind to race and class conflict insofar as it operates with socially neutral notions of mixed use and mixed income. Sometimes, its development perspective is limited to creating 'equal housing opportunities' for a politically unequal and socially mixed community. These, in fact, disguise power imbalances and leave them unaddressed. Nevertheless, planners are strongly confident in their assumption that the progressive middle-income residents who will opt to buy or rent

in revitalized public housing neighbourhoods are going in with an open mindset that does not only accept their public housing neighbours, but offers them opportunities and access to employment networks and social capital (J. Chen, K. Knoeck, SPC).

To the extent that they are acknowledged, the negative aspects of revitalization or its normalized limitations are comfortably justified by the downloading of public housing responsibilities and by federal-provincial underinvestment in public housing. Such rationalizations position the City as a passive victim that tries its best while struggling with innovative solutions to public housing in a neoliberal context. They largely ignore the active role the City has played in the territorialisation, criminalization and stigmatization of public housing neighbourhoods.

The selection of Lawrence Heights as the third revitalization project in Toronto indicates its prioritization over other TCH sites, and the extension of public housing revitalization practices to Toronto's post-war suburbs. The former can be explained in terms of private market interest, which is vital for TCH's public private partnership (even over social needs). The latter however, signals the use of revitalization as a pacifying policy to the threats to Toronto's security ideology that appeared in the early 2000s, supposedly originating from the low-income non-white suburban neighbourhoods.

Several elements in the revitalization planning of Lawrence Heights indicate continued territorialisation between Lawrence Heights and other public housing neighbourhoods and within the new Lawrence Heights itself; The effects of Zero Displacement policy, which avoids displacement of tenants, are not critically considered in the larger picture of public housing in Toronto; the project and the planning process are heavily influenced by strategic decision making, cost limitations, and the structure of land use planning processes and regulations in Toronto; and the envisioned space of the new Lawrence heights does not critically address the underlying social realities and perceptions.

Additionally, I believe the project missed several opportunities for improvement that would have provided better housing conditions and set a better precedent for future revitalization initiatives. The City could have decided to maintain its requirement for new affordable (section 37 of the Official Plan) and to include housing policies within Lawrence Allen Secondary Plan. These policies would have led to a more holistic spectrum of mixed tenure instead of putting the whole burden on a few over-burdened TCH programs and optional negotiations within the public private partnership. Most remarkable was how the City and TCH gave in to political pressure from Lawrence Manor. The development of the mews as a set of open spaces and pathways instead of road connections casts doubt on the real intent of TCH and the City and their support for Toronto's urban poor and marginalized residents. The supposed compromise (although I see it more as concession) that TCH and the City reached does not only build a vision of social inclusion for future solutions that might, or might not happen, but also raises a red flag on the high expectation of the project's envisioned social harmony in overcoming the reality of deep social conflict in the area. At least, I believe, it sets a negative precedent to future conflict in Lawrence Heights, and other revitalizing public housing neighbourhoods in Toronto.

As we have seen, planning for public housing in Toronto is highly politicized. Public housing development and policies are heavily influenced by and partly dependant on changes in mainstream politics, economic and social narratives. Planning rationales for public housing, including revitalization, cannot stand on their own but rather are tied to many issues of local and national politics and readily depend on dominant practices. However, it is in the "recognition of politics, rather than placing faith in rationality and earnest endeavor" that we can properly practice reflexivity in planning (Richardson, 2002, 360). This research offers exactly that: an opportunity to think about the politics around public housing in Toronto and its recent revitalization practices.

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