WORKING PAPERS

Inclusive City Building:
Public Engagement Processes in the GTA

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Abstract

Cities are changing yet planning policies are not keeping up with these changes. The migration of diverse individuals is a reality, yet planners are not considering how city building can be made more inclusive for these groups. This paper aims to answer the question, how can public engagement processes be more inclusive for immigrant and racialized communities? A literature review and analysis of policies for selected municipalities in the Greater Toronto Area is conducted and it is determined most policies and vision statements are too broad. The policies in place do not cater to immigrant and racialized groups however this can be rectified through creating engagement master plans and empowering the public to take part in the public planning process.

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 Planning for Diversity

Cities are constantly diversifying. Not just cities; provinces, regions and municipalities are all becoming more multiracial and multiethnic due to an influx of immigrants. In Canada, 22% of the population identified as a visible minority and the number is even higher in Ontario at 29% of the population (Statistics Canada, 2016 Census of Population). From 2006 to 2016, more diverse people have been migrating to Ontario and Canada which is evidenced by a 13% increase of Ontarians having a mother tongue other than English or French, Canada increasing at over 19%. Other provinces across Canada saw an even more dramatic increase such as Alberta, which had a 49% increase of people whose mother tongue is neither English nor French (Statistics Canada, 2006-2016 Census Data). These statistics show diversity is happening, yet city builders are not keeping up with this change.

This influx of diverse people come with their own cultural preferences, their own religious practices, and their own needs for spaces and services that cater to them. The cultural differences these groups express in the public and private domains goes hand in hand with their reconciliation of the norms, standards, and values they are expected to adhere to in society (Qadeer and Agrawal, 2011). It cannot be assumed the same processes which have been used for many years will still be relevant or welcome in the face of this diversity as the values and norms of the dominant culture are usually the ones embedded in policy. As these policies were created at a point in time where societies are not as multicultural as they are now, the planning system is not representative of the current conditions of society (Burayidi & Wiles, 2015; Sandercock, 2000). Therefore, it falls to the city builders to ensure these groups are having their voices heard and their needs met. It falls to the planners to ensure public policies adapt to keep up with the changing demographics of societies (Qadeer, 2015).

Legislated public engagement processes[1] are one of the processes that have been called into question with regards to how inclusive and representative they are of the population at large, due to the changing demographics (Schmidtke & Neumann, 2010). This change being recognized would be meaningless without equity in the provision of public policies, programs, and services as well as equal access to the planning decision-making process. If people are not sitting around the decision making table, their voices and needs will not be taken into account. In order to successfully integrate immigrants and marginalized groups into a society, taking part in political processes like public engagements is key (Schmidtke & Neumann, 2010). This type of inclusion helps people foster a sense of ownership to the place they live in, and also provides a space for people to connect and build ties with their community. Creating this sense of place and belonging is important for people to feel connected to their community and want to take part in helping shape it through engaging with their government.

In the province of Ontario, public engagement is a required part of the planning and city building process[2] as outlined in the 1990 Ontario Planning Act (Ontario., & Canada Law

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[1] Legislated public engagement processes are processes that must be held by law. For example, a public meeting must be held when a municipal official plan is being updated.

[2] The planning and city building process involves multiple disciplines. Planning is concerned with the development of places (hence each municipality has an official plan which dictates what the municipality wants to build where) while city building includes all the elements that makes a city (eg.

Book Inc, 1992). It ensures the public and all stakeholders have an opportunity to comment on and be part of the decision making process. Traditionally, the process did not involve the public at all and relied on the advice of planners as they were considered the technical experts of planning. This was found to be a problem as planners did not always know what would be best for a community. Currently, planning is no longer completed just by planners. The public and all stakeholders are invited and encouraged to take part in the planning process in order to provide a more accurate picture of what would be best in an area. In order for this process to be effective, it needs to be inclusive and equitable for all members of the community. If only certain groups of the population attend these types of engagements, only these voices will be accounted for. The people not in the room will not get their voices and needs heard.

1.2 Research Objective

This research is aiming to answer the question, how can public engagement processes be more inclusive for immigrant and racialized communities? This will be done through the completion of a literature review, and a review of the public engagement policies of selected municipalities in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA). The main objective of this research is to create a list of best practices for the municipalities in the GTA to better engage immigrant and racialized groups.

1.3 Significance of Research

There have been many studies done on process evaluation (Crompton, 2017; Culver & Howe, 2004; Jollymore et al., 2018; Shipley & Utz, 2012) in relation to both consultation and public participation however, this study will focus on methods that can be used to integrate immigrant and racialized communities into the public engagement process. There is also a substantial amount of literature which critiques planners and their inclusion and accommodation of cultural differences which implies there is a lack of research done in this area (Qadeer & Agrawal, 2011; Burayidi, 2000; Sandercock, 2003; Reeves, 2005; Viswanathan, 2009). Removing barriers for immigrant and racialized groups when it comes to planning for and participating in decisions in their community is key to them feeling included and having a sense of place and belonging. Planners and public policy makers are duty bound to foster a sense of place and belonging among all members of the public, including immigrant and racialized communities.

1.4 Outline of Paper

This paper starts with a literature review of public engagement in planning. The first section provides an overview of how public engagement in planning has evolved throughout the years, the second section describes the different approaches used to engage participants, and the third section looks at the public engagement process through an inclusivity lens. Following this, the research methods used to conduct a policy scan of six municipalities with the highest proportion of visible minority and immigrant populations is

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architecture, sense of community, etc.) City building is a process because it takes time to build a city and establish all of these elements.

explained. Finally, the discussion and conclusion sections elaborate on the findings from the policy scans and connects the research back to key themes that emerged from the literature review.

2.0 Literature Review

2.1 The Evolution of Public Engagement in Planning

Citizen involvement[3] in urban planning was first initiated in Canada over 50 years ago when the realization hit that not taking minority interests into account was displacing Blacks and the poor in the Urban Renewal Program from 1954-1974[4], due to the planning policies that were in place (Qadeer, 2015). Before public involvement became a large part of planning, planners were considered technical experts undertaking an exercise in applied science (Crompton, 2017). This model is referred to as the rational planning model and was criticized by scholars such as Davidoff (1965) for being exclusive and predominately up to the planner's technical experience on what the best course of planning is. The model was also criticized for fostering uneven power dynamics between the planners and the citizens (Crompton, 2017). To counter the rational planning model and its unitary plans, Davidoff promoted the idea that multiple plans should be created to advance the interests of different minority groups, particularly non-white minorities. It was argued all these plans should be discussed in the public realm in order to create equitable policies that everyone could have a say in (Davidoff, 1965; Qadeer, 2015).

Forester (1994) agreed with the notion that planners should not only make multiple plans, but also foster equality in these voices and plural planning proposals to ensure no group is disproportionately left behind due to uneven power dynamics. As argued by Flyvberg (1998), power is what defines and constitutes knowledge and rationality. Thus, as a planner or city-builder is considered the technical expert, they automatically assume a position of power due to their authority to decide what is right and what is wrong.

As the field shifted away from the rational model, many different approaches and strategies to go about planning emerged such as transactive, advocacy, Marxist, and communicative (Crompton, 2017). Although these models differ in strategy, they all aim to overcome the criticisms of the rational planning model, and have other similarities as well (Filion et al., 2007). Firstly, all these contemporary models recognize planning is political in nature and therefore requires an active role for the public (Friedmann, 1994). Secondly, there is a shared assumption not all stakeholders will have the same interests. These varied and contradictory interests signifies multiple viewpoints must be planned for as a unitary public interest does not exist (Davidoff, 1965). Lastly, all models in this era do not consider the planner a technical expert. Instead, the planner is regarded as a facilitator or mediator to the planning process (Lane, 2005). So, although public engagement had been recognized as an important part of planning since the 1960s, it wasn't until the 1980s when activism around these critiques to the rational planning model lead to its collapse. This also caused changes to planning legislation in Ontario (Crompton, 2017). Provincial legislation now states public meetings must be held for policy decisions, secondary plans, and any site plan or zoning changes. Since it has been legislated, all municipalities must comply (Ontario,

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[3] Citizen involvement in this case refers to the participation of non planners (the public) in the planning decision making process.
[4] The Urban Renewal Program was a federally funded program which involved the destruction of dwelling units to create 'nicer' ones.

2019). Having public regulation equitable for all, not just supporting those who are already well off is exactly what Fainstein (2014) advocated for.

Unfortunately, the values and norms of the dominant culture are usually the ones embedded in legislative frameworks of planning, planning by-laws, and regulations. As the legislative framework was created at a point in time when societies were not as multicultural as they are now, the planning system does not reflect the current conditions of society. The planning system instead reflects the values and norms of the dominant culture (Sandercock, 2000). In Qadeer's opinion, equity is the connection between equality and diversity in planning. The objective is to equalize outcomes, not inputs (Qadeer, 2015).

To counter Sandercock (2000), Qadeer (2016) indicates that even if rights do exist by law, their realization depends on the institutionalization of equity in economic, social and cultural matters. So even if the laws were changed to be more inclusive to a multicultural society, planners and policy makers still have an obligation to ensure the laws are institutionalized and used in practice. According to Burayidi (2015), although planning for diversity and difference is now a part of the planning discourse, it is not necessarily embraced by all planners, especially at the local level where it counts the most. This is a problem as institutionally, planning is committed to advancing the public interest, and by professional tradition and ethics, it leans towards fairness for all groups and individuals (Qadeer, 2015). Ensuring there is attention paid to including diversity in public discussions is also part of the Code of Professional Conduct in the Canadian Institute of Planners:

> *1.1*   *practice in a manner that respects the diversity, needs, values and aspirations of the public and encourages discussion on these matters;*
>
> *[A Member unreasonably dismisses ethnic and/or religious based concerns.]*

This is not only part of the Code of Conduct, it is the very first code that must be adhered to which further highlights its importance for planners.
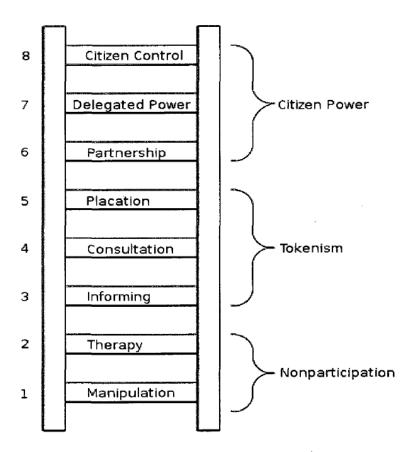
Public involvement in planning processes has been done through many different formats such as: community meetings, statutory public hearings, empowering of community boards made up of residents, and other forms of public involvement. This involvement has made the public a very important part of the planning process (Qadeer, 2015). As per Harper & Stein (2015), planners should also seek to include immigrants as full participants in the collaborative public planning process as well. In this case, the planner's efforts will be better received and more effective if they have a sensitive communicative understanding of the cultures and origins they are working with (Harper & Stein, 2015). This is especially true for less represented groups such as Indigenous, visible minority, etc. Case studies from cities such as Toronto even reveal translation and interpretation services are offered for non-English speaking participants, depending on the ethnic composition of an area, in order to ensure everyone can participate in the public engagement process (Qadeer, 2015).

Overall, it is evident from the research above that planning has evolved over the years to get where it is now: from the rational planning model where the planners were the technical experts and no public participants could help make a decision; to planners acting as moderators and public participants being sought after for every community and committee meeting. Although planning has shifted to include public opinion, it can still improve how inclusive it is for diverse communities. The next section discusses the many different approaches used to engage participants.

2.2 Approaches to Engage in Public Participation

Although public engagement is legislated in Canada, the method of participation used can be partially left up to the municipalities to decide. A statutory public meeting (town hall) is normally the minimum requirement although many other methods are available. These different methods of participation can also affect how much the public contributes or feel like they are contributing to the project. Arnstein (1969) conceived the ground-breaking concept of a citizen participation ladder which provides a reminder of why public participation was originally introduced to planning in the first place: to give those without power a voice. Through this ladder, Arnstein tries to differentiate between the different levels of public participation: non-participation, tokenism, and citizen empowerment. Even with this breakdown, to this day there is still uncertainty around what public participation entails. In **Figure 1**, Arnstein depicts public participation occurring on a spectrum from 'manipulation' to 'citizen control'. Instead of relying on a specific action or outcome, in Arnstein's mind citizen participation is a categorical term for citizen power.

Figure 1: Ladder of Citizen Participation (Arnstein, 1969)

Other scholars such as Cornwall (2008) agree that participation is ultimately about power and control. Having the public involved in the planning process is only worthwhile if they are able to contribute ideas which are fully considered. Otherwise, the public fall in the 'tokenism' category of Arnstein's ladder in which they have information given to them, but

do not have their opinions taken into consideration. Cornwall (2008) refers to this as 'functional participation' meaning people participate to meet the project objectives of having participation, even though the main decisions have already been made by external agents. This sometimes occurs to help reduce project costs and to increase project efficiency as the less people involved in the decision making, the less time and money it will take.

One promising approach to public participation that has gained traction over recent years is visioning. Rather than predicting the future or projecting current trends as a basis for planning, visioning attempts to invent or imagine a desired future and bring it into being through planning (Uyesugi & Shipley, 2005). This method would fall under Citizen Power on Arnstein's ladder as citizens and planners alike work together to create the vision. Not only is it important to engage the public in this way, but it is especially important when engaging immigrant and racialized groups. As evidenced by MacDonnell et al. (2017), building safe environments and focusing on building meaningful relationships at all points of the research by creating spaces for critical reflection can foster positive and inclusive understandings for both the public and planners working across difference.

Public participation processes that use innovative and alternative methods to engagement can give voice to immigrant and racialized groups. Some examples of innovative methods for engagement include those employed by the City of Toronto such as Planners in Public Spaces (PiPs) which is when planners take ideas for a plan (such as an official plan or incorporation of a bike lane, etc.) into public spaces for the public to interact with (City of Toronto, 2020). In their research, Main and Rojas (2015) discuss two forms of public engagement methods outside of the norm. In one, citizens used 'photovoice'[5] to take pictures of their cities and residents in order to tell stories of what they like and don't like in their community. This feedback was then incorporated into the proposed plan by the planners. The other engagement method 'Place It!' asked residents who would otherwise find it difficult to participate in public forums to use random objects and recycled materials to model their ideal neighbourhood. Through the process of these alternative, interactive engagement activities, planners were able to get a sense of what all members of the public wanted. The next section examines the public engagement process through a lens of inclusivity.

2.3 Inclusivity and the Public Engagement Process

Planning in a multicultural and diverse environment has meant expanding the depth and scope of planning to include multicultural groups and the unique gifts they bring (Ameyaw, 2000). By engaging in open, collaborative and critically reflective debate with these communities, planners become more sensitized to the realities of living in the multicultural world and therefore plan to accommodate these communities better (Maginn, 2007). These next subsections use an inclusivity lens to examine what constitutes effective public engagement, what inclusivity measures are included in municipal policies, and the benefits and barriers for immigrant and racialized communities in participating in the public engagement process.

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[5] Photovoice was first developed in 1992 by Caroline C. Wang who used it to empower silenced rural women in the Yunnan Province to influence the policies and programs affecting them. It did not originate from the planning field.

2.3.1 Effective Public Engagement

Public engagement is legislated in many jurisdictions but there are no legislative requirements around participatory planning processes actually influencing decision making. Participation provides a box to be checked off, rather than being used as a key driver of planning outcomes (Thorpe, 2017). Walters (2000) supports this notion that having the public involved in the decision making process just to fulfill legal requirements, without the intention of actually considering their input, is often worse than excluding the public all together because it, "poisons the agency's relationship with the public and dooms future programs" (2000, 352). In other words, scholars' question whether public participation actually changes the outcome of a decision.

Cornwall (2008) also found the most transformational intentions can meet a dead end if 'intended beneficiaries' choose not to take part or if powerful interest groups try and sway the decision for the best interests of their group, regardless of the public interest. This is echoed by Qadeer (2015) who indicates participation in the public decision making process does not always lead to equitable outcomes as well-organized, politically strong groups have greater influence on outcomes than small and disadvantaged groups. As Cornwall (2008) aptly puts it, being involved in a process is not equivalent to having a voice. This can be addressed through having structured spaces for participation as it reduces the potential for disruptive critiques, and helps balance the various stakeholders, enhancing the legitimacy of ensuing decisions (Thorpe, 2017). Minority groups getting the chance to participate in planning processes by expressing their interests yields relatively more equitable outcomes compared to them not being heard or participating in the planning process at all (Qadeer, 2015).

For multicultural planning, one indicator the public engagement was effective is the extent to which marginalized voices are manifested in policy. Another indicator would be tangible results such as land use change of planning policies and programs (Uyesugi & Shipley, 2005). This is further supported by Blomeraad (2006) who in her study of immigrant integration and participation in civic activities in Canada and the United States, concluded where governments provide material and symbolic support for multicultural groups, there is an increased level of participation from these groups in government and electoral representation. Additionally, Burby (2003) found strong plans that have a significant effect on the actions of local governments are plans that stem from involving a broad array of stakeholders.

Having effective public engagement is also about ensuring stakeholders and other members of the public are engaged during the process. One way to keep stakeholders engaged is to be transparent about expectations for stakeholders in terms of: the length of the planning process, the number of meetings, dates and locations of meetings, and the amount of individual effort involved. Stating this in the beginning will give stakeholders an understanding of what is being asked of them. Another way to engage and keep stakeholders interested is to clearly state what the intended outcome of the planning process is so there is a clearer vision of what is being aimed for. Another thing to keep in mind is an inclusive planning process will involve all stakeholders meaning a larger group of people which can come with its own challenges (Nguyen et al., 2015).

One of the greatest challenges in engaging stakeholders as noted by Main and Rojas (2015), is the stereotypes and misunderstandings that exist between individuals, groups, planners, and the rest of the community. Cultural bridges need to be crossed, and a better understanding of each other needs to be gained in order to have meaningful participation

from all stakeholders. Developing community ties will also help planners in building these types of long lasting relationships and ensuring what is discussed makes a difference and is effective (Main & Rojas, 2015). In Burayidi's words, planning with difference in mind is inclusive planning. Inclusive planning means planners must provide effective ways for all the stakeholders that are impacted by plans to be heard in the planning process (Burayidi, 2015).

One study done by Crompton (2017) aimed at identifying what engagement tools are currently used by Ontario municipalities to increase the diversity of citizen participation in the planning process and to evaluate how well the tools have been implemented in practice. It was found a standard public meeting was not the best way to engage racialized groups, instead several alternative methods for engagement were used which helped eliminate physical and social barriers associated with more traditional methods. Crompton (2017) found most municipalities still use traditional engagement methods (e.g. public meetings) to collect public feedback yet municipal officials do acknowledge the value of incorporating more collaborative and inclusive approaches to engagement. Crompton (2017) argues it is no longer appropriate for the public planning department to host a public meeting and assume everyone is equally able to participate. It is not about equality (treating everyone the same) but rather equity (providing the means necessary to ensure everyone is on the same level) when it comes to engaging racialized groups in the planning process.

As Crompton (2017) stated, statutory public meetings are one of the traditional public engagement methods planners use to engage the public. Hearings are also used but are only effective in influencing policy and attracting a representative sample of the population when it is conducted at an appropriate time and venue that is safe and welcoming to everyone (Adams, 2004). To assist in engaging immigrant communities, it has been found outreach to immigrant leaders as well as immigrants increases their presence at public meetings. Another strategy to increase immigrant's participation is to hold public meetings and events where immigrants frequent as they will feel more comfortable in a space they already know (Nguyen et al., 2015). Surveys and focus groups themselves do not offer much opportunity for the public to be involved in decision making if used in isolation. Combining these tools with other methods of engagement makes for a more meaningful and rich participatory structure (Adams, 2004). Having meaningful public engagement which is effective for stakeholders and planners alike not only means immigrants and racialized groups need to engage in the planning process, but they must also do so in a way that directly impacts the decisions being made. The next section broadly examines how municipal policies are not always representative of the people in their municipality.

2.3.2 Municipal Policies

Policies should be reflective of all the people that must adhere to a policy. As Sandercock (2000) indicates, the values and norms of the dominant culture are normally what policy is based on. In this case, the dominant culture is referring to the White majority that used to dominate the population. As cities are becoming more multicultural, Uyesugi and Shipley (2005) argue policies should also employ a "cultural" vocabulary that includes references to specific groups where appropriate. This acknowledgment would be a fitting first policy step to demonstrate the thoughts and actions of those groups are valued. Additionally, concentrated support through policy commitments would help move towards eradicating structures of inequity that are related to racialization, gender, poverty, heterosexism, colonialism, and their intersections as well as other deeply imbedded

dynamics (MacDonnell et al., 2017). In order to address these racialized and gendered dynamics, community knowledge and action rather than expert knowledge is needed (MacDonnell et al., 2017).

Looking at the public sphere, Qadeer and Agrawal (2011) argue equality is the right to equal access and fair treatment in the public sphere, regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, etc. Different levels of government also acknowledge this point. For example, Section 3(1)(C) of the Canadian Multiculturalism Act promotes the participation of all individuals in society, putting emphasis on assisting them with barriers to participation:

> 3. *(1) It is hereby declared to be the policy of the Government of Canada to*
>   *(c) promote the full and equitable participation of individuals and*
>   *communities of all origins in the continuing evolution and shaping of all*
>   *aspects of Canadian society and assist them in the elimination of any*
>   *barrier to that participation;*

Having this policy at the federal level of government in Canada emphasizes how important this matter is. When examining planning policies, accommodation for diverse individuals is prevalent through notions such as reasonable accommodation (Qadeer & Agrawal, 2011). Although reasonable accommodation has not been formally defined in planning, it is implicit in the planning practice and now increasingly referred to in planning reports as well. In Urban Planning, reasonable accommodation means the cultural needs of a community should be balanced against the common interests of the city as a whole and the criteria of fairness and equity for others (Qadeer & Agrawal, 2011). The term, 'reasonable accommodation' suggests the urban planning practice should include policy measures which respond to the cultural diversity within the parameters of the common good and equity for others.

Looking at policies in North America, Qadeer & Agrawal (2011) sent out a planning survey to 42 municipal planning departments in central cities, suburbs and exurban jurisdictions of (selected) metropolitan regions of both Canada and the United States. The questionnaire was addressed to the directors or person in charge of planning in all municipalities and it was asked that a managerial level planner fill out the survey. **Figure 2** below depicts the 19 types of policies the survey was focusing on and whether the jurisdictions (in the United States and Canada) had adopted these policies. Policies 1 to 5 relate to factors such as the use of minority language(s), representation and inclusion of ethnic groups in decision making, and routinely using ethnic variables in analysis. The other two policy clusters focused on land use and development policies (numbers 6 to 11 and 14 of in the table) and polices around community services meeting ethnic needs (numbers 12, 13, and 15 to 19).

Figure 2: Incidences of Policies from Qadeer and Agrawal Survey (2011)

No.	Policies	No of Cities adopted a policy						Total
		US Municipalities			Canadian Municipalities			
		Large Cities over 500,000	Medium Cities 100-500,000	Small Cities less than 100,000	Large Cities over 500,000	Medium Cities 100-500,000	Small Cities less than 100,000	
1	Involvement + Consultation	5	7	2	4	3	1	22
2	Representation in Planning Communities	4	7	3	5	2	3	24
3	Participation in Decision-making	5	6	3	4	3	2	23
4	Routinely Analyzing Ethnic Characteristics	4	4	1	4	4	3	20
5	Studies of ethnic enclaves	5	3	1	5	3	2	19
6	Ethnic Diversity as a goal	3	5	1	5	4	6	24
7	City-wide policies for cultural institutions	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
8	Policies/guidelines for ethnic areas	1	1	1	3	2	1	9
9	Policies for ethnic business areas	1	0	0	3	2	0	6
10	Culture/religion for site-specific accomodations	3	4	2	4	3	1	17
11	Ethnic Signage/Street-names	5	9	2	4	4	3	27
12	Ethnic-specific service needs	4	3	1	5	3	3	19
13	Immigrants special services	4	6	2	5	3	4	24
14	Ethnic heritage preservation projects	5	8	3	5	5	4	30
15	Housing to suit diverse groups	2	4	0	3	3	2	14
16	Providing for Inter-cultural needs	2	5	2	4	4	2	19
17	Promoting ethnic entre-preneurship	2	3	1	4	2	0	12
18	Promoting ethnic art and culture	4	10	2	5	4	5	30
19	Accommodating ethnic sports	4	6	1	5	4	3	23
	Total	63	91	28	77	58	45	

Through the survey, sampled cities at medium and large scales were found to have policies which promoted the inclusion of the interest and voices of ethnic groups in public decision making. It was also found that the second most common cluster was the policies that accommodate for the cultural diversity in providing community services, while the third

most common was land use and development policies. The general trend shows most jurisdictions are attuned to the needs and interests of ethnic minorities from having things like translation and interpretation services, task forces, community mobilization, and web dialogues to engage minorities and other communities in the planning process. Ethnic diversity was found to be a planning goal for about 57% of the 42 US and Canadian cities and providing immigrant special services is prominent in 57% of the cities as well (Qadeer, 2015). The biggest challenge is changing the policies which have built in biases towards Christian rituals at the disadvantage of other groups. For this, common ground needs to be found to equalize the outcomes and make pluralistic provisions. Overall, this study emphasizes diversity in planning has become prevalent in municipal policies for larger areas but work still needs to be done to equalize outcomes in all areas. The next section describes some of the benefits and barriers that exist for immigrant and racialized groups when engaging in the public planning process.

2.3.3 Benefits and Barriers to Participation

There are many benefits for immigrant and racialized communities when they participate in the public engagement process. One of the big ones is social capital. Social capital refers to the connections in and between social relationships in communities which can also include resources such as: trust, bonding, and networks (McGee, 2009). High levels of social capital are good in a community as it will foster understanding amongst the stakeholders. Many scholars have also noted citizens possess 'ordinary knowledge' which can help ensure proposed policies in plans reflect local conditions and values (Burby, 2003). Essentially, the citizens provide a 'boots on the ground experience,' bringing the local perspective to the planning decision making process.

There are benefits to not only those people who participate in the public engagement process, but also to the recipients of the services they provide, the institutions in which participation occurs, and to the community at large (Clary & Snyder, 2002). For example, studies have shown the volunteers who participate in the public engagement process by giving their time and energy receive beneficial outcomes such as: boosts to self esteem, the acquisition of new skills and competencies, and the making of new friends, etc. (Clary & Snyder, 2002). Overall, there are many benefits for citizens who participate in the planning process, the most important one being their voice gets heard. While it is very beneficial to conduct public engagement, there are also barriers to effective public engagement.

There are many barriers for immigrant and racialized groups in particular, as well as planners and city builders, when it comes to participation in public engagement. Starting with immigrant and racialized communities, some of the key barriers include time, language differences, limited access to participate, limited resources to participate, and being unfamiliar with the public engagement process. In economically racialized groups especially (which consist of poor racialized people), limited access to venues and times to participate can be problematic, resulting in a decreased number of participants. In order to design meaningful engagement processes in diverse communities, these concerns need to be taken into consideration when conducting public engagement (Main & Rojas, 2015).

Peinhardt and Storring (2019) found there are four main strategies that can be used to address barriers racialized groups face when engaging in the public engagement process. The first is to cultivate cultural competency which means city builders must understand the community where the engagement is to be conducted. Understanding factors like age, class, gender, and issues of concerns of nearby cultural groups will assist with approaching the

engagement in a meaningful way. Second, more inclusive meetings must be facilitated to make space for everyone. This involves providing childcare, translation services, having gender-neutral restrooms, wheelchair accessibility, etc. so people not only feel welcome, they feel comfortable in a space. Third, it needs to be recognized when workshops alone will not be enough and more creative outreach methods to engage people in the spaces they already occupy need to be used. For example, having design ideas discussed and made visible in everyday spaces (such as public squares) allows new voices to be brought into consideration. Lastly, following through is important and should not be overlooked. Building trust by keeping promises in communities who have been historically wronged allows these communities to feel they can participate and the ideas they put forth mean something.

Building from this, it has also been suggested participation venues be located conveniently so they are accessible to all community members. Ideally, these venues should be places where community members already gather such as public (parks, streets, sidewalks, schools), and community spaces (local businesses, religious facilities). Additionally, providing written material in the mother languages of the residents not only makes them able to participate fully, but also validates their opinions, promoting equity among stakeholders (Uyesugi & Shipley, 2005).

When conducting engagement, issues of research transparency, trust, and ownership also concerns community groups, especially the poor and people of color who have either been ignored or used by researchers as a means to their end (Corburn, 2003). Past experiences of marginalization in the public policy process also contributes to a sense of 'disenfranchisement' among smaller ethno-cultural communities which is hard to overcome (Schmidtke & Neumann, 2010). In order to address this concern, the method of joint fact finding and policy drafting may be helpful as it will allow the community members and planners to work together to reach the projects goals.

When recruiting for public engagements, relying on pre-existing social networks with established community stakeholders may overall seem successful however, it risks ignoring already racialized and disadvantaged ethno-cultural and immigrant groups (whether intentionally or unintentionally). With this in mind, it is not surprising that immigrant or small ethno-cultural groups are far less represented than larger, well connected community organizations (Schmidtke & Neumann, 2010).

In a study done by Nguyen, Gill and Steephen (2015), they ran into three main challenges when trying to include immigrants in the decision-making process. First, identifying and reaching out to different immigrant groups to encourage them to participate was challenging. Second, language barriers had to be overcome which can get difficult as the more immigrant groups there are, the more difficult it is to facilitate an inclusive meeting. Third, if there is a broad representation across immigrant groups, it is hard to decide which groups needs should take priority. Unfortunately, not all communities are ready to participate in a community planning process. They found having strong leadership connections to the community was useful to encourage engagement. Also, creative participation techniques needed to be implemented to engage multiple publics, including immigrants from different sociocultural backgrounds. Minimizing power imbalances was also important to make the immigrants feel comfortable talking and sharing their ideas. Finally, managing expectations to create realistic and achievable goals from the planning process was key to making stakeholders want to continue engaging in the planning process (Nguyen et al., 2015).

Planners also contribute to the challenge of planning for the cultural minority as they themselves can hold beliefs immigrants should adapt to the 'host' culture (Sandercock,

2003). Another challenge is when (western) planners come up against cultural practices that are immeasurable with their own perceptions, values, and practices. Other challenges that municipal planners face include budget restrictions, resource limitations, and fixed timelines. If there is no money in the budget allocated for public engagement or resources are limited, the more traditional methods such as statutory public meetings will be used as they are cheaper than using alternative methods of engagement. Working on a fixed timeline can also be challenging as having limited time usually means the easier, more traditional forms of public engagement will be used. Having a lengthy process with many meetings and sharing of ideas will take a lot longer than 1 public meeting (Crompton, 2017).

Due to fixed timelines municipal planners have to work with, Thorpe (2017) argues participation for citizens is limited. Instead of plans being fixed ahead of time, they should be negotiated in context to provide citizens with the best space in which to express ideas and actually make an impactful difference in the planning and decision making process. Additionally, inclusion should not just focus on the processes that citizens are invited to participate in (i.e. public engagements) but rather attention should also be paid towards the full range of activities intended to shape urban form. Making everyone feel included and welcome in every aspect of the community will help them feel like they belong and will make them want to be involved in the decision making process.

3.0 Methods

The objective of this paper is to examine the public engagement policies and tools which are currently being used by municipalities in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) to identify which policies and tools may be missing for engaging immigrant and racialized communities in the public planning process. The research for this paper was completed through a review of scholarly journal articles and a policy review of selected municipalities in the GTA.[6] The municipalities were selected through examination of Statistics Canada Data from the 2016 Census. The Census Data for all 26 municipalities in the GTA was gathered for analyzation purposes.

The categories from the 2016 Census Data taken into consideration as key indicators to select the municipalities were Total Visible Minority Population[7] and Immigrant Status: Total Immigrants[8]. These two categories were chosen based off their ability to represent racialized groups and immigrants. Through ranking the six highest municipalities in each category, it became clear there were some municipalities which had a high percentage of a visible minority population and immigrants. **Table 1** below shows the ranking of the municipalities with the highest percentages in each category, as well as the percentage of the population in the municipalities who are visible minority and/or immigrants.

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[6] This paper is based off secondary research. Primary research consisting of surveys and interviews with municipal officials will be conducted as a second part to this research. This research is funded by the Canada Excellence Research Chair in Migration and Integration.

[7] Statistics Canada uses the *Employment Equity Act* definition for visible minorities: 'persons, other than Aboriginal peoples, who are non-Caucasian in race or non-white in colour.'

[8] Statistics Canada definition: 'Immigrants' includes persons who are, or who have ever been, landed immigrants or permanent residents. Such persons have been granted the right to live in Canada permanently by immigration authorities. Immigrants who have obtained Canadian citizenship by naturalization are included in this category. In the 2016 Census of Population, 'Immigrants' includes immigrants who landed in Canada on or prior to May 10, 2016.

Table 1: Ranking of Municipalities based on their Total Visible Minority Population and Immigrant Status

Total Visible Minority Population			Immigrant Status: Total Immigrants		
Rank	*% of pop.*	*Municipality*	*Rank*	*% of pop.*	*Municipality*
1	77.9%	City of Markham	1	58.7%	City of Markham
2	73.3%	City of Brampton	2	57.4%	City of Richmond Hill
3	60.0%	City of Richmond Hill	3	53.4%	City of Mississauga
4	57.2%	City of Mississauga	4	52.3%	City of Brampton
5	56.7%	Town of Ajax	5	47.0%	City of Toronto
6	51.5%	City of Toronto	6	46.3%	City of Vaughan

Source: Statistics Canada, 2016 Census Data

This data shows there are five municipalities which have both a high percentage of a visible minority population and an immigrant population, as well as two municipalities that have one or the other. For the purposes of this research, the City of Vaughan was chosen to be examined further as it has a larger population (306,233 people) in comparison to the City of Ajax (119,677 people). It was assumed a larger population would mean more attention paid towards diversity and inclusion policies in public engagement. Vaughan also has a higher percentage of immigrants (46.3%) in comparison to Ajax (38.9%). The municipalities chosen to be further examined with regards to their public engagement policies are the City of Brampton, City of Markham, City of Mississauga, City of Richmond Hill, City of Toronto and City of Vaughan.

More detail with regards to demographic profiles of the six chosen municipalities can be found in **Appendix A**. It should be noted the purpose of this review is not meant to provide a comprehensive record of how each municipality in the GTA approaches public engagement. Instead, the purpose of this review is meant to identify general trends in municipalities that have larger immigrant and racialized groups to determine if municipalities have taken additional measures to include them in public engagement processes. The information collected in this review is reflective of what is available online through the municipality's websites.

4.0 Research Findings

As previously mentioned, an online review of the 6 chosen municipalities (Brampton, Markham, Mississauga, Richmond Hill, Toronto, and Vaughan) was conducted to better understand how diverse municipalities in the GTA engage the public on planning related

matters. The policies from these municipalities will be examined though a lens of diversity and inclusion to identify if any priority is given to these matters.

In Ontario, public engagement is a required part of the planning and city building process as outlined in the 1990 Ontario Planning Act (Ontario., & Canada Law Book Inc, 1992). Due to this requirement, all official plans for municipalities must include a section on how the public will be engaged in the planning process. This was reflected in the municipal policy review as each municipality had an implementation section at the end of their official plan which contained more details related to public engagement.

Although each municipality is mandated to have public engagement, the details of how public engagements are conducted is decided locally. This means each municipality decides on their own how much of the budget will be allocated for public engagements, who the engagements will be targeting, what tools they will use to enhance engagement, etc. Some municipalities listed various engagement methods in their official plans while others did not. The purpose of this paper is to identify how inclusive these engagement methods are for immigrant and racialized groups. This can be done through the acknowledgment of these diverse groups in the policies.

In addition to the official plan, most municipalities also have strategic plans that identify what the municipality would like to accomplish over the course of a few years. The main difference between an official plan and strategic plan is an official plan is legislated, meaning it must be adhered to, while a strategic plan is not legislated but is rather a guiding document. All 6 of the diverse municipalities examined were found to have strategic plans in place. It should be noted all municipalities have public engagement sections in the implementation part of the official plan. These policies are very similar and legislate a public meeting must be held when a planning decision or development approval is being made. As these policies are legislated in the Provincial Planning Act, they are mandatory thus other mentions of diversity and inclusion in engagement were sought out. **Table 2** below shows a list of the municipalities with excerpts from their official plans and strategic plans. The key words that touch on inclusion, diversity, and engagement are underlined.

Table 2: Official Plan Excerpts and Vision Statements

Municipality	Official Plan	Strategic Plan Vision Statement
City of Brampton	*Brampton will be a sustainable community with superior infrastructure and services and will be planned and developed based on accountable decision making and <u>full public participation.</u>* (Official Plan, 2015)	*The <u>essence of Brampton is diversity</u> and the essence of what the people want for the future is that their city be arranged, governed, seen, and <u>celebrated as a mosaic of people</u>, places and endeavours of all kinds, coexisting in harmony.* (Brampton 2040 Vision, 2018)

City of Markham	*Section 4.2.2.1 Community Infrastructure Strategy Policies* 　*2. building capacity to improve stakeholder participation in Markham's planning process;* (Official Plan, 2018)	*We are an inclusive city, engaging everyone in building a livable, caring and culturally vibrant community while respecting our past.* (Strategic Plan, 2020-2023)
City of Mississauga	*To achieve this vision the City will revitalize its infrastructure, conserve the environment and promote community participation and collaboration in its planning process.* (Official Plan, 2019)	*Mississauga will inspire the world as a dynamic and beautiful global city for creativity and innovation, with vibrant, safe and connected communities; where we celebrate the rich diversity of our cultures, our historic villages, Lake Ontario and the Credit River valley.* (Strategic Plan, 2009)
City of Richmond Hill	*"Richmond Hill's Official Plan – building a new kind of urban"* (Official Plan, 2018)	*2. Engage the Community Engaging the community means having an ongoing dialogue with an open exchange of ideas and involvement with the people of Richmond Hill. It means being accessible and inclusive, recognizing diversity and seeking out the views of people who might not otherwise participate.* (Strategic Plan Report, 2018)
City of Toronto	*The vision of the Plan is about creating an attractive and safe city that evokes pride, passion and a sense of belonging - a city where people of all ages and abilities can enjoy a good quality of life.* (Official Plan, 2019)	*"As leaders and partners in an innovative culture, we build a great city through excellence in planning and influential policy. We implement Toronto's Official Plan for a sustainable, connected city of neighbourhoods where life and business flourish."* (Strategic Plan, 2013 - 2018)
City of Vaughan	*Goal 1: Strong and Diverse Communities*	*A city of choice that promotes diversity,*

	A city's Community Areas are among its most important assets. They are where people interact with one another on a daily basis. <u>Distinct and diverse communities</u> make a city an exciting place to live. (Official Plan, 2019)	<u>innovation and opportunity for all citizens</u>, fostering a vibrant <u>community life that is inclusive</u>, progressive, environmentally responsible and sustainable. (Strategic Plan, 2018)

Of these 6 municipal official plan excerpts and vision statements, all of them (in either the official plan, strategic plan, or both) prioritize being an inclusive/diverse city that engages all participants. One statement of note is the City of Brampton's 2040 Vision statement which emphasizes not only taking diversity into account, but also celebrating it (Brampton 2040 Vision, 2018). In the City of Brampton's Official Plan Vision Statement, full public participation is highlighted and brought to the forefront of the vision, emphasizing how important diversity and inclusion in the planning process is:

> *Brampton is planned to be a dynamic urban municipality with a strong live-work ratio, accommodating 727,000 residents and 314,000 workers by 2031. Brampton will be a sustainable community with superior infrastructure and services and will be planned and developed based on accountable decision making and full public participation.* (Brampton Official Plan, 2015)

Considering the visible minority population makes up about 73% of Brampton (Statistics Canada, 2016 Census Population), the city is certainly reflecting their diversity through policies and reports. The City of Toronto's statements are the weakest in terms of incorporating diversity and inclusion themes in the plans examined. The statements are vague to try and be inclusive for everyone but in the process, they ignore the immigrant, racialized, and other marginalized groups which should be recognized considering over 50% of Torontonians identify as visible minority (Statistics Canada, 2016 Census Population).

Following this review of official plans and strategic plans, a scan for community engagement master plans was completed to determine if municipalities follow a set of guidelines when engaging in public consultations. A community engagement master plan is a guiding document which the municipality can create in conjunction with the public on the best ways to engage the community. Of the six municipalities examined – City of Brampton, City of Markham, City of Mississauga, City of Richmond Hill, City of Toronto, and City of Vaughan– most have some version of a community engagement website, but few have an actual master plan in place. The one municipality with a plan focuses on engaging the community in the planning process through the utilization of various methods. The municipalities without a plan have their big projects listed that are either currently in the public engagement phase, or recently had large public engagements. From these master plans, all methods of public engagement utilized were identified. This information has been summarized for each municipality in **Table 3** below.

Table 3: Community Engagement in the Municipalities

Municipality	Team/ Webpage	Master Plan for Community Engagement	Links to Current Public Engagements on Webpage	Other Plans with a Community Engagement Section	Methods of Community Engagement
City of Brampton	Office of Community Engagement	No	No	- Parks and Recreation Master Plan (2017) - Culture Master Plan (2018) - Brampton 2040 Vision (2018)	Online Surveys, High School Online Surveys, Public Meetings, Stakeholder Group Surveys, Stakeholder Workshops, Pop-Up Intercept Events, Citizens Panels
City of Markham	Your Voice Markham	No	Yes	- Active Transportation Master Plan (Ongoing) - Integrated Leisure Master Plan (2019)	Public Meetings, Open Houses, Stakeholder Consultations, Online Surveys
City of Mississauga	Community Engagement and Your Say Mississauga	Yes	Yes	- Transportation Master Plan (2019) - Culture Master Plan (2019)	Focus Groups, Public Meetings, Online Surveys, Stakeholder Consultations, Twitter Town Halls
City of Richmond Hill	None	No	No	- Cultural Plan (2011) - Recreation Plan (2013) - Parks Plan (2013)	Citizen Panels, Stakeholder Interviews, Focus Groups, Community Surveys, Community Forums, Community Soundings, Youth Summits, Telephone Interviews, Public Open Houses
City of Toronto	Growing Conversations initiative	In Progress[1]	Yes	- Parks and Recreation Facilities	Community Meetings, Open Houses,

				Master Plan (2019) - Cycling Network Ten Year Plan (2016) - Recreation Service Plan (2009)	Focus Groups, Online Surveys, Planners in Public Spaces (PiPs), Pop-Up Consultations, Youth Working Sessions, Stakeholder Consultations
City of Vaughan	Your Say Vaughan	No	Yes	- Comprehensive Zoning By-Law Review (Ongoing) - Active Together Plan (2018)	Public Meetings, Online Commenting, Intercept Surveys, Community Survey, Stakeholder Workshops

1. This plan will be based off the Youth Engagement Strategy and the Newcomers Engagement Strategy.

The one municipality with a community engagement plan currently in place is the City of Mississauga. This plan exemplifies how engagement should be completed and has an engagement framework of how to engage the public depending on the level of participation required. Additionally, the plan has goals around engagement the municipality wants to achieve as well as indicators for how those goals will be measured. The four goals are: 1. Enhance our engagement practices, 2. Make it easy for the community to participate, 3. Ensure participation reflects the broad diversity of our city, and 4. Build staff capacity to lead engagement processes. These goals have objectives which are measured by indicators. For example, the objective of Goal 3 is to collect demographic data to understand who the city engages which is indicated by the participation level of different demographics being examined. The City of Mississauga (as per Goal 4) ensures staff receive regular training and coaching on the best practices for community engagement as well as tools and resources to create engagement opportunities for stakeholders (City Building, 2019).

One successful project for public engagement in the City of Mississauga is Dundas Connects. This master plan to redevelop Dundas Street held over 60 face-to-face events in several different methods in several locations. The outreach for these events included a targeted approach whereby 142 places of worship were directly reached out to. To make the plan accessible to all, the city posted all of their information related to the plan online. Some of the more innovative engagement methods used included Tale of a Town (a story telling initiative), a Walkability Audit to determine factors that affect the pedestrian experience along Dundas Street, four focus groups with youth held at their schools, and The Living Lab which took over part of Dundas Street to create temporary public spaces. These different methods not only made it a point to reach out to different groups, but also ensured these engagements were held in places citizens were familiar and comfortable in, such as a school. Through these different methods, the City was able to hear concerns from the whole community.

While none of the municipalities have a plan quite like the City of Mississauga, their big master plans all include public engagement sections with statistics on how many people

engaged in the various approaches used. The methods used across the municipalities include the traditional public meetings, surveys, stakeholder consultations and focus groups. Some of the newer more interactive methods of engagement include: Pop-Up Intercept events/Planners in Public Spaces (where planners take the plan into public spaces for people to comment), Citizen Panels (citizens work with planners by providing feedback and comments on the plan), a Twitter Town Hall (creating a space on Twitter for citizens to ask questions to experts about the plan), Community Sounding (community leaders and participants from cultural communities coming together to comment on the plan), and Youth Summit/Working Sessions (youth gather to discuss ideas about a plan). These interactive methods indicate planners are trying to change engagement methods in order to adapt to the changing demographics.

The final step of the review of municipal policies was to identify the different municipal advisory committees/panels and their duties. An advisory committee/panel is normally established by City Council and is composed of Members of Council, City staff and, members of the public. Each committee has a mandate and is asked to carry out duties to fulfill that mandate on an ongoing basis. The members of the public on this panel inform decision making by making comments and providing feedback, which is incorporated into municipal staff reports and then presented to council. **Table 4** below lists all the committees/panels identified in the municipalities that relate to diversity, inclusion and/or equity. These specific terms are being looked for as municipalities strive to be welcoming and inclusive for everyone. If this is reflected in the policies, it means the municipality has taken steps towards being more accessible and equitable for all. Migration relation issues also come into play here as migrants should feel they belong in their community which means they have to feel able to participate in public engagement and community processes.

The checkmarks indicate the municipality has a committee with this or an equivalent title. The name of each committee and its purpose can be found in **Appendix B**. It should be noted all municipalities have an Accessibility Advisory Committee as required under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act. The Act requires every municipality with a population of 10,000 residents or more to have one.

Table 4: Advisory Committees/Panels Summary Table

Municipality	Diversity/ Inclusion Advisory Committee	Youth Advisory Committee	Seniors Advisory Committee	Planning Review Panel
City of Brampton		✓	✓	
City of Markham	✓	✓	✓	
City of Mississauga	✓			
City of Richmond Hill		✓		
City of Toronto				✓
City of Vaughan				

The City of Vaughan unfortunately does not have any committees related to diversity, inclusion and/or equity. One of the most unique committees/panels in this table is the City of Toronto's Planning Review Panel. This panel is a 32-member advisory body which consists of residents selected through a random process called the Civic Lottery. This process involves collecting people's age, gender, income, visible minority or aboriginal

identification (if they do identify), and whether they are renters or owners. This random selection process ensures a diverse representation which reflects the City of Toronto. The panel was created to complement the public consultation process as the city realizes current public consultation processes may not allow the city to hear from all diverse communities equally. Having this panel in place shows the city's commitment to making sure everyone has a seat at the decision making table and that their voice is taken into consideration.

5.0 Discussion and Conclusion

The main research question of this major research paper was to examine how the public engagement process can be more inclusive for immigrant and racialized communities. Through research, it has become evident changing demographics calls for changes in legislative processes and policies in order to make them representative of society. As indicated by Sandercock (2000), the values and norms of the dominant society are usually the ones embedded in policy, and since most policy was created at a time when society was not as multicultural or diverse as it is today, these policies are outdated. The policies do not take diverse cultural preferences, different religious practices, or the need for diverse spaces and services into account (Qadeer and Agrawal, 2011).

Currently, municipalities have slowly started to make these changes by including words such as 'inclusive' and 'diversity' in their legislated and non-legislated plans. However, while these policy statements are trying to represent everyone, they are too broad for people connect to. Despite the fact migrants are a large part of the population, they are not directly addressed in the main vision statements of these plans. When municipalities are trying to be inclusive by saying they are planning for everyone, really, they are ignoring these immigrant and racialized groups again by not addressing them head on. How does this impact engagement? How do these groups feel about public engagement if they do not feel represented in their municipality? Essentially, the structure to encourage immigrant and racialized communities' involvement is not very strong at the moment. Some municipalities such as the City of Markham, with the highest percentage of a total visible minority population and the highest percentage of total immigrants, do have policies and programs in place that aim at targeting these groups.

There is still a lot of top down community engagement that takes places meaning municipalities and people in charge hold the power. This is seen through the weak policies that do not address engaging immigrant and racialized groups in the public engagement process. It is also seen through the loosely organized engagement strategies in place. Public engagement is legislated meaning it is a mandatory part of the planning process. Unfortunately, it is only specified in the Planning Act that public engagement must be completed and does not detail what methods should be used, what groups should be included, or have any indicators in place to determine if a public planning process was effective or not. This loosely organized public engagement structure allows for public engagements that only consist of 1 public meeting per plan. Some municipalities do have community engagement plans in place that provide more detail and set goals for engagement practices. For example, the community engagement plan in place at the City of Mississauga lays the foundation for how engagement should be conducted and has goals and indicators as to how to achieve effective public engagement. Some of the main strengths of the City of Mississauga community engagement plan is their commitment to making it easy for the community to participate through engaging the public in a variety of formats, and by developing meaningful relationships with the participants so they will want to participate in future public engagements. The different format options allows immigrant

and racialized communities to use an alternative format if they are unable to attend a public meeting because they are working (or due to other barriers). Additionally, the planners building a meaningful relationship will allow the immigrant and racialized communities to feel their voices are being heard and will make them want to participate in the future.

This top down approach to community engagement needs to be replaced with a bottom up approach in which citizens are empowered to help make and guide decision making as per Arnstein's Ladder of Citizen Participation (1969). Engagement methods such as advisory committees are very interactive and immersive ways to engage the public as the citizens make recommendations to city staff which are then normally included in a report to council. The main idea here is to get the public involved in a way their voices are heard, but also in a way their voices are actually paid attention and listened to.

Empowering the public in this way allows people to feel they are guiding the decisions being made in their community, therefore increasing the sense of place and belonging they feel to their community. Political inclusion has been shown to anchor immigrants and racialized communities to where they feel a sense of belonging (Schmidtke & Neumann, 2010). Unfortunately, as seen in the data gathered, there are not very many citizens advisory committees that speak to diversity, inclusion or immigrant and racialized communities. The Planning Review Panel in the City of Toronto is one example that is outside this norm as it is evident a lot of thought and care went into planning the design of the panel and how citizens would be chosen to make up the panel. The City of Toronto also has a Newcomers Office at which immigrants get access to resources or be pointed in the right direction for where more resources can be obtained. Other than this one exception, municipalities need to do better in creating spaces the public can give feedback that will be incorporated into the decision making process.

Additionally, every municipality should strive to create a community engagement plan that not only has various methods of engagement listed, but also have goals and measures to assess how well those goals are met. Every municipality should have a section of this plan which speaks to the diverse population including but not limited to immigrants, racialized groups, and marginalized groups. Included in this plan should be strategies on how to make these engagements welcoming spaces for everyone. This would include having daycare services on site, being wheelchair accessible, providing translators, and holding the engagement in a public place that is familiar to many (Peinhardt & Storring, 2019).

In conclusion, it is evident from this research designing and facilitating public engagement programs in societies with a diverse demographic is challenging, however it is the reality of most municipalities in the Greater Toronto Area. Removing barriers for immigrant and racialized groups when it comes to planning for and participating in decisions in their community is key to them feeling included and having a sense of place and belonging. Having a sense of culture and place in a space where the community interacts can also have a big impact on racialized and immigrant communities feeling connected to where they live. The convergence of place and culture instigates negotiations of belonging, authorship, and power (Rios, 2015). Planners and public policy makers are duty bound to foster a sense of place and belonging among all members of the public, including immigrant and racialized communities.

Appendices

Appendix A – Demographic Profiles

City of Brampton

Total Population: 593,638

Characteristic	Statistic	Number	Percentage
Visible Minority Population	Total - Visible minority for the population in private households - 25% sample data	590,950	
	Total visible minority population	433,230	73.3%
	South Asian	261,705	44.3%
	Chinese	8,955	1.5%
	Black	82,175	13.9%
	Filipino	20,100	3.4%
	Latin American	14,045	2.4%
	Arab	6,045	1.0%
	Southeast Asian	8,425	1.4%
	West Asian	5,275	0.9%
	Korean	430	0.1%
	Japanese	530	0.1%
	Visible minority; (Not Included Elsewhere)	15,950	2.7%
	Multiple visible minorities	9,585	1.6%
	Not a visible minority	157,720	26.6%
Immigrant Status and Period of Immigration	Total - Immigrant status and period of immigration for the population in private households - 25% sample data	590,950	
	Non-immigrants	272,365	46.1%
	Immigrants	308,790	52.3%
	Before 1981	49,655	8.4%
	1981 to 1990	41,145	7.0%
	1991 to 2000	77,800	13.2%
	2001 to 2010	100,280	17.0%
	2011 to 2016	39,915	6.8%
	Non-permanent residents	9,790	1.7%
Mother Tongue	Total - Mother tongue for the total population excluding institutional residents - Single Responses	560895	
	Official languages	289355	51.6%
	English	284920	50.8%
	French	4430	0.8%
	Non-official languages	271545	48.4%
	Aboriginal languages	25	0.0%
	Non-Aboriginal languages	271520	48.4%

Generation Status	Total - Generation status for the population in private households - 25% sample data	590,950	
	First generation	320,330	54.2%
	Second generation	189,190	32.0%
	Third generation or more	81,430	13.8%
Admission Category and Applicant Type	Total - Admission category and applicant type for the immigrant population in private households who landed between 1980 and 2016 - 25% sample data	263,225	
	Economic immigrants	100,360	38.1%
	Principal applicants	39,475	15.0%
	Secondary applicants	60,885	23.1%
	Immigrants sponsored by family	130,455	49.6%
	Refugees	30,050	11.4%
	Other immigrants	2,360	0.9%
Ethnic Origin	Total - Ethnic origin for the population in private households - 25% sample data	590,945	
	North American Aboriginal origins	6,260	1.1%
	Other North American origins	66,270	11.2%
	European origins	159,625	27.0%
	Caribbean origins	68,595	11.6%
	Latin; Central and South American origins	26,040	4.4%
	African origins	32,140	5.4%
	Asian origins	323,165	54.7%
	Oceania origins	505	0.1%

City of Markham

Total Population: 328,966

Characteristic	Statistic	Number	Percentage
Visible Minority Population	Total - Visible minority for the population in private households - 25% sample data	327,400	
	Total visible minority population	255,155	77.9%
	South Asian	58,270	17.8%
	Chinese	147,725	45.1%
	Black	9,655	2.9%
	Filipino	8,905	2.7%
	Latin American	1,750	0.5%
	Arab	3,250	1.0%
	Southeast Asian	2,520	0.8%
	West Asian	7,910	2.4%
	Korean	4,355	1.3%
	Japanese	995	0.3%
	Visible minority; (Not Included Elsewhere)	2,920	0.9%
	Multiple visible minorities	6,895	2.1%
	Not a visible minority	72,250	22.0%
Immigrant Status and Period of Immigration	Total - Immigrant status and period of immigration for the population in private households - 25% sample data	327,400	
	Non-immigrants	128,650	39.3%
	Immigrants	192,220	58.7%
	Before 1981	33,295	10.2%
	1981 to 1990	31,295	9.6%
	1991 to 2000	59,445	18.2%
	2001 to 2010	47,525	14.5%
	2011 to 2016	20,660	6.3%
	Non-permanent residents	6,530	2.0%
Mother Tongue	Total - Mother tongue for the total population excluding institutional residents - Single Responses	313,580	
	Official languages	116,085	37.0%
	English	114,200	36.4%
	French	1,880	0.6%
	Non-official languages	197,500	63.0%
	Aboriginal languages	5	0.0%
	Non-Aboriginal languages	197,490	63.0%
Generation Status	Total - Generation status for the population in private households - 25% sample data	327,400	
	First generation	200,300	61.2%

	Second generation	93,465	28.5%
	Third generation or more	33,645	10.3%
Admission Category and Applicant Type	Total - Admission category and applicant type for the immigrant population in private households who landed between 1980 and 2016 - 25% sample data	161,675	
	Economic immigrants	87,260	54.0%
	Principal applicants	33,630	20.8%
	Secondary applicants	53,630	33.2%
	Immigrants sponsored by family	53,140	32.9%
	Refugees	17,695	10.9%
	Other immigrants	3,585	2.2%
Ethnic Origin	Total - Ethnic origin for the population in private households - 25% sample data	327,400	
	North American Aboriginal origins	1,130	0.3%
	Other North American origins	22,360	6.8%
	European origins	72,825	22.2%
	Caribbean origins	10,665	3.3%
	Latin; Central and South American origins	5,205	1.6%
	African origins	7,520	2.3%
	Asian origins	242,105	73.9%
	Oceania origins	230	0.1%

City of Mississauga

Total Population: 721,599

Characteristic	Statistic	Number	Percentage
Visible Minority Population	Total - Visible minority for the population in private households - 25% sample data	715,475	
	Total visible minority population	408,930	57.2%
	South Asian	165,765	23.2%
	Chinese	54,090	7.6%
	Black	47,005	6.6%
	Filipino	36,570	5.1%
	Latin American	16,110	2.3%
	Arab	36,200	5.1%
	Southeast Asian	14,795	2.1%
	West Asian	7,910	1.1%
	Korean	6,095	0.9%
	Japanese	1,965	0.3%
	Visible minority; (Not Included Elsewhere)	9,050	1.3%
	Multiple visible minorities	13,370	1.9%
	Not a visible minority	306,550	42.5%
Immigrant Status and Period of Immigration	Total - Immigrant status and period of immigration for the population in private households - 25% sample data	715,475	
	Non-immigrants	320,750	44.8%
	Immigrants	381,730	53.4%
	Before 1981	77,125	10.8%
	1981 to 1990	50,500	7.1%
	1991 to 2000	90,385	12.6%
	2001 to 2010	110,310	15.4%
	2011 to 2016	53,410	7.5%
	Non-permanent residents	12,990	1.8%
Mother Tongue	Total - Mother tongue for the total population excluding institutional residents - Single Responses	717,855	
	Official languages	679,815	94.7%
	English	337,005	46.9%
	French	329,990	46.0%
	Non-official languages	342,810	47.8%
	Aboriginal languages	45	0.0%
	Non-Aboriginal languages	342,765	47.7%
Generation Status	Total - Generation status for the population in private households - 25% sample data	715,470	
	First generation	398,030	55.6%

	Second generation	197,215	27.6%
	Third generation or more	120,225	16.8%
Admission Category and Applicant Type	Total - Admission category and applicant type for the immigrant population in private households who landed between 1980 and 2016 - 25% sample data	309,275	
	Economic immigrants	172,665	55.8%
	Principal applicants	63,175	20.4%
	Secondary applicants	109,485	35.4%
	Immigrants sponsored by family	91,590	29.6%
	Refugees	41,820	13.5%
	Other immigrants	3,200	1.0%
Ethnic Origin	Total - Ethnic origin for the population in private households - 25% sample data	715,475	
	North American Aboriginal origins	6,840	1.0%
	Other North American origins	76,365	10.7%
	European origins	304,505	42.6%
	Caribbean origins	40,210	5.6%
	Latin; Central and South American origins	24,900	3.5%
	African origins	34,745	4.9%
	Asian origins	336,350	47.0%
	Oceania origins	900	0.1%

City of Richmond Hill

Total Population: 195,022

Characteristic	Statistic	Number	Percentage
Visible Minority Population	Total - Visible minority for the population in private households - 25% sample data	193,800	
	Total visible minority population	116,215	60.0%
	South Asian	14,970	7.7%
	Chinese	56,920	29.4%
	Black	3,875	2.0%
	Filipino	3,800	2.0%
	Latin American	1,645	0.8%
	Arab	3,575	1.8%
	Southeast Asian	1,455	0.8%
	West Asian	20,170	10.4%
	Korean	5,430	2.8%
	Japanese	630	0.3%
	Visible minority; (Not Included Elsewhere)	740	0.4%
	Multiple visible minorities	3,020	1.6%
	Not a visible minority	77,585	39.8%
Immigrant Status and Period of Immigration	Total - Immigrant status and period of immigration for the population in private households - 25% sample data	193,800	
	Non-immigrants	79,505	41.0%
	Immigrants	111,225	57.4%
	Before 1981	19,195	9.9%
	1981 to 1990	14,940	7.7%
	1991 to 2000	30,895	15.9%
	2001 to 2010	32,200	16.6%
	2011 to 2016	14,000	7.2%
	Non-permanent residents	3,075	1.6%
Mother Tongue	Total - Mother tongue for the total population excluding institutional residents - Single Responses	186,450	
	Official languages	71,655	38.4%
	English	70,410	37.8%
	French	1,250	0.7%
	Non-official languages	114,795	61.6%
	Aboriginal languages	5	0.0%
	Non-Aboriginal languages	114,790	61.6%
Generation Status	Total - Generation status for the population in private households - 25% sample data	193,805	
	First generation	115,230	59.5%

	Second generation	52,345	27.0%
	Third generation or more	26,230	13.5%
Admission Category and Applicant Type	Total - Admission category and applicant type for the immigrant population in private households who landed between 1980 and 2016 - 25% sample data	93,260	
	Economic immigrants	61,155	65.6%
	Principal applicants	23,090	24.8%
	Secondary applicants	38,070	40.8%
	Immigrants sponsored by family	21,425	23.0%
	Refugees	9,220	9.9%
	Other immigrants	1,470	1.6%
Ethnic Origin	Total - Ethnic origin for the population in private households - 25% sample data	193,800	
	North American Aboriginal origins	925	0.5%
	Other North American origins	14,955	7.7%
	European origins	72,260	37.3%
	Caribbean origins	3,675	1.9%
	Latin; Central and South American origins	3,235	1.7%
	African origins	5,385	2.8%
	Asian origins	114,975	59.3%
	Oceania origins	100	0.1%

City of Toronto

Total Population: 2,731,571

Characteristic	Statistic	Number	Percentage
Visible Minority Population	Total - Visible minority for the population in private households - 25% sample data	2,691,665	
	Total visible minority population	1,385,850	51.5%
	South Asian	338,965	12.6%
	Chinese	299,460	11.1%
	Black	239,850	8.9%
	Filipino	152,715	5.7%
	Latin American	77,160	2.9%
	Arab	36,030	1.3%
	Southeast Asian	41,645	1.5%
	West Asian	60,325	2.2%
	Korean	41,640	1.5%
	Japanese	13,410	0.5%
	Visible minority; (Not Included Elsewhere)	36,975	1.4%
	Multiple visible minorities	47,675	1.8%
	Not a visible minority	1,305,815	47.8%
Immigrant Status and Period of Immigration	Total - Immigrant status and period of immigration for the population in private households - 25% sample data	2,691,665	
	Non-immigrants	1,332,090	49.5%
	Immigrants	1,266,005	47.0%
	Before 1981	294,065	10.9%
	1981 to 1990	171,565	6.4%
	1991 to 2000	281,870	10.5%
	2001 to 2010	330,550	12.3%
	2011 to 2016	187,950	7.0%
	Non-permanent residents	93,575	3.5%
Mother Tongue	Total - Mother tongue for the total population excluding institutional residents - Single Responses	2,598,230	
	Official languages	1,411,345	54.3%
	English	1,375,900	53.0%
	French	35,440	1.4%
	Non-official languages	1,186,885	45.7%
	Aboriginal languages	425	0.0%
	Non-Aboriginal languages	1,186,465	45.7%
Generation Status	Total - Generation status for the population in private households - 25% sample data	2,691,665	
	First generation	1,377,465	51.2%

	Second generation	740,180	27.5%
	Third generation or more	574,020	21.3%
Admission Category and Applicant Type	Total - Admission category and applicant type for the immigrant population in private households who landed between 1980 and 2016 - 25% sample data	988,325	
	Economic immigrants	475,155	48.1%
	Principal applicants	201,860	20.4%
	Secondary applicants	273,290	27.7%
	Immigrants sponsored by family	320,940	32.5%
	Refugees	176,120	17.8%
	Other immigrants	16,100	1.6%
Ethnic Origin	Total - Ethnic origin for the population in private households - 25% sample data	2,691,665	
	North American Aboriginal origins	35,630	1.3%
	Other North American origins	345,705	12.8%
	European origins	1,288,855	47.9%
	Caribbean origins	165,735	6.2%
	Latin; Central and South American origins	113,815	4.2%
	African origins	146,870	5.5%
	Asian origins	1,079,290	40.1%
	Oceania origins	5,790	0.2%

City of Vaughan

Total Population: 2,731,571

Characteristic	Statistic	Number	Percentage
Visible Minority Population	Total - Visible minority for the population in private households - 25% sample data	304,145	
	Total visible minority population	107,685	35.4%
	South Asian	30,610	10.1%
	Chinese	20,790	6.8%
	Black	8,325	2.7%
	Filipino	8,675	2.9%
	Latin American	7,360	2.4%
	Arab	4,280	1.4%
	Southeast Asian	6,850	2.3%
	West Asian	8,695	2.9%
	Korean	5,345	1.8%
	Japanese	285	0.1%
	Visible minority; (Not Included Elsewhere)	2,325	0.8%
	Multiple visible minorities	4,140	1.4%
	Not a visible minority	196,465	64.2%
Immigrant Status and Period of Immigration	Total - Immigrant status and period of immigration for the population in private households - 25% sample data	304,145	
	Non-immigrants	159,300	52.4%
	Immigrants	140,960	46.3%
	Before 1981	44,155	14.5%
	1981 to 1990	19,485	6.4%
	1991 to 2000	33,950	11.2%
	2001 to 2010	32,580	10.7%
	2011 to 2016	10,790	3.5%
	Non-permanent residents	3,885	1.3%
Mother Tongue	Total - Mother tongue for the total population excluding institutional residents - Single Responses	292,200	
	Official languages	139,610	47.8%
	English	137,720	47.1%
	French	1,885	0.6%
	Non-official languages	152,585	52.2%
	Aboriginal languages	15	0.0%
	Non-Aboriginal languages	152,575	52.2%
Generation Status	Total - Generation status for the population in private households - 25% sample data	304,145	
	First generation	146,185	48.1%

	Second generation	107,495	35.3%
	Third generation or more	50,470	16.6%
Admission Category and Applicant Type	Total - Admission category and applicant type for the immigrant population in private households who landed between 1980 and 2016 - 25% sample data	99,150	
	Economic immigrants	52,565	53.0%
	Principal applicants	20,195	20.4%
	Secondary applicants	32,370	32.6%
	Immigrants sponsored by family	29,355	29.6%
	Refugees	16,180	16.3%
	Other immigrants	1,055	1.1%
Ethnic Origin	Total - Ethnic origin for the population in private households - 25% sample data	304,145	
	North American Aboriginal origins	930	0.3%
	Other North American origins	25,545	8.4%
	European origins	186,295	61.3%
	Caribbean origins	7,145	2.3%
	Latin; Central and South American origins	10,460	3.4%
	African origins	9,830	3.2%
	Asian origins	101,875	33.5%
	Oceania origins	210	0.1%

All data is from 2016 Census Data from Statistics Canada.

Appendix B – List of Applicable Advisory Committees

City of Brampton
Age – Friendly Brampton Advisory Committee (has both youth and seniors)
<u>Purpose:</u> The purpose of the Age Friendly Brampton Advisory Committee is to advise City Council on matters related to the achievement of an age friendly City, including the following focus areas:
· Outdoor spaces and buildings
· Transportation
· Housing
· Social Participation
· Respect and social inclusion
· Civic participation and employment
· Communication and information, and
· Community support and health services
<u>Mandate:</u> The Age Friendly Brampton Advisory Committee is a citizen-appointed Committee of Council responsible for the development and implementation of an Age Friendly City Strategy. The term of the Committee shall coincide with the term of Council.

City of Markham
Race Relations Committee
<u>Purpose:</u> Advises and assists Council in its efforts to achieve harmonious race and ethno-cultural relationships within community.
<u>Committee Type:</u> Advisory Board/Committee

Markham Mayor's Youth Council

Seniors Advisory Committee
<u>Purpose:</u> To provide recommendations to Council on Seniors' issues, solicit input from the Seniors' community and promote awareness of Seniors' needs within the City of Markham.
<u>Committee Type:</u> Advisory Board/Committee

City of Mississauga
Diversity and Inclusion Advisory Committee
<u>Purpose:</u> This is an advisory committee of Council that provides input in the development of policies to promote awareness of ethno-cultural relations and diversity matters with an emphasis on improving diversity and fostering greater inclusion of all residents and stakeholders.

City of Richmond Hill
Youth Action Committee
<u>Purpose:</u> Richmond Hill's Youth Action Committee (YAC) gives Council advice and input about teen recreational issues. The group is made up of teens in grades 6 to 12.

City of Toronto

Planning Review Panel

    <u>Purpose:</u> The Toronto Planning Review Panel is an exciting initiative to improve public engagement by capturing input from a broader segment of the population. It was created so that a representative group of Torontonians could help the City Planning Division guide growth and change in Toronto.

City of Vaughan

None Applicable.

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