# Neoliberal Urbanism in Transforming Toronto's Built Urban Landscape: The Case of Yonge and Dundas Square

Umar Mahmood

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Umar Mahmood, MES Candidate

Professor Laura Taylor, Major Paper Supervisor

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# Abstract

Scholars in the 1980s and 1990s often characterized Toronto as the 'city that works'. However, by the late 1990s there was a shift in policy by the provincial government to amalgamate Toronto's five neighbouring municipalities. Amalgamation created a mega city of 2.5 million residents. The reason for amalgamation was to increase Toronto's global competitiveness, a key neoliberal policy framework. Neoliberalism also refers to deregulation of state control over public services. Peck et al. (2009) devised a chart to outline the specific elements of neoliberalism that alter the built urban landscape. These are: the elimination of urban public spaces, speculative redevelopment in working class neighbourhoods, withdrawal from community planning initiatives, the privatization of space for elite/corporate consumption, undertaking of mega-projects to attract corporate investment, creation of gated communities, continuation of gentrification, and the adoption of the 'highest and best use' principle in major land use planning decisions. This major paper applies their criteria to the redevelopment of Yonge-Dundas Square as a case study. I conclude that Peck, et al.'s (2009) elements are indeed useful in considering how neoliberalism influences planning processes, and decision making. My findings suggest a lack of public accessibility to public space, and the reproduction of urban inequalities and disenfranchisement in the city. I discuss how their criteria may inform studies of ongoing and future development in Toronto.

# Foreword

This major paper has served the purpose of culminating my graduate education. This paper brings fruition the plan of study document. This major paper has helped in meeting the learning objectives set out in MES I. I gained a solid conceptual understanding of capitalism and learned about the scope of capitalism that is connected to urban planning. I obtained the knowledge and skills necessary to meet the program requirements of the Ontario Professional Planners Institute (OPPI) for Candidate Membership. Situating a complex concept like neoliberal urbanism on a case study like Yonge-Dundas Square has supported me in reaching my learning objectives. In my examination of neoliberalism, I had to begin with a historical review of capitalism and only then discovered how neoliberalism, capitalism, and planning were connected. My case study of Yonge-Dundas Square has allowed me to take a theoretical framework such as neoliberal urbanism, and think pragmatically. Through my research I gained an extensive understanding of planning practice and theory linking built urban landscapes to the broader political, economic, and social factors. I learned about how community resistance tactics lacked in significantly altering and changing the built urban landscape at Yonge-Dundas Square. Thus my research has helped support me in gaining mastery of my learning objectives.

# Introduction

Scholars in the 1980s and 1990s often characterized Toronto as the 'city that works'. However, by the late 1990s there was a shift in policy by the provincial government to amalgamate Toronto's five neighbouring municipalities. Amalgamation created a mega city of 2.5 million residents. The reason for amalgamation was to increase Toronto's global competitiveness. "Under this new political regime, policies and guidelines have shifted from maintaining the city that works to promoting a 'city that astonishes' (City of Toronto, 1999: 3) through a series of rebranding exercises and the promotion of various large-scale development projects" (Lehrer and Laidley, 789). Changes in planning policies both at the provincial and local levels contribute to Toronto's economic attractiveness. Planners and politicians in the post-amalgamation period drafted new plans to make Toronto stand out on the global stage to make Toronto economically attractive to invest in. (Boudreau, Keil, Young, 2009).

Urbanization has created—and continues to create—disparities within the city. Disparities include socio-economic inequalities and how space is experienced exclusively. Investigating disparities in the city, one might start locally, at the neighbourhood or district level, since neighbourhoods and districts are the social fabric of cities in the 21st century. The neighbourhoods and city districts of today in North America are almost always planned spaces that serve specific purposes, however they are constantly shaped and reshaped by insiders and outsiders. Neighbourhoods and city districts are transformed not only on a daily basis, but are affected by its inhabitants, city officials, and planners, among others. There are a number factors that lead urban neighbourhoods and city districts to change. Processes of urban neighbourhoods and city district change can include gentrification and revitalization. Both are ways that we can interpret how neighbourhoods and districts function and how they were intended to function. It is essential to consider the political aspects of planning in understanding why and how specific spaces within the city operate. There is a constant negotiation of power within the city;

the emergence of neoliberal policy over the last 30 years has had perhaps the greatest impact. However, social movements and citizen protest have proved to have the ability to alter landscapes as well. It begs the question who or what are cities built for?

It is evident that the process of planning cities is highly political and can be read through the analysis of landscape change. City projects like the revitalization of Regent Park in Toronto, are given priority over similar environments like the neighbourhoods of Jane and Finch because of its proximity to the central business district (CBD). Investment in infrastructure and development are directed to spaces that are more attractive for elite consumption. This is precisely why I have chosen to research and explore political process in planning.

My research topic focuses on how built urban landscapes may be altered through the political processes of planning. This includes researching both existing and proposed major development projects. I intend for my research to build on the previous work done by scholars in the field of urban studies and urban planning. Theoretical concepts guiding my research include 'neoliberal urbanism' and the 'competitive city'. This major research paper will share the critical perspective that many scholars in the field have on neoliberalism, however my research will differ because I intend to situate a critique of neoliberalism in the built urban form specifically in Toronto's urban landscape.

I am interested in how planning processes can make it seem like the landscapes they produce are in the best interests of the public, when they may be masking other priorities. As part of the Professional Code of Practice, the Ontario Professional Planners Institute requires registered planners to have respect to the public interest and to inform the public in matters that adversely impact them. What I hope to achieve in this major paper is not simply explore the complexities of planning. Rather I intend to create a piece that informs both planners and non-planners that development can be masked to appear to be acting in the best interest of the public, but in actuality is running counter to the public interest. In this paper, I will conclude by calling for greater transparency in city-led development

projects, and presenting collaborative planning among other mechanism to achieving a more apolitical and bottom-up planning process. As an aspiring planning professional, I believe it is vitally important to be critical of the planning process, to reveal disparities created by urbanization and development.

Peck, Theodore and Brenner (2009) believe that there are both 'destructive' and 'creative' moments of neoliberal urbanization that can be seen through the transformation of the built urban environment and urban form. In this paper I will examine the 'destructive' and 'creative' moments in Toronto's urban landscape using Yonge-Dundas Square and its surrounding area as a case study. Yonge-Dundas Square is located east of Yonge Street and south of Dundas Street in Downtown Toronto (See figure 1).
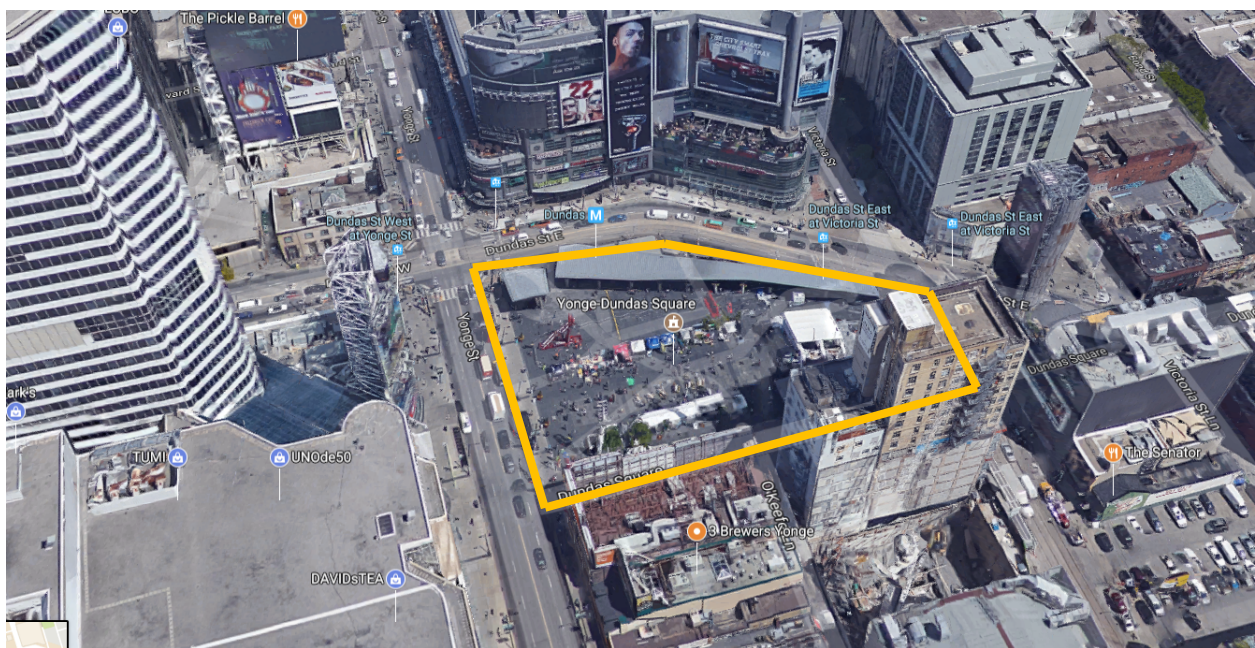


Figure 1 - Area map of Yonge and Dundas Square. Source: Google maps

Jamie Peck is Professor at the University of British Columbia from Department of Geography and has written extensively on neoliberalism. He has many works on the subject and is considered a leading academic. Nik Theodore is a Professor at the University of Illinois Department of Urban Planning and Policy. Theodore has written extensively on public policy and economic restructuring and has his work

published in a number of journals. Neil Brenner is a Professor of Urban Theory at the Harvard Graduate School of Design. His work focusses on processes of urban and regional restructuring and uneven spatial development. All three authors are qualified to speak on neoliberal urbanism and each offer unique backgrounds to the subject.

I intend to uncover the degree that neoliberal processes may be altering the built urban landscapes in Toronto. Neoliberal urbanism describes the connection between neoliberal policy and urban transformations. Peck et al. (2009) devised a chart to outline the specific elements of neoliberalism that alter the built urban landscape. These are: the elimination of urban public spaces, speculative redevelopment in working class neighbourhoods, withdrawal from community planning initiatives, the privatization of space for elite/corporate consumption, undertaking of mega-projects to attract corporate investment, creation of gated communities, continuation of gentrification, and the adoption of the 'highest and best use' principle in major land use planning decisions. These elements of neoliberalism captured my imagination as they encompass a broad range of issues. In this paper, I apply their criteria to the redevelopment of Yonge-Dundas Square and conclude that Peck, et al.'s (2009) elements are indeed useful in considering how neoliberalism influences planning processes, and decision making. My findings suggest a lack of public accessibility to public space, and the reproduction of urban inequalities and disenfranchisement in the city. I discuss how their criteria may inform studies of ongoing and future development in Toronto.

# Theoretical and Historical Review

The purpose of this chapter is to establish the context for neoliberal urbanism, as background to my analysis of Yonge-Dundas Square. To start, the historical context will describe the precursor for the emergence of neoliberal policy. Additionally, it is important to consider the broader academic literature of neoliberalism, because neoliberalism is multifaceted and linked to much broader academic debates. The following is an extensive review of key concepts that will provide the context, both historical and otherwise, for neoliberal urbanism and expose some of the political, economic, and social agencies associated with landscape change. Agencies in this context refers to the actions of decision makers, and recognizes that decisions may be influenced by gender, ethnicity, class and social systems among others.

Agency refers to a person or thing through which power is exerted or an end is achieved (Merriam-Webster, 2017). Political agencies that can be directly attributed to altering the built urban form include neoliberal policy. Economic agencies that have altered the urban built form include increased global competitiveness for investment. Social agencies that have altered the built form in urban environments include citizens taking a LULU (locally unwanted land-use) and NIMBY (not in my back yard) stance to developments. Neoliberal policy, foreign direct investment strategies, and citizen resistance are all ways that development projects are influenced, albeit not equally. Concurrently, it is important to consider the context for how neoliberalism came about. The next section will delve deeper into the historical and theoretical context for neoliberal urbanism. As a part of this review a number of key concepts were considered including, a broader discussion of capitalism and theories of space, and more specifically, governance, planning practice and theory, NIMBYism, public private partnerships, public space, privatization of space, gated communities, urban enclaves, and gentrification as they relate to neoliberal urbanism generally, and as they relate to the specific elements identified by Peck et al.

Therefore, this theoretical review has helped me to use Peck et al.'s elements of transformations of the

built urban environment in my analysis of Yonge-Dundas Square.

**Capitalism**

Capitalism is a significant backdrop for neoliberalism. Neoliberalism was at first a response to

the earlier political economic framework of post Fordist-Keynesian capitalism (Peck et al. 2009). David

Harvey coined the term "Fordist-Keynesian capitalism" to describe the period of time following

traditional capitalism. In his book *The Conditions of Postmodernity*, Harvey explains the term Fordist-

Keynesian to be encompassing of both "Fordism" and "Keynesian economic" principles. Fordism is a

concept based on the Ford Motor Company's early 20th century mode of production and organizational

model (Jessop, 2013). Keynesian economics refers to the work of John Maynard Keynes, who discussed

the perils of the capitalist system, subject to boom and bust periods like the great depression. In his

work, he advocates for increased government spending and reduced taxation in times of economic

uncertainty (Keynes, 1936). Capitalism is both a social and economic system, based on individual

property rights, capital accumulation, wage labour and the free market (Rand, 1967, Gregory et al.,

2009). Capitalism is a mode of production, where manufactured goods are exchanged for profit in a

market (Jenks, 1998). In many ways neoliberalism is a response to capitalism.

A number of scholars point to capitalism as the root of major urban problems. Katherine Rankin

(2009) explains that planning helps capitalist accumulation because it spurs investment. She explains the

ways in which planning deals with urban problems and essentially helps capitalist interests, when she

draws upon the work of David Harvey and his explanation of the current affairs of urban planning and its

inability to counter capitalism with reference to 'accumulation by dispossession'. This particular theory of

Harvey posits the routine displacement of the poor and marginalized not only from their place of

residence, but also from places they frequent because those places have been deemed desirable for

capitalists and elites. An example of this may be in the form of a revitalization project where poor people

are displaced, and a new, more affluent group of people move in. Capitalism certainly has played a major role in producing urban issues, and plays into the larger narrative of how neoliberalism was perhaps seen as a solution. Rankin's work and much of the work that I have looked at is from a Marxist perspective, critical of capitalism. Perhaps equally as important for the purpose of this major paper is the production of space, and the work of yet another Marxist theorist Henri Lefebvre.

If we are to look at neoliberal urbanism and how capitalism provides the historical backdrop for how neoliberalism came about, then it would be rather incomplete to not consider how space is produced as it pertains to the development and planning of cities. By looking at how space is produced, it will give a spatial understanding of how the built form in the city is constantly shaped and reshaped. Lefebvre (1991) discusses the different modes for the production of space. Lefebvre's work marks a shift in scholars studying space to studying the production of space. He is critical of how space is produced because of its conflictual, contradictory, and political process. He argues that space is socially produced and is fundamental to reproduction in capitalist societies. An analysis of space in the city, seemingly will also present a number of prevailing issues, many of which are spurred by processes of neoliberalism that are of particular concern for this major paper.

Neoliberal urbanism is described by few in academia. However, the consensus among the few is reflective in the work of Peck et al. (2009). Peck et al. (2009) describe neoliberal urbanism as the connection between neoliberalization processes and urban transformations. Neoliberal urbanism theorizes that neoliberal policy shapes the built urban landscape. Peck et al. (2009) illustrate the specific aspects of neoliberalism that affect the built urban form which will be examined extensively in this paper. Peck et al. (2009) state that neoliberalism is "the belief that open, competitive and unregulated markets, liberated from state interference and the actions of social collectives, represent the optimal mechanism for socioeconomic development" (2009, 49). Neoliberalism first gained popularity in the late 1970s and early 1980s (Peck et al. 2009). Neoliberal policy often sets out to increase market competition and to

promote the commodification of industries by deregulating state control over industries and by privatizing public services (Peck et al. 2009).

Neoliberal urbanism is both a complex and multifaceted theory. Peck et al. (2009) through their eight elements of transformations in the built environment hint at the complexity of neoliberal urbanism. To fully understand its complexity, it is imperative to identify the more specific academic theories and debates that neoliberal urbanism entails. By doing so, my research from the early stages through to the completion of this major paper has been well informed.

Neoliberal governance works in conjunction with neoliberal urbanism because neoliberal governance can explain how neoliberal policy is maintained in city spaces. Neoliberal governance is the continued process of enforcing the compliance of neoliberal policy into city space (De Angelis, 2003).

To a large extent Rankin (2009) explains the connection between capitalism, neoliberalism, and planning. She says that although capitalism has shifted to neoliberalism, planning has failed to accommodate this shift and goes on to suggest transformative redistribution. Rankin calls for planning to have better strategies for dealing with cultural and socioeconomic injustices through transformative redistribution and admits the difficulties in an era of neoliberal urbanism. Rankin's work serves as an aid to my research paper in multiple ways. Rankin's work doesn't simply link capitalism, neoliberalism, and planning, it also inspires me to be critical of the status quo in planning and seek a planning solution to socioeconomic inequalities.

Further, an understanding of capitalism as it relates to urban development will offer insights on the importance of finance in major financial cities. Neoliberalism is perhaps a current manifestation of capitalism and is a policy framework that has gained tremendous momentum over the course of the last 30 years. Along the lines of capitalist interest, neoliberalism involves the sale of public assets and the offloading of social responsibilities from the state. Conversely, large scale development projects like mega-projects under neoliberalism can flourish. The construction of mega-projects is the fifth element of

Peck et al.'s (2009) theory on the transformation of the built form under neoliberalism, and the works of Lehrer and Laidley (2008) has aided the analysis of mega-projects to come later in this paper.

**Urban Planning Practice and Theory**

Upon the review of the literature, the link and disconnect between urban planning and theory have proved to be advantageous for the purpose of this major paper. This section of the literature review informs us of the disconnect between how planning theory is envisioned academically and how planning is practiced in reality.

Urban planning theory is the body of knowledge available to planners. There are two types of planning theories relevant to this research paper because this paper is intended to add to the knowledge base in urban theory for urban planners. The two types of planning theories for the purposes of this paper are normative theories and procedural theories (Allmendinger, 2002). Normative theory often relates to the vision and end goal of planning. It represents progress, ideals, and utopia. These theories have the interest of the public good, social justice, urban renewal, and sustainable development. Procedural theories of urban planning are how the planner may achieve the lofty goals of normative theory. These theories of urban planning include best practices, participatory planning, public involvement, advocacy planning, new urbanism, etc. Urban planning practice refers to the work of planning practitioners, and is rooted in the planners' actions. Looking into how planning is practiced in reality will aid this research paper by revealing the tools that planners use to address development concerns and also will help explain the role of the planner in the development process.

Participatory planning is a tool that many planners practice to balance and serve the different views of stakeholders in many development projects. This method of planning is considered progressive, however politics often overshadows participatory planning. Healey (1996) discusses the spatial strategy for planners in urban regions. She says that planning practice needs to be participatory, individuals have a 'right to be heard' and should be inclusionary. She explains that planning practice needs to be

democratic but not situated in the hierarchical forms of representative democracy. Elected officials

shouldn't make decisions for people, rather decisions should be made with citizen participation. In order

for planning to be progressive participatory measures must be instilled in the process.

Collaborative planning is an interactive and facilitative way for stakeholders to take an active role

in development plans (Healey, 1998). To manage conflicts over the use and development of land,

collaborative planning can be used as it can result in compromises between parties: the developer, the

government, and the local residents. "Collaborative planning as an approach in a multi-stakeholder

society is thus justified because it is more efficient (reducing regulatory transaction costs in the longer

term), because it is more politically legitimate and because it 'adds value' to the on-going flow of place-

making actions, through building shared knowledge and understanding, generating opportunities for

creative synergy, and developing the capacity among stakeholders to work together locally to solve

common problems" (Healey, 1998, 18). The term stakeholder refers to all parties who have an interest in

the outcomes in place making (Bryson, Crosby, 1992). An understanding of the key stakeholders or

actors in development projects is central to understanding their impacts on the built urban environment.

It is important to consider the institutional structures in place that govern the planning

profession. Various planning organizations hold planners accountable through a set of standards. The

Ontario Professional Planners Institute (OPPI) promotes planners to be transparent, and requires

planners to be informative and to engage the public. Collaborative planning, as theorized can solve

controversial issues by bringing stakeholders together in search of common goals through building

consensus (Healey, 1992). Controversial issues are almost always land-use issues and are complex

because they often involve many stakeholders with differing interests. By bringing a wide range of

stakeholders together, a wide range of interests are considered, not just the obvious ones (Julian, 1994;

Selin, Chavez, 1995). For the community, the likelihood of achieving an appropriate end goal is higher

because mutual interests are often protected and certain things will be deemed non-negotiable from the

residents. Moreover, interaction can spawn new ideas as well as solutions (Innes and Booher, 1999). By putting 'heads together', solutions to complex problems are far more likely (Moote et al., 1997) argue that it is important to provide a public forum for public facilitation.

When consultation firms are hired in the planning process, they set up different ways to engage stakeholders to speak about important issues that are meaningful to them. A wide range of tools are used for civic engagement, this may include a number of workstations at stakeholder advisory meetings. The workstations include Q and A sessions with city officials, the consulting firm/firms, and the developer if present. Stakeholder advisory meetings may also have booklets for attendees to write ideas. In addition, speeches will be given, and chart papers will be placed with cue words like sustainability, green, walkability, character preservation, pedestrian friendly, ergonomics, vibrancy, diversity, etc. Local residents will have the chance to put signifiers next to these words, the words are tallied up and placed in charts to show what areas the communities interests may lie. This is usually done after the stakeholders have already come up with those cue words. Social media for example, Facebook and Twitter pages, email addresses, a phone numbers where stakeholders can give suggestions and leave concerns of varying levels of severity, ask questions, and ask for information and progress of the development. Collaborative planning was not a method that was always used. Healey (1998) posits that collaborative planning was a relatively new form of planning. It is imperative to consider how planning is practiced in the real world in order to determine the extent that planning theory informs practice.

Some scholars in the field have suggested that there is a disconnect between urban planning theory and practice. Traditionally theory would comment on a process or attempt to rationalize a process. Additionally, planning theory can also push an ideal or a desired outcome. For example, mixed use, sustainable and walkable communities have become the ideal neighbourhoods in planning theory. Vanessa Watson observes that "over the last several decades planning theory has shifted towards a closer engagement with practice" (2008, 224). One way of addressing the gap between planning

practice and theory is to apply urban theory on to a real world case study. Perhaps by testing Peck et al.'s (2009) theory on neoliberal urbanism, a more nuanced distinction between planning theory and planning practice can be made.

**Urban Politics (local urban politics and public space)**

Urban politics refers to the political structure in council, race, ethnic, class and gender relations of residents, and the politics of space in the city. This component includes community resistance tactics. In Toronto urban politics involves local councillors and their need to appease their constituents in their wards. At city hall, different groups lobby public office holders into making various decisions both development related and otherwise. There are also a number of organizations who are committed to increasing civic engagement, improving equity, fostering inclusion, and social justice.

There are a number of ways that citizens assist and resist developers and governments who attempt to develop or redevelop areas within local communities. Often is the case with development proposals that there is opposition from residents living in the area and who adopt NIMBYism as a form of resistance. "NIMBY refers to intense, sometimes emotional, and often adamant local opposition to sitting proposals that residents believe will result in adverse impacts" (Kraft and Clary, 1991, 300). Many stakeholders in a particular area, whether it be local residents or businesses, will uses NIMBYism to oppose development that threatens the appeal of their neighbourhoods. The types of development plans that NIMBY disrupts can vary in uses from prisons, highways, toxic waste facilities, homeless shelters, high rise and large scale housing developments to even religious institutions. It is important to note that in relation to Yonge-Dundas Square, the NIMBY tactic has little standing.

**Neoliberal Urbanism**

Neoliberal urbanism is a complex theoretical concept, it is critical and foundational to my paper to define key sub components of the theory. These include, Public Private Partnerships (PPP), the privatization of public space, neoliberal governance, and the notion of the 'competitive city'.

### Public Private Partnerships (PPP)

> Collaborations that involve the private sector in the design, building, financing, and operation phases (known as DBFO partnerships) have recently become common ways for governments to get help both raising funds for new public infrastructure and controlling the escalating construction costs and performance shortfalls that had been criticized in projects designed, financed, and operated by the public sector (Siemiatycki, 2006, 388).

In addition, Siemiatycki (2006) discusses how regular infrastructure projects are built. The common form of development is the design-bid-build procedure. Where the government will hire a private firm, work collaboratively to come up with an appropriate design, and then the firm will come back with a plan and a bid to determine cost. In this case the city finances, owns, operates, and maintains the public sector. Public-private partnerships operate very differently. The project is financed partially or entirely by the private sector.

### Public Space

Further to the previous discussion on Lefebvre's production of space in this theoretical review, it is essential to discuss public space more specifically. Henry Lefebvre (1991) discusses how space is produced, claiming two key foundations for the purpose of understanding public space, representational space and representations of space. Representational space is appropriated, lived space and space in use. Representations of space, are planned, controlled, and ordered space. Further to his Lefebvre's claims, Mitchell (1995) draws on the many parallels with Lefebvre's distinctions when discussing how public space is envisioned. He argues that public space is predominantly envisioned in two ways in contemporary cities. The first vision is public space being a place of free interaction and the absence of coercion from powerful institutions. This vision also includes, spaces that are unimpeded from state interference where political movements can organize and advance. The second vision is commonly held by planners in many north American cities, it is the view that public space is open space for recreation and entertainment. Also, it is only subject to 'appropriate' users that are permitted to use the space and as a place where they may experience the spectacle of the city.

### Privatization of Space

Private spaces are quite the opposite as they are not city owned, and authorized personnel have the right to ask anybody on the extent of the property to leave. Even though some private spaces may seem public, such as malls, they are in fact private, and are highly regulated spaces. Mitchell (1995) believes that public spaces are dwindling and are becoming increasingly privatized. Mitchell analyzed the People's Park in Berkley, California. He found a trend of increased privatization of public space.

### Neoliberal Governance

Neoliberal governance explains how neoliberal policy is maintained in city spaces. Neo liberal governance is the continued process of enforcing the compliance of neoliberal policy (De Angelis, 2003). Constant police presence and the use of CCTV cameras suggest that the space is heavily governed, and is unlike any other presumed "public space".

### Gated communities

Blakely and Snyder (1997) believe that gated communities are not singular in nature, rather there are three differentiating types of gated communities. They suggest the three types of gated communities as lifestyle communities, prestige communities, and security zone communities. Lifestyle communities are characterized by age related complexes often for retirement, as well as providing shared amenities promoting active lifestyles like golf courses and pools. These developments are can be found in the sun belt region of the United States. Prestige communities are characterized by restricted access, sometimes guarded, and located in attractive locations. They also feature privacy and exclusive sense of community. Security zone communities are characterized by restricted public access in the inner city to limit crime or traffic. They are also characterized by closing access to limit through traffic. These communities sometimes feature fencing on public streets for restricting public access points (Blakely and Snyder, 1997)

## Urban Enclaves

Caldeira (1996) has written on fortified enclaves and spatial segregation. She describes enclaves as "privatized, enclosed, and monitored spaces of residence, consumption, leisure, and work." Fortified enclaves are justified with the perceived fear of violence in the public realm. Caldeira argues and cautions that cities that have rampant fortified enclaves become fragmented, and in doing so also alters the character of the public sphere. Under increased developments of fortified enclaves, the utopian value of openness and inclusion in urban planning for contemporary cities is contested. Calderia uses Sao Paulo, Brazil to illustrate her argument of fortified enclave development as contributing to the isolation, exclusion, social inequality, and fragmentation of the city.

## Gentrification

Ruth Glass first coined the term gentrification, when she observed a shift in the social fabric of neighbourhoods in 1960s London. Following London, wider recognition in other major cities of the gentrification phenomena began to take shape (Atkinson and Bridge, 2005). Smith (1996a) viewed gentrification in respect to landscape change. In particular, he looked at the role the housing market played on the changing dynamics in neighbourhoods. He often cites neighbourhoods in Manhattan that have succumbed to processes of gentrification across many of his works. Smith (1996b) dedicates a chapter on the housing market and the impact of gentrification on the local. Smith's analysis of gentrification also included the role of the development industry. He is quite specific on the nature of developer, that they do not simply buy up real estate in slum ridden areas, rather they tend to take take piece by piece, in other words parcels of land on the periphery. The view of the developer in Smith's perspective is that developers have a block to block sense of the the where the metaphorical frontier is situated. Smith discusses gentrification as if it was a clash that has a metaphorical frontier, where would be displaced residents clash with gentrifiers. Gentrification is one of several theories that have been considered in order to fully understand Peck et al.'s elements of transformation of the built urban form.

## Yonge and Dundas Square

Yonge and Dundas Square is located south of Dundas Street and East of Yonge Street. Its redevelopment encompassed a large number of stakeholders including, city councillors, the city's planning department, local businesses, and local residents among others. The redevelopment was a part of the Yonge Street Regeneration Project. The square, although appears to be public space, is in fact privately owned and managed. I believe the square represents a clash between private and public interest and I would like to understand more about the tensions that exist. The redevelopment displays signs of what Peck et al. (2009) suggest as the privatization of public space. There is a good amount of academic literature that discusses Yonge and Dundas Square. A number of scholars including Beth Moore Milroy and Sharon Zukin have looked at Yonge-Dundas Square extensively.

It is important to consider the historical context of Yonge-Dundas Square, one that has seen radical changes to its landscape over the course of forty years. Yonge-Dundas Square was first envisioned in 1997 when government officials looked to improve the intersection. The architects that oversaw the development of the square were Brown and Storey Architects (Toronto Star, 2002). The square was completed in late 2002, and became open to the public in 2003 (Bradburn, 2013). During the Square's redevelopment, a public private partnership was attractive because it would mean city budgets would not have to maintain the Square and private funds would be used.

The plan that the city had for the development project was that it was going to acquire six properties north of Dundas Street to sell to a single developer. Four properties South of Dundas Street were going to be kept by the city to build a public square. Owners who refused to sell their properties to the city would later have their lands expropriated. "Expropriation was shaped to suit developers, not those whose property was being expropriated, as if property owners did not merit equal consideration" (Milroy, 2009, 113). It wasn't until December of 1996 that property owners began to realize that their lands were going to be expropriated. The city knew of the expropriation of properties by June of 1996,

however did not leak this information to the public until later that year. Property owners were told prior to learning that their lands were going to be expropriated that they would have to redevelop their properties into bigger buildings on site to fit the new official plan and zoning regulations, but they could still operate out of their current locations. Properties of the North East Corner of Yonge and Dundas were sold to private developer PenEquity Management Corporation (Milroy, 2009). This theoretical and historical review of key relevant concepts and history of Yonge-Dundas Square provides a foundation for the analysis section of this paper.

# Methodology

A number of qualitative research methods were used in the research of this major paper. These include a theoretical and historical review of literature, observations from site visits, historical analysis, a case study, and policy analysis. A review of the literature is crucial in completing this major paper because having a conceptual framework is necessary to critically analyze the selected urban landscape. Having a solid understanding of key concepts allowed myself to apply that knowledge onto a specific case study. Thus, providing linkages across academic literature. In many ways, my final paper is inclusive of a number of different concepts in urban theory. This final paper adds to the existing literature by filling in the gap between planning theory and practice. Taking Peck et al.'s (2009) work and testing it on a real world case study results in a pragmatic approach to theoretical concepts. A review of the literature will ensure that the complex topics are well researched prior to site visits. Ultimately the literature review may indeed have the greatest influence on analyzing and interpreting the results of the case study. The bulk of the resources from reviewing the literature consist of academic journals and scholars recognized in the field of urban theory.

A historical analysis of Yonge-Dundas Square provides a rudimentary baseline for landscape change in the area. The history of the site offered a historical narrative of not only the time in which it is situated, but also the changes in the landscape over a period of time. Archival images can be used because they are able to tell what the landscape at Yonge-Dundas Square looked like prior to its redevelopment. Looking at the history of the Square is essential in determining the extent politics and economics played in reshaping the Square. The City of Toronto Archives can provide historical images of Yonge-Dundas Square. The City of Toronto also has a database of digitized images from the City's Archives website and may also have a broad collection of historical photographs.

Observations from site visits was the primary research method. Here, I observe the selected site, and critically analyze the site using the established theoretical framework. Additionally, I took the approach of using a single instrumental case study. Here, I focused on an issue/concern, and then selected a bounded case to illustrate that issue/concern. Using a case study is appropriate because it creates a bounded system or boundaries of the case, which provides a time and space (Gomm et al., 2000). Multiple sources of data were used in the case study. A singular case study gave me the opportunity to have a very in-depth understanding of the case, whereas collective or multiple case studies would have resulted in less depth for each case.

When determining appropriate research methods to conduct this research, a number of different methods were considered. After much deliberation I decided not to conduct interviews. Although interviews would answer my research question, they would take away from the intended outcome of this paper. The intended outcome of this research paper is twofold. First, to inform planners of how we can use lessons learned from past development projects to ensure ongoing development projects are more inclusive and equitable. Second, I intend to encourage the public to do their own observations of space in the city to see how processes of neoliberalism are affecting their daily lives.

# Analysis

Peck et al. (2009) outline eight "destructive" and "creative" moments of neoliberal urbanism when discussing transformations of the built environment and urban form. I will refer to these "destructive" and "creative" moments as elements and in turn discuss and analyze them further. I will start this analysis by first discussing the 8 elements of neoliberalism that Peck et al. (2009) lay out. Then, I will test Peck et al.'s (2009) theory on neoliberal urbanism and the built urban landscape using Yonge-Dundas Square as a case study.

1. *"Elimination and/or intensified surveillance of urban public spaces"*

The first destructive moment is the elimination and/or intensified surveillance of urban public spaces. There are two key components in this element. The first component is eliminating by way of ceasing the production of urban public space and the emergence of private interest on urban public space. Under this pretense public space will no longer be produced for an extended period of time. The second component is the intensified surveillance of public space. An important distinction must be made clear about the use of the word intense. This may refer to how space is regulated and monitored by way of cameras, and security and police patrol. This point draws on the governance of space and ties into neoliberal governance, a key concept that Peck et al. (2009) do not discuss specifically. Neoliberal governance theorizes how neoliberal policy is maintained. De Angelis (2003) defines governance broadly as the sum of ways different actors including individuals, institutions, both public and private, manage their common affairs. It also refers to how differing social interest are negotiated. Additionally, governance includes self-regulation both formally and informally through, institutions, enforced regimes, and agreed or perceived arrangements (De Angelis, 2003).

2. "*Destruction of working class neighborhoods [sic] to make way for speculative redevelopment*"

The second element is the destruction of working class neighbourhoods to make way for speculative redevelopment. Working class neighbourhoods are defined as neighbourhoods for waged workers, relatively low and semi-skilled manual work (Oxford English Dictionary, 2007). Speculative redevelopment is the process of buying up used land for a potential development. This also includes expropriation of lands, land acquisition, and eminent domain. Expropriation in Ontario is defined in the Expropriations Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. E.26 as "the taking of land without the consent of the owner by an expropriating authority in the exercise of its statutory powers; ("exproprier")." Acquisition of lands refers to ways the land is acquired by land purchases and defaults. Eminent domain refers the power of nations or states, and sometimes regulated to municipalities, to take private properties for public use (Merriam-Webster, 2017).

3. "*Retreat from community-oriented planning initiatives*"

The third element that Peck et al. (2009) suggest in the transformation of the built environment is the retreat from community-oriented planning initiatives. Here there is a withdrawal from community engagement. Community planning initiatives are public consultation meetings, stakeholder advisory meetings, community town halls, and other form of public engagement. The departure of community planning initiatives would mean limited or no public engagement. In Ontario, the Planning Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. P.13 prescribes the minimum standards for public meetings with respect to notice, timing, and public representations. The Ontario Professional Planners Institute (OPPI) has perhaps even greater standards for Registered Professional Planners (RPP) through its Professional Code of Practice. Through the Code of Practice, the OPPI holds planners accountable in serve the interest of the public by fostering public participation and meaningful engagement, and being informative and transparent (OPPI, 2016).

**4. *"Creation of privatized spaces of elite/corporate consumption"***

Peck et al.'s (2009) fourth element of transformations to the built environment is the creation of privatized spaces of elite and corporate consumption. Here there is the privatization of space, spaces become commercially branded, and private open spaces begin to appear. Billboards and ads infringe on public views and contributes more broadly to the commodification of city view corridors.

**5. *"Construction of mega-projects to attract corporate investment and reconfigure local land-use patterns"***

Peck et al.'s (2009) fifth element is the construction of mega-projects to attract corporate investment and reconfigure local land-use patterns. Mega projects are any projects that have large investments of capital and have long term impacts on the economy, the environment, and society (Brookes and Locatelli, 2015). It is important to consider how cities use mega projects to compete on the global stage for corporate investment. Cities that compete globally are also referred to as "competitive cities". Kipfer and Keil (2002) define "competitive cities" as cities that have associations of class, divisive politics, neoliberal planning, policies to spur the local economy, the management of multiculturalism, and revanchist policies. Lehrer and Laidley (2008) discuss how new mega projects are undertaken to make cities compete globally. In addition, a number of financing techniques are used when public and private sectors come together. Lehrer and Laidley state that "new mega-project[s are] often undertaken by state actors operating in collaboration with private interests in the pursuit of elevating the position of city-regions within a competitive global system" (2008, 789). This explains how cities compete globally for private investment. Again this global competitiveness plays in to a number of themes that both Rankin and Harvey discuss in their critiques of capitalism. Mega projects in cities can be undertaken to raise the status of the city in the global market. This is to make a city more economically attractive to corporations setting up new offices. Mega projects are undertaken because it would make the city appear more vibrant, and bustling.

6. ***"Creation of gated communities, urban enclaves and other 'purified' spaces of social reproduction"***

The sixth element of Peck et al.'s (2009) perspective on the transformation of the built urban environment under neoliberalism is the creation of gated communities, urban enclaves, and other 'purified' spaces of social reproduction. Peck et al. (2009) provide very little on the types of gated communities they are refereeing to. It is necessary to review the literature on gated communities, urban enclaves, and 'purified' spaces to discuss this element further. As noted in the works by Blakely and Snyder (1997) there are three types of gated communities, and all have diverse characteristics. In this element of transforming the built urban environment under neoliberal urbanization, Peck et al. (2009) are referring to the prestige communities and places of exclusion. These are spaces where people become insiders or outsiders. In these communities there is a fear of the other, and residents share the belief of preserving the status quo. Caldeira (1996) has written on fortified enclaves and spatial segregation. She describes enclaves as "privatized, enclosed, and monitored spaces of residence, consumption, leisure, and work." Fortified enclaves are justified with the perceived fear of violence in the public realm.

7. ***"Rolling forward of the gentrification frontier and the intensification of socio-spatial polarization"***

Here in Peck et al.'s (2009) seventh element, they are referring to the frontier of gentrification. Gentrification refers to the displacement of residents in working class neighbourhoods by new middle-class residents. This is done when middle-class residents move in and renovate or redevelop real estate often in working class neighbourhoods in the inner city. Under these circumstances lower-income residents are often priced out of their neighbourhoods due to increasing rents and property taxes (Atkinson and Bridge, 2005, The World Bank, 2015). It is important to note the most notable academic work on gentrification is Neil Smith's *The New Urban Frontier: Gentrification and the Revanchist City* where he discusses gentrification as if there was an observable frontier. The gentrification frontier is a metaphorical front of the clash between gentrifiers and displaced people. It is Smith's view that middle class people seek to reverse territorial loses in inner cities, with language that illustrates a sort of warfare,

combat, or clash. Socio-spatial polarization refers to the process where neighbourhood composition and city space becomes fragmented based on social factors. Social factors may include class, race, and ethnicity. Socio-spatial polarization can occur as a result of large scale gentrification. When evaluating this element, it is important to seek the answer to a key question: what is the extent to this so called frontier, and to what extent does this class warfare extend?

8. *"Adoption of the principle of 'highest and best use' as the basis for major land use planning decisions"*

Peck et al.'s (2009) eighth and final element of transformations of the built urban environment under neoliberal urbanism is: the "the adoption of the principle of 'highest and best use' as the basis for major land use planning decisions." This principle refers to how the highest possible value is sought for real estate projects. The principle is used in terms of addressing development proposals on vacant lands or redevelopment on existing properties. The Appraisal Institute has outline the standards for the highest and best use principle as legal uses, feasible financially, materially practical, and one that maximizes productivity (Appraisal Institute, 2013). Similarly, Dontzour et al. (1990) have defined highest and best use to be physically and legally possible, supported by public infrastructure and financially feasible. The highest and best use principle is fundamental in land use decision making. Often it is the case that building up in the form of high rise residential condominiums, would result in the highest value.

Case Study: Yonge-Dundas Square

In this next section, I will test Peck et al.'s eight elements of the transformation of the built environment and urban form under neoliberal urbanism on to Yonge-Dundas Square.

1. *"Elimination and/or intensified surveillance of urban public spaces"*

To evaluate the elimination of public space we must consider two things. First, we need to look at the rate at which public space is being produced. Second, we need to consider the emerging private interests on public space. It would be beneficial to momentarily halt the close examination of Yonge-

Dundas Square, and look at the state of public space prior to its redevelopment. In this examination of public space, I propose to start in 1998, just prior to Toronto's prominent Yonge-Dundas redevelopment. One of Toronto's most prominent urban affairs writers Christopher Hume wrote back in 1998, "with the exception of Yorkville Park, completed in 1992, Toronto's last great civic gesture was Nathan Phillips Square - and that was more than 35 years ago" (Toronto Star, 1998). This statement reflects a negligible rate for the production of new inventory for public space. If the only significant public space developments prior to 1998 are Yorkville Park and Nathan Phillips Square, then we should indeed be alarmed at the pace of new public space provisions. However, in reviewing the rate of new inventory, we must also consider the existing inventory and determine whether it is a sufficient enough allocation for a city the size of Toronto, the only possible rationale for such a low rate of production. A current inventory of public land in Toronto, excluding roadways would reveal approximately 13 percent of so called "public" land in the form of parks and open spaces (Engler, 2017). Although this percentage may not alarm most as it seems quite adequate, a closer examination of the "publicness" of the 13 percent of Toronto's parks and open space is needed, and determining if these so called "public" spaces are indeed public.

One of the most problematic aspects of Yonge-Dundas Square is perhaps its marketing. Former Police Chief Julian Fantino has been quoted saying, "a problem is now arising where portions of the public believe that Dundas Square is a public space" (Andrew-Gee, 2014). This statement marks a stark contrast with how the space has been and is currently marketed by the City of Toronto on both its Visiting Toronto webpage for tourists and Visiting Significant Landmarks webpages.

*"A unique focal point of the downtown Toronto community. The Square is designated for use as a public open space and as an event venue where you'll discover a wide range of activities…" - City of Toronto,*

*Visiting Information page*

*"A public square, community gathering place and event venue for the general public." - City of Toronto,*

*City Manager's Office page*

The language and official position of the City on Yonge-Dundas Square needs to be addressed to reflect what it truly is. It should be appropriately described as private open space than that of public space.

When Yonge-Dundas Square was in the proposal stage, Toronto's former Director of Urban Design Robert Glover stated, "this is going to be the first public space created in the new city and it's vitally important that we get it right. It will set the standard for all public space in the future." (Toronto Star, 1998). This statement is certainly based off perception, or what is perceived as public space. Such a statement coming from a high ranking city official is troubling considering what is truly public space, and I find this statement is quite problematic. If Yonge-Dundas Square has set the new standard for public space, then perhaps all future public space in cities will be littered with advertisements. Yonge-Dundas Square is not in fact public, although it may appear to be. I argue that it simply just private open space rather than truly public space.

The square certainly strengthens the position of proponents for the dwindling of public space debate. In Toronto's most notable public space Nathan Phillips Square, residents are able to protest without the interference of police or private security. Conversely Yonge-Dundas Square does not permit any citizen protest on its premises.

Although the location, size, and exposure of Yonge-Dundas Square is an ideal location for citizen protest, political movements are not permitted. Social movements are one way citizens mobilize to fight for change. The Reclaim the Streets action exemplifies citizens' disapproval of Yonge-Dundas Square, while globally it is considered an approved and successful tourist spot.

> A clear example of this tension between the global and the local can be seen in the most recent [Reclaim the Streets] action that took place in Toronto on September 26, 2003. The specific site/space that was chosen to be "reclaimed" at this particular action was Yonge Dundas Square, the City of Toronto's largest and most ambitious urban "public space" initiative, located in the heart of the City's downtown core business and tourist districts. Although advertised as being a

"public" space, Yonge Dundas Square is in fact the product of a "public-private partnership" between the City of Toronto and downtown private sector interests, largely represented by the Yonge Street Business Improvement Association (BIA)" (Smith, 2004, 158-159).

The Reclaim the Streets action certainly recognized the issue of the lack of publicness that Yonge-Dundas Square had, a theme that continues today. There was little to no outcome of the Reclaim the Streets action, as no changes have been made in terms of the space's validity of being a public space. Perhaps the city believes that the interests of tourists and corporations should have priority over the interests of the local community. It is quite clear that the square does not permit free interaction, and that powerful institutions are indeed present. Additionally, political organizations are not able to organize and advance, all of which are fundamental aspects of public space.

I agree with Don Mitchell's (1995) analysis of public space. There is a dichotomy of how public space is envisioned. The way public space is thought of from a citizen perspective is quite unlike a vision of a city planner or city official. The city, among them planners, architects and other professionals want to make spaces that are successful, where these so called 'public' spaces are rid of urban issues like rampant homelessness, pollution, and crime. In search of a utopian ideal vision of public space, state actors ignore the very fundamental aspects of public space. If we are to ponder the fundamental aspects of public space, we must consider Mitchell's (1995) view on how public space is envisioned, as it reveals two distinct visions. The first vision is public space as being a place for the free interaction and absence of coercion from powerful institutions. This vision also includes, spaces that are unimpeded from state interference where political movements can organize and advance. The second vision is commonly held by planners in many north American cities, it is the view that public space is open space for recreation and entertainment. Also, it is only subject to 'appropriate' users that are permitted to use the space and as a place where they may experience the spectacle of the city. It is my belief that the first vision holds the fundamental elements that public space should have. Public space should first and foremost serve the needs of the public by way of providing space for whatever needs the public may have. It is my view

that public space should serve the public in the ways that the rest of urban space fails to do. It can

certainly provide a place of refuge for the homeless.

If we are to consider Yonge-Dundas Square and its publicness, we must evaluate it based on the

fundamental aspects of public space. In search of this answer, I visited the square and observed its

occupants, the activity, and the infrastructure. There is a stark contrast of the activity on the Square itself

and across adjacent streets. On the south west corner of Yonge-Dundas, there are religious advocates,

street musicians, and street vendors, promoting their beliefs work, and business. Much of the activity of

the occupants on the sidewalk apart from the hot dog stand is informal. In the square itself, these

activities are rarely permitted. Any sort of occupant on the square that isn't a passerby or tourist, and

who spends an extended amount of time on the square is undertaking their activity formally, in other

words with permission to carry out their activity. This is done by the individual having to obtain the

appropriate approvals or permits prior to their undertaking. This stark contrast in activity, displays that

the square itself is highly regulated in use. If it wasn't evident enough, the newest and tell-tale sign of

how regulated this environment is, perhaps can be seen with the new security office (See figure 2).

**Figure 2** – The sign affixed to the security office accessory structure located on the southern portion of the square, just east of O'Keefe Lane.

Perhaps the more appropriate description of Yonge-Dundas Square is private open space.

Yonge-Dundas Square mirrors Mitchell's (1995) second view of how public space is perceived. The second vision that Mitchell articulates is very much a top down approach. Where planners, architects and other professionals apply their views of public space being places for entertainment, where 'appropriate' users like consumers and tourists are permitted to use and experience the spectacle of the city. This plays into in large part counter to the fundamental aspects of public space and to that effect the elimination of truly public space in the city.

Further to the surveillance of space it is equally imperative to understand how space is governed. Neoliberal governance is a concept for the purpose of this paper that can work in conjunction with neoliberal urbanism because neoliberal governance can explain how neoliberal policy is maintained in city spaces. Neoliberal governance is the continued process of enforcing the compliance of neoliberal policy (De Angelis, 2003). Constant police presence and the use of CCTV cameras suggest that the space is heavily governed, and is unlike any other presumed "public space" (See figure 3). In contrast,

Nathan Phillips Square, a space known for its "publicness" does not have the same sort of control or enforcement that Yonge-Dundas Square has. The Square prior to construction was portrayed as a fully public Square similar to Nathan Phillips Square. At Nathan Phillips Square only non-profit events can be held free of charge. Squeegee kids and panhandling activities weren't outlawed the same way in Nathan Philips Square. In addition, the regulations that are involved for any sort of activity other than walking or other consumer and tourist like activities require permits to be obtained. Having a valid permit for any sort of organized activity is strictly enforced by the board (Wilson, 2012).



**Figure 3 –** Toronto Police Services (TPS) camera on Gould Street looking south on Dundas Street toward Yonge-Dundas Square.

Milroy (2009) states that there were new by-laws that would govern the Square. A Board of Management was appointed and was dominated by local businesses, which allowed them to rent out spaces for a fee. Governance at Yonge-Dundas Square is done in two ways. The first involves public-private partnership, since the Board of Management controls the day to day operations of the Square and the handling of its many initiatives. This was established at Yonge-Dundas Square through neoliberal

policies, since neoliberal policies promote the idea of public-private partnership of public services. The second form of governance at Yonge-Dundas Square is regulation. This is done through provincial legislation, which is a top-down method of governance. Both approaches help maintain the order at Yonge-Dundas Square.

Yonge-Dundas Square is operated and maintained by the Downtown Yonge Business Improvement Area Association (DYBIA) formerly known as the Yonge Street Business and Resident Association (YSBRA) (Milroy, 2009). The DYBIA participates in a number of initiatives including, Safe Streets, Clean Streets, and Streetscape Improvements. The Safe Streets initiative stems from the *Safe Streets Act*. It is provincial legislation that allowed police to become more aggressive towards squeegeeing and pan handling among other activities in the area. Squeegee kids often went to busy city intersections like Yonge-Dundas in search of spare change from motorists. Outlawing these activities was part of 'cleaning up Yonge street' (Joseph, 2014).

The areas in the Yonge-Dundas corridor have long been associated with criminal activity specifically drug dealing. In 1993, a new policing division, 52 division was opened in the North end of the Eaton Centre that greatly reduced criminal activity in the area (Ruppert, 2006). In the Yonge-Dundas Street corridors, squeegeeing was a common practice among troubled youth (Joseph, 2014). Many interpreted this phenomenon as a nuisance, safety issue for drivers, and factor in traffic congestion. The city solicitor asked for amendments to provincial legislation to prevent such activity and related activities from continuing. In 1999, The Safe Streets Act passed preventing squeegeeing. It is believed by some that the attempts to clean up Yonge Street prior to its redevelopment were done to rid the area of 'undesirables'. The Yonge-Dundas area has a long history of cleanup efforts that are driven by economic factors which date back to when the Eaton Centre was first opened.

Both clean streets and safe street initiatives are supplementary to services provided by the city. The clean streets team is hired by the Downtown Yonge Business Improvement Area Association to

remove graffiti, posters, and litter. Since April 2002, the DYBIA hires additional police foot patrols to deter potential criminal activity and unauthorized street vending (Milroy, 2009). The BIA has a major stake in the day to day operations of the Square. They supported Toronto's competitive city approach when designing Yonge-Dundas Square because it would mean a busier shopping district and higher volumes of foot traffic. As a result, shop owners would gain customers, particularly middle class consumers and tourists who are impulse and entertainment spenders (Milroy, 2009).

2. "*Destruction of working class neighborhoods [sic] to make way for speculative redevelopment*"

The plan that the city had for the development project was that it was going to acquire six properties north of Dundas Street to sell to a single developer. Four properties South of Dundas Street were going to be kept by the city to build a public square. Owners who refused to sell their properties to the city would later be forced to sell through expropriation (See Figure 4). "Expropriation was shaped to suit developers, not those whose property was being expropriated, as if property owners did not merit equal consideration." (Milroy, 2009, 113). It wasn't until December of 1996 that property owners began to realize that their lands were going to be expropriated. The city knew of the expropriation of properties by June of 1996, however did not leak this information to the public until later that year. Property owners were told prior to learning that their lands were going to be expropriated that they would have to redevelop their properties into bigger buildings on site to fit the new official plan and zoning regulations, but they could still operate out of their current locations. Properties of the North East Corner of Yonge and Dundas (See Figure 5) were sold to private developer PenEquity Management Corporation (Milroy, 2009).

City of Toronto Archives, Series 1465, File 308, Item 2

**Figure 4** - Looking South of Dundas Street East of Yonge Street. The hard rock cafe remains today, however the bookshop has been expropriated by the City. Source: City of Toronto Archives Website Digitized Library



City of Toronto Archives | Fonds 1526, File 9, Item 14

**Figure 5** View of Dundas and Yonge Street at night from the 6th floor of Eaton's Centre from the 1981. All three corners have had their uses changed. The properties east of Yonge were demolished, while the northwest corner building remains today, it has seen some adaptive reuse, with its new use as a Forever 21 retail store. Source: City of Toronto Archives Website Digitized Library

3. "*Retreat from community-oriented planning initiatives*"

Peck et al.'s (2009) third element looks at community-oriented planning initiatives. Before analyzing this, it is crucial to consider what meaningful community engagement looks like. Meaningful engagement involves all stakeholders in the planning process. It gives opportunity to the voices on the fringes. It engages both the public that is present and absent. It provides a space where the community at large can provide their input on what needs to be preserved, changed, or modified. Meaningful public engagement is the public having the opportunity to give feedback on proposals. It is utilizing the mass outreach of social media to bring voices that are present in the room into the discussion Fostering public participation through multiple town halls and workshops that exceed the minimum standards set out in the Planning Act. Holding a public meeting for the purpose of satisfying a legislative requirement or checking off a box is not meaningful public engagement in anyway. Perhaps in recent years there has been a shift in the way municipalities are thinking. Municipalities today are engaging their communities through public design competitions, a series of open houses, and hiring community engagement specialist. Meaningful public engagement involves the public throughout the planning process from its inception to completion.

In looking at Yonge-Dundas Square's redevelopment and its expropriation efforts, it marked a lack of transparency in decision making. Local business owners were not given an opportunity to be involved in the planning process for future development let alone the opportunity for meaningful public engagement. The level of engagement in the development of Yonge-Dundas mirrors the level of engagement of other private developments and again calls into question the publicness of Yonge-Dundas Square.

This informs us that other so called 'public' development projects that utilize private funds should exercise extreme caution in moving forward with development without the meaningful engagement of the community.

**4.** *"Creation of privatized spaces of elite/corporate consumption"*

In testing Peck et al.'s (2009) fourth element on the creation of privatized spaces of elite and corporate consumption, a number of things must be considered. Of particular note is the ways in which space becomes privatized, and how spaces become commercially branded. Additionally, consideration of the commodification of city view corridors should also be examined.

In evaluating this element of Peck et al.'s (2009) theory, a recount of Toronto's history can inform us of the role private interest play in Yonge-Dundas Square's redevelopment. Public-private partnerships was the city of Toronto's solution to solving a sort of budget crisis after amalgamation.

> [A]malgamation was the main venue through which the Harris Tories "revolutionized" state-society relationships in Ontario. Since the province has sole constitutional jurisdiction over urban affairs in Canada, the shift towards a radical neoliberal agenda has had severe impacts on the province's cities, most notably Toronto. First, the provincial government amalgamated seven local governments in Toronto into one municipality. Second, it downloaded social welfare and transit costs to the city and caused a painful budget crunch at the municipal level. Third, it continued to cut – rather than expand – the powers of local government to tax or otherwise raise funds in order to meet the growing needs of an expanding world city reality (Boudreau, Keil, Young, 2009, 61).

This political backdrop paved the way for the city to look at the private sector for assisting in providing public services. Clearly with the use of public-private partnership after amalgamation, neoliberal policy has altered the landscape at Yonge-Dundas Square, supporting the claims of neoliberal urbanism.

The rationale behind public-private partnership is that the role of government shifts away from being a provider of public services, to a purchaser of public services. Governments use public-private partnerships because they are efficient and transfer the risks associated with projects to the private sector (Debande, 2002). The problem with public-private partnership in the case of Yonge-Dundas Square is that private enterprises take control over what should be enjoyed for the common good.

City views are commodified in two ways at Yonge-Dundas Square, they include the obvious plaster of advertisements and more subtly the rooftop terraces. The rooftop terraces provide separate and exclusive outdoor patio space for both Milestones and Jack Astor's restaurants on the north side of

Dundas Street (See figure 6 and 7). Each patio provides a view of Yonge-Dundas Square from above and exclusive views of the cities sightlines. These become places of elite and corporate consumption. This is a prime example of how city view corridors can become commodified.



**Figure 6** – Outdoor patio of the Milestones restaurant

**Figure 7** – Outdoor patio for the Jack Astor's restaurant

The fact that the square is surrounded by advertisements that take up much of the space's

sightlines makes you consider what aspects of the space could possible make Yonge-Dundas Square

public. Further research indicates that the square is in fact city owned, however it is not necessarily

operated solely by the city. The square is maintained through a public-private partnership (Smith, 2004),

ensuring that corporate interests are never compromised. Although a number of free public events are

held at the square, permission must be granted prior to holding an event, which informs that the space is

heavily regulated. Permits as per the Square's website are only given on a case by case basis. A long list

of rules governs which events will be approved and events require months of notice in advance of event

date.

Yonge-Dundas Square is a public private partnership which shares many characteristics of public

spaces, however has many "hidden" aspects of private spaces like heavy regulation.

The unstated goal of the Yonge-Dundas redevelopment was to increase consumer spending in the area. All imagery was directed to that aim via spectacularization – passive watching and being in the presence of spectacles. Huge lighted screens hang on almost every surface around the square, advertising products, services, and lifestyles. Spectacular events periodically fill the square to boost consumption: Sir Richard Branson sliding down a wire from the Olympic Torch into the square to launch his newest Virgin product; the World's Biggest Stir Fry to promote Arctic Gardens food products; a worldrecord-seeking, chocolate-milk-chugging contest  to advertise Grab, Gulp, and Go from Nestlé" (Milroy, 2009, 11).

Yonge-Dundas Square exemplifies the privatization of public space. The Square is draped in commercial advertisements, plastered with commodities. A large portion of members of the board that handles the day to day activities at Yonge-Dundas Square are also local business owners. As a result, Yonge-Dundas Square operates more like a mall as appose to a public Square.

The organic growth at the intersection at Yonge and Dundas has been largely replaced with an idealized and tourist friendly appearance, a clear aspect of disneyfication (Zukin 1991). When the Square was built, it was done so in an entrepreneurial attitude (Milroy, 2009). Increasing the area's attractiveness as a tourist and commercial district was at the forefront which is yet another example of the economic factors influencing the design of Yonge-Dundas Square. Former Mayor of Toronto Mel Lastman had great regard for the Square's approval. "This is great news for our great City. The approval of this $100-million Yonge Dundas Square means a revitalization of downtown Yonge Street and a project that will be bigger and better than Times Square. Yonge Dundas Square will quickly become a new downtown destination and a great entertainment centre for our City" (City of Toronto, 1998). The redevelopment of Yonge and Dundas symbolizes the undeniable commercialization of North American cities (Hume, 1998).

5. *"Construction of mega-projects to attract corporate investment and reconfigure local land-use patterns"*

Peck et al.'s (2009) fifth element is the construction of mega projects to attract corporate investment and reconfigure local land-use patters. Yonge-Dundas Square undoubtedly exemplifies aspects of a mega project. One key element of a mega project is the large investment of capital and

long term impacts on the economy, environment, and society. Indeed, there was an influx of funds directed to Yonge-Dundas Square during its inception and redevelopment. Milroy (2009) states two rationales behind the influx of funds towards the Yonge-Dundas corridor and eventual development of the Square. The first rationale was that the area was in constant disrepair, and neglect on behalf of the city. The second rationale accepts this reality but adds that planning restrictions in place such as the City's Official Plan prevented development. Later these development restrictions were lifted, which mirrors what Peck et al. (2009) refer to as the reconfigure of local land use patters. There have been many long term impacts from the development. The area today is one of the city's focal points for tourists, a main hub for consumers and economic activity. The societal impact is also quite diverse. The square provides very little service to the local residents living in close proximity to the square in providing true public space. In fact, very few locals use the space (Anderson et al., 2009). Perhaps the City and business has benefitted the most economically. Since the square was strategically placed next to the Eaton Centre and shops along Yonge Street. The environment has become impacted because Yonge-Dundas Square has become a significant landmark for the City.

Lehrer and Laidley (2008) discussed how mega projects are financed. Financing techniques include public and private sectors coming together. With the city utilizing a public private partnership, Yonge-Dundas Square undoubtedly is a mega project. Certainly with the development of Yonge-Dundas Square, Toronto has enjoyed a heightened status that resembles some of the global cities worldwide. With other global cities like New York's Times Square, London's Piccadilly Circus and Leicester Square, and Tokyo's Shibuya District, all make these respective cities appear more vibrant and bustling. Concurrently Toronto's appears the same with Yonge-Dundas Square. New Mega projects shift the public's attention away from controversy because of the rhetoric. When cities begin mega projects, they often shift the attention away from the controversies because of the rhetoric they use, often citing how beneficial the project will be to the area and community. What is especially problematic is that public

participation in today's mega-projects begins not at the outset but in the midst of projects (Lehrer and

Laidley, 2008).

Along the conversation of mega projects, comes the need to discuss the notion of the

competitive city. Kipfer and Keil (2002) define "competitive cities" as cities that have associations of

class, divisive politics, neoliberal planning, and policies to spur the local economy. Additionally,

multiculturalism is managed and revanchist policies are promoted. City Council made a number of

decisions that will illustrate a number of these elements, mainly policies that spur the local environment

and promoting revanchist policies. Previously discussed was the Cities actions to expropriate a number

of businesses. This exemplifies the taking back of land and consequently replacing them with leading

commercial chain businesses. Aside, another consideration should be discussed along the lines of the

management of multiculturalism. Ethnic shops like Paramount have near exclusive right in the Yonge

Street corridor. Similarly, other ethic shops also have near exclusive right. Perhaps this may be attributed

to the DYBIA managing multiculturalism in the corridor. This is a contrasting difference from how retail

on Yonge was prior to the development. Retail in the area almost always fell into three categories,

discount clothing, adult entertainment, and electronics (Milroy, 2009).

In 1995 City Council adopted the Downtown Yonge Street Improvement Plan, and in 1996 the

City Council also adopted a program to promote regeneration. By- law 1996-0135 was enacted on

March 4, 1996 to allow for Downtown Yonge Street to adopt a community improvement plan (City of

Toronto, 2011). This demonstrates the first step to the altering of local land use patterns in the area. The

goals of the regeneration were aimed at making aesthetic improvements, cleaning the streets,

beautifying the landscape and upgrading the facades of retail stores. The improvement plan listed

Yonge-Dundas Square to be the focus of public reinvestment, "it was considered the first step to spur

the redevelopment process and to upgrade the area's public spaces" (Ruppert, 2006). Brown and Storey

Architects were employed for the redevelopment, which was completed in late 2002 and opened to the

public in 2003 (Bradburn, 2013).

Apart of changing local land-use patterns under the municipal planning process in Ontario

requires development to be consistent with the municipalities Official Plan and Zoning By-laws and if

they are not consistent applications to amend these two documents must be submitted.

According to a City Staff Report, PenEquity Management Corporation applied for a Zoning By-

Law Amendment (ZBLA) to permit retail and office uses, in addition to a media tower at 259 Victoria

Street as a part of the Yonge Dundas Redevelopment Project.

The City's Planning department submitted these comments to Toronto City Council:

> An application for Zoning By-law Amendments has been submitted by Penex Dundas Square
> Limited to permit the construction of a commercial/retail building and media tower. This project
> represents an exciting addition to the Yonge Dundas intersection, consistent with the approach
> to the redevelopment of this corner already approved by Toronto City Council and the Ontario
> Municipal Board (City of Toronto, Draft Zoning by-law amendment).

Staff showed their support for this development stating that it was an exciting addition to the

intersection. Planning Staff submitted comments stating that the application for the zoning by-law

amendment was consistent with the the Official Plan (OPA 92, By-law 1997-0193) which includes the

approved policies of the Downtown Yonge Street Reinvestment Area.

This PenEquity Management Corporation ZBLA application along with OPA 92 illustrates a shift in local

land use patterns of the previous era in the Yonge-Dundas corridor.

The City Staff Report *Revitalizing Yonge – Downtown Yonge Street* illustrates the attempts the

city made and continues to make on the Yonge-Dundas Corridor. Even in recent years dating back to

2013, City Council had directed the Chief Planner, along with other city department to consult with the

BIA's downtown along the entirety of Yonge Street to improve the streetscape and retail conditions.

Even after the development of the Square, Toronto continues to focus on the Yonge corridor. The City

has sent an influx of capital to the Yonge-Dundas corridor. The city claims that these are investments in

the public realm. Although this is true on some levels, like increasing sidewalk space for pedestrians, and the permanent pedestrian zone Ryerson Square on Gould Street between O'Keefe Lane and Bond Street, the improvements are largely private realm improvements (City Staff Report, 2015). The establishment of the DYBIA in 2001, and their initiatives continued the altering of the Yonge-Dundas Corridor.

6. *"Creation of gated communities, urban enclaves and other 'purified' spaces of social reproduction"*

Under Peck et al.'s (2009) sixth element states that gated communities, urban enclaves, and other 'purified' spaces of social reproduction begin to take shape. It is important to note that in some aspects of this element, Peck et al. (2009) are largely speaking to residential neighborhoods, and this area is zoned commercial (See figure 8). In this element, there are a number of linkages to the other elements previously discussed. Namely how the space is intensely monitored, regulated and governed, and its exclusivity. In testing this element, it is key to observe what is and what is not happening on the square. There are both permitted and unauthorized uses. On the square itself a clear distinction can be made between neighborhood insider and outsiders. Insiders include tourists, shoppers, event staff, and even pedestrians passing by. While outsiders are the homeless, panhandlers, street merchants. In regards to this notion of the fear of the other, it is safe to presume that the DYBIA among others, would fear any 'other' prevail in this area.

**Figure 8** – 2013 Zoning map of the City of Toronto. Yonge and Dundas area is zoned for commercial indicated in red. Source: City of Toronto, Maps and Land Use Charts.

Space in Yonge-Dundas Square is certainly 'purified'. Upon visiting the square and the surrounding area, it became apparent that although there were quite a bit of homeless persons occupying the sidewalks on the adjacent streets, there were no homeless people on the square itself. There is adequate space on the square and even sheltered enclosures, however a complete absence of homeless people occupying the space. Additionally, even though the city holds ownership over the square, only permitted and accepted uses are permitted. The space is heavily regulated and displays that this space is certainly 'purified'.

Considering this part of Yonge street's history, as a place where people in GTA came for a bargain, a place for squeegee kids to go, and a place for youth to congregate, there has certainly been a drastic shift in the areas perception. Along those line it is important to consider the areas prestige and whether it would be fair to characterize the area as a prestigious community. Again, prestige communities are characterized by restricted access, sometimes guarded, and located in attractive locations. They also feature privacy and exclusive sense of community. To consider the prestige of the

Yonge-Dundas area, one must consider lands to the west of the Square. CF Eaton Centre, is Toronto's

largest and perhaps one of the most prestigious malls in Canada. In 2015, the mall was ranked 4th in

Canada for sales per square foot (Avison Young, 2015). Eaton Centre is home to a number of high end

retail stores including Saks, Nordstrom, and Harry Rosen. Furthermore, the mall even places their more

prominent stores on the main floor and in more attractive parts of the mall to again achieve a higher

perception. The Eaton's Centre is highly restricted, has private security, and also is located in an

attractive and central location in the city. Malls in general are very exclusionary (Voyce, 2006). They are

only interested in selling and advertising to increase profits. All other purposes that it can provide a

community are secondary if that. The community that inhabits this space are consumers. The Eaton's

Centre caters to middle and upper class shoppers. The Eaton Centre is also consistent with how Caldeira

(1996) defines as an enclave. The Eaton Centre is certainly privatized, enclosed, and monitored space for

consumption, leisure, and work. Therefore, Peck et al. (2009) are accurate in their assertion that under

neoliberalism, gated communities by way of prestigious community, urban enclaves, and 'purified' space

of social reproduction can prevail.

7. *"Rolling forward of the gentrification frontier and the intensification of socio-spatial polarization"*

Peck et al.'s (2009) seventh element of neoliberal urbanism is the advancement of gentrification.

It is important to note that likewise to their sixth element, they are referring to residential areas in the

city. Since Yonge Dundas Square both historically and today is zoned commercial (See figure 7), it is

rather difficult to evaluate gentrification in this respect. However, there are aspect of Yonge Dundas

Squares redevelopment that do mirror aspect of the advancement of the gentrification frontier. These

include, the displacement of the spaces users through the additions of higher end retail and chain stores

has changed the area's demographics. Yonge and Dundas was once place for working class people to

shop. If we look further into retail rents, statistics suggest that small businesses may be driven out. Des

Rosiers et al. (2008), found that when chain stores enter the market in major shopping centres, they

command a 15% than independent stores. Also, prestige stores command 10.6 to 13.9% higher rents than standard outlets. Previously discussed was the city's efforts to expropriate properties, this draws many parallels to processes of gentrification.

Milroy (2009) accounts that the public interest in the area was to come up with policy that would be non-residential anti-gentrification. In other words, coming up with a policy that would protect current businesses, a consideration for the local character of discount clothing, electronic, and adult entertainment stores. However, this did not occur with the eventual expropriation effort by the City.

The Yonge Street Regeneration Project was a City led project. Perhaps there are some underlying aspect of class warfare that Smith (1996b) suggests. Being a prominent central part of Toronto, it isn't far outreaching to believe that in the City's view to take back the territorial loses incurred at the hand of working class and disenfranchised youth which mirrors the City's more recent Regent Park Revitalization.

Perhaps Peck et al. (2009) would be better suited to broaden this element to included urban renewal or urban regeneration. Those elements would better capture commercial districts whilst maintaining the theme of transformations in the built environment under neoliberal urbanization.

8. *"Adoption of the principle of 'highest and best use' as the basis for major land use planning decisions"*

Looking at Peck et al.'s (2009) eighth and final element of built form transformations under neoliberal urbanization, we must examine the extent that the "highest and best use" principle was used. Prior to the start of the Yonge Regeneration Plan, two studies were conducted. They included the urban design study and the street survey. Vertical retailing was largely absent from the area. Prior to redevelopment, HMV was the only retail store in the area that expanded into the upper floor. After the urban design study and the street survey study it became apparent that vertical retailing was going to be the new template for retail on Yonge. The street survey also recommended the need to allow minor

alterations to the the built form for the properties along Yonge. The City then used there two studies to initiate the Yonge Street Regeneration Plan, with the stressing the importance of low-rise retail. It is clear that the "highest and best use" principle was used here (Milroy 2009).

It was the preference of the developers to build high rise residential buildings in the area, as that was the most profitable development (Milroy, 2009). However, the City's zoning by laws would not allow for it. Instead property owners sold their properties to large developers who had the financial capabilities to invest in the area and receive huge return on their investments. With the zoning permitting low-rise retail, that was to the extent developers could build. Developers slowly began to see the value in the empty upper floor retail space that wasn't being used by current property owners, which meant that the developers could utilize that space. This project was financially feasible because developers purchased properties at a fraction of the cost that the properties would be valued at after redevelopment. The area would also be supported by public infrastructure, there was a going to be a new subway station that would serve the area (See figure 9).



**Figure 9** – Dundas Station

# Conclusion and Discussion

Masses of people today still believe that malls are public property (Hume, 1998). But malls are actually highly privatized spaces. Even more problematic is the City of Toronto's reluctance to dispel this myth and its attributing of Yonge-Dundas Square as public space.

Even after an era of privatization of public services, the belief, and the trend in Toronto continues to assume that the market will provide social services. Perhaps this is the greatest achievement of capitalism, that the market is seen as to provide every social service. Even the most basic human rights like shelter heavily rely on the market. Although conversations on affordable housing has changed in recent years, few real and substantial changes to the development process have taken place. Perhaps tackling the issue of where we live may have to first be addressed before we can solve the issues of where we work and play.

When the city undertook its redevelopment efforts on Yonge Street, perhaps it was a symbol of the successes of capitalism even more so than the use of private funds for public service. The Square has become one of the most notable places. Once a place for working class residents in the GTA to find bargains, and City led expropriation has altered the character of the neighborhood, and handed it over to the capitalist elites that believe in profit maximization and private property rights. As rare as expropriation is for a city, it is perhaps the greatest indicator of the cities quest to compete on the global stage. Joe Berridge of Urban Strategies, was an advisor during Yonge-Dundas Square's design competition. "The notion of actually taking down buildings to create new space is a dramatic step for the city to take. My hope is that we do something with the space that hasn't been done before, a space that rekindles people's passion for city-building." This statement captures a wider discussion in the city of Toronto. Since the completion of Yonge-Dundas Square, Toronto has seen a condo boom, even with limited developable lands. Toronto has looked at brownfield sites and infill projects to spring spur high

rise development. This kind of city building is quite consistent with the neoliberal urbanization that Peck et al. (2009) proclaim.

If Toronto's former Director of Urban Design Robert Glover is correct in his statement of Yonge-Dundas Square setting the standard for all public space in the future, then perhaps we are in grave danger of losing public space for good. If Toronto is the inclusive city it claims to be, then perhaps, a shift in not only the way space is developed but the way space is thought. It is the job of planners to balance interest of the people who are both involved and not involved in the process. If planners continue this process of ignoring large segments of the population, then its citizens will have to reclaim space.

Since neoliberal policy gained popularity in the late 1970s and early 1980s, it is safe to presume that it may have played a role in Yonge-Dundas Square's redevelopment. What insists that neoliberal policy has played a major role in Yonge-Dundas Square's redevelopment is the loss of fundamentally-public public space, expropriation of properties, lack of transparency and meaningful public engagement, use of public private partnerships to provide pseudo-public space, the influx of capital and private funds, the swift removal of any homeless static activity, the displacement of the former space users, and developers purchasing properties for vertical retailing.

With the absence and surveillance of public space, the destruction of working class neighborhoods, the retreat from community-oriented planning, the creation of privatized space for elite consumption, the construction of mega projects, the creation of a prestige community, the rolling forward of non-residential gentrification, and the adoption of the 'highest and best use principle', all cumulatively demonstrate that Peck et al.'s (2009) elements of transformations of the built urban environment under neoliberal urbanization is eerily accurate. Although Peck et al. (2009) make no reference or mention of Yonge-Dundas Square, each element provided a lens to analyze the square and the immediate surrounding area.

A number of scholars point to capitalism as the root of major urban problems. Katherine Rankin (2009) explains that planning helps capitalist accumulation because it spurs investment. She explains the ways in which planning deals with urban problems and essentially helps capitalist interests, along with the work of David Harvey and his explanation of the current affairs of urban planning and its inability to counter capitalism with reference to 'accumulation by dispossession'. This particular theory of Harvey discusses the routine displacement for the poor and marginalized not only in their places of residence, but also places they frequent because those places have been deemed desirable for capitalist and elites. Clearly, the squeegee kids on Yonge, the expropriated local businesses that provided discounted clothing, and the place where young entrepreneurs could afford $100 stalls for the week are long gone (Tompkins, 2003). I agree with Rankin (2009) when she claims that although capitalism has shifted to neoliberalism, planning has failed to accommodate this shift. Certainly urban planning reform is necessary to deal with injustices like displacement and exclusion.

The emergence of the neoliberal regime globally has caused a number of issues. With the rise of neoliberal urbanization, urban planning has resorted to increased uses of public private partnerships. Planning in many respects has succumbed to the pressures of increased global competitiveness. Leonie Sandercock (2003) critiques modern planning, and suggest new practices that are both progressive and influenced by emerging disciplines like feminism.

Prior to the City's redevelopment efforts, The T. Eaton Company threatened to appeal the City's Official Plan policies at the Ontario Municipal Board (OMB) on the merits that it did not adequately protect retail uses, and recognize retail as an important economic aspect of the downtown area (Milroy 2009). This shows that utilizing the OMB, private interest can strong arm the City into making decisions that would solely be beneficial to them. I believe that reforms across the planning discipline is required. Perhaps OMB reform is the first step to achieving a more inclusive process, where private interests take a

back seat to the public interest. Perhaps planners across public, private, and non-profit sectors uphold the duties to serve in the best interest of the public.

The DYBIA contrary to its past actions has taken a different approach in recent years to addressing issues in its district. They participated in the Safe and Inclusive Streets Strategy (Downtown Young, 2017). The Strategy makes clear that the DYBIA is making efforts to become more inclusive. Included in their Strategy, is their acknowledgement of homelessness, poverty, substance abuse, and crime in their district. BIA's typically do not address these concerns, as an admission of this sort of activity on its premises is not particularly advantageous to business. Often is the case that BIA's ignore these concerns, thus it is my belief that the DYBIA should be commended for their efforts in recognizing these issues. It marks a more progressive and nuanced approach to addressing urban issues.

## Planning in Toronto:

### Linking Planning Practice and Theory, and Lessons Learned

Planning literature that was discussed in the historical and theoretical review of this paper addressed two types of planning theories. Those theories included normative and procedural theories in planning (Allmendinger, 2002). Much of the procedural theory is indeed correct, that we must engage different segments of the population including men and women, the disabled, the homeless, people from different sexual orientations and ethnic backgrounds in to meaningful engagement, through participatory planning, public involvement, and advocacy planning. However, we must understand that perhaps ever more importantly in normative theory, is that every individual will have their own unique vision, a utopian ideal, and end goal of what makes public space successful.

Fincher and Iveson (2008) suggest that expert planners claim to know what is best for a city and attempt to implement their own ideal and thus improving urban life. However, the planners' ideal is far from the ideal of the working-class, people of colour, and immigrants. In other words, planning in the past has a long history of failing to accommodate diversity in cities. Fincher and Iveson (2008) offer three

solutions along the lines of normative theory to planners who will attempt to fix the urban problems we

have encountered in the past. The solutions include redistribution, recognition, and encounter.

Redistribution to plan for addressing the needs of the disadvantaged; recognition to ensure that the

needs of groups of people are met; and encounter is to encourage and increase the mix of diverse

groups of people in social interaction. This is indeed what needs to occur with future public space

development efforts.

In considering lessons learned from Yonge-Dundas Square and its planning, voices were

marginalized. There was a lack of meaningful public engagement. Private security and intense formal

surveillance has no place in public space. Perhaps in public space surveillance should remain passive and

order should be maintained by the public. Lastly, public space must be owned and operated as public.

### Waterfront Toronto

Moving forward it is important to consider the lessons learned both in planning practice and

theory, and Yonge-Dundas Square's redevelopment and how it can be applied to other project in

Toronto.

New and large scale development projects in Toronto are not limited to Yonge-Dundas Square,

but also the revitalization of Toronto's waterfront and appeal to global corporate investment (Kipfer and

Keil, 2002). Toronto's urban Waterfront spans from Coxwell Avenue to Dowling Avenue. In 2000, the

government of Canada, Ontario, and the City of Toronto collectively created an organization called

Waterfront Toronto. This organization's mandate is to oversee Toronto's waterfront redevelopment.

Each level of government allocated $500 million in funds to renew Toronto's waterfront. Toronto's

waterfront renewal project is a multi-billion dollar project intended to foster the long-term growth for

environmental improvements, increased economic activity, and overall enhancement of quality of life of

the area. Three precincts include, West Don Lands, East Bayfront, and the Port Lands. All three levels of

government have pledged funds and are involved in the redevelopment (Eidelman, 2006). Some

redevelopment is bound to see some citizen resistance, and includes many stakeholders including private developers.

Lehrer and Laidley (2008) have describe Toronto's redevelopment of its waterfront as a mega project. Traditionally waterfront redevelopments are a way for cities to invest in the built environment. They discuss the redevelopment of Toronto's waterfront as a new kind of mega project, one that masks in rhetoric of an idealistic view of a multipurpose and inclusive area. The rhetoric involves the use of language like mixed-use development, diverse housing types, retail and office space, public space, and natural amenities, and community and cultural facilities. They discuss Toronto's waterfront development as a mega project within the context of the "competitive city". The authors argue that in reality Toronto's waterfront reproduces rather than resolves urban inequalities and disenfranchisement.

**Proposed Elevated Park at Bay Park Centre**

The proposed elevated park connects the proposed office towers at 81 Bay Street and 141 Bay Street. The proposed elevated park is located south Front Street and east of Bay Street. The project is a two phased project, with phase one at 81 Bay Street already granted approval, while phase two at 141 Bay Street is still going through the approval process (Mirabelli, 2015). The controversy surrounding the elevated park is that the park may only give access to office workers and not be open to the general public. It is a space that would be exclusionary and exemplifies the privatization of public space.

The proposed park is yet another example of the commodification of city view corridors. Early renderings suggest a prominent view looking west to CN Tower and Toronto's Skyline (See figure 10).

**Figure 10** – A rendering of the view of Toronto's skyline looking west from the proposed elevated park. Source: Alex Bozikovic, The Globe and Mail, Toronto towers reveal complex recipe of 21st century downtown skyscraper.

The Park is proposed to be above the rail deck corridor connecting the 4th floors of 81 and 141 Bay Street. The project hides very little in terms of providing a public amenity. They are blatant in their proposal, that this will be a space for corporate tenants to hold events (Bay Park Centre, 2017). Although some may view this space as Toronto's attempt to mirror New York's Highline Park, nothing can be further from the truth. New York's Highline park is publically accessible while the proposed elevated park in Toronto is strictly a private endeavor that will be profit generating for the buildings in serves and the restaurants that will accompany the development. We cannot confuse Bay Park Centre as public space. If

Yonge-Dundas Square is any indication of what is seemingly public space, then we must not be misled

here in to thinking the proposed elevated park to be public space.

Both Toronto's Waterfront developments, and the proposed elevated park at Bay Park Centre

mirror many of the aspect of Yonge-Dundas Square's redevelopment. It is important for city planners in

respect of these ongoing and future developments to be mindful of public space allocations, exercise

caution when utilizing private funds, and provide meaningful engagement both at the outset and

throughout that development process. With ongoing and future development project like the Port Lands

on Toronto's Waterfront, and the proposed elevated park at Bay Park Centre, perhaps we need to use

the lessons learned from Yonge-Dundas Square. Lessons that remind us of the exclusionary nature of so

called 'public' space.

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