THE QUEST TO NEGOTIATE EQUITABLE CIVIC ENGAGEMENT:
TORONTO'S SRI LANKAN TAMIL COMMUNITY
AND SOCIAL PLANNING
IN CANADA'S LARGEST MULTICULTURAL METROPOLIS

by

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B.Sc., The University of Victoria, 1998

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF
THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF SCIENCE

in

THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES
(School of Community and Regional Planning)

We accept this thesis as conforming
to the required standard

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

August 2004

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Title of Thesis: The Quest to Negotiate Equitable Civic Engagement: Toronto’s Sri Lankan Tamil Community and Social Planning in Canada's Largest Multicultural Metropolis

Degree: MScP Year: 2004

Department of School of Community and Regional Planning

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ABSTRACT

In this study I examine the connections between urban governance, social planning, civic participation and engagement, and the quest for full, active, democratic citizenship by marginalized groups, particularly immigrant communities living in Canada’s multicultural cities. The notion of ‘inclusive planning’ within an ethno-culturally diverse urban context is explored through the examination of both the City of Toronto’s approach to social development planning and the response of one newcomer community, the Sri Lankan Tamils, particularly through the work of the newly formed national organization, the Canadian Tamil Congress. My study is guided by five research questions that explore the roles and responsibilities of government, planners and communities in this context. I conclude by presenting a number of recommendations related to how planners can work toward a democratic renewal of planning in multicultural cities such as Toronto through the support and development of planning policies and practices that recognize equitable engagement, communication, negotiation, and partnership as guiding principles. These include a wide range of ideas related to identifying and challenging the forces of exclusion identified within my research, in order to construct a form of citizenship that is grounded in ongoing negotiation between the state and its citizenry.
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Chapter One
Introduction

The idea of citizen participation is a little like eating spinach: no one is against it in principle because it is good for you. Participation of the governed in the government is, in theory, the cornerstone of democracy – a revered idea that is applauded by virtually everyone. The applause is reduced to polite handclaps, however, when this principle is advocated by the have-nots (minorities, visible or invisible). And when the have-nots define participation as redistribution of power, the...consensus on the fundamental principles explodes into many shades of outright racial...ethnic, ideological, and political opposition. 

(Arnstein, 1969)

Given the openness of local governments, with their easy access to elected officials and regular opportunities for citizens to appear before city council, it may seem surprising that local governments bother with organized public participation at all.

(Graham et al, 1998)

Canada is one of a small number of countries in the world that has adopted a multicultural vision of society, yet not all of its citizens have the opportunity to participate equally in the decision-making processes that affect daily life. The processes associated with globalization and associated decades of recent immigration from non-European countries have resulted in a significant transformation not only of the demographics of the population, but of the method of governance required to equitably reflect a highly diverse citizenry within a democratic framework. Within the scaffolding of mainstream Canada, immigrant and other marginalized communities challenge traditional notions of citizenship, identity and what or who makes up the public sphere. This struggle is primarily located in Canada’s multicultural cities as the locus of economic, political and administrative power in which marginalized communities struggle against oppression, discrimination, exclusion and inequality (Abu-Laban and Gabriel, 2002; Bissoondath, 2002; Papillon, 2002; Stasiulis, 2002; Bannerji, 2000; Kymlicka and Norman, 2000; Henry, et al, 1998).

From the perspective of the citizen, the opportunity to shape the social, political and economic fabric of the nation through full participation and engagement in all levels of society and its decision-making represent the underpinnings of democracy. Representation in political institutions,

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1 See Figure 1 for Arnstein’s “A Ladder of Civic Participation”
political processes and civic life is a critical indicator of social inclusion (Saloojee and van Heelsum, 2002).

However, even now, attaining such rights associated with full and active citizenship by the individuals and communities that make up Canada’s diversity continues to be an ongoing challenge, particularly for those who are not included in society’s demographic majority such as immigrant, and ethno-cultural and other visible minority communities. In fact, growing numbers of recent immigrants face barriers to full participation in contemporary Canadian society (Preston and Wong, 2002). This impact reflects directly on the potential for health and prosperity of the nation as a whole. The broad-based cost of supporting a large portion of a society that is virtually silenced within the politics of the state and unable to ‘move forward’ in the sense of attaining full, active democratic citizenship weighs heavy on the social and economic infrastructure of Canadian society, most prominently in our cities (Shaw and Martin, 2000).

A myriad of challenges exist from the standpoint of community and social planners who endeavor to create an inclusive, equitable society - seeking to engage an increasingly diverse citizenry in planning for and with multicultural communities in Canadian municipalities and the diversity of needs and desires they represent. In 1998, Leonie Sandercock offered a critique of “the modernist project of city-building and the planning mentality that supported it, as a state-directed project with emancipatory ideals but less than emancipatory consequences” (1998; 2003a: 2). In a recent paper, she sets out to, “rethink multiculturalism as a form of democratic politics” (Sandercock, 2003a: 3). Sandercock includes the ‘right to difference’ and the ‘right to the city’ as key components in this process which recognize the legitimacy of participation by all members of a diverse society, promoting active citizenship through which to negotiate difference, creating a ‘shared commitment to a political community’ and an empowered citizenry (2003a: 34).

The need to explore the barriers that exist to full participation of immigrants in Canada’s cities is an urgent issue that must be addressed in order to allow for the formation of planning policies and practices that work to reflect equitable engagement of all communities within the urban sphere. From there, a process of negotiation among and between individuals, communities, city
governance, institutional, and other power holding structures becomes vital to building of a functionally inclusive, democratic and prosperous city for all (Alternative Planning Group, 2003b).

In this study I seek to examine the connections between urban governance, social planning, civic participation and engagement, and the quest for full, active, democratic citizenship by marginalized groups, particularly immigrant communities living in Canada's diverse, multicultural cities. Utilizing the case study of the City of Toronto, its Sri Lankan Tamil community and the newly formed national organization, the Canadian Tamil Congress, I will explore the following research questions:

- How do existing governance structures within multicultural cities create opportunities for governments to negotiate with the diversity of voices regarding the needs and desires of their communities?

- What are the responsibilities of planners engaged in the social development of Canadian cities to involve citizens in decision making and what methods do they use?

- How do citizens/communities, particularly immigrant and ethno-cultural communities, respond to the structure of involvement used by planners to engage citizens in decision-making processes?

- How do immigrant communities overcome the barriers they face, if any, to participating in this structure in order to bring their voices forward and assert their rights as citizens to participate in planning for their future?

- What can social planners do to build towards a democratic renewal of planning within Canada's multicultural cities?

I offer the results of this study as a contribution to the discussion of 'inclusive planning' within a diverse, multicultural urban context and to the identification of purposeful actions that can be taken to support the development of policies and practices which recognize equitable engagement, communication, negotiation, and partnership as guiding planning principles that can be applied in the Canadian context.

Background

Canada is often praised for its ability to successfully ‘manage’ and ‘maintain’ its diverse citizenry. Since multiculturalism became official national policy in 1971 under then Prime Minister Pierre Elliot Trudeau, it has acted as the supportive framework for the transformation of the social,
economic, and political fabric of Canada through the process of continual immigration. The policy also supported changes made to the Immigration Act in 1976 that shifted acceptance of immigrants from almost exclusively European countries to include those originating from Asia and Africa, serving to dramatically diversify the demographic of the country (Halli and Driedger, 1999). During the last 30 years of newcomer arrivals, extensive debate has taken place surrounding the theory, policy and practice of multiculturalism including the impact on the ground in Canada’s cities and neighbourhoods, and in the day-to-day lives of Canada’s citizens.

One result of such deliberations and explorations is the recognition that not all citizens experience the same level of ‘equitable inclusion’ in Canadian society as others (Saloojee, 2003). The realms of ‘exclusion’ are as diverse as the groups who experience them and are most often associated with the understanding of Canadian society and structures and the rights of those who live within. Those whose day-to-day reality is reflective of this struggle to be ‘included’ can often be more easily identified by examining, not the notion but the reality, of the ‘mainstream’ – and who is left out. This includes immigrants and refugees, indigenous peoples, the differently-abled, gays, lesbians, transgender and bisexuals, low-income earners, women, and often any individual whose skin is not white. The forms of exclusion, their labels and interconnections are also far ranging: racism, sexism, classism, systematic and institutional discrimination, to name but a few.

Such barriers act to erode the fundamentals of Canadian democracy, blocking individuals from attaining full, active, democratic citizenship, the impact of which is reflected most blatantly in our cities. As urban populations become increasingly ‘diversified’ and the pressures of globalization, amalgamation, downloading, downsizing, service reduction and funding cuts continue, those already living at the margins are pushed even further out. In actuality, citizens who have the opportunity to attain full citizenship in Canadian society are more likely to contribute to building a strong, diverse, equitable and accessible economic, social and political fabric as envisioned in our Constitution, Charter of Rights and Freedoms, and Multicultural Act, a fabric that truly reflects themselves within the full diversity of Canadian society. What can be done in the support of this process?
For planners, the challenges associated with increasing ethno-cultural diversity in Canada have never been so clear as they engage directly in the development and construction of society. Planning as a function of the state has historically reinforced the power and privilege of the dominant cultural and class. Today, planners in Canada and other racialized liberal democracies continue to work within what Leonie Sandercock refers to as an ‘unresolved post-colonial condition’ which maintains a modernist notion of ‘the public’ as one homogeneous body (2004a, 1998). This context poses great challenges for planning with and for an increasingly diverse citizenry - from providing culturally appropriate services, to developing equitable policies, to shifting the system itself toward principles of inclusion (Edgington and Hutton, 2002; Wallace and Milroy, 1999, 2001; Qadeer, 1994, 1997; Ameyaw, 2000; Burayidi, 2000). Planners in today’s Canadian society must develop and carry with them new ideas, perspectives and methods of communication that are reflective and inclusive of the communities they work with and for. They must endeavor to create and supporting relevant and equitable methods of engagement and avenues of participation, while applying the totality of this approach in their endeavors to shift the structure and politics of planning from within. These tools are vital in order to develop planning processes that inherently involve ongoing negotiation within and between the state and its communities, moving planning towards a process of democratic renewal in Canada’s multicultural cities.

According to Shaw and Martin (2000), such a ‘Democratic Renewal’ involves two necessary tasks. First, the forces of social exclusion that are systematically at work in Canadian society must be identified and challenged. Secondly, an active and inclusive concept of Canadian democratic citizenship must be constructed through an ongoing process of negotiation between the state and its citizenry where ‘inclusion’ is not a pre-determined endpoint, but instead the modus operandi. Within this process, planners have a catalytic role as ‘citizenship activators’. Positioned between civil society and the state, though potentially working formally with and for either at any point in time, planners are found in that place where the process of reconstructing citizenship and democracy in Canada begins.

According to Chantal Mouffe, a key component necessary for the realization of a form of radically inclusive democratic citizenship, which inherently involves a process of dynamic negotiation, is that of civic engagement and participation (2000). How does the Canadian state seek to involve its
citizenry? How do governance structures within multicultural cities create space for negotiating with the diversity of voices regarding the needs and desires of their communities? How do citizens, particularly those who are living on the margins of society, respond to this structure? What are the responsibilities of planners engaged in the social development of Canadian cities to involve citizens in decision making and what methods do they use? How do these communities overcome the barriers to participation and engagement that they face, (if any), to bring their voices forward and assert their rights in planning for their future? What can social planners do to support this process and build towards a democratic renewal of planning?

My research seeks to examine these questions in more detail through a case study approach. Within this study, I will explore how one Canadian municipality, the City of Toronto, attempts to engage its citizens in the social development of the city through its governance structure and planning processes. In contrast, I will also examine an ethno-cultural community living 'at the margins', that of Toronto’s Sri Lankan Tamil community, and their response to the city’s approach to social development planning, including the establishment and activities of their newest community based organization, the Canadian Tamil Congress (CTC).

Research Context
This research project was conducted in association with the study, "The Unfinished Quest: Immigrant Citizenship Rights to the City: Sri Lankan Tamils in Toronto and Vancouver", funded by the Research on Immigration and Integration Metropolis office in Vancouver. The project was embarked upon in June 2002 and received funding to April 2004. Through my position as Research Assistant to the project based in Toronto, I was able to engage with members of the city’s Sri Lankan Tamil community over a period of four months in the summer of 2002, and again for two weeks in April of 2003. For the purpose of this study, I have drawn from the research I conducted during this time.

Research Methodology and Methods
The goal of this study was exploratory. The issues surrounding civic engagement and participation of ethno-cultural and other marginalized groups have long been a part of justice and rights movements throughout the world. As a result of globalization and resulting immigration, it has also
become part of citizenship and constitutional debates. Within planning discourse, the involvement of citizens in decision-making is discussed as a key element of theories that view planning as a potential instrument for social change within multicultural societies (Friedmann 2002; Ameyaw, 2000; Au, 2000; Burayidi, 2000; Qadeer 2000, 1997; Sandercock, 2000, 1998; Holston, 1998). Within this study, I attempt to explore this concept as it relates to the creation of more equitable and inclusive planning structures, policies and processes through negotiation and participation of a diverse citizenry.

My study is a qualitative one and I found the case study approach to be the most supportive and appropriate framework. This choice also enabled me to explore a 'phenomenon in context'2, in this case, civic engagement in social planning within multicultural cities, in the context of Toronto, Canada and the Sri Lankan Tamil community (Robson 1993: 56). The case study approach provided me the necessary space to examine this complex, multifaceted issue that has both a present and historical context. The process of Sri Lankan Tamils leaving their war-torn homeland to immigrate, settle, adapt and become active in Toronto has occurred for the most part over the last 15 years (Statistics Canada, 2001b). Over generally the same period, a number of important shifts have occurred in the nature of immigration in Canada, and the approach to civic engagement in the social development planning of the pre and post amalgamated City of Toronto as it responds to increased immigration and diversification of its population. The Tamil story can be seen as a living experiment in the evolution of Canadian multiculturalism.

My research was informed by an extensive literature review, drawing from the realms of planning, cultural studies, political science, geography, sociology, and beyond. I drew particularly on the literature surrounding citizenship, multiculturalism, inclusion/exclusion, civic participation/engagement, and planning. I will outline these works in more depth in the second chapter of this study. Primary and secondary documents were also analyzed, including both published and internal reports from the City of Toronto's various planning-related departments, the Community Social Planning Council of Toronto (CSPC-T), the Alternative Planning Group (APG)3,

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2 See also Flyvbjerg (2001), who argues that social sciences are extremely important in the analysis of value and power in modern society.
3 The APG is a partnership between the Chinese National Council Toronto Chapter, the Council of Agencies Serving South Asians, the Hispanic Development Council, and the African Canadian Social Development Council developed to
Identifcation of informants for the project, "The Unfinished Quest: Immigrant Citizenship Rights to the City: Sri Lankan Tamils in Toronto and Vancouver," began with an Internet search for Sri Lankan Tamil organizations in Toronto, from which a snowball sampling technique was utilized to locate the remaining participants. As the Research Assistant located in Toronto, I conducted 29 interviews during the one-year period from April 2002 through April 2003. From these, I have selected twelve key informant interviews and one focus group interview as one part of the primary research for this case study.

Of the interviews used in this study, three were conducted with planners, one with a Toronto City Councillor, and eight with representatives of Toronto's Sri Lankan Tamil community, all of whom were chosen based on their direct knowledge and experience working within the community, and some, specifically with the Canadian Tamil Congress. The focus group interview consisted of eight Sri Lankan Tamils, all of whom worked directly with the Canadian Tamil Congress. Informants will be referenced as Interview Participant 1-8, Focus Group Participant 1-8, Planner 1-3 and City Official 1.

All interviews were based on a set list of open-ended questions to allow space for different stories and perspectives to be put forth. Interviews ranged in duration from one half hour to two hours and took place in a variety of settings including offices, coffee shops, Tamil restaurants, and community meeting rooms. All interviews were recorded on mini-tape and later transcribed and coded.

Additional information for this study was gathered through participant observation during the course of conducting the total body of 29 interviews. These interviews were conducted with Sri Lankan
Tamil individuals, organizations and families who had a wide range of stories including reasons for immigration, the length of time spent in Toronto, settlement patterns and experiences, level of education and income, community and organizational affiliation, and civic participation, and perspectives on multiculturalism and citizenship. This overall body of interviews helped to inform me of the various struggles facing members of this newcomer community as they attempt to reconcile traditional Sri Lankan ways of life (the socio-cultural) and past homeland experiences (the political), with those within their new home in Toronto. Through this process I was able to observe a variety of dynamics within the community and to begin to recognize some of the key issues, concerns and barriers facing the many community members in terms of attaining full, active and democratic citizenship at the city level. I am extremely grateful for this opportunity and would like to deeply thank all those individuals who allowed me to observe, document and share their experiences.

Limitations of the Research

The topic of this thesis emerged from the process of research that took place in association with the project, “The Unfinished Quest: Immigrant Citizenship Rights to the City: Sri Lankan Tamils in Toronto and Vancouver.” Due to the use of this grounded theory approach and a lack of resources to support further travel to Toronto, my study was limited to a general overview or exploration of the issues related to civic engagement and social development planning in Toronto that had emerged through initial interviews, and the response of the Sri Lankan Tamil community through one organization, the Canadian Tamil Congress. I was not able to engage in an in-depth examination of one particular planning process or the responses of a larger representation of the members of the Tamil community.

Although only a small number of interviews were carried out in relation to the overall number of Sri Lankan Tamils living in Toronto, I have chosen to maintain the use of the term “community” within this study when referring to that of the Sri Lankan Tamils. This decision was strongly influenced by the frequent use of the term by Sri Lankan Tamil study participants during interviews and informal conversations, particularly in reference to cultural characteristics, values, or challenges that have a high rate of commonality among members of their “community”. 
In addition, though all efforts were made to carry out an equal number of interviews with both men and women within the Sri Lankan Tamil community as part of those conducted for the Metropolis project, the majority of interviews I have used in this study represent the voices of men. This is extremely important to state, as the Tamil culture includes defined gender roles that may have influence on or even contribute to the challenges associated with civic engagement for Tamil community members, particularly women, but men as well. It is important to note however, that the majority of women interviewed in this study represented youth within the community. This may be evidence of a shift in defined gender roles.

Also due to lack of time and financial resources, I was unable to utilize a Tamil-English translator, which may have provided more in-depth, nuanced responses to interview and focus group questions and discussions, access to a wider range of participants, and potentially a greater level of comfort with the interview and research process for participants.

Organization of Study
In Chapter Two presents a range of academic literature that has informed my research project. From these sources, I construct a theoretical framework that weaves together insights and explorations from five major areas of study: citizenship, multiculturalism, inclusion/exclusion, civic participation/engagement, and planning. Though I present these ideas in separate sections, the works I examined under each topic are often inextricably interconnected and thus provide insight into the multiple dimensions and points of consideration I have chosen to explore in my study.

In Chapter Three provides an overview of the City of Toronto's recent amalgamation history and the present governance structure, with particular attention to its avenues of citizen participation. I then focus on the realm of social planning as carried out within the City of Toronto including the approaches used by planners to engage citizens in the planning process. I review a number of the initiatives the City has carried out in order to inform social development planning in the City. I then introduce an organization that offers an alternative approach to planning, one that is particularly relevant to ethno-cultural and other diverse communities represented in Toronto. In the final section, I include critical reflections on the City of Toronto's approach to citizen engagement as a vital component of social development planning.
Chapter Four outlines the background and history of Sri Lankan Tamil immigration to Canada, specifically Toronto, and includes an overview of the civil war in Sri Lanka and how this has affected their perspective of state politics and civic involvement in Canada. I focus this chapter particularly on the settlement process of Tamils in Toronto, their successes and challenges, and the key characteristics of the community at present.

In Chapter Five, I examine one Tamil community organization, the Canadian Tamil Congress (CTC). I will include the process and circumstances surrounding its inception, purpose, mandate, and structure of the organization. In addition, I will discuss its relationship to the City of Toronto's social planners and decision makers, and the organization's ideas and aspirations for their community and its role in Canadian society. I will draw particular attention to one of the most recent projects of the CTC that comes in direct response to the desire to increase their level of civic engagement in decision-making processes.

Chapter Six provides an in-depth critical analysis of my case study, examining how the City of Toronto approaches social planning for and with its diverse citizenry, particularly in terms of civic engagement and participation in decision-making, and how one ethno-cultural community in the city, the Sri Lankan Tamils, have responded to this approach. I do this by addressing each of the five questions posed in Chapter One in the context of the literature used to inform my study, and the observations and information I have compiled during the course of my research.

Finally, in Chapter Seven I conclude by providing recommendations for how social development planning within this context can be shifted towards a more inclusive form of planning that emphasizes the development of policies and practices which recognize equitable engagement, communication, negotiation, and partnership as guiding principles in the Canadian context.
Chapter Two
A Review of the Literature

No great North American city can be understood without being studied as a city of immigrants, of newcomers, and their children, as a destination of myriad groups and individual migration projects. Describing city government or municipal politics, the building of an urban economy and the evolution of a city as a polity obviously has value. To do so without understanding ethnicity in the city seems a bit like analyzing the captain and crew of an ocean liner but not noticing the passengers, what they expect of the vessel and why they are traveling (Harney 1990: 229; quoted in Abu-Laban, 1997).

This chapter provides an overview of the wide range of academic literature that has informed my research project. From these sources, I have constructed a theoretical framework that weaves together five major areas of study: citizenship, multiculturalism, inclusion/exclusion, civic participation/engagement, and planning. The following is far from an exhaustive review, but includes the key sources that have provided the intellectual context, insight, and inspiration for the process of examination I maintained throughout the course of research, analysis and writing.

I begin by outlining the recent history of immigration to Canada. Building on this foundation, I move on to discuss how this history has influenced the evolution of Canadian citizenship as reflected in the development and implementation of key laws, policies and principles. In the next section I delve further into the notion of Canadian citizenship as it relates particularly to Canada's multiculturalism and ethno-racial diversity. Following this, I highlight various theories and explorations related to the concept of inclusion as it pertains to citizenship in a diverse society. Next, I move into the issues related to civic participation as an expression and representation of citizenship, and as a tool for measuring, advancing and expanding inclusion in Canadian society. Finally, I take each of these topics and explore their place in relation to the field of social planning, presenting insights from various planning practitioners and theorists as to how the field of planning can promote equitable, inclusive, democratic, urban citizenship activated through citizen participation in civic affairs and community-based planning and decision-making processes.
Many of the ideas I present in this chapter are inherently interconnected, posing a challenge to the presentation structure that follows, but also serving to reflect the multiple dimensions and points of consideration I have taken into account during the research and analysis of my project.

**Evolution of the citizenry**

A number of key forces have influenced the evolution of Canadian citizenship throughout the last thirty years. Economic, technological and cultural transformations, linked directly to the process of globalization through the flow of capital, goods, cultures, and peoples have had a profound affect on the ethno-cultural composition of Canada and the nature of the relationship between the state and its citizenry. One of the most profound processes associated with globalization, is that of immigration. Few countries in the world have been more dramatically transformed by recent immigration than Canada, with 18.4% of its citizens now foreign born (Statistics Canada, 2001d). Immigration has also greatly influenced the evolution of Canadian citizenship, reflected through the development and implementation of key national laws, policies and principles including the *Citizenship Act, Immigration Act, Multiculturalism Act*, the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, and the recent *Immigration and Refugee Protection Act*.

Canadian immigration policy, from its inception in 1867, has been tied to nation building (Abu Laban and Gabriel, 2002). The vision of the nation at that time, however, was a white-European one. Previous to World War II, the two colonial nations of Britain and France ensured the vast majority of immigrants accepted into Canada were of Caucasian descent from northern European countries, as well as a particular emphasis on British-origin Protestants who were seen as the ideal immigrant and citizen (Stasiulis and Jhappan, 1995; Abu-Laban, 1997). In fact, early immigration policies were designed to discourage and even restrict immigration from Asia and other countries4 (Heer, 2000).

The passing of the *Citizenship Act* of 1947 marked a point at which a shift began to occur, albeit slowly, towards greater recognition of immigrants through the provision of citizenship rights, including the right to vote. Following this, the first amendments to immigration regulations took

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4 Examples of these restrictive requirements include the policy that entry into Canada be made in one consecutive journey, legislation requiring Chinese immigrants to pay a head tax, and the Chinese Immigration Act (Henry et al, 1998; Heer, 2000).
place in 1962, removing what was considered to be preferential criteria, and in 1967 the point system of evaluation was installed, and is still in place today (Wallace and Milroy, 1999; Abu Laban and Gabriel, 2002). This process assesses new immigrants on criteria related to skills and training, including level of education, language ability and occupational demand in Canada. The greater the points accumulated, the more likely the chance of acceptance as an immigrant into Canada. This event marked a formalization of the relationship between economic/employment policy and immigration. The Canadian Immigration Act took effect in 1976 highlighting the government's responsibility to plan immigration arrivals for the future, and creating separate classes for immigrants and refugees.

In 1971, Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau introduced Multiculturalism as official Canadian policy. A guiding principle, an identity, and a marketing tool, multiculturalism within a bilingual framework created the scaffolding within which the transformation of the social, economic, and political fabric of Canada could occur through formal support for continual immigration. The policy also prompted further changes to be made to the Immigration Act of 1978, which shifted acceptance of immigrants from almost exclusively European countries to include those originating from Asia and Africa, serving to dramatically diversify the demography of the country, most notably in the cities of Toronto, Montreal, and Vancouver, considered the three main gateways to Canada (Halli and Driedger, 1999). Before 1978, according to Canadian Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 70 percent of newcomers came from Europe and only 11 percent from Asia, shifting dramatically by 1993 when immigrants from Asia accounted for 51 per cent of newcomers with only 18 percent arriving from European origins (Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 1994).

The Citizenship Act of 1977, updated again in 1985, built on the Citizenship Act of 1947 to establish a form of Canadian citizenship open and accessible to people of diverse national origin and socio-cultural background regardless of place of birth, providing equal rights and responsibilities under law (Garcea, 2003). In 1982, the key pillars of Canadian citizenship - accommodating diversity and advancing equality - were given constitutional footing through the entrenchment of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms in Canada's Constitution Act. These principles were further enshrined within the Canadian Multicultural Act of 1988 and were based on three overarching goals: building identity, civic participation and social justice, supported through
the promotion cultural freedom, advancement of equality, and fostering of intercultural understanding (Department of Canadian Heritage, 1998). Together, these pieces of legislation collectively assist to leverage the rights of minorities in Canada (Abu-Laban and Nieguth, 2000). The most recent piece of legislation, the *Immigration and Refugee Protection Act*, became law in 2002 replacing the former Immigration Act. The Act seeks to recognize the contributions made by immigrants and refugees, to promote Canada as a place to settle for workers with diverse skills, and to assist families to reunite more quickly, but has also increased the level of security that exists around the immigration process.

Today, according to Citizenship and Immigration Canada, citizenship is defined in the context of freedom and democracy, multiculturalism, the two official languages, and through equal treatment of all citizens involving, “working together with all other Canadians to build a stronger Canada, and making sure our values, dreams and goals are reflected in our institutions, laws and relations with one another” (Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 1997; Stasiulis, 2002). Reflected in this definition is a citizenship that can be conceptualized as more than just a static framework of legal rights and obligations which individuals possess by virtue of their membership in a state, it is also a dynamic, active process by which individuals and groups participate in the negotiation of new relationships and rights, or struggle to expand or maintain existing rights in relation to each other and the components of society (Siemiatycki and Isin, 1997; Turner, 1997; Holston and Appadurai 1999; Isin 1999; Brodie 2000; Isin 2000; Mouffe, 2000; Friedmann, 2002; Purcell 2003; Sandercock 2004). How is this process and characterization of citizenship reflected within the literature that examines ethno-culturally diverse societies such as Canada?

**Citizens of the Mosaic: Theories of Multicultural Citizenship**

The terrain of citizenship theory in the Canadian multicultural context continues to be a subject of much discussion and debate. According to Kymlicka and Norman (2000), there has been an explosion of interest in the study of democratic citizenship and the rights of ethno-cultural minorities in multi-ethnic societies such as Canada since 1990. This came from the recognition that although democratic citizenship has long been regarded as a difference-blind construct, this did not mean its mechanisms were inherently just, and in many cases in fact led to an unbalanced support for the
majority or mainstream group in society, as well as various forms of exclusions for members of minority groups (Young, 1990; Taylor 1992; Tully 1995).

Kymlicka, a well known Canadian citizenship theorist, recognizes two kinds of multicultural societies – multinational societies, or those resulting from the incorporation of two or more nations through agreement or force such as Quebec or First Nations peoples, and multiethnic societies, or those resulting from a process of immigration (1995). In terms of cultural minorities within multiethnic societies, Kymlicka believes that special 'minority rights' should be allotted to these groups with the purpose of promoting their integration into the larger society. This perspective has received mixed response, particularly by those who believe that multiethnic, or multicultural societies should recognize and respect all cultures equally as a means of their inclusion into the greater society (Young, 1997).

Such debates have opened the discourse surrounding 'difference' and the quest for recognition, respect, and inclusion of those traditionally marginalized and excluded from modern citizenship (Young, 1990; Isin, 2000). Saloojee and Van Heelsum (2002: 152) in their exploration of migration and integration, describe the process of new immigrants in multicultural Canada struggling to "forge identities and develop group cohesion, to understand their changed conditions of existence, and to define and influence their conditions of belonging, and to find a place and a space for themselves". Castles and Miller reflect on, "the problems of living together in one society for ethnic groups with diverse cultures and social conditions" (1993, quoted in Siemiatycki and Isin 1997: 74). Iris Marion Young describe the core of the challenge as, "the being together of strangers" (1990), and James Tully wonders if the most important political and constitutional task for democratic multicultural societies is to recognize diverse groups within their constitutions (Tully, 1995).

Citizenship in racially diverse societies has also been examined within the particular context of cities. In their publication, Fate and Faith: Claiming Urban Citizenship in Immigrant Toronto, Isin and Siemiatycki (1995: 5) found that analyzing citizenship requires exploring not only formal rights but the "autonomous actions, claims and struggles of diverse groups within the same state". The authors go on to note that citizenship, particularly in global or multicultural cities, is being defined and redefined characteristically by urban social movements that include ethnocultural groups.
These groups are reshaping the urban environment through their quest for new rights that will adequately address their needs, further redefining the nature of ‘urban citizenship’ (R.A. Beauregard and A. Bounds, 2000; Isin 1999).

Isin expands on these concepts in his 2000 volume, *Democracy, Citizenship and the Global City*. Isin states that the creation of global cities has increased the concentration of diverse groups, which come together as they assert their rights as citizens (Isin, 2000: 13). Geographer Larry S. Bourne (1999: 9) notes, “diversity obviously creates tensions and conflicts, it also offers numerous opportunities for social progress”. Sociologist Saskia Sassen affirms this notion: “Today's citizenship practices have to do with the production of ‘presence’ by those without power, and a politics that claims rights to the city” (Sassen, 2003: 58).

In her exploration of democratic citizenship and structural power in western society, theorist Chantal Mouffe views the terrain of citizenship as one of political struggle that involves the way in which citizens understand themselves and their relationship to the political world (Mouffe, 2000; Rasmussen and Brown, 2002). Mouffe sees radical democratic citizenship as an identity continually reshaped through political engagement, thereby promoting the broadening of citizen participation and responsibility for civic issues (2000). This theory finds a middle ground between universalism, where equal rights should be afforded to all, and particularity or distinct rights allotted to distinct peoples. Mouffe’s vision, deemed ‘agonistic pluralism’, is located within the conflict found between the two sides, a locus of ongoing negotiation associated with inherent potential for transformative outcomes (2000).

Addressing similar dimensions of citizenship, John Friedmann declares “there is never anything permanent, much less universal about citizen rights” (2002, 69). Friedmann offers valuable elaboration on a theory of insurgent citizenship developed by James Holston (1999). Friedmann defines this model of citizenship as,

a form of active participation in social movements or, as we may also call them, *communities of active political discourse and practice*, that aim at either, or both, the *defense* of existing democratic principles and rights and the *claiming* of new rights that, if enacted, would lead to an *expansion of the spaces of democracy*, regardless of where these struggles take place (2002, 77; Original Italics).
He notes this form of citizenship ‘from below’ as one that requires the personal commitment of its members to each other and to the movement itself (77).

These theories of multicultural citizenship offer a variety of notions and assist in the formulation and recognition of what is possible within a multicultural diverse society. But as is often the case, how such theories translate on the ground into practice and the daily lives of citizens in diverse societies can often have unsuspected results.

**Behind the Mask of Multiculturalism**

Canadian multiculturalism is often contested, the relationship most clearly defined as one between the rhetoric and the reality of multiculturalism - between powerful symbolism and ideology, concrete policies and programs, and between perception and lived reality. The creation of a diverse society supported by enshrined legislation many seem to ensure de facto equal rights to all, but in many cases official multiculturalism serves to provide only the terrain on which the battle for equity can be fought. The challenges this presents are reflected in the approaches to and mechanisms by which Canada’s identity as one of ‘unity in diversity’ is constructed, or deconstructed (Rummens, 2001; Abu Laban and Gabriel 2002; Sandercock 2004).

In her recent paper, *Rethinking Multiculturalism for the 21st Century*, Leonie Sandercock, acknowledges that multiculturalism has been a state directed project in Canada, “and needs to be examined as yet another mentality of the state, for its exclusions and inclusions” (2003b, 2, 3). She goes on to note that, “As a political theory and as a set of policies, multiculturalism remains (necessarily) very much a contested ideology, perpetually open to a new definition as newcomers arrive and challenge congealed or congealing notions of identity, belonging and citizenship” (3).

Many critics of multiculturalism view it as an ideology that preserves the hegemony of the dominant cultural group, keeping certain ethno-racial groups at the margins of society, through ‘tolerance’, ‘accommodation’, ‘appreciation’ and ‘celebration’ of their cultural diversity, but not dealing with real issues of systematic exclusion and racism in Canada (Goldberg, 1994; Henry et al, 1998). This theory of critical multiculturalism moves to a more pro-active and radical model which focuses on empowerment, politicization, and mobilization of marginalized groups, setting out to transform
social, economic and cultural institutions while also breaking down the systems and structures of oppression (Fleras and Elliot, 1996; Henry et al, 1998).

One of the most vocal critics of Canada's multicultural citizenship has been Himani Bannerji. In her publication, *The Dark Side of the Nation: Essays on Multiculturalism, Nationalism and Gender*, Bannerji (2000: 100) notes, from her perspective as a non-white person living in Canada, that Canada's Multicultural Policy is, “a central pillar in its own ideological state apparatus,” that has produced 'visible minorities' as a category of 'others'.

There is a fundamental unease with how our difference is construed and constructed by the state, how our otherness in relation to Canada is projected and objectified. We cannot be successfully ingested, or assimilated or made to vanish from where we are not wanted. We remain an ambiguous presence, our existence a question mark in the side of the nation (Bannerji, 2000:105).

Bannerji highlights the need to, “probe into the social relations of power that create different differences,” in Canadian society, particularly those constructed through race, class, gender and other relations of power that define what or who is Canadian (Bannerji, 2000: 113).

Neil Bissoondath is another author well known for his censure of Canada's official Multiculturalism Policy. In his 1993 article, later expanded into the book, *Selling Illusions: the Cult of Multiculturalism in Canada*, Bissoondath is quick to state his belief that Canada's Multicultural Policy was not only politically motivated but opportunistic, and has led to greater divisiveness and social disarray throughout the country (Bissoondath, 2002: 371- 372). He draws particular attention to the role of tradition in the realization of citizenship, noting ‘Canadian traditions’ outweigh the acceptance of ‘imported traditions’ of new citizens.

Just as the newcomer must decide how best to accommodate himself or herself to the society, so the society must in turn decide how it will accommodate itself to the newcomer. Multiculturalism has served neither interest (ibid: 384).

Echoing Bannerji, Bissoondath believes these continual divisions are likely the result of racism, and urges Canada to move away from its long standing ‘tolerant society,’ which “requires not knowledge but willful ignorance,” towards an accepting society that seeks out a true understanding and recognition of difference (Bissoondath, 2002: 383).
Researcher and theorist, Martin Papillon also supports Bissondath’s point, arguing that “Norms, rules and practices of the citizenship regime must acknowledge difference and allow its full expression in the public realm” (Papillon, 2002: 3). This notion is further expanded by Frances Henry, Carol Tator, Winston Mattis and Rim Rees in their book, *The Color of Democracy: Racism in Canadian Society*. The authors discuss, “the major vehicles by which society’s values, beliefs, and norms are developed, strengthened and protected,” including the role of education and cultural organizations in seeding and perpetuating racial bias and inequality (Henry et al, 1998: 229). The authors analyze the impact of what they call ‘democratic racism’ on Canadian institutions and culture, stressing the inadequacies of laws, public policies and state agencies in dismantling structural inequality and the conflicting role of the Canadian state in both promoting and controlling racism (ibid: 331-332).

The principle underlying multicultural change strategies is a willingness to make limited modifications in the organization or institution but not to alter its fundamental structure, mission or culture (ibid: 377).

Offering a number of strategies for change, the authors discuss the merits of developing reflective practices that allow learning to take place, empowering communities by supporting the development of leadership, and community infrastructure support systems, monitoring anti-racism initiatives including the development of policies and legislation, and emphasizing the role major institutions play in promoting and supporting racial equity (Henry et al, 1998).

**Theories of Inclusion**

Within citizenship discourse, a substantial body of work also exists related to discussions of the inclusion and/or exclusion of citizens, particularly in diverse, ethno-cultural and ethno-racial societies. In her book, *The Cultures of Cities*, Sharon Zukin reflects on whether or not citizens in diverse societies can, “create an inclusive political culture” (Zukin, 1995: 44). Charles Taylor (1999) notes the need for democratic states to form a cohesive common identity in order to avoid the by-product of exclusion. Abu-Laban and Gabriel (2002: 41) pose the question of, “who does and does not belong – and where the politics of citizenship begin”.

Much of the groundwork for the debate regarding inclusion/exclusion is found in the use and understanding of language. In their 2001 RIIM Working Paper, Daniel Hiebert and David Ley discuss the principles at the root of mainstream Canada’s understanding of multiculturalism.
They note that at the early part of the 20th century, ‘assimilation’ was seen as the basis by which newcomers were accepted into mainstream Canadian society (Hiebert and Ley, 2001: 3 - 4). With the installation of official multiculturalism, this became inappropriate and was replaced by the dominant term ‘integration’. The authors note that although assimilation and integration are often portrayed as theoretical opposites, in reality, particularly from the perspective of immigrants or other ethno-cultural minorities, they may represent the central challenge to multiculturalism – that of harmonizing ‘equality’ and ‘difference’ (ibid: 5).

Anver Saloojee, in his paper, *Social Inclusion and Democratic Citizenship* states that, “for citizenship to matter it must be inclusive and for inclusion to matter it must successfully deal with social exclusion in a society that is fractured along numerous fault lines” (Saloojee, 2003: 20). Saloojee distinguishes between ‘weak’ inclusion discourse, or that which focuses on assimilation and integration of the excluded through frameworks such as multiculturalism, and ‘strong’ inclusion discourse which reflects a structural approach, examining and challenging historical processes that perpetuate oppression, discrimination and exclusion, and their impact on rights, citizenship and, “restructured relations between newcomers and marginalized communities and the institutions of the dominant society” (ibid).

It is this ‘strong’ discourse that values participation by those excluded from full citizenship in society, requiring a broader conception of citizenship that pushes into the realm of the substantive, viewing equality not as sameness, but as treating differences differently (Abella, 1984). This ‘politics of difference,’ which involves ensuring equality of opportunity, free from multiple barriers of exclusion and disrespect, is the essence of substantive citizenship which can be offered within a liberal democracy (Young, 1990; Saloojee, 2003; Duncan, 2003). In their 2001 study, Edgington et al found ensuring a higher level of equitable and accessible services by civic government to be a major factor in the development of inclusive, multicultural citizenship and greater opportunity for participation and development of inclusive democratic processes.

Robert Putnam’s 1993 study of regional governments in Italy dramatically influenced theories of social inclusion and citizenship in diverse societies. Through a comparison study, Putnam found that the factor with the most direct influence on the level of regional government performance was that of civic virtue, or social capital. A term first used by Jane Jacobs in 1961, ‘social capital’ refers
to the norms, networks, and trust formed between citizens and communities, and with the institutions within their society (Jacobs, 1961; Putnam, 1993; Graham et al, 1998). Greater or 'stronger' social inclusion generates increased social capital or sense of belonging and co-operation within or among groups, thereby advancing intercultural collaboration and learning, and enhancing access to opportunity for all (Duncan 2003; Kunz, 2003). These factors can then contribute directly to the flourishing of inclusive, active, democratic citizenship.

In their 2002 paper, Myer Siemiatycki and Anver Saloojee examine ethno-racial political representation as one indicator of inclusion. They found that in the City of Toronto, the most ethno-culturally diverse in Canada, "liberal democratic norms have produced a remarkably unrepresentative democracy in Toronto" (Siemiatycki and Saloojee, 2002: 270). The authors conclude that in order to move towards more equitable representation of diversity at the civic level there is a clear need to move "outside the box" and explore a new, radical form of governance such as a "Council of Representatives" model. They also reveal that the only public appeal for such a shift came from the leading anti-racism organization in the city (ibid: 271).

Martin Papillon, in his paper, *Immigration, Diversity and Social Inclusion in Canadian Cities*, notes that it is important not to view inclusion as a one-way process of integration, but to realize inclusion as a two-way street. He states that there are different forms of inclusion and exclusion present in different contexts, varying from one community to another and one city to another where local issues differ from place to place (Papillon, 2002: 4). This concept is central to the notion of the evolution or 'deep' integration of society as one where all cultures and communities learn acceptance and respect for one another through a process of engagement, mutual learning and negotiation. Papillon suggests that all levels of government should work in collaboration with community groups and other local representatives to develop collaborative strategies to respond to the growing issue of exclusion faced particularly by visible minorities (ibid: 23).

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5 The authors describe this as a body constructed on group representation principles and assigned a myriad of powers, including research and policy formation directed to issues often overlooked on present government agendas. They would also have the power to veto or delay decisions of the elected municipal council when the majority of the Council of Representatives stands in opposition.
This notion is also shared by the Alternative Planning Group, a planning body that includes four of the largest ethno-racial communities in Toronto. The group envisions a framework of ‘engagement through negotiation,’ between governing bodies and citizens, establishing a holistic but decentralized approach that promotes equity and a shared vision for the future of the city (APG, 2003b). This form of inclusive process then contributes to the creation of a shared citizenship, whereby all citizens engage in a process of learning, adaptation and change, but also one of direct engagement in decision-making.

**Activation through Participation**

Another key factor within citizenship and social inclusion discourse within diverse societies is that of civic participation or, “the active and respectful engagement in a collective process of deliberation and decision-making on matters that affect daily life” (Schugurensky 2003:10). By this definition, civic participation can nurture the development of an informed, critical, responsible and engaged citizenry, provided that appropriate distributive policies and institutional structures are in place in order to ensure equal opportunity for participation and development of democratic capacity. Daniel Schugurensky notes that one or the other is not enough as “an egalitarian society does not produce necessarily an active citizenry, and a participatory society does not necessarily lead to more equality.” He points to the examples of classical Athens, where civic participation was high but restricted to male property owners, and that of twentieth century socialist societies and welfare state systems that reflected a relatively high degree of egalitarianism but low civic participation (ibid: 10).

According to Graham et al, local governments in Canada introduced public participation as a component of decision-making related to land-use planning in the 1960s. By the 1970s, civic participation was seen as the norm, but “the type of public participation undertaken by local governments seldom involved real power-sharing” (Graham et al 1998: 137). One of the most widely referenced articles concerning the involvement of citizens in government decision-making is Sherry Arnstein’s “A Ladder of Citizen Participation” (1969) as depicted in Figure One. Arnstein creates a scale by which mechanisms of participation can be evaluated based on who makes the final decision. She argues that the less control government officials have over a decision-making

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6 For more about the APG please refer to Chapter 3
process, the more citizens are empowered, which she sees as particularly important for marginalized communities (Arnstein, 1969).

Figure 1: “A Ladder of Citizenship Participation”

Today, Canadian municipalities are seen as substantive democratic governments, and are expected, at least in theory, to recognize the importance of governing in the context of accountability and transparency while exploring issues of equity focused on engaging a diversity of citizens and communities in meaningful ways (Andrew et al, 2002; Saloojee and Siemiatycki, 2003). However, Frisken and Wallace (2003: 173) found that members of ethno-cultural communities often viewed ‘collaborative partnerships’ with municipal agencies in the context of service provision to be structurally unequal, with the City often attempting to dominate and control the agenda. Former City of Toronto Planner Tim Rees warns that even within contemporary governments, not all avenues of participation are effective (1998). He uses the examples of advisory board and commissions, which he notes in some cases serve to disempower citizens and create greater obstacles to inclusion and full participation. Rees argues that issues of power and alternate agendas can often come into play within such constructs, or the participatory body may not actually hold power to make decisions or truly influence policy creation (Rees, 1998).

Growing numbers of newcomers and other minorities continue to face barriers to full participation in their everyday activities (Preston and Wong, 2002). Graham et al note that, “faced with growing cultural diversity, urban governments struggle with how to reach non-white, non-middle-class communities who normally have little contact with city hall and perhaps less trust in government institutions” (Graham et al, 1998: 139). In their 2003 study, Anver Saloojee and Myer Siemiatycki explored the factors that determine the participation of immigrant and other minority communities in
civic organizations and other politically-related realms of society. They propose four main areas of influence:

- individual resources (age, education, income, marital status)
- trajectory of settlement and integration (length of residence, language proficiency, knowledge of political system)
- relationship between social identity and exclusion and discrimination
- ethno-specific organizations

(Saloojee and Siemiatycki, 2003: 43).

Other factors include quality of life, gender, ability, and race. The authors also reference research carried out by Fennema and Tillie (1999) that found a positive correlation between the number of immigrant organizations and the level of political participation and social capital (Saloojee and Siemiatycki, 2003). Graham et al note that, "there has been a sharp rise over the past decade in the number of groups representing ethnic, racial and other cultural communities" (Graham et al, 1998: 128). These 'communities of interest' have been recognized as vital to engagement in civic processes both from the perspective of local government and communities themselves, reinforcing citizenship and providing opportunities to represent a diversity of lived perspectives (Jacobs 1961; Barber, 1984; Graham et al, 1995).

A number of authors have recognized that civic participation in a democratic process based on an effective forms of public deliberation can also be inherently reflective, allowing room for individuals to learn about themselves, their neighbours, and peers, to define and share common goals or values, and collectively take on the challenges and responsibilities of citizenship at various institutional or governance levels (Graham et al, 1999; Abers, 2000; Schugurensky, 2003; APG, 2004). This process is of the utmost importance to the activation and expansion of Canadian citizenship. It is also this form of civic engagement that links citizens to the development of effective public policy.

Planning and Social Change

Within planning discourse, the involvement of citizens in decision-making is discussed as a key element of radical theories that view planning as a potential instrument for social change and expression of urban democratic citizenship within multicultural societies (Friedmann 2002; Filion,
However, as reflected in recent studies, it has been found that planners are keenly aware of the under-representation of ethno-racial diversity found in their municipalities within public participation and other planning processes (Sandercock and Klinger 1998a, 1998b; Milroy and Wallace, 2001; Edgington and Hutton 2002). This is clearly reflected by Milroy and Wallace in their 2001 study, *Ethnoracial Diversity and Planning Practices in the Greater Toronto Area* which states,

> Without concerted efforts to reach ethnoracial groups who are absent from the traditional public meetings, planners are routinely losing the expertise, ideas and interests of a portion of the community (Milroy and Wallace, 2001: 20).

Milroy and Wallace found that planners rarely accommodate ethno-racial participation, and if so it is, “*ad hoc* and motivated by time and place-specific circumstances rather than being a coordinated, standard part of the planning process” (ibid: 18). The challenge is one of translation - from ideas and theories of inclusive planning, into on-the-ground, workable, applied planning policies and practices that support and expand the spaces of democracy in ethno-culturally diverse societies.

Planning is an inherently political process, and is often directly tied to governance and government’s capacity and willingness to support innovative approaches to the changing landscape and requirements of multicultural societies such as Canada. In, “Planning in the Public Domain,” Friedmann (1987) characterized the traditional, rational comprehensive approach to planning as one that accepts existing power relations, places faith in technical reason and maintains a centralized, top-down method. It is this model of planning which reinforces a difference-blind approach to diversity, disregarding the various barriers to participation that exist for many citizens.

Theorist Henri Lefebvre developed the concept of the ‘right to the city’. He viewed the city as a political space, the claiming of which was crucial to the process of asserting the urban citizenship rights of various minority groups.

> To exclude the *urban* from groups, classes, individuals, is also to exclude them from civilization, if from not society itself. The *right* to the city legitimates the refusal to allow oneself to be removed from urban reality by a discriminatory and segregative organization (Lefebvre, 1996: 195).
Theorist Lea Caragata reinforces this notion, adding that “the inclusion of minorities and/or or oppressed populations in the public realm is simultaneous with the transformations of that realm” (Caragata, 1999: 275).

In her earlier work, Sandercock (1998: 197) discusses the modernist, unitary notion of ‘the public interest’ as an ideal in which “disinterested experts, working within the institutions of the modern nation-state, objectively and rationally analyze a problem and arrive at a solution that is ‘in the public interest’. She goes on to describe how, “class, gender and race-based critiques have left this particular historic notion of ‘the public interest’ in tatters,” having emerged in an era of socio-cultural diversity (ibid). Caragata’s work again provides support to Sandercock’s argument: “the ‘public’ sphere is indirectly challenged through the alternative discourses promoted by multiple ‘publics’ or through the discourses which take place in civil society” (Caragata, 1999: 271).

Drawing attention to the challenge of planning for and with multiple publics, Isin (2000: 15) notes that “the task of disentangling the interest of various groups and mapping power relations in the global city is intensely difficult”. He claims this is because the traditions such as planning, through which the issues such as equity and inclusivity need to be analyzed, have not yet evolved to the point of being, “adequate to the task” (ibid: 14). Planner, Mohammad Qadeer, offers his support stating, “extending equal citizenship to diverse communities, and not aiming to homogenize their differences is in the public interest. Within the planning arena, it means pursuing policies for adequate and affordable housing for all, as well as providing the necessary urban infrastructure and services for viable community life,” (Qadeer, 2004: 5).

Wallace and Milroy (1999: 55) outline two approaches planners may take when working in multicultural communities: treat diversity as an exception to the rule, or recognize it as an inherent component of cities, regardless of how it is viewed in policies and practices. With emphasis on the latter, the authors look to planning as something that could also be seen as a process by which gender, ethnicity and class could intersect one another to produce new practices, instead of absorbing new approaches into old methods (55).
Planner Stephen Ameyaw (2000: 101) proposes a model of “appreciative planning” which involves a “two-way learning and problem solving” approach between planning professionals and citizens in order to enable a deeper understanding of issues and barriers faced by various publics within an urban sphere. He describes this model as one of capacity building that,

shifts the role of the planner from one of directing programs and delivering services to supporting partnerships, enabling multicultural community directed assets and needs to be addressed, and facilitating local initiatives. Appreciative planning promotes empowerment, builds confidence and competence in the community to do things for themselves (ibid: 113).

Planner, John Forester (1999) also highlights the need for effective, interactive communication or “communicative planning" as essential to the understanding of citizens' unique and contextual situation. Forester recognizes that information exchange can uncover political and power imbalances and help shape effective actions (1999). His approach also draws attention to the importance of accessibility in relation to how information is communicated and interpreted, and how this may influence citizens' ability to participate in planning or other decision-making processes (Forester, 1999; Heer, 2000).

Planners must also explore their own values and attitudes in relation to planning within a diverse citizenry, as well as a, “profound reconsideration of the different qualities and skills that might be required if planners are to work in cross-cultural contexts” (Sandercock 2003b; 2004).

Conclusion
The literature presented in this chapter has served as the baseline and inspiration for my research project, which involves the exploration of five key areas of study: citizenship, multiculturalism, inclusion/exclusion, civic participation/engagement, and planning.

I began this chapter by recognizing the dramatic influence the process of immigration has had on the evolution of Canadian society, altering its economic, social and cultural landscape and serving to shape the development of related laws and policies. Multiculturalism, as official Canadian policy, is central to the discussion I have presented and continues to be debated from numerous angles, resulting in the formulation of a variety of theories, studies and approaches to citizenship in

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7 See Sandercock 1998, 2003b and 2004 for an extensive exploration of multicultural planning
ethno-culturally diverse societies. Much of the related literature included in this chapter represents a critical perspective and includes an important analysis of power in its many forms. Directly connected to these issues is the inclusion/exclusion dichotomy and the various assumptions, definitions and indicators such as social capital that I found to be essential to understand when deconstructing the evolution of Canadian citizenship. The literature suggests that 'multiculturalism' as a unifying theory, a citizenship identity, and a policy guideline still has a long way to go before ensuring equal treatment and equitable engagement of all citizens in, “making sure our values, dreams and goals are reflected in our institutions, laws and relations with one another” (CIC, 1997).

The literature regarding the examination of civic participation as an essential element of citizenship development has served to inform me that although involvement of the various 'communities of interest' in society is vital to the expansion of citizenship and spaces of democracy, not all avenues of participation are effective, and that once again power plays a key role in determining the agenda and outcomes, particularly in relation to engaging immigrant or other traditionally marginalized communities. Central to this issue is the struggle multicultural municipalities are facing to find ways to engage the diversity of their citizens, coupled with the quest to understand and address the increasing number of barriers to participation found to be facing immigrant and newcomer communities. The literature I have presented also reflects the importance of the community organizations and groups that serve to represent the voices of ethno-cultural communities, and reflect a growing level of social capital and civic engagement. As reflected in the works discussed, civic participation is however, key to the development of healthy and innovative learning that can lead to opportunities for self-reflection, learning and understanding of others, partnership building and overall expansion of citizenship.

In the final section of this chapter, I presented literature that reflected how civic participation has served to shape how planning since the 1960s though discussion of various planning theories that emphasize citizen participation as essential to the further transformation of planning practice, particularly in multicultural settings. Within the last 10 years the amount of literature related to planning with and for diversity has increased. Numerous authors have argued that the planning profession needs to develop more inclusive approaches and practices. I offer this study as one small part of that body of literature.
In summary, the development of citizenship in multicultural societies is inextricably linked to issues of inclusion/exclusion, participation and the process of planning - of building the social, structural, and logistical means by which diversity and inclusion are to be translated, practiced, learned from, nuanced, revised, and so on. As reflected in many of the ideas and observations in this chapter, equitable and inclusive participation in planning processes is therefore of absolute necessity in the creation of an empowered citizenry and engaged society.
Chapter Three
The Toronto Context

The flow of immigrants and refugees into Toronto has had a profound influence on the delivery of public and community-based services, ranging from mental health and social services to economic development, social planning, housing and education. It has also helped re-shape Toronto’s social policy and civic development.

(Siemiatycki et al, 2001)

As cultural and ethnic diversity continues to increase, planners and decision-makers will be faced with re-evaluating traditional planning structures and processes to ensure that they are able to adapt and respond to the needs of Toronto’s changing communities.

(Alternative Planning Group, 2004)

Toronto is Canada’s largest and most ethno-culturally diverse city. Few urban regions in the world have been more dramatically transformed by recent immigration than Toronto, and few institutions have a more direct impact on the lives of immigrants and newcomers than municipal governments (Siemiatycki and Isin, 1997; Siemiatycki et al 2001). As recently as 1971, 6 out of 10 Toronto area residents claimed British ethnic origin (Siemiatycki et al, 2001; Breton et al, 1990). Today, reflected by its post-amalgamation motto, “Diversity Our Strength”, the city’s demography reveals that fifty percent of Toronto’s approximately 2.5 million people were born outside of Canada, representing 90 different ethnic groups from over 170 countries (City of Toronto, 2003b). Social planning within such a diverse, multicultural, multiethnic society is a challenging task. What approach has the City of Toronto taken?

This chapter describes planning carried out by the City of Toronto that relates to the social development of the city. The City of Toronto’s current Strategic Plan states that social development, “encompasses principles of social equity, social well-being and citizen engagement, and is an important determinant of healthy communities and quality of life” (City of Toronto, 2001a). I reflect particularly on avenues of citizen engagement as they relate to the City of Toronto’s social development planning structure, policies and practices. I then draw further attention to the relevance of these topics to newcomer, immigrant and ethno-cultural communities in the city.

In the first section, I explore the City of Toronto’s system of governance as it relates to citizen engagement and involvement in social development. In the next section, I examine how social
planning is approached at the bureaucratic level including the role of not-for-profit planning in the development of social policy and practice in the City. I also review a number of the key initiatives carried out by the city that have helped inform social development, many related directly to exploration of civic engagement. In the final section, I provide critical reflections on the City of Toronto's approach to citizen engagement as a vital component of social development planning though the work of the an emerging voice for ethno-cultural communities, the Alternative Planning Group.

The Local Context

In 1997 the Ontario provincial government, in the face of overwhelming civic opposition and accusations of undermining local democracy, ordered the amalgamation of the seven municipalities of Etobikoe, East York, North York, Scarborough, Toronto, York, and the regional government of Metropolitan, or 'Metro' Toronto into a new “megacity” (City of Toronto, 2001a). The largest citizens' movement in Toronto's history rallied to resist the provincial decision, the majority of which was comprised of white, British-stock Torontonians (Siemiatycki and Isin, 1997). Alarmingly underrepresented within the meetings and rallies of this movement were members of immigrant and ethno-cultural communities within the seven municipalities, who viewed the coalition of opposition as inaccessible, even invisible, and not representative of their own concerns – a similar perception held of City Hall itself. It wasn't until the process of amalgamation had begun that immigrant and visible minority communities began to organize, calling for the promotion of more engaged and effective forms of urban democratic citizenship, particularly support by the new city for increased participation among traditionally marginalized communities (Siemiatycki and Isin, 1997). How have these concerns been addressed by the new City of Toronto and what bearing have they had on social development planning in the new city?

The amalgamated City of Toronto combined two tiers of government, and introduced a complex structure that supported new decision-making requirements but also attempted to maintain, integrate, rationalize and harmonize many of the components of the seven pre-existing municipalities. Before amalgamation, the role of Metropolitan Toronto in social development planning was residual, addressing issues related only to those most in need. The majority of the responsibility for social development planning rested on the voluntary sector to fund and provide
community services to the city, while local government dealt primarily with issues related to physical infrastructure (CSPC-T, 2001). In developing the governance structure and practices of the new City, responsibilities for social development planning have been distributed throughout the political, bureaucratic and not-for-profit realms.

Along with the amalgamation process, the Ontario provincial government transferred the responsibility for a number of social services to the new City of Toronto, including social assistance, social housing, child care and public health, but failed to transfer the corresponding revenue (Papillon, 2002). These changes, in addition to other responsibilities, contribute to the many resource-related challenges of planning within a large, highly diverse city.

Governance

Political accountability and governance in the new City of Toronto is based fundamentally on a Wards voting system, which divides the city into 44 neighbourhoods with one Councillor elected from each ward of approximately 56,000 residents, and the Mayor elected at large. Elections take place every three years on a fixed date in November. Councillors have both legislative and constituency duties, deliberating and establishing policies and bylaws while also consulting with constituents regarding all sides of an issue, be it relevant city-wide, within their ward, or at a local neighbourhood level. City Councillors take part in various components of the committee system, including one of the six Standing Committees. The Toronto Municipal Code sets out the general duties of the Standing Committees of City Council to:

- Provide direction, set priorities and ensure co-ordination among related policies, programs and services
- Provide a forum for public participation and for detailed discussion of the City's decision making
- Make policy recommendations to Council and recommend priorities within the Committee's budget envelope
- Consider reports from the Corporate administration on implementation of program and policy decisions within the committee's areas of responsibility; and
- Promote accountability and interaction with Council on the part of agencies, boards and commissions of the City

(City of Toronto, 2004).

With amalgamation came the realignment of long-standing provincial-municipal cost sharing arrangements. This included removing part of the cost of education from the property tax base, and funding transportation infrastructure (City of Toronto, 2001a).
Responsibilities for social development policy and community grants as well as other social planning related areas fall under the Community Services Standing Committee. In addition, access, equity and human rights responsibilities fall under the Administration Standing Committee, and issues relating to the Official Plan and city-wide planning policy and research are housed under The Planning and Transportation Standing Committee.

Council members also take part in community councils in the area in which they have been elected in order to represent the issues pertinent to residents in their ward. These were established to "consider the City's business of a local nature at the community level, and provide a forum for local input into Council's decision making process" (City of Toronto, 2003c). Much of what is examined through community councils involves traditional urban planning and development matters. In May 2003, Council approved a motion to reduce the number of community councils from six to four, which will now see one community council 'providing a forum' for every 620,000 residents in the city (City of Toronto 2004a).

Councillor involvement in the committee system is rounded out by participating as a chair or member in an average of fifteen additional committees and boards including sub, special, ad-hoc and advisory committees, task forces, boards of management and program operating boards. Individual members of Council also hold responsibility for advocating on certain topics such as 'diversity' (City of Toronto, 2003c).

In terms of citizens' role within the City of Toronto's governance system, the City's website outlines the following avenues of involvement and opportunities to have input into decision making:

- voting in municipal elections
- contacting municipal Councillors
- attending Community Council meetings
- making deputations to committees of Council
- applying for membership to sit on city agencies, boards and commissions
- participating in formal public consultations on specific issues
- volunteering and participating in community development initiatives
From this list it is apparent that each of these methods are top-down and reflect a consultative approach more than one of interactive and participatory citizen engagement. Within this system of citizen involvement, the onus is placed on the citizen to bring issues of concern to the attention of the City, and an assumption is made that all citizens understand the system, are aware of the means by which to bring issues of concern forward, and have equal access and ability to take action and commit to following up. Within this structure, there is no mechanism of accountability of City officials to the participating citizen, with the ultimate decision-making power held by the elected official. These characteristics contribute in the creation of barriers to participation for many of Toronto’s citizens, particularly new immigrant and other ethno-racial communities.

**Social Development as Community Development**

Within the new City of Toronto’s bureaucratic structure, ‘social planners’, do not exist as they do in other Canadian municipalities such as Vancouver. Instead, the responsibilities associated with social development planning are distributed throughout different offices of the City. At its most foundational, Community Development Officers (CDOs), Community Health Officers (CHOs), and members of the Parks and School Boards all work with communities in a variety of social development planning capacities. According to one CDO,

> The city planners are physical planners. They are in general not social planners. By city planners, I mean the planners in Urban Development Services are the traditional. That's what their job is, traditional stuff. But it's not about excluding people - I am saying it's about what the city looks like, and people live in the city, so that's where it comes to for their involvement as opposed to social planners who are more likely to go to communities and say, what are your needs, what are your issues, what do we need to shape the city like both physically as well as socially for you to feel like it is your home too?  

(Planner 2)

Much of the social planning work done through channels is carried out on a geographic basis and spoken of in terms of ‘strengthening civil society’ through ‘community capacity building’ and ‘community development’ (City of Toronto, 1999). Although areas of responsibility may overlap, communication between departments and municipal workers that hold social planning-related roles has diminished greatly since amalgamation, resulting in more ‘informal connections’ than standardized channels of information sharing and exchange. This was found to be among the largest challenges to social planning in the city (Planner 1; Planner 2).
Community Development Officers have the broadest mandate to serve 'on the ground' in terms of social development planning in the city's bureaucratic structure. CDOs are housed under the Community Resources Unit Community Development Program, which is located in the Social Development and Administration Division of the Community and Neighbourhood Services Department at the City of Toronto (City of Toronto, 2001b). One CDO described his/her job as "to work with communities that are disempowered in some way to find ways to ensure that they could participate in civic processes equitably" (Planner 2). There are presently only five full-time geographically based CDOs and two project-specific CDOs responsible for 2,481,494 people in the City of Toronto (Statistics Canada 2001a). Each CDO works almost exclusively with community members who are represented by established community-based organizations and groups. An internal document described the Community Development Program as one which "responds to community needs and issues and facilitates the City's response to critical social needs in Toronto," and CDOs as partners and support mechanism within the planning function of building capacity through methods of direct engagement with citizens to identify issues, strategize options, find creative solutions and implement plans of action (City of Toronto, 2001c). This is operationalized in a number of ways including, but not limited to:

1. Social Planning
2. Coalition/Task Force Support
3. Organization development and effectiveness
4. Community consultation
5. Public education
6. Service Coordination

According to one CDO,

So it's the vulnerable communities we're providing a lot, which the vulnerable communities most often end up to be the ethno-specific communities. We provide looking at coalitions and planning within different areas and some of those include and need to think about including and looking at and involving ethno-specific and ethno-racial communities.

(Planner 1)

Social development planning as carried out by the City of Toronto is informed by research and information gathering methods. Another key social planning body in the City that includes a large research component is the Community Social Planning Council of Toronto (CSPC-T)9, a non-profit

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9 The CSPC-T is committed to diversity, social and economic justice, and active citizen participation in all aspects of community life. Through its research efforts, the Council identifies social trends and advocates for policy solutions to address needs and inequities within Toronto neighbourhoods (Community Social Planning Council of Toronto, 2003).
organization partially funded by the City to carry out independent social planning at the local and city-wide levels. According to a planner from the CSPC-T, “we’re kind of the independent planning body that operates alongside, but provides a different kind of voice, to the city planners, city community development officers, and other staff” (Planner 3). The organization “provides support largely to coalitions and committees working on different issues in Toronto rather than to individuals or residents, per se” (Planner 3). The CPSC-T works with these established organizations to build support for campaigns at the community-level, addressing concerns of people in that community that are also linked to social planning issues of city-wide importance such as homelessness, immigrant and refugee, or youth issues.

In reflecting on the effectiveness of this approach for the involvement of citizens in social development planning, it is interesting to note results of a recent study by Frisken and Wallace (2003) regarding the responses of municipal structures in Toronto to immigration, which found that there were considerable disparities in the degree of awareness and responsiveness of municipal staff to the issues facing particular ethno-cultural communities. The authors found larger, more established communities were often linked to community groups that represented a louder, more accessible voice for bureaucrats, while smaller ethno-racial communities and those more recently arrived were less likely to be represented within established community groups and therefore had less ability to make their views known to municipal officials such as planners (Frisken and Wallace, 2003).

**Funding**

Another key component of CDO work is assisting community groups and coalition groups to effectively access city and other forms of government funding. The City provides cash grants in the approximate amount of $42.105 million to various organizations within the City (City of Toronto, 2004b). The largest grant pool available to community groups is through the Community Services Grant Program, which totals approximately $10,137,000, providing funding to community-based organizations for “programs that improve social outcomes for vulnerable, marginalized and high-risk communities” (City of Toronto, 2002). According to City documents, The City recognizes “that community-based organizations are in a better position to deliver many services more effectively and with a greater degree of community acceptance” (City of Toronto, 2002). These services can include civic education and skills development, as well as those that address settlement and other
immigration-related issues. However, a study carried out by Siemiatycki and Saloojee (2003: 4) found that these groups were concerned that they were seen as service providers and not recognized by elected officials and bureaucrats in the role of "active participants in decision-making, from needs assessment, to program development to policy making," which was a part of their daily work.

To access the Community Services grant pool, it is required that agencies funded are in compliance with the City of Toronto Grants Policy, and the Community Services Grants Program – Program Guidelines which includes provisions that organizations be established for a number of years, possess a functioning Board of Directors as well as an office space and a sound financial record. In addition, these grants are awarded primarily to organizations that have formed partnerships with other communities or groups to address common issues. The City no longer provides 'developmental grants' to new organizations (Planner 1, Planner 2). Since amalgamation, the grants process has come under criticism from both planners and communities attempting to access the City's support. According to one CDO,

I don't think there is enough money that, in terms of providing the kinds of services for the, as I call it, ethno-racial, ethno-specific community organizations. There is not enough. I don't think grants are the only answer. I think grants are part of the answer. The way grants are currently in this city it becomes almost a barrier for some of those communities to access that, so it can't be an answer. It has become more and more difficult because of the demands from the auditor, because the criteria has become a little bit stiffer, there are not what we call developmental grants so there's some kind of entry point for some for those organizations – that's not there, though there has been some thinking about it. There used to be developmental grants.

(Planner 1)

The Many Arms of Social Planning

The office of Diversity Management and Community Engagement, (previously The Access and Equity Division, and previous to that The Multiculturalism and Race Relations Division) also has a hand in social development planning. One example of this is the recent preparation of the Plan of Action for the Elimination of Racism and Discrimination. Over 1,000 people participated in public consultations, meetings of the Advisory Committees, working and focus groups, as well as through the presentation of written submissions and oral presentations to provide input to the Plan. Seven strategic directions were outlined, including proposals for political leadership, advocacy, economic participation, public education and awareness, service delivery, building strong communities, and
accountability (City of Toronto, 2000). The final report was made available in sixteen different languages.

Each of these bodies, as well as other bureaucrats and City Councillors provide input to the Planning Analysts and Policy Development Officers (PDOs) who are housed in the Social Policy Research and Analysis unit under the Social Development and Administration Division. According to the City's website, their responsibilities include:

- developing strategic responses to fiscal, policy and governance changes affected by other levels of government, and develops departmental policies that respond to community needs
- supporting City Council-directed task force initiatives related to community and neighbourhood services
- engaging in social research, often in partnership with the community, to identify social, economic, political and demographic trends, and to analyze the impacts on communities
- designing and implementing social planning initiatives that support Council, the Community and Neighbourhood Services Department, and the Toronto Corporation in identifying priorities and responding effectively to community needs

(City of Toronto, 2003d).

This information helps to frame City programs and policies, "in ways which are responsive to the broad range of critical community initiatives in a manner that is equitable and accessible" (City of Toronto, 2001c).

**Social Development Planning and the new City**

Amalgamation of such a large, diverse population with varying governance structures was never expected to be a simple task. Interviews with two Community Development Officers revealed that in their experience prior to amalgamation, the former City of Toronto engaged more and was "much closer" to local communities. According to one CDO,

> And it was wonderful as far as any input on any secondary plans because the city, most of my area was in the City of Toronto, and a lot of planners had done the work, and they had a protocol and their philosophies and values were about connecting to communities and involving the communities. It became problematic with amalgamation because then you are trying to hope that from the values and the culture and the protocols that were developed from the former City of Toronto were going to be integrated across. Which is now, what are we, four years into amalgamation and it's still a difficulty.

(Planner 1)

In attempts to face the challenge, Toronto City Council engaged in a number of initiatives during the process of constructing the new City, including research-based initiatives involving the CSPC-T
and other City offices to explore how the city could strengthen civil society, increase community involvement and civic participation, and continue to work towards the elimination of the barriers faced by marginalized communities including immigrants and refugees.

The first and seemingly most important of these was to establish a regular review of the City's governance system. This has been carried out three times since 1998, the last taking place between May 2002 and April 2003, with another scheduled for sometime in 2004. Information for the assessment was compiled through, "an extensive consultation process undertaken with members of Council and staff, a review of municipal jurisdictions and governance models worldwide, and a statistical analysis of the volume of Council business transacted by the formal governance system" (City of Toronto, 2003c). The consultation discussion was framed by comparing the eight principles of good governance as defined by the United Nations at the 1995 World Summit for Social Development to that of the City of Toronto's governance structure. These include: participation, rule of law, transparency, responsiveness, consensus oriented, equity and inclusiveness, effectiveness and efficiency, and accountability.

Another initiative taken by the City after amalgamation was the establishment of the Toronto Transition Team, also known as the Miller Committee, to involve Torontonians in active discussion on how to create better local government (CSPC-T, 2003). One central theme that emerged from the broad ranging discussions was that, "people's involvement is a cornerstone of local government," and "citizens want the City government to be visible, accessible, meaningful and sensitive to them" (City of Toronto, 2001b).

The same year, the Toronto Healthy City Office (now defunct) published a booklet entitled We've got to Stop Meeting Like This: 36 Ways to Encourage Civic Participation. The publication resulted from a City assessment of the different modes available for the public to participate in civic life, asking four questions:

- Does the public have clear and easy access to public decisions?
- Do citizens feel there is any value to participating?
- How do citizens get involved in the civic process?
- Is there a satisfactory type of participation for every citizen in the city?
The findings reflected that traditional public consultations were no longer enough, and that new institutions and new methods for engaging citizens needed to be developed (City of Toronto, 2002).

The new City Council then established a Task Force on Community Access and Equity in March of 1998. The Vision Statement for the Task Force's final report stated that:

"Diverse Communities and groups make up the population of Toronto. The City of Toronto values the contributions made by all its people and believes that diversity among its people has strengthened Toronto.

The City recognizes the dignity and worth of all people by equitably treating communities and employees, fairly providing services, by consulting with communities and making sure that everyone can participate in decision-making.

The City recognizes the unique status and cultural diversity of the Aboriginal communities and their right to self-determination.

The City recognizes the barriers of discrimination and disadvantage faced by human rights protected groups.

To address this, the City will create an environment of equality in the government and in the community for all people regardless of their race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, creed, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, marital status, receipt of public assistance, political affiliation, disability, level of literacy, language and or socio-economic status.

The City will implement positive changes in its workforce and communities to achieve access and equality of outcomes for all residents and to create a harmonious environment free from discrimination, harassment and hate."

The Task Force developed the *Action, Equity and Human Rights Action Plan* that included 97 final recommendations. These identified necessary policies, structural functions, program priorities and an evaluation process by which the city could strengthen civil society, increase community involvement and civic participation, and continue to work towards the elimination of the barriers faced by marginalized communities including immigrants and refugees (CSPC-T, 2003; City of Toronto, 2001b; City of Toronto, 2000). Council approved the Plan in December of 1999.

The following year the City of Toronto adopted the *Framework for Citizen Participation in the City of Toronto* policy, which defined the four key principles of civic engagement and participation to be:
• **Collaborative decision-making** - The City of Toronto is committed to govern in partnership with the citizens of Toronto. This principle recognizes that citizen participation is an integral element of the City's governance culture.

• **Accessibility** - The City of Toronto is committed to continuously work towards the removal of barriers to effective citizen participation. The City of Toronto will ensure that citizens have the opportunity to make presentations to Council, its standing committees and community councils. The City of Toronto is committed to include the diversity of community groups in public consultation processes.

The City government is committed to facilitate citizens' access to municipal elected officials and City staff. The City of Toronto will support councillors in actively seeking citizen input on community issues and in expressing citizens' views and concerns in the political decision-making process.

• **Continuous improvement in citizen participation** - The City of Toronto is committed to learning about innovative and creative ways of fostering citizen participation in other jurisdictions. It will apply new learning and develop innovative "made in Toronto" practices.

• **Community capacity building** - The City of Toronto is committed to supporting its citizens in cooperative problem-solving.

This policy also defined what the City saw as a "Continuum of Citizen Participation in City Governancy" (See Figure 2), with the far left side of the continuum as an example of the City government being very aware of an issue and informing the citizen of what the response should be. The far right side reflects situations where the government is unaware of an issue and has not included it on its policy agenda, theoretically pushing citizens to become engaged in the resolution of the issue, acting as advocates by proposing alternative responses and a preferred course of action.
In February of 2000, these principles were further explored through a five-part discussion series organized by the City exploring questions such as:

- What is a useful framework for civic participation?
- What are major global trends which influence civic participation?
- What constitutes meaningful civic engagement?
- How does the City of Toronto engage its citizenry?
- What are the strengths and weaknesses of its civic engagement practices?
- What role should municipal governments play in community capacity building?

(City of Toronto, 2001b).

The findings reflected that traditional public consultations were no longer enough, and that new institutions and new methods for engaging citizens needed to be developed.

In August of 2000, Toronto City Council authorized a Community Consultation on Social Development strategy for the City of Toronto as an, "opportunity for people in all parts of the city to express their views on the social priorities facing Toronto (CSPC-T, 2001). The Department of Community and Neighbourhood Services contracted with the Community Social Planning Council of Toronto to conduct the first phase of the consultation process. The CSPC-T gathered input from citizens through submissions from social support networks, and focus groups with public and community-based sector representatives.
The resulting report produced by the CSPC-T was entitled *Preserving Our Civic Legacy*. The emerging themes from the 22 focus group sessions carried out with 269 local and sectoral stakeholders included:

- **The Spread of Social Vulnerability** – families, newcomers and youth most frequently sited as the most vulnerable populations in communities across Toronto;
- **Strengthening Supportive Communities** – the promotion of a sense of identity, belonging, ownership, active community participation, and respect for diversity and inclusiveness;
- **Promoting Civic Engagement** – by providing support to communities and their organizations for shaping “civic consciousness”, ensuring local political accountability, more creative and flexible outreach to communities, and valuing community consultation by taking responsive action based on community input;
- **Information Needs and Social Development Indicators** – social cohesion, barriers to employment, accountability of Councillors in improving the city’s social development;
- **Regional Social Development Trends and Issues** – relationship between region and City of Toronto in terms of addressing social needs and overall governance and planning – building a shared vision with true partnerships and planning initiatives;
- **Expectations of Government Roles and Responsibilities for Social Development** – city to take on a stronger leadership and advocacy role to provincial and federal levels of government, greater community-specific needs assessment, planning and development needed;
- **Confidence in Social Governance** – stakeholders have greatest social confidence in City level of governance, very little in the province due to result of downloading on the city, so look to the federal government to take active responsibility for social development of the city.

These themes were then utilized in the development of the *Draft Social Development Strategy of Toronto*. The final document, *A Social Development Strategy for the City of Toronto 2001* (SDS), now acts as the social planning component of the city’s Strategic Plan, building on the relevant directions identified in that plan and also helping to define and shape the social aspects of the Official Plan. The latest draft Official Plan for Toronto was adopted by council on November 2002, and includes the concept of ‘sustainability’ as its centerpiece, reflected in the City’s defined “Three Pillars of City Living” being the economy, the community, and the environment (City of Toronto, 2003c).

The context of the SDS reflects on the growing social and economic polarization in the City of Toronto, and its disproportionate effects on ethno-racial groups (City of Toronto, 2001a). The Plan
notes a number of factors that are influencing this trend, including globalization and the resulting transformation in the labour market, but also the reduction in funding from the federal and provincial government for a wide range of social programs resulting in the ‘downloading’ of costs onto the municipality. This has and will continue to have profound implications for the city in the way in which they approach social development planning. With fewer resources to do more, the city, through the SDS, looks through its highly diverse social infrastructure to the degree of social cohesion as a reflection of the level of investment the larger community may have in the ‘public good’.

Toronto’s Social Development Strategy establishes three strategic directions for Toronto’s approach to social planning. These explicitly address firstly, the need to ‘strengthen community’ by encouraging and actively fostering participation of all sectors of communities in government decision-making, and secondly, to help shape a ‘civic consciousness’ among residents (City of Toronto, 2001a). Finally, emphasis is placed on the need to fund community-based agencies and planning organizations, “to undertake community planning initiatives and to develop indicators of community capacity and well-being” (City of Toronto, 2001a).

The aim of the SDS is to strike a balance between social development and economic growth, to “democratize prosperity and opportunity,” valuing diversity and reaffirming “the goals of achieving access and equality of outcome for all residents as expressed in the city’s access and equity action plan” (City of Toronto, 2001a). This is guided by five principles: equity, equality, access, participation, and cohesion. The eleven strategic directions in the document are grouped under three general headings that aim to: Strengthen Communities, Invest in a Comprehensive Social Infrastructure, and Expand Civic Leadership and Partnership.

According to the SDS, Strengthening Communities involves building the capacity of communities by nurturing the development of neighbourhood associations, issue-oriented groups and grassroots coalitions. This in turn strengthens,

the capacities and opportunities of all people, especially those who are disadvantaged and vulnerable, to enhance their own economic and social development, to establish and
maintain organizations representing their interests and to be involved in the planning and implementation of government policies and programs by which they will be directly affected (City of Toronto, 2001a; United Nations, 1995).

In addition, the SDS states that “social development is underpinned by democratic governance – the institutions, process and traditions that shape how city governments work, how decisions are taken and how residents have their say” (City of Toronto, 2001a). Recognizing that civic participation is integral to the city’s governance structure, the SDS provides strategic directions for shaping the civic consciousness of citizens while providing greater support and access to avenues of participation.

Under the heading, ‘Investing in Comprehensive Infrastructure,’ the SDS calls for more holistic social development planning that involves community-based organizations, as well as providing funding to these agencies and planning organizations to undertake community planning initiatives, and to “develop indicators of community capacity and well-being” (City of Toronto, 2001a).

The SDS represents a powerful tool for progressive social planning in Toronto. But does it go far enough to develop the form of inclusive social planning necessary to equitably engage and reflect the diversity of social needs represented in Toronto’s citizenry? How has the document been translated on the ground, and how has this approach been received by citizens, particularly newcomer communities?

An Alternative Planning Voice

The Alternative Planning Group (APG) was one of the many organizations that had provided input during the consultation process associated with Preserving Our Civic Legacy that went on to shape Toronto’s Social Development Strategy. Bringing their voices and those of other ethno-racial communities into the planning debate, the APG is a partnership between the Chinese National Council Toronto Chapter, the Council of Agencies Serving South Asians, the Hispanic Development Council, and the African Canadian Social Development Council. The network representing four of the most populous ethnic communities in the City of Toronto has partnered in projects with the Community and Social Planning Council of Toronto, and has received significant
funding from the City in recent years (Planner 1). Most recently, the group has assisted the City of Toronto in its review of the City’s social planning agenda and process (APG, 2004).

The APG has been working together for several years, “for the purpose of creating and implementing collaborative strategies for inter-ethnic community planning and development, conducting integrative research and organizing joint community events” (APG, 2003c). Motivated through the recognition of key factors common in the experience of each immigrant partner community such as the lack of meaningful mechanisms for participating in civic and political society and multiple barriers to gaining access to employment and affordable housing, the four organizations have come together,

- to build individual capacity of each organization and, by extension, community through sharing of resources
- to create a new paradigm of social planning that reflects the demographic, racial, cultural and linguistic diversity of the new City
- to build social capital of ethno-racial communities so that they could emerge on the policy field as a legitimate player (2004; 2003a; 2003c).

The APG distinguishes their model of social planning from traditional practices through the group’s recognition of the importance of, “the ongoing social planning activities each member agency conducts on a day-to-day basis” (APG 2004, 10). Joint planning within the APG is then informed by each partner’s independent planning, connecting community development, research and service delivery, while building bridges between the four communities “that focus on ethno-racial issues that are firmly grounded in an anti-racist strategies/methodology” (APG 2004, 10).

The wide-ranging work carried out by the coalition,

ultimately encompasses a foundational recognition of policy planning and development as a key tool for development and empowerment for diverse groups seeking an active role in the shaping of the communities we work and live in (APG 2003b, 1).

The ultimate goal of the coalition,

is that through our partnership we could help redefine the notion and practice of social planning within the City of Toronto, so that the shared goal of a liveable, accessible, inclusive and healthy city for all could indeed be achieved, whether in respect of the human or the built environment (APG, 2004, 10).
The APG proposes, "engagement through negotiation," as an alternative planning framework that will replace what the partnership sees as the fragmented approach traditionally taken by the City of Toronto. In their 2003 paper entitled, "Re-defining the Urban Planning Agenda: A joint alternative community perspective," members of the coalition summarize:

To be truly democratic in a pluralistic setting requires holistic but diverse, decentralized but equitable social planning based on principles of equity and shared vision through negotiation (2003b, 1).

The coalition highlights that the 'public interest' must be equated with diverse communities in Toronto, "particularly when diversity and immigration are the key driving forces of the City," and that therefore the APG must serve a "systematic and epistemological function in the traditional planning forums in the City [of Toronto] in order to make those forums more 'relevant'" (APG 2003b, 1). The APG also calls for the City of Toronto to respond to shifting demographics and growing needs of "racialized communities" by recognizing these communities as emerging stakeholders with the ability to negotiate and create requisite structural changes in society to accommodate their emerging and competing demands (APG 2003b, 2). The APG believes that, 'external' planning expertise cannot create community capacity or build social capital among diverse communities. In a pluralistic reality, the diverse communities themselves need to negotiate their differences and build common good. In order for training, skills development, information gathering, decision-making processes to be effective, they need to be 'internalized' by the community which would have built 'active' citizens as well as socially cohesive community. However, only empowered communities can be 'active' citizens and empowerment comes from engagement not from external largesse (APG 2004, 22-23).

The group is concerned that the concept of 'inclusion' held by City is a linear one starting from a state of exclusion and ending at one of inclusion without considering how social inclusion can be democratically constructed as opposed to a defined status quo (APG, 2003c). Reflecting on their own planning experiences in the City, the coalition identifies opportunities for transformation, emphasizing the necessity of exploring issues related to power on which the construction of 'diversity' and 'difference' are based, and the need to reframe 'social inclusion' through a process of civic engagement, to recognize power and structural differences in city governance structures and institutions before true negotiation can take place (APG, 2003c). For the APG, "the issue is not 'how' to include the excluded but rather 'why' and 'how' people are excluded and eradicate those conditions and structures of exclusion" (APG 2004, 14).
Looking to the Future

This chapter has examined the City of Toronto's approach to social development planning, particularly the avenues of citizen engagement available through governance structures, the roles of City Councillors and municipal representatives, and the roles of planners – both within and outside the bureaucratic structure. In addition, I reviewed a number of the key municipal-driven processes undertaken since amalgamation of the City to review, reflect, engage and create a strategy that reflects the City's vision of citizen participation in social development planning. Finally, I presented a contrasting or, 'alternative' planning voice, one reflective of newcomer, immigrant and ethno-racial communities in the city that is calling for further reform of how citizens are engaged and placed within decision-making processes associated with social planning as it is carried out in the City of Toronto.

Throughout this chapter, I have outlined many challenges involved in social development planning in Toronto. The process of amalgamation itself was offered by interview participants as a cause of increased City bureaucracy, disconnection of planners from each other and from the communities they work in and for, and greater centralization of decision-making. The municipality also continues to bear the burden of downloaded costs and responsibilities from the Ontario provincial government, and struggles with the power dynamic of city-provincial relations. In an effort to rework the new City's approach to social development planning and civic engagement, citizens were given the opportunity to present many of their own issues and challenges within the forums and consultations associated with the reports released by the City. Two key documents that emerged from this process were the Framework for Citizen Participation in Toronto (1999) and A Social Development Strategy for the City of Toronto (2001). Both of these reports set forth key principles that promote more collaborative decision-making and a commitment by the City to increase engagement by breaking down the barriers to participation faced by the citizens of Toronto. These publications also include numerous other recommendations, strategic directions, and mandates for the new City and its approach to civic engagement and social development planning.

If truly operationalized, these actions have the potential to move the City beyond what Sherry Arnstein refers to in her "Ladder of Participation" as 'consultative' and 'informing' engagement.
methods, or ‘degrees of tokenism,’ which are utilized by the top-down approach of the City of Toronto at present, to the promotion of ‘degrees of citizen power’ reflected in methods of engagement that include ‘partnership’ (See Diagram 1). Support for organizational development and associated civic education initiatives is vitally necessary in order to move towards a partnership model, particularly in relation to newcomer or immigrant and ethno-cultural communities. However, the more formal means to participate in municipal decision-making offered by the City such as representation or consultation through committees, advisory groups and city staff remains inaccessible in relation to the capacity of racialized communities and newcomers. These avenues of participation are also top-down and reflective of the inherent status-quo power structure that exists between the citizenry and its elected officials.

Another important issue as expressed by the Alternative Planning group is the need for ethno-cultural communities in the City of Toronto to be represented as equal participants within planning forums, in order to make both the processes and the outcomes more ‘relevant’ to the city’s diverse citizenry. Participation of ethno-cultural groups in social planning is presently limited by numerous factors, such as their association with or representation by a formal organization or group that is recognized and engaged with by city officials. However, many individuals from ethno-cultural communities are busy dealing with issues of basic survival, or a multitude of other challenges.10

Bodies such as the Alternative Planning Group (APG) have come together with the purpose of revitalizing how planning is done in the City of Toronto, proposing a framework of ‘engagement through negotiation’ which can be utilized within a partnership model. In order for such negotiation to be equitable, the APG emphasizes the need for an examination of power in the way ‘difference’ is constructed and ‘inclusion’ is determined as the final outcome of social development planning. The group also highlights the need to recognize ethno-racial communities and groups as emerging stakeholders with the greatest understanding of their social planning needs, and therefore, entitled to the resources to effectively and equitably engage in the process of planning.

10 See Chapter Four for a case study examination of the barriers to participation faced by members of Toronto’s Sri Lankan Tamil community.
In summary, the information I have presented in this chapter reflects many challenges the City of Toronto faces as it continues to develop its approach to citizen engagement in the social development planning of the city. I have outlined a number of important consultations and research initiatives involving citizens and community organizations that have been undertaken leading to the release of reports and recommendations that lay out strategic directions for moving towards a more equitable, participatory, sustainable and inclusive city. How these will be put into action; translated into policies and practices, and woven into the governance fabric of the city remains to be seen. I believe the involvement of bodies such as the Alternative Planning Group provide important opportunities in this process, establishing a much needed ethno-racial citizen perspective that can assist in guiding planning policy and practice in the City of Toronto.
Chapter Four
Sri Lankan Tamil Diaspora:
Shaping a home away from home

The political and cultural history of the Sri Lankan Tamil community has directly influenced their process of settlement, and level of civic participation in Canada, specifically Toronto. Their story reflects the challenges and complexities associated with attaining full, active, democratic citizenship for newcomers of a visible minority, as well as those of other communities who are not included in society's demographic majority within a multicultural nation. This struggle is tied directly to the desires of Toronto's Sri Lankan Tamil community to overcome past struggles and directly participate, help shape, and be reflected equitably within the social fabric - the plans, policies and practices - of the city they now call home.

In the first section of this chapter I will provide the historical context of Sri Lankan Tamil immigration to Canada, with particular emphasis on the impact of the post-colonial political climate in Sri Lanka on newcomers to Toronto. Next, I will provide an overview of the Sri Lankan Tamil community as it has established itself in Toronto, including the areas of settlement, and important characteristics of the community as derived from key informant interviews, a focus group interview, media and literature reviews. I will conclude by drawing together key insights into the challenges faced by the Sri Lankan Tamil community in Canada, as well as their approach to these issues, to Canadian society, its values, its political system, and their efforts to participate through the development of community based organizations.

Historical Overview

The Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka is located 29 kilometers off the southeastern tip of the Indian subcontinent. Known as Ceylon until 1972, twenty percent of the island's 19 million people live in urban centers, with the remaining 80 percent dwelling in small towns, village and rural agricultural communities (Government of Sri Lanka, 2004). The three largest ethnic groups present on the island include the Sinhalese (74%), Tamils (18%) and the Moors, often referred to as Muslims (7%). The remaining one per cent of the Sri Lankan ethnic population is made up of Veddah, Malay, and Burgher peoples. The Tamils can be further divided into those considered
'lowland' or native to the island (12%), and those considered 'imported' (6%), or brought in by the British administration to work in the highland tea plantations in the 19th century.

The majority of Sinhalese are followers of Buddhism, while most Tamils are Hindu, with a small number identifying as Christian, or Muslim. The island country has been noted world-wide for its progressive history, being the first country to elect a female Prime Minister, attaining a literacy rate of 87% for women and 97% for men, and reaching a life expectancy of 75 years for women and 70 for men (Ministry of Constitutional Affairs, 2003).

Since 1983, the country has been engaged in a highly volatile internal ethnic conflict between the Sinhalese majority and Tamil minority, which has resulted in the loss of tens of thousands of lives most of which have occurred in the northern and eastern provinces, traditionally home to the Tamil people (see Figures 3 and 4). The northernmost region of the country is known as the Jaffna Peninsula, the ancestral base of Sri Lankan Tamils since the early thirteenth century, which they refer to as Eelam, or homeland. The belief in the existence of an independent Tamil kingdom within this area until the early seventeenth century has provided the basis for Tamil nationalist claims, led by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) militant group, for a distinct national identity and the right to full political, economic and social control over the area (Wilson, 2000). The LTTE's battle for secession has been unremitting since 1983, except for the ceasefires of 1989-1990, 1994 and 2001 to present. The final ceasefire was formally agreed to in 2002, and at the time of writing was still in effect.

Figure 3: Map of Sri Lanka
Source:<http://www.lonelyplanet.com/mapshells/indian_subcontinent/sri_lanka/sri_lanka.htm> (June 6, 2004)
Pre-independence forces

Many significant factors emerged during Sri Lanka's pre-independence era that have been identified as influences in the development of the present conflict situation in the country. The first of these includes the centuries-old existence of the distinct languages, religions and cultures of the Sinhalese and Sri Lankan Tamil peoples. Their early settlement patterns not only established a strong relationship with a defined territory, but also determined their relationship to other ethnic groups in the country and the level of interaction with European colonial forces (Wilson, 2000).

Both ethnic groups are defined by their religious affiliation and through caste, and were faced throughout the time of European colonialization with forceful missions to subvert and convert these beliefs and traditions into a Christian ethic (Johnson and Scrienor, 1981; Little 1994). This threat of westernization pushed both Sinhalese and Tamils to emphasize the distinctiveness of their own cultural heritage, inevitably stressing the elements separating one from the other. This revival of
antagonistic nationalism involved ebbs and flows of support for and opposition against each other. The period of British colonization also brought destruction to the feudal system of Sri Lanka with the implementation of a liberal societal structure of power and governance, replacing the mainly subsistence-based economy with a capitalistic, lassiez-faire commercial system of plantation agriculture and trade and bringing together the three indigenous kingdoms: the Tamil Hindu state in the Jaffna Peninsula, Sinhalese kingdom in the central highlands at Kandy, and the second Sinhalese kingdom near the western coast (Bandarage, 1983; van Horen, 2000). These influences served to further inflame differences between the Sinhalese and Sri Lankan Tamils and create rivalries for positions of political and economic power within colonial circles (Bandarage, 1983). Leading up to Independence of Sri Lanka from the British in 1948, both Sinhalese and Tamils came together to fight for greater representation in government offices, only to quickly separate, each with its own vision for the future of Sri Lanka based on the power of their ethnic identity.

An Independent Sri Lanka
The prospects for an economically viable, robust, fully participatory and manageable democracy looked promising during the first years of independence, though there remained unresolved ethnic problems. The British had left a government structure that enabled a measure of continuity within political processes and provided for the emergence of a Parliamentary system, but had done little to unify the Sinhalese - Tamil relations. The first Independent Constitution was written by the ruling Sinhalese majority in 1948, with little input from the Tamil people. This was reflected in the lack of inclusion of formal protective rights for minorities (Rotberg, 1999).

The national election of 1956 was seen by many as a significant point in the modern history of Sri Lanka, serving to inflame the ethnic conflict that had been periodically agitated since the beginning of the colonial era (Rotberg, 1999; Little, 1994). Winning the election in a landslide, the Sinhalese-dominated People’s United Front (PUF) party replaced English with Sinhala as the country’s official language amid growing resentment from Sri Lankan Tamils throughout the country. The ‘Sinhala Only’ policy was seen as a large stumbling block to the possibilities of fashioning an integrated, multiethnic Sri Lanka based on equal freedom and tolerance for all (Little, 1994).
So began a significant period of growing disparity between the Sinhalese majority and Tamil minority. Political leadership fed Sinhala nationalism and began legislatively restricting Tamil involvement in many areas of society. Within the next few decades, many issues of inequity came to the forefront, stemming from Tamil accusations that the Sinhalese were provided greater and unfair access to areas such as education, health care, employment, access into the public service, and land ownership as a result of the 1956 election precedent. Previous to 1956, Tamils were over-represented in the civic service due to their English language proficiency. Later statistics reflected that between 1956 and 1970, the proportion of Tamils employed by the state fell from 60 to 10 percent in the professions, from 30 to 5 percent in the administrative services, from 50 to 5 percent in clerical services and from 40 to 1 percent in the armed forces (Rotberg, 1999). In addition, the 1970 constitution instituted an 'ethnic preference program' that meant that Tamils had to score significantly higher marks on admissions test to gain entrance into universities (van Horen, 2000). These events began and perpetuated further disparities and divisions between Tamils and Sinhalese throughout the country. In 1957, the Sinhalese government failed to reach an agreement with the Tamil Federal Party that would have granted regional autonomy to Tamil-majority areas and recognized Tamil as the language of administration in those areas (Library of Congress, 1998). This event foreshadowed the escalation of the conflict that would eventually lead to thousands of deaths.

The Sinhalese government also began discussions around plans to re-settle thousands of poor and lower class Sinhalese in the traditional Tamil regions in the northern and eastern parts of the island (Manogaran, 1987). Tamil spokespeople accused the government of promoting a new form of "colonialism", building even greater resentment between the two ethnic groups. After riots broke out the Sinhalese government attempted to smooth tensions by adopting a Tamil Language Special Provision Act in 1959, and finally granting Tamil national language (though not official) status under the 1978 Constitution.

In the general elections of 1977 the Parliamentary party of the Tamils, the Tamil United Liberation Front (TULF), won the majority of seats in the Northeast region of Sri Lanka on a platform of self-determination for the Tamil people. TULF had called for a constitutionally recognized separate Tamil state of Eelam (Rotberg, 1999). Though widely supported, the party lacked coherent
policies or strategy to carry out their objective, and eventually began moving more towards collaboration with the state government.

In 1978, the youth-driven Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) emerged as a faction of Tamil United Liberation Front, a group who had long ago lost faith in democracy, had become economically marginalized, and now demanded a radical strategy in order to create an independent Tamil Eelam. Velupillai Prabhakaran, 18 years old at the time, became and continues today as the group's military leader. The Tamil youth struggle was not only a revolt against the Sinhalese-dominated status quo, but also an expression of resentment against their elders for indecisiveness at a time when they felt the existence of their ethnic community was clearly in danger (Wilson, 2000). By 1980 Sri Lanka society had become irredeemably polarized, with violence resulting from a fusion of discrimination, nationalism, and ethnic inequality claiming thousands of lives and leaving 100,000 Tamils homeless in the capital city of Colombo and 175,000 in other regions of the country, particularly in the Jaffna Peninsula.

1983 will forever be known as the most brutally devastating year in Sri Lankan history, marked by the 'Colombo Riots'. In July of that year, the LTTE ambushed a state army convoy in the Northern region of Jaffna. Thirteen soldiers were killed. In response, the government announced a state funeral for the soldiers, and slated the day as one of 'national mourning' (Balasingham, 2001). This response coupled with strong media backlash fueled a movement of retaliation that resulted in Tamils being killed on sight and houses and belongings thought to be owned or occupied by Tamils burnt to the ground (Cheran 2000, 113; quoted in Hyndman, 2003). The government invoked the Sixth Amendment of the constitution, which obliged members of Parliament to renounce support for separatism, essentially barred Tamils from any form of democratic parliamentary politics and providing new momentum for their struggle for self-determination and political independence.

The LTTE's battle for secession has included three ceasefire periods of 1989-1990, 1994 and 2002. The final ceasefire is still in effect, although peace negotiations that had begun in February 2002 between the LTTE and Sri Lanka's state government facilitated by Norway broke down in April of 2003. The process has been hampered by political disagreements and turmoil between Sri Lankan President Chandrika Kumaratunga and former Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe.
regarding the approach taken to negotiations with the Tigers, who are proposing a form of self-government for the Tamil regions of the country.

As a result of the war, many thousands of Sri Lankan Tamil refugees have fled their country, the majority to the nearby Indian state of Tamil Nadu, and significant numbers to Australia, Norway and other European countries (Fuglerud, 1999). A significant migration has also occurred to Canada.

**Tamil Diaspora**

Before 1983, the small Sri Lankan Tamil diaspora population in Canada was made up chiefly of educated, professional, English-speaking individuals, many of whom lived or worked in Africa or Europe before arriving in Canada (Kandasamy, 1995). As a result of the 1983 riots and the onset of the civil war in Sri Lanka, the influx of Tamil refugees to Canada increased notably. This is reflected in census data for the period 1980-2001 which shows Convention Refugees as the largest immigrant class of Tamils in Canada (Statistics Canada, 2001a). Families also immigrated together (the second largest Immigrant Class), often spending time in other European countries such as Norway as they awaited acceptance into Canada, as was noted by a number of interview participants in this study. In June 2001, the United Nations Refugee Agency (UNHCR) estimated the number of internationally displaced Tamils to be 817,000 most of whom are or were refugees or asylum seekers (Sriskandarajah, 2002).

**Toronto's Sri Lankan Tamil Community**

Toronto's Sri Lankan Tamil community began to establish itself in the 1960s with a very small number of immigrants, but has grown tremendously, particularly in the last 15 years. Entrance figures began to markedly increase in 1985, peaking in 1992 with the acceptance of a total of 10,478 Tamils to Toronto that year alone (Statistics Canada, 2001b). Canada-wide, Sri Lanka was the number one source country for refugee claimants between 1990 and 1999 (Jimenez, 2003). In Toronto, newcomers from Sri Lanka were second only to those from Somalia as a percentage of total immigrants arriving in Toronto between 1991 and 1995, contributing to the sixty eight percent of the total number of Sri Lankan Tamils that have settled in Toronto since 1991 (City of Toronto, 1998; see Figure 5). In 2001, Statistics Canada reported approximately 63,000 residing in the City of Toronto (2002). In conversations with members of the Sri Lankan Tamil community, their numbers often push upwards of 200,000 nation-wide and 180,000 within the Greater Toronto Area.
Today the City of Toronto reports Tamil as the fifth main language spoken at home, after English, French, Chinese and Italian (City of Toronto, 2003b).

Figure 5: The Megacity

Figure 6: Greater Toronto Area (GTA)

Settling in Toronto
According to interview participants, the early demographic of the Tamil community in Toronto was made up primarily of unaccompanied men with limited education and English language skills, many who had left their homeland to save their own lives as well as the lives of their families whom they hoped to sponsor once established in Canadian society (Interview Participant 1; Interview Participant 2; Interview Participant 4; Interview Participant 6; City Official 1).
New Tamil immigrant and refugees often made their home within the downtown neighbourhood known as St. Jamestown (see Figure 7). In an interview carried out for this study, the Toronto City Councillor for the Ward encompassing the area noted that,

The Tamil community began in St. Jamestown...I have represented this area for almost 20 years now...But, as part of that I can remember sort of my first experience with the Tamil community. And part of it is that the community that I represent in St. Jamestown is a very good sort of landing area for people who are coming into the country. And so you can actually trace immigration through the housing patterns in St. Jamestown.

(City Official 1)

Figure 7: St. James Town Locator Map

Originating in the 1870s as an upper middle class neighbourhood filled with prestigious Victorian homes, the land was bought by a consortium of private developers in 1950 after the City of Toronto announced major zoning amendments that significantly increased the allowable building coverage (Dunkelman, 2002). By the end of that decade, the consortium had demolished the entire housing stock of the area and built Toronto's first high-rise apartment towers. Although designed as a neighbourhood for upwardly mobile singles and professionals, almost from the start St. Jamestown has been populated by low to moderate-income families, particularly new immigrants.
Once landed in Toronto, a number of individuals would often share an apartment, often in St. Jamestown, and work at multiple jobs. Recalling campaigning for the 1985 municipal election, the City Councillor for the area recalls,

In the period of time knocking on doors, suddenly we would have – on Sherbourne Street – in the Sherbourne Street apartments we had a new set of faces behind the door that we had never seen before. And what I observed was, knock on the door, open the door – by a man – generally in a sarong with a whole bunch of other men, no women, in the apartment, kind of looking at me. And this was repeated apartment after apartment after apartment. And so after a while I started to put the pattern together.

(City Official 1)

According to one male Tamil study participant,

Well, at that time a lot of people laugh at us because we were probably six or seven guys living in a one-bedroom apartment at the beginning. I remember that. And our food budget when we split it comes to about $60/month or $100/month, that's all. Because six guys, and two of these guys take the evening shift, and some guys work night shift or day shift so the beds are available to all the others.

(Interview Participant 6)

Today the St. Jamestown area is part of the most dense census tract in Canada, with 18 high-rise apartments in an area of 32.1 acres, housing a population of approximately 15,000 people (Dunkelman, 2002). Though many Sri Lankan Tamils have moved out of the downtown core, they are still the second largest group of recent immigrants in St. Jamestown, with Tamil as the most common language spoken in the area overall (City of Toronto, 2001d). Many Tamil residents proudly refer to the neighbourhood as “Little Jaffna”, which includes a dense variety of Sri Lankan grocery stores, restaurants, services and community organizations located in and around the junction of Wellesley and Parliament Streets. The area also includes a hospital, school, and space for a new community center, slated for construction soon.

Recently a number of Sri Lankan Tamil families have left St. Jamestown and moved to a community a number of blocks south within the same Ward boundary. According to the City Councillor for the area,

As they have settled in Canada for a more lengthy time they have become eligible for public housing, and as such they have now been able to move into a larger public housing project just south of St. Jamestown, which is Regent Park.

(City Official 1)
Sri Lankan Tamil communities living within Toronto's downtown core are also located within
neighbourhoods known as Parkdale, and Landsdowne-Bloor where a Tamil Housing Co-op was
built in 1988 by the Society for the Aid of Sri Lankan Minorities (SACEM).

The largest overall populations of Sri Lankan Tamils live in the eastern and northern communities
of Scarborough and North York, as well as other outlying communities11 (See Map 2). Over the
years, a flow of community members has occurred from the downtown core to more suburban
areas as they have become familiar with Toronto's landscape and culture, accessed education
and/or secured employment, and have been reunited with family members. Sri Lankan Tamil
families that immigrated to Toronto with financial resources, or who held professional certification
that could be applied in Canada also tended to settle in these communities outside the city center
(City Councillor). According to one interview participant,

Movement to Scarborough started probably in the 80s and really accelerated in the 90s. you have a lot of people that are no, especially what happening in the 80s was a lot of families were sponsored, and definitely in the 90s that probably doubled or tripled. You have individuals now becoming families and sponsoring either wife or husband or their parents there. With that there was a need for space, and definitely Scarborough offered the cheapest I guess.

(Interview Participant 1)

In addition to the growing number of Sri Lankan Tamil homeowners in communities such as
Scarborough, apartment buildings often occupied by new Tamil immigrants and refugees are also
included in the landscape. In many cases, the living conditions in these building are very poor.
During a tour of Scarborough’s Tamil communities, one Tamil participant who also worked as a
Real Estate Agent identified one such building area:

We are surrounded by apartment buildings here, run by slumlords who don't maintain and
continue to increase the rent. This is probably the first point of contact for people who
come here for their first years and then move on. We are on the southwest corner of
Kennedy and Eglington where it is probably 50% Tamil.

(Interview Participant 4)

The growing Sri Lankan Tamil community has produced a wide range of businesses, services,
shops, markets, movie theatres, restaurants and community organizations in areas such as
Scarborough, along with a large number of temples and other places of worship.

11 Significant populations of Sri Lankan Tamils also live in the Northern community of Markham, and eastern
community of Mississauga – See Map 3.


Community Strengths

A number of key characteristics of the Sri Lankan Tamil community have allowed their members to persevere, adapt and build their community in Toronto in the face of many challenges. One of the greatest strengths of the community is the high value placed on education. In Sri Lanka, the level of education served as a defining characteristic in society. Under colonial rule Tamils had gained opportunities for upward mobility within their traditionally farming and fishing based community, with the highest educated becoming engineers, teachers, or accountants. However, equal access to education has been denied to generations of Tamil people since 1956.

The value of education has translated into a community strength in their new home of Toronto, resulting in large numbers of Tamil youth and adults taking advantage of the opportunity to pursue higher levels of education. According to one interview participant, some Tamils are entering areas of study that were previously not seen as culturally acceptable such as business or journalism (Interview Participant 5). Two participants revealed that they were among the first few Tamils in Canada to be accepted to Law School (Interview Participant 4, Interview Participant 7).

Another key characteristic of the community is their strong cohesiveness and motivation. Many interview respondents, as well as focus group participants strongly expressed that 'back home issues' were the glue that keeps their community actively working towards prosperity here, but also peace back home. One focus group participant offered,

I think that is one of the reasons Tamils have such a good unity here, because we, we had a common cause. We wanted to get our people liberated from oppression and that common cause had a solidarity. It is easier for us to do other work here sometimes because that solidarity and that kind of network is already there in place. Because, you know, if you just came loose as immigrants and starting doing a business you might find it harder to harness that community spirit.

(Focus Group Participant 3)

That motivation has served the Tamil community well in Toronto. Today there are 3000 local businesses, nine Tamil-language newspapers, one English-language newspaper focused on Tamil Diaspora issues, four 24-hour radio stations, three 24-hour television stations, and upwards of 15 organizations working to serve the community (Canadian Tamil Congress, 2002). According to one Tamil interview participant,
Like, this is a community that really came as refugees and they came with nothing. Like absolutely nothing. They've been able to, I guess, rebuild, rebuild the community. So I guess that's what you want to know, like what is the community. They were able to come here with absolutely nothing and then build a community.

(Interview Participant 7)

Community Challenges

Alongside the Sri Lankan Tamil community's strengths there exist a number of significant challenges as they strive to make a home for themselves in Toronto. These barriers that exist to participating in the greater urban realm experienced by the community directly impact their ability to participate in decision making that could lead to improvement of their own lives, and as a result the increase in overall prosperity of the city. Many of these barriers were identified by interview participants and include:

- English language difficulty
- Lack of trust in political and bureaucratic figures and processes due to decades of past experience as targets of political and physical genocide in Sri Lanka
- Inter and intra-generational issues resulting from a dramatic shift in living environments, cultural norms and economic pressures, such as:
  - Loneliness, depression and high suicide rates particularly in elders and women
  - Increased spousal abuse
  - High stress levels of working parents
  - Violence and gang membership particularly related to youth

In addition, Michael Ornstein, in his 2000 report, "Ethno-Racial Inequality in the City of Toronto: An Analysis of the 1996 Census," cites Tamils, as well as 'Sri Lankans', as two of the five severely disadvantaged groups relative to the larger Toronto community in terms of the level of poverty, unemployment, over-representation in low-skill jobs, low education and high-school drop out rates (ii). The result of interviews done for this study also note that lack of affordable housing, limited spaces and resources to support youth recreation, and no available nursing homes for elders were concerns prevalent within Toronto's Tamil community.

In addition, the mainstream media's portrayal of Sri Lankan Tamils has served to inflame the community's struggle in Toronto. The reports relating to Tamils often highlight the incidents of gang violence involving Tamil youth, or individuals and community organizations accused of involvement in "extensive criminal activity" by financially supporting the LTTE in Sri Lanka (Bell, 2003; Pungliese, 2003). The resulting stereotype of all Sri Lankan Tamils as terrorists was further
inflamed by the events of September 11, 2001, which pointed to the situation in Sri Lanka as proof of Tamil terrorism, and its existence within Canada’s Tamil community (Bell, 2002). However, the Canadian government continues to resist pressure from the Canadian Security Intelligence Agency (CSIS) who are pushing for the Tamil Tigers to be added as an active terrorist organization under the country’s new Anti-Terrorist Bill (Young, 2003).

The struggle to effectively deal with these complex challenges is further linked to a lack of connection to and support from the City of Toronto, or to the Ontario provincial government who oversee the education, justice and health care systems within the City. The resulting disconnect produces a lack of general knowledge among members of the Sri Lankan Tamil community regarding the resources within society that are available to assist them in overcoming the challenges and barriers they face. This lack of connection to the ‘mainstream’ community of Toronto produces feelings of alienation, confusion, and isolation (Interview Participant 4; Interview Participant 5).

Community Response

One response of Toronto’s Sri Lankan Tamil community to these issues, and in large part stemming back to their response to the discrimination and oppression they experienced within the governance and political systems ‘back home’, has been to develop itself internally in order to address its own issues. This self-reliance approach is deeply imprinted among Sri Lankan Tamils in Toronto. It was noted by a number of interview participants that this value is strongly held particularly by the elders, many of whom worked hard early on to build unity and support within their community and for their culture, and participated in the development of the first community-based organizations (Interview Participant 5; Interview Participant 8). One focus group participant noted,

As a group we have developed and then worked here, developed resources and then you are able to channel the resources and the network in any direction you want. If you have a particular issues that you have here, but that needs immediate attention of the community and that needs community action, we are able to channel the resources, that network and the skills that we have learned and that we have mastered in coming together as a community. That’s one of the things that is helping the community in negotiating some of these barriers that we have here.

(Focus Group Participant 8)
The majority of Sri Lankan Tamil community organizations in Toronto today are focused on addressing issues related to settlement such as language instruction, housing, employment, and immigration issues\textsuperscript{12}. A number of other more recently established groups deal with more contemporary challenges involving specific sectors of the community such as seniors, youth and women\textsuperscript{13}.

Some members of the Tamil community view the emphasis on self-reliance as a barrier that prevents the community from building stronger coalitions with other immigrant communities who struggle with similar issues. One interview participant stated,

\begin{quote}
If you take the post-September 11\textsuperscript{th} issues and see how the backlash against the Muslim community...I am not saying this was totally fended off, but there were a lot of organizations and efforts from the communities to protect the rights of these communities – it could be Muslim or it could be an Middle Eastern groups that were under attack. But there was no such initiative, even from the wider community. There was no press release from anybody saying that the attacks on our community were wrong. Nothing. Nothing was happening. To some extent, I think it was our community's fault, that there was no initiative to, or action to build some networks, to build some connection with other communities to join hands in mutually relevant issues.
\end{quote}

(Interview Participant 1)

Another noted,

\begin{quote}
Most of them [community issues] are looked upon as issues to do with settlement and the community's response has always been to take the first step. Take the first step in organizing something. For example, the youth issue. The community took the initiative of forming the organization [CanTYD], funding the organization, and putting manpower and the resources that is required to run an organization, to deal with the issues the community was facing. There was not actually a lot of assistance in the beginning from anybody else. But I think one of the things that the community has come to realize is that this is not just our community's problem. This is, I mean, basically, our society as a whole is going to benefit if the Tamil community is going to settle here and integrate itself with the community here.
\end{quote}

(Interview Participant 3)

Although the group mentioned by Interview Participant 3, the Canadian Tamil Youth Development Centre (CanTYD), was created as a result of a community-driven initiative, in an interview with the

\textsuperscript{12}Examples of these include the Tamil Eelam Society of Canada, Society for the Aid of Ceylon (Sri Lankan) Minorities (SACEM), and the Tamil Academy of Arts and Technology

\textsuperscript{13}Examples of these include the Toronto Tamils' Senior Association, Vasantham – A Tamil Seniors' Wellness Centre, Canadian Tamil Youth Development Centre (CanTYD), and the South Asian Women's Centre – which is not exclusively Tamil, providing services to Tamil women as well as women from other S. Asian countries
Executive Director of the organization, it was reported that CanTYD did eventually receive support from the City’s Community Development Officer for the region who also assisted in the re-design of their first funding proposal. This assistance contributed to the success of future grant applications, providing the impetus for successful provincial funding as well. During an interview with the two City of Toronto CDOs, it was revealed that one other Tamil community organization, Vasantham - a wellness center for Tamil seniors – also received organizational support from the city’s social development workers.

Though these two Tamil organizations may be gaining recognition and support from the City, there continues to be growing recognition within the community of the need for a holistic approach to their issues and challenges, to link with other communities facing similar difficulties, and to put that voice forward. Two interview participants offered these statements:

"...there is also a lack of structure or platform for the community to come together to identify other issues that are pertinent to the community, and to advocate in alleviating those problems or to address some of the concerns at different levels of government or other sectors."

(Interview Participant 1)

"I guess, people realize, the people who have been working the community realize, I mean unless we have a say in policy making, we will not go anywhere. We can get the money or the funding, but that's not going to be enough."

(Interview Participant 2)

Such community members recognize the need to access resources outside of their community, to assert their rights within political and bureaucratic structures in order to advocate for the needs and desires of the Sri Lankan Tamil people. An elder and founding member of Toronto’s Tamil community also offered,

"Now things are changing. The people are getting educated, both Tamils as well as the mainstream. So thing are getting better, but there is room for planning and the need for services, implementation of the services that should be done by the service providers or the local municipal government."

(Interview Participant 8)

In the year 2000, a new community-based organization, the Canadian Tamil Congress (CTC) was formed in an attempt to become the “Unified Voice of Canadian Tamils” by providing a space for

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14 The Sri Lankan Tamil community has developed loose affiliations with the Coalition of Agencies Serving South Asians (CASSA), and the Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants (OCASI)
community members to voice their concerns. From here, the organization hopes to bring more awareness to the Tamil community in terms of civic engagement, and provide greater opportunities to bring their concerns to those in positions of power at the municipal level and beyond. This organization will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter Five.

In Summary
This chapter presented an overview of Toronto’s Sri Lankan Tamil community as it has established itself largely over the past 15 years. Comprised mainly of refugees and immigrants who have fled civil war in their homeland, Toronto’s Tamils have moved through a number of stages within their settlement process: from a period of primarily unaccompanied male refugees arriving in the City and large numbers sharing space within small apartments in the downtown high-rise neighbourhood known as St. Jamestown, to families being united and moving to suburban communities and buying homes in areas such as Scarborough and North York. Over time, a wide range of businesses, services, shops, markets, movie theatres, restaurants and places of worship became established providing all the necessary cultural amenities to the community in various locations around the city.

I have discussed how within this process of settling in Toronto, the community has and continues to face internal and external challenges, many of which come as a result of adapting to living within a culture that is in many ways vastly different from that of ‘back home’. I presented many of these challenges, including language difficulties, inter and intra-generational issues resulting from a dramatic shift in living environments, cultural norms and economic pressures for women, youth, elders and working parents. In addition, poverty, unemployment, over-representation in low-skill jobs, low education and high-school drop out rates also affect members of the Sri Lankan Tamil community. It is these barriers that serve to prevent the community from accessing avenues to civic participation at the municipal level such as those made available by the City (see Chapter Three), reflecting a clear need for the City to take a different approach to engaging and promoting the civic participation of immigrant communities.
This chapter also discussed other challenges faced by the community in Toronto related to experiences that took place in their homeland. Tamils in Toronto have struggled with the impacts of being stereotyped as 'terrorists' by some Canadian media as a result of the LTTE tactics of armed struggle. The systematic discrimination and oppression experiences in Sri Lanka at the hands of the State has resulted in a lack of trust in political and bureaucratic figures and processes in their new home of Canada, and a tendency towards self-reliance to deal with their struggles, as opposed to reaching outwards to build partnerships with other communities or access resources within the ‘mainstream’.

I linked the challenges presently faced by members of the Sri Lankan Tamil community in Toronto to their many community strengths and tendency towards self-reliance partly based also on their homeland experiences, to reflect on the creation of a large number of community-based organizations in an effort to address many of the community’s challenges. I then introduced the most recent Sri Lankan Tamil community organizations, including CanTYD, and explored the reasons for their formation, particularly in relation to the need to address issues that have arisen within the community primarily as a result of the cultural adaptation process, such as youth gangs or depression in seniors. From the work of these groups, in association with the evolution of the community, I highlighted the push that has begun for the establishment of a more advocacy-oriented organization. This has come from many members of Toronto’s Sri Lankan Tamil community who recognize the need to connect with other organizations outside of the community, to build partnerships and to assert their rights as citizens of Toronto, to participate and have their voices heard in decision-making that affects them. It is this ‘new wave’ that recognizes the need for a space where community members can come together to discuss issues that require action, and for a voice to represent and advocate to the various levels of government, primarily municipal, on their behalf. Finally, I presented the next step to address this need, the establishment of the Canadian Tamil Congress (CTC) in the year 2000 – an community based organization set to act as the “Unified Voice of Canadian Tamils.” I will present an in-depth exploration of the CTC, its purpose, mandate, activities, and untold role in the push for democratic renewal of planning, in the next chapter.
Chapter Five
Establishing a Voice:
The Canadian Tamil Congress

Within this chapter I explore the evolution and activities of the most recent Sri Lankan Tamil community organization in Toronto, the Canadian Tamil Congress (CTC). My examination will take place specifically in relation to the response of members of the Sri Lankan Tamil community to the City of Toronto's approach to social development planning, including the actions members of the community have taken to understand and address the barriers to participation they face in order to advance their community as equal partners in social development planning and other decision-making processes in the City of Toronto. I highlight one initiative of the CTC, Project Participate, as a recent example of an action taken to address the barriers faced by the Sri Lankan Tamil community to civic participation.

Establishing a Voice
In the year 2000 the most recent Sri Lankan Tamil community-based organization, the Canadian Tamil Congress (CTC), was created by a small group of individuals with their own vision for the future of Sri Lankan Tamils in Toronto, and across Canada. Founded primarily by youth who had gained leadership experience though their involvement in Tamil University Student Associations, as well as other Tamil community-based organizations such CanTYD¹⁵, the CTC represents a notably distinct set of interests within the Tamil community, one that is reflective of a politicized generation of individuals who are taking action beyond what is considered 'traditional', to address issues they have identified within their community as key to their advancement in Canadian society.

According to a representative of the organization, the CTC was formed in response to the growing recognition of the need for a forum in which Sri Lankan Tamil community members and organizations could come together to collectively discuss the challenges they were facing, determine through consensus potential actions that could be taken, and provide a mandate to an organization that could advocate directly to all levels of government on behalf of the community (Interview Participant 1; CTC, 2003a).

¹⁵ See Chapter Four for a brief description of CanTYD
With their main office located in Scarborough and regional chapters in Vancouver, Quebec, Montreal and Ottawa, the CTC is 100% volunteer-run and receives no outside funding. The organization is governed by an active Board of Directors and involves approximately 100 volunteers who organize a wide range of committees responsible for various programs, projects and research-based initiatives on topics such as social development, health, media, racism and foreign policy (CTC, 2003a).

Established with an office space that includes a small reception, library, and board room, the CTC is not yet eligible for grants available through City of Toronto programs. At the time interviews were conducted for this project, the organization had not yet established partnerships with other organizations in order to qualify within certain City funding programs. In addition, it was revealed in interviews done with two Community Development Officers, the City no longer provides 'developmental grants' to new organizations. Grants such as the ‘Community Services Grant Program’ and ‘Breaking the Cycle of Violence’ grants also include requirements based on how long an organization has been active in order to establish proof of sound financial and organizational management. These regulations are seen by organizations such as the CTC, as well as by the City’s Community Development Officers, as challenges to social development planning in Toronto (Interview Participant 3; Planner 2). According to one focus group member,

I guess this role probably is not recognized as an important role, and it is not just for an organization like us, which basically represents the interests of the community, but other organizations out there, which basically are pushing for issues, or agendas which are basically advocating on issues. I think there is no mechanism to support them, and there is actually a negative incentive I would say.

(Focus Group Participant 1)

In order to continue operations, the CTC’s organizational expenses have been absorbed directly by the founding members and active volunteers for its first year and a half. Since that time, support within the Sri Lankan Tamil community continues to be found through contributions by individuals and businesses in order to support an operational budget and project expenses of the Congress (Interview Participant 1).
Constructed explicitly on principles of democracy and inclusion, the Canadian Tamil Congress acknowledges the importance of knowledge and experience as they related to the ability of Tamils to effectively engage and participate in the political system in Toronto, and in other cities in Canada. The CTC is recognized by members throughout the community as forging new ground that previously would have been seen as unconventional within the Tamil community (Interview Participants 1-5). According to one spokesperson for the organization,

> Advocacy is a new concept for the Tamil community. It has not been something that the community has used back home. So it is very difficult to find people who are actually proficient in advocating at different levels of government, let alone people who know the system here and are able to do that.

(Focus Group Participant 1)

Another offered,

> Politics is not, I mean I think it is similar to so many other communities, but politics is not something that the Tamil community has EVER looked up to as a profession...

(Interview Participant 1)

The campaigns of the Congress each begin with a process of seeking a mandate and direction from the greater Sri Lankan Tamil community through forums and focus groups, constructing a bottom-up approach to the organization’s efforts. Simply stated by one CTC founding member, “We want to encourage community’s participation in deciding what the community should be doing” (Interview Participant 3). However, according to another CTC founding member, very few people involved in the original organizing had experience in setting up such a process (Interview Participant 1). In its first year, the organization held its first small community forums on the three issues of health, education and the media in the Sri Lankan Tamil community. These experiences allowed the groups to test various organizational, facilitation, and participatory techniques, learn more about the issues within the community, and gain the knowledge required to hold a large, more broad-based event.

In June 2002, the Canadian Tamil Congress held its first National Convention, inviting over 2500 delegates including Tamil community leaders, non-Tamil political representatives, academics, media personnel, and representatives from various non-governmental agencies. The Canadian Tamil Congress was the first organization to hold a Convention of this kind within the Sri Lankan Tamil community. The purpose of the convention was to provide the opportunity for “individual Tamil Canadians and Tamil organizations of diverse purpose and direction to decide on the
policies and efforts that should be undertaken for the betterment of our lives" (CTC, 2002). Calling again for a democratically established mandate\textsuperscript{16} from the Sri Lankan Tamil community associated with each policy identified, the CTC promoted the values of transparency and active participation with the objective of building a strong Tamil voice in order to advance their interests within the political framework of Canada, as well as “pathways for cooperative efforts and coalition building with the greater Toronto and Canadian multicultural society” (CTC, 2002). The input gathered through forum participants on twelve key issue-areas\textsuperscript{17} helped determine the direction of the work of the Congress over the next three years.

Describing the rationale behind the organization’s evolution, the CTC states that,

The services provided by these organizations [those presently serving the Tamil community], particularly governmental organizations, do not always reach the targeted recipients due to reasons such as lack of awareness of recipients, cultural and linguistic barriers between the service providers and recipients etc. A \textit{mechanism} is required to identify solutions and to work with appropriate policy makers to design and change policies as well as creating awareness of existing services among the community.

Changes taking place in society create the need for identifying new services, ways of delivering services efficiently and co-ordination of the existing services. A common \textit{platform} should be provided to bring together those involved in the front end of service delivery, experts in the respective fields and enthusiastic community activists to achieve these objectives.

Canadian Tamils should discharge their civic responsibility by fully participating in the national and political process. At the same time, they should also assert their rights as Canadian Citizens when addressing their concerns to national and international institutions. A \textit{force} is required to encourage our community to work with political parties whose principles they support to participate in the Canadian national affairs.

Above all, our community should unite to further their economical, social, cultural and political conditions and \textit{voice} their concerns loudly to reach the ears of the elected representatives and government bureaucrats and non-governmental institutions.

(CTC, 2002; original emphasis)

\textsuperscript{16} Please see Appendix A for The Canadian Tamil Congress National Convention 2002 full list of adopted resolutions

\textsuperscript{17} In addition to Health, Education and Media, these include Social Development/Capacity Building/Community Services, Business, Women’s Issues, Justice, Peace Efforts in Sri Lanka, Language and Culture, Human Rights, Immigration and Refugees, and Labour.
Project Participate

Approximately one year after the National Convention and based on the resolutions proposed, deliberated and adopted by the community, the Canadian Tamil Congress was given the mandate to hold a number of focus groups surrounding the issue of civic participation and the barriers facing the Sri Lankan Tamil community. The Congress, aware of the lack of statistical data or any form of vital information denoting civic participation within the Tamil community, chose to gather input from community members through small group discussions. The CTC then built on the information gathered to formulate their activities through the development of ‘Project Participate’.

Project Participate, initiated in 2003, aims essentially to bring together community members, policy makers, researchers and academics to identify barriers to participation faced by the Sri Lankan Tamil community in Toronto, and to educate, develop and provide the means for each member of the community to attain full, active citizenship through civic engagement and participation that would allow them to directly contribute to the shaping of the city and their opportunities to flourish as urban citizens within it (CTC website, 2003b; Interview Participant 1). Guided by an Advisory Committee that includes community members, CTC representatives, academics and a City of Toronto Community Development Officer, Project Participate seeks to engage the Tamil community in the process of identifying its barriers to participation, as a form of empowerment and process of community development. According to the description of the four-stage project found on the CTC’s website,

Project Participate is designed to equip our community with the essential knowledge and skill sets required to assert the Tamils’ needs, issues, values and aspirations at the various levels of civic decision-making process. Furthermore its intent is to assist the Canadian Tamils to form strategic alliances with other communities, while overcoming various barriers and limitations. Most importantly this project will work towards ensuring accountability, fairness and transparency within all levels of governments, policy makers, and elected representatives (2003b).

Described in an interview with a CTC member,

You know, I think when we went on the air [Tamil TV and radio] about Project Participate just to talk about Project Participate and where we wanted to go, we were surprised. We were surprised about the response. People came out and said, like we need to get there, we need to participate, how come we’re not participating?.... But when presented like that they take it, like oh, maybe we should be thinking about running for, supporting a candidate in that election or whatever. Or running for School’s Council Associate, School
Councillor, Teacher's Association...So you know, just giving those ideas to them. Saying this is where you can participate.

(Interview Participant 1)

Another CTC member offered,

I think we need to mobilize the community to ask for whatever they need. Whether it be space for cricket, or whether it be a study on post-traumatic stress. Whether it be a community center, or businesses or things like that. I think the initial step is what we had got through the establishment of the Canadian Tamil Congress...Because as we get developed and kind of advance our plans, it would be the overall city plans that would be getting advanced.

(Interview Participant 3)

In essence, Project Participate seeks to educate all members of the Tamil community about the economic, political and social system in which they live, how it works, and how to participate within it. The project places emphasis on the fact that through contributing their resources, skills, energy and education to participating in the 'mainstream', not only will the Tamil community benefit, but so will the overall city. One interview participant noted that, "In that sense we are doing the work of the municipal government" (Interview Participant 2). Another offered,

It is in the interests of the country to make us a certain part of the political process. It should be seen in that way. Because it is an investment in the people, right?

(Focus Group Participant 7)

The theoretical framework of Project Participate was established through a literature review that allowed the project team to understand and provide context to the issues. The following definition of civic participation was adopted to guide the initiative and appears here from the project website:

Civic participation represents the patterning of how we share a common space, common resources, and common opportunities and manage interdependence in that "company of strangers" which constitutes the public (Selman, 1991). More specifically, it is the processes whereby citizens concerns, needs, values, expectations and problems are taken into account in the governmental decision making process.

Through the project’s background study, it was also determined that various factors govern the civic participation of recent immigrants, particularly:

- motivation - benefits and costs of participation
- competencies - knowledge, skills, attitude, behavioral intention, awareness and having concept or opinion
- attitudes and behaviors
- systemic structural barriers - discrimination, limited access points to governments and receptiveness of government

(CTC, 2003b)

Established as a four-phase project, the first phase involves a 'needs assessment' based on how these factors govern citizen participation within the Sri Lankan Tamil community. According to an interview carried out with a community member working on this project, the approach of this phase will also be to determine why there seem to be a lot of activities and participation within the community, but very little beyond it, in non-Tamil organizations or contexts (Interview Participant 1).

The second phase will involve a community education campaign to address some of the issues that will be identified through phase one, utilizing all forms of media, community programs and organizational outreach. The third component will focus on the development of a broad campaign to encourage community members to participate. The final phase emphasizes developing methods of electoral representative accountability to Tamil constituents and the issues they raise.

One interview participant noted that,

There are some politicians that have gone out of their way to listen to the community when it comes to the issues the community has or is facing. But I would say, the vast majority is not attuned to the needs within the community. That is not definitely always the fault of the politicians, it is also the fault of the community.

(Interview Participant 1)

The first phase of the project is presently being carried out. So far, focus groups have been conducted in a variety of neighbourhoods throughout Toronto to compile input from community members regarding the barriers they face. In addition, the Congress has launched a new section of their website dedicated to the project, providing background information, project updates, and opportunities to become involved as a volunteer. The Congress hopes to synthesize and conduct an analysis of the information compiled and move into the next phase within the year 2004.

In Summary

In this chapter I explained how the Sri Lankan Tamil community arrived in Canada with its own culture, language, hopes, fears, and history of oppression and struggle. I discussed how they have established themselves over a relatively short period of time and have become a viable community,
though one that is still unable to address the totality of struggles they face without connection to and the assistance of the greater society and governance system. I noted that multiple barriers prevent Tamils in Toronto from having their voices heard and participating in civic decision-making processes. I discussed how this lack of connection has not stopped the community from its attempts to understand, become educated, educate others, organize and take action, and continue to evolve and grow as a community in Toronto. This reaction to the structure of involvement by the City and city planners has led to the establishment of new organizations such as the Canadian Tamil Congress, which seeks to bring the greater Tamil community together in discussion and planning, to have their voices heard and connect with other communities who face similar struggles. In this way, a process of democratic renewal begins – one that provides the means to identify, address, and work beyond barriers to participation, while at the same time transforming the planning processes by which decisions are made that affect their community.
Chapter Six
Case Study Analysis

In this chapter, I draw together and analyze the observations and findings I have made that address the connections between urban governance, planning, civic participation and engagement, and the quest for full, active, democratic citizenship by marginalized groups particularly immigrant communities living in Canada’s diverse, multicultural cities. I do this utilizing my chosen case study through which I examine the roles associated with the City of Toronto, its Sri Lankan Tamil community and the newly formed national organization, the Canadian Tamil Congress, in their quest to negotiating equitable civic engagement within social development planning processes in the city.

I have divided the chapter into four key sections. Each segment addresses one of the first four research questions I proposed in Chapter One. I critically investigate each question in relation to the perspectives put forth within the literature I presented in Chapter Two, which binds together the theoretical framework for my study, and the observations and findings I have made within the remaining chapters which make up the balance of my case study research.

The Governance Approach

The first research question I seek to address within my case study examination is:

How do existing governance structures within multicultural cities create opportunities for governments to negotiate with the diversity of voices regarding the needs and desires of their communities?

In order to address this question, I look first to my review of the mechanisms the City of Toronto employs that enable citizens to bring their voices forward to be considered in decision-making processes. Within my research I found these to include:

- voting in municipal elections
- contacting municipal Councillors
- attending Community Council meetings
- making deputations to committees of Council
- applying for membership to sit on city agencies, boards and commissions
- participating in formal public consultations on specific issues
- volunteering and participating in community development initiatives
I then examined these mechanisms based on transparency, accountability, responsiveness, and their ability to create actual opportunities for negotiation, or two-way dialogue between the diversity of citizens in Toronto and their municipal government regarding the needs and desires of their communities. I consider these characteristics of reciprocal exchange to be necessary for planning to be truly inclusive.

As a result, I found each of these avenues of participation to emphasize one-way methods of communication, representing a top-down consultative approach more than one of equitable citizen engagement. Each method provides little if any opportunity for true two-way negotiation between the state and its citizenry. In each case the onus is placed on the citizen to bring issues to the attention of the City, and assumes all citizens:

- understand the system - are aware of the means by which to bring issues of concern forward and how to become involved in bureaucratic mechanisms,
- have equal access and ability to take action
- have the time and resources to following up once a process has begun.

In addition, I found there to be no mechanisms which ensure accountability of City officials to the participating citizen(s). As well, the final decision-making power related to each of the above methods is held by the elected official. As reflected in the critical analysis put forward by former City of Toronto planner Tim Rees, such avenues of participation may have the appearance of holding power, but often in reality they have no ability to influence larger decision making or policy creation, and in some cases the experience of being a part of such bodies and processes serves only to disempower citizens and create greater obstacles to inclusion and full participation (Rees, 1998). These consultative processes often represent ‘tokenism’ and do no more than act as a formalized mechanism for supporting the status quo (Arnstein1969). These methods are paternalistic, and reinforce an approach to making decisions ‘for’ others, not empowering those affected to play a key role in the decision-making (APG, 2004).

However, I did find that the City of Toronto has taken other very important steps since amalgamation of the City to explore how to better engage with its citizens. These include regular reviews of the City's governance structure, establishment of the Miller Committee, Toronto's Healthy City Office, the Task Force on Community Access and Equity and as a result the Action,
Equity and Human Rights Action Plan. In addition, the adoption of the Framework of Citizen Participation in the City of Toronto prompted a five-part discussion series focused on how civic participation can be made more meaningful within the City. Also key was the development of the Plan of Action for the Elimination of Racism and Discrimination. Finally, the Community Consultation on Social Development, a multi-phase project that informed the publication, Preserving Our Civic Legacy, was vital in the construction of Toronto’s Social Development Strategy (SDS), which today acts as the social planning component of the City’s Strategic Plan. The SDS represents the opportunity to revise governance structures, and perhaps support the creation of new ones that will offer important opportunities to increase equitable negotiate with the diversity of citizen voices regarding the needs and desires of their communities.

Responsibilities of Planners

The second research question I pose within my study is:

What are the responsibilities of planners engaged in the social development of Canadian cities to involve citizens in decision making and what methods do they use?

To explore this issue within the context of the City of Toronto, I interviewed three planners with direct responsibilities in social development planning. Two of these worked within the bureaucratic structure of the City of Toronto as Community Development Officers (CDOs). The third was employed by the Community Social Planning Council of Toronto (CSPC-T), a non-profit organization partially funded by the City to carry out independent social planning at the local and city-wide levels. Their work is guided by Toronto’s Social Development Strategy (SDS), the social planning component of the City of Toronto’s Strategic Plan developed in 2001 which is based on the five principles of equity, equality, access, participation, and cohesion.

Through my research, I found all three planners to have explicit responsibilities related to engaging citizens in social development planning. CDOs engaged with citizens almost exclusively through established community organizations, while the CSPC-T planner worked primarily through umbrella groups of more than one community organization, “to provide support largely to coalitions and committees working on different issues in Toronto rather than to individuals or residents, per say” (Planner 3). All three planners noted that the majority of their work is done within vulnerable communities, many of which represent immigrant and newcomer communities. I found CDOs to work closer with smaller ethno-cultural community organizations providing a range of foundational
advisory support including how to establish a board of directors, or etiquette for hosting a monthly meeting. In contrast, I found the CSPC-T planner to focus on engaging and providing support to larger agency coalitions.

I found the purpose of engaging with organizations, and their members by all three planners to be focused on increasing citizens' abilities to participate effectively within the social development and civic structure of Toronto. CDOs provide support mechanisms within the planning function of building community capacity to identify issues, strategize options, come up with creative solutions, and implement of plans of action (City of Toronto, 2001c). All three planners provide education, training, networking, partnership building, organization and project consultation, and assistance in attaining community-based grants provided by the City. The CSPC-T planner described their approach to building civic engagement as 'city-wide down and then community-based up' (Planner 3).

The CSPC-T has also been involved in organizing a number of the community consultation processes outlined in Chapter Three that focused on engaging citizens from a diversity of groups and community organizations about civic engagement and social planning issues, the results of which informed the social development planning documents that now guide such planning in the city. An example of this is the first phase of the Community Consultation on Social Development strategy led by the CSPC-T in which citizens had the opportunity to express their views on the social priorities facing Toronto (CSPC-T, 2001). The resulting report was entitled Preserving Our Civic Legacy, which outlined the emerging themes from 22 focus group sessions carried out with 269 local and sector stakeholders. This information was utilized directly in the development of the Draft Social Development Strategy of Toronto, and the final document, A Social Development Strategy for the City of Toronto 2001 (SDS) which now acts as the social planning component of the city’s Strategic Plan. All three planners also provide input into the creation of City programs and policies in order to create greater equity and accessibility in their responsiveness to a broad range of critical community initiatives (City of Toronto, 2001c).

Mandated though the context of their respective work environments, I found both offices attempted to communicate with each other to ensure work was divided up and not being duplicated within the
City, and that information being provided to communities was accurate between them. However, the CSPC-T planner noted those lines of communication need to be strengthened, and should include the researchers who inform and support work carried out by these three planners. All three noted that the small number of planners responsible for such large geographic areas of the city also posed a challenge for workload and ability to communicate effectively with each other, and with other planning-related bodies such as urban development.

Although I found the work done by the planners interviewed within the City of Toronto to be very important and progressive in its approach, I also identified a number of issues that directly impact the City's effectiveness in engaging citizens in social planning-related decision making.

Logistically, within the bureaucratic realm, I found there to be only five full-time geographically based CDOs and two project-specific CDOs responsible for 2,481,494 people in the City of Toronto (Statistics Canada 2001a). The planner I interviewed from the CSPC-T was responsible for an area of Toronto that previous to amalgamation was its own municipality. Based on the recognition that the vast majority of work done by these planners is hands-on and requires a high degree of personal interaction with community members, effective outreach and engagement of citizens in social planning decision making seems like a formidable challenge in the City of Toronto.

Both the City of Toronto's Community Development Officers, and the planners representing the CSPC-T have a responsibility to engage citizens in decision making related to the social planning issues that have been identified in their communities. As I have already mentioned, these planners employ a variety of methods in which this involvement is facilitated, but each are mandated to the context of engagement through community organizations, groups, coalitions and/or committees. Literature presented in Chapter Two highlights the formation of community organizations as vital to increased civic engagement, levels of social capital, and opportunities for the expansion of democracy. In addition, support for community organizations and umbrella groups is also necessary in order to facilitate effective community and leadership development.

However, this approach to citizen engagement in planning processes also precludes outreach to community members who are not linked to community organizations and groups. As a result, the
barriers to participation that may exist for such individuals may not be addressed in the solutions adopted to community issues and work plans put into place by community organizations that are receiving support by planners. Other situations may find that such individuals are not even aware of/do not have the opportunity to become aware of the existence of such community organizations that may indeed be attempting to address the social planning-related issues that affect their daily lives.

According to Frisken and Wallace (2003), smaller or more recently established ethno-cultural communities often go undetected by municipal workers until they establish their own organization or make linkages with already established organizations. When interviewed, the CSPC-T planner also stated that new and smaller organizations often struggle in Toronto to form partnerships with other larger organizations, having to negotiate new and different identities and power issues (Planner 3). In the case of Toronto’s Sri Lankan Tamil community, although their numbers have increased significantly over the last 15 years, they have built very few connections with community groups outside of their own and have themselves received little support from planners in the city.

The next issue I identified relates directly to an examination of resources available to communities, particularly the responsibility of planners to assist community and coalition groups to effectively access city and other forms of government funding. I found this component to be supported by the City under the premise that community-based organizations are in a better position to deliver many services more effectively and with a greater degree of community acceptance (City of Toronto, 2002). However, in their own study, Siemiatycki and Saloojee found that such community organizations were concerned with being seen as service providers and not recognized by elected officials and bureaucrats in the role of “active participants in decision-making, from needs assessment, to program development to policy making,” which was a part of their daily work (2003, 4). How governments, planners and other power holders view and engage with communities is of utmost importance to the quest for equitable and inclusive planning and must be critically addressed and deconstructed. Linked also to greater funding struggles at the municipal level, issues of power and expectation of outcome within planning and decision-making processes are again reflected strongly in the approach taken by City of Toronto planners. Planning based on this
assumption is still at its core one of consultation and clearly falls short of true equitable negotiation between the state and its citizenry.

Finally, I identified lack of communication and planning coordination as a city-wide issue. In interviews with two Community Development Officers, it was stated that in their experience prior to amalgamation, the former City of Toronto engaged more and was “much closer” to local communities. Interviews also revealed that communication between offices and bureaucrats that hold other social planning-related roles has diminished greatly since the 1997 amalgamation of the former municipalities into the ‘megacity’ of Toronto, resulting in more ‘informal connections’ than standardized channels of information sharing and exchange. In addition, social planners were found to be clearly separated from physical planners, also lacking formal communication channels that would allow social issues to be linked to urban design.

Community Response
The third question I explore during my research is:

How do citizens/communities, particularly immigrant and ethno-cultural communities, respond to the structure of involvement used by planners to engage citizens in the social development decision-making process?

In order to address this issue, I utilized the case study of the Sri Lankan Tamils in Toronto in which I carried out 25 interviews with members of the community. Although each served to inform my study, I focused particularly on the results from eight individual interviews and one focus group interview that included eight participants from the Tamil community who are actively engaged in community development issues through the newest community organization, the Canadian Tamil Congress, as one part of the primary research for my case study.

As a result of my research, I found that the political and cultural history of Sri Lankan Tamils has directly influenced the Toronto Tamil community in their process of settlement, and level of civic participation in Canada, specifically Toronto. As a minority in their homeland, the Tamils have been a part of a struggle for equality since independence of the country, and a civil war since 1983. The related discrimination and oppression they experienced within the governance and political systems ‘back home’ has translated into feelings of distrust of governance structures in their new
home of Toronto. As well, involvement in politics or advocacy of any kind was not seen as something acceptable or recognized as a cultural trait.

Toronto's Sri Lankan Tamil community has gone through many stages of development as they have reunited with family members, accessed education and/or secured employment, and become familiar with Toronto's landscape and culture, and moved out of the downtown core to different suburban locations. Community strengths such as the high value of education, a strong community cohesiveness and motivation based on a shared heritage and homeland struggle has served the community well in building its various capacities. These include a wide range of businesses, services, shops, markets, movie theatres, restaurants, a large number of temples and other places of worship, and upwards of 15 organizations that work to serve the community.

However, members of Toronto's Sri Lankan Tamils have and continue to struggle with a number of significant challenges as they strive to make a home for themselves in Toronto. 'Sri Lankans' were found to be one of the top five severely disadvantaged groups relative to the larger Toronto community in terms of the level of poverty, unemployment, over-representation in low-skill jobs, low education and high-school drop out rates (Ornstein, 2000). Many interviewees cited issues such as language difficulty, lack of trust in political and bureaucratic figures, inter and intra-generational issues resulting from a dramatic shift in living environments, cultural norms and economic pressures, such as loneliness, depression and high suicide rates in elders and women, increased spousal abuse, and high stress levels of working parents. Lack of affordable housing, limited spaces and resources to support youth recreation, and no available nursing homes for elders were also concerns I found to be prevalent within Toronto's Tamil community.

As I stated in Chapter Four, Toronto's Sri Lankan Tamil community has taken a 'self reliance' approach to dealing with these issues. Many interviewees noted this reaction of community bonding, which often includes closing itself off to deal with community problems, to be one developed in large part as a result of their experiences within the governance and political systems in Sri Lanka, and as a value strongly held by community elders, many of whom had participated in the development of the first community-based organizations in Toronto in the 1960s and 1970s. Today, the lack of connection to the 'mainstream' society and its civic structures coupled with daily
socio-economic and cultural struggles, means that the community finds itself at the margins. This situation, and the energy of a number of community members, has fueled the development of recent community organizations that have taken the issues of the community into their own hands.

These challenges faced by Toronto's Sri Lankan Tamils and their resulting actions are key in the exploration of how their members respond to the structure of involvement used by planners to engage citizens in the social development decision-making process. These stem directly from the recognition by members of Toronto's Sri Lankan Tamil community that a gulf exists between the City of Toronto's politicians, social planning bodies, social development policies and processes, and the methods by which citizens, particularly members of new immigrant communities such as the Sri Lankan Tamils are able to contribute, participate and engage in decision-making. Further removed is the ability of the communities to engage in negotiation, and ultimately transformation, of the way in which planning is approached and carried out to reflect the City's great ethno-cultural diversity through a more inclusive and equitable framework.

Most apparent is the recognition that the multitude of barriers faced by members of the Sri Lankan Tamil community often prevent them from being aware of the system in which planners exist and work to engage citizens regarding the needs and desires of their communities. They are instead occupied with their own personal struggles to survive and establish a healthy and hopeful life for themselves and their families in their new home of Toronto. As well, feelings of distrust in political and bureaucratic figures may also come into play, preventing community members who are aware and involved in planning processes from bringing their issues forward.

The major conduits whereby planners engage with citizens in Toronto are community organizations. However, the same daily challenges faced by Sri Lankan Tamils also act as barriers that prevent their community members from becoming engaged and participating in community organizations. Presently, the majority of the 15 Sri Lankan Tamil community organizations in Toronto are focused on addressing issues related to settlement. Although each of these organizations deal with issues related to the social planning needs of the Sri Lankan Tamil community, I found that only three of the most recent organizations have worked with a social
development planner: Vasanatham – a wellness center for Tamil seniors, CanTYD – a youth-focus organization, and the most recently established Canadian Tamil Congress (CTC).

Each of these three organizations has struggled to establish itself, particularly in terms of securing funding. In the case of the CTC, to date they still had not received funding from the City of Toronto through the various grants. Start up, or developmental grants no longer exist as they once had previous to amalgamation, which prevent new or emerging organizations from gaining the valuable support they need. The CTC has only been able to maintain itself through a vast number of dedicated volunteers, and through donations from members of Toronto’s Sri Lankan Tamil community.

Finally, drawing from my research, I believe the development of community organizations reflects an overall recognition by member of the Sri Lankan Tamil community of the structures in which planners engage with citizens— that is, through organizations that create the space for communities to explore and address the issues and barriers they face, that can be linked to other groups with similar issues, and that can present a strong voice to represents its members.

**Community Action**

The fourth question I explore in my research is:

> How do these communities overcome the barriers they face to participating in this structure to bring their voices forward and assert their rights as citizens to participate in planning for their future?

In order to answer this question through my case study research, I engaged in an in-depth exploration of the most recently formed community organization, the Canadian Tamil Congress. The CTC was founded in the year 2000 and was founded primarily by youth who had gained Canadian-based leadership experience though their involvement in Tamil University Student Associations, as well as other Tamil community-based organizations such Toronto’s CanTYD. The organization was created with the purpose of taking a democratic, inclusive, participatory approach to challenges facing the community based on a consensus model.
My research found that the CTC recognized that there were many barriers to participation that existed for community members, and that once again they would need to take responsibility for their community situation with little assistance from social development planners or other mainstream bodies, if they were to find ways to overcome them. The organization also recognized these barriers had to be addressed in order to increase participation of community members in the planning and decision-making that was affecting their community. With these factors in mind and as a result of a mandate given to the organization a year after its first National Convention in 2002, the Congress launched Project Participate.

Project Participate includes four stages, each of which seeks to involve their community in the process of learning more about itself along the road to empowerment, but also to create linkages with others who face similar challenges, as well as to the 'mainstream' through educating power holders at different levels.

The goal of Project Participate is to identify the full range of barriers to participation facing Toronto’s Sri Lankan Tamil community; to educate Tamil community members about these barriers including their sources and implications in relation to the social, economic and political system in which they are embedded; to develop means and methods to address and overcome them; and to organize ways to advocate to the various power holders and publics regarding the findings and outcomes of the project. The Project is a direct attempt by the Sri Lankan Tamil community, through the CTC, to overcome the barriers to participation they face in asserting their rights as citizens to participate in planning for their future.

**Conclusion**

In this chapter I draw on the information I have compiled throughout my case study research, and return to address the first four questions I raised in Chapter One. Each questions brings forth issues directly related to the quest to negotiate equitable civic engagement by the City of Toronto, its planners, and Toronto’s Sri Lankan Tamil community.

In the first section, I explored the ways in which the City of Toronto’s governance structures create spaces for citizens voices to be heard. I found that these avenues fell short and did not provide
opportunities for true negotiation between the state and its citizenry to occur. This was tied into issues of power and the need to re-evaluate the structure in order to allow for and promote more active civic engagement that linked directly to opportunities for true negotiation by Toronto's government and its diverse citizenry.

In the next section, I examined the responsibilities of three planners to engage citizens in decision-making, and the types of methods they used. I found that planners, both from the City of Toronto and the CSPC-T provided a wide range of support to citizens, engaging them primarily through community organizations and coalitions which prevented the inclusion of all citizens, particularly those who faced multiple barriers or who were engaged in smaller or more recently established communities and community organizations. I then drew attention to the small number of planners that are required to engage citizens in large geographic areas. This was also linked to the lack of strong communication between planning bodies. In addition, I discussed the dynamics of the municipal funding structure and its links to issues of power and intention that often view community organizations as service providers and not as active citizens engaged in decision-making processes.

In section three, I explored how the Sri Lankan Tamil community responds to the structure of involvement used by planners. I describe how the community's homeland history plays into their experience of adapting to life in Toronto. I outline some of the strengths and challenges facing the community, including their tendency towards self-reliance to deal with their struggles. I then focus on their development of community organizations as a means of addressing these issues and recognition of the structure in which planners operate, and their struggle to attain funding in order to do so.

Finally, I presented how the Sri Lankan Tamil community has attempted to overcome the barriers they face to participating in the planning structure. I focus particularly on the newest community organization, the Canadian Tamil Congress, and the Project Participate. This four stage project seeks to involve community members to identify barriers to participation, to educate the greater community about these barriers and their implications, to find ways to overcome the barriers, and to inform all levels of government about the process and what they have learned.
In the following chapter I will return to these issues and present my recommendations related to the previous four questions that highlight ideas of how planners can work toward a democratic renewal of planning in multicultural cities such as Toronto.
Chapter Seven
Concluding Recommendations

The quest to negotiate equitable civic engagement within governance and planning processes in Canada's largest multicultural metropolis is a complex journey. Through my exploration of this vast topic I have identified and discussed a number of key issues. Together they form the context in which ethno-cultural and other diverse communities must establish themselves, assert and expand their citizenship rights through participation in planning and other decision making processes in order to have their voices heard regarding the needs and desires of their respective communities.

In this final chapter and by way of conclusion, I will present my recommendation for actions that support the development of policies and practices which recognize equitable engagement, communication, negotiation and partnership as guidelines and planning principles on the path towards a democratic renewal of planning.

Building Toward a Democratic Renewal of Planning

The final research question I pose is:

What can social planners do to build towards a democratic renewal of planning within Canada's multicultural cities?

To address this, I would like to first return to the definition of 'democratic renewal' I introduced in Chapter One. According to Shaw and Martin (2000), democratic renewal involves the two necessary tasks of identifying and challenging the forces of social exclusion that are systematically at work in Canadian society, as well as constructing an active and inclusive concept of Canadian democratic citizenship through an ongoing process of negotiation between the state and its citizenry where 'inclusion' is not a pre-determined endpoint, but instead the modus operandi. Within this process, I see planners as 'citizenship activators', positioned between civil society and the state, planners are found in that place where the process of reconstructing citizenship and democracy to be more equitable and inclusive begins.

In order to work towards this goal, I believe at its most foundational, there is an acute need to move towards a lateral redistribution of power within the present methods of citizen engagement
supported within both governance and planning structures in order to move towards a partnership setting between citizens and power holders that truly gives voice to a diversity of citizens or 'publics'. This requires a re-evaluation of the avenues of participation the City of Toronto provides, and the method by which planners approach engagement with citizens - which often represents a process of 'planning for' rather than 'planning with' communities (APG, 2004). New methods of engagement could also be implemented that reflect a greater emphasis on direct participation in decision making, such as those used in the participatory budgeting process in Brazil (Abers, 2000). This power shift would create actual opportunities for actual negotiation, or two-way dialogue between the state and its citizenry, as well as a notion of 'the common good' that is grounded in the critical factors of transparency, accountability, and responsiveness of all parties. This basic but entirely powerful premise acts as one of the most central forces related to social exclusion/inclusion in Canadian society. The acknowledgement and restructuring of power imbalances are vital in the movement towards more inclusive planning.

Flowing from this, the notion of 'inclusion' within governance and planning structures must also be addressed. Instead of a pre-determined endpoint, inclusion must be approached as a democratically constructed process, and reframed through a process of civic engagement. A higher level of equitable engagement, with outreach to a greater diversity of citizens increases the opportunity for transformation of the planning process and of the notion of inclusion itself.

On a more practical level I have found that a greater number of planners are clearly required in order to facilitate the level of engagement necessary to effectively address the forces of social exclusion issues and other issues facing the great diversity of ethno-cultural groups represented throughout the city. The socio-economic implications of Canada's increasing diversity are immense and require increased resources. This must be made a priority by municipal governing bodies.

In addition, I believe policies and provisions need to be established that require both planners in partnership with established community organizations to reach out in search of individuals and communities who are not already connected through community organizations, as well as emerging and newly formed community organizations. Planners must play a strong role in the
creation, implementation, and monitoring of these outreach methods, that will in turn directly contribute to more inclusive and effective planning by explicitly seeking to incorporate a greater, more diverse number of voices in the planning process, and through building stronger more comprehensive linkages between communities.

Although my chosen case study represents only one of Toronto’s many ethno-culturally diverse communities, the barriers to participation faced by the Sri Lankan Tamils are not unique. For this reason, I have found it to be imperative that Toronto’s social development planners engage with all communities more directly to identify the barriers they may be facing in order to enable each to push past isolationist tendencies and create linkages with other communities based on common experiences and goals. Perhaps Project Participate could be used as a model to be implemented by other communities in partnership with planners as a means to construct an active and inclusive concept of citizenship that involves a process of community empowerment, and ongoing negotiation between the state and its citizenry that recognizes the roles of all citizens in shaping what is it to be included in Canada’s multicultural society.

Municipal governments, planners, and the structures they work within must also recognize and reflect the understanding that citizens do not just desire, but require a substantive, equitable role in decision making processes that affect them. Greater power must be transferred to citizens in order for them to sit as equal partners at the planning table. This is particularly the case for ethno-cultural communities who are traditionally underrepresented or often absent entirely from planning-related decision making.

In terms of funding, municipal granting processes should be structured to mirror this understanding, to provide communities who are seeking to increase their capacity to engage in civic society, and build partnerships with other communities who are attempting to address similar issues the ability to do so. Funding structures must be re-evaluated to include developmental or start up grants to community based organizations. Although Toronto’s Sri Lankan Tamil community has been able to piece together support from its own community, smaller or newcomer communities may not have that option.
Finally, I urge all planning-related bodies in the City to make a stronger effort to increase the level and effectiveness of communication that takes place between them. Without such coordination, work plans may overlap, resources may be wasted, or conversely, important issues may go unidentified and linkages will not be made that could have resulted in stronger, more holistic approaches to community and city-wide planning issues.

Conclusion
By way of conclusion, within this chapter I have brought together the findings I have made during my research project and presented a number of recommendations related to how planners can work toward a democratic renewal of planning in multicultural cities such as Toronto. These include a wide range of ideas related to identifying and challenging the forces of exclusion in order to construct a form of citizenship that is based in ongoing negotiation between the state and its citizenry. I offer this study as contribution to the discussion of inclusive planning within a diverse, multicultural urban context.
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APPENDIX A

Canadian Tamil Congress National Convention 2002 - Adopted Resolutions

SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

POVERTY:

1.1 WHEREAS every human being is entitled to food, shelter, clothing, education, and health care;
WHEREAS every resident of Canada should be entitled to a basic standard of living;
WHEREAS there is poverty in Canada despite the existence of a social safety net; and
WHEREAS newcomer communities require additional social support services during the period of transition.
IT WAS RESOLVED that CTC will advocate to ensure that social services are protected and enhanced in Canada.
IT WAS RESOLVED that CTC works in conjunction with other organizations of like mind to lobby every level of government to protect the existing social safety net.
IT WAS RESOLVED that CTC undertakes to work with all levels of government to ensure that refugees do not become scapegoats in the debate over support programs.
IT WAS RESOLVED that CTC undertake research on the issues identified in the Ornstein report to ensure that the Tamil community is fairly represented.
IT WAS RESOLVED that CTC represents the needs of the Tamil community in changes in government policy with regard to the CPP, GIS, Old Age Benefits, Disability Insurance, Income Supplement Programs, Family Benefits and Social Service Benefits.
IT WAS RESOLVED that CTC advocates for the development of a National Child Care Policy to address the needs of working families to afford child care.
IT WAS RESOLVED that CTC advocates for improved services for single parents and their children at all levels of government.
IT WAS RESOLVED that CTC advocates for gender parity in the availability of social services.
IT WAS RESOLVED that CTC works towards the elimination of child poverty in Canada.

HOUSING:

1.2 WHEREAS every human being is entitled to shelter;
WHEREAS there is a dire need for affordable housing, particularly in urban areas;
WHEREAS governments have a role in ensuring the affordability of shelter;
WHEREAS there are homeless people living on the streets of one of the most affluent countries in the world; and
WHEREAS there is an urgent need to have every level of government work together to develop a national housing program.
IT WAS RESOLVED that CTC advocates for a National Housing Program in Canada.
IT WAS RESOLVED that CTC advocates for improved tenant protection.
IT WAS RESOLVED that CTC works with other like-minded organizations to lobby
governments to make affordable housing a priority.
IT WAS RESOLVED that CTC coordinates the development of affordable housing
program for the community including Coops.
IT WAS RESOLVED that CTC coordinates/promotes the development of Tamil Senior
Residences with long term care facilities.
IT WAS RESOLVED that CTC works with community agencies to ensure that the
community is educated on their rights with regard to tenancy.

LABOUR:

1.3 WHEREAS the working people of Canada, including Tamils, make an incalculable
contribution of the Canadian economy;
WHEREAS there is inadequate protection for the working people of Canada;
WHEREAS there is an unacceptable level of deaths and injuries as a result of poor
working conditions in Canada amongst the Tamil community;
WHEREAS many members of the Tamil community are working below acceptable
safety standards;
IT WAS RESOLVED that CTC advocate for the rights of working people on issues
such as health and safety, increased minimum wages, increased maternity/paternity
benefits; and on the general well being of Tamil workers.
IT WAS RESOLVED that CTC advocates for increased EI, Disability and WSIB
benefits for workers.

CAPACITY BUILDING

COMMUNITY CENTER:

2.1 WHEREAS there is a need for a unified center to represent the diverse needs of the
Tamil community;
WHEREAS there is a need to showcase the talents, culture, and contributions of the
Tamil Canadian community; and
IT WAS RESOLVED that CTC lobbies all levels of government to impress upon them
the need for a community centre for Canadian Tamils in the Canadian cities where
they live in large numbers; and works through existing community organizations to
secure the funds needed for such centres.

HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT:

2.2 WHEREAS there is a dire shortage of non-traditional professionals able to provide
services (including social services) to members of the Tamil community;
WHEREAS there is a need to encourage a diversity of careers within the Canadian
Tamil community;
WHEREAS we need to commit to investing in the human resources within the
community.
IT WAS RESOLVED that CTC be mandated to develop consecutive 5 year strategies
to ensure that Tamils are represented in a wide spectrum of fields.
IT WAS RESOLVED that CTC's first five-year strategy must include the following careers: Journalism, Social Work, Law and Health Care Support Workers.
IT WAS RESOLVED that CTC's strategy include education of the community and the provision of incentives in the form of bursaries to expose young people to a diversity of career paths and industries.
IT WAS RESOLVED that CTC develops this strategy further by creating and supporting the provision of internships and job opportunities within the targeted career fields.

POLITICAL INVOLVEMENT:

2.3 WHEREAS democratic principles dictate that every segment of a society be represented in the arenas of power;
WHEREAS the Tamil community has no political representation at the current time in any level of government;
WHEREAS political representation is crucial for the further development of this community in Canada;
WHEREAS Tamils can make an incredible contribution to the further development of Canada by engaging in politics; and
WHEREAS members of the Tamil community can offer a unique perspective to political debate and contribute to the Canadian political scene by engaging in governance.
IT WAS RESOLVED that CTC encourages and supports members of the Tamil community, who endorse CTC's objectives, to take an active role in politics, including seeking of elective office.
IT WAS RESOLVED that CTC encourages members of the community to take an active role in all political parties.

BUSINESS

ASSIST IN START-UP OF BUSINESSES:

3.1 WHEREAS there is a need to encourage more Tamils to be entrepreneurs, especially in non-traditional businesses;
WHEREAS there is a need to form a business advisory council to advise and/or assist any new Tamil entrepreneur on important matters such as Taxes, Permits, Regulations, Finance, Quality Assurance and general business matters;
WHEREAS there is a need to provide financial assistance or directing them to the appropriate sources for these entrepreneurs to obtain funding for their business startup;
IT WAS RESOLVED that the Canadian Tamil Congress will form a business advisory council consisting of established Tamil entrepreneurs, accountants, lawyers, software consultants, and tax experts who will serve in an advisory capacity to assist any new Tamil entrepreneur needing guidance with starting up their business;
IT WAS RESOLVED that the Canadian Tamil Congress will lobby the Federal and Provincial Government to allocate funding for start-up of businesses by new entrepreneurs, specifically in the Tamil community, by means of loans, grants, tax breaks or subsidies;
IT WAS RESOLVED that the Canadian Tamil Congress with the assistance of established successful Tamil entrepreneurs would establish a business start-up fund, which will be given out as loans to any new Tamil entrepreneur who meets certain mandated criterias.

COALITION OF BUSINESSES:

3.2 WHEREAS there is a need for Tamil businesses to work together in order for them to continue to grow and also to foster a healthy competitive landscape;
IT WAS RESOLVED that a Business Coalition council be formed, consisting of entrepreneurs from all business sectors, which will monitor the competitive landscape of Tamil businesses and take appropriate actions to promote healthy business practices including addressing unhealthy business practices.

BREAKING DOWN BARRIERS FOR GROWTH OF BUSINESSES AND GLOBAL TRADING:

3.3 WHEREAS there is a need for Tamil businesses to think globally, expansion into other countries and explore the opportunities present in our homeland and other Asian countries;
WHEREAS there are barriers, restrictions, high import/export duty which prevents or limit businesses from doing businesses outside of Canada.
IT WAS RESOLVED that the Canadian Tamil Congress in conjunction with other interest groups lobby with the Federal government to ease restrictions and reduce duty on certain import/export items;
IT WAS RESOLVED that the Canadian Tamil Congress lobby with the Federal government to provide subsidies or tax breaks to encourage businesses to increase trading between Canada and our homeland, and to assist in the reconstruction/redevelopment of our homeland.
IT WAS RESOLVED that there is a significant business opportunity to invest in the reconstruction and development of infrastructure of our homeland and the Canadian Tamil Congress would promote this initiative.

WOMENS ISSUES

GENDER BIAS:

4.1 WHEREAS there is insufficient attention paid to the social, economic and political participation of women within the Canadian Tamil community;
IT WAS RESOLVED that CTC will advocate for funding to establish resource centres and support services for Tamil women, and resources to train more Tamil and English speaking women support workers and researchers to address the growing social crises involving education, pay equity, legal equity, changing roles and responsibilities in the context of families, changing constructions of femininity and sexuality, changing family dynamics, changing roles of elderly women and divorce as a result of displacement and dislocation that Tamil women are experiencing in Canada.
VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN:

4.2 WHEREAS there is shame, fear and lack of awareness among members of the Canadian Tamil Community about the urgent need to address domestic violence, sexual harassment, sexual assault, incest and sexual abuse experienced by immigrant Tamil women;
IT WAS RESOLVED that CTC will build coalitions with existing women's service agencies in the Toronto, and other Canadian metropolitan centres, to establish Tamil women's support services, shelters, legal services, outreach programs, crisis hotlines, resource centres and non-profit organizations to serve the immediate and long-term needs of Tamil women who are struggling to survive in abusive living conditions.
IT WAS FURTHER RESOLVED that CTC will advocate for public forum discussions, educational programs and the dissemination of information via TV and Radio on otherwise unspoken "shameful" topics regarding sexuality, domestic violence, sexual harassment, sexual assault, incest and sexual abuse experienced by immigrant Tamil women and men.

4.3 WHEREAS there is shame, fear and lack of awareness among members of the Canadian Tamil Community about the urgent need to address constructions of femininity, masculinity, and sexuality within the context of Tamil cultural values and social norms as they intersect with mainstream Canadian cultural values and social norms;
IT WAS RESOLVED that CTC will establish outreach programs, workshops on gender and sexuality, community services, support groups, and counselling services for Tamil men and women in coalition with existing service agencies in Canada.

TEENS, SEXUALITY AND SOCIAL CRISIS:

4.4 WHEREAS there is a growing concern among members of the Canadian Tamil Community about the rise of teen pregnancies and sexual liaisons with other teens and adults;
BE IT RESOLVED that Congress will, along with existing Tamil service organizations, establish outreach programs, hotline services, information and education regarding male and female sexuality, counselling services and support groups for teens within the immigrant Tamil community.

4.5 WHEREAS there is a growing alienation between teens, parents and elders within the immigrant Tamil community, particularly, with regards to the crisis of gender and sexuality;
IT WAS RESOLVED that CTC will establish support groups, community workshops, and support services to bridge the gap between parents and children in the process of migration and transnational social, cultural change.

4.6 WHEREAS there is already an effort to establish teen educational and support services for girls and young women, there is a lack of knowledge and education on the need to establish educational and support services for boys and young men;
IT WAS RESOLVED that CTC will establish educational and support services, and community workshops for boys and young men in primary, secondary and university
levels that provide information, one-on-one as well as group support on the critical issues of male and female identity, male and female sexuality, negotiating changing social norms and cultural values, and maintaining relationships of integrity

EDUCATION

PREAMBLE:

5.1 WHERAS education is a core value of the Tamil community; and
WHERAS everyone is entitled to an accessible education system free from all forms of discrimination.
IT WAS RESOLVED that CTC affirms that education is a universal right and that it ought to be available to anyone who seeks it, free of any forms of discrimination.

PUBLIC EDUCATION:

5.2 WHEREAS a more representative curriculum and culturally sensitive service in public education required;
WHEREAS government under funding results in cuts that affect student communities especially newcomer communities like the Canadian Tamil community;
WHEREAS there is systemic racism within the public education system;
IT WAS RESOLVED that the Canadian Tamil Congress establish an effective process and protocol to address the issues related to diversity, representation as well as systemic and other forms of racism with education system;
IT WAS RESOLVED that the Canadian Tamil Congress promote curricula that encourages respect and harmony.
IT WAS FURTHER RESOLVED that the Canadian Tamil Congress join with student associations, youth service agencies, parent associations, educators and other lobby groups to improve public education.

NEWCOMER’S EDUCATION:

5.3 WHEREAS there is insufficient resources for English/French language education and Professional training for Canadian Tamils who are newcomers;
IT WAS RESOLVED that the Canadian Tamil Congress urge Municipal, Provincial and Federal governments to provide sufficient educational and professional training resources to newcomer communities to aid in the settlement process.
WHEREAS there is a strong need for training in spoken English and French in newcomer communities;
IT WAS RESOLVED that the Canadian Tamil Congress advocate for a balanced adult education curriculum which includes spoken English and French.

COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN EDUCATION:

5.4 WHEREAS there is a need for increased community participation from the Tamil community to address issues and to raise concerns in education;
WHEREAS the concerns of the Tamil community is not incorporated into the decisionmaking processes at various levels of administration and management of educational institutions;
IT WAS RESOLVED that the Canadian Tamil Congress advocate for increased participation of the Tamil community in various aspects of the education system.
IT WAS FURTHER RESOLVED that the Canadian Tamil Congress establish a liaison committee with all the boards of education that serve large numbers of Tamil students to effectively address the community's concerns.

POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION:

5.5 WHEREAS access to post-secondary education is essential for the vibrant growth of our economy;
WHEREAS funding for post-secondary education has not been consistent with the growing needs of the economy; and
WHEREAS there is a need for cooperation amongst the provincial and federal governments to ensure that access to post secondary is not hindered.
IT WAS RESOLVED that CTC recognizes and will work towards the acceptance of post-secondary education as a right, which ought to be extended to everyone who meets minimum standards regardless of their financial position.
IT WAS RESOLVED that CTC will work with other like-minded organizations to defend a publicly funded post secondary education system that is accessible to all Canadian residents.
IT WAS RESOLVED that CTC will oppose moves towards the privatization of universities and colleges.

5.6 WHEREAS any tuition fees are an impediment to an accessible education system:
IT WAS RESOLVED that CTC opposes any user fees imposed on post-secondary education.

JUSTICE

JUSTICE SYSTEM:

6.1 WHEREAS there is evidence of racialization in the criminal justice system
WHEREAS there is a lack of pertinent information available to ethnic minority communities to educate them regarding their rights and freedom
IT WAS RESOLVED that CTC will work with other community organizations in the legal and justice field to ensure that Canadian Tamils are aware of their legal rights and obligations

RACE EQUITY:

6.2 WHEREAS Canada is a nation consisting of Aboriginal peoples, and is now a multicultural nation comprised of diverse people from all cultures of the world;
WHEREAS despite Canada's multicultural present and history, racism and racial discrimination are rampant in both the public and private sphere
IT WAS RESOLVED that CTC shall advocate for the elimination of racism and for the advancement of the Aboriginal and multicultural reality of Canada. IT WAS FURTHER RESOLVED that CTC work with other like-minded Aboriginal and multicultural community organizations to lobby all levels of government to achieve a true Aboriginal and multicultural nation.

CHARTER:

6.3 WHEREAS the year 2002 marks the 20th year anniversary of the proclamation of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms WHEREAS the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms among other things guarantees the following:
- Security of the person
- Freedom of expression and association;
- Freedom from arbitrary search and/or detention
- Rights to a lawyer
- Equal treatment under the law, etc.;
WHEREAS legislation proposed or passed since 9/11, 2001 appears to disregard the above mentioned guarantees;
IT WAS RESOLVED that CTC endorses the intent and values of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.
IT WAS RESOLVED that CTC undertake a program of advocacy, lobbying and educating the authorities and the Tamil community with a view to restoring the guarantees in order to ensure that Canada remains a free and democratic society;

MEDIA

MEDIA ADVOCACY:

7.1 WHEREAS the media is a powerful tool that has a significant impact on society; and WHEREAS the mainstream media has consistently portrayed the Canadian Tamil community in a negative light thus contributing to the negative stereotype of Tamils that can often have adverse affects on their daily lives
IT WAS RESOLVED that the Canadian Tamil Congress will seek to establish longstanding channels of communication with all level of media including senior executives to create a better understanding of the Canadian Tamil community and therefore more accurately portray all aspects of the lives of Canadian Tamils.
IT WAS FURTHER RESOLVED that the Canadian Tamil Congress will educate media personalities on diversity issues and provide profiles of expert Canadian Tamils who could be used as sources and subjects in stories and programs.

7.2 WHEREAS the Canadian Tamil community must take proactive measures to hold the media accountable in their coverage and portrayal of Canadian Tamils
IT WAS RESOLVED that the Canadian Tamil Congress will organize the Canadian Tamil community to continuously monitor the media and provide feedback regarding the accuracy and fairness of content and coverage.

DIVERSITY AND REPRESENTATION:
7.3 WHEREAS the invisibility of diverse ethnic communities and lack of adequate representation of ethnic minority groups continues to be a concern in current media, news and television programming.

IT WAS RESOLVED that the Canadian Tamil Congress will advocate government bodies and agencies such as the CRTC, to ensure more representative programming to be included in Television and Radio to reflect the changing facet of the Canadian mosaic.

IT WAS FURTHER RESOLVED that the Canadian Tamil Congress will co-ordinate strategies with other likeminded organizations and ethnic minority groups in achieving these objectives.

7.4 WHEREAS the field of journalism is severely under representative of Canadian Tamils.

IT WAS RESOLVED that the Canadian Tamil Congress will take measures to encourage Canadian Tamil students to engage in higher studies in the fields of media, journalism and communication.

MEDIA INDUSTRY:

7.5 WHEREAS it is acknowledged that media convergence raises potential concerns and impacts upon diversity and representation in the media.

IT WAS RESOLVED that we urge media decision-makers to think critically about the impact of convergence strategies on the portrayal and representation of ethnic minority groups and seek remedies to guarantee that diversity strategies are incorporated.

7.6 WHEREAS ethnoculturally based media play an important role in reflecting the information needs of the community.

IT WAS RESOLVED that CTC supports the further development of ethnocultural media.

LANGUAGE AND CULTURE

MULTICULTURALISM:

8.1 WHEREAS Canada has, since time immemorial, been comprised of multi-cultural communities;

WHEREAS Canada is enriched by the multicultural communities that comprise it;

WHEREAS The Canadian Multiculturalism Act recognizes the contributions of the communities that make up Canada; and

WHEREAS the continued reaffirmation and implementation of the Multiculturalism Act ensures the long-term socio-economic viability of Canada.

IT WAS RESOLVED THAT CTC endorses the Multiculturalism Act and shall advocate to enhance it to truly reflect Canadian Diversity.

TAMIL LANGUAGE AND CULTURE:

8.2 WHEREAS Tamil Canadians will continue to form an important and integral part of the Canadian mosaic;

WHEREAS the preservation and progression of the Tamil Culture and Language
among Tamil Canadians are vital to the continued vibrant existence of multiculturalism in Canada;
WHEREAS the preservation and development of the Tamil language is imperative to the preservation and progression of the Tamil Culture;
WHEREAS the Tamil Culture and Language form the basis of the Tamil Canadian identity, and therefore, should be celebrated and nourished;
WHEREAS Tamil Canadians are in a position to aid in the advancement of the Tamil Language
IT WAS RESOLVED that the Canadian Tamil Congress works with and/or through the appropriate authorities, religious groups, and social groups to ensure that Tamil Canadians will have the choice of practising their respective religions in Tamil, and the choice of performing their respective religious rites in Tamil.
IT WAS RESOLVED that the Canadian Tamil Congress lobbies all levels of government to impress upon them the need for a community centre for Tamil Canadians in the Canadian cities where they live in large numbers; and works through existing community organizations to secure the funds needed for such centres.
IT WAS RESOLVED that the Canadian Tamil Congress works through the Tamil media and community organizations:
1) To educate Tamil Canadians of the need for the Tamil Culture to progress in order to continue to survive, and
2) To effect progressive changes.
IT WAS RESOLVED that the Canadian Tamil Congress lobbies the necessary levels of government and school boards to stress the importance Tamil Language education; and to ensure that the necessary funding for the same continues to be available.
IT WAS RESOLVED that the Canadian Tamil Congress works with existing community organizations to ensure that second generation Tamil Canadians have the opportunity to learn Tamil as a second language through Canadian institutions.
IT WAS RESOLVED that the Canadian Tamil Congress lobbies the necessary levels of government and Canadian universities for the creation of an endowment chair for Tamil Language and Culture at a Canadian University; and work to secure the funds necessary for the same.

HEALTH CARE

HEALTH CARE FUNDING:

9.1 WHEREAS there is insufficient attention paid to the health care needs of new immigrant populations such as the Canadian Tamil community;
IT WAS RESOLVED that the Canadian Tamil Congress will advocate for improved funding toward health care services for the new immigrant groups, resources to train more Tamilspeaking health care support workers and more research into the disease patterns affecting the Canadian Tamil community.

ACCESS AND EQUITY IN THE HEALTH CARE SYSTEM:

9.2a WHEREAS there is general lack of knowledge among members of the Canadian...
Tamil Community about the services available under the health care system, resulting in its under-utilization;
IT WAS RESOLVED that the Canadian Tamil Congress will work with health organizations to educate the Canadian Tamil public of their rights as patients, the set-up of the Canadian health care system, and a working knowledge of the services, which they can access within the system.

9.2b WHEREAS the Canadian Tamil community lacks language-specific services available to other ethnic communities in the Canadian health care system;
IT WAS RESOLVED that the Canadian Tamil Congress will facilitate the institution of Tamil-specific family wellness centres where Tamils may receive Tamil-language education about medical issues and be seen by Tamil-speaking health care workers, and will work on increasing the availability of interpretation and translation services for Tamils.

9.2c WHEREAS there are cases in the Canadian Tamil community in which an individual or group are or were unable to access appropriate medical care for reasons owing in part to their ethnic background;
IT WAS RESOLVED that the Canadian Tamil Congress will review each case and work with the individual or group to enact the appropriate process of investigation as deemed necessary.
IT WAS FURTHER RESOLVED that the Canadian Tamil Congress will emphasize the importance of cultural sensitivity, including the delivery of culturally-sensitive medical care, in its dealings with governmental agencies on health care issues.

PHYSICIAN AND ALLIED HEALTH WORKER QUALIFICATION:

9.3 WHEREAS it is identified that many highly skilled, foreign-trained Tamil physicians and allied health workers are facing frustrating Canadian qualifying requirements that discourage many from pursuing medical careers;
IT WAS RESOLVED the Canadian Tamil Congress will, along with international physician and allied health professional groups, urge Canadian medical associations to examine the issue of qualifying procedures for foreign-trained physicians and allied health care workers, and promote the integration of skilled workers into the health system.

PRIMARY CARE:

9.4a WHEREAS that Canadian Tamils are lagging behind the general public in their participation in preventative health strategies ratified by the Canadian Task Force on Preventative Health Care;
IT WAS RESOLVED that the Canadian Tamil Congress will advocate, together with health professional organizations, the participation of Canadian Tamils in such health promotion activities as routine immunizations, diabetes and blood pressure screening, pap screening and mammography.

9.4b WHEREAS it is identified that there is a need for better communication between the health service-providing organizations that serve the Canadian Tamil community and primary care physicians and other front-line medical workers;
IT WAS RESOLVED that the Canadian Tamil Congress will assist in coordinating activities between community service-providing organizations and health professionals to enable more effective delivery of health care services in the Canadian Tamil community.
9.4c WHEREAS there is a disproportionate number of Tamil-speaking paramedical workers (e.g. nurses, psychologists, social workers, diet and nutrition counselors, physical and occupational therapists, speech pathologists) to serve the substantial and growing Canadian Tamil population;
IT WAS FURTHER RESOLVED that the Canadian Tamil Congress will join with secondary school associations and post-secondary institutions in the promotion of para-medical professions to Tamils.

CARE OF THE ELDERLY:

9.5 WHEREAS it is recognized that Tamil seniors face unique social challenges upon immigration that can lead to their de-valuing as citizens and to family breakdown and elderly depression;
IT WAS RESOLVED that the Canadian Tamil Congress will facilitate senior organizations in outreach to isolated Tamil seniors, and advocate on issues of relevance to seniors including independent living and increased availability of ethno-specific long-term care facilities.

MENTAL HEALTH:

9.6 WHEREAS there is a lack of funding to mental health research and support services for Canadian Tamils in whom a number suffer from depression, schizophrenia, post-traumatic stress disorder and other primary mental health disorders;
IT WAS RESOLVED that the Canadian Tamil Congress will urge for the allocation of proportionate funding toward mental health research, counseling and support services in keeping with population demand.

WOMEN'S HEALTH:

9.7 WHEREAS it is recognized that Tamil women encounter problems in health care including access to information on family planning, sexual health, prenatal care, child development, domestic violence;
IT WAS RESOLVED that the Canadian Tamil Congress will help women's groups and health care organizations to promote women's health issues and public education.

PEACE EFFORTS IN SRI LANKA

CANADIAN ROLE IN PEACE INITIATIVES IN SRI LANKA:

10.1 WHEREAS Government of Sri Lanka and Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam have signed a memorandum of understanding on February 21, 2002 and agreed to resolve the ethnic problems through negotiations;
WHEREAS the Government of Norway has undertaken to facilitate the peace talks between the above mentioned parties;
WHEREAS the Government of Canada has expressed an interest to assist the peace process;
IT WAS RESOLVED that Canadian Tamil Congress to advocate for establishing a working group consisting of Canadian Tamil Congress and Ministry of Foreign Affairs to identify Canadian role in the peace process.
IT WAS RESOLVED that Canadian Tamil Congress advocate for a role for itself in the monitoring of the implementation of Canadian initiatives in this regards.

LEGITIMATE POLITICAL ASPIRATIONS OF THE TAMILS LIVING IN THE NORTH AND EAST OF SRI LANKA:

10.2 WHEREAS in the last parliamentary elections in the Island of Sri Lanka, Tamils living in the North and East of the Island overwhelmingly reaffirmed their long standing demands for the recognition of homeland, nationhood, and right of self-determination for the Tamils of Northern and Eastern Sri Lanka and accepted LTTE as their sole and authentic representative;
IT WAS RESOLVED that Canadian Tamil Congress advocate on behalf of the Tamils living in the North and East for their legitimate political aspirations of homeland, nationhood and the right of self-determination.

RESOURCES FOR THE REBUILDING OF NORTHERN AND EASTERN SRI LANKA:

10.3 WHEREAS the economy and infrastructure of Northern and Eastern Sri Lanka has been systematically destroyed as well as neglected;
WHEREAS health, education, employment, commerce, social order and living standards of the Tamils living in the North and East of the Island of Lanka have been reduced to deplorable levels;
WHEREAS Canadian Tamils wish to contribute the necessary resources to help rebuild the shattered economy and infrastructure of the Northern and Eastern Sri Lanka;
WHERE AS International Aid Agencies serving internally displaced people in the Northern and Eastern Sri Lanka have expressed serious concern over dwindling of foreign aid reaching such people;
IT WAS RESOLVED that Canadian Tamil Congress facilitate and co-ordinate the efforts of Canadian Tamils to contribute necessary resources in the rebuilding of Northern and Eastern Sri Lanka.
IT WAS RESOLVED that Canadian Tamil Congress advocate the Canadian Government and Agencies to allocate more resources in the rebuilding of North and East of the Island.

HUMAN RIGHTS

WAR CRIMES AND CRIMES AGAINST HUMANITY:

11.1 WHEREAS verifiable cases of war crimes and crimes against humanity that are
committed by the Sri Lankan government and armed forces are made known to the community;
IT WAS RESOLVED that the Canadian Tamil Congress lobby international and Canadian federal tribunals to prosecute members of the Sri Lankan government and armed forces accused of war crimes and crimes against humanity in Sri Lanka;
IT WAS RESOLVED that the Canadian Tamil Congress urge the federal government:
1) To lobby for the prosecution of the above accused, based in Sri Lanka, through their offices in Colombo;
2) To prosecute the above accused who have immigrated to Canada;
IT WAS FURTHER RESOLVED that the Canadian Tamil Congress lobby international and federal tribunals to prosecute Canadian nationals accused of war crimes and crimes against humanity in foreign countries.

TAMIL-SPEAKING PEOPLES LIVING IN SRI LANKA:

11.2 WHEREAS there is consistency in the strength and frequency of human rights violations of Tamil-speaking peoples living in Sri Lanka;
WHEREAS there is need for a return to political, economical, and social normalcy of the Tamil-speaking community living in Sri Lanka within a human rights framework;
WHEREAS there are ethnocentric and ethno-specific discriminatory laws and regulations sanctified by the Sri Lankan constitution;
WHEREAS Tamil-speaking peoples living in Sri Lanka are victims of past and present state-sponsored and paramilitary war crimes and other crimes against humanity;
IT WAS RESOLVED that the Canadian Tamil Congress advocate for the preservation and propagation of human rights of the Tamil-speaking peoples living in Sri Lanka through Canadian, Sri Lankan and international human rights groups and individual, independent monitors;
IT WAS RESOLVED that the Canadian Tamil Congress advocate for the return to political, economical, and social normalcy of the Tamil-speaking peoples living in Sri Lanka, especially in the North and East, within a human rights framework;
IT WAS RESOLVED that the Canadian Tamil Congress advocate on behalf of the Tamil-speaking peoples living in Sri Lanka to international legal committees and challenge the Sri Lankan constitution to repeal ethnocentric and ethno-specific discriminatory laws and regulations;
IT WAS FURTHER RESOLVED that the Canadian Tamil Congress lobby on behalf of the Tamil-speaking peoples, who fall victim to human rights violations, and demand financial compensation.

INTERNATIONAL TAMIL DIASPORA:

11.3 WHEREAS a request for advocacy of human rights of stateless Tamils, such as refugees and other immigrants, in the international Diaspora, and/or documentation of violations of these rights is communicated to the Canadian Tamil Congress;
IT WAS RESOLVED that the Canadian Tamil Congress advocate for the human rights of status less Tamils in the international Diaspora and/or document violations of these rights and advocate for the recognition of their human rights and regularization of permanent status;
IT WAS FURTHER RESOLVED that the Canadian Tamil Congress advocate for the human rights and documents the violations of human rights of Tamil citizens of other countries, if such request is communicated to the Canadian Tamil Congress.

DISCRIMINATION WITHIN AND WITHOUT:

11.4 WHEREAS an individual or a group of people faces intra-communal discrimination on the basis of their gender, age, religion, class, caste, place of birth, sexual-orientation or political beliefs;
WHEREAS an individual or a group of people from the Tamil Canadian community is discriminated against on the basis of race, gender, age, religion, class, caste, place of birth, sexual-orientation or political beliefs from various sources outside the Tamil Canadian community and this discrimination is made known to the community;
IT WAS RESOLVED that the Canadian Tamil Congress advocate on behalf of an individual or a group of people against intra-communal discrimination on the basis of race, gender, age, religion, class, caste, place of birth, sexual-orientation or political beliefs as well as jointly advocate with Tamil anti-discriminatory and service-providing groups concerned with the above-mentioned issues.
IT WAS FURTHER RESOLVED that the Canadian Tamil Congress advocate on behalf of an individual or a group of people against inter-communal discrimination in either the public or private national sectors, on the basis of race, gender, age, religion, class, caste, place of birth, sexual-orientation or political beliefs as well as jointly advocate with national anti-discriminatory and service-providing groups concerned with the above-mentioned issues.

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN:

11.5 a) WHEREAS violence against women and rape are being used as a weapon of war by the Sri Lankan armed forces against Tamil civilians;
IT WAS RESOLVED that the Canadian Tamil Congress advocate on behalf of the victimised Tamil women living in both Sri Lanka and Canada.
b) WHEREAS verifiable cases of sexual violations and other human rights violations against Tamil women living in Canada are made known to the community;
IT WAS RESOLVED that the Canadian Tamil Congress advocate on behalf of the victimised Tamil women living in Canada.

ADVOCACY NETWORK:

11.6 WHEREAS the overall organizational mandate of Canadian Tamil Congress is advocacy for human rights and
WHEREAS a formal request for joint advocacy has been made to the Canadian Tamil Congress by national and international human rights groups;
WHEREAS the nature of the advocated human rights issue or group of issues finds resonance in the Canadian Tamil Congress' overall organisational mandate;
IT WAS RESOLVED that the Canadian Tamil Congress network with national and international Tamil and non-Tamil advocacy groups if the human rights issue or group of issues falls within its organisational mandate;
IMMIGRATION

PREAMBLE:

12.1 WHEREAS successive generations of Canadians have benefited from new immigrants and refugees;
WHEREAS immigrants and refugees contribute significantly to the social and economic development of Canada;
WHEREAS Canada needs a continuous flow of new immigrants and refugees in order to look after the needs of the ageing Canadian population;
IT WAS RESOLVED that CTC advocates for an open immigration and refugees system;
IT WAS RESOLVED that CTC advocates for the removal of systemic barriers to immigration and refugees.
IT WAS RESOLVED that CTC advocates for the elimination of the head tax on new immigrants;
IT WAS RESOLVED that CTC advocates for the increased flow of new immigrants and refugees to Canada;
IT WAS RESOLVED that CTC advocates for increased settlement services for new Tamil immigrants and refugees to Canada.

UNACCOMPANIED MINORS:

12.2 WHEREAS unaccompanied minors of Tamil decent are the most vulnerable group within our community;
WHEREAS unaccompanied minors are the most under-serviced sector within Canada;
WHEREAS we have a collective responsibility as a community as well as a country to ensure the social well being of unaccompanied minors;
IT WAS RESOLVED that CTC advocates for the development of programs to service unaccompanied minors.
IT WAS RESOLVED THAT CTC works to coordinate services for unaccompanied minors.

FOREIGN TRAINED PROFESSIONALS:

12.3 WHEREAS most foreign trained professionals are not able to gain employment in trained fields in Canada;
WHEREAS new immigrants are becoming increasingly disappointed with the current system;
IT WAS RESOLVED THAT CTC work towards the elimination of all barriers for foreign-trained professionals to secure gainful employment in Canada.