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The Other Urban Designers:

The Role of Private Sector Consultants in Shaping Policy and Form

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the

requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

in Urban Planning

by

Orly Linovski

2014

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

The Other Urban Designers:

The Role of Private Sector Consultants in Shaping Policy and Form

by

Orly Linovski

Doctor of Philosophy in Urban Planning

University of California, Los Angeles, 2014

Professor Anastasia Loukaitou-Sideris, Chair

While previous research on urban design processes has largely treated urban design practice as the public regulation of private activities, the increasing role of private consultants in public policy and design activities brings this into question. Looking at two cities with differing public capacities, Toronto and Los Angeles, this research assesses the relationships between private and public sector urban designers, the relative power that they have over urban design processes, and how this is influenced by public sector capacity.

Professional expertise is shown here to be a form of political power, in the sense that it allows for influence over decision-making processes. In negotiating design processes, the professional expertise of private sector urban designers was constructed, and for the most part, perceived as “more expert” or legitimate compared to that of public sector urban

designers. The establishment of a creative-technical division between public and private sector professionals was enforced in both Los Angeles and Toronto, often limiting the role of municipal urban designers in substantive decision-making.

The research also demonstrates that professional urban designers have political identities. One aspect of this is the portrayal of outside experts as politically neutral and unbiased in a way that public employees were not. Consultants used the construction of political neutrality to bolster the perception that they were able to provide "more expert" advice than their public sector counterparts, arguing that they didn't face the same political and bureaucratic constraints. The public sector urban design capacity of the city was also found to be important in constructions of municipal expertise. Without a public sector that saw itself at least partially in conflict with private urban designers, confrontation about the substantive issues related to design practices and goals rarely occurred.

Importantly, these constructions and deployments of professional and political practices were used in the shaping of urban design processes in a way that can be broadly understood as "setting the agenda". This notion of setting the agenda, or having control not only over the outcome of decision-making processes but also the range of possibilities that are considered, demonstrates the relative power of private sector actors in urban design practices.

The dissertation of Orly Linovski is approved.

Tridib Banerjee

Dana Cuff

Anastasia Loukaitou-Sideris, Committee Chair

University of California, Los Angeles

2014

Table of Contents

Chapter 1: Introduction 1
Chapter 2: Research Framework 10
Chapter 3: Changing Visions, Changing Plans 44
Chapter 4: Politics of Expertise 115
Chapter 5: Power and Politics 148
Chapter 6: Setting the Agenda 180
Chapter 7: Conclusion 226
Appendices 237
References 246

List of Figures

Figure 1: Yonge-Dundas Square with commercial development 35

Figure 2: Theatre complex at Yonge-Dundas Square 35

Figure 3: Model of proposed design for Yonge-Dundas Square 36

Figure 4: Model of proposed design for Yonge-Dundas Square 36

Figure 5: Eaton Centre, looking west across Yonge Street, c. 1980 37

Figure 6: Advertising, Yonge-Dundas Square 37

Figure 7: Wartime production, Downsview airport 38

Figure 8: Former military uses, CFB Downsview 38

Figure 9: *Tree City* proposal 39

Figure 10: Revised plans for Parc Downsview Park 39

Figure 11: Pond and walking paths, Downsview Park 40

Figure 12: Public space, Staples Center/L.A. Live 41

Figure 13: Advertising, Staples Center/L.A. Live 41

Figure 14: Development blocks, Grand Avenue project 42

Figure 15: Grand Avenue, looking west 42

Figure 16: Grand Park water feature 43

Figure 17: Grand Park main lawn 43

Figure 18: Future form diagram for South Park Area 105

Figure 19: Olympic Park, facing east from Hope Street 105

Figure 20: Streetscape elements, anchors and gateways, Urban Land Institute 106

Figure 21: Open space components, L.A. Sports and Entertainment District Specific Plan 107

Figure 22: Pedestrian linkages between LASED, South Park and Central Business District 108

Figure 23: Future form diagram, showing little intervention in Civic Center area.....108

Figure 24: Proposed Civic Space, west of City Hall.....109

Figure 25: Development parcels, Grand Avenue Project 109

Figure 26: District Centres Plan.....110

Figure 27: Study of retail uses and vacancies on Yonge Street strip.....111

Figure 28: Artist rendering of proposed Yonge-Dundas Square 112

Figure 29: Signage strategy for Yonge Street strip.....113

Figure 30: Ratio of employment to population in North Suburbs (including Downsview) 114

Figure 31: Axonometric of the cultural campus in Downsview 114

List of Tables

Table 1: Comparison of governance systems, Los Angeles and Toronto 16

Table 2: Characteristics and perceptions of planning regimes, Los Angeles and Toronto.....18

Table 3: Comparison of case study projects 20

Table 4: Interview participants, by sector.....29

Table 5: Urban design interview participants, by professional training.....31

Table 6: Academic training by sector 31

Table 7: Existing and Designated Industrial Land, Downsview Area 94

Acronyms

BIA – Business Improvement Area

CBD – Central Business District Redevelopment Project Area

CFB – Canadian Forces Base

CLC – Canada Lands Company

CRA/LA – Community Redevelopment Agency of the City of Los Angeles Agency]

DDA – Disposition and Development Agreement

DYBIA – Downtown Yonge Business Improvement Area

JPA – Joint Powers Authority

LASED – Los Angeles Sports and Entertainment District

OMB – Ontario Municipal Board

PDP – Parc Downsview Park Incorporated

TTC – Toronto Transit Commission

TYSSE – Toronto-York Spadina Subway Extension

ULI – Urban Land Institute

YSBRA – Yonge Street Business and Residents Association

Spelling

When terms are used to refer to specific titles or policies, such as the *District Centres* plan, or are direct quotes from the text, the Canadian spelling has been retained.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

There is an increasing awareness of the political nature of urban form production and the disparate public and private sector actors that influence city design and development. Nevertheless, we have had an ambiguous understanding of the role of urban design professionals and other actors who straddle the private and public spheres of influence. Molotch argues that consultants, operating in a market-driven realm, are biased towards encouraging development, as "the 'Johnny Appleseeds' who help sow… similar policy (and architectural) conformity across urban America" (1993, 37). While there has been anecdotal concern about the growing influence of private consultants, the processes of balancing power between private and public urban design professionals, and their relative influence in shaping the built environment, has been largely unaddressed.

While some have asserted that "there has been a strong suspicion… of the work of various intermediary agents involved in the production of urban space" (Faulconbridge and McNeill 2010, 2820), rarely has the work of private sector professional actors, operating in the public policy realm, been interrogated in great depth. Despite the existence of a significant body of research on public sector professionals in the urban planning process and their political power (for example, Altshuler 1965; Flyvbjerg 1998), there is less known about the processes of urban design, and specifically the balance of power between public and private professionals in their attempts to shape the urban environment.

Studies such as those by Cuff (1991), Loukaitou-Sideris and Banerjee (1998), Fainstein (2001), and Sherman (2010) examine how actors such as property developers, real estate interests, public officials,

and architects have a direct influence on the built form. But for urban design professionals, there is a tendency to assume that they work in the public sector, shaping the urban environment through urban design as a matter of public policy (Barnett 1974; Hack and Canto 1984; Punter 2002). For example, while it is acknowledged that urban design is a result of a 'dialogue' among professionals (Hack and Canto 1984), the differing backgrounds, priorities, and goals of this diverse group of urban design professionals is unclear. This conceptualization of urban design practice as a matter of public policy reoccurs throughout the literature (Barnett 1974; Lai 1988). Tiesdell and Adams provide an especially apt definition of public policy in relation to urban design:

> Acting as a form of intervention, public policy is a means of managing – 'steering' – real estate development, in pursuit of *policy-shaped*, rather than merely *market-led*, outcomes. (Tiesdell and Adams 2011, 3, emphasis in original)

Urban design as public policy is premised on the idea that designers create the 'decision environment' that other actors work within, reinforcing the notion that urban design is a 'second order' practice (Barnett 1974; George 1997).[1] The public policy approach to urban design is widespread in understandings of practice and process (for example, Lang 1994; Shirvani 1985). Scholars working within the design as public policy framework have differing degrees to which they acknowledge the influence of other processes: Lai (1988) is unequivocal on the importance of regulatory tools, while Barnett (1974) and George (1997) are more measured in their approach.[2] Despite these differences, the public policy understanding of urban design practice is implicitly focused on the work of

[1] Even for urban design that is initiated and undertaken in the private sector – or the type of urban design referred to as "big architecture" – it can be argued that the increasing interest by municipalities in achieving built form goals means that few projects are free from government intervention (Tiesdell and Adams 2011). See Lai (1988, 2) for further discussion of project-based urban-scale architecture.

[2] Certainly, many have criticized the perception that law and legal regulation are supreme in determining the built form (see, for example, Cuthbert 2006; Knox 1987).

governmental actors.[3] In discussions of urban design practice, there is also a tendency to assume that those involved in regulating the built environment are a unified sector. For example, while Tiesdell and Adams (2011, 5-6) discuss the motivation factors of various 'producers' and 'consumers' of urban design, regulatory actors are portrayed only as public sector employees, operating on a long-term time scale and with presumed neutrality.[4] As a practice that often focuses on public regulation of private activities, the tension between public and private sector urban design professionals and its impact on the resulting built form provides a critical site for analysis.

A different model of analysis focuses on the interaction between design professionals and other actors, with an understanding of design as a social process. In this conceptualization of urban design practice, professionals engage in both collaboration and negotiation with other participants. Hack and Canto (1984) and Forester (1985) emphasize discursive processes in shaping design. Designers are seen as being only one part of the design process. Thus, collaboration and negotiation among actors with disparate interests is required, and this process can be seen as one way for designers to engage in 'sense-making' (Forester 1985). In one sense, these negotiations are the design process itself: "… architects and clients design their interactions as closely as their design their buildings, that is, the meetings and the negotiations themselves design problems" (Cuff 1991, 171-3). Rather than the 'designer as artist' approach to design, Cuff advances one where all the actors with a stake in the design process (such as clients, engineers, and contractors) can be viewed as designers. With this more

[3] There is also a large body of work on the practice and profession of architecture (Blau 1984; Blau et al. 1983; Cuff 1991; Gutman 1992; Schön 1984). Given the unique position of urban design in negotiating between public regulation and private development, it is worthwhile to examine it as a practice separate from architecture and urban planning.

4 In contrast, works from the architecture and sociology traditions build a more substantial approach that acknowledges the influence of multiple participants.

political formulation of the design process, issues such as relative power, control and access to information, and material interests become key factors.

The division between public and private actors is blurring in many sectors, with traditionally public functions being provided either through the private market or public-private partnerships. McCann remarks on the changing nature of the planning profession in recent decades, arguing that there:

> … is an increasing permeability in the institutional boundaries of urban planning, characterized by an ongoing privatization of planning services and outsourcing of its functions to private consultants. (2001, 209)

Policy formulation for urban design is no exception to this. Given the complex network of public and private actors working in the built environment, a series of questions arise as to how these groups work together, their relative influence and the impacts on the resulting built form. Arguably, the impact of the neoliberal turn on urban form is especially evident through an examination of the urban design process, a practice that negotiates between public policy and private investment. With the argument that urban design is increasingly being used as a tool to promote the competitive value of localities (Gospodini 2002) and related concerns about the increasingly entrepreneurial nature of cities (Harvey 1989), the balance of power between public and private professionals in shaping city form becomes an important concern.

Examining urban design processes without understanding the complexity of the relationships between public and private sectors actors does not account for the full range of influences. For example, in approaching political power, there is the argument that “the effectiveness of local government depends greatly on the cooperation of nongovernmental actors and on the combination of state

capacity with nongovernmental resources" (Stone 1993, 6). While these relationships have been assessed in other fields, rarely are they taken into account in urban design processes.

There is increasing attention being paid to the nuances in the relationship between 'regulators' (or urban designers, in this case) and those being regulated (the development community or private sector). Rather than a hierarchical system where power flows downward, the view emerging is of "systems of interacting networks of state and non-state actors, [where] power is diffuse, with all actors having some resources with which to bargain in pursuit of their own ends" (Tiesdell and Adams 2011, 2). With the possibility of a more complex understanding of the processes of urban design, questions emerge about how decisions are negotiated, the role of different actors, and the balance of power between competing interests. Despite this interest in the distribution of power in urban design decision-making, there has been little explicit attention paid to the role of political actors in design outcomes or the tensions between public and private actors.[5] How actors are able to bargain to achieve their own ends, and perhaps more importantly, how these goals shift between different types of professionals is largely unknown.

To explore these critical gaps in our understanding of design practices, this research examines the relationships between private and public sector urban designers, the relative power that they have over urban design processes, and how this is influenced by the public sector capacity in the cities they work in. To understand the strategies used to exercise power and influence urban design outcomes,

[5] For example, the role of government as 'enabler' (Imrie and Raco 1999), or as one of many policy actors that shape the urban environment, is a view often superficially addressed with respect to urban design policy.

it's necessary to situate these practices in the project realm. Cities with substantially different urban design capacities provide a natural case study for understanding how these processes vary depending on public intervention. Toronto, with its considerable public sector capacity, is examined in contrast to Los Angeles, through a focus on four urban design projects. In Los Angeles, Grand Park, a downtown park and redevelopment project, and Staples Center/L.A. Live, a privately-initiated sports and entertainment complex with a substantial public component, are analyzed. In Toronto, the focus is on Downsview Park, a brownfield redevelopment project, and Yonge-Dundas Square, a downtown civic space. While these projects all have significant public aspects – such as the creation of public space, the use of public land and funds, and the involvement of government actors – the interaction between public and private sector actors is shown to be substantially more complex then previously conceptualized.

The strategies and tactics used to exercise power between these actors are examined in depth, as well as how they shift depending on the level of public sector capacity. This research finds that urban design professionals are actively engaged in creating a politics of expertise, through the construction and reinforcement of their professional knowledge, with these processes differing significantly between public and private sector urban designers. This work also challenges the idea of urban design professionals as politically neutral, arguing that both private and public sector designers are embedded in the political processes that shape urban form.

Lastly, it is important to note that the interest in professional practices stems from their relation to larger theory building. As Kreditor notes, there is the possibility for theories of practice to offer insight into areas for strategic intervention:

> There is growing appreciation for the design professions' skills at inventing their processes as well as their products. Theories of urban design can be revealed through professional behavior… Action can breed insight, which will inform action – a dynamic model in an institutional nest. (1990, 161)

This research operates from the perspective that it is necessary to explore the actions of built form professionals if we are to understand how urban form is shaped and manipulated.

Structure of Dissertation

To address the questions about the relative power of private sector professionals in shaping the built form, four thematic strands are developed. These strands draw on the different perspectives related to both the production of built form and understandings of professional practice and develop a multi-faceted approach to understanding contemporary urban design practices.

Since the focus is on professional practices, the findings from this research emerge from the case study projects. In each city, the projects straddle the public and private realms, and how professional actors negotiate these landscapes forms the basis of this analysis. While the nature of the projects may seem disparate – ranging from a small urban plaza to a sports complex to a major brownfield redevelopment site – they provide a framework for understanding the nature of contemporary urban design practices.

To begin, Chapter 2 outlines the research framework and methodology for this work and presents the case sites that form the basis of this analysis. Chapter 3 starts by examining the decades' worth of planning and urban design guidance related to the case study sites. This section evaluates how visions for the study areas shifted over time and how these changes are reflected in the resulting urban design and planning guidance. Incorporating analysis of official plans, staff reports, by-laws and guidelines, this chapter describes the change towards a development-driven approach to urban design processes.

The next chapters move the discussion from the realm of policy and guidance to the interactions between public and private sector urban design professionals. Chapter 4 examines the nature of professional expertise in shaping negotiations between public and private sector actors. This section analyzes how professional expertise is both constructed and deployed and explores how this differs between public and private sector urban design professionals. Through processes that reinforce capabilities related to creativity and technical expertise, this chapter discusses how expertise is used to legitimate the work of private sector professionals.

The next chapter applies these understandings of professional expertise to analyze the role of political actors in urban design processes. By situating urban designers from both sectors in the context of political actions and processes, Chapter 5 re-assesses the notion of professional neutrality. The strategies used to negotiate urban design processes by both political actors and design professionals are examined here in depth, with specific attention paid to the construction of professional neutrality as a political tactic.

Chapter 6 extends the previous discussion on shifting visions and the nature of professional practices to examine the relationships between the two. Focusing on strategies and tactics for shifting the agenda, this chapter looks at the relative power of private sector professionals and development interests in the framework for urban design processes. The role of public sector capacity in limiting this perspective is also addressed here.

Finally, the last chapter ties together the four themes to develop a fuller picture of how professionals operate in shaping urban form. This chapter discusses the implications of these findings for our understandings of urban design practice, as well as the relationship between public and private sector actors. The notion of urban design as a negotiated process is discussed, laying the groundwork for future understandings of the work of built form professionals.

Chapter 2: Research Framework

This research is concerned with issues of power, professional expertise and the negotiations surrounding the development of urban form, all within the context of urban design practice. Given the complexity of issues involved in this study, it was necessary to select suitable data collection and analysis methods that would provide the appropriate level of depth to approach these concerns. A case study approach was used to allow for in-depth analysis of the relationships between private and public sector urban designers, situated in their unique political and local contexts. One of the key advantages of the case study approach is that it allows for an empirical inquiry "that investigates a contemporary phenomenon in depth, and within its real-life context – especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident" (Yin 2009, 18). Within the case study approach, several methods were used, including in-depth interviewing, content analysis, archival research and on-site documentation to allow for a rich analysis of each case. The use of multiple methods is driven by the concept of triangulation, using different data sources to ensure robustness of the findings. The following section outlines the questions guiding this research, the selection of case study cities and projects, and the methods used, concluding with a description of the case projects.

Research Questions

As the field of urban design develops, the nature of decision-making and the interaction between disparate political, public and private actors in shaping built form remains largely unanswered. While there is an acknowledgment of the complexity of the interactions between multiple participants – from both the public and private sectors – the nature of these negotiations, the balance of power between actors, and the resulting impact on the built form is largely unknown. The following primary questions were used to structure the research:

1) What is the balance of power between public and private sector actors involved in the urban design process? How is this influenced by the existing planning regime, government capacity and political context of cities?

2) How does public sector design capacity (both perceived and actual) affect negotiations with private sector actors and the resulting urban design outcomes?

3) How do private-sector professional actors exercise power in urban design processes and in what ways do they affect design outcomes?

These questions were used to assess the nature of design practice, and analyze it in light of increasing concerns about the privatization of government services and the entrepreneurial nature of cities. The complexity of the relationships between the actors involved, as well as the fluidity of the connections between them and the changing nature of the political and economic context, necessitated a research design that would allow for an understanding of the external and internal factors that influenced the project development

Research Design

This study uses a variety of methods to answer questions about the role of public and private sector actors in the urban design process. This research is compromised of four in-depth case studies of major public urban design projects in Toronto and Los Angeles which address questions about the role of professional expertise and the balance of power between public and private actor. The case study

approach was selected to develop a more explanatory analysis and offer insight into the nuances in negotiations around the built form.

The case studies are comprised of four main sources of data:

1) In-depth interviews with public sector urban design and planning staff, and private design consultants about their interactions and relationship

2) Supplemental interviews with other actors involved in the case projects, such as politicians, political staff, and other associated professionals

3) Content analysis of the design policies and products of both private consultants and public sector staff

3) Archival research of council reports, budgets and meeting minutes that relate to the projects

The following section provides further analysis on the case study method as a research tool, as well as describing the four data sources, their collection methods and analysis techniques.

Case Study Design and Rationale

The key justification for the case study method is the intrinsic linking between the phenomenon under investigation and its context. While other methods seek to minimize the number of variables examined or limit their relationship to the extenuating context. In contrast, the case study method not only involves the study of a real life phenomenon in depth but also incorporates the important contextual

conditions (Yin 2009). The research presented here is guided by the principles of triangulation, where multiple sources of date are used to develop and support findings. Using multiple sources and triangulation methods allows for increased validity in the study.

Issues of generalizability and applicability are often raised in critiques of 'small-n' case study research designs (Flyvbjerg 2006; Small 2009; Yin 1981). However, as Small (2009) argues, the adoption of techniques aimed to increase that samples are 'unbiased' or representative, has its own caveats. Rather, developing an extended case study method that relates the conditions of the specific case (whether social, political or economic) to the larger societal context allows for 'societal significance' as opposed to a more narrowly defined statistical significance. Similarly, since the case materials focus on the development of a sequence of events over a relatively long period of time, the emphasis is placed on process, a critical focus given the nature of the questions guiding this research. The advantage of this approach is that it can result in the development of "ontological statements", or as Small describes "those regarding the discovery of something previously unknown to exist… a well-executed single-case study can justifiably state that particular process, phenomenon, mechanism, type, relationship, dynamic or practice exists" (2009, 24).

Given the interest in the relationship between actors in the political context of urban development, there is an argument for contrasting cities with differing political and planning contexts, especially as several previous studies focus on single city cases (Hack and Canto 1984; Sagalyn 2006). As the concern here is with how professional actors operate in the political context, comparing cities with differing planning, political and governance environments offers the opportunity to examine these in greater depth than a single case approach and assess issues of power and public capacity. As Flyvbjerg (2006)

argues, the selection of critical or extreme, rather than necessarily representative, cases can offer understandings of whether the findings will hold true for other examples. By selecting cities that are located on opposite ends of the spectrum in term of public sector capacity offers opportunities to assess both "most likely" and "least likely" assumptions (Flyvbjerg 2006, 231). Choosing these cities offers opportunities for both falsification and verification, with the assumption that locations with high public sector capacity would have the balance of power tilt towards the public sector, and vice versa for locations with lower public sector capacity. This pairing of case sites is strategic in adding depth to the research design and allowing opportunities for falsification and verification.

While it is naïve to assume that the range of differences between locales can be accounted for, there is value in cross-comparative study, and as Punter suggests "significant practical benefits can be forthcoming for the study of other regulatory systems if the differences in the systems are acknowledged and appropriate adjustments are made in the application of ideas" (Punter 1999, 3). The following section addresses the criteria for the selection of case study cities and sites, and elaborates on the differing political environments that provide for an informative comparison of design processes.

Criteria for City Selection

The selection of case study cities was designed to address questions about the role of design professionals in differing political contexts, and to assess their position in shaping the urban environment, aiming for the critical and extreme cases that Flyvbjerg describes (Flyvbjerg 2006). One suggestion that emerges from the public management literature is that non-governmental design professionals will have a greater role, and potential influence, in cities with a weaker planning regime

and design capacity (Christensen and Laegreid 2001; Saint-Martin 2000). It is unknown how a vacuum in the design capacity of city planning departments affects both the outcome of design processes and the process through which they are negotiated. Similarly, the outsourcing of policy-making activities is widely portrayed as a negative development. This study compares public urban design projects in Los Angeles and Toronto, based on the dissimilarity of their planning, governance and design contexts.

Fundamental differences in the governance, structure and political regime of American and Canadian cities make their comparison particularly apt.[6] In terms of growth politics, while Canadian cities are generally more similar to American ones than their European counterparts, there is the belief that they are significantly less focused on developmental rather than social objectives (Keating 1991). American cities, which are more reliant on the attraction of investment capital and inter-urban competition, differ from Canadian cities that are "protected by more interventionist higher-level governments, which prevent them from indiscriminately subsidizing development or diverting moneys from social budgets… [and] competition for development is further muted by the lesser governmental fragmentation in urban areas" (Keating 1991, 173).[7] Higher levels of inter-governmental transfers also result in Canadian cities being less reliant on self-financing than their U.S. counterparts. Furthermore, there is the belief that the decentralist tradition in the U.S. provides less protection for local governments against market forces (Keating 1991). These differences in the reliance on self-financing

[6] Keating (1991) gives a thorough analysis of the differences between local governments in American, Canadian and European cities; I have focused here on the qualities most applicable to design and development.
[7] This is also partially evidenced by the wider range of financial incentives for attracting development available to American cities, such as TIFs and redevelopment area designations, which have no Canadian equivalent.

and development as a source of income provide an important opportunity to compare urban design practice in differing political and economic contexts.

While more recent studies of Canadian cities are beginning to address the move towards American-style entrepreneurial policies (Kipfer and Keil 2002; Lehrer and Laidley 2008), there remain key national-level differences in their governance and financing.[8] This historic divergence in how American and Canadian cities see their role with respect to investment and development provides a natural case study for considering the role of private sector actors in shaping design policy. Aside from these national-level orientations towards growth and city function, there are also significant local variations between cities in their political and governance structure that have an impact on design and development.

Table 1: Comparison of governance systems, Los Angeles and Toronto

	Los Angeles	**Toronto**
Geographical area/ Population (political boundaries)	468 sq. miles/ 3,792,621 (2010)	240 sq. miles/ 2,615,060 (2011)
Council	Council district system[9] 15 councilors (1/253,000 people)	Ward system 44 councilors (1/59,000 people)

[8] Aside from the financial tools available to American cities to attract development, Canadian cities often have more liberal taxation options. Especially for the case studies presented here, officials in Toronto have much more flexibility in raising property taxes compared with Los Angeles, which is bound by Proposition 13 restrictions.

[9] Both ward and council district systems refer to electoral districts for local governance. This is in contrast to at-large systems. Los Angeles also has a system of neighborhood councils that are involved in planning and governance issues. The role of these councils is not covered in depth here but has been addressed by others (see, for example, Musso et al. 2006).

Mayoral system	'Strong mayor'[10]	'Weak mayor'
Term Limits	Mayor – 2 terms Councilors – 3 terms	None

The local governance structure of the selected cities affect the design and development process in important ways. The key characteristics associated with local government reform – a weak mayoral system,[11] a small number of councilors elected citywide, and a dominant city manager – were designed to "maintain political non-interference in local development politics and to reduce not-in-my backyard political responses to political development" (Punter 2003, 13). While both case study cities have elements of a reformed local government, both elect councilors through a ward or district system, a method often seen as a major factor in the politicization of planning and design decisions.[12] Given the orientation of this research towards issues of political and private sector control, it was crucial that the selected case cities had similar ward or district-based systems. The differences in the local political landscape of Toronto and Los Angeles (as summarized in Table 1), as well as the major differences in the relationship between city and upper level governments, permitted a critical comparison of local capacity and decision-making. Similarly, the case cities were selected for their contrasting characteristics of their urban design policy framework and capacity at the municipal level (Table 2).

[10] Los Angeles historically had a weak mayor system but the passing of a new City Charter in 1999 allocated new powers to the mayor, including the power to dismiss city general managers, as well as allocating more power to neighborhood councils. Despite these changes, the mayor has less power than other traditional 'strong mayor' systems.

[11] Judd (1984, 100-103) contrasts the differences between strong and weak mayoral systems, noting the criticism that weak mayor systems disperse power so widely that no one is held accountable for government policy. The role of a 'strong mayor' in effectively guiding development is debatable as there is significant variance in design capacity between cities with both systems and this has not been studied extensively.

[12] In contrast, cities such as Vancouver elect councilors city-wide, a system thought to reduce 'horse-trading' or 'ward courtesy', albeit at the expense of ward representation (Punter 2003).

Table 2: Characteristics and perceptions of planning regimes, Los Angeles and Toronto

	Los Angeles	**Toronto**
Urban design department capacity	Urban Design Studio: 1 dedicated staff person	Urban Design Section: 24 dedicated staff people[13]
Perception of design regime	Reactive Entrepreneurial Developer-led	Proactive Policy-led Inclusive
Types of intervention	Episodic	Long-range
Regional context	Fragmented	Unified

It should also be noted the cities selected are largely representative of the type of urban design guidance provided in the North American context. In contrast to the British system of providing high-level urban design guidance in the form of national policies and guidance, the majority of urban design advice for Canadian and American cities emanates from the local level.[14] While U.S. and Canadian cities differ in how local authorities derive their power related to planning and urban design decision-making, in effect these are municipal level policies, with little influence from national, state or provincial authorities, especially in the case of urban design.

Criteria for Project Selection

While the case study cities were selected because of fundamental differences in their political structure and governance, the research was structured around two projects in each city that had

[13] There are 48 staff members in the Urban Design department, if Graphics and Visualization staff are included.

[14] For example, in the UK there has been a national requirement for district-wide development plans to have design policies since the early 1990s (Punter and Carmona 1997) and the National Planning Policy Framework emphasizes the importance of urban design and design excellence. In addition, organizations such as the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE) have been influential in providing both urban design policy guidance and national review panels. Punter (2009) in particular addresses the impact of national urban design policies at the local level in a number of British cities. The impact of this type of national level guidance on public sector urban design processes is an area for further research.

similar characteristics. By focusing on existing projects, respondents were able to address questions of political negotiation and decision-making in the specific, as well as consider the relationship between design processes and outcomes. To determine suitable projects, I conducted a search within the two case study cities for projects and plans that meet the following criteria:

- Significant public and private sector involvement, demonstrated through site-specific planning and design policies, public involvement in selection/development of project design, and funding. Projects had to have a significant public component to be classified as "public urban design projects".
- Public interest or controversy surrounding the urban design aspects of the project, as demonstrated by mainstream media coverage.
- Critical acclaim of the project, shown through architectural, urban design or planning awards.
- Wide range of participants, including both public and private sector professionals.
- Access to the primary participants, both public and private, involved in the development and completion of the project. Projects should have been completed in the last 10 – 15 years to ensure availability of participants.

Using these criteria, I selected two case projects in each city: Staples Center/L.A. Live and Grand Park in Los Angeles, and Yonge-Dundas Square and Downsview Park in Toronto (summarized in Table 3). The projects have all been completed in the last ten years, to varying degrees of critical success, and represent fairly large examples of public or public-private urban design. While the level of government involvement varies between projects, all are covered by specific design guidelines or policies, allowing for the analysis of public urban designers as well as private actors.

Table 3: Comparison of case study projects

Criteria	Los Angeles		Toronto	
	Staples Center/L.A. Live	Grand Park	Yonge-Dundas Square	Downsview Park
Period of development and construction	1999 - 2010	2005 - 2012	1993 - 2002	1995 - 2010
Type of Project	Public square, private development	Park, private development	Public square, private development	Park, private development
Size	27 acres	12 acres	1 acre	650 acres
Design process	Partial competition, run by private sector	RFP, run by semi-public agency	Public competition, run by consultants	Public competition, run by consultants
Awards	Urban Land Institute: "Global Award for Excellence" (2010)	American Planning Association: "Great Places in America: Public Spaces Award" 2013; American Society of Landscape Architects: "Honor Award, Design" (2012)	Canadian Architect magazine: "Award of Excellence" (1999); Architecture Magazine: "Progressive Architecture citation" (2000)	Ontario Professional Planners Institute: "Honour Award" (n.d.)
Management	Private	Public-private partnership	Public-private partnership	Public (Crown corporation)

The selected case studies meet all the criteria described above as well as offering differences in types of projects and in their political contexts. The case study projects have included a wide range of types of private sector participants in their development, offering an additional area for comparison and analysis.

Case Study Projects

The examples studied here were in their genesis public projects: all involved the use of significant public funds, had goals of creating new civic spaces and occupied public land (either already owned by government agencies or acquired through expropriation). The two urban plazas, Yonge-Dundas Square in Toronto and the Staples Center in Los Angeles, have been criticized for the nature of the civic space that was created, and questions have been raised about their value as public projects. In both cases, the resulting public spaces have been heavily commercialized and policed, often relying on advertising revenue for their maintenance. For the other case sites, Grand Park in Los Angeles and Downsview Park in Toronto, there has been less concern about the quality of the open space, although the power of private-sector development interests to shape city-wide planning visions and goals remains questionable.[15]

Yonge-Dundas Square, Toronto

Yonge-Dundas Square is located in downtown Toronto, in the central commercial core. The square is compromised of a hard-surface plaza ringed by commercial buildings (Figure 1). The project was undertaken by the City of Toronto in conjunction with the local business owners' association beginning in 1993, with construction beginning in 2001. The project involved the development of both the public square and commercial buildings on the north-east corner of the intersection and south-east corner of the square, that now are occupied by retail, restaurant and entertainment uses (large multiplex movie

[15] The case projects should also be situated in the context of significant research about processes of urban redevelopment, revitalization and economic development. For Yonge-Dundas Square and the Staples Center/L.A. Live, the link to work on blight and slum clearance is evident (see, Beauregard 1993; Cuff 2002; Jacobs 1961, among others), though not covered in depth here. Similarly, for the Downsview Park and Grand Park cases, scholarship on large-scale urban development projects can offer insight onto these types of projects (for example, Fainstein 2001; Gordon 1997; Olds 2001).

theatre), as well as space for Ryerson University (Figure 2). The development of the space involved the expropriation of several parcels of land along Yonge Street, which were required in addition to a City-owned parcel. The affected landowners contested the expropriation of their property, challenging the City at the Ontario Municipal Board. The OMB ruled in favor of the City and the expropriation for the project was permitted to proceed. Once the case had been settled, the City selected a project developer for the commercial buildings and engaged a private-sector consultant to run a competition for the design of the square. As a result of the international competition, a Toronto-based firm was selected to design the public plaza. Initial diagrams for the square depict a spare, hard-surface design with a raised plinth forming a stage and no visible advertising (Figures 3, 4). The square is managed by a private-public partnership, and was the first City facility that was required to be self-supporting in terms of revenue.

Prior to the development of the Yonge-Dundas project, the area had been comprised of largely low-rise commercial and retail space along Yonge Street. A major intervention occurred in the late 1970s with the construction of the Eaton Centre, an enclosed mall on the west side of Yonge Street, stretching from Queen to Dundas Streets (Figure 5). The original design of the mall was inwardly focused with little relationship to the street and few entrances and was seen as destroying the viability of Yonge Street as a commercial street: “When it [Dundas Square] was proposed in the early ‘90s, Yonge Street was in free fall. The Eaton Centre had sucked much of the vitality from the street and dollar stores were the only growth industry in the area” (Hume 2002). Recent renovations have attempted to return some retail activity to Yonge Street as well as create a more public entrance at the south-west intersection of Yonge and Dundas, though the structure remains largely inwardly-focused.

Part of the justification for the Yonge-Dundas regeneration project emerged from the public and political perception that the area was unsafe and rundown. A high profile shooting in the area, combined with increased police activity around drug use, contributed to this view. One media account includes a common perception of the area at the time: "The city expropriated those buildings, which were at the extreme end of their life. They were basically a criminal landscape" (McCabe-Lokos 2003). There was also the perception that the stores in the area were low quality retail uses such as arcades and dollar stores, or as one respondent referred to them, "bottom-feeding or vacant" [Interview 22]. Similarly, media accounts refer to the area as "infested with marginal retail uses" (Toronto Star Toronto Star 2002). The area councilor was particularly interested in improving the area and was largely responsible for initiating the regeneration project, along with the local business-owners association (McCabe-Lokos 2003). The perceived decline and safety issues in the area formed a substantial part of the argument in support of the project and expropriation.

Criticism of the project following its construction largely focused on the commercialization of the space and the large amount of advertising in the area (Figure 6) (Hume 2002). In addition to the large format advertisements, including several video billboards, the space is frequently rented out for commercial events, such as marketing promotions. While the project had been compared to New York's Times Square and London's Piccadilly Circus extensively during the OMB trial,[16] and the

[16] The Board members went on a trip to New York City to understand "the new trends in signage, vertical retailing and the concept of urban entertainment centres" (Ontario Municipal Board 1998, 36).

potential source of revenue from advertising was a significant reason for the Board approving the project,[17] this remains the primary source of contention.

Downsview Park, Toronto

In contrast to the urban setting of Yonge-Dundas Square, Downsview Park is located in an area that was once considered the suburban fringe of the city.[18] With considerable growth in the region, the neighborhood, as well as areas to the north, have had significant development since the 1950s, and the site now occupies a central location in the greater regional context. The Downsview project includes the development of significant parkland – Parc Downsview Park – as well as the creation of new residential neighborhoods on part of the land. The project was initiated in 1994 when the federal government decommissioned the military base on the land, with the promise to create a new national urban park.

The site that now comprises Downsview Park was originally developed in the 1920s as industrial land for de Havilland, an airplane manufacturer, and was used for the production and testing of aircraft. The factory became an important site for wartime production in the 1940s, with workers bussed to the remote location to build and test military planes (Figure 7). Following World War II, de Havilland sold their primary property at Downsview to the federal Department of National Defense, moving some of their operations further south, while maintaining some presence on the site. The federal government established a supply depot on the site (Figure 8) for the Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF), later renaming the military lands Canadian Forces Base (CFB) Downsview. The base remained in operation

[17] The advertising revenue was seen as limiting the financial risk to the City (Ontario Municipal Board 1998), which was a concern after recent failed expropriation projects (Barber 1997).
[18] Prior to municipal amalgamation in 1998, Downsview was located in the municipality of North York.

until the 1990s, though air services were phased out in the 1970s due to encroaching residential development (Globe and Mail Huge project set for air base 1997), while the de Havilland site, now owned by Bombardier, still produces airplanes.[19]

With the official withdrawal of the military presence in the area in 1994, the land was transferred to the Canada Lands Company (CLC), and then to a subsidiary named Parc Downsview Park (PDP) in 1995, that would be responsible for the development of the lands. Initial plans included proposals for a major entertainment and sports complex (called "Destination: Technodome") along with new residential and industrial development (Globe and Mail Huge project set for air base 1997). When this proposal fell through, the corporation initiated an international design competition for the park, attracting entries from numerous global firms.[20] The winning entry, announced in 2000, was entitled *Tree City* and was the result of a partnership between Rem Koolhaas/OMA, Bruce Mau Design and Oleson Worland Architects (Figure 9).[21] Despite the high profile nature of the competition, and its critical support (Czerniak 2001), the team behind the *Tree City* design was not involved in the implementation of the project. Rather, different planning and design consultants were hired to implement the park plan as well as develop plans for the development lands. Revised designs for the park included a water feature (a stormwater retention pond) as the central organizing feature, surrounded by paths, wooded areas as well as sports and entertainment facilities (Figures 10, 11).

[19] Bombardier is a major industrial employer in the city, with 3,800 employees on the Downsview site (Government of Canada 2013).
[20] The entries for the competition have been documented extensively elsewhere (for example, Czerniak 2001; Czerniak and Hargreaves 2007).
[21] Other team members included PMA Landscape Architects and SNC Lavalin Engineers.

Controversy surrounding the park has largely focused on the sale of federal land for development to fund the creation of the park. Some have argued that the development runs contrary to the original federal government promise for parkland, although representatives of PDP maintain that the park was always intended to be self-financing. Similarly, there was community concern and political opposition to the number and form of new residential development (Macdonald 2012). This opposition was accompanied by significant delays in the approval of official plan changes as well as the re-structuring of the park's governance and management structure. Despite these issues with governance and the nature of development, the critical response to the park design has been largely positive (Hume 2012).

Staples Center/L.A. Live, Los Angeles

The Staples Center/L.A. Live project in downtown Los Angeles was developed as a major sports and entertainment complex along with the creation of new public space in the form of plazas. While the project was privately initiated and funded, it received considerable public support from the Community Redevelopment Agency/Los Angeles (CRA/LA). The mega-project included the sports arena, as well as the L.A. Live hotel and entertainment complex, developed by AEG, and intended to revitalize the area as well as provide services for the struggling Los Angeles Convention Center.

Located just south of the historic central business district, the project was associated with attempts to spur redevelopment in an area that had been the site for numerous planning and urban design interventions. While there had been interest in the South Park neighborhood for a considerable amount of time, the Staples Center/L.A. Live project represented a significantly different orientation for the area. The public space is located on land owned and controlled by the developer, which allows public access that can be limited and enforced by the landowner. There was significant public sector

involvement through the CRA, which assisted in assembling the required land, including relocation of existing businesses and residents, and establishing the planning and design framework for the area. The CRA created these development and urban design guidelines with the aid of hired private sector consultants, in addition to their own staff.

The development has been criticized heavily for its privatized vision of public space. The plaza, ringed by restaurant and entertainment uses, is comprised of hardscape surfaces, with large format advertising billboards (Figures 12, 13). While billed as a public space, this description has been highly contested given the nature of commercialization and advertising in the area. As one critic of the space has stated: "the project is relentlessly focused on creating its wholly separate commercial universe" (Hawthorne 2008). Further criticism focused on the lack of connection between the development and the surrounding South Park community, despite the master planning efforts of the CRA and the initial goals of the project.

Grand Park, Los Angeles

The Grand Park project is located in the Civic Center area of downtown Los Angeles, an area historically associated with government uses. Grand Park was initiated as part of a larger development scheme on Grand Avenue that included residential, commercial and cultural uses on four parcels of land, owned by public authorities (Figure 14). Largely attributed to the vision and direction of Eli Broad, a noted Los Angeles developer and philanthropist, the Grand Avenue plan sought to create a cultural corridor linking major institutions along Grand Avenue as well as enhance the civic district (Grand Avenue Committee 2003). To select a developer for the project, a joint powers authority was established with representatives from the CRA and the County, and selected a developer to undertake

all aspects of the project, including the civic space (Los Angeles Grand Avenue Committee 2003). As part of this larger scheme, the selected developer, Related Companies, was required to pay 50 million dollars upfront for the construction of the civic park (Anderson 2005).

The development of the park was through a lease-back agreement, whereby the developer leased the property (owned by the County), was responsible for the design and implementation of the park and then returned ownership to the County. The funding of the park in advance, with the funds held by the joint powers authority, meant that the civic space development proceeded despite the residential and commercial developments stalling. As part of this agreement, the developer, along with the Grand Avenue Committee, was heavily involved in the design and implementation of the park, including in the hiring and supervision of the urban design consultants.

The park formerly existed as civic space, known as County Mall. Flanked on both sides by government buildings, interrupted by public streets and with a steep topographical grade, the site was long considered a difficult space to encourage public uses (Hawthorne 2012). Additional constraints were posed by ramps that led to underground parking and created a barrier between the civic space and the street. The redevelopment of the space removed the ramps along Grand Avenue (Figure 15) and includes a sloping lawn, water features, distinctive furniture and a small stage (Figure 16, 17). While questions were raised concerning the suitability of the location for a major civic space, the park has largely received positive critical response (Hawthorne 2012; Medina 2012).

Methods

Interviews

Interviews were conducted with forty-six actors who were involved in the case study projects. This data provides rich insight into how professional expertise is constructed, the sorts of negotiations that occurred during urban design processes and perceptions of power and control. The primary participants were identified as public and private sector urban designers and planners. Secondary interviewees included a broader range of participants in the projects, such as politicians, political staff, real estate professions and other city staff.

Initial interview subjects were selected based on position and affiliation with a project as a 'purposive' sampling method. Further interview subjects were identified through 'snowball sampling' where interview subjects were asked to identify other interviewees. Interviewees were contacted by e-mail in the first two instances, then by phone if there was no response. The list of interview subjects by project affiliation and position is detailed in Appendix 1. As is discussed below, there was significant fluidity between the public and private sectors, with professionals moving between sectors. Participants' classification is based on their role during the majority of their involvement in the project. There was fairly equal participation between public and private sector professionals, and across the case projects, although, as expected, the significantly lower public sector involvement in Los Angeles translated to fewer public sector participants for those case sites (Table 4).

Table 4: Interview participants, by sector

Participants	**Los Angeles**	**Toronto**	**Total**
Public Sector Urban Designers	4	6	10
Public Sector Urban	1	2	3

Planners			
Quasi-Public Urban Designers and Planners (CRA, JPA, PDP)	4	2	6
Private Sector Urban Designers and Planners	9	9	18
Political Actors	2	3	5
Other Participants[22]	2	2	4
Total	22	24	46

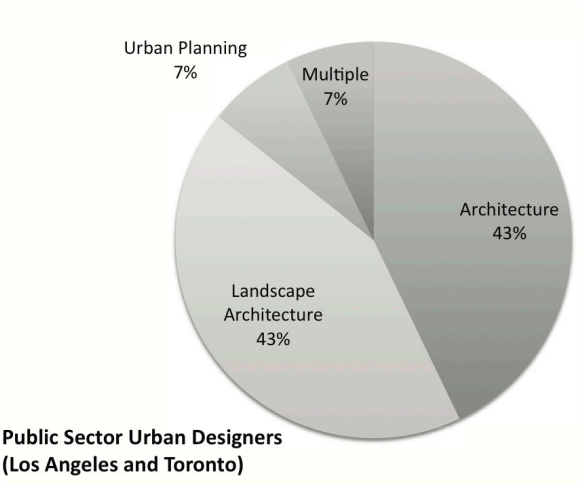
Participants classified as urban designers based on their job title and self-identification, were asked about their academic training and background. Those who identified themselves as urban design professionals had a variety of academic backgrounds, though only one participant had formal training in urban design, in the form of an urban design certificate (see Table 5).

In both cities, public and private sector urban designers had similar academic training. Few public sector urban designers had training exclusively as urban planners (one in Toronto and none in Los Angeles), while several private sector designers had backgrounds only in urban planning. While this doesn't provide a representative sample of the academic training of all urban designers, it shows that in the case study cities there are few differences in the backgrounds of public and private sector urban designers. Perhaps contrary to expectations, public sector urban designers were more commonly trained as architects and landscape architects, while those in the private sector had more diverse backgrounds, including urban planning (see Table 6).

[22] Other participants include real estate actors (developers), legal consultants, and other consultants.

Table 5: Urban design interview participants, by professional training

Academic Training	Los Angeles		Toronto	
	Public Sector[23]	Private Sector	Public Sector	Private Sector
Architecture	2	3	4	3
Landscape Architecture	2	1	4	1
Urban Planning	0	2	1	1
Multiple[24]	1	2	0	1
Other	0	0	0	2[25]



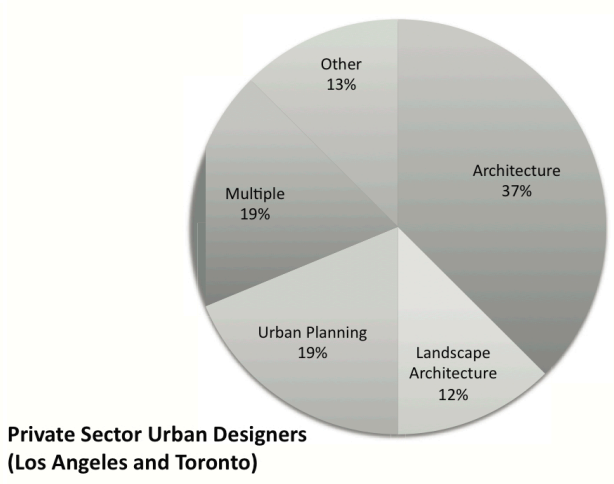


Table 6: Academic training by sector

Interviews were conducted with an in-depth, open-ended structured based on an interview protocol with suggested probes for further questioning. Protocols were developed for each interview type (public sector, private sector or political actor) and adapted as dictated by the participants' role in the

[23] Public sector includes professionals who work for quasi-public agencies as well as the city.
[24] Multiple degrees refers to two or more professional degrees in planning, architecture or landscape architecture. Two participants had degrees in both urban planning and architecture, and one participant had degrees in landscape architecture and urban planning.
[25] Other includes degrees outside of the built form professions as well as a certificate in urban design.

project (Appendix 2). All interviews were recorded with the permission of the participant and then transcribed. The majority of interviews were conducted in-person, at the participants' place of work, though three interviews were conducted by phone. The interviews lasted between thirty minutes and three hours, with the majority of interviews lasting approximately one and a half hours.

There are often concerns associated with using interviews as a data source.[26] While issues in coding and interpreting the data may occur, problems can arise earlier at the interview stage. Participants can be unrevealing or misleading, which may not be apparent to the interviewer, leading to questions about both reliability and validity (Berry 2002). Some validity issues that may arise in interviews are not necessarily problematic, as one of the goals of this study is to assess perceptions of power and control amongst policy makers and urban designers. However, since the actual nature of power-sharing and decision-making is part of the research agenda, issues of bias and misdirection are a concern. There is the chance that very persuasive interviewees will be more influential in shaping the understanding of events and processes, especially when they appear to be dispassionate or objective (Berry 2002).

As this research addresses issues of power and control within government agencies, many of the concerns that Berry (2002) points to in his work with lobbyists and politicians hold in this case as well. There is the danger of interviewees exaggerating their role or level of control, as actors benefit in being perceived as influential. Similarly, there may be a tendency to downplay the role of other actors,

[26] This section draws on the work of Geoffrey Berry's (2002) work on interviewing political elites which addresses many of the methodological concerns associated with investigating power-sharing among government and non-governmental actors, as well as related work by Schoenberger (1991, 1992).

or omit their participation, as it may be in the interest of participants to overstate their role. To address these issues, I used several strategies. Multiple sources from both within the same agency and different organizations were asked to participate. Where interview data was contradicted by other sources, which was the case with some differing accounts of the role of certain actors, both accounts are noted in the analysis. While this occurred infrequently, it adds to the complexity of understanding power-sharing and decision-making amongst various actors. Interview data was also triangulated with archival materials, policy and related documents and media sources.

Interview Analysis

All the interviews were transcribed verbatim in text form. These responses were coded using HyperResearch, a qualitative analysis software tool. The codes were partially derived from existing theories on professional expertise and the role of actors in shaping the built form. Additional codes were based on concepts and themes that emerged from the text. The coding strategy was based on the map-analysis techniques outline by Carley (1991) that focuses not only on the extraction of concepts from texts but the relationships between them. All coding was done manually with software tools used to develop descriptive statistics and organizational strategies.

Archival Research

To supplement the interviews with key actors, analysis of archival documents related to the development of the projects was conducted. The majority of these documents were publically accessible through the municipal archives in Toronto and Los Angeles.[27] The purpose of this segment

[27] Some Los Angeles documents, especially related to the Civic Center and Bunker Hill proposals, were accessed through the University of Southern California Special Collections. Documents related to the Yonge-Dundas Ontario Municipal Board case were accessed through a Public Inquiry request. Several files related to the

of the research was not only to supplement the interview data but also to triangulate the accounts given by participants. The documents examined as part of this process included council agendas and minutes, internal memos, preliminary plans and guidelines, press releases and planning reports. Where available, the personal files for Toronto area councilors were also examined.[28] For the Yonge-Dundas case study, documents and evidence entered as part of the Ontario Municipal Board case. Lastly, some materials were obtained from the personal collections of interview participants, notably documents related to the activity of the CRA-LA, which was undergoing significant upheaval at the time of this research.

Content Analysis

An important part of this research is in understanding how the power of private sector actors translates into municipal policy changes. To examine this relationship, documents guiding urban design and form – primarily, official or general plans, specific area plans, and site-specific design guidelines and plans – were examined in depth. These texts date from the early 1910s up to contemporary times. The majority of plans are official city documents although some plans, especially earlier ones, were undertaken by special purpose bodies such as the Civic Center Committee. Similar to the interview analysis strategy, content analysis was conducted on these documents that not only explored individual concepts but the relationship between them. The results of this work is largely discussed in Chapter 3, analyzing the nature of changing visions and plans for the project areas, but is also integrated through the study.

Downsview subway extension were requested under the Municipal Freedom of Information Act but denied access.

[28] These were only available for councilors that were no longer sitting on council.

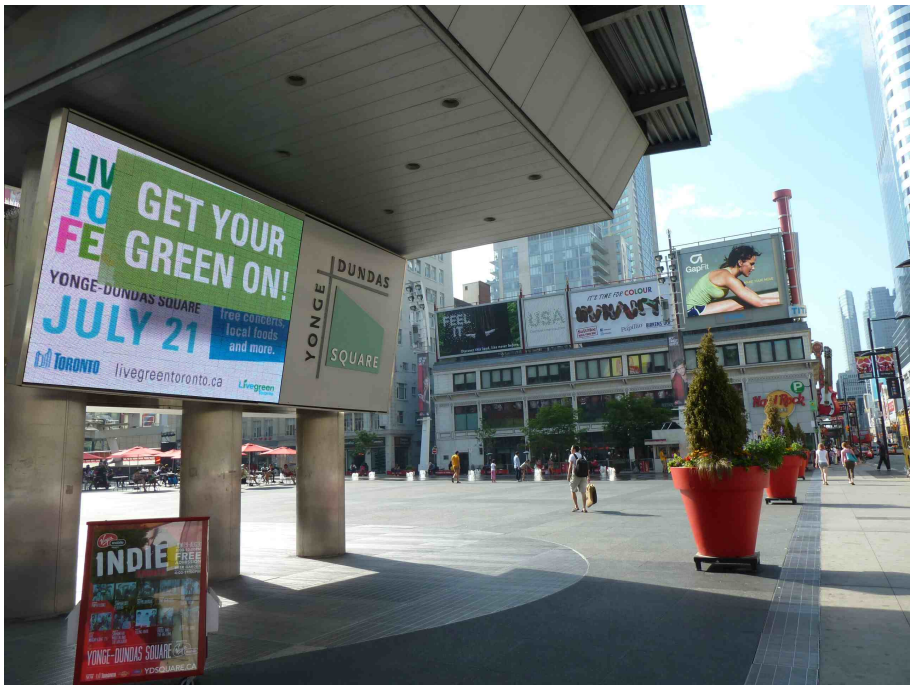


Figure 1: Yonge-Dundas Square with commercial development



Figure 2: Theatre complex at Yonge-Dundas Square

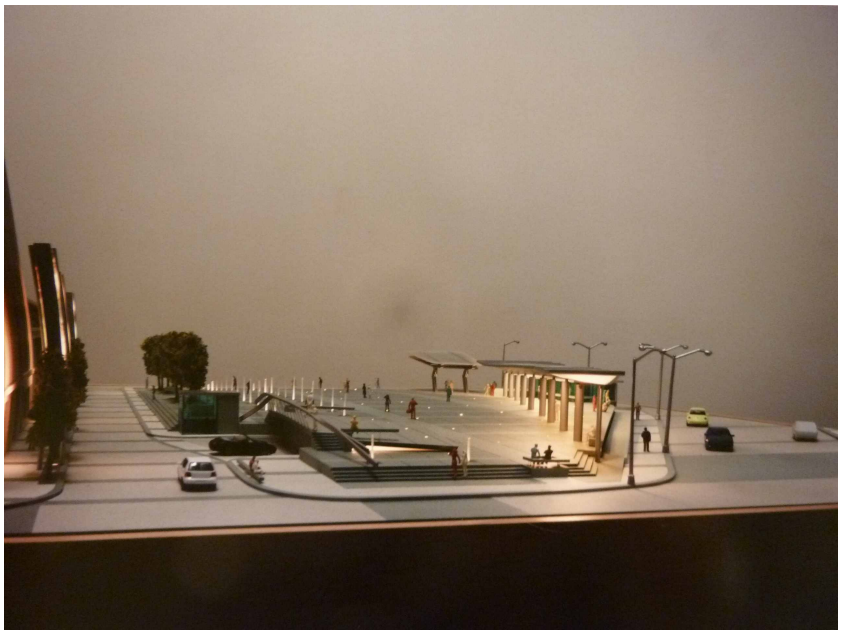


Figure 3: Model of proposed design for Yonge-Dundas Square
(Brown + Storey Architects)

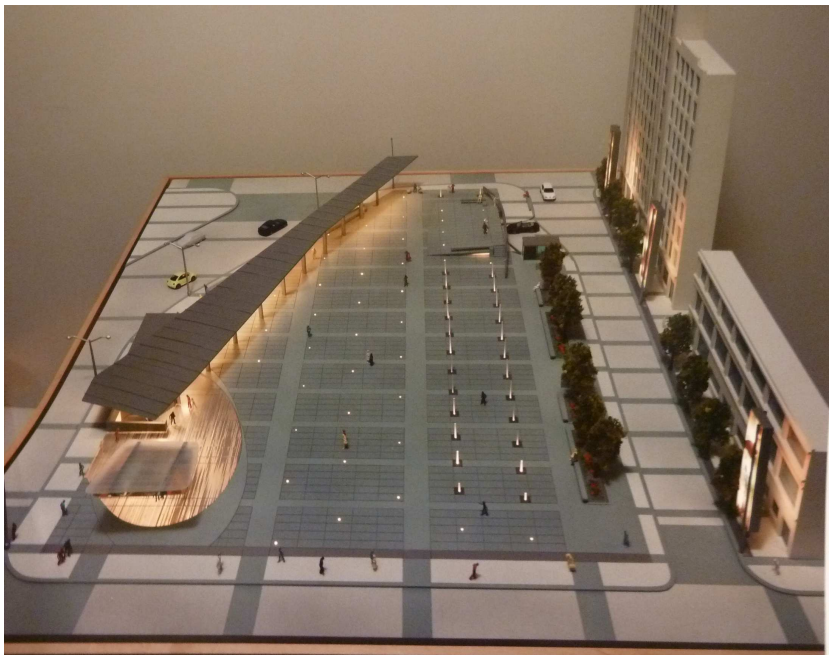


Figure 4: Model of proposed design for Yonge-Dundas Square
(Brown + Storey Architects)



Figure 5: Eaton Centre, looking west across Yonge Street, c. 1980 (City of Toronto archives, Fonds 200, Series 1465, File 308, Item #00009)



Figure 6: Advertising, Yonge-Dundas Square



Figure 7: Wartime production, Downsview airport
(Source: City of Toronto archives)



Figure 8: Former military uses, CFB Downsview



Figure 9: *Tree City* proposal
(Rem Koolhaas/OMA, Bruce Mau Design, Oleson Worland Architects)



Figure 10: Revised plans for Parc Downsview Park



Figure 11: Pond and walking paths, Downsview Park

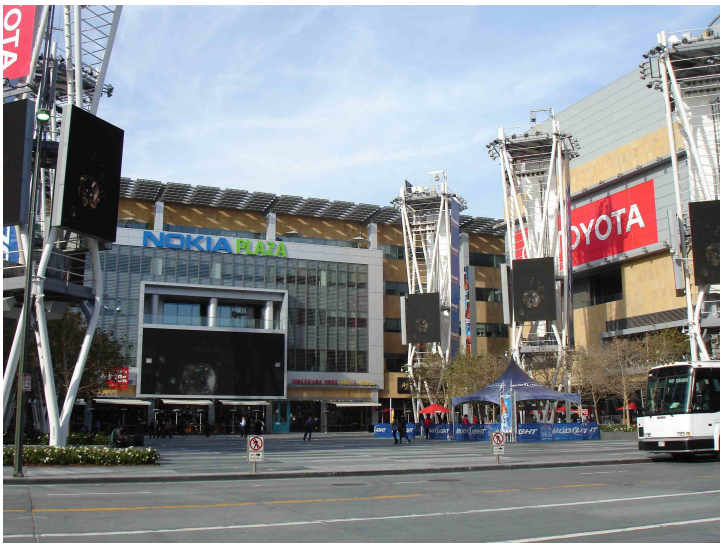


Figure 12: Public space, Staples Center/L.A. Live

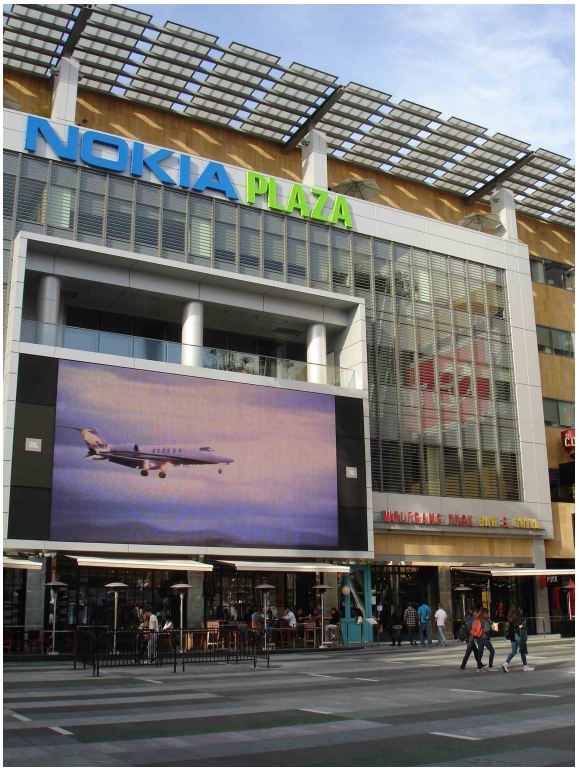


Figure 13: Advertising, Staples Center/L.A. Live

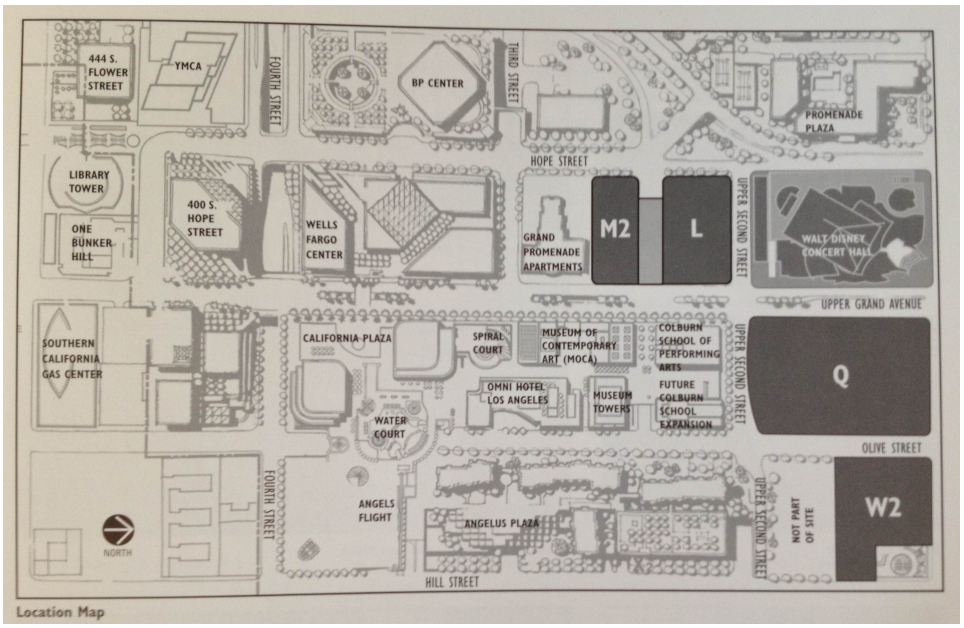


Figure 14: Development blocks, Grand Avenue project
(Los Angeles Grand Avenue Committee 2003)

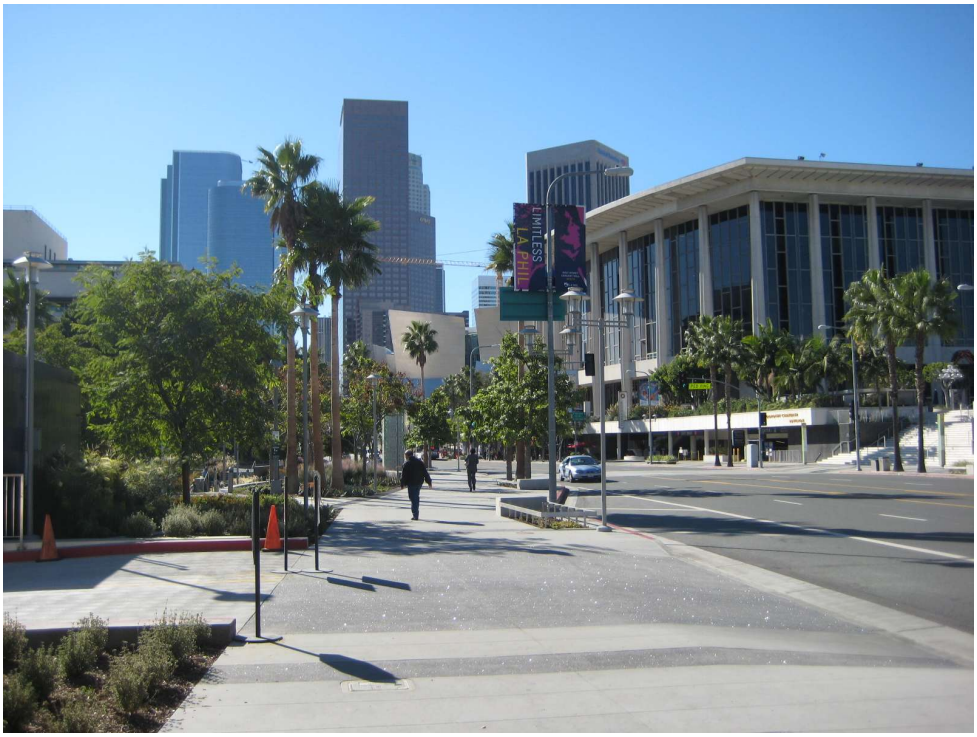


Figure 15: Grand Avenue, looking west



Figure 16: Grand Park water feature



Figure 17: Grand Park main lawn

Chapter 3: Changing Visions, Changing Plans

The story told through the decades' worth of plans, documents and correspondence related to the four case study projects is one of changing visions and priorities, largely shaped by the demands of private sector development. The plans offer textual and visual evidence of how design and planning processes interact with the demands of real estate development and competing goals. While all of the case study sites have been the focus of planning and urban design interest since the post-war period – and in several examples, well before that – they had long periods of stability when there was little change in the vision for the area. In both Toronto and Los Angeles, the cases largely demonstrate consistency in the proposals and plans up until the implementation in their current form. Although the initial plans vary between the cases – such as the urban village proposed for South Park or the maintenance of industrial uses in Downsview – they all exhibit a rapid change in planning guidance to allow for the development of their current form.

The focus of this chapter requires definition on what is meant by urban design plans. There have been significant contestations about what urban design is, and how it is negotiated through practice (for example, Dagenhart and Sawicki 1994; Marshall 2009; Rowley 1994). Urban design can be seen from several perspectives, each having different implications for understanding practices. While there is a historical perspective, focusing on key events in the formation of a formal discipline (Mumford 1992, 2009; Mumford et al. 2008), here the interest is in how urban design is constructed through professional practices. As such, the definition of urban design plans comes from understandings of those professional practices. Previous research has shown that urban design plans are differentiated from other types of plans through a focus on the specifics of built form (massing, relationship to the

street, and three-dimensional considerations), the design of the public realm and the relationship between the formal and functional aspects of buildings (for example, shadow and wind impacts) (Linovski and Loukaitou-Sideris 2013; Southworth 1989; Southworth and Southworth 1973). Documents that contain this content are interpreted as urban design plans, though may vary in their form, including stand-alone plans, design guidelines and visioning documents.

The analysis presented here is not limited to strictly urban design documents as many early plans incorporated design principles, often referred to as civic design, along with more general planning guidance. Urban design principles are woven throughout earlier plans in both cities, to varying degrees. For example, the 1972 General Plan for Los Angeles, emphasizes the importance of urban design by developing urban design standards and stating that:

> By this device [urban design standards], the objective of making the whole development greater than the sum of its parts can be achieved. Without it, projects whose parts are designed by many architects and built by different developers lack continuity, coherence and overall quality. (Committee for Central City Planning 1972, 87)

Similarly, early plans for Toronto – even at the metropolitan scale – often include a strong emphasis on civic design and urban form. As such, while the focus is on urban design guidance, the approach here is through a deep analysis of all related documentation.

The following section first provides a brief overview on the context for assessing plans and urban design guidelines through an analysis of the related literature. This is followed by an in-depth critical assessment of the plans and urban design documents related to each of the case studies, including

official plans, reports, staff reports, by-laws, and guidelines.[29] The final section draws conclusions on the findings and explores their implications for understanding professional practice in the built form professions.

Context: Plans as a Record of Values

This section examines the plans, guidelines and visions related to the case studies as a way of understanding the evolution of the projects through the lens of professional practice. Plans offer one way of recording the values and intentions of the profession, as well as providing documentation of shifting strategies over time (Kumar 2002; Linovski and Loukaitou-Sideris 2012; Southworth 1989; Southworth and Southworth 1973). Increasingly, there is the belief that language can no longer be seen as a strictly neutral medium for conveying information (Fairclough 1995; Jacobs 2006). Rather, there is the acknowledgement that language not only legitimizes certain actions and structures but also establishes the parameters of policy interventions (Fairclough 1995). As Stenson and Watt (1999, 192) argue:

> Discourses create … a cast list of political and economic agents which governments must consider, objects of concern, agendas for actions, preferred narratives for making sense of current situations… They also create a series of absent agendas, agents, objects of concerns and counter-narratives which are mobilized *out* of the discursive picture.

The role of this discourse in not only reflecting an existing agenda but also in creating that agenda is key. Understanding how plans change to restructure visions of the city helps to also understand the nature of professional practices in shaping urban form.

[29] Reports include those issued by the cities themselves, such as official plans and by-laws, as well as reports by other governmental organizations, such as the Civic Centre Authority, or business associations, such as the Central City Association.

There is a rich literature on the analysis and interpretation of discourse, though few studies specifically focus on discourses of design. There are significant reasons for analyzing the discourse surrounding policy and design (Jacobs 1999). Examining the planning discourse is one method of capturing how planners respond to problems, including the creation of the 'problem' itself, as well as how they decide on possible solutions (Portugali and Alfasi 2008). Even more importantly, it can be argued that these forms of expression both express and mold interactions among actors (Healy 1999). While there has been acknowledgment that a discourse analysis must extend further than written texts, analysis of visual representations has been thin (Jacobs 1999). A notable exception is Faludi's (1996) work on the use of visual imagery to frame policy responses which argues that imagery is integral to the field of urban design and the links between text and imagery are often inseparable.

There are limitations to an approach that focuses solely on policy outputs such as design plans. An analysis that only considers official documents produced as part of a discourse disregards the political actions and attitudes that inform the process (Portugali and Alfasi 2008). As Healy argues (1999), the danger in only examining texts is that wider political and social issues are not incorporated and the possible disjunction between policy and implementation is unaddressed. Nonetheless, as the primary documents that guide design and development in many cities, their analysis can offer insight into the shifting attitudes that shape urban design policy.

One definition of 'discourse' for planning scholars is as a term "used to describe the entangled and contested transactions through which real-world planning and policy issues are addressed" (Kumar and Pallathucheril 2004). Yet, this only hints at the value of discussing discourse in relation to planning theory. In essence, discourse analysis is interested in how language is used, such as the use of

particular vocabulary or rhetorical strategies, and what is accomplished through these strategies (Hastings 1999b; Van Dijk 1993). Discourse can provide insight into the established norms and ideologies that are present in design practice.

There is increasing attention being paid to the role of discourse in reflecting existing power structures and vested interests, witnessed by the 'discursive turn' in the social sciences. Not only does language represent the world as perceived by those with access to discourse production, but is integral in establishing the framework for policy solutions. As Rydin (1998: 178) states:

> … Language can influence the policy process in a variety of ways: it can alter perceptions of interests and issues; it can define the object of policy attention; it can define the object of policy attention; it can promote particular policy agendas… and it can be diversionary, resulting in a form of symbolic politics.

Rydin's notion of discourse being diversionary and promoting specific policy agendas is key to the study of planning and design documents. How these policy agendas change over time is also recorded in these policies, and the application of a deep analysis of case specific documents is one mode of understanding both the changing nature of urban form production as well as shifts in professional practices.

Discourse analysis, especially in the social science fields, has evolved in two separate, if related, strands. While Lees (2004) argues that few scholars acknowledge the distinct fields, there is well-developed research in both areas. The first, based in political economy, views discourse analysis as a "tool for uncovering certain hegemonic ways of thinking and talking about things should be done that serve certain vested interests" (Lees 2004, 102). In this strand, discourse is seen as concealing the power of those in control (Healy 1999; Lees 2004; Mele 2000; Van Dijk 1993). The second strand,

drawing on poststructural theory, argues that discourse is part of a process that constructs things and identities (Lees 2004). Compared to the first strand, "discourses are not simply reflections or (mis)representations of 'reality'; rather they create their own 'regimes of truth' – the acceptable formulation of problems and solutions to problems " (Lees 2004, 103). In reality, these two strands are often mixed, and there is difficulty in establishing the differences between constructing realities and concealing power structures.

Normative and Descriptive Discourses

While critical discourse analysis is not limited to a specific field, the analysis of design plans and imagery offers some unique challenges. Fairclough claims that the value in analyzing discourse is in making normative goals visible. As he discusses:

> Discourses not only represent the world as it is (or rather is seen to be), they are also projective, imaginaries, representing possible worlds which are different than the actual world, and tied into projects to change the world in particular directions. (Fairclough 2003: 124)

Yet urban design plans, by their very nature, are explicitly normative and projective. In this case, it is the implicit representation of the city as it is (or as it is seen to be) that offers a similarly rich text for analysis. As discussed previously, one of the key values of discourse analysis is in demonstrating how the representation or misrepresentation of 'reality' frames the range of solutions. Maps and diagrams especially are used to offer a view of the city that is objective and difficult to critique. This combination of the descriptive and projective offers substantial opportunities for analysis.

There is a body of scholarship which analyzes the role of discourse in shaping and reinforcing ideologies, power structures and norms related to planning (for example, Hastings 1999a, 1999b; Healy 1999; Jacobs 1999). Hastings' (1999a) critical discourse study of power relations in an urban

regeneration partnership is particularly informative about the framing of policy questions and solutions. She argues that the way policy problems are constructed is of great importance to the nature of the solutions proposed. This framing of policy problems can be limited or expanded in a variety of ways, such as the extent to which processes can be altered by human agents; the identity and depiction of actors; the identification of processes causing the problem; and the spatial scale over which the problem is presented (Hastings 1999a). Acknowledging that the framing of problems is selective and indicative of a particular world-view provides rich opportunities for critical discourse analysis. In an attempt to create a more nuanced understanding of urban design practice, this work draws on the model established by Healy (1999). Rather than relying on technical strategies or those based on linguistic methods, the approach here seeks to understand the organizing ideas that permeate the planning documents.

Evolving Plans

The histories of the case studies presented here appear quite different on the surface. In Los Angeles, the two areas studied have a long record of planning interest. The South Park area had been the focus of multiple city-wide plans, identifying it as a location for substantial residential growth and the creation of an urban village concept. The Civic Center district was historically conceived as the location for the centralization of government services. In Toronto, both regional and municipal governments have created plans for the case study sites. The Downsview site was intended as an area for the preservation of industrial uses and an important location for restoring the jobs-housing balance. The development of the Yonge-Dundas district, while slightly less consistent in its approach, was primarily intended to create a lower density shopping strip with street-level retail, secondary to other important retail nodes. Despite this diversity in vision and approaches, the case studies are all similar in that their

current form represents a significant departure from their long planning histories. As shown here, despite years of consistent recommendations and guidelines for the area, the plans all shifted substantially to allow for the development of the projects as built. As discussed further below, these changes were in response to private-sector initiatives and pressure, and often stand in stark contrast to the substantial planning and design visions established previously.

From Amenities to Entertainment: South Park

The area surrounding the Staples Center has not only been seen as a site for significant urban design and planning interventions in recent times but rather has been the focus of planning efforts since the early 1950s. However, while contemporary plans for the area envision a 'sports and entertainment' district, earlier plans had a much different vision for the area. As detailed below, plans in the late 1960s and 1970s saw potential for major residential intensification in the area, centered on the creation of new public recreation facilities in the form of a large park, giving the new neighborhood the moniker South Park.[30] Despite these plans for the area, little change materialized until the development of private-sector interest in creating a major sports venue and the intervention of the Community Redevelopment Agency of Los Angeles (CRA/LA).

South Park: An Urban Village

The 1972 General Plan establishes the redevelopment of South Park - with an associated central park - as a core planning element not just for the neighboring district but for all of downtown Los Angeles.[31]

[30] 'South Park' or 'South Park Urban Village' were the terms used in the 1960s and 1970s (i.e. Committee for Central City Planning 1972) for the district now referred to as the 'Los Angeles Sports and Entertainment District', such as in the area specific plan. 'South Park' will be used when referring to documents from this earlier era.

[31] This plan is also known as the "Silver Book", and was prepared by the firm of Wallace, McHarg, Roberts and Todd.

The importance of South Park and the proposed civic space is reflected throughout the document. While other districts are addressed in depth, namely those areas actively facing urban renewal such as Bunker Hill and Bunker Hill East, as well as those seen as problematic such as Central City East, South Park and its park space form the guiding vision and central imagery for the plan. For example, the section that addresses implementation for the whole plan acknowledges the importance of the proposed park and its successful realization:

> The Plan is exciting; the Park would be terrific, but can we really achieve it? (Committee for Central City Planning 1972, 82)

The design for the South Park project area includes the creation of a primarily residential "Urban Village" supported by commercial and office uses in later phases, with the 80-acre park as the central organizing element (Figure 18). The plan provides a future-tense narrative of how the area will be transformed over the next twenty years. The vision is primarily focused on residential development, estimating 7,000 new dwelling units by 1990, with additional associated recreational, institutional and commercial uses. In 1990, South Park is envisioned as the centre of downtown development, spurred on by the transformative effect of the park:[32]

> [In 1990] The South Park Urban Village currently is where the majority of Downtown construction is occurring. The amenity of the Park and Lake have been the basis for the formulation of the new residential community, balanced with new cultural institutions, office towers and hotels, along with the facilities in the Park itself: a museum and art gallery, a school, restaurants, a "Tivoli Gardens", tennis courts, bicycle path, and "quiet" areas. (Committee for Central City Planning 1972, 1)

[32] The importance placed on the central park, as well as its role in catalyzing additional development, has interesting links to the Grand Park project, as discussed below.

The residential nature of the proposal is emphasized throughout the plan,[33] and in the references to the district as a Village. The park is imagined to not only be a regional attraction but also "specifically designed for the residents of the new Village" (Committee for Central City Planning 1972, 25). There is also significant attention paid to providing housing for a wide range of income groups (this is phrased as a "key problem of implementation"), and ensuring that moderate-income units are created along with innovative community services. Future residents are seen as not only downtown employees and those "interested in the growing activities, excitement, cultural advantages and amenities that Downtown offers" but also the elderly and moderate-income families (Committee for Central City Planning 1972, 25). In addition to exploring federal tools and subsidies available, the plan also examines lowering housing costs through reducing construction costs and providing alternative forms of housing.[34]

The potentially catalytic effect of both the park and the associated development is explicitly referenced throughout the General Plan. While the park space is also seen as providing an amenity to an underserved area, its importance in stimulating and sustaining housing development is key. The Central City Community Plan echoes the importance of this public open space, stating that:

> Another important feature is the provision of large quantities of open space - a regional park, park system or multiple open use space within the planning area. This vital amenity is the *key to the success of the new housing* as well as an important addition to the open space inventory of Central City. (City of Los Angeles 1972a, 4, emphasis added)

[33] The more detailed Central City Community Plan reiterates this focus on residential and open space uses: "The predominant land uses in the South Park Planning Area, excluding streets, is to be housing in the High Medium and High Density categories, while the remaining land in this planning area is to be occupied by significant amount of open space and by commercial land uses" (City of Los Angeles 1972a, 4).

[34] The Central City Proposed plan also comments on the possibility of federal involvement for the provision of low and moderate income housing (City of Los Angeles 1972b).

The impacts are seen as not being limited to the local area but spread throughout the downtown:

> The South Park development would be an obvious "shot in the arm" to the Central Commercial Core, and would specifically benefit south Broadway, the garment district, and the Convention Center. (Committee for Central City Planning 1972, 25)

For the 1972 Plan, South Park is seen as the central organizing framework around which future growth, as well as infrastructural and transportation improvements, will coalesce.[35] The associated imagery of the new park and development is seen as a way to change the perception of downtown Los Angeles with the idea that the South Park project will be able to "create a new Downtown image and symbol of pride" (Committee for Central City Planning 1972, 25).

The park specifically is seen as having an important role in attracting development. Its function as an important public amenity is established, though its impact in creating an environment for increased development is a similarly important aspect. One of the goals for the area is described as follows:

> Create a major new amenity to both attract new growth and provide a new environment for residential uses. (Committee for Central City Planning 1972, 25)

The park is also seen as being able to attract housing, "which might not locate in Downtown without the added attraction of a major amenity like the Park" (Committee for Central City Planning 1972, 23). Similarly, it is acknowledged that while development may occur in the area without intervention, the park amenity will be used to leverage the sort of 'grand' development that is detailed through the downtown goals. The change to the immediate area is substantial while significant impacts for all of downtown - both in terms of physical form and perception - are seen as emanating from the project.

[35] In fact, the only major land use changes proposed by the plan are in the South Park area (Committee for Central City Planning 1972, 86).

The plan describes the growth that may occur without city involvement, in contrast to how the new community - with its associated development effects - are envisioned:

> Although the Area is characterized by outmoded land uses and inefficiently and uneconomically subdivided land, its location has made it subject to current forces which would probably renew it eventually in whole or in part. There is, however, no way to assure anything except a "mixed bag" of unrelated buildings. There is no assurance of anything particularly grand occurring, nor is there any assurance of adding the kind of land use mix which would fulfill some of the most important overall Downtown Goals. A beautiful, centrally located and landscaped Park and Lake is proposed as the catalytic element, to dramatically and rapidly change Downtown's image (Committee for Central City Planning 1972, 23.)

The plan recommends establishing South Park as a "First Priority Urban Renewal Action Area", to allow for renewal in the same manner as Bunker Hill.[36] The contrast between potential 'mixed bag' development and the grand visions promoted by the plan further underscore the plan's classification of South Park as underdeveloped. The characterization of the area as "largely barren and blighted, and directly in the path of future Downtown expansion" is one that has remained throughout generations of plans, though few proposals retain the focus on creation of large public amenities " (Committee for Central City Planning 1972, 23).

Evolving Village

The notion of an "Urban Village" in South Park with substantial residential development was established in the 1972 plan but was incorporated into later proposals to differing degrees, including those by the CRA/LA. Ten years after the General Development Plan, South Park was the focus of planning by the Redevelopment Agency.[37] This 1982 document has similar goals for increased

[36] Three areas in downtown were proposed as First Priority Urban Action Areas, allowing for urban renewal tactics: South Park, the East Side Industrial Park and Central City East (specifically to deal with the issues surrounding Skid Row). While the designation allows for similar procedures as in Bunker Hill, the plan states that most cases would not require total clearance (Committee for Central City Planning 1972, 87).
[37] CRA/LA begin projects in the area in 1980.

residential development in the area, focused around public open spaces, though the public amenity space has been significantly reduced (Community Redevelopment Agency/City of Los Angeles 1982).[38] In place of the large 80-acre central park, this iteration of South Park is focused on a 3-acre Olympic Park (Figure 19). Similar to earlier plans, the park is seen as transformative, with a role in establishing the area's residential image, as well as contributing to its liveliness:

> This new 3-acre park, located at the intersection of important South Park office, residential and retail activity, will become a lively meeting place and CBD landmark. Ground floor commercial tenants of the residential towers will enliven park use with accessible attractions and service - restaurants, shops, a pre-school and a daycare center. (Community Redevelopment Agency/City of Los Angeles 1982, map)

The relationship between these public investments and increased private development are made fairly explicit:

> Olympic Park establishes the special emphasis of this new community on the public realm and the resulting benefits to private development. (Community Redevelopment Agency/City of Los Angeles 1982, "Public Urban Space")

Like the General Plan, there is an emphasis on middle-income residential development, though the implementation strategies in the CRA plan focus largely on private investment, aided by development incentives and financing mechanisms.[39] While there is an emphasis on diversity in residential options, this is phased, with the first residents comprised of singles, young couples and the retired elderly, with the broadening of housing types anticipated only in later phases (Community Redevelopment Agency/City of Los Angeles 1982, 8).

[38] The Village moniker is also dropped, in favor of community and neighborhoods.

[39] As the plan states: "the development of South Park will be paced by the CRA commitments to public improvements and by developer responses to evolving market forces" (Community Redevelopment Agency/City of Los Angeles 1982, "Community Growth").

From the development of the early plans in the 1970s through to the mid-1980s, the CRA/LA committed funding for private-sector led residential housing development and housing rehabilitation, as well as for the acquisition of land for the Olympic Park, now re-named Grand Hope Park, in some documents. In 1985, the CRA commissioners requested that a panel from the Urban Land Institute (ULI) assist in assessing the plan for the South Park area (Community Redevelopment Agency/City of Los Angeles 1990). In the context of a changing downtown real estate market, the ULI advisory panel was tasked with evaluating the feasibility of the South Park proposal, "with particular emphasis on whether the South Park concept can be realized and whether the current and proposed implementation strategies need to be modified to reflect current market and economic conditions" (Urban Land Institute 1985).

The ULI report agreed with the broad strategy proposed by the City and CRA - a major new residential district for downtown - but suggested alterations to the implementation strategy as well as the nature of the public open space. Advocating that a critical mass of development was needed for the project, the report suggests the housing should be prioritized in certain key locations, with the park taking the form of an "an active public neighborhood square… a traditional urban open space, or 'square' such as Rittenhouse Square in Philadelphia" (Urban Land Institute 1985, 27), a marked difference from earlier plans for the public open space. The distinct identity for the area would be created through the development of the Hope Street Promenade, envisioned as an "urban activity spine" reinforced through streetscape, gateway and landscaping elements, a strategy that would also serve to link South Park to the rest of downtown (Figure 20).

While the nature of the public space is conceived differently in the ULI report, it still remains a consideration for the area. However, in contrast to previous plans, the ULI report questions the value of the proposed amenities and their role in encouraging development and devotes attention to whether they will be catalytic in spurring development:

> The second primary planning and design question the panel was asked to address focused on whether efforts should first be concentrated on proposed amenities - such as Olympic Park, the Hope Street Promenade, neighborhood services/retailing, entry/exit identity, and the rehabilitation of existing housing - in order to change the public's perception of the area and to attract people. (Urban Land Institute 1985, 32)

The provisioning of public space is partially seen as a planning and urban design issue, but also as part of marketing and development concerns. The focus of the ULI report was grouped into four categories: development potential, planning and urban design issues, marketing and development issues, and implementation. As part of the urban design concerns, the report questions whether the proposed amenities can change public perceptions of the area, as well as the impact of design and development controls on hindering private-sector investment. However, these amenities also form part of the marketing and development questions:

> Is it reasonable to assume that when Olympic Park, the 800 dwelling units, and the Fashion Institute of Design and Merchandising are completed, South Park would enjoy increases market appeal and a greater number of private initiatives for residential development? (Urban Land Institute 1985, 10)

The report concludes that in addition to targeting housing to specific "critical areas",[40] the development of Olympic Park (along with a below-grade parking structure) and the Hope Street Promenade should be priorities. However, it also recommends that the housing product should have a focus on security and have their own recreational facilities (Urban Land Institute 1985, 14). While the

[40] For this initial "critical mass" of development, a minimum of 1,500 to 2,000 dwelling units were planned (Urban Land Institute 1985).

broad goals of the original planning efforts undertaken in the 1970s are maintained, the development focus of the ULI report demonstrates an altering of the vision, focused more on increasing private-sector investment. To this end, the ULI report recommends that:

> Although it is important that the CRA continue to emphasize quality of the overall development, it should not dictate such project-specific market elements as the style and mix of units or the types of amenities. Rather the CRA's efforts should focus on processing and accommodating development deals for available sites in short order. (Urban Land Institute 1985, 37)

The emphasis on a mix of units for different income and family groups, as well as the importance of planning and design controls are lost in ULI's recommendations in favor of a largely market-driven strategy.[41]

The last major document to emerge from this planning continuum is the Downtown Strategic Plan in 1992. In this conceptualization of the South Park area, a major civic space is seen as a catalyzing factor to encourage residential development, for both the district and downtown more broadly. Similar to earlier planning and design efforts from the 1970s, South Park is still referred to as being Downtown's "first new residential neighborhood" with the anticipation that it will "demonstrate how successful future Downtown residential communities can be" (Downtown Strategic Plan Advisory Committee 1992, 84-5). Like the earlier urban village concept, the area is envisioned as a mix of residential and commercial activities, creating an active, urban community, albeit at significantly lower densities than previously proposed to make South Park "an attractive alternative to living in the surrounding towns and suburbs".

[41] The CRA did contest some of the ULI recommendations, namely that re-zoning will lower land costs, developer resistance was due to the perceived profit barriers from rent control, as well as some of the timing and density recommendations (Heldfeld 1985).

Similar to the recommendations put forth by ULI, the new public space, referred to as South Park Square, is reduced to the area of one block[42] although it remains a major strategic element. While the plan does not provide extensive details about its implementation, it is envisioned as a place for both passive and active recreation. The 1992 plan specifically confronts the quality of open space that is being developed, critiquing the abandonment of public spaces. As stated in the strategies for the South Park Square:

> … Los Angeles has experienced an abandonment of the public realm, marked by a fear of public open space as a locus of undesirable activity and behavior. Many see the solution as minimizing public spaces, and investing as little as possible in the streets beyond what is needed for automobile traffic safety. This Strategic Plan posits the belief that the public realm gives value to both private property and communal life. The answer lies not in eschewing public space but in supporting and democratizing it (Downtown Strategic Plan Advisory Committee 1992, 90).

The plan also sets out specific goals to ensure the spaces proposed in the plan function as civic and communal amenities,[43] such as requiring they are bounded on all four sides by public streets, are commonly accessible, and form part of a pedestrian network connecting with the rest of downtown. In contrast to the implemented forms of public space in the area, the 1992 plan explicitly states that civic spaces "should not be the 'front lawns' of any buildings" (Downtown Strategic Plan Advisory Committee 1992, 106).

[42] The plan places South Park Square in the block bounded by Olive and Hill to the west/east, and Olympic and Eleventh to the north/south.

[43] In addition to South Park Square, the plan includes a re-designed Pershing Square, as well as two new spaces on the east side of downtown, Market Square in the wholesale district and San Julian Commons in the Central City east area.

Although the ULI report and 1992 Downtown Strategic Plan recommend important departures from the original vision for the South Park area, the broad goals of an urban residential district, centered around public open space are largely maintained. The contrast, the next phase of planning and urban design tactics are fully shaped by private-sector interests and opportunism.

New Directions: Sports and Entertainment

The planning and urban design visions of the 1970s South Park Urban Village change radically with the proposal for a new sports arena adjacent to the existing convention center. The possibility of major new sports facility, believed to have a significant impact not only on the built form but also on the attractiveness of the area to new development, resulted in major changes to how the area was envisioned. Significantly, while original plans for the district include the area adjacent to the Convention Center and bordered by the Harbor Freeway on the west side as part of the South Park planning area, the proposed arena resulted in the creation of separate planning area, entitled the Los Angeles Sports and Entertainment District (LASED). While there is still a concern with providing more housing in the district, the reorientation towards the sports and entertainment complex demonstrates more interest in providing amenities in the form of commercial spaces, rather than public open spaces. Additionally, as already established in the ULI assessment of planning for the area, the focus is largely on allowing for private-sector investment, in contrast to the previous vision of establishing a mixed-income residential community.

Like earlier plans, the orientation towards creating a sports and entertainment district included the importance of attracting residential development to the area, as well as the more expansive Central Business District Redevelopment Area (CBD). There is an emphasis on enhancing downtown livability,

and unlike previous plans, there is an acknowledgement that the area is not currently seen as a desirable place to live. It is believed the proposed sports and entertainment complex will:

> Make the CBD a more livable place and assist in the Agency's effort to prevent residential flight from the CBD and encourage residents to move to the CBD. (Community Redevelopment Agency/City of Los Angeles 1997, "Recommendations")

However, while earlier plans, with the possible exception of the ULI advisory panel report, stressed public open space as the amenity to attract development, this generation of planning focused on entertainment and commercial space.[44] In addition to enhancing downtown livability and encouraging residential development, the goals for the project include a focus on commercial spaces. The project is envisioned as being able to:

> Enhance livability within the CBD, and will attract families to live Downtown by providing entertainment and commercial facilities which will provide goods and services to residential areas of the CBD, and surrounding community. (Community Redevelopment Agency/City of Los Angeles 1997, "Recommendations")

And similarly,

> Directly provide, and indirectly enhance retention and growth of, commercial retail outlets to meet a variety of commercial demands within the CBD project area. (Community Redevelopment Agency/City of Los Angeles 1997, "Recommendations")

These broad goals of revitalizing the area were envisioned primarily through the new proposed sports and entertainment facility, and secondarily through attracting increased commercial and entertainment amenities to the area. One aspect of the project development required public open space to be developed adjacent to the arena. The various agreements between the CRA and the development company (L.A. Arena Development Company LLC) include urban design guidelines that not only focus on the massing and external design of the arena itself, but also on the provisioning of

[44] It is also important to note that these changing visions for the South Park area were occurring during a time of increasing importance for downtown Los Angeles as whole, especially the financial district.

public space. The Disposition and Development Agreement (DDA) between the CRA/LA, City of Los Angeles and the developer specifically outlines urban design objectives for the project, derived from the Downtown Strategic Plan and the South Park Development Strategies and Design Guidelines (City of Los Angeles and Community Redevelopment Agency/Los Angeles 1997, Attachment 7). Although the majority of the urban design goals focus on the arena design,[45] there is an interest in the relationship between the project, the site and the larger district. The urban design objectives focus on two main strategies: firstly, the connection between the site and surrounding neighborhood; and secondly, the design and nature of public open spaces.[46]

In the sports and entertainment district-generation of plans, there are few explicit requirements in terms of the size or type of open space other than the stipulation to provide "publicly accessible open space". Rather, one of the urban design objectives states:

> Design an attractive, active and secure pedestrian environment on the Site and adjacent public rights-of-way with consideration given to such factors as walkway configuration and widths, arrangement of building massing and accessible open area, lighting and landscape/hardscape design and materials. (City of Los Angeles and Community Redevelopment Agency/Los Angeles 1997, Attachment 7, 2)

The plan also includes active street level uses as part of the urban design objectives. Both retail spaces and publicly accessible open spaces are included with the strategy:

[45] For example, "Create a signature quality project that reflects a high architectural quality in terms of style, form, materials and execution" and "Design the Project incorporating massing, scale and materials as well as architectural features, signage and landscaping/hardscaping that are compatible with the neighboring Los Angeles Convention Center" (City of Los Angeles and Community Redevelopment Agency/Los Angeles 1997, Attachment 7).

[46] The LASED Specific Plan includes design guidelines that developments in the area must conform to. These focus on primarily on building massing (including the relationship between the building and the street), ensuring street-level activity and uses, and public entrances (City of Los Angeles 2001, Appendix A).

> Provide active uses at the street level of the Project, such as retail and publicly accessible open space… (City of Los Angeles and Community Redevelopment Agency/Los Angeles 1997, Attachment 7, 1).

The Gilbert Lindsay Plaza is one component of the public space strategy with the plan stating that the "reconfiguration of the Plaza shall be designed as a major open space element" (City of Los Angeles and Community Redevelopment Agency/Los Angeles 1997, Attachment 7, 4). Despite this projection of the plaza as a major open space element, there are few guidelines regulating or defining the public nature of this space, including how it will relate to private buildings and maintain open access.

Later documents offer more guidance on the public space for the area, stating that the Central Plaza must be 30,000 square feet (approximately 0.69 acres) while a minimum of 150,000 square feet (3.4 acres) of open space be provided in the Specific Plan area (City of Los Angeles 2001). The nature of this open space is significantly different from that proposed in the 1972 General Plan, and even the amended version envisioned by the CRA in later years in response to the ULI report. While the first versions of public space for the area treated it as a major community benefit, the Specific Plan has a much looser interpretation of civic space (Figure 21). Regulations for the Central Plaza state only that it should be open to the public during business hours (though it may be closed for private events) and may include associated commercial uses. For the general open space requirements in the Specific Plan area, the regulations are permissive in allowing above-grade and rooftop space to be considered public open space, as well as allowing privately owned spaces and setbacks to be considered as part of the requirement (City of Los Angeles 2001, 28), in considerable contrast to the guidelines for public spaces put forth in the 1992 Strategic Plan (Downtown Strategic Plan Advisory Committee 1992).

Although the Sports and Entertainment district was removed from the larger South Park planning area, there are attempts to make connections to the surrounding district. Specific routes for pedestrian linkages between the district and surrounding neighborhoods including South Park and the Central Business District are listed (Figure 22), and have requirements related to hardscape, landscape, lighting and sidewalk widths. In contrast to earlier plans, the LASED Specific Plan promotes 11th Street, running east-west, as a pedestrian area, whereas all previous studies prioritized Hope Street as both an important pedestrian zone and connector to the downtown core. This change in street hierarchy reflects increased attention to the needs of the sports arena and associated entertainment uses (allowing for the street to be closed to vehicular traffic) rather than establishing connections to other areas of the downtown.

An examination of the changing plans for the South Park area demonstrate a major shift in the vision for the area and how it would be achieved. Although the interest in increasing residential development remained somewhat constant, the nature of that development, and crucially, the factors that would encourage it, shifted considerably. While earlier plans focused on creating a major community amenity in the form of major park space, and establishing firm connections to the downtown core, the possibility of a new sports and entertainment venue changed these planning and urban design goals, both geographically and conceptually. Plans as late as 1992 – just a few years before the sports and entertainment concepts emerged – still focus on the importance of creating public open areas as part of an important network of downtown civic space. Later plans focus on the potential of the new arena to spur development, focusing on the western part of the South Park area, adjacent to the Harbor Freeway, and treating it as a potential amenity for the district. While these visions emerged in different points of times, with the latter ones amidst a broader change in the success of downtown Los

Angeles as a commercial and office hub, they reflect a differing conceptualization of the nature of public space and urban design. Overall, the changes in what were viewed as amenity and public spaces, as well as the different prioritization on connections to downtown represent a re-structuring of city priorities based on private-sector led development.

Government Efficiency to Cultural Center: Civic Center and Grand Park

While the development of Grand Park itself does not have a lengthy history, the area surrounding the Civic Center and City Hall has a strong narrative in policy documents that focused on concentrating government services in one area with few auxiliary uses. The change from these original goals - which go back as far as the 1910s, prior to the construction of City Hall - to a vision of residential development and public recreational space, is key in understanding the influence of private sector goals and visions in shaping urban design projects.

The reinforcement of the Civic Center area for primarily office uses, and more specifically, government services, was not only established early but maintained until relatively recently. Plans as late as the 1990s (Downtown Strategic Plan Advisory Committee 1992), that argue for residential and commercial intensification in multiple areas of downtown, maintain the Civic Center as an area almost exclusively for government uses. The transformation of the Civic Center from government center to one of residential intensification - with associated recreational uses and services - is one that occurred only recently, and through the involvement of private sector interests with the strength to influence policy decisions. The following section describes this shift over time through analysis of the changes in key documents, plans and proposals associated with the Civic Center area.

Strengthening a Regional Government Center

Several policy documents, ranging from the late 1910s to the early 1990s, enforce the Civic Center as an area primarily for government services and civic uses.[47] While the vision for other parts of downtown Los Angeles changed significantly over this period, the Civic Center as a hub for government services remained largely consistent throughout this time.

Initial designs for the area were undertaken as early as the 1910s, with the appointment of a Civic Center committee (chaired by William Mulholland) in 1918, which established a preference for the establishment of a government center at an unspecified north end location (Gleye 1981). In the 1920s, the Los Angeles Planning Commission, in conjunction with an architectural firm, included plans for the possibility of a civic administrative center in connection with the new City Hall, which was strongly influenced by the City Beautiful movement (Gleye 1981). Although these plans (undertaken by both County and City planning commissions separately) created conflicting boundaries for the Civic Center area, these were resolved in 1927, with a resolution passed simultaneously by the Los Angeles City Council and Los Angeles Board of Supervisors establishing First, Hill, Main and Ord Streets as the boundaries of the area. This resolution also reinforced the area as a site for government services:

> WHEREAS, it is the desire of the City Council of the City of Los Angeles, as well as of the Board of Supervisors of Los Angeles County, to conveniently locate all of the public buildings in which will be housed the offices of the several governmental departments of the City, County and State in a given area, to the end that an administrative center may be created in such a manner as to give the greatest possible opportunity for harmonious treatment in the design of the public buildings to be erected as well as the public grounds and streets surrounding the same… (City of Los Angeles Council and Los Angeles Board of Supervisors 1927)

[47] The 1972 plan reinforces the Civic Center as a single use area throughout the plan. For example, while statistics given for other areas include the number of current dwelling units, office and commercial space, for the Civic Center only the number of current employees (25,000) is given (Committee for Central City Planning 1972).

While the criticism of these resolutions was that they didn't create any government powers or funding mechanisms to acquire the land necessary to achieve these objectives, they do demonstrate an effort to amalgamate government services around City Hall.

Later plans sought to coordinate planning between levels of government and ensure a connection between Union Station and the Civic Center area (Civic Center - Union Station Committee 1938).[48] In these early plans, at a time when City Hall and other key government buildings had been recently built or were under construction, a link between Union Station and the Civic Center was proposed through extending the government area southward towards the under-construction train station. As stated in the 1938 plan:

> The first and major objective of the Civic Center-Union Station Committee is to connect the Union Station with the Civic Center, and to secure public acquisition of the intervening unplanned area. (Civic Center - Union Station Committee 1938, 4)

Reiterated throughout the 1938 plan is not only that the area should be primarily for office uses, but that it should be exclusively for government uses and the land acquired through public means and for public purposes.

Planning for the Civic Center in this early period was undertaken by a wide variety of actors. In addition to the various government appointed committees, the Civic Center Authority contracted the American

[48] This 1938 document was undertaken in response to the significant new construction of publicly funded buildings (for example, Union Station, the Federal Building, and the Post Office adjacent to Union Station, amongst others) by different levels of government without the benefit of coordinated planning. As the plan states: "The responsibility of creating and administering such a plan rests upon no one authority, yet is of vital interested to them all, and to all of us. There is urgent need of some coordinating agency created for the purpose of assuring the public that such a comprehensive plan will be developed and carried out." (Civic Center - Union Station Committee 1938, 3).

Institute of Architects to prepare a plan for expanding the existing facilities in the area (Civic Center Committee 1947).[49] This 1947 plan differs from earlier exercises in a few key areas: firstly, it proposes a park and historic site surrounding Olvera Street and Pico House and preservation of these historic sites, rather than their demolition; secondly, there is an emphasis on providing parking facilities and establishing convenient freeway access to both existing and proposed buildings.[50] Despite these changes, the overall orientation of the Civic Center area as one exclusively for government uses is reiterated even more forcefully, with an emphasis on efficiency:

> The very urgent need for additional facilities is well known. It would therefore appear propitious now to proceed toward the realization of an ample civic center, which will vie with any other as a place of dignity and beauty and where the citizen and his government can transact their affairs with harmonious efficiency. (Civic Center Committee 1947, 3-4)

This plan, anticipating the urban renewal era, speaks of a "blighted area, now ripe for reconstruction" (Civic Center Committee 1947, 5) and the need to 'clean up' Bunker Hill (Civic Center Committee 1947, 7). In addressing the "rundown boarding houses" that dominate the top of the heights, the plan states that it should be important public buildings that are located there, separating civic center traffic from the crowded through streets below (Civic Center Committee 1947, 7). The topography becomes an important aspect of this plan, allowing for improved vehicle access to civic center buildings and relieving congestion from the downtown commercial area. For this reason, few other uses are considered for the area. While the plan makes mention that spaces for conventions and trade fairs are often part of civic center developments, and can extend the use of the area beyond working hours, as

[49] Lead by Burnett C. Turner, the Civic Center Committee of the Southern California Chapter of the American Institute of Architects prepared the report (including a comprehensive site plan) as per an agreement with the government-appointed Los Angeles Civic Center Authority.

[50] Indicative of the new era of car-centric planning, the plan also recommends eliminating surface street crossings for pedestrians and dealing with the substantial grade changes through escalators and elevators within the buildings themselves rather than in the public realm (Civic Center Committee 1947, 7 -8).

well as increase use of parking and shopping facilities, "they present collateral problems which it has been decided not to include as part of this plan" (Civic Center Committee 1947, 8).

After the series of planning and design exercises that accompanied the construction of City Hall and Union Station in the inter-war period, later plans still maintained the area as one of focused on government services. One substantial plan, the *Civic Center Development Plan*, an element of the General Plan, was developed by the Civic Center Authority in conjunction with an advisory board responsible for developing the General Plan (Civic Center Authority 1969). The 1969 plan, while acknowledging the presence of cultural attractions in the area,[51] is explicitly focused on maintaining current government services and allowing the potential for additional government offices to locate in the area. The objectives of the plan include:

> To provide central locations for major governmental offices, grouped by jurisdiction, in order to promote efficient administration of government affairs, increase the convenience of citizens' transactions with government, and facilitate intergovernmental communication.
>
> To provide sufficient flexibility to accommodate future change in the functions and administration of government. (Civic Center Authority 1969)

Other objectives for the plan include ensuring linkages between the government services concentrated in the Civic Center and the business core in downtown Los Angeles, and, indicative of the plan's era, assuring adequate off-street parking facilities and efficient traffic circulation. As highlighted in the plan's objectives, government services were seen as distributed by jurisdiction, with State and County buildings on the West Mall area, and Federal and City building on the East Mall area. The plan also

[51] Cultural attractions included in the 1969 Civic Center area are the Music Center (which was opened in 1964) and the Pueblo de Los Angeles State Historical Monument (now commonly referred to as Olvera Plaza), which was not included in later area boundaries.

includes the proposed development of eight new government buildings, including City Hall East and the County Criminal Courts building.

The 1972 General Plan, which outlines priority areas for development in South Park (as discussed above), the east side industrial area of downtown and parts of Bunker Hill, describes the Civic Center as a stable area with little need for change in uses or intensity (Figure 23). While significant areas of downtown are depicted as in need of redevelopment or re-investment, the Civic Center, along with the historic core, is identified as requiring little change:

> The eight Areas, except for the Civic Center and the Central Commercial Core are, by and large, either vacant or under-utilized… (Committee for Central City Planning 1972, 9)

The success of office uses, and specifically government uses, is seen by the 1972 plan as creating, and ensuring, long-term stability in the area. In detailing the objectives and design concept for the area, the plan focuses on government buildings currently under construction (the Criminal Courts Building and City Hall East Government Offices), as well as plans for proposed County and Federal buildings.

In creating a future vision for the area, government services maintain a dominant role. In depicting what the area will be like in 1990, 18 years later, the 1972 plan states:

> Expansion of government uses southward and between Grand and Hill Streets, north of Temple, along with Mass Rapid Transit and People Mover linkages, has kept the Civic Center the government nerve center of Southern California. (Committee for Central City Planning 1972, "1990 Plan Components")

In contrast to the significantly more radical plans detailed for other parts of the city, such as Skid Row and the east side industrial area, the intentions for the Civic Center are considerably more modest. The more detailed Central City Community Plan also specifies that the area is to remain primarily institutional:

> The following land uses are designated as appropriate in the Civic Center planning area: government activities on publicly owned land; activities and uses related to those in the government complex, such as office space, retail stores, restaurants, clubs, etc., on privately owned land; and joint public-private uses, such as parking garages above or below retail stores. (City of Los Angeles 1972a, 4)

With the exception of major public transportation improvements, which extend throughout the downtown area, the vision for the Civic Center was one of stability, with few proposed changes in the existing uses and form.

While many of the elements envisioned by the 1972 plan failed to materialize (notably much of the transportation plan, such as the proposed People Mover and elevated pedway), elements of the Civic Center plan were reiterated in later plans. The Downtown Strategic Plan, undertaken by the Community Redevelopment Agency in the 1990s, continued to envision the Civic Center area as focused primarily on government services:

> The Downtown Strategic Plan proposes that government uses continue to be concentrated Downtown. The Plan supports the continued development of the Civic Center as a regional center for Los Angeles City, County, State and Federal government activity… (Downtown Strategic Plan Advisory Committee 1992, 5)

Similarly, the objectives for the area in the Downtown Strategic Plan emphasize the area as suitable for public and civic buildings:

> Objectives: To encourage the location of public buildings on the civic mall so that the Civic Center District becomes one of the most prominent civic and cultural monuments in the world (Downtown Strategic Plan Advisory Committee 1992, 44)

Unlike earlier plans, the Downtown Strategic plan addresses the civic mall and recommends its extension to City Hall and improvements to its accessibility and visibility by reconfiguring the parking garage ramps. While improvements to the civic mall are addressed in this plan, including issues of pedestrian access, the mall is still conceived as auxiliary to the area's primary function as a center for government services. Further analysis of parks and civic spaces in the downtown core do not include

the civic mall as either a current or proposed park or civic space (Downtown Strategic Plan Advisory Committee 1992, 107-109).[52]

In contrast to other districts detailed in the Strategic Plan, the Civic Center is envisioned as an area of relative stability,[53] with few substantial changes. Considering the importance of Grand Park as a tool for catalytic change in current plans - and its relation to major residential development - the plans from the early 1990s envision little change from its initial development in the early 1910s.

The development of the Los Angeles Civic Center Shared Facilities and Enhancement Plan, commonly referred to as the Ten-Minute Diamond Plan, re-examines the Civic Center in relation to the rest of Los Angeles.[54] Based on the concept of a 10-minute pedestrian shed originating from City Hall, this plan proposes a changing orientation for public space in the Civic Center area. In this plan, the importance of a civic space for the city is reiterated, though placed in the block bounded by First Street, Spring Street, Second Street and Main Street (Figure 24). This location was proposed as a strategic site to capitalize on existing circulation patterns and access to the Civic Center (Los Angeles Civic Center Authority 1997, 33). Similarly, access to Main Street and important view corridors were seen as enhanced by this plan that focused on City Hall as the "crossroads" for the city (Los Angeles Civic Center Authority 1997).

[52] The plan also describes "metropolitan parks" beyond the downtown core which serve as a metropolitan resource, in contrast to neighborhood parks. These include Exposition Park, MacArthur Park and Dodger Stadium (Downtown Strategic Plan Advisory Committee 1992, 112).

[53] For example, contrast with the recommendations for South Park, which suggest the creation of three new residential neighborhoods, or Bunker Hill, where recommendations include significant increases in density, FAR and residential development (Downtown Strategic Plan Advisory Committee 1992, 45 - 46).

[54] While the plan originated out of a desire to identify existing overlaps between government facilities and develop a strategy for sharing facilities, it includes a substantial land use and urban design component.

Other plans reiterated the proposals in the 10-Minute Diamond Plan, calling for the main civic space for Los Angeles to be located at First and Main rather than the civic mall:

> The site of the soon-to-be demolished Caltrans Building at First and Main will provide Downtown with the kind of central park and public gathering place the City is currently lacking. Such a park at the Civic Core would be a natural "town square" where Angelenos can enjoy open space on a daily basis and gather together for large citywide events. (Central City Association 2003, 34)

This creation of a civic space adjacent to City Hall, intended to capitalize on historic and existing patterns of development and circulation, was developed for a brief period in the early 1990s, but soon abandoned in favor of the Grand Avenue orientation.[55]

Civic Center to Development Potential

In contrast to the long history of envisioning the Civic Center area as one of government services, the anticipated real estate potential of four key parcels adjacent to Grand Avenue and Grand Park are associated with a rapid shift in not only the vision for the area, but its actual transformation as well.

In the early 2000s, the Los Angeles Grand Avenue Authority began the process of re-developing four large development parcels (Figure 25) and the County Mall.[56] A vision for the area began to emerge through a series of documents issued by the Authority, including a Request for Qualifications (Los

[55] The plan was largely discarded due to political negotiations that placed the new police headquarters on the prominent site across from City Hall [Interview 37].

[56] The Grand Avenue Authority was established through a joint powers agreement between the County of Los Angeles and the Community Redevelopment Agency/Los Angeles (CRA/LA). The Authority was compromised of elected officials (Gloria Molina, Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors and Jan Perry, Los Angeles City Council) and representatives from the County (David Janssen, Chief Administrative Officer) and the CRA (Robert R. Ovrom, CEO), although this shifted over time. In contrast, the Grand Avenue Committee, established as a private, non-profit entity included designers (Martha Welborne) and developers (James A. Thomas, Eli Broad and David Malmuth).

Angeles Grand Avenue Committee 2003) and Request for Proposals (Los Angeles Grand Avenue Committee 2004). While the RFQ and RFP were issued with the goal of finding developers for the four vacant parcels,[57] the redevelopment of the civic mall was included as a possible part of the project, to be developed either simultaneously or in a future phase.

The key change in the conceptualization of the area in the Civic Park phase is its re-envisioning as a "vital urban destination" with activity oriented towards Grand Avenue and a redeveloped 'Civic Park', which would later be named Grand Park. In describing the development goals for the area, the park is seen as becoming a city-wide attraction, as well as a space for local residents and workers:

> The Authority is also seeking a development that is coordinated with the nearby Civic Park and extension of the existing Country mall north of First Street. The new park will be a central gathering place for all Angelenos and the setting of civic events, outdoor performances, and casual daily interaction of neighboring residents and workers. (Los Angeles Grand Avenue Committee 2003, 4)

The emphasis on Grand Avenue as the central corridor for activity represents a marked departure from earlier plans for the Civic Center, partially reflecting the new cultural developments located there in the intervening period, such as Walt Disney Concert Hall, the Museums of Contemporary Art (MOCA) and the Colburn School of Performing Arts. As Grand Avenue is projected:

> [Grand Avenue is] envisioned as a major urban promenade… a plan is evolving to remake Grand Avenue as a premiere pedestrian space, with appropriate retail and other destination activities added to the mix of uses already in place. The result is intended to be a world-class boulevard worthy of the world-class institutions which line it. (Los Angeles Grand Avenue Committee 2003, 7)

Also lining the central portion were the four development parcels included as part of the RFQ and RFP, consistent with the intention of the Civic Park supporting mixed-use development. The Civic Park is

[57] Two of the parcels were owned by the County and two were owned by the CRA/LA, and at the time all the parcels were being used for parking.

seen as integral to the success of the four development parcels and is emphasized in this way in several instances. For example, in the urban design guideline issued to competing developers, it states:

> The Plan also envisions the renovation and extension of the County Mall into a new Civic Park for Los Angeles. It is imagined that the new park and the new development on Grand Avenue will attract a regional market and that these two elements will be mutually supportive and collaborative in the scheduling and creation of events, and in attracting the public to Grand Avenue in general. (Los Angeles Grand Avenue Committee 2003, 18)

Interestingly, despite the significant differences between previous visions for the area and the *Reimagining Grand Avenue Documents*, there is an attempt to portray a sense of continuity in these plans. One Grand Avenue Committee document states that despite there being many plans for the Civic Center area over the decades, "what remains consistent is the agreement that this area is a focal point in the downtown" (Grand Avenue Committee 2003, 70). While the interest in the Civic Center area has been consistent, the focus on Grand Avenue as a central thoroughfare was only really associated with the development of the Walt Disney Concert Hall in the 1980s. This is illustrated with a series of models and diagrams that depict numerous firms prioritizing development along Grand Avenue, although all in response to the competition for the concert hall, while most earlier proposals had focused on Union Station and City Hall as the locus of activity.

The documents issued by the Grand Avenue Authority hint at competing interests between creating an accessible public space on the former County Mall and ensuring profitable development for both the City (through the CRA) and County on their parcels of land:

> … the development should maximize the long-term revenues to the CRA/LA and the County from the four Development Parcels and should create significant increases in the value of the underlying real estate. (Los Angeles Grand Avenue Committee 2004, 3)

This desire to increase the value and real estate potential of downtown is also noted through the language around the projects serving as 'catalysts' for Los Angeles. Both the residential/mixed-use

developments and the Civic Park itself are seen as having the ability to change the landscape of Los Angeles. In the request for proposals issued to pre-qualified development firms, the importance of this is underscored:

> The Project presents the rare opportunity to transform the Los Angeles civic center and to provide a catalyst for further quality investment in downtown Los Angeles. (Los Angeles Grand Avenue Committee 2004, 3)

The estimated economic benefits of the proposed redevelopment form the basis of justification for the projects. Aside from a one-time economic benefit from the construction phase, the Authority argued that there would be a significant increase in government revenue at all levels from income, sales, and property taxes. While the economic benefits are largely focused on the construction of new structures on the development parcels, many of these benefits are tied to the renovation of the Civic Mall. The 'spin-off' economic benefits related to the development are dependent on the creation of a 'new center of town' and "build[ing] a compelling story about downtown Los Angeles as an attractive place to live, work and play" (Grand Avenue Committee 2003, 77-80).

In contrast to the goals and vision for earlier incarnations of the civic center area - co-locating of government services for efficiency, increasing the convenience of citizens' transactions with government, and the protection of cultural and civic monuments, amongst others - the Civic Park era of planning adopts a model largely based on increasing the real estate potential of the area through catalytic projects, and a reactive form of urban design.[58] While there is an emphasis on improving the

[58] See Loukaitou-Sideris and Banerjee (1998) for a broader discussion of the market-led development of downtown and its implications for public space and urban design.

pedestrian environment of the area (in stark contrast to earlier plans) and creating more 'vitality', this is largely a plan premised on increasing development, income potential and other economic benefits.

The emphasis on potential economic benefits has larger implications in terms of understanding the public orientation of urban design practices. Situated in the context of neoliberal strategies, the park can be seen as operating less in the model of a public urban design project and more as a development project with financial goals. While initial plans had proposed a separate competition for the design and development of the park space, by the time of the Request for Qualification this had been rolled together with proposals for the development parcels (Grand Avenue Committee 2003). Although an argument can be made for the integration of these two processes - namely, in allowing for a more integrated plan for the area - the bulk of the visioning for this important civic space was passed on to bidding development teams. The degree to which the vision for the Civic Park was to come from the development community is made clear in the requests for qualifications and proposals. While a vague framework for the space is laid out,[59] the bulk of the plan was to come from the developers:

> In a narrative form of no more than two pages, describe the developer's vision for Grand Avenue and the Civic Park. Explain how the development will contribute to the creation of a street that captures the essence of Los Angeles. (Los Angeles Grand Avenue Committee 2003, 8)

Similarly, in the RFP, developer teams were asked to address "the perceived use/role of the Civic Park in the context of the development program proposed" as part of their program description as well as address questions related to the management and development of the park, such as in these questions that were intended to guide the financial concepts proposed by the teams:

[59] The RFQ states that: "the park would be a welcoming gathering place in the spirit of a town plaza, village green or oasis for workers, residents, visitors and tourists" (Los Angeles Grand Avenue Committee 2003, 7).

> What do you anticipate will be the Developer's responsibilities with respect to development of the Civic Park? How integral is its development to the success of the four Development Parcels? Where within the timeline for development do you see the park's implementation? (Los Angeles Grand Avenue Committee 2004, 8-10)

The design guidelines issued in advance of the development competition offered little further guidance for the design of the space, other than vague descriptions of a 'park for all' and increasing use of the area. As the guidelines stated:

> The approach of these guidelines is to promote careful design and management of the full length of the park so that it is constantly secure, beautiful, active and appealing to a broad range of users. (Grand Avenue Committee 2003, 34)

Rather than a publicly driven strategy setting out the terms for the design and management of the central civic space, the development of Grand Park demonstrates a process that is largely shaped and directed by the private sector, through competing development firms and the work of their consultants.

While the creation of the Civic Park as an important public space for all residents of the City and County is discussed throughout the Grand Avenue Authority's document, this can be seen as undermined by several factors. Firstly, although the Authority created a vague framework for the creation of the Civic Park, the vision and many aspects of its implementation were left to the competing development firms. Secondly, tied to the private sector shepherding of the process is the acknowledgment that the development of the park is intimately tied to the success of the associated development, with it functioning as a key element in establishing the area as suitable for residential development. Understanding the significant changes in the vision for the area over time – from a primarily single-use government center to a mixed-use, residential-intensive community – should be placed in the context of increasingly competitive and entrepreneurial cities.

Commercializing Public Space: Yonge-Dundas Square

Analysis of the history of plans addressing the Yonge-Dundas case study shows views of the area evolving from a vibrant, commercial district to an area in need of significant intervention. For the most part, the earliest plans for downtown Toronto do not offer specific strategies for the area around Yonge and Dundas Streets, although they are prescient of the type of redevelopment that would eventually take place with the Yonge-Dundas Square project, as well as the major changes in retailing that would lead to its identification as an area in decline. For a brief period in the 1970s there was an interest in strengthening and protecting the street-related retail of the area, prior to the adoption of the private sector initiated plan. In contrast to previous understandings of the importance of civic space, this vision was premised on the value of the public square for supporting private investment and stimulating economic development, and supported a commercialized approach to the square.

Early Visions for the Area

Early plans identify the need for a civic square for downtown, both to add interest and beauty to the central business district (Toronto City Planning Board 1949). The improvement of the "civic appearance" was a motivating force for the creation of new public spaces in the city, with the plan recommending that significant attention be paid to the quality of the public realm:

> Seldom, if ever, has public money been spent in Toronto on beautification alone… Nevertheless, cities all the world over are known for their beauty as well as for their other virtues and the City Planning Board believes that no city plan can be considered complete unless consideration be given to this important matter. (Toronto City Planning Board 1949, 24)

In addition to proposed public spaces on the waterfront and the eastern part of the central core, the plan recommends that the primary new plaza be located adjacent to City Hall because of the civic nature that this location would convey. As the plan describes the proposed Civic Square:

> … [recommends] the creation of a Civic Square of about 10 acres in extent reaching along Queen Street from City Hall to Osgoode Hall[60] to create a proper centre for the official life of the City and serve as a suitable place for joyful celebration or solemn commemoration… (Toronto City Planning Board 1949, 24)

With this site adjacent to City Hall identified as the main location for the proposed Civic Square, the space was intended to have a clearly public function. In contrast, the Yonge and Dundas area is designated as partially commercial and partially industrial (Toronto City Planning Board 1949, Land Use map), reflecting the existing mix of uses.[61]

With the construction of the new City Hall (begun in 1961 and completed in 1965), this was identified as the principal civic space for the downtown core. With a substantial open public space, the new City Hall was intended to be the central focus for the civic life of the city:

> The new City Hall and Square, integrated with the surrounding group of buildings, old and new, will give downtown a fine monumental centre, the first conscious composition of a group of handsome buildings and the spaces essential to them. (City of Toronto Planning Board 1963, 10)

In these early plans, the civic and commercial life of the city is clearly delineated. Space for civic functions are centered around public buildings, whether the old or new city halls, while Yonge Street is maintained as a commercial and shopping area, though with a mix of industrial uses.

While the neighborhood to the east of the area was targeted for urban renewal (Advisory Committee of the Urban Renewal Study 1956; Metropolitan Toronto Planning Board 1959), the Yonge Street corridor around Dundas Street maintained its designation as a commercial zone in the downtown core

[60] At the time, as well as currently, Osgoode Hall houses the Provincial and Superior Courts.
[61] Later plans also identify a substantial industrial and warehousing district on Dundas, to the east of Yonge (City of Toronto Planning Board 1963, 16).

with few explicit strategies aimed at changing its structure or form (City of Toronto Planning Board 1966). However, there were broad strategies in the 1966 plan aimed at shifting retail and commercial outside of the downtown core. In contrast to the important regional commercial centers identified to the north and south of the project area,[62] the 'strip' type commercial development typified by the Yonge-Dundas case is seen as less favorable than concentrated shopping plazas. Cognizant of the increasing importance of the private automobile for shopping, as well as the move towards the dispersal of retail centers, the plan proposes a strategic reduction of traditional shopping strips in favor of planned shopping plazas:

> [There] is the need to reduce progressively, in accordance with detailed studies, the strips that no longer have an adequate market to serve, and to help the merchants relocate in the growing centers. (City of Toronto Planning Board 1966, 32)

This strategy towards concentrating retail uses in suburban centers rather than street corridors is not explicitly applied to the Yonge Street area but rather advanced as a more general strategy. There is also the concern of potential "commercial blight" with the plan advocating tactics similar to urban renewal programs for dealing with underutilized commercial space once businesses relocate to concentrated centers:

> Urban renewal measures are the best means of dealing with this problem since public funds from all levels of government will then be available to help in moving businesses and in changing street and lot layouts as may be necessary. (City of Toronto Planning Board 1966, 33)

[62] These centers are at Yonge and Queen Streets, and Bloor and Yorkville (City of Toronto Planning Board 1966, 16). The importance of the retail center at Yonge and Queen Streets is identified in earlier plans as well (City of Toronto Planning Board 1963; Toronto City Planning Board 1949).

This tactic of encouraging commercial concentration away from traditional strip development along streets, can be viewed as ultimately successful and a partial contributor to the decline in the area.[63] While later plans reversed this policy calling for maintaining street-related retailing in strip form, the success of decentralization can be seen throughout the metropolitan area (City of Toronto Planning Board 1975a). Although the plan does not specify strips likely to decline based on the District Centres plan, the areas identified for concentration of services do not include the Yonge-Dundas area, favoring more suburban locations sited at the intersection of subway stations and arterial roads (Figure 26) (City of Toronto Planning Board 1966, 31).

In terms of public and civic spaces, the 1966 plan addresses what it refers to as a "serious shortage of parks", mapping areas that have a deficiency of parkland (City of Toronto Planning Board 1966, 26).[64] While the report identifies deficiencies in the northern and western parts of the city, the downtown area is not targeted for increased open space. Given the significant civic space developed just south of Yonge-Dundas with the new City Hall plaza, as well as the proposals for the creation of significant open space along the waterfront, this lack of priority is not surprising.

Valuing Strip Retail

In contrast to plans from the 1950s and 1960s, a series of documents from 1975 work to re-establish street-related retailing in the Yonge Street strip, and emphasize the importance of downtown retailing. The nature in which the area is portrayed is significantly different as well. Rather than the "commercial blight" that earlier plans envision, documents from this era discuss the vitality of the area:

[63] Several interview subjects pointed to retail dispersal as a contributing factor in the decline of the area, aided by the inward-focused Eater Center development in the 1970s.
[64] There is no specific reference to non-park open spaces.

> The Yonge Street strip is a focal point for both varied retail activity in the daytime and the centre of Toronto's nightlife in the evening. The stores are vital, noisy and flamboyant, The sidewalks are crowded with people by day and night, who attracted by the mix of taverns, record shops, clothing stores, body-rub parlours and pinball arcades. (City of Toronto Planning Board 1975b, 49)

Of course, while massage parlors and pinball arcades were the types of uses that were used to justify redevelopment in the late 1990s, this plan refers to the character of the area as "vibrant" and "unique" (City of Toronto Planning Board 1975b, 49). As such, the 1975 plan recommends supporting street level retailing:

> In view of these unique characteristics, it is important to develop policies to protect the distinct identity of this area in the future, given the anticipation of sweeping changes in the future which are likely to occur around it, and the development pressure these changes are likely to induce on the Yonge Street strip.[65] (City of Toronto Planning Board 1975b, 49)

The plan also supports the strength of retailing in the area with an analysis of the existing at-grade retail, finding few vacant stores (Figure 27) (City of Toronto Planning Board 1975b, 53). Despite the significant changes to the area that were already taking place, the 1975 plan proposes policies that encourage additional street-related retail with the goals of creating a lively pedestrian environment (City of Toronto Planning Board 1975b, 52).

Further changes to the official plan in 1993 maintain the low-density mixed-use designation. The official plan referred to as Cityplan (City of Toronto 1993) continues to identify the importance of the area, listing it as a Prominent Area and a Priority Retail Street. While earlier plans had argued for decentralization of commercial and retail services to sub-centers, the 1991 plan establishes policies to

[65] The sweeping changes are in reference to the Eaton Centre, a major shopping center already under construction at the time, which had involved the demolition of buildings on the west side of Yonge Street.

retain these uses in the downtown core.[66] For example, the plan outlines objectives related to commercial area improvement:

> It is the policy of Council to encourage improvements in the general appearance and level of maintenance, the provision of public amenities, the efficient functioning and the economic viability of Mixed-Commercial-Residential Area [and] Regional Commerce Centres. (City of Toronto 1993, 15.7)

In selecting areas for commercial revitalization, the plan states that priority should occur for retail strips where there is a need for improved appearance or increased public amenities, though the possible measures for achieving improvement in commercial areas are listed as supporting business associations, assisting individual businesses, and providing capital improvements such as enlarged sidewalks, decorative paving, street trees and furniture, and special lighting (City of Toronto 1993, 15.9; 15.10).

Civic Space for Commercial Development

With the proposal for the Yonge-Dundas redevelopment project, the goals and strategies for the area change significantly. Premised on the need to attract new retail and entertainment uses, the project includes both a significant private-sector component, on the north-east corner of the intersection, and the development of Yonge-Dundas Square, a public plaza on the south-east corner. The goals of the project not only focused on improvements to the area and the creation of a new public space but also goals that can be considered explicitly entrepreneurial. Listed among the objectives for the program include the desire to increase private-sector development, with one of the goals being to "attract new up-to-date retail and entertainment space, including a large mega-plex cinema" (City of Toronto 2001,

[66] The concerns were largely raised by the Eaton Company who were concerned about downtown, where they had a major retail location, losing its share of the consumer market share to more outlying locations (Ontario Municipal Board 1998, 14).

4). In this context of attracting commercial development, the square is established as an "essential element" of this vision of increased economic activity (City of Toronto 2001, 4). While early justification for the square itself included the importance of creating a new civic space and public amenity, in addition to attracting private-sector development, this vision changed significantly over time, with an increasing orientation towards commercial uses.

With the project requiring the expropriation of land for the creation of the square and associated private commercial development, in addition to changes to the Official Plan and zoning regulations, significant opposition emerged from landowners facing expropriation. As a result, the case went to arbitration at the Ontario Municipal Board (OMB), which ultimately approved the plan (Ontario Municipal Board 1998).[67] The decision by the OMB, including the evidence supplied by the City and their consultants in support of the plan, provide another lens for examining the motivation and goals of the project.

In contrast to earlier plans, the documents used to support the Yonge-Dundas Square development firmly establish economic development as one of the end goals for the project:

> The City seeks to change [the area's] image into a retail shopping and movie-going centre, restore its vibrancy and vitality, and use the activity at the intersection as the catalyst to promote, spark and further economic activity and redevelopment in the Yonge/Dundas area. (Ontario Municipal Board 1998, 4)

The idea of using a commercial development as a catalyst for increasing further economic development was not a strategy found in earlier planning and design efforts, which focused on

[67] The Ontario Municipal Board is a body unique to the province of Ontario that allows for the contestation of municipal planning decisions, or failure to make a decision, by any member of the public. The Board is comprised of provincially appointed members and their decisions are binding.

directing growth to certain locations rather than the expropriation and financial tools such as the ones used in the Yonge-Dundas project. In a staff report advocating for an independent operational structure separate from the manner in which previous City-owned spaces were managed, the development goals of the project are clearly highlighted:

> Yonge-Dundas Square is intended to function as a unique focal point in the Yonge-Dundas area. It promotes economic development activities and contributes to the cultural vitality of the area. (City of Toronto 2001, 5)

Although there is mention of the square contributing to the livelihood of the area, there is a dominant focus on the economic development potential of the project. The creation of new public amenities is tied to the economic success not only of the immediate area:

> The regeneration of Yonge Street as a main shopping street with new retail and entertainment premises and the improvement of the environment of the street with improved public amenities is a key to maintaining the economic and social wellbeing of the downtown and the region. (Ontario Municipal Board 1998, 25)

This focus on economic development is emphasized throughout the project documentation, both in support of its creation and in assessing its operation and management. While this is an approach that can be seen as justifying the expense and city involvement in a largely private sector undertaking, the role of the public square itself is also seen as a tool for increasing economic development.

Although the private development aspect of the project, with its retail and entertainment complex, is a key part of the economic development strategy, the new civic space is also constructed as integral to the success of the entire project. The testimony of the lead consultant for the project, which the Board noted as solid evidence for approving the development, demonstrate how the creation of a new public space was argued as crucial for the economic success of the project:

> In an urban context, it was [the] opinion that there are three key factors leading to a successful UEC [urban entertainment complex]. The first is the need of a major Cineplex or

> grouping of cinemas to act as an anchor… The second is the choice of good quality theme restaurants that act as entertainment in themselves, labeled "eatertainment" in the new industry jargon… The third is the creation of a unique "sense of place" through public space and memorable architecture. The "place" must be pedestrian friendly but active. The public square must act as a draw and *not break the rhythm of the retail environment*. (Ontario Municipal Board 1998, 31, emphasis added)

The type of "memorable architecture" and civic space needed to support the associated retail and entertainment complex is depicted through artist renderings of the proposed space (Figure 28). Through these depictions and the positioning of the square as a crucial element for the success of the commercial development, the nature of the space as a civic space becomes questionable, especially given the requirement that the square does "not break the rhythm of the retail environment".

While economic development goals are positioned as important for the development of the square, part of the evidence supplied to the OMB still maintains that the square would function as a civic space in the same manner as other city-owned and managed plazas:

> The square would become a major centre of activity as is the case with Nathan Phillips Square and Mel Lastman Square.[68]… The evidence of Jennifer Sprout, program director for Nathan Phillips Square, indicates that the City intends to control it through regulating the activities of the square and to program and promote activities in the square. (Ontario Municipal Board 1998, 7)

The documents related to the Yonge-Dundas redevelopment project reveal two contrary depictions of the square: In one sense, it is portrayed as an important civic space, maintained and controlled by the City, while in the other, it is seen as an attractor to support the associated commercial development and should "not break the rhythm of the retail environment". The ways in which these two

[68] These are the two plazas associated with Toronto City and the former North York City Hall, now the north district municipal offices.

conceptualizations are managed are made more clear once the project is approved and in the implementation stages.

Despite earlier documents that establish Yonge-Dundas Square as a civic plaza in the same model as other city-owned properties, the nature of the space changes significantly once it is approved and under construction. In discussing the possible governance and operation models for Yonge-Dundas Square, its nature as a commercial rather than purely civic space is emphasized. In one staff report assessing operational models for the square, and advocating for the establishment of a Board of Management model, this is made clear:

> Unlike public squares attached to City-owned buildings where programming is geared toward community events, the Yonge-Dundas Square was intended to be used largely for commercial events for which a fee would be charged. Once fully operational, it is expected that the operation of Yonge-Dundas Square will be self-financing. (City of Toronto 2001, 1)

In direct contradiction to earlier justifications for the use of public funds, notably in the evidence provided at the OMB hearing, in this report the square is argued to be different from other civic spaces in its management, financing and programming. The report provides estimates of the potential revenue from the square, stating that they are a "conservative estimate that does not take into account the potential for sponsorship revenue" (City of Toronto 2001, 2). The focus on the commercial orientation of the square is also seen as justification for a different management structure:

> The proposed commercial use of the Square and the active community planning component distinguishes Yonge-Dundas Square from other civic squares. (City of Toronto 2001, 5)[69]

Similarly, in justifying a management board model, rather than direct city management, the focus on the commercial nature of the space is emphasized:

[69] It is unclear what "community planning" refers to in this case, but it may reference the intensive involvement of the area business and residents' association (YSBRA), largely comprised of local retailers rather than residents.

> A Board of Management model will help to maintain focus on attracting commercial events. This focus supports the primary objectives of the Square which are economic development and financial sustainability. (City of Toronto 2001, 6)

Despite substantial City investment in the creation of the space, and the use of municipal powers for expropriation of private land, operation directly by the City is dismissed as potentially detrimental to the functioning, and revenue-generating potential, of the square:

> If operated like other civic squares, the commercial interest may be diminished. Such a strategy could result in a substantial cost to the City over the long term. (City of Toronto 2001, 6)

The discussion of the operational models for the square demonstrates the tension between the creation of the plaza through public financing and efforts – seen through references to the space as a civic square – and its role in generating development and revenue (City of Toronto 2001). In discussing the importance of the space for encouraging private-sector development, its origins as a private-sector initiated project (largely through the efforts of the YSBRA) are also noted. However, despite City involvement in the creation of the square, both from a financial and planning perspective, documents reiterate the need to have Yonge-Dundas Square operate in a way distinct from other civic spaces.

The emphasis on the commercialization of the civic space and focus on entrepreneurial goals is furthered by proposals for a signage strategy instigated after the completion of the square (Downtown Yonge Business Improvement Area 2009). In a process managed by the Downtown Yonge Business Improvement Area (DYBIA) at the request of the City of Toronto, the document outlines strategies for managing large format signage.[70] The tension between increased economic development and the

[70] The document was produced by consultants in consultation with the local area councilor, members of the business improvement association and relevant City departments (Downtown Yonge Business Improvement Area 2009, 1).

creation of a new civic space are also noted in the signage strategy. In some instances, the notion of a great civic space is emphasized, as in the vision for the area:

> A signage vision should ensure that the Downtown 'Yonge Strip' will continue to be one of the City's most important, vibrant and recognizable commercial streets while evolving into one the City's greatest civic achievements. (Downtown Yonge Business Improvement Area 2009, 13).

Despite this characterization of the area as a "civic achievement" the focus on commercialization of outdoor and public spaces through an aggressive signage policy can be seen as undermining these efforts.

The focus on third-party signage (not associated with current tenants of buildings) is used as an explicit strategy for creating a distinct urban environment. While in places the role of signage is limited and argued to be for creating an urban street-wall, it is still portrayed as an integral part of the district, with advertisements seen as a way to create character:

> This immersion in all signage… creates the colourful, animated and illuminated environment that defines this precinct. If this is to be the desired 'civic' outcome and distinction of the area, then clearly Third-party signage alongside First-party signage is an essential means of enabling this vision. (Downtown Yonge Business Improvement Area 2009, 16)

Additionally, signage is seen as a part of the urban design strategy for the area:

> The strategy recognizes the opportunity for signage to become an integral built form component and contribute to urban design objectives for the precinct. (Downtown Yonge Business Improvement Area 2009, 23)

While the signage strategy is intended to reinforce urban design principles, such as framing public spaces and creating a unified street wall (Figure 29), the reliance on advertising signage contributes to the creation of a commercialized rather than civic space.

Examining the treatment of the Yonge-Dundas area in the plans and design guidelines developed since the late 1950s, demonstrates significant changes in visions for the area. Early plans addressed the area from a city-wide perspective, encouraging retail and commercial dispersal to other identified district centers. While important commercial centers are identified in other areas of downtown, the Yonge-Dundas area is portrayed as relatively stable, with even later plans describing it as vibrant and lively. In contrast, redevelopment proposals for the area argue that the improvement of public amenities is important for not only the future success of the area but for the larger downtown and regional context as well. The notion of decline and commercial blight (despite relatively low levels of vacancy and few substantial physical concerns) was used to create the need for immediate redevelopment in the area.[71] While this created justification for the project, the role of the public square emerges in two different – and perhaps conflicting – ways. In one conceptualization of the square, it is depicted as instrumental for the commercial success of the private development and a key element in creating the "sense of place" that would make it commercially viable. In the second conceptualization, it is depicted as an important new civic space, justifying the public involvement, in terms of both funding and support, in its creation.

Changing Views of Industrial Lands: Downsview Park

Interest in the Downsview area can be seen in the 1950s as the post-war boom was rapidly changing residential patterns throughout the Greater Toronto area. With the formation of the Metropolitan Toronto government – a higher order authority with representatives from Toronto and the

[71] Interestingly, in considering two other proposals put forth, the OMB members emphasized the urgency of redeveloping the intersection immediately: "It was also the evidence of Iain Dobson, a real estate broker, who did not express a preference for either the City's proposal or the alternative proposals, that what was essential was that the corner develop <u>now</u>" (Ontario Municipal Board 1998, 29, original emphasis).

surrounding boroughs – region-wide planning began in earnest. These plans represent a focus on the area as an important industrial zone, with controls established to protect and maintain these uses. Despite its previous incarnation as a military base with significant employment and industrial uses, some of which are still operating in the case of de Havilland Aircraft, current planning visions for the area note that it is "the last major 'greenfield' site left to be developed in the City of Toronto" (City of Toronto 1998a). This section outlines the shift from protecting industrial and employment lands to the creation of parkland and residential development that is documented in the planning and design visions from the post-war period to today.

Balancing the Jobs-People Balance in the Suburban Fringe

Although the Downsview area was on the fringes of intense urban development until more recent times, the regional scope of the Metropolitan Toronto Planning Board meant that it was incorporated in planning and visioning efforts as early as the 1950s.[72] The 20-year plan produced in 1959 provided a vision of growth and development in the region for 1980, focusing on protecting employment lands while directing residential growth primarily outside of the inner city.

The 1959 plan puts a strong emphasis on industrial and employment lands, establishing convenient access to workplaces as one of the primary principles of the plan:

> In order to minimize the time, cost, and inconvenience of the journey to work, a substantial amount of industrial and other employment should be available in locations easily accessible to residents of every section of the area… Land for industry should be reserved in various parts of the area in excess of the anticipated total land requirements of industry

[72] The Metropolitan Toronto Planning Board, was established by the new powers afforded by the creation of the Municipality of Metropolitan Toronto, a regional government created in 1954, was widely considered a pioneer in regional planning.

> so as to provide industrial establishments with an ample choice of sites of varying sizes and other characteristics at reasonable prices. (Metropolitan Toronto Planning Board 1959, S3)

The industrial strategy for the region largely concentrates future industrial growth around current industrial areas, though there are some exceptions in the far east and western fringes of the region (Metropolitan Toronto Planning Board 1959, Plate 29). The Downsview area is identified as an area for future industrial and employment growth, and is specifically designated as an industrial zone. The 1959 plan designates the majority of land north and south of the airport as industrial (the airport itself, still operational at the time, was designated as Transportation and Utilities), with residential uses largely to the east (Metropolitan Toronto Planning Board 1959, Plate 32).[73] The area is both identified as an area of current industrial uses and allocated for future industrial growth (see Table 7).

Zone		**1956**	**1980**
North Downsview	Acres	89	1249
	Employment	100	3,500
North Dufferin	Acres	649	1,089
	Employment	13,000	21,000

Table 7: Existing and Designated Industrial Land, Downsview Area[74]
(Source: Metropolitan Toronto Planning Board 1959, Plate 29)

In addition to this industrial zoning, the larger district was also expected to absorb the majority of employment and industrial growth for the region, moving from a employment density of 450 jobs per square mile in 1956 to 2,290 in 1980 and creating more balanced ratio of employment to population (Figure 30) (Metropolitan Toronto Planning Board 1959, 50). The area to the east of the Downsview site had also seen a major residential boom around the time of this plan, with the majority of its

[73] Part of the Downsview area is also identified as a "special area" site where conditions require special attention due to its designation as industrial or commercial lands but with the presence of existing residential uses (Metropolitan Toronto Planning Board 1959, Plate 34).
[74] Calculations do not include the employment or acreage of the de Havilland airport. The North Dufferin zone also includes a substantial area south of Wilson Avenue, which is not in current Downsview planning efforts.

development occurring between 1950 – 1958 (Municipality of Metropolitan Toronto 1976, 109). Acknowledging that high residential growth in many suburban areas had led to the development of "bedroom" communities, the plan sought to increase employment uses in these areas and balance the jobs-population balance:

> The fringe areas are expected to show substantially increased ratios of employment to population; they will no longer be just "dormitory" areas (Metropolitan Toronto Planning Board 1959, 56).

The strategy for Downsview and its surrounding residential neighborhoods reflect this, with the protection of existing industrial uses as well as the designation of new areas for employment growth in the vicinity.

Along with the emphasis on industrial and employment uses, the majority of substantial residential growth in the plan is directed toward the suburban areas of the region, including North York (Metropolitan Toronto Planning Board 1959, S7). For example, while North York, included as part of the North Suburban District, had 8% of the region's population in 1958, it was projected to have 16% in 1980, the largest increase in the metropolitan region. In comparison, the other suburban districts have projected residential increases of 1 – 4% while the downtown core and inner ring have decreases in their share of residential population (Metropolitan Toronto Planning Board 1959, 31). Examining the area from a regional perspective, the 1959 plan highlights the Downsview area as both a location for increased residential growth, a pattern of which had already been established, but also for the protection of industrial and other employment uses.

Later plans such as the 1966 Metropolitan Plan maintain the area for primarily industrial and transportation uses,[75] with the maintenance of the residential zone to the east of the airport as in previous plans (Municipality of Metropolitan Toronto 1966, Map II). While the protection of industrial and employment uses is not emphasized as strongly as in the 1959 plan, it remains part of the regional strategy.

Area of Special Status

By the time of the 1976 plan for the metro area, known as the *Concept and Objectives* plan, there was acknowledgement of the potential for the Downsview site to be re-developed on a larger scale (Municipality of Metropolitan Toronto 1976). Though there were no immediate plans for the Canadian Armed Forces to withdraw from the area, and de Havilland still maintained an active factory on the site, this later plan identifies the need for special planning for the area.[76] With the land still active with military and airport uses, the plan does not propose specific goals for the area but rather identifies its potential for future long-term development, while stressing that other areas should be intensified first (Municipality of Metropolitan Toronto 1976, 92). The development of the area was also positioned as being dependent on the success of other suburban sub-centers in attracting the "central area type functions" as proposed in the plan.

While the plan does not contain concrete proposals for the area, there is the recommendation that it should be designated as an "area of special study" in acknowledgment of its "potential for innovative

[75] The designations of industrial and transportation are fairly inclusive in the 1966 plan. For example, industrial zones may include commercial and incidental residential uses, while transportation zones may include industrial and commercial uses (Municipality of Metropolitan Toronto 1966, 8).

[76] Following the end of World War II, in 1950, CFB Downsview was identified as a peacetime reserve but still active on the site.

design and excellence" and the need to guard that potential (Municipality of Metropolitan Toronto 1976, 92). Although specifics are avoided, it is stated that the special area designation should involve further study:

> … to determine Downsview Airport's development potential as a major urban land bank for a combination of central area functions, housing, light industry and open space. (Municipality of Metropolitan Toronto 1976, 93)

In contrast to previous plans which emphasized the importance of maintaining employment and industrial uses in the area, the 1976 plan broaches the possibility of re-locating the industrial uses present:

> In view of the fact that there are many difficulties surrounding the availability and development of the Downsview site (e.g. inter-governmental negotiations, the relocation of de Havilland Aircraft) discussion as to its future uses should begin soon. (Municipality of Metropolitan Toronto 1976, 92)

While the rest of the plan stresses the importance of maintaining industrial land both from re-designation and encroaching non-industrial uses on a metropolitan-wide basis, the Downsview lands are identified as a specific site for future, "central area type" development. Although this potential conflict is only hinted at, presumably because the site still had functioning uses, this represents a substantial change from earlier visions for the area.

Designing for Parks: Plans after the Closure of CFB Downsview

With the planned closure of the Canadian Forces Base at Downsview in 1994,[77] there was a need to readdress the planning and design visions for the area. Despite significant bureaucratic hurdles involved in the transfer of the land, efforts began in the early 1990s to update the secondary plan for

[77] The base was formally closed in 1996, but the plans for the national urban park were made by the federal government in 1994.

the area to account for the proposed national park and associated development, as well as later on, significant transportation improvements.

Early proposals for the area were focused on the proposed Technodome (also referred to as Destination: Technodome), a 240,000 square meter indoor recreational sport and entertainment complex backed by the Reichmann family of developers, which was eventually cancelled.[78] The secondary plan from this era reflects this proposed project, designating part of a 30-hectare parcel on the south-west corner of Sheppard Avenue and Allen Road for Sports and Entertainment Use.[79] Reports by the planning department found the proposal consistent with both the Official Plan designations for the area (as a potential reurbanization site) and the Downsview Area Secondary Plan, because of its proximity to high-volume roads as well as the existing subway system (City of Toronto 1998b).

Many of the changes to the secondary plan reflect a growing desire to increase public transit use in the area. Early versions of the secondary plan argued that the area was the ideal location for a major entertainment complex due to its proximity to high-capacity roads and availability of parking. In contrast, revisions stress multi-modal transportation options for the area, and argue that it should influence the type of development that occurs there. The goals are explicit in this respect:

[78] The proposed complex would have included an indoor ski hill, a white-water kayaking facility, a multiplex cinema, multiple arenas and other entertainment uses.

[79] Earlier versions of the secondary plan refer to the new designation for the Technodome area as Sport, Entertainment & Recreation use. Following concerns raised by community representatives, the designation was changed to Sport & Entertainment use to reflect the nature of the proposal as commercial recreation rather than public recreational uses (City of Toronto 1998c).

> Provide for a balanced mix of urban land uses at an overall level of development consistent with the capacity of the regional transportation system, including a number of feasible and desirable transportation improvements and facilities… (City of Toronto 2006)

The evolution of the secondary plan for the area demonstrates a shifting understanding of the role of transportation in directing new development and structuring an increased intensity of uses. While at early stages the extension of the subway line from the existing Downsview station was not confirmed, there was still an interest in directing growth around transportation infrastructure, though not to the same extent that later plans demonstrate.

Overall, the planning and design plans for the area that emerged between the closing of CFB Downsview and prior to the creation of PDP represent a fractured vision largely driven by the possibility of an ultimately unsuccessful megaproject. While these plans acknowledge the potential of future connectivity and mobility for the area, they offer little change over the existing low-density development that existed. In contrast, the next series of plans take significant strides to re-envision the area as a mix of urban land uses shaped by the development of substantial park space.

In light of the evolving developments around the national park and proposed transit improvements in the area,[80] council directed a second review of the Downsview Area Secondary Plan beginning in 2008. Given the significant changes to the area in the intervening years since the passing of the secondary plan amendment in 1998, not only in terms of the proposed subway extension, but the cancellation of the Technodome project and the transference of the federal lands to the Parc Downsview Park corporation, it was deemed necessary to reevaluate the plan for the area (City of Toronto 2007). This

[80] In 2006, the Toronto-York Spadina Subway Extension (TYSSE) was approved, allowing for six new subway stations, one of which would be within the Downsview Secondary Plan area.

review was completed as a four part study undertaken by a consultant team, funded by Parc Downsview Park. The results of this process, undertaken between 2008 and 2010, resulted in an updated secondary plan (Official Plan Amendment No. 111)[81] that demonstrates a significant residential intensification of the area, focused on the development of the new national urban park.

This version of the secondary plan lays out a framework for development that is partially centered on the creation of open space as part of the national urban park, but also pays significant attention to encouraging future growth in the area. The park is a major element of both the secondary plan and its associated urban design guidelines, and functions as a structuring feature for development:

> The Urban Design Framework Plan places development projects within the context of developing a major public park at the core of the Downsview Area. (City of Toronto 2004)

In contrast to the existing low-density, low-rise development primarily in the area, this era of planning represents a substantial shift in the character of the area, acknowledged by the plan:

> This Secondary Plan provides for a transformation of the physical character and structure of the lands. The Secondary Plan promotes an urban character with a focus on providing for an increased scale of development on the 'Avenues.'[82] (City of Toronto 2010a, 29)

Whereas previous planning efforts viewed the Downsview area as part of the urban fringe, substantial growth in the city, as well recent and proposed subway extensions, led to changing views of its centrality. Transit access was viewed as a significant part of this, forming part of the guiding vision for the area. The most substantial change in the planning for the area is in its emphasis on residential development, associated with transit access:

[81] PDP challenged the revised secondary plan at the OMB and as of writing, it has yet to be adopted.
[82] 'Avenues' are designated by the Official Plan as corridors for increased growth and development. See Linovski (2012) for a partial assessment of this strategy.

> The Downsview Area Secondary Plan Area is centrally located in the City and presents a unique opportunity to develop a significant national urban park, new residential neighbourhoods and employment areas, all in a park-like setting and well-served by public transit. (City of Toronto 2010a, 28)

And similarly:

> The new subway station, along with the existing Wilson and Downsview TTC subway stations and a network of surface transit will provide an exceptional of transit service and an opportunity to develop transit-supportive urban communities. (City of Toronto 2010a, 28)[83]

Residential development is proposed throughout the plan with the highest intensity areas, designated as either apartment uses or mixed use, proposed closest to the planned transit facilities. The mixed-use areas are envisioned as having intensive development, including commercial and office uses. At times the vision for the area is depicted as intensive or urban (capitalizing on the transit infrastructure), while other aspects of the development are characterized as park-like or in a park-like setting, with the goal for the plan identified as:

> To provide for the development of a national park and a mix of urban land uses in a park-like setting at a level supported by transportation infrastructure. (City of Toronto 2010b, 7)

Much of the secondary plan is devoted to residential uses with less attention paid to employment uses, despite the area's designation as an Employment District in the Official Plan. While a large portion of the plan area is designated as an Employment Area to allow for the continued operation of the de Havilland/Bombardier site (as well TTC rail yard operations),[84] it is less clear how these uses will be maintained under increasing residential development pressure. One staff report notes that Bombardier Aerospace, the major employer in the district, had expressed interest in having their lands

[83] The plan notes if the extension is not completed, it will require a re-evaluation of the permitted uses and densities, although there is no formal process for this.

[84] Parts of the National Urban Park are also designated as Employment Area to allow for ancillary uses within the park such as museum, retail and restaurant uses.

re-designated for residential and commercial uses though this would be not supported by staff given provincial and municipal policies requiring the protection of employment lands (City of Toronto 2010b). While the secondary plan emphasizes the creation of 'complete' communities, including work opportunities, the conflict between maintaining employment lands and allowing for residential development remains unresolved.

The urban design guidelines developed for the area echo the goals of the secondary plan with more emphasis on the built form and open space implications. Approved after the international design competition for the park, though still including references to the Technodome project, the guidelines develop substantial strategies for the park space, including developing an open space network linking major and minor recreational spaces. Acknowledging the objectives of both increased development and the creation of a major park space, the design guidelines include the objective of balancing these:

> The plan provides a point of reference for the evaluation of specific development applications in the context of the interrelationships between land-uses and the overriding objective to create a park of national significance. (City of Toronto 2004, "Urban Design Framework Plan")

In terms of land uses, in addition to the residential development parcels, there is a focus on a range of uses, including a cultural campus quarter which proposes combining cultural, retail, tourism, business, manufacturing and recreational uses (Figure 31) in a way that is "compatible with the Public Park image" (City of Toronto 2004). In contrast to early plans for the area, the nature of the industrial uses and employment areas are largely left unspecified and are presumably low intensity, given their proximity to cultural, recreational and tourism uses.[85]

[85] In other sections of the plan, there is reference to "artisans/craft studios" rather than manufacturing.

The Downsview area has experienced considerable change since the post-war period not only in terms of its physical form but also in how it was envisioned in the context of the larger metropolitan region. Its major period of growth occurred when there was an increasing interest in regional planning, and as such, was considered as part of the larger region. Early plans demonstrate its potential for future employment and industrial growth, in concert with a distinct strategy of increasing the jobs-housing balance in suburban communities. While early plans designated the area as an industrial zone, with strong wording about the need to protect industrial and employments lands from encroaching uses, the closure of the federal defense base saw a rapid change in the vision for the area. As the plans and design guidelines demonstrate, the potential of the site for new residential development, associated with the creation of a new national urban park, mark a shift in the vision for the area.

Conclusion

The changing visions for the cases studied here all occurred in the context of larger urban processes. For the downtown cases – Yonge-Dundas Square, Grand Park and the Staples Center/L.A. Live – this was a period of increasing centrality of the central business district after a period of decreased importance. For the more peripheral site – Downsview Park – there were significant changes in the structure of the region with increased residential and commercial growth in the post-war period. Despite this, examination of these plans offer a window into understanding how site-specific changes relate to the broader context of urban design practices.

Several themes are shared among the case sites. While early plans explore urban design as a unifying and comprehensive strategy for city improvement, later ones are primarily focused on the ability of

the projects to stimulate growth and encourage development. This goal is certainly not absent from earlier plans but it is not emphasized to the same extent as contemporary visions for the area. Furthermore, there had been a significant amount of planning and urban design policy work devoted to the study areas in the years preceding the current projects, and those plans were remarkably consistent in their approach until the current urban design efforts. Despite differing levels of public sector capacity, Los Angeles and Toronto were observed to have similar levels of guidance in providing urban design and planning frameworks in the early periods of the sites' development. Little of that work was incorporated into the most recent plans. Rather, the plans were dictated by private-sector interests in redevelopment and renewal, creating an opportunistic and reactive approach to urban design. Strategies that had been based on study of the social, economic and built form conditions of the area were rarely incorporated in later plans when the potential for private-sector development became apparent. Surprisingly, this was observed to similar extents in both cities, despite the perception that Toronto engaged in a more unified, proactive approach to urban design.

Given these changing orientations for the case study areas over time, the role of professional practices in negotiating those visions is of increasing interest. While the role of development interests in shaping urban design projects and re-orienting their goals has been noted (Fainstein 2001; Loukaitou-Sideris and Banerjee 1998), the nature of professional practices in shaping and implementing those projects has received considerably less attention. The next chapters examine the construction of professional models of expertise and how these vary between public and private sector urban designers.

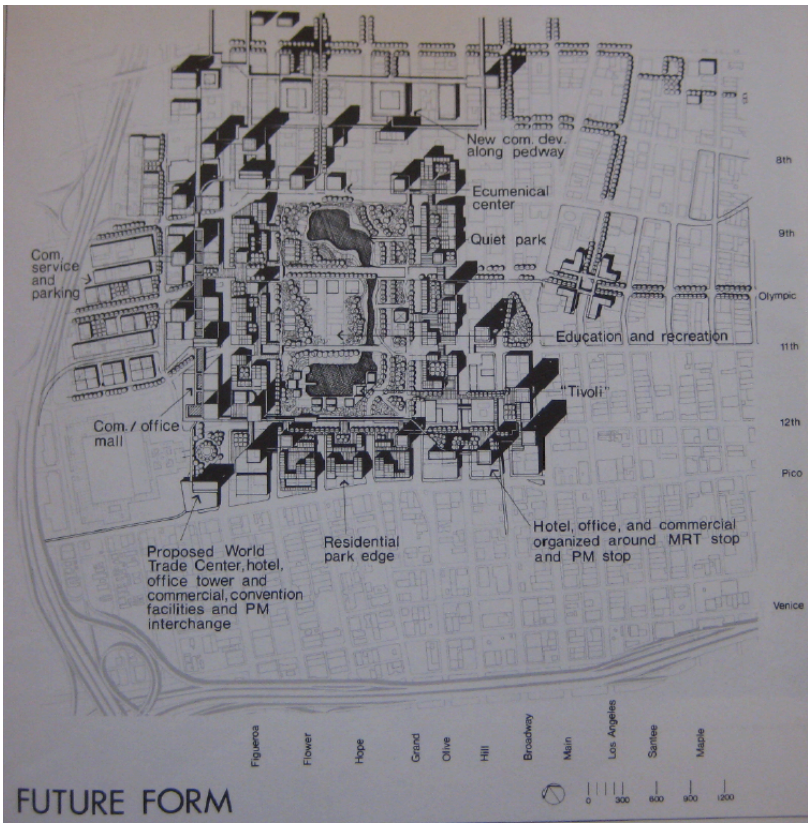
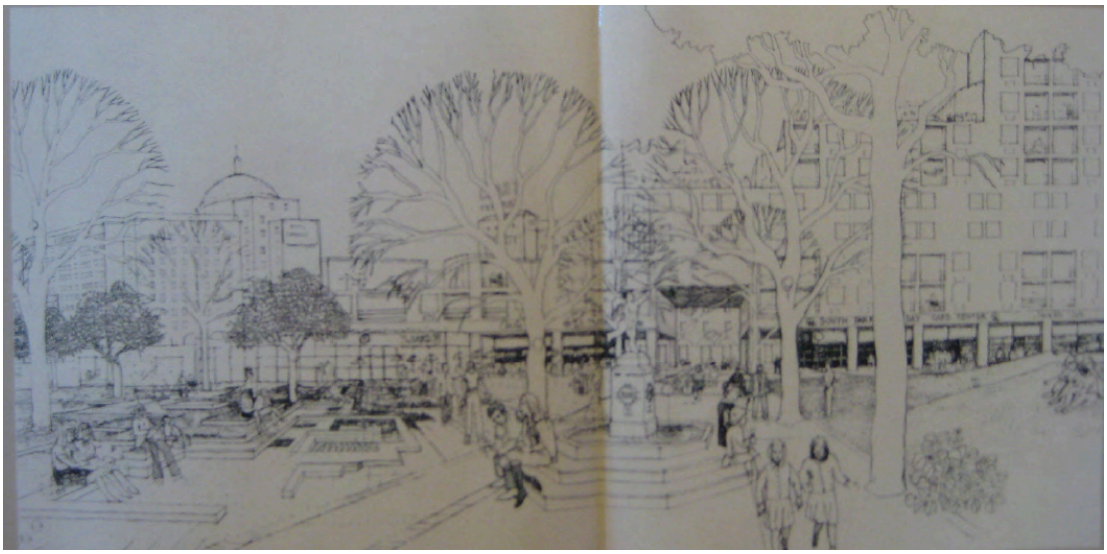


Figure 18: Future form diagram for South Park Area from 1972 General Development Plan with park as central feature (Committee for Central City Planning 1972).


Figure 19: Olympic Park, facing east from Hope Street
(Community Redevelopment Agency/City of Los Angeles 1982)

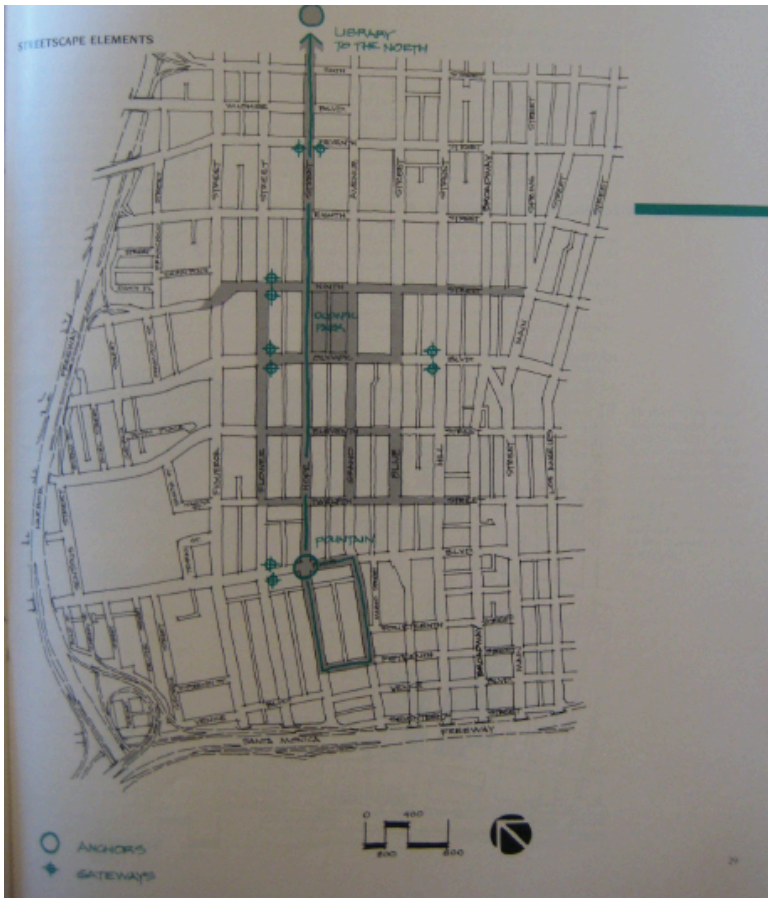


Figure 20: Streetscape elements, anchors and gateways, Urban Land Institute evaluation of South Park plan. (Urban Land Institute 1985, 29)

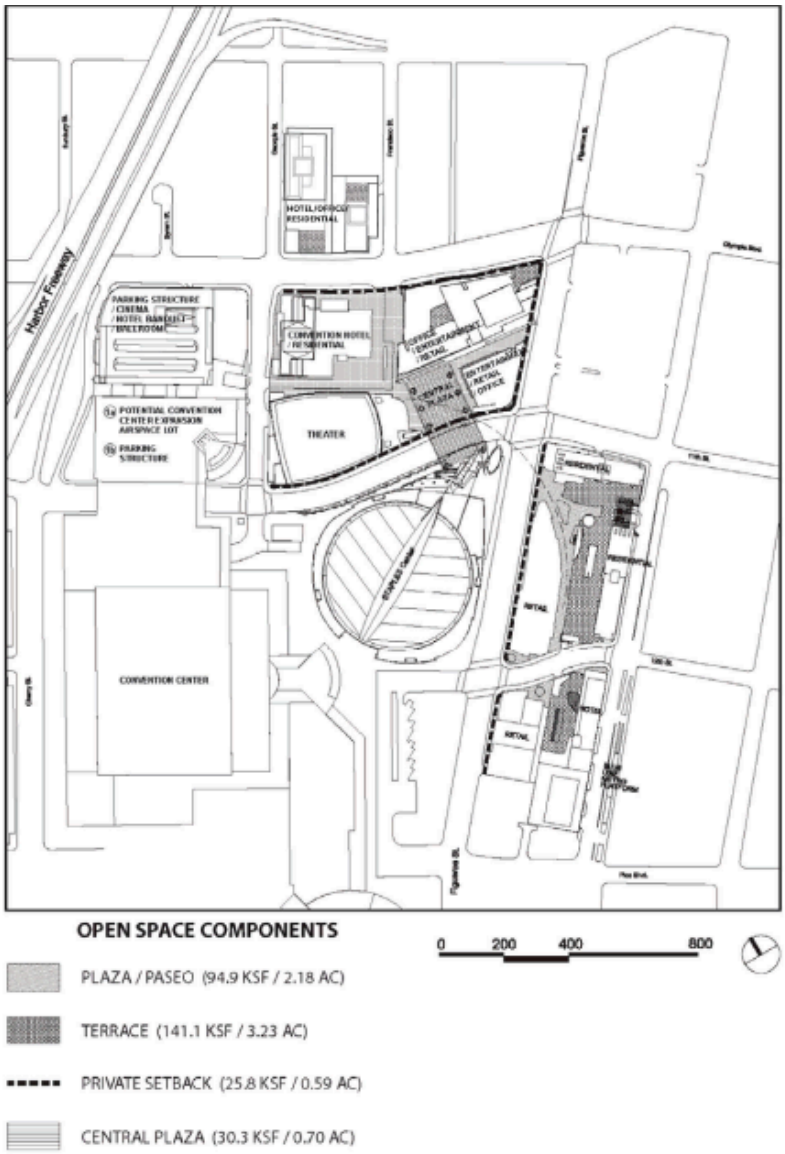


Figure 21: Open space components as outlined in the Los Angeles Sports and Entertainment District Specific Plan. Private setbacks and privately owned spaces are included as open space components. (City of Los Angeles 2001)



Figure 22: Diagram showing pedestrian linkages between LASED, South Park and Central Business District (City of Los Angeles 2001)

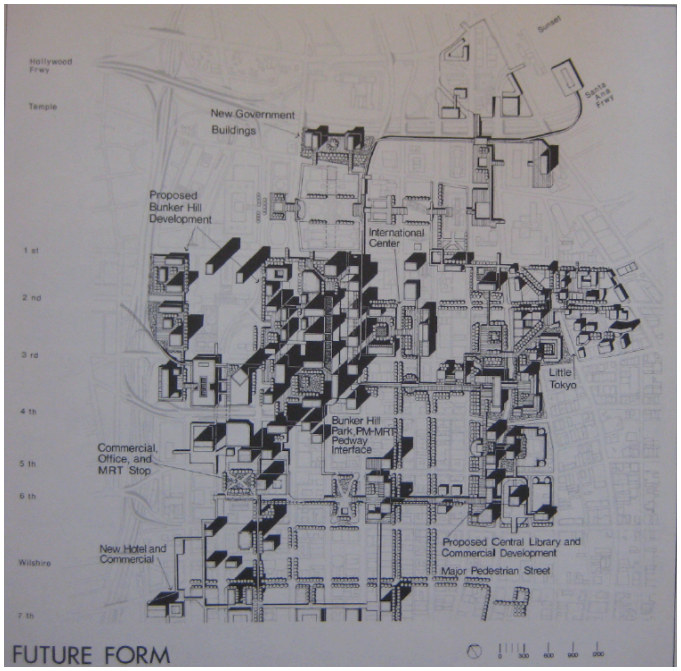


Figure 23: Future form diagram, 1972 General Development Plan showing little intervention in Civic Center area (Committee for Central City Planning 1972).

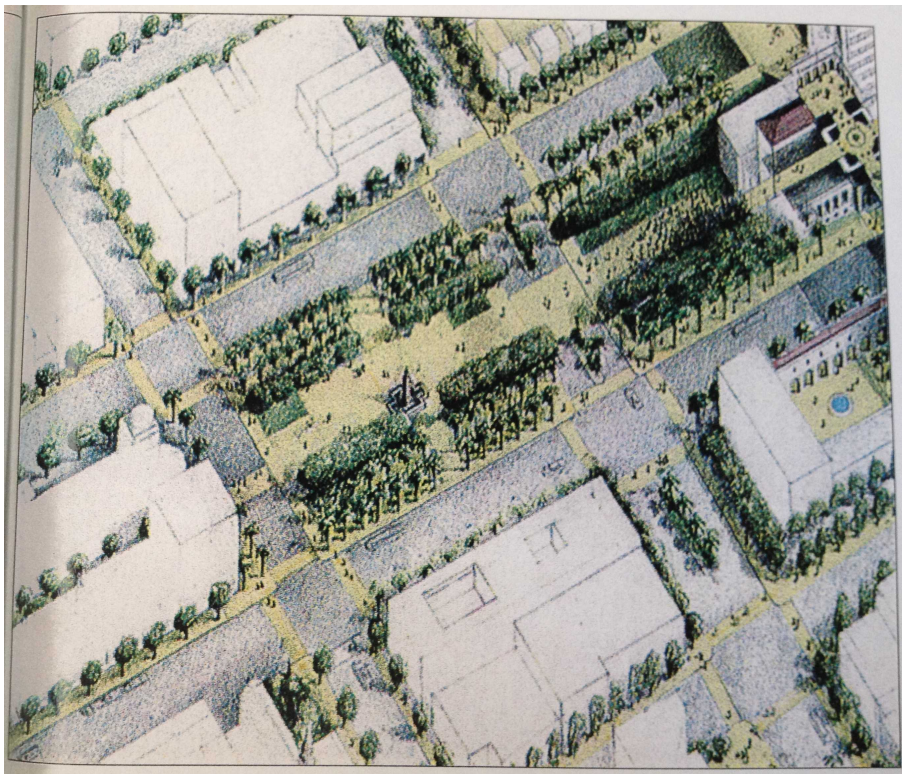


Figure 24: Proposed Civic Space, west of City Hall (Los Angeles Civic Center Authority 1997)

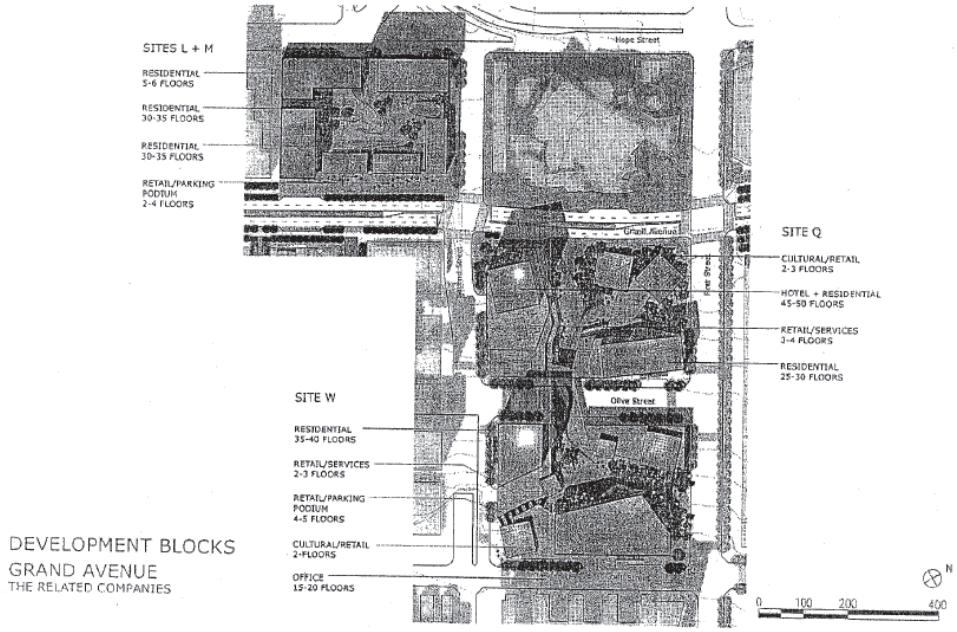


Figure 25: Development parcels, Grand Avenue Project (Los Angeles Grand Avenue Authority 2008, 3150)

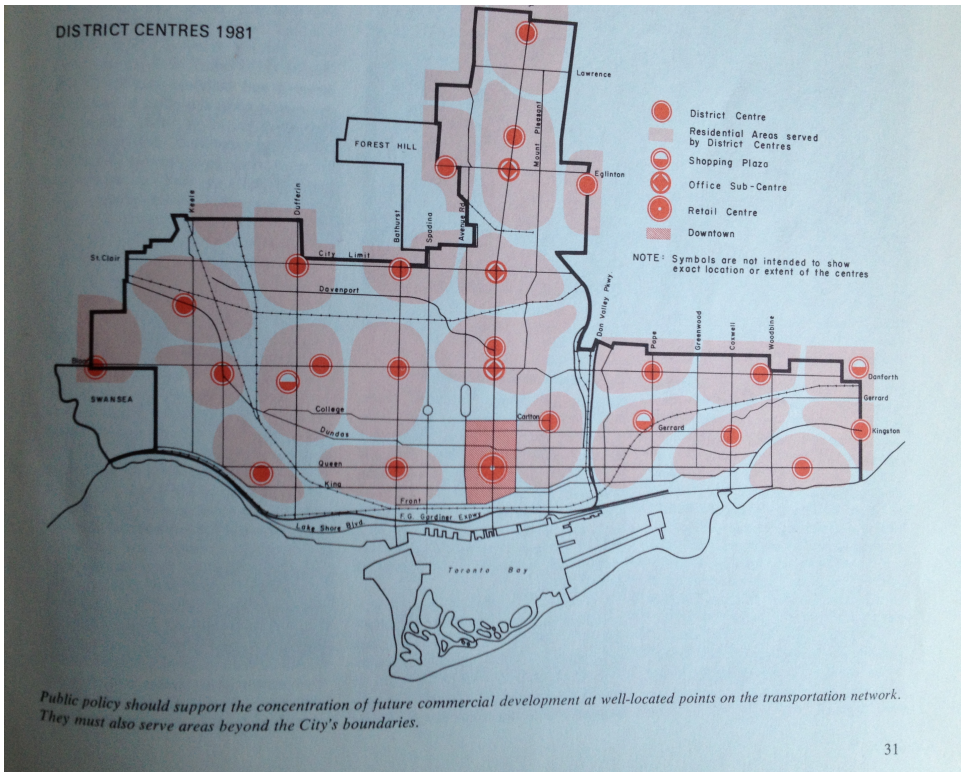


Figure 26: District Centres plan identifying areas for dispersal of commercial and retail uses with the major concentration at Yonge and Queen Streets, south of Dundas. Caption reads: "Public policy should support the concentration of future development at well-located points on the transportation network. They must also serve area's beyond the City's boundaries." (City of Toronto Planning Board 1966, 31)

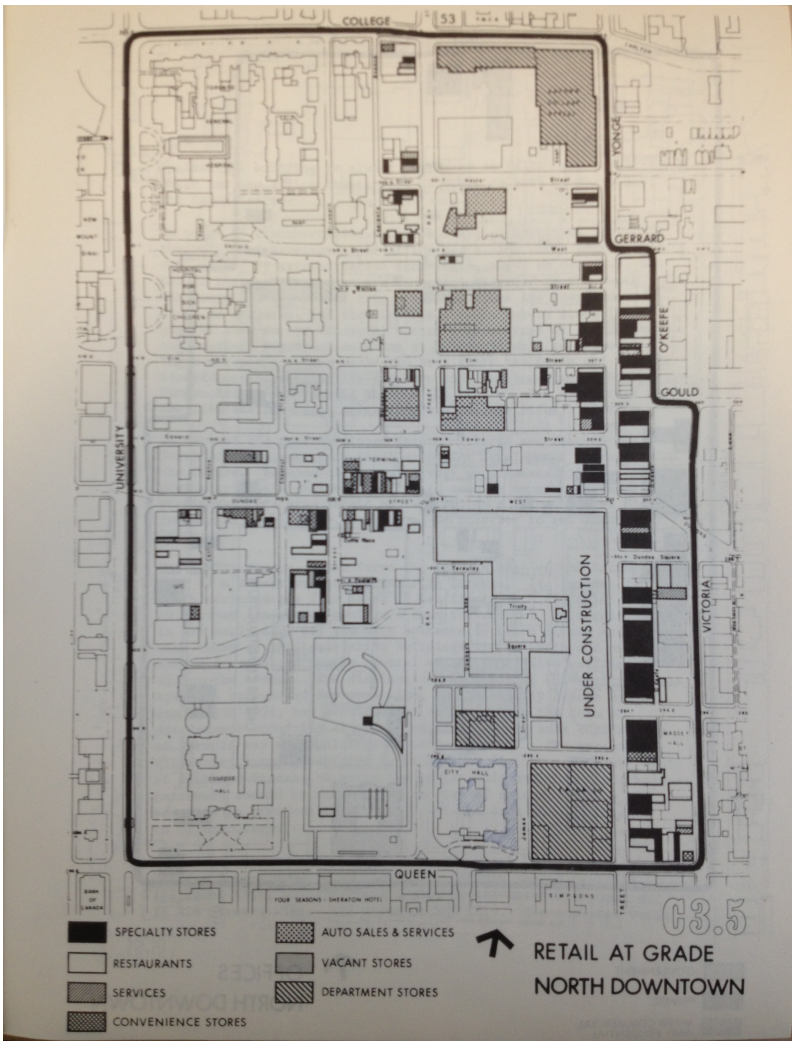


Figure 27: Study of retail uses and vacancies on Yonge Street strip (City of Toronto Planning Board 1975b, 53)

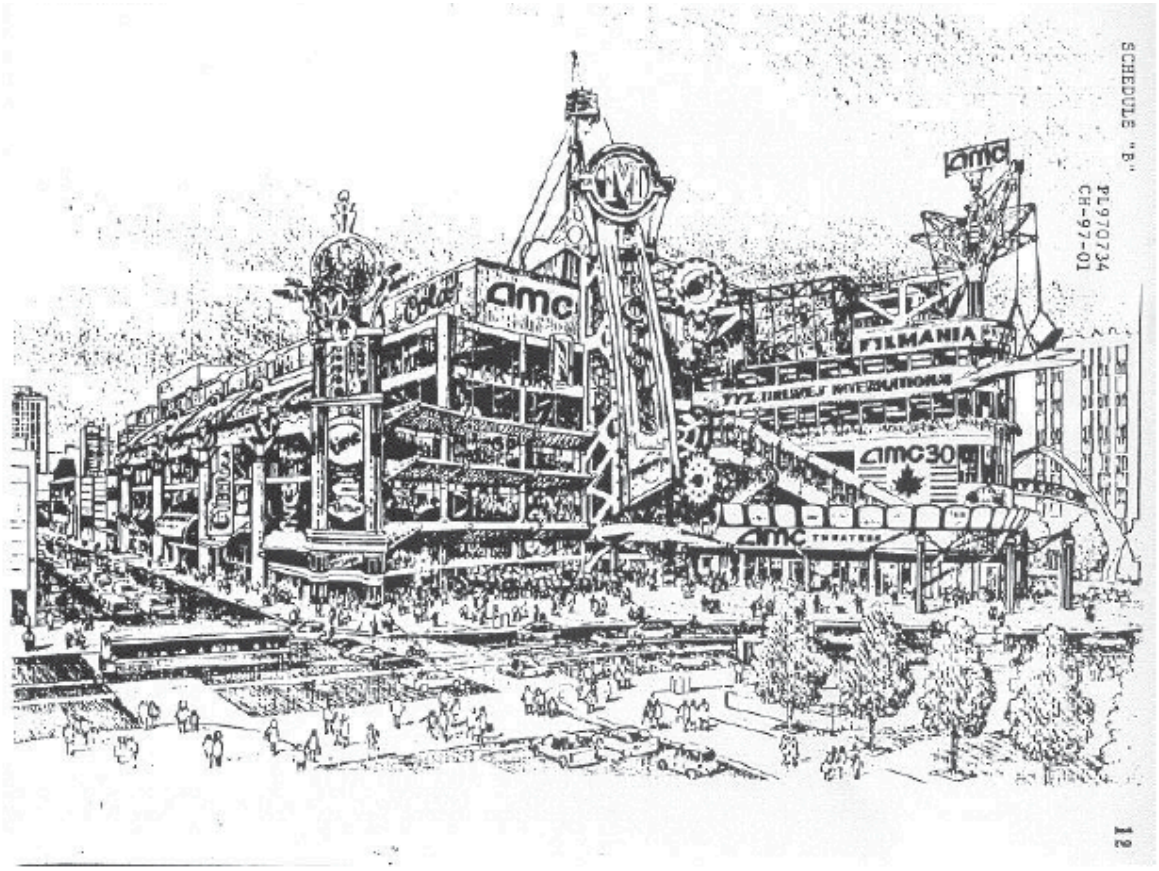


Figure 28: Artist rendering of proposed Yonge-Dundas Square and retail entertainment complex (Ontario Municipal Board 1998, 55)

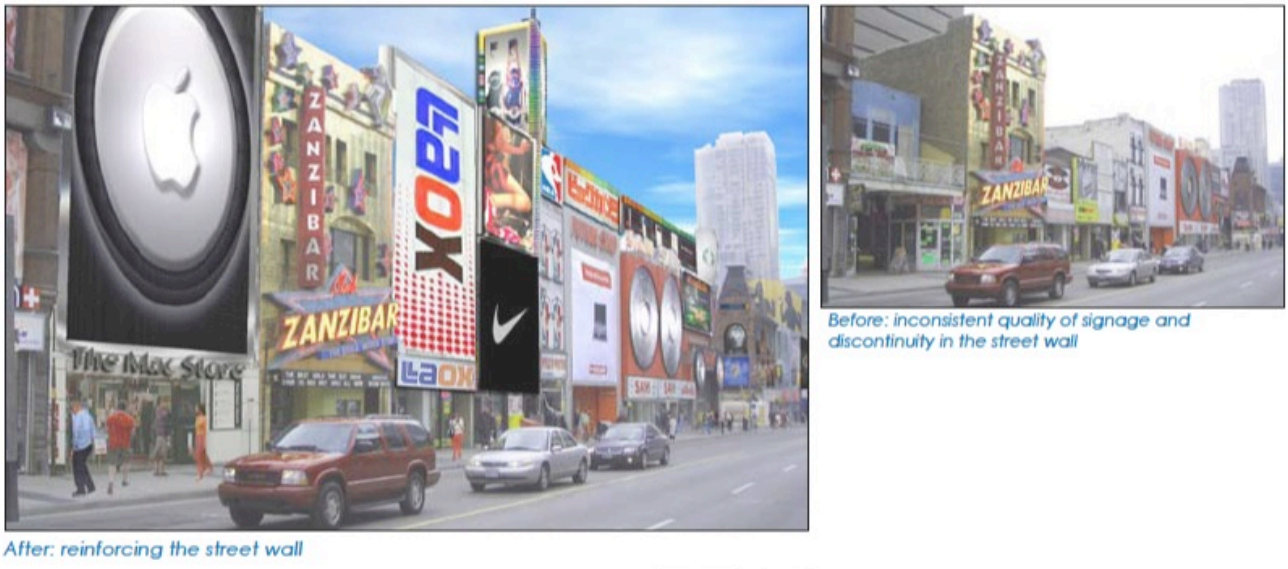


Figure 29: Signage strategy for Yonge Street strip showing advertisements as reinforcing street wall, with the current status (right) and artists' rendering of proposal (left) (Downtown Yonge Business Improvement Area 2009, 36)

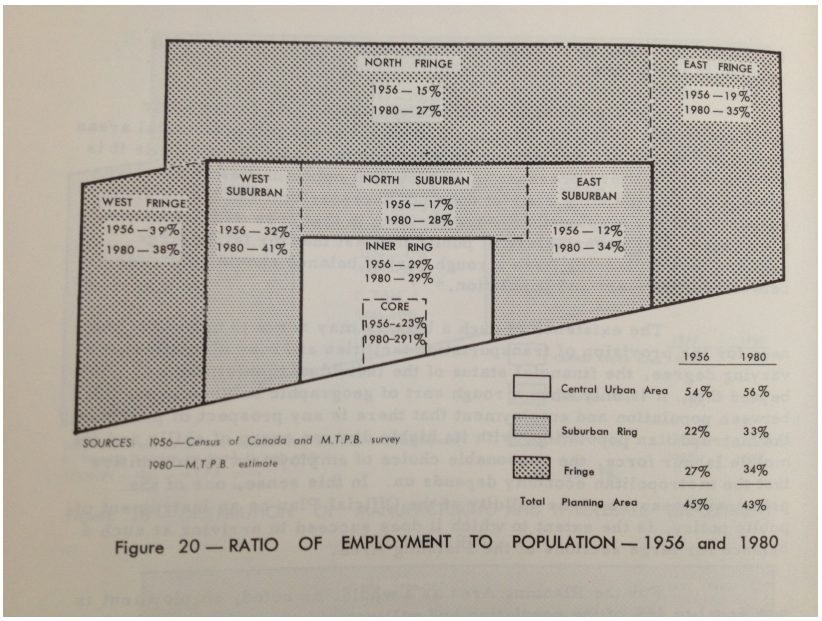
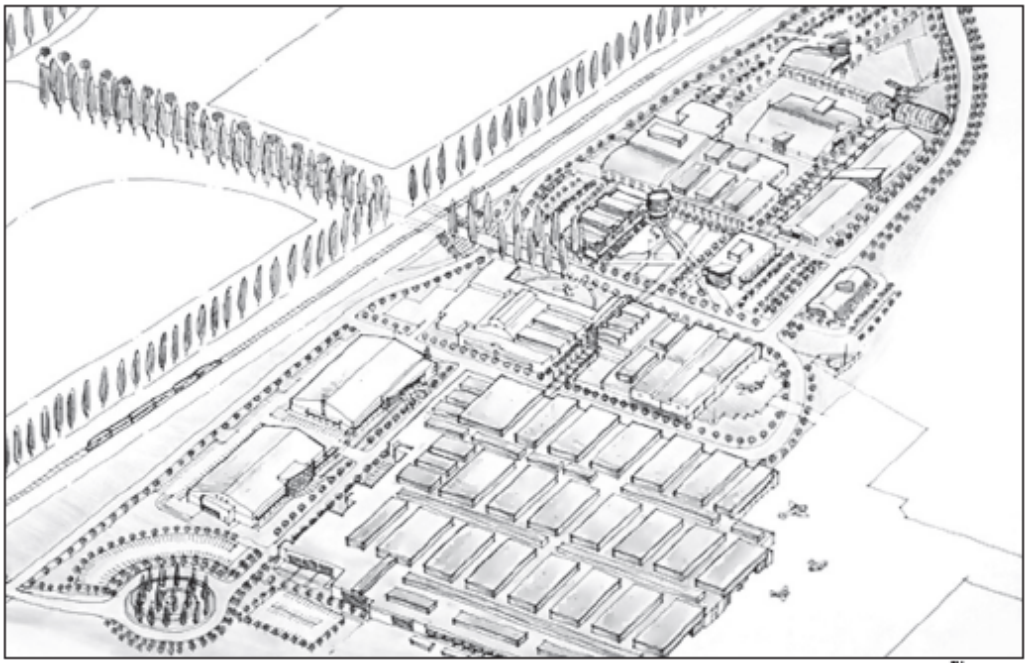


Figure 30: Ratio of employment to population increasing from 17% - 28% in North Suburbs (including Downsview) (Metropolitan Toronto Planning Board 1959, 56)


Figure 31: Axonometric of the cultural campus in Downsview Park combining cultural, retail, tourism, business, manufacturing and recreational uses. (City of Toronto 2004)

Chapter 4: Politics of Expertise

This section examines how the politics of expertise – namely, the construction of professional knowledge, and the perception and valuation of expertise – are created, established and deployed by public and private sector design professionals. While the degree of public sector capacity varied between the two cities studied here, similar processes of legitimating private sector expertise, often by positioning it as distinctive from the work of public designers, were observed in both Toronto and Los Angeles. Professional expertise, and the related qualities of autonomy and legitimacy, are critically examined here as important factors in shaping the built environment.

This chapter begins by outlining some of the debates surrounding professional expertise as it applies to urban designers and planners, situating them as actors in both bureaucratic and political processes.[86] The next part assesses how expertise is established and deployed in the case cities by contrasting both the perception and self-analysis of public and private sector actors. The final section offers conclusions about the role of private sector professionals in both creating and legitimating public policy and the importance of situating this in the larger political and social context of urban design practices.

Context: Professional Expertise and the Built Form Professions

> The planner's knowledge is used ideologically, as both legitimation and justification for certain forms of action. Political struggles and arguments may, under the planner's influence be reduced to technical arguments for which a 'rational' solution can easily be found… but it is the capitalistic definition of rationality to which we appeal. (Harvey 1985, 177)

[86] Of course, designers and planners operate not only in the realm of bureaucracy and politics, but in the area of land development as well.

Urban design scholarship has only infrequently addressed issues of practice and process. In the instances where it does, the interaction among professionals, the political realm, and the economic context often remains in the background. While understandings of professional practice in urban design have vacillated between 'black box' - an artistic and creative moment - and 'glass box' - a rational process where actions follow logical steps - the complexity of expertise has received less attention from a design perspective (Banerjee and Loukaitou-Sideris 2011, 276; Bentley 1999). However, there has been a significant interest in professional practice both in the allied built form professions of architecture and planning, and from a broader perspective in sociology and political science. This section outlines the existing literature on professional expertise, focusing on the construction of professional knowledge, the deployment of expertise for political purposes, and its applicability to urban design practices. This sets the context for establishing how professional expertise is both constructed and utilized by actors in the case projects, as well as setting the foundation for applying a social and political analysis of urban design expertise.

Professionalization

While not the substantial focus of this work, it bears briefly addressing the nature of professionalization and professional practice as it applies to urban designers, planners and architects. There is some consensus that occupations considered professions are defined by a particular body of knowledge or skills, have a normative aspect related to a public service orientation, as well as some degree of autonomy and prestige (Larson 1977). The service orientation of professions is thought to distinguish them from other occupations: professional actors are expected to be involved in activities related to public welfare and have certain self-regulated ethical standards (Blau et al. 1983; Cuff 2000).

Professionalization has also been tied to the quest for legitimacy, especially for professionals working in the public sector where decisions about determining the public good can lead to questions about the legitimacy of government professionals. The desire for professional autonomy is similarly questioned for built form professionals when their role is limited to providing advice rather than decision-making (Blau et al. 1983). While issues of expertise, legitimacy, and autonomy form the basis for understanding professionalization generally, their negotiation in practice by urban design professionals is less defined.

Professional Expertise

The role of professional status in creating expertise hints at the importance of examining design practices and processes. Professionalism has been argued to be the "monopoly over the *practice* of a defined body of intellectualized knowledge and skill" (Freidson 2001, 198, as quoted in Larson 2005, original emphasis). Larson sees the move to professionalism as not only serving a market demand and providing a distinctive service (though these are integral), but also as the creation of a "monopoly of competence" (1977).[87] In both these senses, the existence of a distinct body of knowledge or skills is not sufficient in the processes of professionalization, but rather there has to be a dominance or exclusivity in its practice by those in the field.

How this "monopoly of competence" is applied is considerably more problematic. One definition of expertise relies on technical-rationality and adherence to its ideals. Altshuler (1965, 335) considers expertise in light of these goals, stating that the definition of 'pure' expertise is that you could "give

[87] By this definition, few of the built form fields have been fully successful in professionalization (Blau et al. 1983).

any number of pure experts the same operational objective, and they should come out with sets of specific recommendations that differ insignificantly if at all". This definition of expertise for planners is based largely on a narrow range of decision-making scenarios, such as forecasting, highway planning or engineering projects.[88] The technical-rational model has been questioned, with some arguing that the basis of the client-professional relationship is the creation of a mythology that there is both an answer to the problem and that there are persons - the professionals - that can solve these problems (Meadows 1983). The application of these narrow understandings of professional expertise to the design professions - with their complicated tension between artistic creativity, personal ideals, and entrepreneurial goals - is more complex.

The foundation of expertise for design professionals is markedly different. For architects, professionalism is partially defined by artistic goals, rather than technical, rational or client-based needs. In this way, the expertise of architects is based on subjective artistic truths, as a way to create autonomy for the profession (Cuff 1991). Despite the use of an 'art defense' to reinforce the autonomy of architects (Cuff 1991, 37), the ambiguity of professional expertise allows for threats to their independence. While all professionals may have their practices contested, the varied nature of the architects' role, as well as the need for significant collaboration with other experts, can limit their perceived expertise (Cuff 1991; Gutman 2010b).[89]

[88] See also Rittel and Webber (1973) on the complexity of planning problems.
[89] A further issue is the ability of other professionals, such as engineers and landscape architects, to perform the work of architects and planners (Gutman 2010b).

In understanding urban design as neither planning nor architecture, the complexity deepens. Some distinctions between the professional practices of architects and planners have focused on public-private sector differences. For example, in understanding the professional expertise of planners, Beauregard (1983, 197) states: "The fact that planners are State employees sets limits on the techniques they use… [public] experts must utilize techniques that are ostensibly value-free". In contrast, architects' independence from the public sector has been noted as a factor constraining their professional autonomy:

> Planners tend to work in the public sector, architects in the private sector. The very fact that most planners work for a salary, and architects, whether salaried or not, depend on fees for their economic well-being means that architects are particularly subject to conflicts between their professional commitments to clients and their business objectives, notably profitability (Blau et al. 1983, 179).[90]

This conflict of professional practice is often set up as a dichotomy between public and private when, in reality, these distinctions are much less precise. The fact that the products of architectural design are to some extent always public goods in that they exist in the public realm (Larson et al. 1983) is one example of the interaction between the two sectors. In a similar vein, while professional practice is largely premised on contribution to the public good, the push for professional autonomy can be seen as in conflict with the public interest (Cuff 1991, 35). These tensions between professional practice, entrepreneurial goals and commitment to the public service are underscored when professionals such as urban designers straddle the public and private sectors.

[90] The division between salaried and fee-based professionals has been challenged elsewhere (Gutman 2010b) but also requires serious re-evaluation of the stability of public sector employees given the disinvestment from many local governments (Harvey 1989; McCann 2001).

Construction of Professional Knowledge[91]

The construction of professional knowledge is integral to understanding the role of the expert in shaping the built environment. Professionalization, and by extension, professional knowledge, has been examined from a variety of perspectives to understand its role in obtaining and maintaining power. There has been the assertion that the professional turn is a quest for legitimacy and authority. In that respect, Larson (1977) argues that professionalization is the process by which producers of special services constitute and control a market for their expertise. Blau et al. reinforce this, defining professionalization as the "tendency on the part of select occupational groups to control private market forces in order to gain status benefits" (Blau et al. 1983, 3). Integral to this is the way that knowledge - the essential service that marks professionals - is controlled and marketed. As Larson describes the process:

> Professionalization is thus an attempt to translate one order of scarce resources - special knowledge and skills - into another - social and economic rewards. To maintain scarcity implies a tendency to monopoly: monopoly of expertise in the market, monopoly of status in a system of stratification. (Larson 1977, xvii)

Given the often-political nature of expertise, there has been a questioning of how it is socially constructed, and by extension, how professional knowledge or *ways of knowing* are established. Views on the production of knowledge and information range from a 'technician' approach, where information is seen as neutral and unbiased, to structuralist views, where information is a source of power used to reinforce and legitimize existing power structures (Forester 1982). Schön's reflection-in-action theory is rooted in questions of the epistemology of professional practice and the dominance of what he terms "technical rationality" (Schön 1983, 1992). In this understanding, there is the desire to

[91] The use of the term 'professional knowledge' is to distinguish it from types of knowledge and information in other domains (for example, Latour and Woolgar 1979, on the construction of knowledge in the sciences).

make professional practice rigorous through the application of scientific methods and techniques, assuming that it is possible to agree on desired ends. In contrast, Schön proposes a way of understanding professional practice as 'reflection-in-action' where action is informed by the shifting context of individual cases. Other ways of understanding how decision-making in design is undertaken focus on negotiation, collaboration, and discursive processes (Cuff 1991; Forester 1985; Hack and Canto 1984). These approaches to design offer a more nuanced interpretation of professional practice and allow opportunities to examine the role of relative power in shaping design processes.

A key issue with understanding professional expertise for urban designers is acknowledging that the issues considered by planning and design professionals are all "wicked problems" that are difficult to define and "rely upon elusive political judgment for resolution" (Rittel and Webber 1973, 160). The political context of design decision-making must therefore be considered when examining the nature of professional practices. Expertise and professional knowledge are linked to issues of power and control, especially when it is acknowledged that decision-making processes are inherently political ones: "Politicians cannot evaluate every argument presented by any administrative official. They must therefore assess the competence of men and professions, and not, in most instances, arguments. The ideal of expertness serves them as a means of control" (Altshuler 1965, 335).

Political Uses of Expertise

Critical assessments of the nature of professional expertise have argued that expertise is deployed in a number of ways to garner support, obtain power, and legitimize decision-making. In all of these formulations, the role and purposes of expertise may vary while the nature of professional expertise as

a tool for gaining power is common.[92] The role of expertise in obtaining and maintaining power can take several forms. In one sense, professionals are able to create discipline beyond their own domain through control over discourse and standards, or as Larson states: "the professions' authority over discourse is what gives its representatives *control* over the design of objectified and disciplining norms" (2005, 323). Others have argued that for planners, the expansion of their technical skills and sophistication increases their political power (Kreditor 1990, 156). Benveniste (1977) suggests that there are three approaches used by experts to gain power and to cement their roles in institutions: firstly, by expanding the scope of their work; secondly, by controlling access to information; and lastly, by developing political support. In applying Benveniste's model to the planning and design professions, some have debated the applicability of these criteria, but generally only in assessing the role of municipal expertise *within* bureaucratic structures (Dalton 1985).[93] Information as a potential source of power has been noted elsewhere, notably by Forester in his influential work on the relationship between structures of political power and the planning profession (Forester 1982).[94]

The idea of a master-servant relationship between client and designer, where the commissioning client has control because he/she is paying for services, has been re-assessed in understanding the power and agency of designers. While some understandings of power prioritize economic power (which in

[92] One definition of power is that it "refers to the ability of persons to affect outcomes in intended ways, and the dominant form power takes in organizations is control over decision-making" (Blau 1979, 103).

[93] Dalton (1985) uses a variety of arguments to assert that planners are unable to acquire power, including a lack of acceptance of planning as a profession and the importance of public consultation. This reasoning largely assumes an independent public sector planning profession, a situation largely in decline in most North American cities, as well as predominately structuring power as negotiated between professionals and the public.

[94] Cuff (1991, 39) also describes the control over knowledge and information as a source of power for the architect.

the case of a client-designer relationship would be the ability to fire the designer), relationships premised on professional expertise are significantly more complex than purely financial exchanges. Bentley (1999, 38) discusses a case involving architect Zaha Hadid, where she successfully negotiated for fundamental design changes against the wishes of the public sector client. In describing how the master-servant relationship was subverted, he states about Hadid:

> She knows things the others do not, and the others need that knowledge. She has something they want, which gives her an initial bargaining position… [95]

This illustration of the types of negotiations that occur on a constant basis for designers (see also Forester 1985; Hack and Canto 1984) demonstrates how conventional understanding of power hierarchies can be reversed in the complexity of expertise and professional knowledge.

Expertise to De-Politicize

The use of professional expertise as an explicit way to de-politicize decision-making has been addressed by both planners and non-planners. Benveniste has argued that far from being neutral, 'technical' decisions are always made on political or economic grounds (1972). Similarly, constructing the expertise of a planner in an unbiased way is a strategy for disregarding the political context of decision-making (Forester 1982). Nelkin (1975) in particular, criticizes the association of expertise with, as she terms it, the 'end of ideology.[96] In her analysis of the role of experts in controversial planning cases, Nelkin found that not only was expertise used to legitimize plans, but that "the extent to which

[95] Bentley also comments on Hadid's stature as an internationally-renowned architect and the associated 'cultural capital' this accrues, creating a circular logic where "their own commissioning decision implies that the people who hired her *must* respect what she says and does" (Bentley 1999, 38). The nature of global architects is covered more substantially by Sklair (2005, 2006), McNeill (2009), and Faulconbridge (2010).

[96] Nelkin's description of the perceived model of technical decision-making - as a process of "defining objectives, considering available knowledge and analyzing the most effective ways of reaching those objectives" (1975, 36) - has obvious links to the rational planning model.

technical advice is accepted depends less on its validity and the competence of the expert, than on the extent to which it reinforces existing positions" (Nelkin 1975, 51-53). Thus, the role of the expert is not as a neutral provider of information, but rather as a type of "social gatekeeper", whose values and orientations direct economic and social change in line with their own positions (Knox and Masilela 1989). This overtly political view of professional expertise has been infrequently applied thus far to studies of urban design and development.

The role of professionals in engaging with the public offers further insight into negotiations over power and control. Discourse with the public can work to confirm the expertise of professionals: "as professionals interpret their clients' needs, they engage in a form of 'talking politics' that both confirms their authority and makes sense to the politically disaffected citizens" (Larson 2005, 326). Despite the considerable work on how expertise is utilized by professionals in relation to citizens, political decision-makers, and within firms (Blau 1979), there is little understanding of the nature of expertise among professionals in different organizations.

Consultants and Expertise

The specifics of the practice of consultants have been examined most commonly from a governance and public management perspective, though early studies of planning processes have also commented tangentially on the role of consultants in their assessment of municipal actors (Altshuler 1965; Forester 1982). The nature of consultants as policy actors has been discussed from the perspective of bureaucratic reform and the rise of the "new public management" (NPM) or new managerialism. In the 1980s, a widespread movement towards bureaucratic reform was driven by criticism of the efficiency of government administration as well as the qualifications of its staff and their working

methods (Saint-Martin 1998). Management consultants from the private sector were thought to be a source of positive reform:[97]

> Free and independent consultants were expected to show their worth, drawing from their experience and qualifications from the private sector to improve on the central government bureaucracy. (Blymke 1995, 127)

The rising influence of private management consultants in shaping government policy led one scholar to term it the "consultocracy" (Saint-Martin 1998). The movement can be broadly characterized by the principles of efficiency, effectiveness, and value for money (Christensen and Laegreid 2001).[98] The impacts of public management reform vary in intensity depending on the existing political context, though in cases where reform is either encouraged or lightly contested, it can result in a weakening of control by politicians over the civil service and public decision-making processes (Christensen and Laegreid 2001; Saint-Martin 1998). Importantly for urban design practice, it was found that tensions arise when private-sector consultants are charged with both providing impartial advice and acting as an 'advocate' for projects (Sam and Scherer 2006).

Altshuler's study of planning activities comments on the role of professional consultants in two main ways: firstly, they were able to promote certain ideas - mainly economic - that would have encountered more resistance if they came from municipal planners; and, secondly, they were more

[97] Much of the discussion about consultants and the new managerialism also relates to issues of professionalization and standards of practice. As Saint-Martin (2000, 72) states: "This was the period… where faith in rational planning and in the capacity of social sciences and technical expertise to solve the public or political problems was relatively high." While public management consultants were drawn mainly from the engineering and accounting professions, similar links may be made to the push for professional recognition in urban planning.

[98] There is also the tendency to refer to 'entrepreneurial government' in relation to the new managerialism, though there is little engagement with David Harvey's and other geographers' use of the concept (Hall and Hubbard 1996; Harvey 1989; Hubbard 1996). The entrepreneurial nature of local government actors is addressed in Chapter 6.

skilled in “the art of persuasion” (1965, 225-226). A further tactic is embedded in the nature of outside consulting itself, with the notion that outside expertise confers a higher level of expertise. As Altshuler (1965, 225) details:

> If they [the consultants] were questioned, they could truthfully say that they sold experienced judgment, not mere technical skill. It sounded reasonable for consultants to argue that they would not, any more than other executives, be worth such high fees if their judgmental processes could be reduced to formulae. Planners could not make the same claims. They could not refer to personal studies of many other downtowns; they were not respected businessmen; and they did not command high fees.

The ability of consultants to deploy expertise in a manner *different* from that of municipal employees is key in understanding their relative power. Placed in the context of theories of professionalization and professional practices, the role of consultants in shaping government priorities is one that needs to be differentiated from that of municipal actors. The following section reports the findings from the four cases studies to assess how these different urban design actors negotiate issues of professional practice, expertise and legitimacy.

Negotiating Expertise in Urban Design Projects

> … Modern professions, rather than simply existing as the sum of the professional interests of the individual members, instead are complex social constructs that structure their autonomous identities in relation to the specific configuration of the economy and society in which they operate. Successful professional identities depend as much upon devising convincing ideological representations of professional practices as one the actual practices themselves. (Crawford 1991, 27)

In understanding professional practice as a complex social process, a key component involves the specifics of how notions of professionalism are created and deployed. Examining the practices of urban designers in the four case projects demonstrates that a variety of tactics are used to reinforce the professional expertise of outside consultants and establish a dichotomy with public sector employees.

Despite similar academic training between public and private sector urban designers,[99] there existed a significant divide in perceptions of their expertise and professionalism.

In both cities, similar themes emerged about the role of professional expertise in the selection, use and valuation of outside consultants. Despite the varying levels of government capacity in Toronto and Los Angeles, city staff's view that private-sector consultants had a unique skill set made them highly valued and respected actors in the creation of urban design policies. The belief that consultants were more creative, had an understanding of market forces, and were less bound by the existing political and bureaucratic framework than city employees was used to reinforce both their expertise and autonomy. Key differences emerged in the perceptions of the public sector between the two case cities, however. Thus, only in Toronto was there a common sentiment that the role of a public sector designer was to protect the public interest, however defined. The following sections describe how professional expertise is deployed and constructed among public and private sector designers in both cities, and how these constructions influence the possible realm of decision-making for both groups.

[99] While there might be the expectation that public sector urban designers do not have the same design backgrounds as private consultants given the perception of public urban design as largely regulatory, this was not found to be the case. The majority of public sector designers were trained as architects or landscape architects. In fact, private consultants had more diverse backgrounds, including in degrees in urban planning and geography. Although academic training does not fully account for experience and expertise, the similarity between public and private sector urban designers in their training can be seen as partially indicative of pervasiveness of the divisions between public and private sector expertise.

Private Sector Expertise

Creativity and the Design Professionals

One key difference in understanding the creation and legitimization of professional expertise for private sector urban designers is the nature of creativity in the design professions. While other types of consultants formulate expertise in a variety of ways, creativity and innovation is a key component for the design professions. While experts in most professions claim theoretical-cognitive knowledge, in the fields such as urban design and architecture, claims are also laid to aesthetic-expressive knowledge (King 1988). The interaction between these two knowledge domains becomes a source of tension between public and private sector actors.

In both Los Angeles and Toronto, the perception was held by a variety of actors that only outside consultants had the required creativity for successful urban design practice was a key argument for their use. Not only were outside professionals viewed as less constrained by political and bureaucratic considerations but they were also seen as being able to offer more creative and innovative options. Only in Toronto were there some instances of public sector interest in strengthening their role in providing creative solutions:

> It's a creative field so everyone wants to be the head honcho. So there's the public sector … and the private sector always think they're the ones that come up with the ideas. [Interview 45][100]

[100] The Yonge-Dundas case was one where there was specific disagreement over the contributions of public and private sector staff. While numerous private consultants described their role in formulating the design and plans for the area, city staff contested this. In the other cases, there were fewer discrepancies between actors' analyses of their roles.

The public sector did not often define their role as one of providing creativity or innovation or challenge the dominance of private consultants in this respect. Much more common was a sort of consensus about "creative expertise" being held by the private sector, though the divisions between municipal and private design roles in this respect were much more marked in the Los Angeles case studies. While the private sector asserted their control over creative expertise in both cities, only in Los Angeles was this largely uncontested by municipal employees.

Private sector professionals in both cities established a dichotomy between their work and that of municipal urban designers based on innovation and creativity. Private sector consultants constructed their services as fundamentally different from those provided by the public section in that they could provide more innovative and creative solutions. In Toronto, this was often explained as outside consultants not being limited by political and bureaucratic constraints in developing their solutions:

> I think that we all [public and private designers] really have the same goal, and what the private sector, sort of on the consulting end of things, can bring hopefully is doing the real innovation, and bring those new ideas to the table. Whereas the public sector has more of an administrative, oversight kind of role and I think is in a good position to demand more, and to demand more innovation, to demand better practices, but may not be involved as much in coming up with the solutions… its up to, or it falls more on the shoulders of the private practitioners to be able to come to the table with the solutions. [Interview 7]

And similarly:

> I think there are some frustrated designers within municipal planning and urban design staff, it doesn't make them any worse, it's just not what they do. Whereas when you hire a planner or an architect or a landscape architect from the private sector that is their role. Are they more creative? Yeah, because they are not hamstrung by all the rules until they make a submission, then they get all the rules thrown at them. But they don't start from the perspective of what would the city want, they start with what makes the most sense and what's innovative and what works best and what fits best… I always think that is a better way to start. [Interview 6]

In a similar manner, the private sector in Los Angeles firmly established their role in providing creative solutions in contrast to the work of public sector designers:

> I think in Los Angeles, and generally speaking in the American cities that I have knowledge of, an urban designer who works within the municipal realm is there to administer and manage design goals and objectives, and an urban designer who works in the private realm is really there to formulate design options and implement projects. [Interview 1]

The use of creativity and innovation expertise as a way to market their services is not unexpected from the private sector. However, in Los Angeles, public sector designers echoed the sentiment of the outside consultants, noting that bureaucratic and administrative constraints impact the creative abilities of municipal staff. For the case studies in Los Angeles, there was little disagreement about the contribution of various actors, and public sector actors themselves reinforced this division between municipal and outside staff:

> You [municipal staff] might not be creative because you might not have the ability to try and push that [existing regulations]. [Interview 35]

> I think it's a private designers' obligation, whether required or not, to push the envelope… [Interview 34]

> On the private side you can have substantial influence and on the public side you can have a very, very substantial influence, and public employees aren't always as driven, courageous, perhaps as well-trained as they could be to take advantage of that. [Interview 37]

This division of labor between public and private designers revolved most clearly around creative expertise, often referred to as "pushing the envelope", and the perception that only outside consultants were able to provide innovative solutions. While the public sector attempted to contest this in Toronto, it remained the dominant paradigm in both cities.

In one sense, the division between public and private sector urban designers is dependent on categorizing certain activities as 'design' and others as 'not design', premised largely on creativity and the 'artistic moment'. In this conceptualization, the work of public sector activities falls into the

category of non-design activities because of the negotiation and collaboration with other actors. While the importance of so-called 'non-design' activities such as negotiation and collaboration has been studied previously (for example, Cuff 1991; Forester 1985), it is worth noting the similarities in this design/non-design model to a study of architects in firms from the late 1970s:

> I am impressed by how many of the younger architects have little patience with these non-design activities, how much it conflicts with the expectations that drew them into the profession. This is especially the case in larger firms, whose large-scale projects require staff who will work on problems that provide few opportunities for exercising the creative, artistic design imagination. Many of these men and women are ready to abandon the profession entirely. (Gutman 2010b, 45)

In the practices studied here, the same division between 'design' and 'non-design' work exists but rather than being within firms, it is split between the public and the private sectors. The work of private sector designers is conceptualized – by professionals on *both* sides, for the most part – as the only professionals with the creativity to do 'design' work. As one private sector designer explained:

> What you are going to need in cities is highly trained, incredibly smart individuals who are capable of managing their private consultants for the public good, but they are not going to be producing the plans, they're going to be basically managing the policies, and re-managing the policies but… Yeah, and I'm not interested in doing that. I'm interested in designing cities and formulating policies that sort of shape things and making public environments and designing public environments… So for me, it's completely boring the idea that I would work within government. [Interview 1]

The perception that consultants have an exclusive ability to provide creative and innovative design solutions was one of the most common justifications for their use over public sector employees. The establishment of this sort of "monopoly of competence", as Larson (1977) describes, is based not on technical expertise – which is allotted to the public sector – but rather on the more amorphous and difficult to define notion of artistic and creative practice.

Market Expertise

Another one of the key ways that the need for private sector expertise was justified by political actors and outside consultants was the belief that market expertise could only be provided by designers outside the government sector. In the Yonge-Dundas Square example, the argument that only private sector consultants would have enough knowledge of market conditions to guide the planning and design process structured the selection of consultants and the relationship between them and municipal staff:

> … The [city] planners were involved from the very beginning, but they were asked to take… not the leadership role, let the business association with their consultant – who has got planning, who has got retail knowledge – let them come up with the plan. [Interview 33][101]

The belief that market knowledge was unique to outside consultants not only justified their use, but also put them as the lead in a project involving not only a significant public space but also the expropriation of private land by the City. This view was re-iterated throughout the projects, to varying degrees.

Unsurprisingly, consultants echoed this sentiment, often remarking that it was their main advantage over their counterparts in the municipal sector, and the way that they promote themselves to the public sector. As two private consultants in Los Angeles remarked:

> One of the ways we sell ourselves… is that we understand how that building and development process works… So we understand, we've never acted as developers here, but we've worked with enough developers to know how the development process works. We know what it takes to get things built, we know what kind of physical things to do just to make things work, so it could affect what size block you plan, it makes all the difference in the world… so there's a kind of level of detail that often gets overlooked at the city level. [Interview 10]

[101] This division of work by sector is important not only for examining how expertise is constructed and deployed but also for understanding who has the power to 'set the agenda'. This is covered in depth in Chapter 6.

> I think one of the things we try to bring forward is understanding the private development world and the public world and kind of making them mesh more easily, and I think that's why we're attractive to public entities, it's really understanding development. [Interview 12]

Even in Toronto, where most public sector designers expressed a strong belief in their unique contribution, the value of market expertise was seen as unique to outside consultants.[102] Some public sector designers reiterated the belief that the private sector had knowledge of market conditions that they did not:

> They bring the information to us as a way of helping us, because I guess in their opinion, they're saying 'ok, this is reality, this is what's *really* going to happen, you guys are in your ivory towers thinking you should be going in a different direction, but we are in the trenches and we know what is going on, and its not going to happen'. So this sort of information is helpful to us because what they're saying to us is 'you may be entirely right, but it's not going to happen that way, so let's find a way to get the best we can out of the situation.' [Interview 44]

Political or municipal actors very rarely contested the belief that private sector consultants have a specific knowledge of market and development processes that allows them expertise not held by other urban designers or planners.

The nature of private sector urban designers working in the private sphere also gives them knowledge of differing practices and jurisdictions that is largely unattainable for public sector actors. As one private sector consultant in Toronto described:

[102] It is interesting to note that one public sector designer disagreed with the belief that being in the private sector gave consultants a special knowledge of market conditions: "I mean, we deal with development every day, so through the experience you know 'well that's not going to work, how can we try to achieve something in a different way?'" [Interview 42]

> I mean these guys [public sector designers] can't even go to conferences. So, you know, we go to conferences, we're learning from each other, we go to cities and see what is happening there, we win awards, we have that profile, we publish. So to a certain extent, I think it's not that those people are not just as intellectually capable or well trained, it's just the environment they're in. [Interview 19]

The perception that public actors were limited in only having knowledge of their own jurisdiction and practices was advanced by private sector professionals. This expertise afforded by working in a variety of environments was commented as only available to private-sector actors, especially given the largely one-way flow of professionals between the public and private sectors.[103] The degree to which this outside knowledge improves the practices of private consultants is unknown but was established as a key aspect of their advantages over public professionals.

Conceptualizing urban design as a practice of public regulation of private development (Barnett 1974; Lang 1994; Shirvani 1985) makes the division of knowledge between professionals more apparent. In both cities, the creation of a specific type of expertise - unattainable to those working for the public sector - can be seen as one way that consultants obtain power and are able to shape policy-making in the built environment. In that sense, understanding Forester's (1982) analysis of power and information as a relationship that happens between professionals and the lay public does not account for the more subtle negotiations *among* professionals. For urban design professionals, power over information and knowledge is not simply a relationship between the professional and the public, but rather is negotiated and constructed through the divisions between public and private sector experts. In this case, knowledge of development and the real estate market is one way that outside consultants re-affirm their role as necessary experts.

[103] While some public sector actors had private experience, this was seen as less common than the converse.

Public Sector Expertise

Technical Expertise and 'Code-Readers'

The nature of the expertise afforded to public sector actors is critical in understanding their influence in the design process. By limiting their expertise to 'technical' issues or the interpretation of legislation and policies, the range of their power is similarly limited. Blau, for example, is clear in addressing how the range of decision-making opportunities is a factor in understanding power: "power is measured by influence in major decision areas; they are major in that they involve the productive work of the firm, and they are largely professional rather than administrative in nature" (1979, 104). Through the reinforcement of the creative-technical divide, the expertise of the public sector was often times limited to providing technical advice while outside consultants formulated 'creative', and by extension substantive, solutions.

Private consultants in both cities couched the role of public sector designers in terms of providing 'technical' expertise or guidance on issues related to existing policy or legislation. In this respect, the function of private consultants as visionary, and conversely, the public sector as regulatory, was further emphasized. When asked about the role of the public sector in developing design solutions, one actor in Los Angeles replied:

> Naturally, we work with various departments, we have to work with the Bureau, City Planning, Convention Center, when you develop those kinds of plans. For example, when the realignment of 12th Street had to be worked out. Initially 12th Street came across, I don't know if you've noticed but 12th Street has a curve on it… 12th Street used to go straight in so we had to realign 12th Street, and that created a short block here and a longer block here, so all that had to be worked out in conjunction with our friends and family at the City. [Interview 3]

In this example, the role of the public sector is acknowledged though significantly reduced to one of providing advice on technical issues rather than substantive decision-making. A further way public

sector expertise was limited was in the construction of their knowledge as primarily related to the interpretation of legislation and codes. Consultants in both cities commonly (though with more emphasis in Los Angeles) expressed the theme of public sector designers as "code-readers":

> But it seems like that [the use of outside consultants by cities] reduces the people who are in those project positions in the City to a kind of managerial role that strips… well, either strips them of any opportunity for creativity or more likely, attracts to it those people who really want to make sure that the numbers all line up and everything is in order and don't really have the passion for implementing it because they don't have the ownership of it. [Interview 10]

Similarly, private sector and political actors in Toronto echoed those in Los Angeles by emphasizing the role of public urban designers as regulators:

> Their job is to regulate. It was a kind of good collaboration from that point of view, in that they understood once they worked through the process with me… they had really bought into the analysis and the solution, although it wasn't something that in their wildest dreams that they would have dared to propose, I mean it's just not in their nature, so… [Interview 22]

And similarly:

> The job of a city urban designer… isn't really to be creative. Their job is to assist and support the regulatory process and give some professional opinion based on the public values that the City has stated are its values. [Interview 32]

Outside consultants in both cities reinforced the idea of professional expertise in the public sector as limited to technical or managerial decisions, which aligns with the goals of establishing exclusivity in services as part of the processes of professionalization (Larson 1977). However, in Los Angeles, public employees remained largely uncritical of this. One municipal urban designer in Los Angeles described the partial role of a public sector designer as knowing "the context and existing city regulations very well" [Interview 35], while creativity comes from the private sector.

In Toronto, while there was still an emphasis on the public sector as regulator, one interpretation was that regulatory processes are an integral part of design, rather than a solely bureaucratic issue. This

more nuanced acknowledgement of design as a process of collaboration was only expressed by the public sector in Toronto. For example, in describing the interaction between the City and their consultants, one public designer described their role as:

> So what I tried to do is guiding the consultants to make sure what they were delivering stayed aligned with council's vision and the City's vision. I think if I wasn't a trained architect and urban designer, I might have accepted a different product, because you can't turn off… I can't turn off the architect's part of my brain, so it's working through every conversation and every decision that I am working my way through with these contracts, with these consultants. [Interview 40]

The role of city urban designers as limited to interpreting legislation and providing technical advice was common in both cities, but only in Toronto did municipal designers push back against this conceptualization by arguing that the processes of negotiation and collaboration were a part of design activity. While in some sense this can be seen as motivated by the same processes that drive private consultants to assert control over creative expertise (namely, the desire to establish an exclusive domain for their work), it can also be viewed as allowing for a more complex understanding of the processes that shape built form.

Public Designers and the Public Interest

The differences between professionals in the two cities became most apparent when participants were questioned about the roles of public sector and private sector designers. While the difficulties of *defining* the public interest are myriad, in Toronto, public sector urban designers were emphatic in that they had a distinct duty to protect the public interest, however defined. For example:

> One of the reasons why – and this is one of the things that is really interesting about working on the municipal side of things versus the private consultants side – we're here for a reason. This is what I talk to my staff about from time to time… you're here because you really, truly honestly believe in the public interest and the public good. If you didn't, you'd be a private consultant. [Interview 39]

> Well, we're really advocates for the public. You know, we see a lot of advocates for development but we're looking after the public interest, that's what we do. [Interview 42]

While this is hardly surprising – from an economic and professional standpoint, it makes little sense to admit that your position is unnecessary – some *private* sector urban designers in Toronto also discussed the importance of the public interest:

> I think the role of the urban designer is really a role of protecting the public interest, recognizing that most people in the world live in cities… So it's sort of mediating between a very imperfect city-building process that is really totally chaotic versus this idea that like Haussman or Versaille or Brasilia that you can actually design a city. So I kind of feel like we are these mediators trying to inject design as something within the public interest [Interview 19].

Although this was addressed by relatively few private consultants in Toronto, several – most of whom had worked exclusively in the private sector – did see their role as private urban designers as involved in protecting the public interest.[104] For the most part, private sector urban designers spoke about the role of urban design in protecting the public interest in general terms, and only rarely saw it as an explicit aspect of their professional practice.

In contrast, the relationship between urban design and the public interest was rarely mentioned by participants in the Los Angeles case studies, even those employed in the public sector. While city designers hinted at the nature of public sector design, there was no weight placed on protecting the public interest. As one City of Los Angeles urban designer stated:

> I think the role of the public sector is helping to elevate from the outside what private development [is]… [and] help get support for better functioning cities and give guidance on it, and also internally be an advocate for better design and better function. [Interview 35]

Similarly:

[104] Private designers that had previously been employed by the City also mentioned the importance of the public interest, for example: "So what we try to do is, you know, understand the public interest, whether it's urban design or what have you…" [Interview 43]

> I would say both private and public sector designers need to advocate for good design of public space. They should have that same role… And then I think it's the public designers imperative to demand, in a realistic way but nonetheless demand, a bigger vision than we often see come in the door with a design proposal. [Interview 34]

One of the noticeable differences between these public designers speaking about their role and those in Toronto is the actor on which they focus their actions. In Los Angeles, the relationship is between public sector urban designers and the development sector or with internal, bureaucratic organizations. In these understandings of the role of public urban designers, the attention of their expertise is directed towards improving development rather than on some notion of the public interest.

Given the lack of focus on the public interest by the public sector in Los Angeles, it is not surprising that outside consultants either relegated public actors to regulatory or technical roles, as discussed above, or asserted that there were few differences with public sector designers:

> There is not really much difference if it's public or private [sector]. I mean you need to either way respond to your client, whether it is public or private, you have to… the issues are the same and the effort should be in creating a quality environment and that's true no matter what realm it's in or who the client is. [Interview 12]

In contrast to Toronto, where City urban designers spoke very clearly about their role in defending the public interest, in Los Angeles public designers referred much more to an ideal of "good" or "better" urban design. While both the public interest and "good" urban design are notoriously difficult to define, the differences in orientation are informative. By defining the role of a public sector designer as a protector of the public interest, the implication is on a client or user-focused approach. In contrast, defining the role of the public sector as an advocate for "good" design implies not only that there are certain universal principles of urban design, but that these can be known and implemented. Although it is doubtful that urban designers in either city would establish a strict dichotomy between public interest and good design, the nature of their responses on the role of the public sector gives insight

into key differences in urban design practices, and the way that the public sector negotiates its role. In the contestations over the expertise of public sector professionals, those in Toronto sought to establish their authority over issues related to the public good, while in Los Angeles this function was not considered.

Negotiating Expertise between the Public and Private Sectors

With these competing claims on professional expertise, one would expect a certain degree of conflict as public and private sector actors attempt to manage the processes of city building on the project and policy scales. This was largely not the case in the projects studied here, with conflict more often occurring between government departments, such as planning, engineering and public works, or between levels of government, than between urban design professionals. Consultants in both cities rarely spoke of disagreements with the public sector, which is not unexpected given their business model and the importance of the city as client. The degree to which consultants asserted consistency with municipal actors varied slightly by project and by city, but the general sentiment was that disagreements with the municipality were over technical or minor, rather than substantive, issues. Only in Toronto did the public sector acknowledge considerable differences of opinion and orientation between municipal employees and private consultants. In this respect, examining the differences between Toronto and Los Angeles professionals in assessing private-public sector conflicts can offer insight into how private expertise has been deployed in a way that limits debate about the motivations or goals of urban design practices. Without a public sector that sees itself at least partially in conflict with private urban designers, active confrontation about design practices and goals rarely occurred.

In Toronto, consultants and city staff expressed marked differences of opinion about the level of conflict between public and private sector professionals. While city staff emphasized their role in carefully managing outside professionals and shaping their work, consultants smoothed over these differences to portray a sort of unified team of private sector and municipal designers. Contrast these two views of design processes in Toronto:

> That's actually a great working relationship [with the City] and it's almost like one studio. [Interview 19]

> This morning I was at a meeting where we actually had to decide 'well, which of our team has the biggest ego' because that person is the person that is going to deliver certain messages to our consultants. Because you can sit around a table like this and we can discuss and we can share things, but when you get into certain large groups, we actually have to have people who have big egos to deliver messages in a certain way so that the principal consultants – who also have significant egos – will listen. So I think there's a lot of the psychology of how to communicate is very important when you're a municipality dealing with consultants, who often have an extremely high profile, and it doesn't necessarily mean they're always right, but they have the appearance of always being right. [Interview 44]

Municipal staff in Toronto commonly expressed this questioning of the products and expertise of private sector urban designers. While acknowledging their expertise, municipal staff in Toronto rarely offered uncritical support for the work of consultants. Instead, city staff emphasized the importance of the public sector in shaping the work of consultants to meet city goals.

In contrast, both sides of the design profession in Los Angeles felt there was little conflict between the public and private sector, and when this did occur, it was over minor issues. When one consultant was asked if there were any conflicts with the public sector over the design of Grand Park, he stated:

> No… not really. There were definitely a lot of issues because it was an existing site and there's existing parking structures below grade, there were some issues with how best to move forward with new elements that had to hit the top of the deck, that had to be structured there, and once we sort of resolved the process, it sort of followed through. [Interview 15]

Public sector urban designers in Los Angeles did not argue that they had a specific role in managing consultants or protecting the public interest, rather they emphasized the notion of a common ideal of good design:

> … we all worked together on that, [with] the private consultants on board. And the private consultants had worked on several other private development projects so [they] also understood the issue… so with the consultants from the outside they understood the issue. And being designers, they wanted to figure out how to make it easier to get good design done… [Interview 35]

The lack of apparent conflict between public and private sector urban designers in Los Angeles – and its contrast to these negotiations in Toronto – reinforces the professional expertise of outside consultants. In one respect, this united approach between the public and private sectors on substantive issues serves to increase the political impact of consultants. Previous studies of consultants point to conflict between private and government professionals as a destabilizing force. As Nelkin argues: "The influence of experts is based on public trust in the infallibility of expertise. Ironically, the increasing participation of scientists in political life may reduce their effectiveness, for the conflict among scientists that invariably follows from their participation in controversial policies highlights their fallibility, demystifies their special expertise and calls attention to non-technical and political assumptions that influence technical advice" (1975, 54). While Nelkin speaks about conflict "invariably" following the use of experts in policy formulation, this sort of conflict - and the associated processes of demystifying professional expertise - did not follow in the Los Angeles projects. The significant capacity of the public sector in Toronto was able to foster some debate about design practices, while in Los Angeles, which has no check on the expertise of outside professionals, this debate rarely occurred.

These differences in how public sector experts in the two cities conceptualize their role in relation to the public interest raises broader questions about models of urban design practices. While there may be the tendency to view public sector practices as emblematic of urban design as the protection of the public interest – perhaps representing a model of practice that leans more towards the pluralistic then the visionary – this was not shown to be a governing principle for public sector actors in Los Angeles. While urban design professionals in Toronto viewed their practices as shaped by this ideal – to varying degrees of success – this was not a vision espoused by their counterparts in Los Angeles.

Reinforcing and Legitimating Expertise

One of the issues that emerged was the difficulty faced by public sector employees in asserting their expertise when outside consultants were perceived as more highly valued (see, for example, Altshuler 1965). Part of this was due to a circular logic that since consultants were being paid, their work is more valuable:

> People always think that a private consultant will give you better advice even if it's the same advice that you are getting within because you are paying for it. [12:18]. I laugh now because I'm in the private sector, but I know what it's… the public sector is a complicated animal. [Interview 45]

When asked if the City sees an advantage in having outside consultants provide planning and urban design services, one former public sector employee stated:

> Well, yes, I think they do for a couple of reasons. One is that planning [department] is short by 60 odd people, so they have a huge manpower problem. But they also have an expertise problem. A third thing, I think, is if an outside firm does it, they are hopeful that it gives them more credibility then what they might provide. [Interview 43]

In this response, two justifications for outside consultants are described:[105] first, is the perception that the public sector is unable to provide the same level of expertise as the private sector, and the second is the idea that outside consultants were seen as more credible in the advice they provided. Aside from the idea that paid services are of a higher quality than "in-house" staff can provide (or as the respondent refers to it, the "expertise problem"), the outsider role itself contributed to the view that consultants were more expert than their municipal counterparts. Designers in the private sector acknowledged that even if they were providing the same advice as public sector staff, they were able to garner more support because of their outsider role:

> … even though the planners will say 'well in our policy statement we think this should be 6 [storeys] going up to 8', the councilor will say 'screw the policy statement, I don't care'. So we [consultants] come along and basically say 'you know what, 6-8 is fine, it should be 4 over there and maybe here you can go to 12' and that then provides a home for a lot of people to come, and even the councilor to come. [Interview 18][106]

Public sector staff also commented on the 'outsider' role as important for creating professional expertise:

> I guess it's the same you've got in the city, there's a certain familiarity with the people you're working with all the time and then when outsiders come in they appear to be more qualified or more expert or whatever. [Interview 42]

Regardless of perceived expertise, private sector consultants are seen as more valuable – either more qualified or credible – because of their employment outside the public sector. This was not only used by private consultants to justify their use, but remarked upon by in-house staff, as well. While outside consultants may use this perception of increased credibility to bolster the recommendations made by

[105] The lack of staffing for urban design and planning processes, whether a product of 'permitted decline' or not, is largely beyond the scope of this work. The relationship between inadequate public sector staffing and the reliance on outside consultants would be an area for future investigation.

[106] The interactions between political staff and design professionals creates another layer of complexity. This is covered in more depth in Chapter 3.

public sector staff, as in the example above, they may also contradict municipal policies. Regardless of whether outside consultants are supporting or challenging municipal policies, the perception that they have a higher level of expertise or credibility because of their outside status permits them a higher degree of power.

While the outsider status of consultants was one way the expertise of outside experts was legitimated, there were also more subtle instances. One example is when public and private sector designers were forced to defend their professional expertise and advice. If policy documents are contested – as is common in Toronto with the ability to appeal planning decisions to the Ontario Municipal Board – professional expertise can be at the center of these cases. The use of consultants to develop policy documents relates to the perception of their expertise for contentious cases:

> … Because the consultants have done the study, their name is on the study, they become the experts. So when we go to the [Ontario Municipal] Board, they will go and defend a new development application, when in actual fact the study doesn't support it. But *because they're the expert*, they wrote the study, they can say 'yes, but this is a different situation, different context, and therefore it's appropriate.' And so we see that quite a bit. [Interview 42, emphasis added]

Professional expertise can be negotiated and legitimated through a variety of avenues. The role of outside consultants in formulating policy documents - regardless of the input of municipal staff - in this case was seen to establish and reinforce their autonomous expertise, as well as allow them to contest the advice of public sector staff.

Conclusion

Multiple strategies are used to both create and reinforce the expertise of urban designers, and in related practices, differentiate between the expertise of public and private sector professionals. Placed in the context of professionalism as a protection against competition, or as Larson (1977, 2005)

describes it “monopoly of competence”, the professional practices observed in Toronto and Los Angeles show a clearly formulated divide between the public and private sectors. While outside consultants maintained control over “creative” and market expertise, public sector actors were often relegated to interpreting legislation and non-substantive decision-making. The degree to which this occurred varied, but only in Toronto was the professional expertise of private-sector consultants actively challenged. Although the extent to which these contestations were successful in altering projects and policies is debatable, they were noticeably absent in the Los Angeles case studies.

These key differences in how the expertise of Los Angeles and Toronto public sector designers is conceptualized - both internally and externally - points to a divergence in the nature of urban design in these cities. While in many theoretical conceptualizations the practice of urban design has been seen as the public sector regulation of private development or the idea of an ‘invisible web’ shaping urban space (Kumar 2002; Lai 1988; Lang 1994), it is clear that there is a spectrum along which this occurs. Although there is some form of regulation governing built form in both cities, to imagine these regulations shaping urban development to the same extent is inaccurate. In addition to noting the political and professional uses of expertise, understanding how public sector designers see their role helps better understand the contemporary practices of urban design in the U.S. and Canada.

The divide between how outside experts view the role of the public sector also offers clues into design practices. In Toronto, this divide is fairly subtle, with the private sector acknowledging the importance of public urban design to some extent, while also asserting the significance of their role. However, in Los Angeles, this public-private relationship breaks down fairly quickly, with few checks on the expertise of private sector professionals.

The implications of the ways that professional expertise is created, situated and reinforced relates to the larger context of urban design and development. The deployment of professional expertise to shape not only project outcomes but social and public orientations cannot be underestimated. This chapter sets the foundation for understanding how the construction of professional knowledge has much wider social and political impacts. As Larson comments, empirically-based questions must be situated in a broader frame that acknowledges "what professions have contributed to the rise of new regimes, the transformation of the class structure, and the application of practical knowledge to social and cultural change (2005, 318)." Reflecting back on Bentley's description of Zaha Hadid's negotiation strategies with a public sector client, the deployment of "creative" expertise not only alters the project, but also creates the range of possibility:

> … the division of labour in the modern form-production process is organized in such a way that it is usually only 'designers' such as architects who make proposals for physical designs, except in the most general terms. As an architect, this gives Zaha Hadid a crucial element of initiative, so far as physical form is proposed. It is her proposal, once made, which sets the agenda for the subsequent process of negotiation about form. (1999, 38)

The following chapter examines the ways that professionals are able to deploy their expertise in relation to political actors and processes, and how these tactics are influenced by the public sector capacity in both cities.

Chapter 5: Power and Politics

As with all questions of urban design, land use and development, issues of political control and power are interwoven throughout the decision-making and implementation processes. Adding to the complexity of these questions is the role of private sector urban designers, who are able to operate both within and outside the formal political channels.

The following sections outline the context for understanding the role of political actors in local governance as well as theories of planners as political actors. After providing this background and its applicability to urban design processes, the next section addresses those actors traditionally associated with political power – elected officials and their staff – to better understand the context within which both public and private sector urban designers work. The following parts look specifically at how power is negotiated *between* design professionals, paying attention to the work of public and private sector urban designers in shaping built form and policy. It is argued here that those traditionally associated with politics – elected officials, political staff, and business coalitions – can be considered a visible source of power, able to shape design decision-making through a variety of overt and implicit strategies. In this sense, formal political actors are not only involved in policy-making functions but in the day-to-day shaping of urban design projects, leading one urban designer to observe that the "council offices are the true planners".

In contrast, political power among professionals is wielded through more subtle processes. Private sector actors were often able to portray themselves as politically neutral, unlike their municipal counterparts, and use this to bolster their role as more professional and unbiased. While many public

sector designers challenged this, only consultants were able to leverage the advantage of political neutrality. Consultants were also able to exercise political power by capitalizing on their external status to provide advice outside of the formal channels, such as when politicians disagreed with the advice provided by planning staff.

Context: Understandings of Power and Politics

Understanding Political Power

The distribution of power – and understandings of who has access to decision-making – has important implications for urban design practices. While some theories have focused on the role of political elites other imply that power is more dispersed. For urban design and planning decisions, the role of these actors is key. In a highly politicized planning system – which is influenced by the type of political structure present – decisions are made not only on the basis of professional and bureaucratic recommendation, but also political self-interest. Understanding the nature of these political interests and how they are negotiated through formal political actors and their staff is key to contemporary urban design practices.

Theories of urban politics can be grouped into several broad strands based on the perceived motivation of principal actors, distribution of power, and definition of interests. Despite a large body of work on local political actors, there is a recurrent focus on the role of elites – whether economic, political, or less commonly, social – in shaping government actions. While pluralist and public interest theories seek to show that power is dispersed and decision-making is driven by a rational knowledge of the public interest, these types of political actor theories receive less attention than those oriented

towards elites, and have been highly criticized (Sanders and Stone 1987). Elite-focused studies such as elite-reputational, regime, and growth machine theories, argue that various powerful groups are most influential in shaping local policy, though they may require public allies to achieve their goals. These theories vary in the degree to which they discuss design and planning decisions, though the nature of urban politics means that land policies are at least superficially addressed in most discussions of local political actors.

Pluralists, believing that power is diffuse rather than centralized, focus on the *exercise* of power rather than the source of it, where power is defined as participation in decision-making. While the pluralist approach has certain methodological advantages over elitist understandings of power, Bachrach and Baratz (1962, 948) identify several issues: firstly, there is no way to distinguish between important and unimportant issues, and secondly, the model "takes no account of the fact that power may be, and often is, exercised by confining the scope of decision-making to relatively 'safe issues'". Similarly, the differences between reputed power and actual power can be difficult to assess (Bachrach and Baratz 1962), further complicating understandings of how power influences both decision-making processes and the results of those negotiations.

Social Production Model of Power

A key difference in approaches to urban politics is in the assumptions on the capacity of governmental authority. While "pluralism assumes that governmental authority is adequate to make and carry out policies promoted by top officials so long as those officials do not lose popular favor", few other theories take the same approach (Stone 1993, 2). In contrast, regime theory, with its roots in political economy, acknowledges the role of the private sector in issues of governance: "It [regime analysis]

recognizes the enormous political importance of privately controlled investment, but does so without going so far as to embrace a position of economic determinism" (Stone 1993, 2). Rather than allocating power to any one group – whether formal or informal political actors – regime theory focuses on the interactions between these groups. In this respect, regime analysis theories offer a middle ground between the belief that governance operates independently from economic issues (a primary criticism of pluralist theories) and the structuralist interpretation of production as the dominant influence for every other activity.

Regime theorists focus on the actions of business elites in conjunction with formal political actors in shaping policy. These theories emphasize the dynamic of internal decision-making, and the interaction between public and private actors, rather than the dominance of one group (Kantor et al. 1997). In this conceptualization, neither government nor businesses have the capacity on their own to shape policy. Rather the view is of:

> … power as fragmented and regimes as the collaborative arrangements through local governments and private actors assemble the capacity to govern... Both local government and business possess resources need to govern – legitimacy and policy-making authority, for example, in the case of government, and capital that generates jobs, tax revenues, and financing, in the case of business. (Mossberger and Stoker 2001, 812)

Regime theory is important in that it rejects the assumption that government has the capacity to form and enact policies on its own, making interactions with the private sector crucial in understanding political decision-making (Stone 1993).

In Cox's critique of the new urban politics (1991), he argues that while land-based elites may form growth coalitions, in other contexts it is local governments that are instrumental in formulating policy – one of the primary differences between growth machine and regime theories. These differences in

process lead Cox to argue that local dependence, or the degree of immobility, explains more of the pro-growth movement, than either coalitions or political regimes.[107] In fact, this complexity – indicative of the tension between politics, economics and idiosyncratic social factors – is difficult to resolve, and reflects a greater debate about the influence of formal and informal political actors.

There is an interesting parallel between the view of the built environment as a social product (Cuff 1991) and the treatment of power by regime theorists. As Mossberger and Stoker argue, the internal dynamics of coalition building and regime formation can be "understood using the social production model of power… the political power sought by regimes [is] the 'power to' or the capacity to act, rather than the 'power over' others or social control" (2001, 812). In this sense, cooperation among disparate actors is fundamental to regime maintenance, though does not necessarily imply consensus (Stone 1993). Just as a more nuanced approach to the built environment stresses multiple actors and the negotiations between them, regime analysis treats political power as similarly socially produced and spread among disparate actors. A key element largely missing from this social production model of power is the role of professionals - whether in the civil service or the private sector - as political actors that share in the capacity to influence decision-making in the same manner as formal political actors. While some scholars understand professional expertise as a political tool (for example, Fischer 1990, 2000; Nelkin 1975), this area has not been fully addressed in understanding the nature of political decision-making for land use and development issues.

[107] The distinction between growth coalitions and local governments seems problematic when quasi-governmental organizations such as redevelopment agencies form part of growth coalitions.

Politics of Local Government

Moving beyond theories of political power, there has been substantial interest in local governance and the multitude of actors involved in regulating municipal functions. In some instances, the focus is on elected officials (for example, Judd 1984; Valverde 2012) while others have examined the decision-making capacity and power of non-elected actors, such as bureaucrats (Lipsky 2010) and professionals (Blau 1979; Nelkin 1975). From both perspectives, there are a variety of modes through which power is exercised in the context of planning and local government.

The orientation toward elected officials has often prioritized the formal methods of government including the ballot box, government structures and electoral politics. In some cases, these have had strong impacts on planning and design decisions. Movements towards local government reform have attempted to reduce the politicized nature of land use decisions. The key characteristics associated with local government reform – a weak mayoral system, a small number of councilors elected citywide, and a dominant city manager – were designed to "maintain political non-interference in local development politics and to reduce not-in-my backyard political responses to political development" (Punter 2003, 13). In other cases, government structure can affect the nature of decision-making and support for design and planning policies. Judd (1984, 100-103) contrasts the differences between strong and weak mayoral systems, noting the criticism that weak mayor systems disperse power so widely that no one is held accountable for government policy. The role of a 'strong mayor' in effectively guiding development is debatable as there is significant variance in design capacity between cities with both systems and this has not been studied extensively.

Despite the movement towards local government reform, formal political actors are often seen as contributing to a highly politicized environment for planning and urban design decisions. In Valverde's study of municipal regulations and enforcement, she notes that "local politicians play a very important part, not only in shaping policy, which is their job, but also interfering to a surprising extent in the day-to-day work of municipal officials… this often hostile interaction between local politicians and low-level city officials is here described as the 'dysfunctional dance of local governance'" (Valverde 2012, 21). The power of politicians to not only shape policy but to affect the day-to-day decision-making around land use issues is a distinction that needs to be prioritized when analyzing the context for urban design practices.

In contrast to theories of formal political actors – elected officials – there has also been an examination of the bureaucracy and their implementation of policies. There has been a concern about the potential for innovation and responsiveness in the bureaucracy (Fainstein and Fainstein 1972), and the role of professionalization in government responsiveness and democratic processes (Kearney and Sinha 1988). Despite this interest in the role of bureaucratic actors, there has been less research on the political constraints and orientation that affect the civil service and bureaucrats involved in land use and urban design. Lipsky's seminal study of what he terms "street-level bureaucrats"[108] underscores the conflict between policy and implementation:

> On the one hand, the work is often highly scripted to achieve policy objectives that have their origins in the political process. On the other hand, the work requires improvisation

[108] Lipsky focuses his analysis primarily on the work of teachers, social workers and police officers, but defines "street-level bureaucrats" as those workers who interact with the public and have control over the allocation and dispensation of benefits or sanctions. The lessons he draws from observations of these public sector works can be applied to those in the planning and design fields.

> and responsiveness to the individual case… The phrase street-level bureaucracy hints at this paradox. 'Bureaucracy' implies a set of rules and structures of authority; 'street-level' implies a distance from the center where authority presumably resides (2010, xii).

In this sense, while Valverde (2012) argues that formal political actors have a surprising influence on municipal decision-making through day-to-day negotiations rather than policy formulation, professional actors also have the power to execute policy through a variety of interpretations. In this understanding, bureaucrats can act as policy decision-makers through their power over discretionary services. Understanding these competing pressures, and how they are negotiated, is a critical element in unraveling the political realm of urban design practices.

Planners as Political Actors

While many theories of political processes address issues of planning and land use, they often focus on either formal political actors or those thought to be land-based elites. Understandings of urban planners as political actors have received more attention in planning theories than those focused primarily on local governance. There has been interest in the interaction between planners and politicians as part of the political process (Flyvbjerg 1998; Forester 1989; Kitchen 1997). In challenging the neutrality of planners, the need for integrating power relations in the framework of planning process, and by extension urban design, has also been noted (Beauregard 1989; Forester 1982).

Several seminal case studies detail the political pressures and constraints facing planning practitioners. Seeking to challenge the ideal of rationality in planning, scholars such as Altshuler (1965) and Krumholz and Forester (1990), have analyzed the actions of professional planners in local government. Flyvbjerg's (1998) work in Aalborg, Denmark provides a more contemporary analysis of the work of professional planners, and how rationality was deployed for the protection of special interests and for the exercise of power. Peattie's work in Ciudad Guayana (1987) is especially instructive as it devotes

attention to the work of urban designers, facing different constraints than planners. In Peattie's analysis, the complexity of the political realm facing the urban designers and planners - and their own professional biases about the nature of expertise - were critical in understanding the planning and design processes.

In this context of highly politicized decision-making, there can be a tendency to gloss over the gradations in the work of professional actors. Forester in particular has argued for understanding the nuances in the political actions of planners rather than portraying every decision as part of a power struggle (or as Flyvbjerg insists, Machiavellian). While there may be instances of withholding information and other tactics of manipulation, this does not necessarily apply to *every* case. As Forester states: "In a political world, surely we should expect that planners will often withhold information or manage consent or be pressured to manipulate people, and we should assess in detail *how* they do so" (Forester 2001, 267). The emphasis here should be on the cases and circumstances where these tactics are deployed and in what manner, rather than applying a broad brush to understandings of political power.

However, largely absent from these theories of political power and planners as political actors is a more nuanced understanding of professional actors. In most conceptualizations, the civil service or bureaucracy is seen as a unified sector, directly employed by public entities. The key differences between the work of public and private actors, both of whom are involved in activities traditionally seen as the domain of government, has been addressed from a management or governance perspective (Beveridge 2012; Saint-Martin 1998, 2000) though rarely one that accounts for the complexities of professional expertise in urban design and planning processes, or one that assesses the

political nature of these two groups. The following sections examine the political pressures on public and private sector professionals and how these are negotiated through urban design practices.

Power, Politicians and Design Processes

Politicians as Planners

The complexity of negotiating planning and design decision-making is underscored by the multitude of actors involved at multiple stages of the development process. Before examining how power over design decision-making is balanced between public and private sector consultants, the role of elected politicians and their appointed staff must be first addressed. The perception of those interviewed was that elected representatives were actively involved in planning and design issues, to greater or lesser degrees. Many urban designers in both cities focused on the nature of local politics and the power of councilors to control what happened in their ward or district. As opposed to at-large systems where councilors are not elected by a specific district, both Toronto and Los Angeles have ward systems (called council districts in Los Angeles), which are associated with concerns over 'horse-trading' or ward courtesy.[109] In both cities, the relationship between local councilors and professional urban designers highlights this concern, and the power that ward or district officials have over urban design decision-making. This section addresses not only the broad political context within which design decision-making occurs, but also the specifics of leveraging political support, the nature of ward courtesy, and the role of council staff.

[109] Ward courtesy is the tacit understanding that the local councilor has control over projects in his or her ward, and the rest of council abides by that decision. Los Angeles is especially notable in this regard, with almost 100% unanimity in council votes (Alexandar 2010).

Planning in the Political Context

While political engagement and support was seen as an important factor in all case studies (either for the positive or negative), the way it was deployed could vary significantly based on perceived interests and context. Several respondents identified political support as one of the key deciding factors related to the success of their projects. In some cases, political support was positioned as integral for defending the public interest against private sector goals:

> You have got to have the political side's support because if the politicians don't support the public sector goals then the private sector goals run roughshod over the public sector. It's just the way it is. I've had a number of times when directors had come to me and said 'the politicians don't support it… give up'. [Interview 2]

In other instances, designers did not identify the political conflict as between public and private goals but rather as the gap between developing policy documents and then implementing them in a council-based system. Public sector staff in Toronto (with its well-developed policy framework) were especially cognizant of this issue:

> The biggest challenge to me is the political reality of getting things through council. So staff will articulate the vision, we'll work on development applications, we'll work on recommendations to council but then anything happens, right. So we're never… council doesn't always agree with us. [Interview 40]

In both Toronto and Los Angeles, there was consensus that planning decisions were politicized and that councilors, who ultimately have control over planning issues, are often motivated by significantly different concerns than those of planning and design professionals. As one public sector employee, with significant private sector experience, stated:

> You know, the city council of L.A. does the planning. That's another problem. To be the head of planning in L.A. must be a very frustrating job because all planning decisions are made by the council offices. And a cynic would argue that all of them are made based on campaign contribution potential. [Interview 37]

Private-sector consultants underscored this understanding of planning decisions as highly politicized:

> It's long been said that in LA, development has as much as anything been the plaything of the council members. [Interview 10]

Understanding planning and design decisions as part of a highly politicized land use context affects the nature of how urban design policies are undertaken and implemented. These examples can be seen as general issues related to the political context surrounding design. In a council-based system, which requires approval of many planning and design issues, the role of political support, whether for plan development, implementation, or for a specific project, is a key influence in the work of planners and urban designers. While most of the case studies were marked by a lack of serious, substantial conflict, Downsview Park was the exception. With the local councilor in staunch opposition to the project, the impact on municipal staff was considerable. In this instance, the conflict between the elected official and other levels of government (in this case, the federal government and their arms-length agencies), contributed to the view that city staff were unable to provide independent advice because of the surrounding conflicts. As one former elected official stated:

> I'd say city staff were in quite a difficult position and… the local councilor took a very, very hard line throughout this, that basically nothing should happen and nothing was good enough and there were lots of procedural battles with motions coming up at community council that were designed to frustrate the planning process and pre-empt it, and I think city staff felt in a very difficult position to give independent professional advice. [Interview 32]

Where there was intense conflict over the goals and implementation of the project, the professional opinions of staff were included in these conflicts. In the context of highly politicized decision-making, with local councilors exerting control over planning and urban design strategies, the professional competence of urban design professionals, especially those employed by the public sector, is highlighted. There were also specific strategies used to influence or control built environment decisions. The next sections address how ward courtesy, political leverage and political staff are used to shape urban design processes.

Ward Courtesy

Several extensive studies of the planning and design cultures in North American cities emphasize the public policy nature of design practices but rarely account for differences in the political structure of the locations. For example, the detailed examinations of Vancouver's urban design policy and review framework by Punter (2002, 2003) address the special powers conferred by the Vancouver Charter but fail to account for the key differences in the structure of an at-large council system. The at-large system, which some argue can limit adequate representation, does often succeed in prioritizing city-wide concerns over local interests. In contrast, ward-based politics were frequently mentioned as a challenge to the work of professional designers. As one consultant describes it, ward courtesy is the tacit understanding that the local councilor directs what occurs in his or her ward:

> There's basically a deal among councilors, you stay out of my ward, I'll stay out of yours, and so each ward is a fiefdom. Thank god [councilperson] was a benign dictator, a very creative one, but if it had been a different type of politician, it wouldn't have happened. [Interview 22]

Municipal planning staff in Toronto and Los Angeles echoed the importance of ward courtesy as well. While power may be seen as decentralized among many councilors, the nature of ward courtesy overrides that, with few willing to go against the wishes of the local councilor if it jeopardizes his/her support when issues occur in their district. Municipal staff commented on this relationship among councilors:

> So much of planning is ward based, and it's the local councilor who really leads, who the rest of council looks toward. One of the things on council here is that if you have development in your ward, certainly a developer who has not garnered the friendship of the local councilor, can do what we call 'working the second floor', but 99% of the time, councilors look toward the local ward councilor to say 'yay' or 'nay'. Because nobody wants to be making war that way, to be saying 'oh we're going to be putting all the tall buildings in your ward'. So there is generally a respect on council for that. [Interview 41]

In Los Angeles, the power of the ward councilor in shaping development decisions was reiterated:

> The council role in planning is pretty powerful in LA because there's that sort of mutual courtesy: you want that in your district, I'll go your way but I'm going to want this in my district so go my way. [Interview 34]

Private sector consultants were also aware of the importance of having the support of the local councilor for planning and urban design decisions. As one private sector consultant commented on the nature of ward-based politics in the planning system:

> There's [councilperson] who is the best of the bunch but he works as a kind of a mini-planning commissioner in his own ward. He basically tells people what to do and how to do it. [Interview 22]

Although councilors in Los Angeles have significantly larger districts than in Toronto, both by population and land area, the same notion of ward courtesy was commented on by design and planning professionals. As one private sector consultant in Los Angeles stated:

> Each city councilperson has a lot of control over what happens in their district. I think it's really important. [Interview 12]

Despite the differences in Los Angeles and Toronto with regards to the level of urban design policy and planning, the political system could often undermine these comprehensive strategies through decision-making at the council level. With both municipal staff and outside consultants describing ward courtesy as an important factor in decision-making at the political level, understanding the constraints on design and planning professionals becomes significantly more complex.

Council Office Designers

The role of council office staff emerged as one of the key differences in how political power was deployed in the two cities. Unlike in Toronto, elected officials in Los Angeles relied heavily on their own appointed staff to provide advice, independently of the planning department. These staff members are not part of the civil service and are expected to be responsive to the wishes of their appointing official, rather than the council as a whole or broader governmental priorities (Sonenshein

2006). This group of political staff, who come from various backgrounds, were often intimately involved in providing advice to councilors and engaged in shaping decision-making processes. Political staff viewed their role as being involved in the day-to-day decision-making, as a way to ensure accountability of the project team to the elected representative. Ultimately, they viewed themselves as those with the final control over decisions:

> I think the pressure of having a representative from the elected official there every meeting, kind of brings a new sense of accountability, whether 'oh shit, we better figure out this problem because if not somebody is going to tell the boss'. Whereas in other projects, where maybe someone from a politician's office is not so intimately involved, they don't have that amount of accountability. And so I think that really helped because at the end of the day there was somebody in the room who could say 'this is how we are doing it, and we're the ones who are paying you guys, so this is going to happen'. [Interview 29]

Planners and designers contested this perception that council staff had ultimate control over planning and design decisions to differing extents. Some designers acknowledged that council staff perceive that they have final control over planning decisions, though how that power is deployed is less clear. As one private sector designer stated:

> I would say that most of the council offices that… actually I would say *all* of the council offices that I have dealt with also have a very, very strong sense that they actually are the true planners. [Interview 1]

And similarly,

> It's always been fascinating to me that they [councilors] have their own planning staff, and it's sort of like that mediates between council office and the neighborhood groups, really, and then Planning [department] kind of gets brought in, and kind of gets *let know* what the decisions are in some ways [Interview 9].

The power of council offices was echoed by those in the public sector as well, with one urban designer stating that political staff members:

> They have a lot to say about projects, they don't have everything to say, but they have a lot to say about the main thrust of a project, there is no doubt about that. Sometimes when these projects come through, the council staff, you know, lay down the broad parameters of what their expectation is, and usually, I'd say 80 to 90% of the time, whoever's deciding in the planning department goes along with that. [Interview 34]

Given this perception that council staff have significant control over these issues, the question arises as to how this power is negotiated, and how design professionals arbitrate conflicts with political staff. While most private and public sector designers expressed that they had a good working relationship with council staff, difficulties were acknowledged. As one private sector urban designer stated:

> The truth is that you've got a planning department in Los Angeles and then you've got something like 50 other people doing planning in the City of Los Angeles who are working within the council offices, because the council offices are staffed with planning deputies and assistant planning deputies and there's a type of weird synergy in that there's both a tremendous amount of respect and good working relationships between those groups, and at the same time, there's a sense within the council offices that they're the ones who actually, on a project-driven basis, sort of are the gate-keepers, the true gatekeepers. [Interview 1]

One private sector urban designer who had done a substantial amount of public sector work for both the City of Los Angeles and other local municipalities commented on the episodic nature of working with council offices:

> Well, I think it's… in the City itself… it's odd, you know, the council offices are powerful so if there is a councilman who gets that – like Bill Rosendahl – that's an important force, but it's very happenstance. You know, they'll have their deputy for transportation, so you go and argue for something but it's very ad hoc. That's a force. [Interview 16]

The involvement of council offices in planning and urban design issues was largely characterized as episodic and reactive. While there were instances where council offices would be heavily involved, there were others where urban design issues were seen as inconsequential.

Some designers differentiated between the interests that council staff had in design issues specifically, rather than broad development and planning concerns. While design issues were sometime seen as inconsequential for political staff, in other instances they could become serious issues of conflict:

> There are cases where the council staff doesn't even worry about what's going on at the margins, the design margins. So a project might come in and they might have their broad

> parameters but they really don't care about whether there's a landscape requirement and how difficult it is and that kind of thing so usually landscape is something the planning staff for councilmen and women say 'fine, the more the merry, I don't really object' but when it comes down to re-designing the façade of a building or trying to sort of mess with the ground level or something, it gets very contentious and ultimately the planning staff loses if the council staff decide they want to do it. [Interview 34]

This view that council staff often times acted as the "gatekeepers" for planning and design issues was borne out by their active involvement in the day-to-day planning and design decisions. For example, in the Grand Park case, political staff members were involved not only in broad strategy decisions but in the weekly meetings between the developer (who was managing the project), the design consultants, and county staff.[110]

Relationships between professional designers (whether public sector and private sector) and political staff also raised issues of professional expertise in how decisions were made regarding design issues. The political staff involved in the design negotiations surrounding the projects often had varied backgrounds or little experience related to the built environment. While some had formal expertise in planning or design, others did not. As one council staff member explained:

> To be quite honest with you, I never thought I would do this type of work. I have no experience in this type of work, I didn't study planning in college… I never did construction, I'm not an architect, so I never thought that I would be doing something like this, I never thought that I would… but I kind of have been groomed into this role. I've kind of been trained and taught how to do it. [Interview 29]

While negotiations over professional expertise commonly occurred between public and private sector professionals (as described in Chapter 4), the important role of political staff in design issues added another layer of complexity to this issue. Political staff were often cognizant of the issues related to

[110] As discussed in Chapter 6, staff from the City of Los Angeles were only tangentially involved in the Grand Park project.

professional practice and acknowledged the difficulty of challenging paid consultants on their professional opinion. When asked if there was any conflict over design issues with professional staff, one political staff member replied:

> I don't want to talk bad, but definitely they think they know what is best and yeah, they get insulted at times when you come in and just tell them 'we don't like that' or 'that's not what we want' or 'that's not the vision that we have for the park' and yeah, there's a lot of pushback, definitely. It gets very tumultuous at times and you know, you're telling somebody you don't like their artwork and they are like 'well, you paid me to do this and for my professional opinion, and the industry standards, this is the right way to do things' and you know, you got a guy like me who's coming and saying 'well, we're not going to do it' and they don't like that. [Interview 29]

There were clear instances where professionally-trained designers and planners seemed to resent the involvement of political staff in planning and design issues. In several cases, this was expressed as the belief that political staff didn't have the appropriate professional expertise and were expressing political, rather than professional, opinions. Two public sector professionals discussing this issue highlight the perception that political staff are involved in design projects beyond their professional capacity:

> [Interview 3]: Not all of them [political staff] are planners, right?
>
> [Interview 36]: Yeah…
>
> [Interview 3]: They have the title but they don't have the background.
>
> [Interview 36]: They sure don't, so well said. But yeah, depending on how the office is set up, there's no criteria for… it's a political office.

In this sense, establishing the professional expertise of urban designers is not only a process of negotiation with other professionals (whether in the private or public sector), but also with political actors who have differing interests in the implementation of projects. While understanding the negotiations around expertise between municipal actors and outside consultants largely revolved around protecting professional domains, the active role of political staff implies a further threat (whether perceived or actual) to the work of professional urban designers.

The heavy involvement of political staff was unique to Los Angeles, with no similar equivalent in Toronto.[111] While political staff in Toronto commented on projects and discussed their council members' position on design and planning issues, none mentioned being actively involved in either planning meetings or consultation processes. As one political staff member described his interaction with municipal planning staff:

> Planning staff do alert the councilor whenever proposals come in, and that kind of stuff. [Interview 31]

In Toronto, the relationship between council staff and design professionals was largely limited to one of providing information, rather than the active and influential role they have in Los Angeles.[112] Municipal staff and private sector consultants in Toronto reiterated this, acknowledging that while elected representatives have significant control over and interest in planning and design issues, their council staff did not have the same important role as they did in Los Angles.

Political Leverage

The political involvement in design issues was significant in both cities, as described above. Although this offers an interesting perspective on the autonomy of design professionals and processes of urban design, the motivations for political involvement in urban design provide further insight. The complexity of why political actors get involved in some projects and not others - and the impact of that involvement - offers another lens on the issue of professional urban design practices. A common

[111] Some Toronto politicians and professionals attributed the differences to the larger ward sizes in Los Angeles, and associated it with more funding for political staff, though the exact reasons for this would require further investigation.

[112] This is not to imply that councilors themselves did not have active involvement in design projects in Toronto. As discussed above, councilors were often key players in shaping projects that occurred in their wards.

sentiment in both cities and across the projects studied was that there had to be some sort of tangible political benefit for political involvement to occur. Planners and designers, especially on the municipal side, were aware of this and acknowledged the importance of allowing politicians to claim 'benefits' from urban design projects. As one former high-ranking municipal employee stated:

> That political link is crucial because I never met a politician that doesn't want to take credit for something. I used to say, and I still do, that you come up with the ideas… and it hurts sometimes to say 'well, that was [politician's] idea in the official plan, and he championed it' but you got to do it. So that's important. [Interview 38]

However, making this political benefit clear was less straightforward in other cases. Where there was seen to be little advantage for municipal politicians – oftentimes because of complex interactions among levels of government – it was difficult to get political support. In the case of convoluted governance structures, such as in the development of Downsview Park, the interactions among different levels of government made the political benefit for local councilors less clear. While community opposition could also be a motivating factor for political involvement in urban design issues, this was only observed in the Downsview Park case. One private sector consultant remarked on the lack of interest from municipal politicians because of few perceived benefits:

> From the City's perspective politically, like you think about this project… the Crown corporation is giving the people of Toronto a 360 acre park at no cost to the taxpayer, either in its construction or its long-term maintenance and operation. You would think that somebody at the City of Toronto would think that was a great thing and support the project for it, but because nobody can leverage that politically, it can only be leveraged at the federal level. At the federal level, there are really are no champions anymore that feel they can… you know, it's already been given and it's done so whatever political benefit it had, is now gone. So I actually find that there's just no incentive for the City to really support anything on this project. Except I think at the staff level, you know as city builders, they do think it's a great project but they are just unable to act on it. [Interview 19]

Downsview Park, in particular, was a case where the lack of political support was attributed to few clear benefits for elected politicians, as well as some community opposition. In other examples, clear political champions of projects emerged - Country Supervisor Gloria Molina for Grand Park and

Councilor Kyle Rae for Dundas Square - and were widely identified by both municipal and private sector actors as being instrumental for the projects' success. The importance of political support was identified in more general ways as crucial for implementing urban design projects in both cities. When asked what could improve the quality of urban design in their city, participants frequently identified issues related to political will, leveraging political support and political interest in design issues:

> … political will, that's what we need... That's the biggest problem. [Interview 13]

And, similarly:

> We don't have city councilors who are standing up at public meetings, or not enough, we do have some but we don't have city councilors who are standing up at public meetings and saying this is the next generation, this is part of the evolution of Toronto. [Interview 21]

The importance of having political champions for public sector projects specifically was also mentioned by public and private sector urban designers. In contrast to developer-led or private-sector projects, urban design projects that have a large public component need advocates with the power to support them through council processes. One private-sector consultant in Toronto specifically commented on the differences between public and private projects:

> We did… a hugely controversial project. That was all about having some councilors fighting for it and being very progressive. But yeah, a lot of our projects you need those political champions. On the other hand, developer projects, which actually go through the system relatively quickly, don't necessarily need political champions, even the really big projects and I think that has to do with the OMB, because that's always hanging over everybody's head. [Interview 19]

Political staff, unsurprisingly, touted the importance of elected officials in implementing projects,

> There are five supervisors but Grand Park was really a vision of Supervisor Molina and she was kind of like the champion of it. [Interview 29]

While to some extent this may be seen as a self-preservation tactic on the part of elected officials and their political staff (i.e. the need to demonstrate their success in accomplishing projects), it was borne

out by both public and private sector staff, who do not necessarily have a vested interest in the portrayal of elected officials. However, even when political actors supported projects, their relationship with professional actors could still require careful management. In the Yonge-Dundas case where there was a political champion for the project, one of the consultants still felt that they were battling against the planning department and the city administration[113] over the implementation of the design.

> There were so many things that we were trying to fight to keep into the project that we could only go to [the councilor] with the real big things. We couldn't go to him everyday and say '[Name]…'. [He] was the champion of it, but you couldn't use up all of your wild cards, and so we would try to keep the important issues in perspective so when we really needed help we could ask [him] for help. [Interview 23]

Although political champions can be seen as an important aspect of the urban design process, in some cases there was a limited amount of intervention they could provide at the implementation stage. In other examples, such as Grand Park in Los Angeles, not only were political champions influential at the large-scale processes of the project, they - or more specifically, their staff - were also involved in the minutiae of implementation.

In the cases discussed here, political actors (and their council staff in Los Angeles) played an important role in the planning, approval and implementation of urban design practices. While elected officials could operate as 'political champions' advocating for projects, they could also capitalize on the highly politicized planning system in both cities to shift planning and design processes in different directions. With the politicization of planning decisions and the dominance of ward courtesy, the professional

[113] Specifically, conflicts emerged with the facilities department, which was involved in procurement and materials. Several of the consultants on the project felt that conflicts were due to attempts to save money through cheaper materials and alterations to the selected design.

expertise of both public and private sector professionals was often challenged. While this provides a broad overview of urban design processes through the lens of municipal government, the specificity of public and private sector actors working in concert – and in opposition – in this political context requires further analysis. The next section outlines the nature of private sector consultants within the political framework and assesses their impact on urban design practices.

Consultants in the Political Process

The nature of elected officials and their appointed staff offers insight into formal political processes in design and planning decisions. However, understanding design professionals - both in the public and private sector - as political actors embedded in this realm further expands how the role of professionals is conceived. This section assesses the political machinations that surround the decisions related to issues of urban design by examining the relationships between elected officials and both public and private sector professionals.

Political Neutrality

While the political nature of decision-making by built form professionals is well established (for example, Altshuler 1965; Fainstein 2001; Logan and Molotch 1987), the private-sector professionals interviewed sought to portray themselves as removed from the political nature of their work. There was a tendency on the part of consultants to emphasize their removal from political decision-making and establish a sort of neutrality. Private sector consultants in Toronto particularly emphasized their lack of involvement in political issues in contrast to public employees:

> And we're also not bound by the political stuff that goes on… they [municipal staff] have to deal with all the councilors and all that stuff that goes on. So we can just have almost a more pure approach to it, where we're going to look at it and try to figure out what the best thing for this area is going to be, and we'll balance it obviously with the input of the

> community, but we don't have to get caught up as much in all that political negotiation that's going on behind the scenes… [Interview 24]

In Los Angeles as well consultants portrayed themselves as removed from the political constraints faced by public employees:

> I've never worked on the city side myself so I really don't have a good understanding of what it's like to work within those kinds of constraints where you've got the political side kind of on you and you've got the organizational, administrative, bureaucratic side on you, and you've got constituencies that are braying for one thing or another, either positively or negatively [Interview 10]

Other private sector consultants argued that their neutrality and removal from the political realm of decision-making allowed outside consultants to provide different advice than municipal employees. When asked about his interaction with city staff, one consultant argued that the private sector was able to provide "better" advice because they weren't constrained by their relationship with political and community groups:

> They [municipal staff] are smart people, they are good people, they are well-trained people. They are also people who have had their shit kicked out of them by every local councilor and community group so they are sort of battle tested. So they use us, to say things they can't necessarily say themselves, and introduce ideas that they can't. [Interview 18]

This sense that private sector consultants are outside the political nature of decision-making was commonly presented, either explicitly or implicitly. In some instances, this was explained as private sector consultants not being restricted by the existing legislative and policy framework:

> When it comes to being creative and being innovative about approaches to land use in different parts of the city, and how these areas fit into broader city building, that's what *we* can bring, because we can operate outside of the policy. I mean obviously we also have knowledge of it, and we know what's realistic, but we're not *bound* by it… [Interview 25]

This was a fairly common argument established by private sector designers, often in conjunction with the idea that this allowed them to offer "more creative" or innovative solutions, as discussed in Chapter 4. As this example illustrates, the consultant here attributes their advantage to not being limited by the existing legislative and policy framework, in the same way that municipal actors would

be. While the accuracy of this statement can be challenged on numerous fronts, the construction and utilization of this argument leads to the perception that private sector consultants can be more "politically neutral" than their public sector counterparts.

In a similar vein, private sector actors often argued that municipal actors faced serious political constraints that limited their ability to produce impartial planning advice. In the Downsview Park case, where the ward councilor actively opposed the development, consultants in the private sector questioned the professional expertise of municipal staff and designers, implying that their practices were shaped by political limitations. In this example, where the area development company, Parc Downsview Park, had hired its own private consultants, the competing interests between municipal staff and outside consultants are relatively transparent. Despite this, private consultants argued that municipal planners and designers had similar goals but were too constrained by the political context to express them:

> I think it's also depressing for the City staff because they are sort of… what I think has been happening with them is that they are under pressure to do everything they can to make it go slow, if not stop it all together. Or maybe go slow, make it so that the actual decision-making is removed from the city process and moves to the OMB [Ontario Municipal Board]. I actually think that the City prefers it when it goes to the OMB so they don't have to be seen to have approved what they know should be approved but the politicians are telling them not to do it. [Interview 19]

This conscious portrayal of municipal staff as professionally limited because of the political context of local government can be seen as a strategy of advancing the professional expertise of private consultants. As this example illustrates, the neutrality of private sector consultants is often established by creating the perception that *only* public sector actors are cognizant and affected by political issues. Although not all consultants advanced this argument, it was common amongst senior level consultants and firm partners.

Challenging Neutrality

Public sector employees actively challenged the notion that private sector actors could be considered politically neutral because of their outsider status. While consultants may not have the same direct pressures from political actors and staff because they operate on a fee-for-service model, they are still dependent on obtaining government contracts for their employment. Municipal staff argued that this relationship undermines their possible political neutrality:

> I find that consultants are political animals. They are political to get the job, and then when they do it, they read the lay of the land, and it depends on the consultant, but some of them are more inclined to give the answers that the politicians want to hear, whereas others will say 'no, no, this is what I think…" [Interview 38]

Public sector staff often questioned the neutrality of private sector consultants because of their fee-based business model. Where consultants argued that municipal staff were constrained by political demands, public staff described outside consultants as structuring their work to encourage future projects for the firm. While public staff attempted to mitigate this by establishing clear boundaries at both the Request for Proposal (RFP) and project level, some felt it still persisted:

> I think what's difficult for a lot of consultants is to grasp is that we're giving them work for a very specific part of the site and a very specific phase and a lot of them, in their interest, would love to be working on the entire [project] or thinking about the future and how their work that they're working on now may transition into more work in the future and bigger, larger scope. So what we find is that a lot of consultants will come back with the big ideas that foresee future phases and how their work might lead or lend itself to future phases of work, where we may have something else in mind. And we don't want to get into a situation where the consultants' design sets us up for having to implement future phases, you know what I mean, so they're creating work for themselves in the future in a way. Where we have a fairly clear idea of where we want to go in the future and it may or may not align with what the consultants have in mind. [Interview 7]

Some consultants were candid about the need for future work driving their professional practices:

> … there are 3 phases or 4 phases and the trick is to get hired in every phase. So the first phase is to think about what you're going to do, or to write a plan, a report about what you think you might do, so get paid just to conceptualize. And then the next phase is to take it through the public process and then the process of what it actually now really will look like, so like right before you finish construction drawings. And then, now you've actually got to

> get all the approvals, the environmental review and everything. And then you have this chance to actually build it, and then you have a chance to be involved with it when it's open. [Interview 8]

As these examples illustrate, the private consultant business model – fee-based, and dependent on new contracts – is perceived by some as influencing the way in which consultants provide planning and design advice. In this sense, understanding politics broadly as the competition and distribution of limited resources includes a wider range of political agents, namely professional actors. Incorporating consultants' business model as competition for resources, and an integral part of their professional practice, leads to new conclusions about how these practices are understood.

In Toronto, with its unique appeal process available through the Ontario Municipal Board (OMB), consultants could be brought into conflict with municipal staff over the interpretation of how design and planning policies applied to specific instances. Some public staff mentioned instances where consultants who had worked on policy documents were then hired by developers when their projects went on appeal to the OMB:

> … what's happened is because we worked very closely with the consultant on the study, now developers are going to that consultant and saying 'will you come with us to the OMB, and argue our case against the city?' And you know, they're a business, they've got a bottom line, they take those opportunities to earn that money. They're behaving with some integrity on the stand and arguing against themselves in some cases [laughs]… but it puts me in a *very* difficult position, because you don't want to challenge them because they've given the city their best advice, but you've got to allow enough room for thinking to change and evolve too. So that is a clear problem. [Interview 40]

In this scenario, the political nature of consultants is not expressed in their dealings with elected officials but rather in the conflict between their fee-based business model and the ideal of neutral professional expertise.

The view of the OMB appeal process varied significantly between public and private sector designers and planners. While one public employee mentioned the positive benefits of the appeal process (stating that it could act as a 'check' on the power of individual ward councilors trying to limit development in their local area), only private sector actors were overwhelmingly supportive of its role.[114] Often acknowledging that their municipal counterparts viewed it as an overtly political process, private consultants argued that the appeal process acted as a way of enforcing policy strategies that are undermined by ward politics. Although many public staff pointed to the difficulties that occur when private-sector consultants who previously worked on policy documents later defend projects that are being opposed by municipal staff, few consultants saw this as a conflict of interest.

Despite the professional advantages for consultants in portraying themselves as politically neutral, some did acknowledge that they had similar constraints as municipal staff. In some instances, consultants expressed that the range of options available was limited by political considerations. As one consultant remarked, she was aware of what would be considered politically feasible:

> There were some things that we just couldn't go for, either because they [city staff] had extensive discussions with the community and they knew they weren't going to go for that sort of development or density, or because they knew that the councilor, for example, was really pushing for something and it just wasn't going to fly if we did it any other way. [Interview 24]

The close working relationship between consultants and municipal staff described here meant that private-sector designers were not only cognizant of, but also responsive to, the same political constraints that affected public employees. This provides a more nuanced understanding of how private consultants work with both municipal employees and elected officials. To some extent, private

[114] Specifically in relation to private-sector consultants' support for the OMB, it was difficult to discern whether this was for their policy work for the City, or as consultants for private clients.

sector actors face similar political constraints but are able to portray – or better profess – a degree of political neutrality, and by extension professional expertise, in a way that their municipal counterparts are unable to. Similarly, private sector consultants, especially firm partners, are expected to develop close relationships with the development community, which is unsurprising given the business model of their practices. This key difference between public and private sector actors has implications in how their expertise is deployed and utilized, and by extension, their relative power in shaping policy about built form.

"If they are not getting what they want…"

While private sector consultants are able to establish a professional advantage by depicting themselves as more removed from the political realm of decision-making than their municipal counterparts, they often maintained close interactions with political actors. While one private sector consultant responded when asked about constraints in his work for the City that "I don't think that we have felt the political pressure directly", links with political actors made this portrayal of neutrality questionable, and the professional expertise of consultants was often used for political purposes. Rather than consultants acting as politically neutral experts, they often had close relationships with political staff and elected officials. Although dependent on the particular circumstance, councilors sometimes circumvented public sector employees to obtain professional opinions from the private sector that fit their goals more closely:

> Q: Do councilors ever deal directly with planning consultants?
>
> A: Yes. Some of them have very good working relationships with the planning consultants, so sometimes instead of asking staff for advice they will ask a consultant that they feel very comfortable with, they will go directly to them. We have a number of those that are at the city… It depends on the councilor and what kind of relationship they have with the consultants. [Interview 42]

These types of relationships were found mostly in Toronto, where there was a strong public sector engagement with issues of design. In Los Angeles, while private sector consultants were heavily involved in projects, public staff did not identify many conflicts in the same way those in Toronto did. However, in some cases, municipal designers in Los Angeles commented on elected officials and their council offices working outside of the planning department:

> I would say that my experience is that the council offices in Los Angeles have very strong relationships with staff in the planning department, for the most part have confidence in them. At the same time, I would say that if they're not getting what they want to get out of the planning department, they don't hesitate to get what they want to get from other people. [Interview 34]

This sense of consultants working outside the formal channels in providing expertise to elected officials was more common in Toronto, although it was noted in both cities. Rather than assuming that there was little political maneuvering on the part of consultants in Los Angeles, this can be interpreted that consultants there had fewer threats to the independence of their professional expertise than they did in Toronto, with its involved public sector.

While there was evidence in both cities that outside consultants could be used to provide alternative advice if political actors were not in agreement, this only hints at the differing relationships with political decision-makers that private-sector consultants are able to hold. The status of private-sector designers gives them a wider range of activities that they are able to engage in, including lobbying and donating to political campaigns as well as developing relationships with political actors. The nature of these relationships accords a certain degree of power to private designers which has no comparison in the public sector, though the difficulty of measuring and assessing this is apparent.

Conclusion

In understanding the political context for urban design practices, a complex picture emerges of the constraints and pressures that are placed on both private and public sector actors. As described in previous scholarship on the politics of land use and development, formal political actors were actively involved in urban design issues in both Toronto and Los Angeles. The ward-based political systems in both cities were seen as contributing to the politicization of urban design decisions, with 'ward courtesy' and the influence of the local councilor seen as important factors. Looking beyond elected officials, a range of other actors were also involved in urban design practices. In Los Angeles, appointed political staff - working through council offices - could often be highly involved in design decision-making and influential in urban design processes.

While private sector consultants often portrayed themselves as politically 'neutral' in their professional advice, several challenges counteracted this claim. Consultants could be used to provide a different professional opinion to elected officials when they were in disagreement with municipal staff. Another challenge to the neutrality of consultants is their fee-based business model that is reliant on new contracts to sustain their firms. In some cases, it was felt that consultants would develop proposals that created the demand for future work.

This examination of the relationship between elected officials and professional actors establishes the context for understanding the multiple factors involved in urban design processes. However, in understanding the relative power of actors in urban design practices, it is necessary to evaluate not only how design and planning decisions are made, but also how the range of possibilities for decision-making is established and the role of private-sector consultants in shaping this. The following chapter

explores how negotiations between political actors, municipal professionals and private-sector consultants work to shape both design policies and the resulting built form.

Chapter 6: Setting the Agenda

To understand political power, it is necessary to examine the relative power of actors in influencing decisions and creating outcomes. As has been previously noted, it is critical to move beyond the dominant rhetoric into a concrete examination of the products of planning and design processes. As Yiftachel states: "the study of power relations should not be overly concerned with the stated goals, rules, or ideologies, but rather with concrete policy outcomes" (1998, 396). Moving beyond the proposed visions and strategies requires evaluation of the results of urban design and planning processes, and how actors are instrumental in shifting those plans. This section analyzes the negotiation of competing public and private sector goals, and where the relative power lies in these processes. For the cases studied here, the power is shown to lie largely with development interests – regardless of public sector capacity – and is deployed through a number of strategies aimed at shifting that balance. While the nature of these tactics, and the degree to which they are utilized, varied between the cities depending on their public sector capacity, they were found in all four instances.

While some of the strategies for shifting the agenda towards development interests can be seen as private sector based, others were dependent on the nature of professional expertise. Here, Benveniste's blunt assessment on the function of experts: "that is, the use of experts to reassure everyone that decisions taken for other motives appear to have been taken for rational, technical reasons" (1977, 55) takes on significant importance. Two different types of strategies are identified here – those that emanate largely from the development sector and those that are dependent on

professional expertise for their initiation.[115] While the later is most relevant to this research, both will be addressed to offer a more complete understanding of the nature of urban design decision-making.

Context: Power over Decision-Making

The difficulty in assessing control over decision-making is heightened by the complexity of determining what issues are considered important. The idea that key issues are marked by public disagreements has been actively challenged. Rather, "the distinction between important and unimportant issues… cannot be made intelligently in the absence of an analysis of the 'mobilization of bias' in the community; of the dominant values and the political myths, rituals and institutions which tend to favor the vested interests of one or more groups, relative to others" (Bachrach and Baratz 1962, 950). Part of this includes understanding how values are promulgated and the range of options established. In Nelkin's discussion of the political implications of technical expertise, she states that "the planner may not be the first to identify 'problems' of an urban area, but he puts them on the agenda and plays a large part in defining the terms in which the problem will be thought about – and those terms in effect play a large part in determining the solution" (1975, 39). The ability to 'set the agenda' or establish the realm of decision-making possibilities gives substantial power to structuring urban design outcomes. Thus, asking if the public or private sector sets the agenda in discussions about urban design policies – as well as how this agenda changes – becomes a pertinent question. The cases studied here show that

[115] This is not to imply that the development sector is without professional expertise, but rather that in this scenario the client is more explicitly defined. In all of the case studies, development interests hired their own professional consultants (or employed them in-house), and these urban designers had more clearly defined roles than those working on public policy or design activities. While this is not addressed in-depth here, the way that privately-employed designers and planners balance their clients' goals with their professional ideals is an area for further research (see also Cuff 1991; Gutman 2010a).

the substantive realm of decision-making was largely formulated by business interests, who were able to gain access to political decision-making through the use of consultants, and capitalizing on the blurred lines between public and private sector practices.

Professional Power in Setting the Agenda

The power of professionals can be understood from a number of perspectives. While several have discussed access and control over information as a source of power (Benveniste 1977; Nelkin 1975), there has been less analysis of how this is deployed in the shaping of the built form. One strategy for power over decision-making has been to assume political neutrality on the part of professional experts. In this conceptualization, the portrayal of political neutrality is in itself a source of power. As Forester describes the relationship between technical expertise, political neutrality and power:

> … because information supplies solutions to technical problems, it is a source of power… The technician must adopt a benign view of politics to believe that sound technical work will prevail on its own merits. (Forester 1982, 68)

In this understanding of professional expertise, it functions as a source of power by creating the perception of political neutrality. While access and control over information has been assessed as one way of achieving and maintaining power (Altshuler 1965; Benveniste 1977; Forester 1982), there is less known as to how this transforms the built form, or how it is deployed through specific strategies and tactics.

In the context of professional neutrality, it has been argued that the relationship between public and private sector participants has influence over the relative power of these actors. Weight has been placed on proximity and alignment as one model for influencing those involved in decision-making, though the emphasis has been on political actors and lobbyists rather than professionals (Beer 2009). Other sources of power have been identified that capitalize on professionals' relationships with the

multiple, and often conflicting, actors involved in land development. The combination of neutrality and access to numerous participants can function as a form of power. For example, Olds (2001) discusses the importance of professionals acting as a mediating force in negotiations between development, political and bureaucratic actors. In favoring the selection of local architects over elite or international firms, it was noted that:

> More important [than creativity] was their ability to reach some consensus between the demands of the firm, and the demands of City [of Vancouver] politicians and officials. (Olds 2001, 137)

In the example above, professional practices are shown to be a mediating factor between real estate, political and bureaucratic interests, and utilized to the advantage of the development sector. This is especially key given the argument that the role of the public sector has moved from one of direct control to one of continual bargaining with private networks (Peters and Pierre 1998). The extent to which these strategies are able to shape the future direction of development and city visions has been less explored, especially as they structure the resulting built form.

Entrepreneurial Goals and Professional Practices

A further issue with the role of professional practitioners in setting the agenda has been the assertion of the entrepreneurial orientation of urban design professionals. Professional practices take place in the context of larger urban and global processes, which many have argued have embraced an entrepreneurial nature (for example, Hall and Hubbard 1996; Harvey 1989; Hubbard 1996). Most of these have focused on the role of state actors in creating a climate of increased development, dependent on attracting private investment: “State actors, in pursuing their own aims of maintaining revenues and power, depend on private capital investment to reproduce and expand the urban environment, resulting in a bias toward capital” (Fainstein 2001, 13). While these approaches have often prioritized business-elites or political actors in the reproduction of entrepreneurial landscapes,

understanding how professional practices operate within this realm provides the opportunity for an additional layer of complexity.

How professionals negotiate the entrepreneurial landscape, and its impact on their professional practices, becomes a key issue in understanding the orientation towards increasing development. In one conceptualization, professionals, whether from the public or private sectors, are integrated in managing the desire for increased development. As Cuthbert points out in his analysis of planning processes in Hong Kong, this has been associated with planning and design based on accommodating increased development:

> Instead of planning being carried out on a macro-scale, directing development in accordance with legislation, it has devolved to a system of micro-powers at the level of individual building sites. As a result, bureaucratic discretion has been optimized along with the capacity to accommodate shifting patterns of investment and economic interests" (1992, 583).

Notably, urban planning is seen as both object and *agent* of this restructuring of local urban economies (McCann 2001; Roweis 1981). The entrepreneurial turn in local governance is accompanied by a discourse of increasing government austerity and limited resources. Within the context of limited resources, the role of the professional in providing advice and guidance is further heightened:

> Governments are resource constrained, sometimes deliberately so. They need the information and resources that social forces can mobilize in order to design and implement effective policy" (Horak and Young 2012, 6).[116]

The position of professionals, as well as the development sector, in providing expertise to fill this gap is a part of the shifting nature of urban design practices. Obviously, the impacts of the entrepreneurial turn in local governance and management go far beyond issues of professional practice. However,

[116] Horak and Young use the term 'social forces' to refer to organized interests of all kinds, especially from the business sector.

exploring the nature of urban design and planning professionals within this context is crucial for understanding how urban form is produced.

The entrepreneurial nature of urban design practices has received less attention than that of architectural ones. In contrast to professions such as law and medicine, architecture is dependent not only on the strength of the building sector, but also on attracting clients and increasing the firm's future work (Gutman 2010b).[117] How these entrepreneurial strategies work within the context of the public sphere is an additional aspect for understanding the role of urban design professionals in shaping civic priorities and agendas. As Larson argues, the integration of professionals in the public realm gives them priority in shaping discourses and practices:

> Even the market aspect of the professional project still involves the production of *new needs* and the interpretation of old and unrecognized ones. When professionals act as civil servants, or *for* the state, as in the setting of standards, the creation of social needs and their direction toward stated forms of fulfillment construct a positive image of state power. Thus, in promoting the performance of function, the professions have become central players in the constitution of a public sphere, by their discourse and by their applied practices. (Larson 2005, 327, emphasis in original)

Understanding urban design practices in the context of an entrepreneurial profession opens up significantly new areas of interest. As will be explored here, certain strategies of private sector consultants, such as providing pro bono services to the public sector, can be seen as a tactic for extending the entrepreneurial nature of the profession, and by extension, its power over decision-making and setting the agenda.

[117] Gutman, writing in the late 1970s, comments on the astuteness of architects expanding their expertise to market themselves as specialized in graphics, visual communication, exhibition design and other areas, as a strategy to minimize their dependence on building and market cycles (Gutman 2010b, 37). The expansion of architectural firms into both urban design and government policy work may be seen as another astute entrepreneurial strategy.

Professional and Private-Sector Tactics

Two sets of tactics can be seen as tilting the balance of power towards the development sector in urban design processes. The first tactic largely originates from the private sector, when it has the ability to alter municipal agendas through the formal channels of policies and guidelines. While this strategy takes different forms in Toronto and Los Angeles – a more substantial public sector in Toronto allows for an arguably unsuccessful contestation of these processes – they both can be seen as part of a broader trend of more control by private sector interests. The second tactic focuses on professional consultants and their mediating role between the two sectors. Here professional expertise – largely conceptualized as neutral – is a further strategy for increasing the power of the private sector in shaping the built form. This section explores both of these approaches and how they were deployed in the four case studies to shift the balance of power away from the public sector.

Private Sector Tactics

Assessing power as the ability to affect outcomes in intended ways (Blau 1979) is full of inherent difficulties. Determining how outcomes would proceed without intervention can often be little more than a thought experiment. However, in examining the urban design processes and practices that took place in the four cases studies presented here, a clear form of intervention occurred that can lead to conclusions about the relative power of private sector actors in shifting design outcomes. By funding planning and urban design policy activities, private actors were able to not only accelerate the frameworks deemed necessary for their projects to proceed, but also to fundamentally change public sector priorities. Where there was little public sector oversight, the private sector fully took over public urban design processes.

This section examines how private sector interests are able to shift municipal planning processes by paying for planning and urban design studies to be undertaken. It also assesses the role of urban design consultants in advancing the visions of their private clients through these processes. This strategy was identified in both Toronto cases, while different tactics – albeit with similar outcomes – were identified in the Los Angeles examples. As will be discussed below, the ability to shift and change municipal priorities – oftentimes in direct conflict with previously established policies – represents a significant source of power for private sector interests, as well as for the planning and urban design consultants that represent them.

Paying For Priority: Shifting Agendas in Toronto

In the Downsview Park case, land interests in the area were able to accelerate the development of planning and urban design policies by funding those studies, to be managed by public sector staff. While the intention was for the funder – in this case Parc Downsview Park (PDP), the major landholder in the area – to have no involvement in the creation of these plans, the difficulty of maintaining that distance was apparent and exacerbated by conflicting goals between the City and those funding the policy review.

When the military base at Downsview was decommissioned, pressure was applied on the City by local landowners to re-evaluate its secondary plan, zoning and design guidelines for the area. While the City had an interest in doing so – the plans referenced the Technodome project, long since cancelled, and were created before the approval of the subway extension – it was estimated that lack of staff

resources would delay this process by three years.[118] With the majority of the Downsview lands zoned as hazardous industrial due to their previous use as a military base and for manufacturing, redevelopment of the land was considered unfeasible. Staff at PDP emphasized that the current zoning would make it impossible to proceed with selling the land for development, stalling both residential development, as well as the creation of the park itself due to its self-financing structure.

To ensure that the policies were in place to enable the sale of development lands, PDP paid for three city staff to be taken "off-line" and work exclusively on a Downsview area secondary plan amendment, as well as for consultants to be hired by the city to complete an area study and urban design guidelines.[119] While the studies were funded by the landowners group, both the City and the consultants involved asserted that the funders had little control over the process. For example, the consultants hired by the City to complete the Downsview urban design guidelines stressed that their direction came from public sector staff rather than the funders of the study:

> … certainly there is some consultation with the landowners group but they're not driving the process and we're not as consultants dealing directly with them, we go through our municipal contact and then they deal with the funders. [Interview 24]

Similarly, while public sector actors acknowledged the potential for promoting private interests over city priorities, it was largely felt that having municipal staff mediate the process eliminated these conflicts:

> Well, first of all, he who pays the piper calls the tune. So that's why it was so important in the arrangement with Downsview and the one or two other examples, that the developer didn't hire the consultant. That would be unacceptable. Because whenever there was a

[118] This is based on estimates by PDP staff. City staff did not comment on how long the process would be delayed without outside funding.

[119] In addition to planning and urban design firms, the funds from PDP paid for heritage, servicing, transportation, and water management consultants to be hired. These firms were all managed by City of Toronto staff.

> policy decision to be made, it would be in their interests, even with the best of intentions, it would be in their interests. So the person would have to be accountable to the city… [Interview 32]

Despite these assertions that the funder should not get involved in the development of the policies, issues arose. The notion of 'paying for planning' was problematic and created certain expectations from the private parties that funded it. There were dissenting views across the range of actors – city staff, private consultants, and the landowners – as to the involvement of the funders in this process. While private consultants insisted that they were responsible to only their municipal contacts, as described above, other actors acknowledged the difficulty in maintaining this relationship. As an example of the former, one consultant felt that the privately funded process was not different from ones that had municipal funding:

> PDP was actually funding the secondary plan study but they were arms-length so we had some meetings with them but really no more than we had with the other landowners in the area. [Interview 24]

In contrast, some city staff described having to actively mediate between the funder of the study and the consultants hired to work on the policies. While there had been formal policies stating that the funder was not to have influence over the process, this was difficult to enforce, especially when the funder was able to contact the hired consultants. As a public sector planner stated:

> PDP… had a lot of trouble with the concept that the city is actually driving the process, it's the City's Official Plan, and there were a lot of issues and a lot of problems around that. They actually picked up the phone to call the City's consultants. We had some sympathy for it because they were paying the bills but at the same point of time we made it very clear… there was a clause in there which said very clearly at the front end 'the City is driving the bus, we are in control of the consultants.' Notwithstanding that, again this person from PDP kept calling our consultants up offline and trying to mold some of the things that they were doing, which was very, very problematic for us. [Interview 39]

The differences in these accounts of the process are illustrative of the difficulties in assessing the balance of power in the private-sector funded public process. To further complicate the implications of this 'paying for priority' scenario, the landowners' understanding of their role in funding the studies

conflicts significantly with that described by public staff, political actors and consultants. For example, while all the other groups implied that the City had maintained control not only over the management of the consultants but in their selection as well, this was contested by the funder of the study:

> The Official Plan amendment was directed by the City of Toronto. That was a decision that our board made a couple of years ago that rather than us simply do one with our consultant team and submit it for review, we elected for a bunch of reasons to allow the City to conduct their own review of their own Official Plan. We paid for it. And we hired their consultants. [Interview 6]

While other accounts are more nuanced in their assessment of the degree to which the study funder was able to influence the process,[120] the discrepancies between these interpretations raise concerns about the role of private sector actors in shaping municipal priorities through this 'paying for priority' process.

Both public and private sector staff interviewed were cognizant of the possible conflicts that could arise from the scenario where landowners funded policy studies. It was identified that one source of potential conflict might be if the interested parties directly hired the consultant, however public actors argued that this was minimized by the City managing the process. As one political actor stated:

> Well, there would be an obvious conflict if they [landowners] hired the [consulting] planner. The arrangement was, you pay the City money and we hire a planner, who was responsible and accountable to the city bureaucracy, not to anybody else. [Interview 32]

While many felt that the process could maintain public sector autonomy despite funding from the private landowners, the issue that remains fundamentally unquestioned is how public priorities are re-ordered when the development community is permitted to pay to accelerate and prioritize public

[120] For example, in another instance, the process of hiring consultants for the secondary plan amendment is described by the landowner as "we offered to pay for their [City] staff, to put on a few people, and their consultant team. So they [went] through an RFP process that we were party to but we didn't have the final say" [Interview 6].

policy processes. The Downsview case study in particular displays the ability of the private sector to restructure City priorities by paying for planning processes to be advanced according to their own development goals.

This process of "paying for priority" was not unique to Downsview Park. In the Yonge-Dundas Square case, a similar process took place where private sector interests funded municipal planning and urban design processes, though the relationship between policy outcomes and specific landowners is not as clear as in the Downsview Park example. For Yonge-Dundas, in a deal brokered by the local councilor, area businesses agreed to contribute the partial cost towards hiring a consultant to develop a strategy for the area.[121] As one political actor described the process:

> With the businesses, they agreed to put in money, and they hired [consultant name]. It was important for it to come from them… so this plan was generated by the YSBRA with their consultant. [Interview 33]

In the Yonge-Dundas case there appeared to be less concern about potential conflict between the goals of the business association and the City. Whereas in the Downsview case there was significant attempts to have the funder of the study maintain a distance from the consultant, with the project explicitly managed by the City, for Yonge-Dundas, these relationships were significantly more fluid. For example, in discussing their relationship with public sector staff, one consultant stated that they were involved in managing the planning staff. Furthermore, it was acknowledged that despite the contribution of city funds for the study, the consultant was working for the business association:

> [The consultant] did a really good job… being in the middle, working for the business association but understanding how to talk to the planning department. [Interview 33]

[121] The ratio of private sector to public funds varied depending on the account. The range for the private contribution was between one-third to one-half of the total costs.

The fluidity of the consultant's role – moving between having the City and the business association as clients – is not only an issue from the perspective of managing the process. After gaining approval from city council for the plan developed by the private-sector consultant, and partially funded by public and private sources, the selection of a developer for the site further emphasized the fluidity between public and private goals:

> We again had a RFQ, RFP and we selected them [the developer] and made a deal with them, and then we moved forward to acquire the land. And basically after a few tense negotiations [with the landowners], it became clear that this wasn't going to happen, so we moved to expropriate. [Interview 22]

Here the private consultant identifies with the public sector in describing the move to expropriate ("we moved forward to acquire the land"), while in other instances, they state that their client was the business association. These differing identities demonstrate the fluidity of consultants moving between public and private realms. In contrast to the Downsview example, there was less concern about maintaining the appearance of independence on the part of the City for the Yonge-Dundas project. The process is portrayed as being driven by the privately funded consultant, rather than the City:

> It was a kind of good collaboration from that point of view, in that they [the planning staff] understood – once they worked through the process with me – they had really bought into the analysis and the solution, although it wasn't something that in their wildest dreams that they would have dared to propose [Interview 22]

In contrast, public sector staff contested that the policy direction came from private sector actors but acknowledged that they worked together on a market driven strategy:

> The policy aspect would have been from the City of Toronto, I would have just been the person that was responsible for attending meetings, bringing that policy forward, doing the day-to-day work, working with the urban planner, and we worked with [the consultant]… trying to come up with something that was a viable solution to kind of stimulate that part of the city. [Interview 45]

While there were substantial differences between the two Toronto case studies in terms of how privately funded consultants were managed and directed by the City and development interests, they both illustrate the difficulties inherent in the "paying for priority" process. Although the extent to which the City attempted to maintain control over consultants paid by private interests – and their relative success in doing so – varied, the cases raise the question as to how this "paying for priority" arrangement allowed for city priorities to be re-structured or re-evaluated according to private sector goals.

In the cases where the private sector paid for the City of Toronto to either undertake policy activities directly or manage outside consultants completing the work on behalf of the City,[122] the motivation was often explicitly stated as for the purposes of capitalizing on building cycles or concern about missing development opportunities. For example, while part of the justification for the Downsview secondary plan update was related to increased transit service to the area, city staff focused on the development interests of the area landholders, referring to "timing issues":

> I don't know of any other secondary plan updates that have been funded by outside… certainly not since the amalgamated City of Toronto came into being in 1998… but because

[122] In Toronto, city staff disagreed as to how often policy work such as design guidelines had been funded by outside parties. Although a long-time public employee stated that Downsview was the first example they were aware, other public actors said there were a number of examples of developers paying for planning processes. One private consultant stated that they "do a lot of secondary plans processes where the landowners group is funding the study" [Interview 24]. Both of the Toronto cases studied here are examples of outside funding of policy processes.

> there were timing issues around this, because PDP did have development interest… [Interview 39]

For the Yonge-Dundas case, the need for an accelerated schedule to meet development goals was a critical issue in developing the project. In response to criticism about the quality of the built form and public realm, one consultant for the project emphasized that the priorities had been on stimulating development and working within a timeframe based on development cycles:

> We didn't have time, we just *had* to get this going. When you have that kind of momentum you just have to ride the wave. [Interview 22]

Others were less explicit as to why an accelerated process was required, though still supported the use of outside funding to achieve it. For example, one political actor commented on the long process that could occur if the municipal policy work was not privately funded:

> [There were] developments that would take years and years and years because it was so complicated. And by having somebody totally focused on it, it would mean that the paperwork side was better from the developers' perspective. [Interview 32]

While the above respondent implied that having landowners paying for increased priority only resulted in a reduction in paperwork, this justification remains based on the interests of the development sector. The time-based rationalization for allowing private sector actors to pay for planning and urban design policy processes, commonly found in both of the Toronto case studies, can be seen as one tactic for asserting control over the planning and urban design processes.

In addition to the argument for increasing the speed at which policy documents were developed, the development potential of the projects was another key aspect of justifying the external funding for public sector processes. Participants made clear the impossibility of developing the Downsview area without amended city policies. City staff acknowledged that development in the area could not occur

before significant policy and zoning changes, and were cognizant of the development pressure placed on the City by the landowners in the area:

> Even the recession in 2008 hasn't dented the real estate market in Toronto. Everybody and his brother can pick up a piece of land and put a proposal in and sell it in that milieu. Well, PDP wanted to get on that bus. And the problem that they experienced was that the development industry said to them 'well, that's wonderful but your zoning by-laws don't help us'. So if you're the Tridels and the Menkes and the Concord Adex [large residential developers], are you going to pick up a 20 acre piece of property that is zoned airport hazard land? No, thank you. You have no idea what to do with it. So PDP realized that… the minute they sold it off to the private market it reverts back to the zoning of airport hazard land and who's going to buy land that say airport hazard land on it? Nobody. So they had to go through the municipal land use planning process to rezone the lands to get the money out of it so they could sell the lands and build the park. That's the only reason they came forward to do that secondary plan review which is now resulting in the development applications that are flowing behind it. [Interview 39][123]

And similarly, in the Yonge-Dundas case, the consultant emphasized the need for a market-driven response to the issues, and identified that as a key aspect of the project's success:

> So I think that fact, that it was a market response to the problem, a market-driven response to the problem was really important. [Interview 22]

The ability of the area business association to partially fund the work of a consultant that was explicitly focused on finding a market solution and have that process become part of the public sector planning framework demonstrates a significant amount of control on the part of both private sector interests and their consultant. Although the level of public sector control over the privately funded consultant is contested (though not to the same extent as the Downsview case), the power of the business association to select and direct the consultants' work represents one strategy for re-orienting public priorities.

[123] This can be seen as the city actively working to reduce the "transaction costs" for the developer.

The ability to pay for accelerated planning processes not only re-orders the City's priorities in terms of policy issues, but also assumes future development according to the needs of the landowner rather than city-wide objectives. In this sense, permitting these "paying for priority" scenarios reorients the public sector to focus on policies that allow for the potential of increased development:

> So, I suppose there is a bit of an inherent conflict in that it's implicit from the City's perspective that, you know, we're going to try to make this application… the timings of the application be much faster, but underlying that is an assumption that something is going to happen here. [Interview 32]

Despite the other planning and urban design considerations for the area, the allowance of "paying for priority" – whether the motivation is discussed as a way to reduce bureaucratic hurdles, accelerate the timeline or deal with limited public sector staff resources – not only prioritizes the goals of specific landowners but also stipulates increased development as a city-wide policy. While the City of Toronto has been viewed as less reactive than Los Angeles in terms of developing urban design and planning policies, these examples of paying for priority illustrate that increased development can be seen as the underlying motivation for the development of these policies.

While in some instances both public and private sector consultants expressed concern that the private landowner did not interfere or influence the plan-making process, there was little appreciation of the fact that a private party had set the agenda by initiating, paying for, and arguably, directing, public policies. The case studies show that despite Toronto having a strong urban design department and capacity, the public sector seems to be in many cases taking the lead from the private sector. While city staff manage the day-to-day process of developing design policies, if the priorities are largely set through private interests, they are as Kipfer and Keil (2002, 228) describe, "like their American counterparts, [with] little control over investment and thus see their role restricted to managing the

contradictions of capitalist urbanization and codifying real estate trends through the politics of development approvals."

This process of private consultants "paying for priority" in the public sector policy framework raises questions about the nature of public sector decision-making. In this sense, the power of private sector consultants lies not in the "day-to-day" negotiations around projects and policies, but in establishing the focus – or realm of possibilities – for municipal policies. In both of the Toronto cases, the ability to pay for a separate planning process resulted in different outcomes for the development community. In the case of Downsview, this was by accelerating the municipal policy processes, while for the Yonge-Dundas case this was by funding and directing consultants that would focus on the needs of the business community and provide a solution that met their needs. While the level of municipal control in these scenarios varied – and is clearly debated – the end result is a high degree of power for the private sector, mobilized through the work of their professional consultants.

Private Goals as Public Goals: Altering Agendas in Los Angeles

In Los Angeles, where the policy framework and public sector involvement varied considerably from that in Toronto, the experience was less an issue of paying for priority to accelerate public processes. Rather, private sector interests were able to shift previously established plans and policies in favor of changing development interests. With a limited public sector capacity and urban design policy framework, the goals of the private sector often became those of the public, with little oversight or intervention.

In the Grand Park case, the role of the development community in altering a public agenda for the area is clear in the context of its long planning history. As discussed in the previous chapter, the area was conceived as a center for government services as early as the 1920s. Since that period, the planning and urban design strategies for the area reiterate and expand on these goals, emphasizing the area as a location for the concentration of civic services. While later plans encourage the development of new civic spaces and integration of other uses, this is focused around City Hall, rather than the Grand Avenue area (Los Angeles Civic Center Authority 1997). The role of development interests in changing this vision and re-orienting it towards a market-driven approach echoes the experience found in Toronto, though without the need to alter the policy framework to achieve those goals.

In understanding the creation of the Grand Park project, the role of development interests come to the forefront. Despite the substantial urban design and planning policies for the area, including those completed as late as 1997, development interests succeeded in re-orienting the Grand Avenue area. Consultants involved in the project were candid about the role of the developer in initiating the project:

> It [Grand Avenue] began really as you know, the famous glimmer in the eye of [developer and philanthropist] Eli Broad, who at that time… it was clear that the concert hall would be built. There was a period of time when it was not clear if there was going to be sufficient funds to build the Walt Disney Concert Hall so … and the parking structure sat there unused, and a resolution had just come about and some funding was found, more was sought after that. So Eli basically turned to his friend, who was the mayor at the time, Dick Reardon, and suggested that something should happen around… you know, here is going to be this iconic building surrounded by parking lots, government-owned parking lots and something should happen, and he had the idea of creating the Grand Avenue Committee, and initiating the work. [Interview 5]

As this respondent describes, the project was fundamentally a privately initiated project that was able to garner political support. The motivations of Eli Broad however are more complex than typical development interests. While he has a background in residential development, his involvement in the

Grand Avenue project was from the perspective of concern with the cultural and civic realm of the city, and more specifically, downtown. Although he had no financial interests in the development of the Grand Avenue project, his gains can be seen in a different realm related to prestige and influence.[124] Despite the lack of direct financial interest, his role is still as a private citizen that can make few claims to a broad representation of the public good.[125]

The conflicts between the established plans for the area and those that were proposed and ultimately implemented were substantial. While previous plans, notably the 10-Minute Diamond Plan, looked at existing and historic patterns of development, topographic constraints and development potential to propose areas suitable for intensification and new civic spaces, the Grand Park development capitalized on the available land and developer intentions. As one of the consultants on the 10-Minute Diamond plan commented:

> Eli Broad came downtown and it was a fascinating transformation, he's a man who made his fortune on sprawl as the head of Kaufman and Broad, lives on the Westside, does most of his work on the Westside, but something in his heart connects with downtown, and we've been a great beneficiary of that. I don't think he gave it the thought that we just

[124] Fainstein (2001) in particular covers the complexity of understanding the motivation of developers, including non-economic factors.

[125] A more cynical perspective on Eli Broad's interest in Grand Avenue relates to the desire for prestige as a philanthropist and a physical testament to his civic and cultural contributions:

> [Grand Avenue] has evolved in my mind into something like the Appian Way. And the Appian Way is where rich Romans build mausoleums for themselves, you can quote me on this. What we have up here – we have a Chandler Building, big beautiful building; we have a Taper Building, an Ahmanson building, we have a Disney Building and we have a Mahoney building. And these are monuments, free-standing, not really urban, but… free-standing monuments with the names of highly successful people, all purportedly, and I think and honestly, for good public use, but its not a place you go other than to attend a show or a museum. The Broad Museum… is another piece of it. He had to be on the Appian Way too. You know, I'm sure in its first century every Roman knew the name of every rich person buried on the street heading south out of the city.

> described, what has LA historically been, what is it topographically suited for and how did it organically grow based on the independent choices of people over all this time? You know, the idea of making Grand Avenue the great [street]… it fights all those vectors of influence. But we had Disney Hall finished, [the] County sold him some land for his museum and the idea of connecting them… [Interview 37]

The changing vision for the area, based on private sector and development interests, provides a contrast to the strategies deployed in the Toronto case studies. While the tactics for altering plans for Downsview and Yonge-Dundas involved private sector contributions to altering the policy framework, for the Grand Avenue case, these strategies are much more explicit. Rather than employing strategies to have city policies conform with private visions for the area – as done in Toronto – here those private sector interests were widely adopted with little apparent formal process.

The Grand Park project reveals further ways by which private sector interests were able to shape the vision and strategy for the area. Related, the firm selected to develop the available development parcels in addition to the park, was actively involved in the design and implementation of the new civic space. Public sector staff and consultants in Toronto were quick to emphasize that despite providing funding for the public processes, the private sector landowners were not to have influence over the process. In contrast, in the Grand Avenue case few saw this as a potential conflict, and the developer was actively involved in managing the design and implementation process for the public park. At the outset, the developer was to have a role in developing the civic space, however as the project progressed this increased substantially. A staff member from the developer described how their role increased from the initial arrangement with the County:

> When we first made the deal… the deal was basically we would help them through the process, to spend the 50 million and to try and help streamline it. That's really all that the original deal kind of contemplated, it said down the road we'll do a development agreement for the park improvements so it was like a couple of paragraphs in the original deal. And so we just sat down with them and said 'what do we want to do, do you want us to look over your shoulder?' and we kind of worked together and came up with this

> lease/lease-back option to… where the money would be best spent, so it was kind of a collaborative sit down and work through the nitty-gritty and we came up with that as a concept and then worked through the development agreement. [Interview 27]

In another instance, the developer stated that their role was not limited to an advisory one but rather they were instrumental in managing aspects of the design and the implementation of the civic space on publically owned lands:

> What we did, we Related, agreed to manage the design of the park and the construction of the park, and the construction is done on a lease-back arrangement with the County, so we leased the County property, did the improvements and then they were leasing it back to them, and then they have an option to buy it back. [Interview 27]

The role of the developer in shaping the form and implementation of the public space is clearly stated in these examples. While the perceptions of other participants may downplay the control and influence of the private sector in shaping the outcomes (though as noted below, they mostly align with the developers account), their role was part of the formal arrangement established as part of the public project.

Representatives of the Grand Avenue Committee confirmed the role of the developer in guiding the consultants and directing the implementation of the park, though described it as more of a collaborative process:

> … Because the park was owned by the County, it was never going to *not* be owned by the County … We selected [the consultant] firm and I worked sort of hand in hand with the Related Companies in directing them. That was a much more clear relationship,[126] and that was during the design. After the design and during the construction, the County itself took over, so the County then had a hand-in-hand role with Related. [Interview 5]

[126] The relationship was clearer in managing the development of the park compared with the development parcels, of which the plans for stalled significantly.

While this account differs slightly from that of the developer – as more of a partnership, rather than the developer fully managing the process – the private sector still has an instrumental role in shaping the design and form of the public park.

All the participants noted that the relationship between developer, consultant and public representative resulted in few disagreements related to the project design. However, the developer was ultimately seen as in control of the funding for the park and having a say over those issues. In discussing the design conflicts that came up related to the project, one consultant describes the influence that representatives of the developer had in these issues:

> So a lot of things came up, like that, where later on, as things developed, people realized certain things and brought them up to others attention and we had to figure out how to deal with it, and everybody was involved because it was… you know, Related would become involved then because it was a money issue and they were managing the money, and then they would say 'well that rail is important but I don't think that rail is important' so… [Interview 15]

The consultant notes that in issues related to the funding of park elements, the developer was ultimately in control. As discussed above, in the Grand Park case, the nature of the lease-back development agreement, as well as the transfer of the responsibility for the park design and implementation to the development company, resulted in a process ultimately guided by private sector interests.[127] While in Toronto there were significant attempts to maintain a distance between

[127] It may seem that the developer's contribution to the park ($50 million dollars) changes the public nature of the space. However, that financial commitment was part of the larger deal for the four publically owned development parcels. Although development on the other parcels has stalled, the fee was part of that agreement for the purchase of those sites and, as one respondent noted, the County could have chosen to use those fees for any public purpose. Rather than viewing the developer as paying for the park, a more accurate description is that the County used the fees recovered through the sale of development parcels to create the park. The degree to which private-sector interests influenced this is considerable. However, that is a comment on the nature of planning and urban design in Los Angeles rather than the private provision of civic space.

private-sector interests and the public urban design processes, in this case the developer was invited to manage the process. Despite public sector involvement in the projects – primarily through the joint powers authority and political actors, with City and County staff having a much lesser role – the design processes were largely a negotiation between private-sector development interests and the consultants. While the strategies were different from those employed in Toronto, the end result of private sector control over public processes are similar.

This trend of allowing control of the project to development interests was also found in the Staples Center case study. While several respondents noted that the Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) had significantly more planning and urban design staff capacity and resources than the City or County, the project proponents still held a significant amount of control over design and implementation. Although the development orientation of the CRA raises questions about its classification as a public agency, many argued that it had taken on the planning and design processes for this project. Despite the assertion that the CRA took on public-sector planning functions, the balance of power was still largely left with the project proponent and shaped by development interests.

Similar to the other case study projects, development interests were able to shift the vision for the area and re-orient them to suit their goals. As one CRA staffer described the origins of the project, the change in vision from the area came wholly from the project proponent:

> The Staples Center was something the City had not ever contemplated happening down there. It was AEG approached them, and they [AEG] were particularly interested in that parcel that the City had assembled for a hotel, that was way too small for a hotel. [Interview 4]

As discussed earlier, over the span of fifty years a number of agencies had significant planning and urban design visions for the South Park area. Despite this, the possibility of increased development, along with the political power of the involved private sector interests, allowed for a radically different vision to be presented and accepted. As in other projects, the private sector was able to shift public sector agendas substantially and with little intervention from the part of municipal actors.

In addition to the project being initiated by the private sector, the City had limited involvement in the design and implementation of the public space component. While there was interest in the creation of a civic space as part of the development, as described in the previous chapter, there was little municipal guidance for the planning and design of these elements. As one CRA planner described the City's involvement:

> For a lot of the projects that I worked with, when there was City involvement, we tried to get the city planning staff on board early. I'm not sure that happened with the Staples Center. I think that there was a situation where the developer and LA-CRA's urban design staff worked out issues and then presented those to the city staff. And I think there was a little kickback… [Interview 2]

And similarly:

> The City deferred to the CRA given where the CRA was operating… the CRA was operating throughout all of downtown with the exception of the industrial areas… the CRA was aggressive and willing to do that so they [the City] just backed off and let the CRA do it. [Interview 4]

When there was City interest in the project, it was from the perspective of ensuring that development occurred rather than regulating the public space. The development orientation of the City can be seen as a factor in the lack of control over private sector interests. When asked about the interest in urban design issues, one respondent argued that this was subordinated to development concerns:

> Design really was not a big issue with the City, they were more interested in just getting to the point where the development could be built, that was acceptable, if you will, to both the community and the developer, they didn't like developers walking away. [Interview 4]

This concern about "just getting the development built" combined with the lack of interest in urban design issues allotted a substantial amount of control to the private sector in shaping the project's development. This was re-iterated by private sector consultants who commented on the planning department's lack of involvement:[128]

> When we did L.A. Live it was kind of similar, that was 15 years ago, and it was really working with the redevelopment agencies, which were alive and well and doing really entrepreneurial work and you know the planning department was really a secondary entity. [Interview 14]

Despite the significant public funding, as well as the creation of a new public space, there was little municipal interest in governing how that space was designed and implemented. Rather the interest was in ensuring the project was developed, leaving the planning and design issues to the redevelopment agency and project proponent. Interestingly, city staff commented that there were concerns about the nature of the civic space and the role of the developer in advocating it as a public space:

> There was concern at the very beginning that it wasn't really one hundred percent public space and I think the developers advertised it as this great public space, labeling it as similar to some public spaces on the east coast, which were really in the public realm, controlled by the local government. And when I started reading that I go 'oh, this is not good' because it's a grand statement I knew they would be challenged about what it is. [Interview 35]

While the public sector was cognizant of the nature of the civic space being proposed for the area, there was little involvement in shaping it to meet city goals. As described above, the City largely left the management of the project to the CRA – with their entrepreneurial orientation – and made little attempt to shape the development of the space.

[128] This comment on the redevelopment agency as an entrepreneurial agency was also expressed by other participants, highlighting the distinction between the CRA and other city departments.

While it was believed that the CRA had more planning and urban design capacity than the City, the project consultants were still given significant leeway to develop their proposals free of CRA intervention. One consultant stated that although the CRA was involved in the project, its involvement was based on the premise that the project proponent should be allowed to develop their proposals independently from public sector input:

> The CRA was very involved, I mean they were very much advocates for giving the designers freedom within some constraints but there was basically a trust there that made it a lot easier to work, that a lot of times isn't there. [Interview 14]

Similarly, staff from the CRA reiterated that there was no significant control over the work done by the proponent's consultants:

> AEG was actually very good to work with. They had a lot of free reign in terms of what they were doing… [Interview 4]

The general sentiment was that while the CRA had an interest in the project's development – as well as the ability to shape it given their financial commitment – the developer was permitted to shape the terms of development. Although there were two public sector agencies with legal control over the project design and implementation, the real balance of power lay with the private sector. Few of those interviewed contested the view that the project represents both a privately initiated and privately controlled space, despite the involvement of public funding and the promise of a civic space.

The Staples Center example also demonstrates how privately initiated studies were later adopted as municipal policy. As one of the developer's consultants describes the development of the streetscape guidelines:

> They [AEG] were sort of getting down to the wire and the planning department said 'oh but you haven't done a streetscape plan, so you can't do anything' and AEG's like 'oh no, what do we have to do?' and luckily I was at the meeting and I just said, well you already have one, we did it already, we just have to write it down. So we did that. So they got those two

> mechanisms, the specific plan and the streetscape plan, which are now in the planning department, managed by the planning department. [Interview 46]

This account of the adoption of city policies from private sector processes – processes which included little municipal oversight – brings questions about the nature of public policy formation to the forefront. The involvement of consultants in developing studies and documents for the private sector that later become official city policy demonstrates another considerable source of power for the private sector.

In both the cities studied here, the private sector was able to shape and influence city policies related to urban design and development. With the differing public sector capacity in Los Angeles and Toronto, the degree to which they were able to do this changed, but was still present in all of the case studies. In Los Angeles, developer-led tactics were largely uncontested by the public sphere while in Toronto there was considerably more conflict and contestation from the public sector. Despite these differences, the development sector was largely able to shift municipal agendas and re-orient policies to benefit private development.

Professional Strategies

In conjunction with the private sector strategies outlined above, there were a number of tactics that can be seen as explicitly related to the nature of the professional expertise of private sector consultants. The role of the consultant is central in these strategies: their involvement in private sector processes, while able to maintain the appearance of neutrality, is one way that private interests can be prioritized in the design process. Although these tactics vary between the two case study cities because of their differing public sector capacities, they can been seen as present in both. Through the creation of fluidity and permeability between public and private sector processes, the consultants

studied here are able to negotiate between both realms and permit the private sector an additional degree of control over public processes.

In Toronto, professional strategies were expressed as permeability between the two sectors – with consultants capitalizing on their previous experience as city employees to promote development agendas – while in Los Angeles, there was fluidity in how consultants understood who their client was. Despite the public nature of the projects, both in terms of funding and policy objectives, consultants identified the developer as their client as often as they did the public sector. In addition to this, there was the unique example in Los Angeles of consultants providing pro bono services to the municipal sector. The ability of firms to provide unpaid work that becomes public policy raises questions about the neutrality and impartiality of this arrangement. Taken together, these three tactics offer a lens onto how the balance of power is shifted towards development interests through the use of private-sector professional expertise.

Permeability and Fluidity

Notwithstanding the public sector urban designers' perception that there are key professional differences between them and their private sector colleagues, there were many instances observed where the distinction was significantly less clear. Elements of what McCann (2001) refers to as the restructuring of planning practice were present in both cities, displayed through the loosening distinctions between the private and public sector. Despite the assertion that public institutions in Toronto have the capacity to oversee the work of private sector policy consultants, there was significant fluidity between the public and private sectors, often negotiated through professional tactics. As one consultant stated, the relationship between private and public urban designers "almost

operates as if the consultants are an extension of City staff". In Los Angeles, with significantly less public sector capacity for urban design processes, the permeability was even more pronounced, with the development sector taking the lead on public projects, in some instances. The ability for private sector consultants to move between their work for private clients and public clients – the permeability described here – while still being perceived as politically neutral allows them an additional source of power in shaping the built form.

The loose distinction between public and private sector staff was aided by the close relationship between 'policy' consulting firms and city staff in Toronto. Due to the substantial movement between public and private firms,[129] some consultants had the reputation of being 'friendly' firms that understand the goals of the City:

> There are a small group of firms who do most of the policy work for the City when it's outsourced, and the major one would be [firm name]… the original principals were all at the City in the '70s, and most of them had left by 1980. But they were all part of that group of people who had set up that initial paradigm, and so over the years, had worked very closely with planning, worked closely with us when I was there. And they were sort of a good, friendly firm that sort of got the idea of where things were going… [Interview 43]

Interesting, while the firm was viewed as "friendly" in that their work aligns with municipal policies, the development sector saw the same firm in a different way:

> Yeah, they are good guys. They are development people… [Interview 6]

The contrasting views of the same firm partially illustrate the fluid nature of consultants operating on behalf of both public and private sector clients and goals. Despite the encouragement of a discourse of professional neutrality, and the promotion of a form of urban design that is removed from the political

[129] This is a primarily one directional flow of public sector employees moving to private firms, and professionals felt this was more common in Toronto. In Los Angeles, some commented on public sector staff moving to council offices and taking on political roles, but rarely to the private sector.

and economic reality within which these processes take place, these cases illustrate that this is rarely the case. Given this, the movement of firms between public and private sectors – both in terms of their employees and their clients – can be seen as one strategy for minimizing public interests.

The movement between the two sectors often meant that private consultants, acting on behalf of either public or private clients, had strong relationships with municipal staff and could be treated as public employees. This relationship was seen as a beneficial in certain projects, and a reason to employ those consultants. For example, in one of the Toronto case studies, the previous relationship between the consultant and the City was an important aspect of the consultants' work:

> … [the consultant] knew most of the people in the planning department because he used to work in the planning department so there was a very good relationship [Interview 33]

Similarly, consultants were also hired to work on projects that occurred in districts where they had previously worked:

> But a lot of it was meeting all of the people, doing all of the legwork… and he [the consultant] knew people in the area, having been the area planner… long history. [Interview 33]

This scenario, where consultant firms are headed and staffed by former city employees, can be seen as contributing to the perception of them having similar goals and priorities to public staff. While there are distinct advantages to having professionals who understand both the public and private sectors, the largely one way flow of planners and designers from municipal staff to consultant firms can be seen as downplaying the competing goals that private-sector firms are often faced with. Although city staff in both cities commented that it would be helpful to have municipal staff members with experience in the private sector, this was felt to be fairly uncommon.

In addition to urban designers and planners moving between the public and private sectors, firms also alternated between public and private clients, oftentimes on the same project. In the Toronto example, the flow between public and private sectors occurred at multiple stages of projects, with firms shifting not only between the two sectors, but also existing in a sort of 'hybrid' space where they were managed by the public sector but paid for by the private sector as described above. In Los Angeles as well, firms worked on the same project or area for both the public and private sector, often moving between them multiple times.

The role of private sector consultants in shaping the built form can also be seen through the shifting nature of the client of urban design services. While the relationship between client and consultant can be fairly clear in other design fields, the cases in both Toronto and Los Angeles demonstrated significant fluidity in understandings of who was the client. Further adding to the complexity that Mera (1967) describes between nominal and substantive clients of urban design – or the users of the space compared with those making decisions – is that the fluidity between the public and private sectors resulted in multiple nominal or decision-making clients, often with competing goals and interests. Despite the different public sector resources in Toronto, allowing for the regular hiring of consultants for urban design projects, unlike in Los Angeles, this flexibility in the nature of the client was observed in both cities.

As described above, the joint public-private sector funding of policy projects could create tension between the City and the funder when there were differing goals. However, the role of the consultant in this relationship as the mediator between these two groups because of their professional expertise

provides another lens on the potential difficulties. In the Yonge-Dundas case, the consultant describes their movement between the public and private sectors as follows:

> So it was actually [the business association's] recommendation that I was hired, and so I worked technically for them, but what I was actually doing was working as a kind of project leader for the City planning department, working with the business community as a board of directors to come up with an analysis and then a plan. [Interview 22]

Similarly, despite the public funding for the study, the consultant's client was viewed as the business association rather than the City:

> There were a lot of consultants involved in the project, but [the main consultant] was the representative of the business association. [Interview 33]

This situation where the consultant operates as both a representative of private interests and as project leader for a municipal department offers a much more complex view of the public and private sectors.[130] In this example, the role of the consultant can be seen as a way of reinforcing the permeability between the public and private realms, with professional expertise as a mode of neutralizing potential conflicts between the two sectors.

In the Los Angeles cases, there was little concern about the impartiality of consultants and the flexibility for consultants to work on behalf of both public and private clients was clearly present. Moreover, participants from all backgrounds – public, private and political – agreed on the role of the private sector in actively guiding the work of the consultants. For example, in Grand Park, the developer did not only fund the development and implementation of the project, but also was

[130] As noted above, the public sector was much more cognizant of maintaining distance between the project funder and the consultant in the Downsview Park case. Consultants for that project clearly identified the City of Toronto as their client, although they had also worked for private sector clients in the same area before and after the completion of their City-funded work.

involved in directing the work of the consultants. As one political actor described the role of the development company after paying for the lease-back agreement:

> Yeah, Related was… they actually had one of their construction project managers who was on our team, and he oversaw the construction. You know they were paid for it, of course, but they were intimately involved in the whole process.[131] They had a guy who was at every meeting, and he was equally accountable for managing the construction, as was the County. It was a kind of a dual managerial role, project management, between the County and Related. [Interview 29]

In contrast to the Downsview case, where the public sector's desire was to keep the project funder out of the design and implementation processes, for Grand Park private sector interests were largely uncontested in managing these public processes.

The role of the developer in managing the process was one of active engagement and direction. In describing their role, those involved in the process as representatives of the private-sector funder saw themselves as shaping the project and negotiating with both the consultant and the public sector. Describing their role, the developers argued that they were involved with all aspects of the project, from project design to community outreach:

> So we, the developer, coordinated the design, we hired [the design consultants], and the structural, civil, plumbing, electrical designers, did a big community outreach effort and put together a plan to improve and expand the park. [Interview 27]

While the public sector representatives maintained their position in the process, they acknowledged the role of the developer, stating that they "worked hand-in-hand with Related" in directing the consultants [Interview 5]. However, because the developers were given so much oversight with respect to their role in managing the process, they were able to present options that benefitted them:

[131] Other participants questioned whether the development company was paid for their involvement in managing the project.

> I worked with [the consultants] every day, talked to [the consultants] almost every day on the design portion. And really to do a couple of things: one was to strategize on how to spend the money, because we could have spent 3 times as much if we had it, so how to strategize on the best way to spend the money, also how to present that to the public entities to get their buy-in, and really important, was I did a construction budget based on the schematic drawings and came up with a bunch of price options so when we presented it we gave the County and the JPA options on how they wanted to spend the money, and we kind of, you know, spun it the way we thought the money should be spent. [Interview 27]

The relationship described here is one of collaboration between the developer and the consultant, with options then being "spun" to the public sector. It is difficult to understand this urban design process as one of the public sector managing private consultants to achieve municipal or civic goals. Rather, it is one largely directed and managed by development interests, despite the public orientation and funding for the project.

The consultants working on the Grand Park project were cognizant of the role of the developer and viewed them as a client, in addition to the public sector. In describing to whom the consultants were responsible to, it was acknowledged that control of the project had largely been conceded to the private sector:

> We also had another client, which was the developer Related, who were brought in to oversee and manage the whole process. When they had to give up the $50 million dollars to do their development, they also had to give up their time beyond that – I don't know if they were actually paid for that through that process – but their time to kind of oversee the whole process through design, so they managed some of the later phases of design to make sure everything was in budget and then they also managed throughout construction. And they were sort of… it was kind of said that the County had given up control to them to do this process and then we'd get control back. [Interview 15]

Despite the public nature of the project, a large proportion of the design negotiations occurred between the consultant and the developer, rather than with the public sector. In discussing conflicts that occurred during the design and implementation of the project, the developer described not only how closely they worked with the consultant but also how their goals were very much aligned:

> They understood there was a limited budget, I gave them options, we strategized together on what we thought was the best way to spend the money, and then together we came up with a strategy on how to present it and you know, even how to put together renderings, how to describe the alternates, so no, there was never really much disagreement with [the consultant]. I mean, I did have to go to them and say 'we just can't afford this' and they understood. So [the consultant] and Related worked together very closely. I don't think we ever had much of a disconnect on what to build, and their work product. [Interview 27]

While the public sector was to have oversight over the process, their description of conflicts in the process reveals a lack of interest in the management of the project:

> It was all wonderful, you know, it wasn't… I think there was sort of universal approval of the design approach… from an urban design point of view, it was just so welcome to have this project happening and the sort of basic principles of building on Bunker Hill were known and laid out and followed, but yeah, there weren't too many issues really [Interview 5]

The role of the private sector in managing consultants engaged in a public process – and their relative power in shaping that process – represents a different type of permeability between the two sectors than that observed in Toronto. Rather than a process that is actively contested by the public sector – while the success of that contestation may be debatable, as described above – the Grand Park example consists of urban design processes dominated by private sector interests.[132] While the development sector had a strong interest in controlling the work of consultants in both cities, only in Los Angeles did this translate into a process largely guided by the private sector.

This fluidity of experts between the public and private sector can offer insight as to how consultants achieve political power. Benveniste (1972) argues that the ready access of experts to existing power centers is a key way in which power is acquired. With pre-established connections owing to the flow between city staff and private firms, the close working relationship and the appearance of

[132] This can also be seen as related to the role of the CRA as a quasi-public agency with explicitly development-focused interests. While there are similar agencies in the Toronto context, particularly PDP, they do not have the wide-ranging power of the CRA.

professional, impartial expertise allows the differences between the public and private sector to be downplayed. The reliance on professional expertise, coupled with the political process of agenda setting, allows the private sector to have significant influence over public planning and design processes. In this respect, understanding urban design as an exercise in public policy becomes an even more problematic conceptualization.

"For the public good": Pro bono services

While the majority of tactics influential in shaping the agenda for design processes were found in both cities, only in Los Angeles was there the phenomenon of private sector consultants doing public sector policy work free of charge.[133] The term pro bono, short for *pro bono publico*, comes from the Latin meaning "for the public good". While this was the term that both city staff and private consultants used most often to describe the unpaid work undertaken by consultants for the City, the implication that this arrangement is always in the interest of the greater public good requires evaluation.

It should also be noted that there are critical differences in comparing the type of pro bono work traditionally undertaken by professionals such as lawyers, and those involved in planning and urban design.[134] Not only are urban design consultants frequently employed by the types of firms that will be regulated by the documents they are preparing, but the results of these policies can have a direct

[133] The exact number of pro bono projects undertaken by consultants is unclear, but respondents reported that these were generally only urban design policy documents, rather than planning studies or related to specific development applications.

[134] This also applies to comparisons with the types of consultants often studied by sociologists and political scientists (Beveridge 2012; Nelkin 1975; Saint-Martin 1998; Van Houten and Goldman 1981). Few of these other professionals, such as environmental consultants, have a future financial interest related to their expertise, aside from in the creation of more consultant work.

impact on their future business. This relationship between firm (consultant), clients (notably the development community) and possible future employer (the City) is one that is not present in the majority of traditional pro bono relationships.[135] By providing pro bono services, these firms are permitted to strongly influence the urban design process with little critical assessment of the implications of this relationship.

As opposed to the traditional client-consultant relationships where the client identifies a need and contracts with the consultant to provide agreed upon services, some pro bono projects in Los Angeles have been initiated by the private sector. As an example, the experience of one consultant who has been involved in three pro bono projects was that two of the projects had been initiated by the City and one project had come from the firm itself. As the consultant explained, pro bono projects that originated from the firm were based on the interests of the staff involved, rather than direction from the City:

> If somebody has an interest in pursuing public work or… like [the design guidelines], that was just two of us initiating that and doing that because we were interested. [Interview 12]

The public sector may have a role, substantial or not, in shaping these consultant-initiated policies. However, with the projects originating from private firms the autonomy of the City to direct its own policy goals becomes questionable. While it is laudable that there is an interest in contributing to the urban design culture in the city on a volunteer basis, the ability of the private sector to initiate pro

[135] Pro bono services are most commonly associated with legal work for clients who could otherwise not afford those services. The expectation that these clients would become paying clients in the future does not seem part of this relationship, in contrast to the work of design consultants. Furthermore, there is no relationship between the services provided to low-income clients and the firm's paying clients, unlike in the case of urban design policy work.

bono projects that are adopted as city policy represents a significant power in shaping the public sector agenda.

From the perspective of public staff in Los Angeles, the use of consultants for unpaid work was one strategy for dealing with the limited resources available for public sector urban design work. Public staff advanced the idea that their motivation for using unpaid work was to develop urban design policies in areas where city staff did not have the financial or expertise capacity. While the financial constraints on the municipality were often repeated,[136] there was also the sentiment that pro bono work was used to fill an expertise gap, similar to the justification for outside consultants in general.[137]

> … [the firm] did [pro bono] work for us and it was just fabulous, things that we never could have done. [Q. In terms of staff resources?] Correct. Both in terms of talent, because we don't have graphic staff resources that understand… we have graphic people that are really good at graphics, but we need people who can think through the problem and then graphically express it. And that's where [the firm] was fabulous, and they're still doing some work like that. [Interview 34]

While this is similar to the argument advanced for the use of outside consultants more generally, having consultants operate as unpaid labor raises additional issues. Importantly it raises questions regarding the capacity of public sector staff to evaluate the products produced as the result of pro bono work, as well as direct and shape these policy documents to align with city goals.

Rather than question the motivation of these firms in their desire to control professional design expertise as well as shape city design policies, City staff felt that these firms were driven by the desire

[136] While its beyond the scope of this research to assess the financial situation of the City of Los Angeles and the amount of funding devoted to basic planning and urban design policy work, the austerity measures noted by many public and private sector actors contribute to the reliance on pro bono work.

[137] This construction of public sector employees as lacking the same type of expertise as private consultants is discussed more fully in Chapter 4.

to improve the urban design environment of Los Angeles, or "for the good of the city". As one former municipal urban designer stated when questioned about the use of pro bono work:

> I think they are honestly motivated to help the city. I think that that's like give-back, just like lawyers do pro bono work for non-profits and to a certain extent they get their name… because we have not covered up who helps us with this work, so it's good for them, so that's kind of how I think it's… They have bragging rights, in other words, and that's fine. [Interview 34]

Similarly, other city staff implied a degree of neutrality on the part of the urban designers despite the financial structure of private firms. When asked about the reasons for private firms donating their time to work on government policy, one municipal designer stated:

> I think designers are designers, they want a good project. And I think [firm] was just also supporting the idea of getting a better-designed L.A. [Interview 35]

While the respondents gave possible reasons for private firms to engage in unpaid work – the so-called "bragging rights" and the belief in a desire to help the city – the influence of pro bono work on consultant's future business is not addressed. Interestingly, the second respondent mentioned the improvement of projects, acknowledging the link between policy and future development, but did not allow for the link between shaping policy and shaping development. In another example, the motivation for improving the design policy at the city was portrayed as a way for consultants to get better projects from their clients:

> I think what a lot of the designers in the city felt, was that by having an advocate *inside* the city, they could actually get a better designed project instead of just being driven by the applicants program, at all costs. That if the city were to express some of its desires or needs or its programming for the city, then they would be able to help shape and get a better project. [Interview 35]

The idea that consultants would want to have design policies in place to aid in creating clear expectations for their private sector clients, as well as encouraging better design outcomes, is laudable

and not unprecedented.[138] Given the resource constraints facing not only the City of Los Angeles but also many North American municipalities, the use of pro bono services was posited by public sector staff as beneficial for both the city and private sector consultants.

Private consultants who engaged in pro bono work described their motivation for engaging in unpaid work for the City as driven by an interest in improving the design culture of the city, ensuring a higher quality of urban design, and by a general interest in "good design". One urban designer with a firm that has participated in several pro bono design policy documents for the City reiterated their motivation as driven by a desire to "help out", but left the possible advantages from this business strategy not fully developed:

> I think just really an effort to help and give back and become part of the solution to the problem and just being more involved in where we live and less privately oriented. We're growing as a firm and just taking more interest… [Interview 12]

While the respondent mentioned that one of the motivational factors was related to the growth of the firm, the meaning of this and it relationship to encouraging further business from either the public or private sector was left unaddressed. The relationship between establishing the firm as one that engages in policy work (and developing links with the municipality) and the firm's business model is not explicitly stated. Regardless of whether firms are candid in their motivations for engaging in unpaid work, previous research on the entrepreneurial nature of the design professions (Gutman 2010b) suggests that the implications of these forms of practice – and their role in shifting the urban design agenda for municipalities – require careful reevaluation.

[138] One parallel example would be that several consultants and architects expressed support for design review panels as a way to "push" their clients into developing better projects. The negotiations between architect and client have been documented extensively elsewhere (Cuff 1991; Hack and Canto 1984).

The interviewed public sector staff in Los Angeles largely didn't express concerns about the quality of work that comes out of a pro bono arrangement, or their ability to direct the outcomes or processes. Public urban designers and political actors in Toronto questioned the ability of public staff to manage a policy process involving unpaid consultants and to direct it in a way that reflected city priorities. In Los Angeles, this view was largely absent, although one interviewee involved in a professional advocacy organization did express concerns about this arrangement in terms of the quality of work:

> There are private firms out there in the L.A. market that make a living by providing design review to municipalities, and the more successful, better designed cities probably *do* pay for that, and get a much higher value return on that service than the model in the City of L.A. [Interview 30]

However, this view was the exception in the Los Angeles context and few of those directly involved in either providing or receiving pro bono services raised substantial concerns about the nature of unpaid consultancy services. Rather, it was largely seen as a process that is mutually beneficial to both parties: private consultants can improve the urban design culture in the city while the City gets urban design policy guidance that it would otherwise not have the resources for. Despite the potential for conflicts of interests and the danger of policies largely shaped by private sector interests, few questioned the problematic nature of pro bono relationships.

In contrast to those described above,[139] public sector staff in Los Angeles not directly involved in commissioning pro bono work, as well as those in Toronto, were largely critical of the use of unpaid

[139] All the private consultants who expressed support for pro bono work were employed by firms that had been involved in unpaid projects.

consultants for policy work and questioned the ability of the public sector to manage unpaid consultants. For example, one political actor in Toronto stated:

> If it's purely volunteer, where is the accountability? That person isn't responsible to the City, or the public interest, they are really only responsible for their own opinion, and that's a slightly different thing. Their opinion could be very good but you've got to be accountable to a public framework of development that accounts for the public interest. [Interview 32]

With these issues related to accountability and ensuring the public interest, public sector and political actors who had not used pro bono services were highly critical of these relationships.

Unsurprisingly, consultants who did not provide pro bono services questioned the expectation of unpaid work by consultants and design professionals.[140] While they were critical of the use of unpaid professional work, it was not from the perspective of conflicting goals or interest, but rather a concern with issues of protecting professional domains:

> Los Angeles is a really fascinating case study because, in comparison to the one that you are looking at [Toronto] if nothing else, there is a tremendous amount of assumption that volunteerism is the way to have design issues come to the forefront and bubble to the surface. And I think it's kind of insulting actually. It's like 'well, wait a second, I didn't spend 30 years doing this in order to be a volunteer'. [Interview 1]

Given that the protection of domains of expertise has been considered a defining characteristic of the professions (Blau 1984; Larson 1977, 2005), this view is not unexpected from practicing urban designers in the private sector. However, the distinction between firms that are able to provide pro bono services – large firms that can afford the staff time – and those excluded from this relationship have implications for understanding contemporary design practices. Although the growing structural differences between design consultancies is beyond the scope of this research, the ability to provide

[140] These consultants were exclusively in small firms, often with one or two principals and less than five employees. In contrast, the firms actively engaged in unpaid policy work were all large, with offices in multiple countries.

pro bono services to municipalities is one way that firms are able to exert control over design processes, even if only certain types of firms are able to do this.[141]

Although the full extent to which urban design policy work for the City of Los Angeles is done by unpaid consultants is not known, the character of these relationships where they do exist raises questions about the role of private sector designers in shaping public agendas. While there may be few potential conflicts in traditional pro bono relationships, the business model of private firms and the development context that they operate in differentiates them from other examples of pro bono services. With private firms engaged in unpaid labor that results in government policy, the ability of these firms to shape urban design goals and public priorities is at the forefront.

Conclusion

The ability of private sector consultants to shift agendas for urban design practices represents a marked difference in understandings of public sector processes. Rather than the public sector guiding private consultants in achieving a vision for the city, these policies can be either shifted by – or even fully established by – private sector interests. Through a variety of tactics that vary depending on the public sector capacity, public sector goals were determined by the interests of the development community. While there was resistance from municipal urban designers and city planners in some instances, the agenda was largely set by private interests.

[141] This in itself is another form of control in that large firms able to provide pro bono work, initiated by the firm and without an open competition, develop links with the municipal sector in ways that smaller firms are unable to do. The manner in which certain firms are able to compete for public sector contracts, either by developing relationships through pro bono work or by providing multiple services (i.e. engineering, servicing and infrastructure, in addition to urban design) in the case of mega-firms, is another emerging issue in contemporary urban design practices.

The role of consultants in this process was significant. Where there was substantial public sector capacity – both in terms of staff and resources – consultants were able to represent private interests through the creation of "friendly" firms and a high level of exchange between public and private employees. In Toronto, this level of permeability contributed to the view of private sector consultants as neutral in their professional expertise and their integration in public processes. In instances where there was an attempt to maintain distance between consultants and development interests, this was subverted by the ability of the private sector to "pay for priority" in the development of planning and urban design processes, thereby re-shaping city goals. Despite the significant public capacity, the balance of power was often held by development interests because of this ability to shift the public agenda by paying for alternative planning and design processes.

In contrast, in Los Angeles, where there was little government capacity to direct urban design processes, the private sector was able to exert even more control. While in Toronto there had been an attempt to keep development interests out of public processes, this was rarely the case in Los Angeles. Public urban design processes were often controlled by private interests, including the management and direction of design consultants. There was a high degree of fluidity observed between public and private, with consultants often describing their client as both the developer and the public sector, despite the public nature of the projects. Furthermore, with consultants engaging in pro bono work for the City, the line between public and private is significantly less defined than as traditionally conceptualized.

While there were significant differences in the orientation of public sector urban designers in Toronto and Los Angeles as described in Chapter 4, the seemingly minimal importance of these factors in shaping actual outcomes raises questions about urban design practices in the larger global economy framework. Despite the observed differences between public sector actors in both cities, analysis of how private sector goals took precedence in shaping urban design outcomes reiterates the importance of situating these practices in the context of neoliberal context of global competition and market-driven strategies.

As has been previously noted: "To measure relative influence solely in terms of the ability to influence and veto proposals is to ignore the possible exercise of influence or power in limiting the scope of initiation" (Bachrach and Baratz 1962, 952). The experiences observed in both Toronto and Los Angeles demonstrate that power is exercised not only in limiting the scope of initiation, but also in the ability to shift or prioritize existing agendas and propose new ones. While deployed through different tactics, the cases in Toronto and Los Angeles point to the ability of the private sector to shape government policies through the use of professional expertise. The portrayal of professional consultants as neutral was instrumental in blurring the lines between public and private, and allowed for development interests to structure the municipal agenda. The variances in public sector capacity affected this somewhat, in that there was an acknowledgment of the potential for influence and conflict when there was a strong public sector. Despite this, the overwhelming power to shape the agenda and future directions for these case studies was held largely by the private sector.

Chapter 7: Conclusion

Private sector consultants have become an important part of urban design practices across North America. Their expertise is used to create public policy, develop municipal guidelines, and implement publically funded projects. This involvement of private sector urban designers in public notions of urban design – however disputed the "publicness" of urban design may be – raises questions about the interactions among professional actors. This research demonstrates that there are significant differences between public and private sector urban design professionals, and these differences are negotiated and deployed in multiple ways to achieve power over design processes.

Despite differing levels of current public sector capacity, the case sites in both Toronto and Los Angeles were historically the subject of considerable planning and urban design guidance. The case projects are illustrative of substantial change in the policy directions undertaken by the cities after years of fairly consistent approaches. In Los Angeles, while there had been well-developed strategies for South Park and the Civic Center, the development of the Staples Center/L.A. Live and Grand Park have little relation to these earlier plans. Similarly, in Toronto, the significant planning and urban design efforts targeting the north Yonge Street strip and Downsview area bear little resemblance to the plans enacted for Yonge-Dundas Square and Downsview Park.

The difficulty in teasing out the shifts in the urban visions for the case projects from the broader context of urban change is apparent. The historic plans cover a period from the 1920s until the early 1990s, a time when there was a changing orientation towards many key urban design and planning issues, such as the functional separation of uses, auto-oriented built form and residential development

in the downtown core. Taking into account these changes, there are still themes that cut across the case studies and cities. The later visions for the case areas are largely premised on developer-led interests and goals, leading to a reactive and opportunistic form of urban design. The implemented plans represent a considerable change in the municipal vision for the sites, often times contrary to the recommendations of earlier documents. While the public sector urban design culture in Toronto is largely viewed as proactive and comprehensive in comparison to that in Los Angeles, analysis of the projects in the context of historic urban design plans demonstrate a move towards site-specific and project-led design guidance in both cities. In contrast to earlier urban design efforts, the implemented projects were largely focused on private redevelopment potential and can be seen as primarily drawn from, and shaped by, development interests.

Given the changes in the urban design and policy frameworks governing the study sites, questions arise as to the role of professional practitioners in shaping these visions. The research presented here demonstrates the complexity of negotiating professional expertise between public and private sector actors. Professional expertise is shown here to be a form of political power, in the sense that it allows for influence over decision-making processes. While the ways in which private sector professional actors constructed their expertise varied between the cities, similar processes were observed in both. In negotiating the design processes for the case study projects, the professional expertise of private sector urban designers was constructed, and for the most part, perceived as "more expert" or legitimate compared to that of public sector urban designers. This ability of consultants to deploy their expertise in a manner *different* – and more superior – to that of public sector professionals is one source of power. This dichotomy between public and private sector actors was established through a number of tactics. The arguments that consultants were more creative and innovative, had a fuller

understanding of market forces, and were less bound by existing political and bureaucratic constraints were used to justify their higher level of professional expertise and autonomy. In contrast to the construction of consultant knowledge, public sector professionals were posited as having administrative, regulatory or "code-interpretation" expertise. The establishment of a creative-technical division between public and private sector professionals was enforced in Los Angeles and Toronto, often limiting the role of municipal urban designers in substantive decision-making.

The public sector urban design capacity of the city was reflected in constructions of municipal expertise. While the divisions between public and private sector professional knowledge were observed in both cities, only in Toronto was there a belief that public sector expertise had corresponding advantages, with municipal urban designers being better equipped to protect the public interest. The importance of the public interest was identified by both public and private sector urban designers in Toronto, while few in Los Angeles, even those employed in a public capacity, saw it as part of their role as urban designers. The differences in public sector capacity were also reflected in the relationships between public and private urban designers, and their view of conflicting advice. In Los Angeles, without a public sector that saw itself at least partially in conflict with private urban designers, confrontation about the substantive issues related to design practices and goals rarely occurred. In both cities, the creation of a specific type of expertise – largely seen as not held by those working for the public sector – granted consultants power in shaping urban design processes.

Constructions and perceptions of professional expertise are also negotiated through political processes. In both cities, the expertise of professional urban designers, whether from the public or private sector, was restricted by the heavy involvement of political actors in design and planning

processes. Local councilors had significant control over design decisions, aided by the prevalence of ward courtesy in both cities. In Los Angeles, council office staff members were seen as the "gatekeepers" for many design decisions, though like the actions of elected officials, this was episodic in nature and dependent on the perceived interests of those actors. The expertise of professional urban designers interacted with political actors in shaping design processes. Like the negotiations between public and private sector professionals, expertise was key in negotiations with political officials. Urban designers challenged the involvement of political actors, as a way of maintaining control over their professional domains, while political actors sought to challenge the advice of professional experts if it conflicted with their goals.

In addition to the involvement of formal political actors in urban design processes, the research demonstrates that professional urban designers have political identities as well. One aspect of this is the portrayal of outside experts as politically neutral and unbiased in a way that public employees were not. Consultants used the construction of political neutrality to bolster the perception that they were able to provide "more expert" advice than their public sector counterparts, arguing that they didn't face the same political and bureaucratic constraints. In contrast, public sector actors in Toronto actively challenged the political neutrality of outside consultants, noting that the entrepreneurial nature of firms influenced their work. While these two conflicting understandings of consultants exist – either as somehow politically neutral or overtly political because of the demands of a fee-driven business – the research presented here demonstrates that the political sphere is intimately tied into constructions of professional expertise.

How these constructions and deployments of professional and political practices were employed in the shaping of urban design processes can be broadly understood as "setting the agenda". This notion of setting the agenda, or having control not only over the outcome of decision-making processes but the *range of possibilities* that are considered, is a way of understanding the relative power of actors in urban design practices. In both cities, development interests had substantial control over these processes and were able to shift, or even initiate, planning and design processes. When there was more substantial public sector capacity, as in Toronto, public sector urban designers challenged these agendas to some extent, though largely ineffectually. The role of private sector consultants in these "setting the agenda" processes was considerable. These tactics varied between Los Angeles and Toronto, which can be attributed to the differing levels of public involvement in urban designer processes.

In Toronto, with substantial public capacity in terms of staff and resources, these tactics centered on shifting urban design and planning agendas through official channels. While there was a focus on creating comprehensive municipal planning and urban design policies, rather than site-specific guidance, this was subverted by the ability of the private sector to "pay for priority" in undertaking these processes. In terms of professional tactics, the high level of permeability between the public and private sectors and creation of "friendly firms" contributed to the view of outside consultants as neutral in their professional expertise and encouraged their integration in public processes. The funding of planning and design processes by the private sector, combined with the easy movement of outside consultants between public and private sector clients, represents significant power over not only urban design processes but outcomes as well.

When there was markedly less public sector urban design capacity, the private sector was able to exert more influence, both independently and through professional practices. While in Toronto there had been an attempt to maintain a separation between development interests and public processes, in Los Angeles there was explicit private sector control over these processes, including in the direction and management of consultants. The involvement of development interests in public processes was rarely even questioned in the Los Angeles examples. There was also a high degree of fluidity in these processes, with consultants often describing their client as both the developer and the public sector, despite the public nature of the projects. Additionally, with consultant firms engaging in unpaid policy work for municipal clients, the degree of power that private sector actors have over these processes was further increased.

These case projects not only offer a perspective on the negotiations around expertise in the built form professions but also lead to broader considerations about the nature of contemporary urban design practices. Several important conclusions can be drawn from the comparison of urban design practices in two locales with significantly different public sector capacity and resources.

One of the more fundamental conclusions from this research is that the line between public and private sector professional urban design practices is considerably more blurred than often conceptualized. Urban design professionals struggle with how these two sectors interact and the implications for the built form. As one private sector urban designer reflected:

> The practice of urban design is an interesting concept because… it's one set of folks kind of making up rules and another set of folks charged with doing it, and they may have conflicting purposes often. [Interview 10]

With professionals shifting between public and private clients, often on the same projects, previous understandings of urban design as an exercise in public policy needs to be critically re-evaluated. Although this research operates from the planning-centric idea of urban design as the public regulation of private development, there are other understandings of urban design. While some urban design scholars have dismissed the notion of urban design as "big architecture", or large-scale projects, this remains a valid understanding for many.[142] These two views can be seen as operating at either end of a spectrum: the ideal of public regulation on one side, and the control and autonomy of the market on the other. In reality, neither of these conceptualizations reflects the urban design practices observed in Toronto and Los Angeles. While these understandings dominate, it can be argued that there is no urban-scale project that is free from some degree of public sector control, just as public regulation is always forced to interact with market forces. Rather, it is possible to understand the urban design practices observed in Toronto as closer to the public regulation end of the spectrum while those in Los Angeles fall closer to the project-driven side. The research shows that the degree of public sector capacity and resources influences the form that urban design processes take.

The differing notion of public professional expertise that existed between Toronto and Los Angeles has implications for our understanding of not only urban design practices but also the division between public and private. Lisa Peattie made an important distinction between the "Platonic City" and "Aristotelian City"in her study of the planning and design of Ciudad Guayana, with one a product of

[142] In contrast to the public policy approach to urban design, Lai defines the "big architecture" form of urban design as undertaken under "the mandate of a unified entity that maintains full practical control over all considerations of design, development and use, usually through ownership or contractual interest in the property intended for development" (Lai 1988, 2).

professional vision and authority, and the other of pluralistic processes (1987, 56).[143] In this conceptualization of city building, professional practices are integral. Peattie describes a meeting of the Ciudad Guayana urban design team, where two designers were reprimanded by the head of the design team for "abdicating the function of the designer" by offering proposals that originated from an analysis of current growth patterns rather than a wholly "creative" process (Peattie 1987, 50). This distinction between visionary and pluralistic visions of urban design cannot be cleanly split between public and private sector actors. While public sector actors in Toronto largely ascribed to the pluralist ideal – whether successful or not – this was absent in Los Angeles. Although it may be tempting to differentiate between public and private sector urban design practices as on either side of this pluralistic/visionary divide, the abdication of public sector actors in Los Angeles from an interest in public processes (instead, favoring a commitment to "good design") calls this division into question.

This research also points to the importance of agencies that are not easily classified as either public or private sector. In the cases studied here, arms-length government development corporations – the Community Redevelopment Agency in Los Angeles and Parc Downsview Park in Toronto – dominated the negotiations around built form and urban design.[144] Rather than clearly public or private sector, these organizations have goals related explicitly to development but with additional powers associated with the public sector. The role that these types of agencies have in the future and their influence on shaping the built form remains an area for further investigation.

[143] Thanks to Tridib Banerjee for highlighting this conceptualization in relation to urban design practices.

[144] Their level of involvement varied, as would be expected give the relative capacities in each city. In Toronto PDP was largely treated by the City as a landowner, albeit with additional powers because of their relationship with the federal government. In Los Angeles, planning and urban design functions were in essence consigned to the CRA with very little oversight.

One of the limitations of this research is in its explicitly local focus. While the processes and practices described here occur in the local context, they are influenced by a much larger framework of global financing, urban competitiveness and the changing nature of both municipal and upper-level governance. Some of these connections are more apparent than others – such as in the global nature of design and planning firms – though their impact on local design processes remains largely unaddressed here. Furthermore, how these cities, with their differing public sector capacities and orientations, approach city-building processes from an entrepreneurial or growth-driven perspective remains to be explored. In some cases, the importance of driving future growth was explicit, often evidenced by a focus on the need to capitalize on shifting property markets and allow development to proceed quickly. Although the local processes described here are nested in larger global networks, the mechanisms through which they play out requires further exploration.

The ambiguity of public urban design – evidenced by the power of private sector designers in public processes – only becomes problematic if the fundamental underpinning of professional practices is questioned. The implicit assumption in the lack of critical attention paid to the work of private sector urban design consultants is that there is a universal notion of "good urban design" and professional actors – regardless of their employer, fee-structure, or competing interests – are able to both uncover this and advocate for it. This was advanced to differing extents in both cities, with those in Los Angeles less critical of this assumption, partially evidenced by the unquestioned acceptance of pro bono services.

Of course, the idea of professionals providing independent, neutral expertise is not unique to urban designers, planners or architects.[145] It is the foundation of professionalism itself. However, the relationship between public policy, private development and professional expertise that so clearly marks the built form professions calls into question the possibility of neutrality in urban design practices. Urban design professionals, both in the public or private sector, have substantial interests in the advice they provide, whether they are driven by bureaucratic, political or entrepreneurial pressure. In light of this, it is worth reconsidering the role of professional practices with reference to the way Larson understands professionalization as part of larger class structures and processes:

> The persistence of profession as a category of social practice suggest that the model constituted by the first movements of professionalization has become *an ideology* – not only an image which consciously inspires collective or individual efforts, but a mystification which unconsciously obscures real social structures and relations. (Larson 1977, xviii, emphasis in original)

While it is not the intent to for this research to address the nature of class relations, there is a link between the professional practices described here and *mystification*, as Larson puts it, concerning the relationship between social structures and the professional practices that shape the built form. As shown here, professional expertise is used to promote private sector interests, diminish the perception of public sector expertise, and shift the agendas of public agencies. The relationship between those practices and the larger context of entrepreneurial cities competing over limited resources requires reassessment of the way in which professional urban design practices are permitted to shape urban form.

[145] In techno-rational conceptualizations of professional expertise, the ideal is that multiple experts would all come to the same conclusions with little variation, an understanding that implies the possibility of neutrality (Altshuler 1965).

This is not to say that private sector urban designers do not provide an important function. Although there may be political advantages for cities in employing outside consultants, these professionals also provide perspectives that are important for shaping our cities. They are able to foster debate and push public sector actors in new directions. However, without any limitations on the practices of private sector urban designers – either through the public sector as we understand it, or some new form of organization – the danger is in allowing their professional expertise to obscure competing private sector and development interests. The experiences in Los Angeles of a development sector primarily unchecked by public goals (aside from the goal of ensuring that development occurs) has resulted in a form of urban design that can largely be seen as site-specific, opportunistic and developer-led. While this is not solely the responsibility of professional practitioners, this research describes how the nature of professional expertise is used to obscure and reinforce these relationships. As demonstrated here, professional practices and the construction of private sector expertise are used to limit the role of the public sector in substantive decision-making. If there is to be some protection of the public interest in shaping urban form, then there has to be a careful examination of how professional practices are deployed in the service of development goals and whether it is possible to challenge this without considerable public sector professional expertise.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Description of interview subjects

Reference Number	Role, City
1	Agency professional, Los Angeles
2	Agency professional, Los Angeles
3	Agency professional, Los Angeles
4	Agency professional, Los Angeles
5	Agency professional, Los Angeles
6	Agency professional, Toronto
7	Agency professional, Toronto
8	Consultant, Los Angeles
9	Consultant, Los Angeles
10	Consultant, Los Angeles
11	Consultant, Los Angeles
12	Consultant, Los Angeles
13	Consultant, Los Angeles
14	Consultant, Los Angeles
15	Consultant, Los Angeles
16	Consultant, Los Angeles
17	Consultant, Toronto
18	Consultant, Toronto
19	Consultant, Toronto
20	Consultant, Toronto
21	Consultant, Toronto
22	Consultant, Toronto
23	Consultant, Toronto
24	Consultant, Toronto
25	Consultant, Toronto
26	Consultant, Toronto
27	Developer, Los Angeles
28	Legal consultant, Toronto
29	Political actor, Los Angeles
30	Political actor, Los Angeles
31	Political actor, Toronto
32	Political actor, Toronto
33	Political actor, Toronto

34	Public sector professional, Los Angeles
35	Public sector professional, Los Angeles
36	Public sector professional, Los Angeles
37	Public sector professional, Los Angeles
38	Public sector professional, Toronto
39	Public sector professional, Toronto
40	Public sector professional, Toronto
41	Public sector professional, Toronto
42	Public sector professional, Toronto
43	Public sector professional, Toronto
44	Public sector professional, Toronto
45	Public sector professional, Toronto
46	Consultant, Los Angeles

Appendix 2: Interview Protocol
Interview Protocol
Public urban designer

Overview
As part of my doctoral dissertation research, I am interviewing urban design professionals like yourself to gain a better understanding about the nature of urban design practice. I will be asking questions about your involvement in specific projects, as well as more general questions about your work [as an urban designer].

A. Respondent characteristics
1. Can you describe your role with the City?

2. How long have you been in this role?

3. Background, training in urban design?

4. What has been your previous experience as an urban designer?

B. Project specific questions
The next questions are concerning the design and development of [project].

1. Could you give me a brief overview?
    a. What was your role in the project?
    b. What other participants were involved in the project?

2. What key issues arose in the development of this project?
    a. Is this different from your experience with other projects? How?

3. What would you consider the key factors in the outcome of the project?
    [Either positive or negative]

4. How would you describe your relationship with other professional participants in the project?
    a. Is this similar to other projects you have worked on?
    [Probe – Specify participants i.e. other city departments, private consultants, etc.]

C. Role of private consultants
I am also interested in the role of private-sector consultants in urban design. The following questions address your work with urban designers employed in the private sector.

1. During your tenure with the city, have you worked with private consultants on urban design projects?
    [Probe – Can you specify projects and consultants?]

2. Is it common for the city to work with private urban design consultants?
    a. On what type of projects?
    b. Has this changed over the years?

3. What are some of the issues that have arisen when working with private sector consultants?
    a. Are these common to all work with consultants or were these issues project-specific?
    b. When do issues/problems tend to occur?
    c. Are there projects for which you had very positive or very negative experiences in your (or the city's) relationship with consultants? Which projects? Why?

4. Are there types of urban design that are better undertaken by consultants? Why?
    [Probe: Policy, design, managing public competitions, etc.]

5. How would you describe the nature of the relationship between the City of Los Angeles and urban design consultants, in general?
    [Probe – Would you classify it as largely positive or negative? Why?
        Do you think has changed over time?]

6. Please describe the process of the city's collaboration with and supervision of private urban design consultants.

D. Public design capacity
The next few questions are about the ability of the City of [Los Angeles/Toronto] to shape urban form and development.

1. How successful do you think the City is in regulating urban form? (ask for specific examples)

2. What would make the City more successful in this respect?

3. What do you think are the barriers to shaping urban form, from the local government perspective?
    [Probe – give examples? i.e. lack of staff, lack of political interest, political system, etc.]

E. Urban design practice
The last questions are about how you view the nature of urban design practice in LA more broadly.

1. What would you consider as examples of urban design [projects?] in Los Angeles in the last 10 years?
    a. Which of these would you consider 'good' urban design projects?
    [Probe – Includes policies as well as projects?]
    b. Have there been urban design opportunities missed in Los Angeles? Give ex.

2. How would you define the role of an urban designer?
    a. Do you think this differs between urban designers working for the city and in the private sector?
    a. Do you think this view is commonly-held? Why or why not?

End of Formal interview

Thank you for your participation.

1. Can you recommend anyone else I should speak with, in either public or private sector?
2. Would you be available for a follow-up interview, if needed?
3. Would you like to receive a draft copy of the study to review?
4. Any other comments, questions or suggestions for me?

Interview Protocol
Private urban designer

Overview
As part of my doctoral dissertation research, I am interviewing urban design professionals like yourself to gain a better understanding about the nature of urban design practice. I will be asking questions about your involvement in specific projects, as well as more general questions about your work [as an urban designer].

A. Respondent characteristics
1. Can you describe your role?
    a. Would you describe yourself as an urban designer? Some other professional title?

2. How long have you been in this role?

3. What has been your previous experience as an urban designer?
    a. Academic or professional training?

B. Project specific questions
The next questions are concerning the design and development of [project].

1. Can you give me a brief overview of the project?
    a. What was your role in the project?
    b. What other participants were involved in the project?
    [Probe – Names, roles]

2. What key issues arose in the development of this project? How were these issues resolved?
    a. Is this different from your experience with other projects? How?

3. What would you consider the key factors in the outcome of the project?
    [Either positive or negative]

4. How would you describe your relationship with other professional participants in the project?
    a. Is this similar to other projects you have worked on?
    [Probe – Specify participants i.e. other city departments, private consultants, etc.]

C. Relationship with municipal staff
I am also interested in how designers in the private and public sectors work together.

1. Have you worked with city staff consultants on other urban design projects in [Los Angeles/Toronto]?
    [Probe – Can you specify projects and consultants]

2. What are some of the issues that have arisen when working with city staff?
    Are these common to your work with the City?

When do they tend to occur?
Which projects stand out in your mind regarding your relationship with other professionals? Either positive or negative.

3. Are there types of urban design that are better undertaken by City staff?
[Probe: Policy, design, managing public competitions, etc.]

4. How would you describe the nature of your relationship with urban design staff at the City of [Los Angeles/Toronto], in general?
[Probe – Would you classify it as largely positive or negative? Why?
Do you think has changed over time?]

D. Urban design practice
The last questions are about how you view the nature of urban design practice in Toronto more broadly.

1. What would consider as examples of urban design [projects?] in [Los Angeles/Toronto]?
a. Which of these would you consider 'good' urban design projects?
[Probe – Includes policies as well as projects?]

b. Have there been urban design opportunities missed in [Los Angeles/Toronto]? Examples?

2. How successful do you think the City is in regulating urban form?

3. What would make the City more successful in this respect?

4. How would you define the role of an urban designer?
a. Do you think this differs between urban designers working for the city and in the private sector?

b. Do you think this view is commonly held? Why or why not?

End of Formal interview
Thank you for your participation.

1. Can you recommend anyone else I should speak with, either public or private sector?
2. Would you be available for a follow-up interview, if needed?
3. Would you like to receive a draft copy of the study to review?
4. Any other comments, questions or suggestions for me?

Interview Protocol
Political staff, officials

Overview
As part of my doctoral dissertation research, I am interviewing those involved in the development of urban design projects to gain a better understanding about the nature of urban design practice. I will be asking questions about your involvement in [project], as well as more general questions about your interactions with both city staff and private consultants.

A. Respondent characteristics
[1. Can you describe your role with the City?]

B. Project specific questions

The next questions are concerning the design and development of [project].

1. How would you describe your role in the project?

2. Who would identify as the key participants in developing the square?
    [Probe – Names, roles]

3. Who did you work most closely with?
    a. How would you describe that relationship?

4. Which staff at the city were most involved in the project?
    a. How would you describe your relationship with them concerning the project?
    b. Is this similar to other projects you have worked on?

5. Which private consultants were most involved in the project?
    a. How would you describe your relationship with them concerning the project?
    b. Is this similar to other projects you have worked on?

6. What issues arose in the DESIGN of this project? How were these issues resolved?
    a. Is this different from your experience with other projects? How?

C. Role of private consultants
I am also interested in the role of private-sector consultants in urban design. The following questions address your work with urban designers employed in the private sector.

3. What are some of the issues that have arisen when working with private sector consultants?
    a. Are these common to all work with consultants or were these issues project-specific?
    b. When do issues/problems tend to occur?
    c. Are there projects for which you had very positive or very negative experiences in your (or the city's) relationship with consultants? Which projects? Why?

4. Are there types of urban design that are better undertaken by consultants? Why?
[Probe: Policy, design, managing public competitions, etc.]

5. How would you describe the nature of the relationship between the City of [Los Angeles/Toronto] and urban design consultants, in general?
[Probe – Would you classify it as largely positive or negative? Why?
Do you think has changed over time?]

6. Please describe the process of the city's collaboration with and supervision of private urban design consultants.

D. Public design capacity
The next few questions are about the ability of the City of [Los Angeles/Toronto] to shape urban form and development.

1. How successful do you think the City is in regulating urban form? (ask for specific examples)

2. What would make the City more successful in this respect?

3. What do you think are the barriers to shaping urban form, from the local government perspective?
[Probe – give examples? i.e. lack of staff, lack of political interest, political system, etc.]

E. Urban design practice
The last questions are about how you view the nature of urban design practice in [Los Angeles/Toronto] more broadly.

1. What would you consider as examples of urban design [projects] in [Los Angeles/Toronto] in the last 10 years?
a. Which of these would you consider 'good' urban design projects?
[Probe – Includes policies as well as projects?]

2. How would you define the role of an urban designer?
a. Do you think this differs between urban designers working for the city and in the private sector?
a. Do you think this view is commonly-held? Why or why not?

End of Formal interview

Thank you for your participation.

1. Can you recommend anyone else I should speak with, in either public or private sector?
2. Would you be available for a follow-up interview, if needed?
3. Would you like to receive a draft copy of the study to review?
4. Any other comments, questions or suggestions for me?

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