Access, Barriers and Role of Transit for Homeless Shelter Residents in Surrey, British Columbia

by

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BA, Simon Fraser University, 1985
MUrb, Simon Fraser University, 2008

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Supervisory Committee

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Abstract

In this research, I examine the mediating role of transit and the mobility needs and experience of individuals who are homeless in the suburban community of Surrey, BC. I have used Harvey's (2005) conception of social spatial sorting as a means of understanding the suburbanization of poverty and Galtung's structural violence (1969) as a means of understanding the experience of homeless transit access.

I employed a multiple case study, using semi-structured interviews, with residents and staff of three homeless shelters, located in three distinct neighbourhoods in Surrey. A cross-case analysis of the interview data was undertaken, to draw conclusions and recommendations for policy development and research concerning the transit needs of people who are homeless. To provide a policy context, a review of existing transit access programs available for people who are homeless and/or low-income is presented demonstrating the range of criteria and best practices.

Four dimensions of transit access were identified by residents and staff: physical, temporal, social and financial (Kenyon et al., 2003). Residents had the most constrained agency (Coe & Jordhus-Lier et al., 2010) in relation to the physical and temporal dimensions, so that these dimensions became the most problematic in this suburban context.

The importance of considering and understanding the geographic context of shelters and potential impacts on mobility and social inclusion for shelter residents, exiting from homelessness, are demonstrated.

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Acknowledgments

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To all the participants in the study thank you for sharing with me your experiences with public transit in Surrey. I should state how much I enjoyed speaking with the people I met and interviewed at the homeless shelters, both residents and staff. Speaking with you was the highlight of this research project for me.

I would like to thank Karen O'Shannacery, Wanda Mulholland, Reverend Norman Oldman and Barbara Spitz for the work we undertook jointly through the Transit Working Group (TWG), advocating for affordable transit access for people who are homeless. Colleen Huston and Bonnie Pacaud of Fair Fares Calgary willingly shared both information and their more than 10 years of experience of successful advocacy for low-income transit access through Calgary Transit. The Calgary system has demonstrated best practices in financial access to transit for low-income people.

I also thank Danielle Scott and Shayne Ramsey (BC Housing), Andrew McCurran and Peggy Hunt (TransLink), Captain Dave Olson (BC Transit Security) for their work, support and interest with the Metro Vancouver Homeless Transit Planning Committee.

Finally, my daughter Morgan Greenwell has kept me current and Elizabeth Greenwell kept me grounded; a life-long transit user and activist and independent senior who advocated for bus service in her neighbourhood of Vancouver Heights.

Dedication

I dedicate this research to the homeless individuals I spoke with. They were willing and generous with sharing their personal experiences of public transit and mobility with me. The highlight of this research was listening and recording the stories they shared with me. Without their willingness to share their experience, I would not have been able to outline this story.

Chapter 1 – Introduction

The UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights' Article 13.1 maintains that "everyone has the right to freedom of movement and residence within the borders of each State." Article 21.2 avows that "everyone has the right to equal access to public service in [their] country." Public transit has been identified in needs assessments as critical for people who are homeless, to access services and personal support systems (York Region Alliance to End Homelessness, 2009) including healthcare (Syed, 2013) and resources for exiting homelessness

Taking a social determinant of health perspective illustrates how the experience of homelessness is shaped by a range of policies at the federal, provincial and local levels (Mikkonen & Raphael, 2010). In the Canadian Public Health Association report *What are the Social Determinants of Health*, 14 social determinants of health[1] (SDoH) are listed, including housing, social exclusion, health services and social safety network. Transportation is not noted. In this research, I am interested in transportation as a social determinant of health for people experiencing homelessness.

> Transportation is an essential component of a functioning society. Transportation provides access to jobs, education, health care, recreation, and essential goods and services—all of which are aspects of the social determinants of health. Distribution of transportation goods and services across populations substantially contributes to the length and quality of life.[2]

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[1] National Collaborating Centre for the Social Determinants of Health in its Glossary lists 21 social determinants as part of its definition, without mentioning transportation.

[2] *A Research Roadmap for Transportation and Public Health*. National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine (2019)

The social impacts of transportation disadvantage (Murphy, 2019) can be significant, especially for already disadvantaged population groups, including those experiencing homelessness (Lucas & Jones, 2012). People with insufficient mobility may be unable to participate in the economic, political and social life of their community (Kenyon, Lyons & Rafferty, 2003).

Marmot & Wilkinson (2011) recognize the inequality of health outcomes amongst the homeless population in terms of morbidity, chronic conditions and suicide. Studies have examined a range of health outcomes of people who are homeless whether they are on the street, in shelters, or part of the “hidden” homeless population. People who are homeless experience poorer health outcomes than does the general population. Examples include:

- Keyes & Kennedy (1992) found homeless people, in Britain, were 34 times more likely to kill themselves than with the general population;
- Grenier (1997) reports the homeless population, in Britain, is 35 times more likely to commit suicide;
- Keyes & Kennedy (1992) found homeless people 150 times more likely to be fatally assaulted;
- Desai et al (2003) reported suicide ideation by half of their sample group; and
- Folsum & Jeste (2002), in Sweden, found a prevalence of schizophrenia across 10 studies of 11%.

Hwang[3] has studied aspects of health outcomes for homeless people in the USA and Canada including: access to dental coverage, attitude of doctors and nurses in emergency wards, the role of interim housing in a 'housing first' model, and numerous studies on brain injury and homelessness.

Men living in homeless shelters in Toronto have a mortality rate of two to eight times higher than their counterparts in the general population (Hwang & Bugeja, 2000; Hwang, 2002). In a study co-authored by Hwang and Hulchanski, *Relationship between Housing Conditions and Health Status of Rooming House Residents in Toronto* (Hwang et al., 2003), rooming-house residents 35 years and older had significantly poorer health status than the general population over 35 years. Hwang (2001) stated:

> Homeless people are at increased risk of dying prematurely and suffer from a wide range of health problems, including seizures, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, musculoskeletal disorders, tuberculosis, and skin and foot problems.[4]

Lo (2015) observes that physical access to services can reduce or increase vulnerability, with public transit having a mediating role, through its impacts on access to services, with positive influences for inclusion. What happens when people cannot realize their right to freedom of movement because transportation is not affordable or physically accessible? In this research, I seek to understand and conceptualize the role of public transit, for a

[3] A selection of publications can be found here: www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed?term=(Hwang%20SW%5bAuth%5d%20OR%20Hwang%20S%5bAuth%

[4] Stephen Hwang (2001), *Homelessness and Health*, Canadian Medical Association Journal, page 229

sample of homeless shelter residents in Surrey, British Columbia, in order to better understand the spatial context of suburban homelessness.

Homeless-related services in the suburban community where the study was conducted are scarce and geographically disparate. The mediating role of transportation, as a means to support and/or enhance the ability of people who are homeless to access required housing, income supports, education, counselling, health services and/or social support networks (hereafter referred to as essential services) has not been sufficiently studied (Murphy, 2019).

With the lack of documentation of the transportation needs of suburban homeless people, having a more specific understanding of the self-perceived needs of people who are homeless can provide relevant information for the formulation of homeless specific transit policy in Metro Vancouver. My research question is:

What role does public transit, as social infrastructure[5], have for suburban homeless shelter residents trying to access housing, essential services and social supports?

My research objectives include the following:

[5] Social infrastructure includes the range of services/facilities that meet community needs and provide for a basic social standard of life including such facilities as, hospitals, schools, recreation facilities, churches, transportation, sewage facilities, water, electric grid and emergency facilities etc. https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/draft_london_plan_chapter_5.pdf, Greater London Authority (2017).

- Document self-perceived transportation needs of residents as expressed by residents in three suburban homeless shelters
- Document transportation needs of residents as perceived by staff
- Understand the nature of transportation barriers and/or aids, as they relate to housing, essential services and social supports for these suburban homeless shelter residents
- Understand and conceptualize the role of transit for this group of people as part of the process of accessing housing, essential services and social supports
- Understand the self-perceived benefit of improved transportation and mobility to this group of socially excluded people

In formulating this research question I wanted to be explicit and clear with defining the population group I was working with and the research objectives, so the data I collected from the semi-structured interviews, document review and personal observation would:

- Generate the appropriate level of detail to address the research questions
- Produce data with understandable patterns
- Provide the precision required in the analysis phase
- Allow for the identification of a wide range of experience with residents.

Recognizing that shelter residents are people who have self-directed needs to fulfill, I am interested in learning about and documenting where shelter residents say they need/want to get to while they are living in these homeless shelters and in order to exit homelessness. As part of understanding the context and experience of service provision where these residents lived, I also interviewed staff on their perceptions of resident experience and needs.

In this research, I focused first on travel from the shelter, as the starting place of all journeys taken or, importantly, perhaps not taken due to barriers which are documented through the data collection. There may be a larger number of trips initiated than completed, given potential difficulties with access and barriers.

Locating Myself in the Research

In this research, I am interested in the role, the experience and impact transit has on the lives of the residents of homeless shelters. I recognize that my own background and experience will shape my interpretations of the data collected in this research. I have thirty years of experience working with people who are homeless, in a variety of settings and contexts, but I have not been homeless myself. I have had the good luck to, mostly, live in the community where I work. I have had the chance to know people who were struggling with their homelessness, not only as clients but as neighbours.

From 2010-2017, I coordinated a community-based homeless program situated one block from the Joyce Street SkyTrain Station in East Vancouver. The Saturday morning program began at 7am, with free clothing and shower facilities available with breakfast served at 8am. The people who were the most street entrenched tended to be those who would use the shower facilities and take advantage of the free clothing provided. The breakfast program had a wider spectrum of people attending, often people who were at risk of homelessness. Attendance in the program was directly linked to public transit. The first participants arrived when the SkyTrain began running and arrived at the Joyce SkyTrain Station at 6:35am. Groups of people continued to arrive with each train. I learned that almost everyone who did not have a disability or senior's transit pass was risking a fare evasion fine as they were riding without paying a transit fare due to a lack of funds.

Access to the homeless program was impacted in 2012 by three policy changes that the Province of British Columbia passed, and TransLink implemented, including:

1. Changes to the enforcement and collection of fare evasion fines
2. Installation of fare gates as a physical barrier to access at SkyTrain stations; and
3. Introduction of the electronic Compass card for transit fare payment

I saw a direct impact between transit and accessing homeless support services in my work and was concerned how these three changes might impact the ability of transit dependent people to attend our breakfast, shower and support programs. At this time, in the fall of

2012, I became involved with homeless transit issues working with the Transit Working Group (TWG).

Transit Working Group

The TWG has been advocating on homeless transit issues since the mid1990s. The TWG began as a committee of the Vancouver Urban Core Community Workers Association (VUCCWA), centred in the Downtown Eastside neighbourhood of Vancouver. This was at a time when street homelessness in Metro Vancouver was seen, almost exclusively, in the downtown core of Vancouver.

Since the advent of neo-liberal policies in Canada in the 1980s there has been an increase in number of people who are homeless and a change in the nature of their homelessness. In cities across Canada visible long-term street homelessness began to appear in the late 1990s. As the Coordinator of the City of Vancouver's Tenant Assistance Program (TAP) from 1989 – 1994, I observed few people living on the street, and the fairly substantial vacancy rate in Downtown East single room occupancy (SRO) hotels, functioned as a residual rental market. The City of Vancouver's *Survey of Low-Income Housing in the Downtown Core 1992*[6] reported a vacancy rate of 23% in Downtown Eastside SRO hotels. This high vacancy rate served informally as part of the homeless shelter system. The Ministry of Human Resources (welfare) would provide vouchers to temporarily unhoused individuals for SRO hotel rooms.

[6] For the *Survey of Low Incoming Housing 1992* I interviewed the manager of every single room occupancy (SRO) hotel and rooming house in the downtown core of Vancouver. I have a hard copy of the report, but could not find an on-line reference to it.

Long-term residents of the SRO hotels in downtown Vancouver did not have equal tenancy protections with other tenants in BC, the RTA had distinct definitions of ‘tenant’ and ‘hotel tenant’. Hotel tenants legally fit somewhere between a ‘full’ tenant, of an apartment for example, and a licensee (guest) of a tourist hotel. Hotel tenants had weaker legal protections in regards to evictions, right to privacy and rent increases.

In the 1990s, in the absence of rent controls, the high vacancy rate kept rental rates low, within the then $225 per month shelter component of the provincial welfare allowance. While vacancy rates kept rents from rising, welfare policies kept rents from falling. Welfare policies with the shelter portion of a person’s cheque maintained an inflated minimum rental rate. If a person found a hotel room that rented below the $225 shelter portion of their monthly cheque, they would receive a reduced cheque amount. The shelter portion of $225 per month became the functional minimum rental rate. Street homelessness emerged while the SRO hotel vacancy rates began to fall in early 2000s. With no vacancy rate or applicable rent control hotel rental rates began to escalate far above the welfare monthly shelter portion.

In 1995, the Lookout Emergency Aid Society (renamed Lookout Housing and Health Society in 2017) opened the first winter shelter outside the downtown core of Vancouver in the Marpole neighbourhood, a mixed residential/industrial community in South Vancouver. Until the mid-1990s homeless shelters had concentrated in downtown Vancouver including: Catholic Charities on Cambie St., Salvation Army on E. Cordova, Triage Shelter on Main St., and the Lookout Shelter on Alexander St. It was transit oriented poverty with services largely within walking distance. This concentration of homeless shelters, drop-ins, soup kitchens, food lines up and other services is similar to descriptions of Dear & Wolch who described ‘service dependent ghettos’ managed through the church and non-profit sectors representing a form of malign planning neglect (Cloke et al., 2010).

The Marpole Shelter was geographically isolated from other homeless services and was closed during the day. It served only as a seasonal shelter during the winter, from November 1 to April 30. It was a first step toward the regional shelter system in Metro Vancouver, in response to the rising level of homelessness throughout the region from the late-1990s. To access services (food programs, drop-in centres and counselling services) during the day residents would travel back and forth from the shelter to the downtown core of Vancouver. At the time of the Marpole Shelter opening the TWG had begun advocating for free transit for residents of homeless shelters.

In 1995, I was the Manager of The Gathering Place Community Centre (GP), a City of Vancouver facility providing services to the low-income community in the Downtown South neighborhood, more than 10 kilometres from Marpole. Even though located in the downtown core we were one of the resources accessed by residents of the Marpole Shelter for meals, laundry and education. The Lookout Society provided downtown services, such as The Gathering Place, with bus tickets to distribute, on a daily basis, to people who were confirmed as residents of the Marpole Shelter. A telephone call to the

Marpole shelter staff by GP staff was required, for every single person, to confirm them as a shelter resident for the night, before a bus ticket was signed for and issued to them.

The Marpole Shelter was the start of homelessness being recognized as a regional issue in Metro Vancouver, not solely an issue of the Downtown Eastside in the central urban core. Since 1995, the homeless shelter system has expanded with permanent shelters located in North Vancouver, New Westminster, Coquitlam, Surrey, Langley and Richmond, with additional winter and extreme weather shelters[7] operating in White Rock, Maple Ridge, Richmond, Delta and Burnaby (there are transition houses for women and youth safe houses across the region as well).

Figure 1 Metro Vancouver Municipalities and Populations[8]

7 Overnight-only mat programs which operate out of churches and community centres when the temperature is below 0C degrees.

8 *Shaping our Future 2040*, Metro Vancouver Regional District

Recognition of the regional nature of homelessness was formalized with the acceptance by local and regional governments and the non-profit sector of *Three Ways to Home* (SPARC, 2003) as the regional homeless plan, adopted by the Metro Vancouver Regional Steering Committee on Homelessness (RSCH) in 2003. The three ways to home were housing, income and support services. With this plan there was an acknowledgement of homelessness as an issue, for both the urban core and suburban communities. *Three Ways to Home* remains the current regional plan.

Three Ways to Home makes no specific mention of transportation. Later policy reports have acknowledged the mediating role of transportation in accessing social support and essential services by people who are homeless. For example, in 2012, the City of Surrey's poverty reduction strategy, *T.H.I.S.*[9] *is How We End Poverty* speaks specifically to the role of transportation. *T.H.I.S* outlines that Surrey is geographically the largest municipality in Canada, with relatively few services for people who are homeless (shelters, drop-ins, food banks and meal programs, social assistance offices, etc.) and highlights the need for transit to access supports.[10] *T.H.I.S*. points out the need to make transit accessible for low-income populations and the regional transportation plans Frequent Transit Corridors network does not achieve that goal.

Since 2010, the TWG has grown to represent a number of homeless services and local community homeless task forces throughout the Lower Mainland. The awareness of

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[9] THIS is an acronym for transportation, housing, income and support

[10] The City of Vancouver's *Healthy City Strategy 2012* stated that this is a "long-term strategy for healthier people, healthier places, and a healthier planet to focus our efforts in three key strategic areas:

transit access and, more generally, mobility, coincided with the growing number of people experiencing homelessness in suburban communities across the Metro Vancouver region. It also coincided with the expansion of the homeless shelter system beyond the traditional confines of the Downtown Eastside.

Transit Access Research Conducted in Shelters in Metro Vancouver

Since 2014 I have undertaken three sets of interviews regarding the transit needs of homeless shelter residents in Metro Vancouver. The three research projects had three distinct methodologies. In 2014 through the TWG 131 people were interviewed, from six shelters and one drop-in centre from across the Metro Vancouver region, with a two-page fill in the blank and short answer questionnaire. In 2019 I created a web survey for the staff of 43 social service agencies (immigrant, youth, homeless, seniors) in the Surrey area. In the research for this dissertation I conducted the semi-structured interviews with shelter residents and staff in 2018-2019, described in Chapter 7, as the core data source concerning the case studies for this research.

The survey from 2014 had a more a priori approach than the semi-structured interviews conducted for this research. There was more of an assumption about what the answers would be when the questions were formulated and asked, more collecting of ‘facts’ rather than eliciting understanding. The questions I asked were ones that were informed by the three demands the TWG was advocating for: the need for a homeless transit plan in Metro Vancouver; a discounted bulk fare ticket purchase program for homeless service non-profits; and an appeal process for fare evasion tickets based on poverty and inability to pay.

This dissertation was undertaken to consider the mediating role of public transportation, as social infrastructure, for residents of three suburban homeless shelters in the City of Surrey, British Columbia. Through an exploration of residents' transit experience I examine how transit impacts access to needed services and social supports.

In Chapter 2, Literature Review, I present and discuss existing academic research on issues of homeless access to transportation in terms of social inclusion and health, as well as grey literature on existing programs that provide homeless transit access. This informs the discussion of my findings and results in Chapter 7 and 8.

Chapter 3, Theoretical Perspectives, discusses David Harvey's theory of social spatial sorting and Johan Galtung's structural violence. Harvey presents the concept of a social spatial sorting as a fix geographic to manage the over accumulation of capital and/or labour which occurs in capitalist economies. Post-WWII suburbanization is an example. Structural violence focuses on the impact that social structures can have, rather than on the actions of individuals. This is the theoretical framework for the data analysis and discussion of this neo-liberal experience of homeless mobility in a Keynesian suburban geography.

Chapter 4, Methodology, discusses constructivism as my epistemological paradigm in the construction of knowledge. I detail my mixed methods case study approach, including semi-structured interviews, sampling and data analysis processes and presents the methods used for the analysis of the data in relation to the theoretical perspective

Chapter 5, Case Studies, describes the three cases, individual suburban homeless shelters, where individuals were interviewed, providing details of each shelter and their community context. As well the spatial context of the City of Surrey and the characteristics of its homelessness population are discussed.

In Chapter 6 I provide an overview of the transit policy context of existing programs and services specific to the homeless population in Metro Vancouver and other metropolitan jurisdictions in both Canada and the USA

Chapter 7 presents the findings for each case, and a cross-case comparison, derived through the semi-structured interviews with a sample of the shelter residents and staff at the three homeless shelters described in Chapter 5.

Chapter 8 discusses the findings in relation to the existing literature regarding homelessness and transportation. As well, I reference previous research I have completed earlier within these shelters.

Chapter 9 presents my conclusions from the analysis and conceptualizes the findings in terms of existing theory, in light of my research question and objectives, and presents recommendations for future policy, programs and research regarding homeless transit access.

Chapter 2 – Literature Review: Social Exclusion, Access and Mobility

This literature review focused on research and policy documents concerning public transit access for homeless shelter residents, with particular reference to suburban contexts. The initial literature search included major social sciences, health and humanities databases at the University of Victoria including the Social Sciences Index, Humanities Index, and Google Scholar. Keywords used in the database searches included the following: social inclusion and homeless shelters, transit and homeless shelters, homeless shelters, transit and homelessness. Additional research papers, books and articles were identified through a review of bibliographies of published papers (1991 – 2019).

Also included in the review were policies, evaluations, surveys and papers from non-peer reviewed literature, grey literature, from government and non-profit sectors including reports available through the Homeless Hub (York University), Wellesley Institute (Toronto), Centre for Analysis of Social Exclusion (London School of Economics), and Transit Cooperative Research Project[11] (National Academy of Sciences Washington, D.C.). Additional grey literature was identified on policies, programs and program evaluations through discussions with individuals who have worked on transit access issues in Metro Vancouver, Calgary, Edmonton and Seattle. Documents reviewed

[11] TCRP comprises three cooperating organizations: Federal Transit Administration (FTA), the National Academy of Sciences, through their Transportation Research Board (TRB); and the Transit Development Corporation, Inc. (TDC), a non-profit educational and research organization established by APTA. They have a memorandum of agreement from May 13, 1992

included long range transit and transportation strategies, plans and evaluations for Metro Vancouver, TransLink, City of Vancouver, City of Surrey and TransLink's Mayor's Council.

The peer-reviewed literature focussing on the transportation/homeless connection for shelter residents was limited. However, three key concepts emerged from the review: social exclusion, mobility and access[12]. These three concepts describe the economic, social and physical dimensions of the journeys taken by people who are homeless and are discussed below with reference to the relevant literature.

Concept 1 - Social Exclusion

Hulchanski (2009) describes homelessness as the result of extreme poverty and social isolation. Homelessness refers to a level of poverty that includes being unhoused as well as lacking necessary social supports (Hulchanski, 2009). Homelessness may serve as an indicator of a number of social processes including failure of the housing market (Hulchanski 1997), lack of employment, systemic racism and/or social exclusion. Kenyon et al (2003) conceptualized the following definition of transport-related social exclusion highlighting accessibility and mobility dimensions:

> [It is] the process by which people are prevented from participating in the economic, political and social life of the community because of reduced accessibility to opportunities, services and social networks, due in whole or part to

[12] Accessibility planning for transportation was also recognized in the literature but was not selected as a theme as it was narrowly focussed on the physical accessibility of transit.

> insufficient mobility in a society and environment built around the assumption of high mobility.

Social exclusion can happen when either individuals or communities experience inter-linked problems such as unemployment and/or, lack of employment skills, low incomes, poor housing and/or family breakdown. Social exclusion impacts on the access to resources, goods, services, and/or rights when people don't have the ability to participate in a normal range of relationships and/or activities within economic, social, cultural or political spheres.

Social exclusion is not only the individual experience of disadvantage. As well the concept considers the associated economic and social outcomes of this condition (Lucas, 2012). Social exclusion considers disadvantage in social networks and whether supports are available for individuals. Social exclusion can leave people isolated and relying on the shelter system for temporary accommodation rather than friends or family; resulting in personal issues being experienced through an impersonal system.

The exceptional increase in daily personal travel that has occurred in the last few decades, in almost all countries, is partly the result of more extended and complex social networks developing (Doyle & Nathan, 2001). The ability to sustain friendships, family connections and the informal personal and/or professional relationships requires more travel to maintain and reproduce. Our social networks may be more geographically dispersed than in the past. The spatial overlap of primary inter-personal relationships have reduced, with some amelioration with social media, from less spatial cohesion in our social connections.

Less proximal and casual interactions means people may need to put more work into the maintenance of social networks. The future, for many of us, may mean traveling longer distances to sustain the same levels of social contact and social inclusion (Urry, 2003). For people who are homeless their social networks are often more localized and immediate. Also, people experiencing homelessness may not have consistent access to the technological resources (Wi-Fi) to access social networks.

Many of the people who are homeless, who access the shelter system to meet their emergency housing needs, often have either limited, or completely lost personal supports.[13] Hulchanski (2009) describes social isolation as a contributing factor to homelessness. Part of shelter life for people who are homelessness is re-gathering personal supports and accessing key services including some combination, as stated earlier, of housing, income supports education, counselling, health services and/or social support networks.[14] Transportation related social exclusion occurs at different levels simultaneously, including:

1. *the individual*, seniors and people with disabilities generally have fewer private transportation options (private cars) with an increased reliance on public services;

[13] Conversation with Case 3 shelter staff member

[14] In conversation with shelter staff regarding newly homeless individuals I was told that, ‘sometimes they just need to stare at the wall for a month’ to accept their new situation.

2. *the local area structure*, such as a lack of available or adequate public transportation, non-walkable neighbourhoods, a lack of affordable and appropriate housing, and/or accessible or appropriate health and social services; and
3. *the national and/or global economy*, such as the re-structuring of the labour market resulting in a dispersed low-wage service sector[15] with poor transit availability (Lucas, 2012) between work and home resulting in increased travel times and more complicated 'trip chaining.'[16]

The relation between mobility and access to transportation is dynamic, at both the individual and societal level. For people who are homeless, transportation needs may influence their ability to conduct housing searches, access health care, live in neighbourhoods well served by transit, and provide access to employment and education that allow for effective economic demand[17] (to compete in our predominately market based housing economy). Murphy (2019) states "transportation [is] a critical variable influencing numerous housing and non-housing outcomes for this population."[18]

The values pursued by transit systems are discussed by Jarrett Walker in *Human Transit.*[19] He speaks of the competing (and conflicting) goals of ridership goals and

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[15] Meeting with Seattle transit staff I was told the ORCA Lift discount fare program was introduced to provide service sector workers priced out of Seattle's housing market, with access to employment from suburban locations, which is why there is no residency requirement with the ORCA Lift program.

[16] Trip chaining in transportation policy refers to multiple stop trips such as picking children from daycare, and/or shopping on the way to and from work.

[17] In economics, effective demand in a market is the demand for a product or service which occurs when purchasers are constrained. An example is being unable to successfully compete for a good (such as housing) due to income restraints.

[18] Erin Murphy (2019), *Transportation and homelessness: a systemic review*, page 103

[19] Jarrett Walker (2012). *Human Transit*, page 118.

coverage goals. Ridership goals concern the maximization of riders and potential revenues. And coverage goals involve making sure everyone in the geographic area is provided the same level of service – low occupancy suburban routes. He equates coverage goals with equity and social service.

Making the Connections[20] (MTC) is one of earliest comprehensive studies describing the mediating role of transportation on social exclusion (Lucas 2004, 2012; Cass et al., 2005). The dominant theme in MTC concerns access to jobs and training. Jobs and training were seen by the Blair Labour government (report commissioned through the Social Exclusion Unit[21]) as fundamental keys to combatting social exclusion and enhancing social mobility within British society. Social exclusion and transportation disadvantage are intricately related to poverty and deprivation (Murphy, 2019). Over-coming spatial distance is required at particular moments of time to access the informal networks of work, friendship and family help, to reduce social exclusion. *MTC* focussed on a pre-defined set of policy goals. Target groups included: people looking for work, education, health care, food shopping, social networks/supports and/or housing. *MTC* describes, at an aggregate level, the nature of trips taken by, and needs of, individuals. It identified numerous inter-relationships that exist between transportation disadvantage and other areas of social policy.

[20] Social Exclusion Unit (2003). *Making the connections: final report on transport and social exclusion*.

[21] The Social Exclusion Unit (SEU) was established during the early years of the Blair government in Britain within the Deputy Prime Minister's Office in December 1997.

In Canada, the majority of transit systems reviewed have longstanding programs that offer a discount based on demographic group (typically limited to seniors, people with disabilities, and students, both K to 12 and university) but not to income groups. However, over the last 10 years there has been an emerging trend to provide discounted fares based on income level as well, a policy development that begins to acknowledge that transit has a role with issues of poverty, social exclusion and inequality. The cost of transportation has been found to impede movement out of homelessness by limiting opportunities for employment, social inclusion and access to needed health and social services (Hui & Habib, 2017). TransLink's final recommendations in July, 2019 for future fare programs, following a two-year public engagement process involving 66,000 public contacts on its fare structure, was to "work with the Provincial Government to explore potential options for expanded discounts for low-income residents, children, and youth."[22] This is an acknowledgement of need, if not a program.

Social inequality, in terms of availability, access and affordability for low-income riders of the transit system, is not referenced within any of the Metro Vancouver's *Regional Transportations Strategy* (RTS) goals. RTS discusses accessibility in regards to aging of the population and increasing disability issues, increasing diversity of travel patterns between and amongst the suburbs, and affordability in terms of the tax revenue required to meet projected capital and operational needs. The medium and long-range transit policy goals and objectives do not acknowledge poverty and social exclusion.

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[22] https://www.translink.ca/Plans-and-Projects/Transit-Fare-Review.aspx

The transportation strategy for the region, approved in 2010, is *Transport 2040*. As part of the development of *Transport 2040*, TransLink commissioned a series of eight background reports on various ways transportation planning can impact on other social policy including environmental and health impacts. In the health background report, *Transportation and Health: Context Report* (TransLink, 2013) public transit impacts are discussed in terms of a medical model of disease. The report notes "ensuring accessible travel facilities and encouraging people with chronic disease to use them could help stabilize, slow down, or even reverse disease processes."[23] Social determinants of health are not referenced in the health background document.

In *The Spirit Level: Why Equality is Better for Everyone,* Wilkinson & Pickett (2009) focus on the impacts social inequality has on population health. Countries, states and cities with more equal income distributions have better health outcomes – lower infant mortality rates, longer life expectancy and reduced morbidity rates – than comparable jurisdictions with higher inequality levels. They argue this is true across the entire income gradient – amongst the rich as well as the poor. There are numerous empirical studies showing correlations between national mortality rates and national income inequality measures (such as the GINI[24] co-efficient). Vicente Navarro[25] says of Wilkinson's work: "it provides a sociological alternative to other explanations for social inequalities in health that have emphasized behaviours …"[26] Navarro applauds this work because it

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[23] Andrea Procyk (2013), *Integrating Health in Transportation Planning,* page 10

[24] The Gini index is a statistical measure of distribution used to gauge the economic inequality among a population. It was developed by Corrado Gini, an Italian statistician, in 1912.

[25] Vicente Navarro (2002), *The Political Economy of Social Inequalities*, page 322

[26] Navarro (2002), page 326

moves poverty from an individual level to a relational level – moving from average incomes to relative incomes.

Concept 2 - Mobility

Cass, Shove & Urry (2005) describe an unavoidable 'burden of mobility' with our physical urban landscape, heavily influenced by post-World War II suburbanization with its assumption of highly individualized and flexible mobility (the use of private automobiles). Mobility, or lack thereof, is seen as an indicator of social polarization. Urry (2012) describes the transportation 'rich,' those with multiple choices of transportation, and the transportation 'poor,' those with limited choices. There are diverse but intersecting mobilities with different consequences for different peoples, depending if they are located in the 'fast' or 'slow' lanes, with people who are homeless stuck in the slow lane.

Looking at the consequences of a lack of public transit and the ability to access employment, education, health and social networks, Lucas (2004) examined the 'equity of outcome' and argued that "policy should seek to redistribute transport wealth[27] in the interests of 'fairness' or 'justice'" (Lucas 2012). For example, in a study conducted for the Department of Human Resources and Social Development, Government of Canada (Paez et al., 2009) analyzed *Household Travel Surveys* in Montreal and Toronto and found that lower income households (which would overlap, but are not the same as, the

[27] In Metro Vancouver this would be the 'choice commuter,' car drivers that TransLink wants to become transit users, even though they have the option of commuting by private automobile.

at-risk of homelessness population identified in the Canadian definition of homelessness[28] cited in this paper on page 79), make fewer trips, over shorter distances, and have less access to key services when compared to the Canadian average. Metro Vancouver has seen the mirror impacts of the rising cost of housing in central urban neighbourhoods with a suburbanization of poverty; people moving to the suburban periphery, in search of cheaper housing.[29] TransLink, as part of its two year Fare Review, presented a similar situation in Metro Vancouver, where lower income (less than $25,000/year) took shorter trips, most frequently 4km or less, more often on a bus than on SkyTrain. TransLink concluded "this situation could have equity implications, as the short travel distance of, low income people may be cross-subsidizing the long distance higher income people, under the current fare zone system."[30]

Urry & Sheller (2006) discuss a mobilities paradigm with three elements of mobility[31]:

1. Access – the range of all available mobilities according to time, place and other contextual constraints, such as price and physical location;
2. Competence – the skills and abilities directly or indirectly related to the appropriation of access;
3. Appropriation – how individuals, groups, networks or institutions act upon or interpret perceived or real access and competences

[28] Homeless Hub, definition, https://www.homelesshub.ca/sites/default/files/COHhomelessdefinition.pdf

[29] Neighbourhood Change Research Partnership: http://neighbourhoodchange.ca/documents/2017/12/hulchanski-neighbourhood-change-1970-2015-sfu-2017.pdf

[30] TransLink Transit Fare Review: Existing Conditions Review, November 2016, page 42

[31] These elements were considered with the development of questions for the interview guide

Urry & Sheller (2006) are concerned about the creation of unequal mobility through the expansion of both spatial and virtual social networks. Access, competence and appropriation are all significant. Appropriation, in particular, relates to the case studies in this research as there are multiple institutions interacting, within overlapping jurisdictions impacting on the three cases where the homeless shelter residents I interviewed reside. For the purposes of my research, the aspect of spatial mobility is most relevant, as a shelter is a physical space that is located within a social and geographic context for residents looking for housing, not a virtual space.

With social relations becoming increasingly mobility related, certain groups in society are excluded and/or disproportionately impacted (Kenyon, 2003). Lucas & Jones (2012) make the point that some social groups – including older people – are more adversely affected by transportation issues which can "lead to social exclusion though this is sometimes difficult to measure and quantify."[32]

One example of mobility needs in terms of access, competence and appropriation is shown in a study of patients in the Appalachians (Arcury et al., 2005). The study involved 1,059 rural Appalachian residents and examined the relationship between transportation and health care utilization/access. It found that people who knew someone (appropriation) who regularly provided rides to a family member utilized health care more than those who did not have transportation support. Transportation barriers were

[32] Kenyon (2003), page 100

associated with greater disease impact; which reflects a relationship between poverty and transportation availability in another study (Syed et al., 2013).

Transportation is a factor in producing and/or addressing health inequities. MTC included specific discussion on the effect of transportation access on health inequalities (Lucas, 2012). Public transit is seen as "key to providing access to medical services, schools, work sites, grocery stores, and other community services, as well as reducing transportation-related inequities."[33] Another study (Wallace et al., 2005) found 3.6 million Americans were unable to access health care because they did not have transportation. Inequality and inequity have similar but distinct meanings, inequity indicating injustice or unfairness of access or outcomes, while inequality implies a difference in access or outcomes.

Factors associated with missed appointments included either not owning or having access to a car (access as in Urry & Sheller's mobility paradigm). Those with a driver's license (competence in the paradigm had greater health care utilization (Arcury et al., 2005), independent of other factors. This study showed a connection between social connection and mobility, and how access to social networks can impact on our success negotiating our more spatially dispersed society.

A report from Melbourne, Australia, considered the mobility issue of 'forced' car ownership (access), where the owner is seen as having little choice but to purchase a

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[33] National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine (2019), *A Research Roadmap for Transportation and Public Health,* page 16.

motor vehicle to access services and people (Currie, 2009). An association was found between the lack of available public transportation, the lack of walking access, and the additional financial hardships experienced by low-income households who are 'forced' to own two or more cars.

Personal control over transportation is a significant factor in mobility concerns. This is demonstrated in a Norwegian study examining mobility and job opportunities.[34] The study determined the preferred option of the participants was to have a driver's license (competence) rather than either access to better public transit or a car (access). The driver's licence, beyond the specific transportation need, provided broader control, adaptability and recognition of abilities when seeking employment. A driver's license increased personal choice with a variety of social mobilities – not only 'transportation'.

Wray[35] has referenced studies from numerous jurisdictions outlining a lack of recognition of accessibility, availability and affordability for all income groups (including the homeless population) in medium and long-range transit plans for employment (Preston & Raje, 2007; Van Ham et al., 2001), social networks and social capital (Axhausen, 2003; Frei et al., 2009). Murphy (2019) says "as a population, individuals experiencing homelessness are overlooked in the extant transportation literature."[36]

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[34] Priya Uteng, T *Gender, ethnicity and constrained mobility: Insights into the resultant exclusion* (2009)

[35] Ron Wray (2014), *The Spatial Trap: Exploring Equitable Access to Public Transit as a Social Determinant of Health*.

[36] Erin Murphy (2019), page 96

The results of a North America wide survey of 55 transit agencies, conducted through the National Academies of Science, Medicine and Engineering (NASME), *Transit Agency Practices in Interacting with People Who Are Homeless* (2016) summarized the experience of 55 transit agencies across the USA and Canada with regards to the homeless population. TransLink was one of the 55 agencies participating. For transit systems in major cities, in particular New York and Philadelphia, the most frequent issue they faced with regard to homelessness was complaints about 'visibly' homeless people being on transit. The homeless issue reported by the other transit systems was largely managed, in Metro Vancouver, by a shelter system that providing 24/7 services and support.

Transit planning, in Canada, has largely focussed on environmental issues/outcomes and personal health promotion, not on the broader social determinants of health. This is demonstrated in *Transport 2040*, the Metro Vancouver regional transportation plan. However, there are examples of a social equity lens emerging in transportation planning in Canada. An example is the City of Edmonton with its *Transit Strategy Guiding Perspectives Report.*[37] This report laid the foundation for the establishment of the current low-income transit pass, instituted in 2017. The report discussed fare rates and discounts and the tradeoffs to be considered between contradicting objectives of revenue versus community benefits and equitable fares versus simple fares.[38]

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[37] City of Edmonton (2016), Transit Strategy Guiding Perspectives Report https://www.edmonton.ca/city_government/documents/RoadsTraffic/transit_strategy_subsidies.pdf

[38] The advent of electronic transit passes, *Compass Card* in Metro Vancouver, has reduced 'simple fares' as an obstacle, with the ability to have the fare structure programed onto the card

A literature review commissioned and funded by the City of Edmonton's Transportation Planning Branch in 2016, concerned the social sustainability of transit, as part of the City's transportation planning. The report objectives were to consider transportation equity, and to provide an overview of equity policies, programs, and practices of comparable transit agencies. The focus of the review is concerned with the specific needs of different ages, incomes, ethnicities, abilities, and genders.[39] Another example of increasing awareness of equity in transit planning is the *Calgary Transportation Plan*, which makes a specific mention of 'meeting the needs of low-income residents'.[40]

The Big City Mayor's Caucus (BCMC) of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) released the report, *National Transit Strategy*, in 2008. This report provided an important cross-Canada policy reference and focus for local transit agencies.[41] This report was endorsed by the Canadian Urban Transit Association (CUTA), a national organization that includes all major public transit systems in Canada amongst its membership.[42] It aims to be the collective voice of public transportation in Canada" (CUTA, 2007). Its motto is to be Canada's voice for public transit.

[39] City of Edmonton, 2016. https://www.edmonton.ca/city_government/documents/RoadsTraffic/social_transit.pdf

[40] City of Calgary (2012), *Calgary Transportation Plan. Part Three: Transportation Policies: Social considerations*, page 3-1

[41] B.C. is unique in Canada with the BC Transit Authority managing local transit services through a province-wide agency, and, also, unique in having a province-wide discounted bus pass program for seniors and people with disabilities.

[42] Email correspondence with Tammy Siu, Coordinator, Industry Data, informed me a significant portion of CUTA research is private for member organizations only, and TransLink contacts should not share research with me.

The BCMC's *National Transit Strategy* had five elements. Three of the elements speak to economic efficiency, accountability and stable capital investments which, in relation to this research, are more narrowly focussed on the management and operational issues of transit. The other two elements speak to health, more generally, in the form of environmental concerns/land-use planning and health promotion:

1. environmental concerns/land-use planning – transit oriented development [TOD] and policy objectives to reduce single occupancy vehicle use with the objective of improving air quality and reducing traffic congestion and travel times ("choice rides" in transit planning terms)[43]; and

2. health promotion through incentives to use transit (individual health promotion with moving people from cars to transit as this leads to more active travel, more walking and less sedentary behavior).

Another example of transportation policy that promotes health through individual lifestyles is the Metro Vancouver *Regional Transportation Strategy Strategic Framework.*[44] This is TransLink's long-range regional transportation plan adopted by the regional district in 2013. It identifies goals and proposes strategies, with implementation through rolling 10-year plans (serving as updates with input from public and stakeholder consultation).[45] Its two stated major foci are:

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[43] This is relevant to this research with shelters located in car-oriented suburban communities.

[44] TransLink (2013), https://www.translink.ca/Plans-and-Projects/Regional-Transportation-Strategy.aspx

[45] Current consultations are underway (June, 2019) to update the *Strategic Framework* with *Transport 2050*

1. Economic issues, with the impact of transit capital investments on land use planning and future development (transit-oriented development); and
2. Health promotion, with the promotion of active transportation (transit, walking and biking).

Much transportation planning is concerned with ‘mode share’, shifting the percentage of people using cars to a mixture of modes including walking, biking and public transit – referred to as ‘active transportation’. Local transit policy has not referred more broadly to the social determinants of health and social justice concerns such as equitable distribution of public transit. Income based transit fare programs have emerged where there are social equity policies in place that inform the framing of long range transportation planning.

Braveman et al (2011) states that promoting behaviour change may have contributed to small health improvements, but the evidence is limited in terms of measuring progress in the reduction of health disparities amongst different social groups. Krieger (2011) argues the health promotion/lifestyle model treats populations as simply the sum of individuals, resulting in population patterns of disease being the reflection of individuals.

Krieger refers to “bodily health and the body politic” (Beckfield & Krieger, 2009) with the interplay of political choices having social consequences which result in unequal population health distributions. For Krieger, this conceptualization applies to population health in the following way: “lifestyle equals individual ‘choice’ equals ‘health behaviour’ equals individual’s exposure to ‘health risk-factors’ chiefly involving smoking, alcohol, illicit drug, food, exercise and sexual behaviours" (Krieger, 2011). Braveman[46] further states "experience has shown that efforts focused solely on informing or encouraging individuals to modify behaviors, without taking into account their physical and social environments, too often fail to reduce – and may even exacerbate – health inequalities."[47] The social determinants of health perspective of Wilkinson and Marmot,[48] on the other hand, directly acknowledges the social context of individual choices and the role of social structures in contributing to the social gradient of health.

Transportation policy has tended to focus primarily on economic and environmental outcomes of planning and decision-making (Lucas, 2012). There are specific instances where social justice aspects have been incorporated into transit planning, for example, in Britain and the State of Victoria, Australia (Lucas, 2012). In Britain, starting in 2006, 'accessibility planning' was required of local transport authorities as part of their statutory five-year Local Transport Plans (Lucas, 2012). Accessibility planning was a GIS-based methodology with a short-term goal of making more efficient use of public transit services and the longer-term goal of promoting new patterns for the delivery of local services. Transport authorities were expected to work in partnership with local public bodies to develop solutions to identified deficits in accessibility. The social impacts and "distributional effects of the transport system and transport decision-making

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[46] Paula Braveman et al (2011). *Broadening the Focus: The Need to Address the Social Determinants of Health.*

[47] Braveman et al (2011) page 9

[48] Marmot & Wilkinson (2008)

have been far less well researched … than the associated economic or environmental considerations."[49]

Concept 3 - Access

The concept of access is frequently associated with physical access and disability concerns[50] (Cass et al., 2005). However, within the literature reviewed for this study, access is expanded to include financial, physical, organizational and temporal components. All of these impact on social participation within society. These four dimensions are not discrete categories as they have overlapping (intersectional) impacts as commented in Church, Frost & Sullivan (2000), and in Kenyon et al (2003):

1. Financial access can be addressed by providing discounted transportation for groups such as school children/ teenagers, the elderly, people with disabilities and post-secondary students (see Appendix A). It is where the price of transport exceeds its affordability when social exclusion occurs.

2. Physical constraints are a function of both design (e.g. of transportation, of cities, of homes) and of the physical and mental capacities of potential users.

[49] Lucas & Jones (2012) page 29

[50] These are also concerns within the Metro Vancouver homeless population with 52% indicating two or more health conditions in the 2017 Regional Homeless Count, data on health conditions is not yet available from the 2020 Regional Homeless Count.

3. Organization of public transportation includes: proximity of a bus stop or station, direction of travel, ability to reach destinations quickly (directly or indirectly), quality of the experience, and service frequency, reliability and punctuality (Cass, Shove & Urry, 2005). These are crucial where people have no access to a car.

4. Temporal availability relates, for example, to people not finding public transit for evening check-in curfew at a homeless shelter, or at a time when people are able to shop, or leisure activities curtailed because of the time/infrequency of service, or reduced transit frequency after moving to the suburbs in search of cheaper housing. Also, there is the question of 'time sovereignty.' Shelter residents may not have control over personal schedules, with shelter meal times/check-ins sandwiched between appointments and bus schedules set by others

Transit research has tended to be quantitative, such as analyzing household transportation surveys (Paez et al., 2008) rather than focussing on the how and why of the transportation issues and the context and/or the constraints on personal decisions. Transportation access research also tends to focus on the person accessing transit as the object of services, rather than the subject, defining and acting on needs. In one study respondents were asked to identify locations where they felt an 'obligation' to visit (shopping, child care, education or health care without eliciting any self-perceived needs (Moore & Lilley, 2001). Another study (Delbosc & Currie, 2011) developed an 18-item measurement tool that allowed 534 participants to rate various aspects of transportation on a five-point scale. People experiencing homelessness were included as one of the four categories of people who were surveyed. The survey had four topics: transportation disadvantage, transit disadvantage, vulnerability and reliance on others. It was within the homeless population that the impacts of transit disadvantage were most significant.

Improved access to services and supports is a factor in reducing inequalities and social and/or geographic isolation. Urry (2002) argues mobility rights (as well as civil, political and social rights) should be included when considering citizenship rights. Mikkonen & Raphael (2010) discuss the need to consider whether the social determinants of health are viewed as a right of citizenship, or as a commodity dependent on an ability to individually pay.

In the State of Victoria, the Social Transit Unit was established in 2008 to provide high-level coordination amongst State departments for an accessible transportation agenda. Additional funds were invested in buses and service level increases, including the use of 'flexibly routed' buses, a system where routes could respond to in-the-moment needs of transit riders within a fixed area. Both of these planning initiatives sought to increase both social and physical accessibility.

There is a role for both universal and targeted programs. An example related to transit planning addressing inequality of access with a targeted program is in the State of Victoria, Australia, where a distinction is made between 'mass transit' and 'social transit.' Mass transit refers to volume issues (related to Jarrett's 'ridership' focus, page 19) not needs issues (Jarrett's 'coverage' focus, page 19). Social transit concerns policies and programs aimed at transportation-related social exclusion for sections of the community with limited or no transport options.

In Canada, universal health insurance has reduced income-related health inequalities in access to health care. However, the social determinants (with a mediating role of available and accessible transportation I would argue) "represent the next frontier in reducing health inequalities" (Bryant et al., 2011). Complementing universal programs with targeted investment to people in the lowest level of the income/health gradient would result in the greatest absolute reduction in mortality.[51]

Braveman relates this to the social gradient of health in this way: "increasing income for people at the lower end of the income scale tends to translate into larger increases in health, while increases in income among the already very high-income may not be associated with better health."[52] "The proportional relationship between income and mortality is the same at all income levels" and a proportional dollar goes further at the lowest levels.[53] This means a dollar invested to impact the lowest quintile would have greater impact than investments in the highest quintile.[54]

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[51] Transit examples will be discussed later in this research (page 132-168) when discussing targeted discounts for low-income and/or homeless populations by various transit authorities

[52] Braveman et al (2011) page s7

[53] Marmot & Wilkinson (2011) page 348

[54] In conversation with Councillor Brenda Steele, City of Surrey, she said that "there are 60 people every day at Surrey Memorial that are homeless. Fraser Health Authority has had to develop out-patient care for non-housed patients; in addition to the mobile home care teams providing service to shelters residents in Surrey." (May, 2019)

Summary

The literature presented above on social exclusion, access and mobility demonstrates the importance of, and need for, additional study of the mediating role of transportation for homeless shelter residents. The literature is deficient in describing how people, who are homeless, experience barriers to transportation, and what that means in accessing the 14 social determinants of health recognized in Canada (Canadian Public Health Association, undated). Transportation has not been identified, specifically, as a social dimension of health, while it is inextricably linked as a means of accessing almost all of the others. With regard to both homeless policy planning and evaluation, and transportation planning, the role of transit, as a necessary means of accessing the social determinants of health has been overlooked. There has been a social policy absence, in terms of homelessness.

Chapter 3 - Theoretical Perspectives

In this chapter I will outline the theoretical perspectives of social-spatial sorting and structural violence. I will use David Harvey's conceptualization of capitalism as a socio-spatial sorting mechanism, to provide understanding of the spatial context of the proposed research[55]and the geography of suburbanized poverty. The suburban geography of this research represents a landscape that emerged, predominately, during the post-WWII era and Keynesian social policies and programs. During the last 20 years, during a time of predominately neo-liberal social and housing policy the suburban homeless population has increased significantly.[56] Social-spatial sorting will provide a theoretical perspective to understand this suburbanization of poverty.

Structural violence relates to the material and social conditions in which the residents of homeless shelters in this research experience poverty in this suburban geography**.** Within sociology, conflict theories consider the effect and role of, for example, class-conflict, racial conflict, gender conflict and increasing levels of inequality. As a category within conflict theory, I will use structural violence as described by Johan Galtung with the analysis of data collected and to describe and compare the three separate cases within this research.

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[55] In discussing socio-spatial sorting, I will reference David Harvey, Manuel Castells and David Gregory

[56] This is demonstrated in the regional homeless counts conducted every three years in Metro Vancouver, starting in 2002.

Social-Spatial Sorting

According to Harvey (1981), the built environment under our current economic system serves the production, circulation and consumption needs of capitalism. When capital and labour can no longer be re-invested with an average rate of profit in their originating territory over-accumulation occurs.[57] In order to deal with this over-accumulation of capital and/or labour – and resolve what will emerge as an internal crisis – capitalism requires a 'spatial fix' either through a geographic expansion and/or a geographic restructuring. Harvey argues this is an explanation for the post-WWII suburbanization and the concurrent massive investments in public infrastructure for private use (highways) and gutting of public rail systems.

Commenting on Harvey's work on Marx's internal contradictions of capitalism, Castree & Gregory[58] write: "Harvey describes Marx's theoretical contribution in *Capital* [as] unravel[ing] the nature of capitalism's *inner* dialectic. Harvey with his spatial concern is examining its external dialectic – the *outer* transformations of the capital relation.'"[59] Harvey's social spatial sorting is describing an internal symptom of capitalist contraction expressed externally on its geography. Harvey argues there is 'no long-run [external] spatial fix to capitalism's internal contradictions,' the contradiction is part of the essence of capitalism and spatial sorting is both a permanent feature and a temporary fix.

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[57] In *Capital* Marx outlined the theory of a declining rate of profit as inherent to the capitalist mode of production

[58] Harvey (1981), page 307

[59] N. Castree & D. Gregory, eds, *David Harvey: a Critical Reader* (2006), page 326

Castree and Gregory (2006) claim that Harvey's 'trademark' notion of a fix through 'spatial sorting' is loose and heterogeneous. As a term it is meant to be general and refer to the many different forms of spatial reorganization and geographical expansion that, for a time, manages the crisis-tendencies Harvey (1981) finds are inherent in the system. The geographic nature of the spatial-fix could be seen, perhaps, as an 'embodiment' of capitalist contradiction, to use the eco-social language of Nancy Krieger (2014).

In an address to the *Growing Home: Housing and Homelessness in Canada* Conference in 2009, David Hulchanski made a number of remarks about homelessness being the result of societal structural changes in Canada over the last 30 years. He said the "word homelessness came into common use in developed countries in the early and mid-80s to refer to the problem of de-housing – the fact that increasing numbers of people who were once housed … were no longer housed. Canada had started to experience de-housing processes." [60]

Hulchanski (2009) characterizes homelessness as an 'easy' problem to solve. As a problem it is not complicated – the solution to homelessness is housing. Hulchanski quotes Cushing Dolbeare from the late 1990s saying:

> The one thing all homeless people have in common is a lack of housing. Whatever other problems they face, adequate, stable, affordable housing is the prerequisite to solving them. Homelessness may not be only a housing problem, but it is always a

[60] David Hulchanski, *Homelessness in Canada: Past, Present, Future*. Conference keynote address, Growing Homes: Housing and Homelessness in Canada, University of Calgary, February 18, 2009

> housing problem; housing is necessary, although sometimes not sufficient, to solve the problem of homelessness. [61]

Through the post-War period Hulchanski (2007) argues the policy thrust in Canada was to re-house Canadians into better quality housing. Starting in the 1980s – during the period of the advent of monetarist[62] economic policy – a combination of changes in social policy programs allowed the reality of de-housing people into worse conditions rather than re-housed into better ones. Hulchanski maintains that the initial social program changes began in 1984 – with significant reduction in the number of units built across Canada under Section 56.1 under the 1973 Amendments to the National Housing Act.[63] This was followed in 1993 by devolution of housing programs to the provinces and the termination of direct federal spending on new low-income housing supply. Only three provinces, Ontario, Quebec and British Columbia, maintained social housing construction programs; without federal funding the other provinces' programs did not have sufficient scale to be maintained.

The first homeless count I organized occurred in September, 1992, through the alleyways of the West End neighbourhood of downtown Vancouver and Stanley Park. We found visible signs of people sleeping out but not a single person was interviewed; at the time we assumed people had moved into Stanley Park over night to sleep. By the late 1990s,

[61] Cushing, N Dolbeare, 1996, "Housing Policy: A General Consideration," in *Homelessness in America* 1996, p. 34

[62] The International Monetary Fund's, *What is Monetarism?* Monetarism is described as fundamentally about the quantity theory of money. It is an accounting theory that says "the money supply multiplied by velocity (the rate at which money changes hands) equals nominal expenditures in the economy (the number of goods and services sold multiplied by the average price paid for them)".Politically it is identified with the economic policies of Ronald Reagan and Margaret Thatcher. https://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/fandd/2014/03/basics.htm

[63] Hulchanski (2007) page 2

outreach and advocacy work had an additional focus beyond housing repair and tenancy issues to include homelessness and people living on the street.

Hulchanski has done a number of studies on the changing income and wealth profile of homeowners and renters in Canada over the last three decades. In his keynote address (2009) he questioned "whether it is right to give priority to the homeownership sector and to ignore the rental and social housing sectors?" He points out Canada does not have a tenure-neutral housing system. It is a system that, through subsidies and regulations, helps owners more than renters, supporting the dominant social class relations. There are two separate parts of Canada's housing system,[64] encompassing 80% of households with some effective market demand (current homeowners and tenants who will be able to become homeowners at some point), and 20% without effective market demand, who are in residual housing, lower-cost and/or poor-quality rental or managed subsidized housing.

In a Research Bulletin published in 2007, Hulchanski describes the Canadian policy of assisting owners and neglecting renters and the related wealth and income profiles by tenure. [65] With 95 percent of Canadian households obtaining their housing through the private market – only 5% of housing is non-profit in Canada (Hulchanski, 2007) – we rely almost exclusively on market mechanisms for provision, allocation and maintenance of the housing stock; significant government intervention in the supply of housing is with the private market.

[64] Hulchanski (2009)

[65] Hulchanski (2007)

According to Hulchanski (2009), the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC), which was established in 1946, focused "public funds almost exclusively on the ownership sector."[66] Its focus was supporting the amortized mortgage market for house buying and for investors in the private rental housing market; through programs such as the Assisted Home Ownership program, Canadian Homeownership Stimulation Plan, Registered Homeownership Savings Plan and the Mortgage Rate protection Program. Hulchanski writes "if it were not for federal government housing policies and programs, past and present, Canada's ownership rate would be very much lower and its housing system very different from what it is today."[67]

One of Hulchanski's criticisms, in terms of public acknowledgement of this lack of tenure neutrality, is the void of statistical information the government reports by tenure. However, Hulchanski does cite from the 2006 CMHC annual report "more individual homeowners (746,157) were helped through mortgage insurance in 2005 than all the social housing units (633,300) [68] funded over the previous 35 years."[69] Another statistic noted is the $6 billion (2007 estimate) in tax revenue not collected as capital gains from owner occupied housing – no similar wealth transfer is available to rental households.

During the 1950s and 1960s state interventionism and Keynesian economics were predominant in most industrialized developed economies. Vicente Navarro describes this

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[66] Hulchanski (2007), page 2

[67] Hulchanski (2007), page 2

[68] Hulchanski (2007), page 2

[69] CMHC 2019 Annual Report, highlights 100,000 individual mortgages insured, and 34,400 units of market rental and non-market rental housing

Keynesian policy as including: “wage increases, along with expansive social expenditures and redistributive policies of the welfare state (favouring consumption by the popular classes), stimulating the internal aggregate demand.”[70]

Hulchanski (2007) describes the pre-WWII Canadian state as a social assistance model and post-WWII as a social security welfare state that provides wage stabilization for the emerging middle class, but not with any anti-poverty agenda. With the social security welfare state there is universality and wage replacement. With universality of payments come entitlements and rights of citizenship (Old Age Security and public health insurance), or earned benefits (Canada Pension Plan). Hulchanski (2009) characterizes Canada’s social welfare state as a “liberal welfare state” which has minimal “interference with the commodification of goods and services and dualism maintained between market and state allocation.” Navarro (2002) describes a limited social pact between labour and capital; quite formally in countries such as Germany – with joint management and labour work councils with a degree of co-determination over conditions of work – and less formally in Canada with the acceptance post-WWII of the Rand formula with compulsory deduction of union dues from wages. Harvey calls it embedded liberalism in the USA – not a social democratic system – with union rights, some social programs and state interventions.

Hulchanski (2009) argues the objective of these policy regimes was to maintain high and stable levels of mass consumption. With housing, this meant maintaining a high level of

[70] Vicente Navarro (2002), *Political Economy of Social Inequalities*, Page 45

housing starts within the private market, and had less to do with assisting impoverished households directly. The example he uses to demonstrate this is from the 1992 federal budget where the *Home Buyers Plan* was introduced to allow *Registered Retirement Savings Plan*[71] (RRSP) withdrawals for home purchases, at the same time as social housing units were cut from 12,400 per year to 8,000 per year (and the following year eliminated entirely).

Poverty and housing tenure are closely connected. Hulchanski describes the combined reduction in housing supply, with changes in the labour market and in federal and provincial social transfer payments, such as unemployment insurance and welfare, having the effect of a poverty so deep "that even poor-quality housing is not affordable ... [starting] in the 1980s more and more people were not only poor, but also found themselves unhoused." [72] In other words, [homelessness] "is a by-product of Canada's housing system."[73] Hulchanski supplies information from the federal finance department's *Fiscal Reference Tables* to support his claim that a direct transfer to individual and families declined from 5% of GDP being spent on federal programs in the 1970s and 80s to less than 3.8% of GDP in 2008. The social need for housing is unmet mainly amongst renter households – tenants whose income and lack of wealth cannot generate 'effective' market demand in the predominantly private market of housing supply.

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[71] A tax free savings account established under the Mulroney Conservative government, with voluntary annual contributions, a retirement pension enhancement.

[72] Hulchanski (2009), page 4

[73] Hulchanski (2009), page 5

Harvey, in *New Imperialism* (2003), puts forward an argument that the state is a social relation as is capital and the historic role of the state is to control the irreconcilable antagonisms within society. The 'structured coherence' in society results from the political/cultural processes working within the economic dynamic. This is consistent with Galtung's structural violence, and the 'naturalization' of current social political assumptions.

Capital builds and rebuilds the landscape to meet the functional needs of the system – creating a fixed space – and as a global system it now re-shapes the planet (Hulchanski, 2007). Manuel Castells in *The City and the Grassroots* (1983) takes a more fine-grained stance saying "the city is a social product … economic factors and technological progress do play a major role in establishing the shape and meaning of space. But this role is determined by the social process through which humankind appropriates space."[74] The spatial fix is an on-going coping mechanism of capital to deal with internal contradictions, and it can be expressed in many different geographic forms. As capital accumulates and productive forces develop and change, capital will destroy its created spaces with a new "spatial fix": either re-development of old space or the creation of new space and innovations in physical and social infrastructure, required by the development of productive forces.

[74] Manuel Castells (1983), *The City and the Grassroots*, page 291

Castells (1983) discusses Henri Lefebvre's argument space is not passive and neutral.[75] Space is produced and reproduced within our class divided society and so it represents the site of class contradictions and struggle. People use the space of their environment as a place to life. Lefebvre (Castells, 1983) called this interactively used space of everyday life 'social space'. Lefebvre's language for the uses proposed by business investors for profit and regulated by government is 'abstract space', such as the planning of a new suburban housing development. This 'abstract space' may conflict with the existing social space, the way residents currently know the space, such as an open field. Lefebvre (Castells, 1983) said the conflict between abstract and social space, along with conflicts between classes, is a basic one in society.

How does this relate to homelessness and transportation? Lo[76] outlines the current suburban context and response to suburbanization of poverty, has three aspects to consider:

1. With a short history of development, suburban areas have been particularly vulnerable to the full impact of fiscal constraint at all levels of government in the past three decades;
2. Infrastructure demands are increasing rapidly in suburban areas where vulnerable populations are growing in number and as a proportion of the population; and

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[75] Castells (1983), page 296

[76] Lo et al (2015), *Social Infrastructure and Vulnerability in the Suburbs*, Page 9

3. Automobile-oriented and highly segregated land use patterns exacerbate public infrastructure needs, with residents traveling long distances, using slow and infrequent public transportation.

Harvey (2007) writes "the particular spatial fix varies according to whether capital is seeking to overcome overproduction (new markets); to reduce surplus population, to access new materials and/or to deal with localized over-accumulation (new investment opportunities)."[77] In the 19th Century there was the expansion of empire, with the dislocation of "reserve armies" of labour through emigration from Ireland to North America (surplus population) and there was the investment in infrastructure during the railway age (new investments). And war has been used as a means of resolving capital surplus with the example of the production boom of World War II ending the Great Depression.[78] WWII managed the excess accumulation of both capital and labour. China's economic miracle with a growth rate of over 8% is partly fuelled by state investments in infrastructure – a growth based on growth. Ghost cities for half a million people have been constructed and sit empty across China.[79] In the first 13 years of the 21st century, China consumed [80] 50% more concrete (infrastructure, housing, factories, military projects included) than the USA used in the entire 20th Century.

[77] Harvey (1981), Page 293

[78] Willis Shaparla, Carnegie Centre volunteer and former On-to-Ottawa trekker speaking of WWII said to me in 1989 about the advent of WWII 'suddenly there was money for everything'

[79] Australian news report here: www.youtube.com/watch?v=rPILhiTJv7E&feature=player_embedded#at=87

[80] Harvey (2016), Harvard Lecture, March 16

Harvey describes his intellectual task as:

> … construct[ing] a general theory of space-relations and geographical development under capitalism that can, among other things, explain the significance and evolution of state functions (local, regional, national, and supranational), uneven geographical development, interregional inequalities, imperialism, the progress and forms of urbanisation and the like. Only in this way can we understand how territorial configurations and class alliances are shaped and reshaped, how territories gain or lose in economic, political, and military power, the external limits on internal state autonomy (including the transition to socialism), or how state power, once constituted, can itself become a barrier to the unencumbered accumulation of capital, or a strategic centre from which class struggle or inter-imperialist struggles can be waged.[81]

In Harvey's terms, the temporary spatial-fix of capital creates spaces based on their exchange value and not with their use values. Castells' frames this use value in terms of mobilizing around collective consumption, cultural identity and political self-management.[82]

For Harvey this raises a question about "the displacement of class struggle from the point of production to the political and ideological class struggle to control the state apparatus and its policies."[83] Castells looks at these political/cultural processes distinctly as a "political system (aimed at the state) and civil society (not necessarily tied to dominant values and norms) and a source of social innovation rather than social bargaining."[84]

[81] Gregory & Castree (2006), *David Harvey, A Critical Reader*, Page 327

[82] Castells (1983), page 328

[83] Harvey (1982), Page 449

[84] Castells (1983), Page 294

Harvey characterizes class struggle today, with the advent of finance capital, as one waged against accumulation of dispossession (Harvey, 2016).[85] Capital, as a social relation, results in the creation of the real estate wealth within modern capitalist society, where the value creation is privately expropriated. This is a basic contradiction of capitalism within the urban system; private exchange value depends of the social relations and collective action of others. An example is productive and unproductive labour: teachers in the public education system are unproductive (in economic terms as they do not generate a profit); teachers in the private system are productive, as their labour generates a profit. This is not a question of labour use value but of labour exchange value – it's an expression of dominant social relations (akin to Lefebvre's abstract and social space distinction).

Real estate under capitalism, as the physical representation of the dominant social relation, is a powerful force in shaping the urban environment we live in. One can: buy property, hold on to it making no improvements, and then sell it at a higher price; or lose all investment capital – depending on how the neighbouring properties are developed or not. An increased price is the result/product of collective societal activities, and subject to the spatial fix of capital. For example, with the advent of condominium legislation in Canada in the 1970s, high density sites were no longer de facto rental zones. There is more profit in homeownership. Since renters have about half the income of homeowners, condo developers can always outbid rental developers for residential sites (and in

[85] Harvey (2016), states the first accumulation of dispossession with emergent capitalist relations in the 16th and 17th was against process of the proletarianization of serfs

CMHC[86] rental surveys, condo rentals consistently have higher rental rates than purpose built rental sites). Even when condominiums are on the rental market for some period of time they are not purpose built as rental, with long-term security of rental stock.

Harvey (2016) describes capitalism since the 1970's as poor at generating growth. Piketty[87] would argue it has returned to a more typical rate of growth. This period of time Harvey (2016) describes as slow growth, and through accumulation of dispossession as one mechanism, increases polarization and stratification between rich and poor. Who are the dispossessed and what political possibilities come from their experience to find our way out of the current impasse? The great accumulation of money that has been concentrating in the upper classes has come not as a result of growth but by re-distribution of societal wealth – accumulation by dispossession – resulting in society being more unequal. Since the 1980s there has been the creation of new tools of finance – and the credit system as a vehicle – for accumulation by dispossession.

In the 1970s embedded liberalism (Harvey, 2002) was not working as it had previously. There was a developing crisis of capital accumulation and Keynesianism did not seem to be addressing this newly emerging crisis. Neo-liberalism was an answer to the crisis of capitalist accumulation. Margaret Thatcher became Prime Minister of Britain in 1979 and took on an advisor, Keith Joseph, from the Institute of Economic Affairs, dedicated to

[86] CMHC Annual Rental Market Survey, 2019

[87] Thomas Piketty (2014), *Capital in the Twenty-First Century*

neo-liberal economic policies; and neo-liberal economic policies began to be implemented in Britain.

Harvey (2005) argues neo-liberalism as a theory is a hybrid. It is called neo-liberalism because they took the liberal political principles of freedom and liberty of the 17th and 18th century and wedded them with neo-classical economic principles of free markets, free trade and strong system of private property rights as the basis of protecting the liberty and freedom of the individual. He identifies Von Hayek and the Mont Pelerin Society as its initial proponents. Castells says "at this extreme societies have disappeared and we are left with markets."[88] Margaret Thatcher was quoted as saying "there are individuals and there are families, there is no society."[89] For Castells there are three kinds of actors: "the dominant elite, the creators of a new social order and the rentiers of any social organization."[90]

Harvey (2005) points out the effect of neo-liberalism has been to make the poor poorer and the rich richer, not as an accident but as a political project through the pragmatic application of neo-liberal economic theory. Harvey paraphrases Nixon's phrase saying 'we are all neo-liberals now', when he reflects on how the neo-liberal principles have been accepted (normalized) into our politics and policies.

[88] Castells (1983), page 293

[89] Jarret Walker (2012) in *Human Transit* quotes Margaret Thatcher, from Parliament Hansard as saying: "A man who, beyond the age of 26, finds himself on a bus can count himself as a failure." Page 42

[90] Castells (1983), page 293

However, in the late 1970s neo-liberalism was not working in terms of jump starting the economy of the USA and Britain. While being good at capital accumulation, neo-liberalism tended to generate financial crisis. So, rather than pure neo-liberalism, what was pursued policy-wise was a more pragmatic version. Thatcher was re-elected in the 1984 election by nationalism (with the Malvinas/Falklands Islands intervention) and not because of economic recovery.

Harvey (2016) describes New York City in 1975 as the beginning of pragmatic neo-liberalism. In the mid-70s New York City investment bankers refused to fund the city's debt and forced the City into near bankruptcy. William Simon, Secretary of the Treasury advised President Ford to not provide federal assistance to aid the City to avoid bankruptcy. The City's budget was taken over first by the Municipal Assistance Control Board and then later by the Emergency Financial Control Board (EFCB). The municipal taxes collected by New York City were not under democratic control of City Council but under the EFCB. Harvey describes the financial institutions as engineering a 'financial coup' of the City; with investment bankers restructuring New York City's economy.

In the case of New York City, this pragmatic neo-liberalism was expressed in two ways. First, in the conflict between the well-being of financial institutions versus the well-being of the population as a whole, the interests of financial institutions were prioritized. The EFCB paid off the debt to banks first, and municipal services were cut or user fees instituted to compensate for insufficient City funds. This moved away from neo-liberal theory which implies lender beware – if you make bad investment decisions you should bear the costs of it – to the pragmatic practice of borrowers beware and be prepared to pay for any bad investment decisions of capital. This happened again on a much larger scale in 2008 with the ‘too big to fail’ bail out of the banking industry in the USA after the sub-prime mortgage collapse of the economy; people lost their homes, lost their capital investments (accumulation by dispossession) but the Troubled Asset Relief Program (TARP) provided assistance to financial institutions to purchase assets and equity, to maintain the financial sector not the individual homeowner. It was signed into law by U.S. President George W. Bush on October 3, 2008 and authorized $700 billion in expenditures.

The State addressed vulnerable institutions but not individuals. Heightened vulnerabilities led to a bail-out of investors and banks, but at the individual level there was no bailout. Efficient, effective government action was demonstrated; however, the preferred target for intervention was capital not citizens. The stumbling block was not government inability to address issues – TARP was quick, well-funded and effective.

Current economic and social polarization has reached levels not seen since the 1920s (Piketty, 2014), characterized by widespread decline in economic and social conditions. Piketty has quantified this through decades – in the case of France it was centuries – of tax filings, estate filings and other data sets from France, Britain, the USA, Canada and other advanced industrial economies. A Canadian demonstration of this growing polarization – in income if not in wealth – has been quantified through data collected through the Canadian national censuses during the period from 1981 – 2011 (Murdie et al., 2014). This polarization has been visually mapped to demonstrate the wide-spread geographic impoverishment of eight Canadian cities through David Hulchanski's *Neighbourhood Change Research Partnership*.[91]

Harvey (2016) describes the struggle against accumulation by dispossession as important as the traditional class struggle through unions and the political parties which came out of them. The sub-prime mortgage crisis in the USA and the resulting great recession beginning in 2008 is a prime example of accumulation by dispossession with people losing the accumulated wealth of their homes.

The functioning of capital has changed from high growth in the 1950s – 70s to much slower growth since the 1980s. Harvey is raising the question: What changes in the nature of capital accumulation need to be considered? In the contemporary era we need to look at the idea of an oppositional force of people dispossessed of wealth as well as surplus value; workers are dispossessed of surplus value through their labour and people across demographic groups are disposed of their assets and rights through accumulation by dispossession.

Castells (1983) wrote in *The City and the Grassroots* "urban meaning will be a process of conflict, domination and resistance to domination directly linked to the dynamics of social struggle and not to the reproductive spatial expression of a unified culture."[92] I

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[91] Neighbourhood Change Research Project: http://neighbourhoodchange.ca/documents/2017/12/hulchanski-neighbourhood-change-1970-2015-sfu-2017.pdf

[92] Castells (1983), page 292

think there is something hopeful in Castells description. There is historical change; our cities are expressions of this historical change. Some of this change – currently the predominant form I would say – may be the result of the spatial-fix of capital in the creation or destruction of space managing internal contradictions of the system.

So, when considering Harvey's spatial-fix mechanism and how it complicates and/or undermines efforts to provide housing and the consequences to health, we know this:

- We have empirical evidence 95% of Canada's housing market is within the private housing market;
- We have Harvey's theory that internal contradictions of capitalism concerning accumulation of labour and capital have a temporary spatial fix by either destruction or expansion of existing space;
- We have growing impoverishment of rental households relative to owner households both in terms of income and wealth – who have no effective market demand in a housing market dominated by the private market;
- We have Hulchanski and Ley mapping a growing spatial polarization of neighbourhoods based on average incomes;
- We have Wilkinson and Marmot's work showing inequality has negative health outcomes at the population level; and
- We have a litany of studies showing the impact of homelessness on health outcomes

Homelessness, both absolute and hidden, is a symptom of this spatial-fix as the dominant social relation shaping our urban environment, and that is not all that is going on. Incremental changes, policies and actions can matter; a homeless-related example of the impact of an adequately funded targeted program, which achieved measurable results, are the homeless outreach teams throughout Metro Vancouver. Starting in 2006, these teams assisted with reducing the number of homeless people reporting no source of income falling from 23% in the 2005 Metro Vancouver Homeless Count to 9% in the 2008count. Homeless outreach workers assisted homeless people with maintaining their source of income, largely income assistance, through the complicated application and monthly reporting processes.

Harvey is concerned with understanding the function and limitations of capital with the intention of finding a means to confront capital – to impact and change it. My, much more modest, task is to use that spatial understanding as an objectively important context for an examination of the subjectively important lived experience of suburban homeless shelter residents, through the lens of structural violence. I do not assume that homeless people are political or cultural dupes. Homeless individuals do exercise subjective choices and draw on enabling knowledges, creativity and capabilities (Cloke et al., 2010) in their survival strategies.

Structural Violence

The social structures we live in influence our social interactions, political institutions, and cultural values. Structural violence, and the resulting outcomes, occurs from a differential application of power, within a social structure. Structural violence is:

> … the imposition of suffering or disadvantage by social structures and systems. It can emerge from different constructs, such as the economy, and is often the cause of more direct forms of violence[93]

This theoretical perspective focuses on the impact social structures can have, rather than on the actions of individuals; rather than blaming individuals as 'responsible' for the effects of the structural inequalities existent in society. This structural perspective can be helpful in understanding how institutions produce social exclusion, such as the issues which emerge with homelessness (Norman et al., 2015). A structural perspective complements Harvey's understanding of homelessness resulting from extreme poverty (a structural issue) and social isolation, instead of focussing on the individual life choices made by people who are homeless.

As individuals we are all situated differently within webs of unique economic, cultural and institutional relationships. These webs can either ease or impede our opportunities. For people living in extreme poverty, public services (such as transit) can be essential to meet personal needs; and policies that limit services or can inhibit an individual's ability to meet their life needs (Galtung, 1969). The transit system infrastructure focussed on in

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[93] Galtung (1969)

this research has been created, shaped and operated through government policies, within the context of a capitalist market system with particular economic and social relations (post-WWII suburbanization).

Where you exist within a social structure will impact on your risk of harm. Groups of people, those experiencing homelessness for example, may have more exposure and/or less resilience to economic, physical or social/cultural risk factors (Norman et al., 2015). Structurally violent policies can affect people experiencing homelessness and affect the ability of achieving life goals.

In the *Social Determinants of Health* (Shaw, 2004) state: "There is a well-established link between poverty and poor health … and homeless people experience the very worst health outcomes of the general population."[94] In the *Political Economy of Social Inequalities* (2002), Vicente Navarro states: "Poor people are more vulnerable to disease due to marginal diets, higher stress, hopelessness, and anxiety of dangerous neighbourhoods [and] the basic insecurity of life."[95] My research recognizes the importance of vulnerability, as discussed by Navarro, in considering the inequalities of health outcomes and the inequities of access.[96]

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94 Mary Shaw quoted in, *Social Determinants of Health* (2011) page 216

95 Vicente Navarro, The Political Economy of Social Inequalities (2002) page 326

96 While inequality and inequity are similar there are differences in meaning with inequity indicating injustice or unfairness of access, while inequality implies more generally a difference.

At a population level there are many different forms of resources required (Harvey, 2007), related to homelessness, differing for every individual experiencing homelessness. Resources for individuals will include different combinations of the following:

- physical resources (material goods needed for quality of life including food, entertainment, and means of transportation)
- human resources (the goods contributing to our development and assist us in accumulating personal resources – human capital – education, training, knowledge)
- social resources, the sometimes difficult to quantify importance of family, social networks, the sense of community that can emerge from identity characteristics (age, ethnicity, gender, class, education, geography), ecological resources (our relation to the physical, built or natural environments we live in)
- existential resources (belief systems such as religion, culture, art and politics; resources that help us to understand our place in society and help us see the meanings in our existence)

These resources, which reflect the social determinants of health as described by the Canadian Public Health Association (undated), accumulate and dissipate throughout our life based on: the extent the choices we make are limited; and where our lived situation is within the social structures. The overall web of resources we live with may compensate for lack of specific resources. For example, a good early start in education and success at school may assist, in later life, in overcoming familial poverty; if material resources are coupled with relational resources, such as a supportive family or social network, can impact whether an individual is able to access other systems.

The impacts of advantage and disadvantage are cumulative and may have a more profound societal effect, at a population level, than due individual gains or losses. Poverty, a lack of housing and/or inadequate income, can be worsened if other support, such as health care or transit, is limited. Structural violence has a hybrid aspect, part empirical and part theoretical. Institutions may create a condition of threat (for example, extremely low welfare support levels), but there are difficulties in empirically assessing the threat. The outcomes of structural violence (gender, racial, poverty and/or class biases) many not be as obvious as the outcomes of direct violence (physical threats, assaults or suicide), nonetheless, structural violence is present with poverty. Needlessly difficult challenges can shape the day to day existence of people experiencing homelessness (Norman et al., 2015). The experience of poverty, wherever avoidable, can be structurally violent (Ho, 2007).

The notion of cultural/symbolic violence is part of structural violence. Poverty and inequality, in addition to being classed, gendered and/or racialized, can also be depoliticized with the acceptance of 'how things are' (Lyon-Callo and Brinn-Hyatt, 2003). This relates to Hulchanski's (2009) political observation of the residual housing stock – and the people living there. With changes in the global economy "a large unskilled pool of labour is no longer required, as it once was."[97] The institutions of power

[97] Hulchanski (2007), Canada's Dual Housing Policy, Research Bulletin 38, page 7

lack the political imperative to do something about the people (excess labour) in this residual housing market. Redevelopment, as an expression of a spatial fix, will impact on the impoverishment of a large segment of the population who lack effective market demand, and could also be seen as an expression of structural violence.

An historic memory is 'erased' – the fact we haven't always had people living on the street is forgotten.[98] This is a process Farmer refers to as 'pathologies of power' (Farmer, 2004). Events can be reconstructed and retold so they fit current political needs. This is a cultural/symbolic violence naturalized by neo-liberal ideology. The mental/social acceptance of violence and self-defeat creates a denial that there could be an alternative reality/possibility; acceptance results in a normalization of discrimination.

The structural violence is expressed through the experience of the person impacted by the structure. Examples of this include an acceptance or ignorance of bias based on gender, racialization or poverty. In this situation an awareness of the structural violence can be used to challenge the 'naturalization' of the experience of the neo-liberal subject. This strikes me as a useful theoretical perspective to develop an understanding of socially and economically situated subjects, to support a politic for agency, both at the individual and collective level.

[98] After five years of presentations on homelessness to Grade 12 Law students, it became obvious to me the first thing I needed to make clear to them was that homelessness hasn't always been this way. The first time I was explicit about this their teacher described how as a little girl her and her sister played unsupervised in the alley behind her parent's restaurant in Chinatown.

Structural violence differs in its focus, while being complementary to, the concepts of social vulnerability and resiliency. Social vulnerability and resiliency emphasize the human subject as the location of dependency and vulnerability. Structural violence emphasizes the institutions and structures an individual operates within, with varying degrees of individual agency; which can be limited by structural violence. A lack of resilience[99] may not be about individual failure but societal/institutional failure.

We all have different 'realistic' options limiting or enhancing our autonomy, and perhaps defining our ability to exercise agency. Individuals are dependent on each other and the public and private institutions we have contact with, to compensate for varying degrees of success and/or vulnerabilities, and to build our resilience in accessing to resources. Resilience is accumulated, or not, over a life time in social circumstances that, as individuals, we may have little control over.

A structural violence perspective places the responsibility of social impairment on social structures (Norman et al., 2015. In this research this perspective is focussed on transit provision and punitive regulation, addressing impacts on health, wellness and exits from homelessness may require efforts aimed at the social structures that aggravated the impacts.

[99] From the Social Work Policy Institute, resilience literature generally sees the concept as including not only surviving a stressor experience, but also includes thriving and perhaps even benefiting from the experience. http://www.socialworkpolicy.org/research/resiliency.html

Summary

In summarizing to the concepts of spatial-fix and structural violence I will reference a quote Harvey uses to describe humanity's creation of the city. Harvey references a quote from Robert Park[100] written in the 1920's:

> The city is man's [sic] most consistent and on the whole his most successful attempt to re-make the world he lives in more after his heart's desire, but if the city is the world that man created it is the world he is hence forth condemned to live, thus indirectly and without any clear sense of his task in making the city, man has remade himself.[101]

In referencing this quote, Harvey claims the creation of the city; we should think about what kind of people we have become versus the spatial-fix capitalism uses to manage its internal contradictions.

Harvey speaks of leaping from our current condition, to create our own "historical geography" even if it is not "under the historical and geographic conditions of our choosing."[102] Marion Young describes our current condition as well. "We are at a point in time – it is not the end of history – but a stage. We dwell not just in our houses but on the stage of history."[103] Homelessness, both absolute and hidden, will remain as long as this spatial-fix predominates as the dominant geographic/social process shaping our urban environment. In *Spaces of Hope*, Harvey (2000) speaks of a speculative spirit and how inaction brought disaster upon Hamlet.

[100] Robert Ezra Park (1864 – 1944) was an urban sociologist, teaching at the University of Chicago from 1914 – 1933.

[101] Robert Park, *On Social Control and Collective Behavior*, Chicago, Chicago University Press, p.3

[102] Harvey (2000), *Spaces of Hope*, page 254

[103] Iris Marion Young (2013), *Responsibility for Justice*, page XXI

For me transformations are possible, both personally and socially, and I want the urban space I dwell in to be informed by values of social justice. It begins with recognizing differences, the importance of both the material and non-material conditions, and of justice and fairness. To me this speaks to individual and collective agency, and the need to understand the geography in which live.

Chapter 4 - Methodology and Data Collection

In this chapter, I describe the epistemological stance underlying my research project, the methodological approach, and rationale for choosing case study as the specific research design. I will describe the data sources, data gathering and data analysis, to provide the reader with an understanding of the how, and of the why, this research was conducted.

Michael Crotty [104] asks four questions which relate to the construction of research design:[105]

1. What is the epistemology (theory of knowledge – what it means to know) underpinning the theoretical perspective and the methodology??

2. What theoretical perspective (the philosophical stance) provides the logic and context that lies behind the methodology chosen?

3. What methodology (research strategy, plan of action, process and design) governs the choice and use of methods?

4. What methods (techniques or procedures used to gather and analyse data) are proposed to be used?

Crotty says it is important to be clear on the relations within this hierarchy in the construction of knowledge, when developing the research design. The epistemology

[104] Michael Crotty (1998), *The Foundations of Social Research: Meaning and Perspective in the Research Process* page 10

[105] Crotty (1998), page 6

pertains to the data collection by describing how knowledge is created, and the theoretical perspective pertains to how knowledge is analyzed and understood. Any theoretical perspective could make use of a range of methodologies, and any of the methodologies could make use of a range of methods. My chosen epistemological approach is constructionism. My theoretical stance is social-spatial sorting and structural violence. My research design is a multiple case study with three cases, using a cross-case analysis to understand the data collected.

Epistemology and Theoretical Perspective

Constructionism is the epistemology on which I base my methodology (research design). The qualitative research I have undertaken is in line with constructionism, recognizing the importance of the social context in which the phenomena is situated, and how the phenomena operates within that social context.[106] In this research, knowledge is constructed with the homeless shelter residents and staff I interviewed concerning public transit access for residents. Harrison et al (2017) describes the constructivist approach, with reality constructed inter-subjectively through meanings and understanding developed socially and experientially."[107]

This research is about how the residents of the shelters (cases) move *from* the shelter (context), rather than *within* the shelter. As was discussed previously, people who are

[106] Michael Crotty (1998), describes a constructivist would see scientific knowledge, for example, as just a particular form of constructed knowledge designed to serve particular purposes, page 16.

[107] Helena Harrison et al (2017), page 8

homeless are often dependent on non-personal social supports. In this way the social and geographic context of each of the cases where surveys took place is important. Through reflection and analysis, I present the meaning constructed through my interactions with participants, using data collected during interviews, and through my personal observations. The theoretical perspectives, informing the data analysis, are social spatial sorting and structural violence, discussed in depth in Chapter 3.

Methodology

I have used a multiple case study (with cross-case comparison in data analysis) as my research design (Crotty, 1998; Yin, 2003). Case study is a research design that includes a detailed examination of a subject (the case), recognizing the importance of the contextual (E.g. social and geographic) conditions of the subject. In *Case Study Research*, Yin (2003), describes case study as an empirical inquiry:

- Investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when;
- The boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident;
- Copes with the technically distinctive situation in which there will be many more variables of interest than data points; and
- Relies on multiple sources of evidence, with data needing to converge in a triangulated fashion[108]

[108] Robert Yin (2003), *Case Study Research Design and Methods,* page 13

I am examining the mediating role of transportation for homeless shelter residents. The intent of this case study is to provide understanding of a complex phenomenon (transit experience of homeless shelter residents) through an analysis of transit experiences within a real-life context of shelters and homelessness (Cresswell, 2007; Yin, 2013). Case study research is a means to seek understanding, "and establish the meaning of experiences, from the perspective of those involved."[109] The focus of this research is to gather data based on the direct experience of people who are homeless and living in shelters, and the staff who work with them, to analyze the information to understand and conceptualize the role of transit for this group of people in relation to their experience of homelessness.

Specifically, this is an exploratory multiple case study design. The research question is posed as a 'what' question, which is consistent with exploratory case studies. Yin describes an exploratory case study as one with a purpose[110] (in this case documenting the transit needs of homeless shelter residents) rather than a proposition (proving or disproving a hypothesis). I chose exploratory case study as there was limited peer-reviewed literature available regarding the transportation needs of homeless shelter residents. My specific research objectives are to:

- Document the self-perceived transportation needs as expressed by residents in three suburban homeless shelters;

[109] Harrison et al (2017), page 6

[110] Yin, 2003, page 22

- Document transportation needs of residents perceived by staff

- Understand the nature of transportation barriers and/or aids, as they relate to housing, essential services and social supports for suburban homeless shelter residents;

- Understand and conceptualize the role of transit for this group of people as part of the process in accessing housing, essential services and social supports;

- Understand the self-perceived benefit of improved transportation and mobility to this group of socially excluded people

Why three case studies? Yin (2003) discusses that when external conditions are consistent amongst the cases, a “smaller number of replications”[111] are needed. A ‘literal replication’ would require two or three cases, and a ‘theoretical replication’ would require more than four. Robert Stake[112] says that cases, given they are a selection, will be fewer than all of the cases in existence. Multiple case studies allow for the emergence of patterns, from the data, amongst the cases under study. Each homeless shelter is considered as an individual case, with a cross-case comparison as the final step during the data analysis.

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[111] Yin (2003), page 51

[112] Robert Stake (2006), *Multiple Case Study Analysis*, page 2

Methods

Multiple data sources are an essential feature of case study research. Yin (2003) speaks of triangulation of data as a means of corroboration, with "multiple sources of data providing multiple measures of the same phenomena."[113] I have drawn on multiple sources of data to explore the role of and need for transportation amongst the residents of three suburban shelters. In this research I drew on the following data sources:

1. documents identified through a literature review and through suggestions from contacts, transit planners and allied professionals;
2. semi-structured interviews with shelter residents and staff; and
3. notation of personal observation and experience, and context of the cases

A. Literature and Document Review

The literature was limited to the period 1991 – 2019. Key words used in the database searches included the following: social inclusion and homeless shelters, transit and homeless shelters, homeless shelters, homelessness and transit. Additional research papers, books and articles were identified through a review of bibliographies of published papers.

[113] Yin (2003), page 99

B. Semi-Structured Interviews with Residents and Staff

With the semi-structured interviews, I engaged the respondents in a formal interview, with the interview guide developed ahead of time (Appendix G and H). The interview package included an explanation of the research purpose, consent form to sign, the right to withdraw and the list of questions and topics covered during the conversation. With these semi-structured interviews subject error risk was limited, as I was the only person conducting and transcribing the interviews. I followed the guide but also followed topical trajectories in the conversation that might have strayed, in a way relevant to the person being interviewed, from the guide (Robert Wood Foundation, 2008), consistent with the constructionist epistemology of this research.

C. Personal/Researcher Observation

My observations included notes on the location and times of the interviews as well as any interruptions or other impacts from the surroundings. Harrison (2017) says to “understand the case requires experiencing the activity of the case as it occurs in its context and in its peculiar situation.”[114] I did a walk-through of the facilities (with staff) and the immediate surroundings. Also, with all three cases I walked all of the routes to bus stops and SkyTrain Stations, described to me by residents, making notes on time spent, physical conditions of the routes, traffic conditions, and short-cuts.

[114] Harrison et al (2017), page 9

Case Study Design: Replication and Rigor

Lee & Chavis[115] (2012) compare experimental research and case study at the individual and population levels in relation to causation. Case studies look to 'explicate and to examine"[116] with consideration of the context of the subject as an essential part of the knowledge construction. Replication logic, with similar or divergent data patterns emerging across cases, could lead to inferences on causation. Rather than presuming the contextual challenges faced by this particular sample of homeless shelter residents, I am asking these residents about their experience as a means of documenting and understanding the challenges that emerge from their descriptions of the contemporary context. Lee & Chavis note the large influence of both the environment and systems, as the root cause of most social problems.[117]

A. Replication

With this multiple-case study I have considered the issue of replication and provided a detailed description of the case selection, methods and data sources. A replication logic, not a sampling logic (cases were not chosen to be statistically representative of the larger 'population' of shelters), was used for the selection of the cases. I have described why I excluded other cases (suburban homeless shelters in other municipalities) from this study. The cases were selected based on their context, population service group, geography and

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[115] Lee & Chavis (2012), *Cross-case Methodology: Bringing Rigour to Community and Systems Change Research and Evaluation*

[116] Kien S Lee & David M Chavis (2012), *Cross-case Methodology: Bringing Rigour to Community and Systems Change Research and Evaluation*, page 436-7

[117] Lee & Chavis (2012), page 437

administrative boundary overlaps, so emerging patterns in the data could be considered with a full understanding of the wider context of the cases. Divergent results between cases are discussed with consideration of the case selection.

B. Rigor

For exploratory case studies Yin describes the need to address issues of construct validity, external validity and reliability to ensure the quality of the research and results[118]. Construct validity concerns the use of multiple sources of evidence, establishing a clear chain of evidence and having key informants review drafts of the data coding it was developed. External validity concerns the use of a clear replication strategy. And reliability is satisfied through the use of a case study protocol and development of a data base. I was the single researcher in this study and issues of validity and reliability were therefore minimized, as the chain of evidence and case study protocol adherence was not problematic, as it would be with multiple researchers undertaking the data collection, transcription and analysis.

My key informant committee provided expert knowledge for the draft coding system I compiled using an Excel spreadsheet as the data base for interview data. Karen O'Shannacery is the retired Executive Director of the Lookout Emergency Aid Society, with 40 years of experience developing and operating homeless shelters across Metro Vancouver, including in Surrey. Wanda Mullholland has been the Community Developer

[118] Yin (2003), page 34

for the Burnaby Homeless Society for many years. Both have worked extensively with the TWG on homeless transit issues. My rationale for including a local key informant committee was that their extensive expertise in shelter management and with shelter residents would provide an informed opinion for the labelling of the interview data collected.

Cases Studied

I contacted two of the homeless service agencies operating shelter facilities in the City of Surrey to identify the three cases selected for this study: Case 1 (North Surrey), Case 2 (Newton Surrey), and Case 3 (Cloverdale Surrey).[119] I will now describe the three cases selected.

Case 1 Whalley neighbourhood

Case 1 has 40 beds and is a barrier-free homeless shelter (i.e., it operates under a harm reduction[120] policy for substance use whereby use does not exclude people from accessing the service). It offers separate women's and men’s sleeping areas. Individuals must be over the age of 19. Lockable storage is available. The shelter is attached to the 24-hour Front Room Resource Centre, where individuals can access community referrals,

[119] Shelter policy in the last ten years (since 2010) in Metro Vancouver has been shifting to a 24/7 model, with meals provided and, generally, people are not forced to be out of the shelter during the day with a certain amount of unchosen mobility that would engender.

[120] Canadian Nurses Association describes “Harm reduction is a public health approach aimed at reducing the adverse health, social and economic consequences of at-risk activities such as the use of illicit substances.” https://www.cna-aiic.ca/en/policy-advocacy/harm-reduction#sthash.fV57GKDd.dpuf

showers, laundry facilities, hygiene products, coffee, individualized case planning, medical and other services. Individuals staying at the Case 1 Shelter are offered three meals daily through the Bread4Life Program. Length of stay is dependent on need. The building is wheelchair accessible. Guests who do not qualify for Lookout's housing program can access shelter beds on a night-by-night basis.

Case 2 Newton neighbourhood

Case 2 provides temporary 24-hour shelter to men and women over 19 years of age. Support at Case 2 includes: individualized case planning, linkages with required services, assistance with finding employment and housing, and increasing life skills including budgeting and integrating into the community. Case 2 has 35 single shelter rooms for men and women. During extreme weather, the shelter can expand overnight services to include 15 mats. This is a purpose built shelter, not a renovated space. The shelter is wheelchair accessible. Services available include: laundry, showers, meals, and personal support with housing searches. There are an additional 20 units of self-contained transitional housing for people requiring longer-stays in a separate building across the parking lot at the back of the shelter. This housing is not open to people in active addiction.

Case 3 Cloverdale Surrey

The Case 3 shelter has 12 shelter beds and 16 transitional housing units. There is no elevator in the two-story building, so all of the accessible units are on the first floor. There is no waiting list maintained for the permanent housing, and the facility fills the units through the shelter or on an emergency basis, if there is a vacancy.

Data Collection

A. Literature and Document Review

Both peer-reviewed and grey literature, were considered in the document review. Keywords used in the database searches included the following: social inclusion and homeless shelters, transit and homeless shelters, homeless shelters, homelessness and transit. My search was limited to English language peer-reviewed publications. Social inclusion, poverty and transit access produced too many results individually to review, and were narrowed down to combined searches of social inclusion + homeless shelters, poverty + homeless shelters, and transit access + homeless shelters. I focussed on Canadian and USA studies given similarities in suburban development and public transportation systems with the cases selected.

There was substantial grey literature from the municipal and regional governments, from BC Housing and TransLink, as well as the non-profit society managing the shelter. Documents relevant to transportation and the homeless population, included policies and procedures, such as anti-poverty and health strategies, program evaluations, and long-term planning strategies and plans were reviewed. Including grey literature was necessary as information is increasingly emerging in reports from governments and community agencies which is not, as of yet, part of the peer-reviewed academic literature. The programs, described in Appendix A and B, each have policy documents, reports and research studies connected with them but peer-reviewed evaluations and studies of these programs were not found.

Included in the grey literature reviewed were documents relevant to the transportation policy context within Metro Vancouver: *Transport 2040*, TransLink's long-range transportation plan, the *Region Transportation Strategy Framework* (TransLink, 2013), and the *Transportation and Health: Context Report* (TransLink, 2013), TransLink background report to Transport 2040. Other documents reviewed include: the regional growth strategy, *Metro Vancouver 2040, Shaping Our Future* (Metro Vancouver, 2016), the *Health impact assessment of transportation and land use planning activities* in Metro Vancouver (undated); *Transit-Oriented Communities a Primer on Key Concepts* (TransLink, 2011); and the *Housing and Transportation Cost Burden Study A New Way of Looking at Affordability* (Metro Vancouver, undated).

For the wider Canadian context, I reviewed the *National Transit Strategy* (Federation of Canadian Municipalities, Big City Mayor's Caucus, 2008), the *Strategic Plan 2015-2017* of the Canadian Urban Transit Association (2015) and *Transport 2040* (2013). The National Academies of Sciences, Medicine and Engineering reports, *Transit Agency*

Practices in Interacting with People Who Are Homeless (2016) and *Social and Economic Sustainability Performance Measures for Public Transportation* (2019) were reviewed, as was the literature review commissioned and funded by the Transportation Planning Branch at the City of Edmonton in 2016, covering the social sustainability of transit.

B. Interview Guide

With the case study research for this dissertation, the interview guide (Appendix D and E) for residents and staff was developed after a literature review. The questions were informed by the research, and the gaps, in the relevant literature. For example, Doyle and Nathan (2001) noted the ability to maintain friendship, family ties and informal connections, and the socialization that organizes and structures everyday life is compromised by the amount of travel required to maintain and reproduce these relationships. I asked about contacts with family and friends and any feelings of isolation. The community context of the three shelters was carefully considered before selecting the cases; contexts that reflect three different, yet administratively cohesive, geographic settings.

The interview guide used with residents (Appendix D) had four closed questions and 15 open-ended questions. The open-ended questions could be considered as short answer and long answer.

- Questions 5, 6, 9, 18 were closed questions

- Questions 1, 2, 3 11, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 19 were short answer questions
- Questions 4, 7, 12 were long answer questions
- Questions 8, 10 vary from short answer to long answer

The long answer open-ended questions had a great deal of variation in the extent of the responses received amongst residents. Some individuals had a lot to say and some did not. This depended on interest, experience, personal relevance, level of understanding and communication styles. With Questions 8 and 10 in particular, there was a lot of variation, often related to understanding and perhaps education level.

For the most part the questions worked as I had hoped, and flowed well in terms of content and focus. I did notice with the interview guide that it worked better with some resident interviews than it did for others. I found this had less to do with the interview guide itself, and more to do with the individual situations of the person being interviewed. With residents who appeared to have what could have been either educational and/or intellectual impairments the interview guide seemed, at times, awkward or stilted. I did my best to re-contextualize questions involved in those circumstances, so as to keep the interview going, and move onto the next question. I was very aware that I was there to gather information and not to make anyone uncomfortable or awkward.

Some questions just did not work for all people. For example, Question 8, on the resident interview guide: How has being able to use transit affected you? For some residents this was a useful question, but a couple of the residents had no idea what the question was asking of them. The question was reflective in nature, and was challenging for some residents. If this happened, I moved on to the next question so they did not feel stuck, frustrated and/or confused. I did ask about whether interviewees had a Driver's License, which was related to possible issues with fare evasion fines and possible non-renewal of a license.

C. Sampling

For the purposes of this multi-case study research, homeless individuals interviewed were drawn from the 'emergency sheltered' population as outlined in the Canadian definition of homelessness developed by the Canadian Observatory on Homelessness (2017). This definition is a typology encompassing a range of physical living situations including:

1. Unsheltered, or absolutely homeless and living on the streets or in places not intended for human habitation;

2. Emergency Sheltered, including those staying in overnight shelters for people who are homeless, as well as shelters for those impacted by family violence, fleeing a natural disaster or destruction of accommodation;

3. Provisionally Accommodated, referring to those whose accommodation is temporary or lacks security of tenure, including people in institutional care who lack permanent housing and recently arrived immigrants and refugees without prospect of permanent housing, and

4. At Risk of Homelessness, referring to people who are not homeless, but whose current economic and/or housing situation is dangerously lacking security or stability or does not meet public health and safety standards.

I interviewed two managerial level staff persons at each of the three shelters. The staff was asked for their assistance for the most appropriate way to identify and interview residents. Amongst residents of the three shelters, my original intent was to interview 8 – 12 people through purposive sampling.[121] I used two recruitment methods; a recruitment poster in the shelters (Appendix F) and word of mouth amongst residents for snow ball sampling. Considerations for the sampling included: people who had been long-term shelter residents, male and female residents, people with disabilities, seniors (that may have had a discounted monthly transit pass), newly homeless and long-term homeless. I recognized these may not have been mutually exclusive categories and individuals may have fit into one or many of these categories.

D. Semi Structured interviews: Staff and Residents

In addition to the review of documents, data collection methods for this multiple case study included semi-structured interviews with shelter residents and staff, and informal interviews with transit/transportation planning staff in the Metro Vancouver region. I spoke with two staff and 12 residents at each of the three sites. Extensive interviewing provided for data saturation related to the research question and objectives. In general, data saturation means: “no new data, no new themes, no new coding, and ability to

[121] Total one-night occupancy of these three shelters is 92 people.

replicate the study."[122] Staff interviews partly informed saturation. There was a consistency with topics and concerns discussed by the sample of residents I interviewed, and the long-term staff understandings. I would have been concerned if divergent rather than complementary subjects had been expressed. I followed an iterative process between the interviews, transcriptions and coding, with the final interviews in the cases coinciding with the emerging coding.

I created a guide for residents and a guide for staff (Appendix D and E) for the semi-structure interviews for use at the three homeless shelters in Surrey. The interview guides were developed as a tool to examine the research question and objectives as outlined in the proposal. The same interview guide (Appendix D and E), for both the shelter residents and staff groups, were used at all three shelters. Given the high proportion of Aboriginal people amongst the Metro Vancouver homeless population, I had the interview guide reviewed by a representative of the Surrey Urban Indigenous Leadership Committee.[123]

Interviews with the staff and residents were conducted on a one-to-one basis with me at the shelter. The interview started with an explanation of my purpose and a review of the consent form which each person interviewed was asked to sign. The goal of the interviews was to elicit detailed material that could be used to address the research questions.

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[122] G. Guest et al (2006). *How many interviews are enough? An experiment with data saturation and variability*. Field Methods, 18(1), page 64

[123] This is a community-based coalition of Aboriginal groups based in the City of Surrey https://www.surrey.ca/community/18417.aspx.

I explained I would audio-record the interview, with a cell phone app (*Voice Recorder*), so I could accurately type up a word-for-word record of the conversation. Soon after, sometimes the same day and sometimes after a few days depending on how many interviews I had completed, I transcribed and summarized the notes. Transcription of the raw data included word-for-word quotations of the responses ensuring participants' views were being expressed in their own terms. I used *Express Scribe* for transcription; it allowed me to stop, start and 'rewind' the recordings fairly easily during the transcription process.

The nature of qualitative data is to "elicit an 'insiders' view from the group under study"[124] which is consistent with the epistemology underpinning this research. With qualitative research there is an emphasis on enquiry within the language and terms of the research, emphasizing that approaches and values may be open to evolution within a study. Changes that occurred in the setting and how these changes affected the way the research was approached were noted and documented (Cresswell, 2007). For example, notations were made when a resident felt suddenly pressed for time and the final portion of an interview was rushed through to the end.

Staff Semi-structure Interviews

The shelter staff interviews included two descriptive questions and 17 open-ended questions, with no demographic information included (see Appendix E). At each shelter,

[124] Steckler (1992), page 2

I identified the most appropriate staff people to interview based on program and policy responsibility over the transportation needs of residents. Interviewing staff first informed me of staff perceptions of residents' needs, which I later checked with residents as a means to more fully understand any institutional assumptions, as a possibly important context issue for residents.

The staff interviews informed my understanding of the context, issues and concerns shelter residents face with the multiple aspects of access to transit, as outlined in my literature review, including: financial access, physical constraints, organization of transit and temporal availability. My task with coding was to make sense of a lot of unstructured data. The coding of resident interview transcripts resulted in four overarching dimensions: physical, temporal, social and financial. In analysing the information provided to me through the interviews with staff, they touched on all of these same aspects of access.

The staff members were asked essentially the same questions as residents, eliciting their opinions and observations on residents' experiences and comments to staff. Interviews with staff were used to provide additional context and potential understanding to the information provided by shelter residents. I interviewed the staff from the three homeless shelters first, before I conducted interviews with residents.

In interviewing staff first, I had the opportunity review the questions for clarity and logical sequencing, as well as getting a larger sense of the shelter, before interviewing residents, to see if they made sense, if the questions flowed well from one question to the next and also if I was getting the type of information I was intending to get. Also, the staff was indirectly impacted by transit policies because they have to manage the individual bus ticket program currently available. One context factor I was aware of was the shelters in Surrey were part of a pilot program from October, 2016-September, 2019 where additional transit tickets were made available to residents, funded through TransLink and BC Housing.

The interview guide for staff was shorter, with fewer questions than the one for residents (I did not ask any demographic questions of staff, for example). However, many of the questions on the staff survey were the same (if slightly re-worded) as for residents. After I had completed the interviews with residents, described below, in the three shelters, I re-contacted the shelter staff I had interviewed, to check back for any anecdotal feedback they could share with me from the residents I had interviewed.

Resident Semi-structure Interviews

I did not have any difficulty interviewing the number of people I had wanted to at each of the three shelters. I recognize the obvious reason for this, on the face of it, was because I was offering a $15 gift card (to residents) for the time commitment expected of them, to complete the interview. At the beginning of every interview I explained to each interviewee they could skip any question they wanted to, and could end the interview entirely whenever they wanted.[125] No one skipped any questions, and no one ended the interview early.[126] The interviewees were engaged in the subject and often became more animated with the details they provided for the open-ended questions as the interview proceeded.

The shelter resident interviews included the collection of both quantitative and qualitative data, with both descriptive questions and open-ended questions included. Interviews with shelter residents began with demographic questions similar to those asked in the last regional homeless count in 2017. The resident survey included eight descriptive questions and 17 open-ended questions. The qualitative open-ended questions were meant to collect in-depth information to reveal contextual factors and mechanisms not detected by quantitative surveys alone (Cresswell, 2007). The quantitative data (mostly demographic) was collected to understand the samples in terms of age, length of time homeless, gender and Aboriginal background.[127]

The demographic information was asked so the samples at the three cases shelters could be compared to the overall homeless population in the Surrey in general. I considered these categories as they were consistent with the demographic categories used by the Metro Vancouver regional homeless counts in 2002, 2005, 2008, 2011, 2014 and 2017.

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[125] And while writing this, I will acknowledge that the gift card was given at the end of the interview, which I think is standard practice, and completion rates may have differed if the gift card had been given at the beginning of the interviews.

[126] One interviewee at Case 3 almost ended the interview because of stress over time and wanting to leave to take a bus to an appointment.

[127] Privacy considerations will be considered in reporting findings, with consideration of the number of shelter residents interviewed.

These homeless counts provide a point-in-time (PIT) snap shot on homelessness in Metro Vancouver as well as providing information on trends.

Case 1 Interviews

Interviews took place in a small room off of the main entrance to the shelter. There was a table with two chairs, no window and a bright light. The room was quite quiet as there was no one in the lobby, and the TV room had a closed door. The bulletin board where my study poster was posted the week before interviews was on the wall just outside the office. Staff had identified a few individuals who had asked about the survey. After those interviews I spoke to people in the TV room and recruited additional interviewees.

Case 2 Interviews

Interviews at Case 2 took place in the cafeteria space between meals, when the room was for the most part empty. Late morning, before lunch (12pm- 1pm), was the earliest time set for interviews, with additional time after lunch. I was working from the assumption a person interviewed before lunch might talk about it during lunch, which might lead to another interview after lunch, if the spot was not already full (snowball sampling).

This did not pose a problem in terms of people's privacy as no concerns were expressed to me, and I did not notice any difficulties. However, when there were other people in the room, engaged in conversation, sometimes because they were waiting in line to be interviewed by me, noise was a problem. I could not hear some of the answers from some of the residents, and I had to ask people to wait outside. Luckily this did not pose too much of a problem; the weather was pleasant enough to use the seating area of the court yard immediately outside the cafeteria. (I observed it was probably designed to be used as a smoking area before or after meals.)

Background noise did make listening to tapes afterwards challenging at times, but having conducted the interviews, I was able to pick up missing words from notes from the interviews. This happened twice. Staff did not have a list of interviewees for me during the times of the interviews. I would go out to the smoking area to ask people, and through word of mouth (I observed once one interview had been completed and the person had received a $15 coffee card, residents would start to enquire about being interviewed).

Case 3 Interviews

Interviews took place between meals in a small office beside the entrance to the building, across the hallway from the administrative office. This did pose a challenge for interviews, and taping of interviews. This was convenient for me as the staff had spoken to residents before my arrival each time, and had a list of residents to interview, which they would go and track down for me when the previous interview had been completed. Staff assisted with locating residents who wanted to be interviewed. This did not result in a selection bias, as this is a small shelter and I interviewed all of the residents.

Being at the main entrance did not interfere with the flow of the interviews, as the residents had a view, through the window to the outside, and could see other residents arriving before I did. It was not something unexpected, as it was the same door the interviewee used to enter and leave the shelter. The residents in this shelter are, on average, older and I did need to repeat questions and really lean in to hear what the resident being interviewed was saying a number of times. I think this was more of a concern for me than for the residents. I did not pick up any agitation or feeling of interruption from the residents I was interviewing.

E. Personal/Researcher Observation

I walked all of the routes described to me by residents and staff to the bus stops. I took notes of similarities and differences I noticed from what I was told in interviews; terrain, people, how long it took, time and distance. With Case 2 and Case 3 there were multiple routes described, and given the distances this included numerous short cuts. I made note of the time involved, distance (paces counted on the *Pacer* application on my smart phone). In addition I also attempted to take each of the bus routes without paying my fare. I was surprised by the lack of negative reaction from the driver. However, rather than lie about my purpose, I explained I was part of a research project on homeless transit access.

Data Analysis

While my research question formulation was informed by my literature review, the data analysis was informed by my theoretical perspective. The interview guide and how it was used is discussed, as well as a summary of the steps used for the coding and analysis of staff and resident interviews. The analysis was done through coding of the complete transcribed responses of residents, not from summarizing the highlights from the interview (as with the 2014 survey, page 34).

I was surprised that with each of the completed interviews, it was Question 7 (Can you tell me the five words that describe transit for you?) that elicited the most open-ended responses and opinions. In designing the survey questions my expectation had been asking for a description of a specific trip would provide the most open-ended question for residents. I was mistaken on that point.

Coding

The initial coding involved an iterative process referring back to the research question and objectives posed, looking at the meanings, role, access and barriers of public transit. The coding process creates a system of labels for specific information within each interview to construct the broader abstractions sought through this research (Cresswell, 2007), and articulating explanations about this particular context and phenomenon. Individual interviews with residents were coded to identify the fullest range of dimensions, looking for patterns of agreement, and/or convergence to develop the overall thematic interpretation of the findings. Any changes that occurred in the setting and how these changes affected the way the research was approached were noted and documented. The coding of residents' individual interviews, looking for patterns of agreement and/or convergence to develop, allows for the thematic interpretation of the findings within the theoretical framework of structural violence as described by Johan Galtung. The limited control over accessing what was described to me as an essential service resonated as a form of structural violence.

Summary Data Analysis Process

Data coding and analysis entailed the following steps:

1. Initial data management included a full transcription of each the individual interviews with shelter residents (36) and shelter staff (6).
2. Each of these transcripts was labelled with a unique identifying number (not by name) and the shelter location (case) of the interview. A separate list – detached from the surveys – was maintained to identify the codes with the individual interview subjects, in case of a need for follow-up questions or later enquiries from subjects.
3. Once the transcripts were completed, they were re-read and reviewed to provide myself with an overview of the full content of the data collected.

4. Initial coding involved paraphrasing the meaning/significance of individual phrases within the text of each of the individual transcripts for each case. This was an initial labelling of the data to understand it at a descriptive level. This coding was done separately for each of the individual shelter and staff transcripts collected from each of the three individual cases.

5. An Excel spread sheet was utilized to collate the initial set of descriptive codes, for the qualitative data, with a separate tab created for the resident and staff interviews at each of the three cases.

6. With each interview transcript there were two columns in the spreadsheet

    a. the first column listed the descriptive codes from the review of each of the transcripts, grouped into like groups of codes;

    b. The second column was used for high-level codes, the dimensions emerging from inductive consideration providing the main categories of information for analysis based on the theoretical perspective.

7. An iterative process, using constant comparison of the initial coding refined the high-level codes, developing the dimensions for data analysis. The Excel spread sheet recording of the codes was updated as needed.

8. Discussed method to group comments to develop codes with Supervisor, using Excel spreadsheet.

9. Each case had a separate worksheet. On the worksheet each interview was coded using three columns representing: the initial transcription; grouping of comments with initial coding; and final coding.

10. Informant Committee[128] views were considered in reviewing the draft final coding system compiled using an Excel spreadsheet.

11. The data analysis moved from the study of particulars (the descriptive labelling of the views expressed by shelter residents and staff in column 1 of the spread sheet) to abstractions and conceptualizations (the development of dimensions for each of the individual cases from column 2 high-level codes). This was done for each of the three separate cases.

12. A cross-case analysis of the dimensions developed from the three separate cases was completed using a matrix, essentially the "intersection" of two lists, set up as rows and columns. For this research the columns were the three separate shelters and the rows were the dimensions developed from the analysis of interviews conducted at each of the shelters (Table 5, page 177).

[128] Wanda Mullholland, Coordinator, Burnaby Task Force on Homelessness and Karen O-Shannacery, retired Executive Director Lookout Emergency Aid Society, both of whom have been involved in transit and homeless related issues through the Vancouver Shelter Strategy, the Urban Core Workers Association and Community Homeless Tables (regional advisory body on homeless issues).

Summary

The data analysis examined the assumptions and outcomes from the experiences and strategies described by the participants in the study. Being specific in the description of the context, assumptions and the subjects allows for an assessment by other researchers if there is transferability of this research to other suburban settings.

The focus of this research was to gather data based on the direct experience of people who are homeless, and to analyze the information to understand and conceptualize the role of transit for this group of people, as part of the process of accessing housing and essential services and supports. My research question looks for an understanding and conceptualization of the geographic impacts on this group of shelter residents, and what is the role of transportation in addressing the spatial nature of their homelessness is. To do that, I reviewed peer-reviewed literature and grey literature, interviewed staff and residents of the three homeless shelters, and detailed the geographic context of the three sites in terms of community context and transit infrastructure.

Chapter 5 – Case Study: Shelters and Community Context

In this Chapter, I will describe the geographic context of each of the three case studies in terms of urban form and transit infrastructure and homeless services. I will provide an overview of recent demographic trends with the homeless population in Metro Vancouver and the City of Surrey as context information on the three case study sites and to compare with the sub-regional homeless demographics.

In Metro Vancouver, outside of the urban core areas of Vancouver, New Westminster and North Vancouver City, there are eleven permanent shelters in suburban municipalities. The three homeless shelters selected for this study include: Case 1 Shelter (Whalley/Surrey), Case 2 (Newton/Surrey), and Case 3 (Cloverdale/Surrey).[129] These shelters serve a cohesive suburban area sharing common cross jurisdictional boundaries including municipal, provincial health authorities, social service, school and transit (TransLink's Sub-Fraser Region).

There are other suburban Metro Vancouver shelters not included in this study. These are shelters located in other suburban municipalities of the region including: a 10 bed facility in Richmond, a 25 bed facility in Maple Ridge and a 32 bed shelter in Langley, as well as two women's shelters and an Aboriginal youth shelter (with 6 beds, for 16-18 years old). Those shelters serve a wider geographic and jurisdictional area beyond the City of Surrey, where the three cases under study are located.

[129] Shelter policy in the last eight years in Metro Vancouver has shifted to a 24/7 model with meals provided and, generally, people are not forced to be out of the shelter during the day with a certain amount of unchosen mobility that would engender.

From my previous work with the local homeless service providers, I knew each of these three Surrey shelters provide shelter for a demographic cross-section of adults who were homeless, but with distinct demographic profiles – with the smaller Cloverdale shelter generally having an older group of residents and the North Surrey location with a more long term homeless and street entrenched group of residents.

An important context (Cresswell, 2007) for this research is the availability and accessibility of transit services to facilities and services from the different geographic locations where these three cases are located. An important assumption underlying this research is that public transit is an essential component of the personal travel of shelter residents within this suburban context.

Geographically, Surrey is the largest urban centre in Canada and has limited and widely dispersed homeless support services not accessible by walking. There are five permanent homeless shelters, one winter shelter, one youth safe house and two transition houses in Surrey. There are two food banks in Surrey open to the general public, as well as one for seniors, another for people who are Muslim, an HIV/AIDS food bank, and a food bank for pregnant moms. There are three BC Employment and Assistance Offices (welfare) in Surrey, two in Newton and one in Whalley, and none in Cloverdale.

The structure of public transit in Metro Vancouver is the SkyTrain light rail system provides regional travel service, for example between Surrey and Vancouver, and buses are routed from the SkyTrain stations to provide local service. 85% of bus routes operate entirely within one zone of the regional transit system's three zones.[130]

Context Metro Vancouver Homeless Population Characteristics

The Metro Vancouver shelter population is aging (Metro Vancouver Regional Homeless Count 2017). This is consistent with the regional population in general, and this aging is a significant issue for regional shelter providers. Over the years 2002-2017 the age of people interviewed in the regional homeless counts has increased, see Table 1 below.[131]

Table 1 Percent of People 55+ years from regional homeless counts 2002-2017

	2002	**2005**	**2008**	**2011**	**2014**	**2017**
Age 55+	4%	9%	9%	16%	18%	21%

From 2012 - 2016, the Greater Vancouver Shelter Strategy's 'Community of Practice' looked at developing senior-specific policies to assist with exits from homelessness.[132] Data collected[133] over a 2-year period (January, 2012 – December, 2013) representing over 243,000 shelter nights showed the following distinctive traits for people aged 50+:

[130] TransLink Fare Review Phase 1 (TransLink, 2016)

[131] Conversation with Councillor Brenda Steele, City of Surrey, she commented that "Fraser Health and BC Housing presented to [the City of Surrey's] Social Planning Committee, that the senior street homeless population (45+) is more than 50% in Surrey. (May, 2019)

[132] Greater Vancouver Shelter Strategy (2015), http://hsa-bc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/Housing-for-Vulnerable-Seniors.pdf

[133] Data collected through individual shelters through the *Homeless Individual and Families System* (HIFIS) in January, 2014

- People 50+ have longer but fewer stays than the general shelter population;
- Women's stays are longer than men (both 50+ and general shelter population);
- Women have fewer stays than men (both 50+ and general shelter population).

Commonalities have emerged across the shelter sector when assisting an aging population to exit homelessness. When discussing those results with shelter managers, personal mobility, appropriateness and location of housing were cited as reasons for increased bed stays by people 50+ years old. In general, many older adults were less able to adapt to available housing. Reduced mobility contributed to an increased length of stay in shelters, as poor location could result in long walking distances or make multiple trips by transit, for food, social support and health services.

In 2012, Ley and Lynch released *Divisions and Disparities in Lotus Land: Socio-Spatial Income Polarization in Vancouver*, which shows a large area – most of East Vancouver, South Burnaby and all of North Surrey – experiencing a relative impoverishment, where average neighbourhood incomes are 20% less than Metro Vancouver as a whole. As well, other, smaller areas, in North and West Vancouver, Vancouver's Westside and White Rock have shown a relative enrichment with 20-40% higher incomes than Metro Vancouver. There are pockets of more extreme poverty – in the Downtown Eastside and Aboriginal communities scattered along the Fraser River.

The link below has four maps of Metro Vancouver showing the change in neighbourhood income profiles from 1970 to 2015. The Newton neighbourhood of Surrey, location of

Case 2, has changed from a neighbourhood of average income in 1970 to one more than 40% below the median regional income by 2015. Newton joins the Downtown Eastside as a community with the most concentrated poverty in the region. [134]

The 2020[135] Metro Vancouver Regional Homeless Count identified 3634 individuals as homeless on the street or in shelters; and the 2016 Census identified over 67,125 households at-risk of homelessness[136] in Metro Vancouver. In terms of housing insecurity, people who are absolutely homeless are the tip of a very significant iceberg.

Context Surrey homeless population characteristics

The three cases selected for this research are located within the City of Surrey, but provide shelter services in three distinct communities. The 2020 Metro Vancouver Homeless Count reports the following for the Surrey sub-region:

- Surrey has a higher proportion of homeless seniors compared to the Metro region (24% vs. 21%); 50% of the homeless population is between 35 and 54 years old;
- A slightly higher proportion of women (30% compared with 27%) are homeless in Surrey than across the region as a whole;

[134] David Ley & Nicholas Lynch (2012), *Divisions and Disparities in Lotus Land: Socio-Spatial Income Polarization in Vancouver* (2012) http://neighbourhoodchange.ca/documents/2012/10/divisions-and-disparities-in-lotus-land-socio-spatial-income-polarization-in-greater-vancouver-1970-2005-by-david-ley-nicholas-lynch.pdf

[135] The next regional homeless occurs March, 2020, data not available until August, 2020 at the earliest.

[136] Statistics Canada defines households at risk of homelessness when in core need and paying more than 50% of household income for inadequate housing (INALH)

- 2.5% of the total population in Metro Vancouver identifies as Aboriginal (2016 Census), however, 20% of individuals experiencing homelessness in Surrey identify as Aboriginal compared to 34% across the region;
- 46% of Surrey's homeless population had been homeless for a year or more, compared with 51% of Metro Vancouver's homeless population.

Councillor Brenda Steele[137] reported to me Surrey's homeless population has more health challenges than other municipalities, particularly in regards to mental issue issues. During the winter of 2018-19, Councillor Steele said Fraser Health Authority had reported to the City of Surrey's Social Planning Committee there were two men in wheelchairs, one with a catheter, and both with early on-set Alzheimer's who had been released from Surrey Memorial Hospital to one of the local homeless shelters (Case 2 in this research). Both had to be readmitted to the hospital as the shelter's staff was not able to manage the complex care needs, even with homecare support.

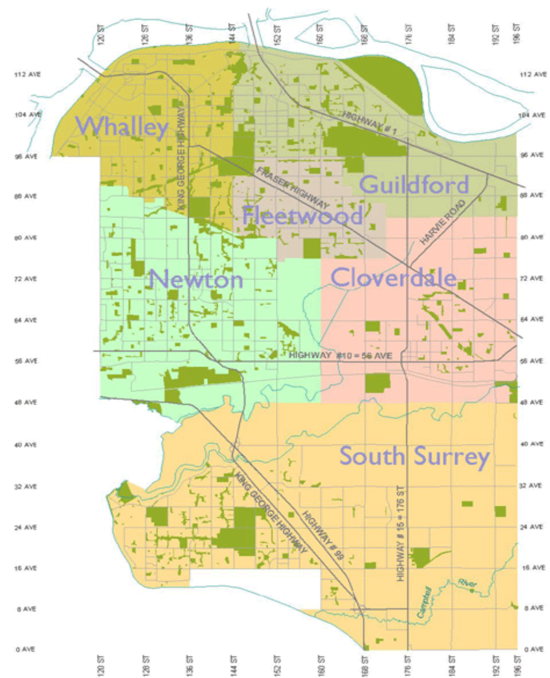
Context Surrey Neighbourhoods

The City of Surrey recognizes six communities: Whalley, Fleetwood, Guildford, Newton, Cloverdale and South Surrey (see Figure 2 below). The communities in north Surrey have higher densities and are more urban than south Surrey. Most of Surrey's population lives north of 56th Ave, in the communities of Whalley, Fleetwood, Guildford and Newton South of 56th Ave. there is a significant amount of land within the Agricultural Land

[137] Conversation with Councillor Steele, May, 2019

Reserve, arable land provincially designated since 1973 as protected farm land. The three homeless shelters selected for this research provide service in three distinct communities; Whalley, Newton and Cloverdale.

Figure 2Neighbourhood Boundaries, City of Surrey[138]



The latest regional homeless count in March, 2020 confirmed the continuing trend of the regionalization of homelessness beyond the central city core of Vancouver. The count reported the City of Vancouver had a 2% decrease in the number of homeless people interviewed, while the City of Surrey had a 7% increase. From the regional homeless plan, *Three Ways to Home* (2003), housing, income and support services were seen as essential to address homelessness.

[138] Source: City of Surrey Planning Department

In 2007 Surrey City Council established the Surrey Homelessness and Housing Society (SHHS) to encourage development of affordable housing. The initial funding of $9.5 million dollars was to support capital grants to projects to address homelessness. Funding to non-profit developments was provided from the interest generated on the initial funds and any donations received. One community-based project funded through the SHHS was the Surrey Rent Bank (SRB). The SRB is a homeless prevention initiative that provides loans to qualified applicants to cover rent or utility debts.

In 2008 the City of Surrey signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with BC Housing to encourage the development of affordable housing in Surrey. The MOUs were a provincial initiative to encourage partnerships between municipal, provincial and non-profit agencies to support the development of local affordable housing projects. The MOU required the municipality to provide land to secure provincial construction and financing. Surrey is one of six cities that signed these MOUs with the provincial government agency. An example project from the MOU is the Green Timbers Purpose-Built facility in 2015. This is a low-barrier facility with 96 supportive housing beds and an additional 27 transitional housing units, and included space for other services including health care and counselling. The City contributed the land and waived the municipal development levies.

Shelter services in Surrey are limited and concentrated in the Whalley neighbourhood in north Surrey. Whalley is the site of eight of the 12 shelter facilities in Surrey. These 12 shelters (homeless, youth safe houses and women’s transition houses) have a total of 333 beds. However, of that total only 191 beds (57%) are permanent shelters, and 143 beds (43%) are temporary season beds and mats available November through March. All of the temporary winter beds are in Whalley.

Food assistance programs are more widely available than shelter services. There are 17 food banks operating in the City of Surrey, with various services targeted to adults, youth, families and ethnic groups. Whalley is the site of eight of the services, Newton four, Cloverdale two and South Surrey/White Rock three.

In relation to income support services, Surrey is comparatively poorly served. There are three BC Employment and Assistance (welfare) offices in Surrey, while there are eight in the City of Vancouver. Geographically Surrey is almost three times as large as Vancouver (316.4 sq. km. versus 115 sq. km.) with a smaller network of bus routes. By a Google Maps estimate it would be almost a three hour walk from Case 3 to the closest BCEA office.

Case 1 North Surrey

Case 1 is the oldest of the three shelters in this study, established in 1992. This shelter had an ‘organic’ start. The shelter was located where homeless people were already self-congregating with the shelter came to the homeless.

Figure 3 Case 1

The Case 1 Shelter is located in North Surrey, within 1 kilometre of the Gateway SkyTrain Station, which is to the north west of the shelter. To travel to the station, residents need to walk two blocks north along 135A Ave., turn left on 108 Street and walk two more blocks. There is one major intersection, with traffic lights and crosswalks, at the Gateway Station. With the proximity to the station the residents of the Case 1 Shelter have direct access to the regional public transit system.

Case 1 is surrounded by two story buildings lining the street front with a mix of single detached housing to the north, 1950-1970’s smaller apartment buildings to the east and south, and newly constructed condominium towers to the west. This is an area of transition with re-development as part of planned densification around a transit node and major transit corridors, consistent with the *Metro Vancouver: Shaping Our Future 2040*, the regional growth strategy unanimously adopted by the region’s 21 municipalities in 2011. The shelter itself is a two -story building, constructed in the 1980’s.

Figure 4 Case 1 route to transit

The planning policy context for Case 1 is underpinned by the existing SkyTrain transit infrastructure. The City of Surrey adopted the *Whalley-Guildford Plan*[139] in 1985, proposing high-density commercial development along 104 Avenue between the King George Highway and 152nd Street in anticipation of SkyTrain service beginning in 1986. Whalley's is the only town centre in Surrey serviced by the SkyTrain rapid transit system. The Expo Line stations in Surrey include, Scott Road, Gateway, Surrey Central and King George stations. Based on the City of Surrey statistics, Whalley is the second-most populous Surrey community after Newton, but the most densely populated and urban of Surrey's six town centres.

Both the City of Surrey and Metro Vancouver regional planning has emphasized high-density transit-oriented redevelopment (TOD), with the area designated as the second

[139] Whalley-Guildford Plan (1985), https://www.surrey.ca/bylawsandcouncillibrary/3709023051124200521618PM30416.pdf

downtown core of the region. The geography of this is a neighbourhood re-zoned for high-density residential development in the form of condominium towers, with significant redevelopment having happened over the last 20 years.

During Mayor Diane Watts term in office (2005-2014) a number of decisions were made to create more of a downtown core for Surrey including: a new City Hall and Central Library, new campuses for Simon Fraser University and Kwantlen Polytechnic University. All these facilities are within walking distance of the Surrey Centre SkyTrain station, creating a pedestrian district with a large public plaza, Holland Park. There were also re-branding decisions to promote Surrey's urban future rather than its suburban past including: renaming itself the City of Surrey (not municipality) and changing King George Highway to King George Boulevard (prior to the King George's visit in 1936 it had been known as the Peace Arch Highway).

Case 2 – Newton neighbourhood

The Case 2 was established at its current site in 2003. The current facility replaced a number of rented houses that had originally provided shelter space. The existing facility includes both the shelter building as well as a building with permanent housing, and parking for 20 vehicles.

Figure 5 Case 2

Case 2 is located in the second oldest neighbourhood amongst these shelters. The site was chosen for a number of non-shelter resident centred reasons. It was a large parcel of land available for development. There are four strip malls within four blocks of the shelter and a mix of single detached houses to the west, low rise apartments to the north and a manufactured home park to the south. The Newton Manufactured Home Park is on the south side of a small creek that runs through a small ravine between the two properties. It is an older home park, with the lower parking area filled with RVs (permanently located there), and further in the back older model manufactured homes.[140]

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[140] I didn't enquire but from observation I expect these homes would not be able to be moved to another manufactured home park as they would not meet current standards for homes.

The site is on one of the three main north/south arterial roads in Surrey, King George Boulevard. Unlike Case 1, this was not a location where homeless people had congregated. Homeless people would not be able to walk to get to this shelter.

Figure 6 Case 2 route to transit

Newton is the designated town centre for central Surrey in *Metro 2040* it has the largest population of Surrey's six town centres. The City of Surrey considers Newton's borders to be: 120th Street on the west, Colebrook Road to the south, and 152nd Street to the east. The northern boundary jogs between 80th and 88th Avenues. This is where the previous Surrey City Hall and Courthouse were located, in the geographic centre, rather than the population centre of Surrey.

Case 2 is perhaps the most classically 'suburban' of the three cases. The area has low-rise development, wide streets, long blocks and numerous shopping malls within one kilometre. The area is serviced by bus lines, which are oriented to the SkyTrain stations further north. The busses were often described by shelter residents and staff as crowded with either commuters or children in the mornings and afternoons.

There is a bus stop immediately in front of the shelter if you are traveling south towards South Surrey/White Rock. The bus stop to travel north, where the services accessed by people who are homeless are located, is located across six lanes of traffic. There is no cross walk or light in front of Case 2. The closest controlled pedestrian crossing is 400 metres to the south at 64th Ave., which makes the bus stop across the street approximately 800 metres away if using controlled crossings, and not jay walking across six lanes of traffic. North bound the 321 and 393 busses provide service to Surrey Central SkyTrain station and to the Newton bus exchange respectively. South bound the 321 bus connects with White Rock centre, and the 393 bus provides limited service (rush hour) to the Surrey Central SkyTrain station.

Newton has the most ethnically diverse population in Surrey; over half of the population identifies (2016 Census) as a racialized population group (predominantly Sikh). French, Spanish and Punjabi are the three languages classes offered at Frank Hurt Secondary, the local high school. From the most recent data provided by Hulchanski's *Neighbourhood Change Project*[141], it also has the second highest concentration of poverty in the Metro Vancouver region, after the Downtown Eastside in the City of Vancouver.

Case 3 Cloverdale Surrey

Case 3 is the newest of the three shelters. This building's shelter portion opened in March, 2018 and the transitional housing opening in July, 2018. The City of Surrey

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[141] Web link here: http://neighbourhoodchange.ca/documents/2017/12/vancouver-cma-income-maps-new-1980-2015.pdf

provided the land to BC Housing for the development, and Options Community Services Society is the operator of the shelter. The original shelter utilized an existing structure, a City of Surrey owned farm house. When first established, street homelessness was emerging in Surrey, there was a demand for shelter space and this was a vacant civic building that could quickly meet the purpose with minimal renovations[142].

The site, rather than being selected, was more ‘maintained’ as the site for the construction of the current shelter, which replaced the farm house, in 2017-2018.

Case 3 has the unique policy context of being surrounded by Agricultural Land Reserve designated by the Province of BC. The shelter is located on a little used rural road with nothing other than an animal shelter in the immediate vicinity.

Figure 7 Case 3

[142] Conversation with Peter Fedos, Shelter Manager, Options Community Services Society

Amongst the three cases, this is the one homeless individuals must travel the farthest in order to access any services. On three sides are agricultural fields, which flood in the spring, and on the forth side are three lines of railway.

During construction the new shelter site had to be built up about 12 feet above the surrounding land in order to prevent flooding, as this is an area where spring flooding happens often. This is the original right of way of the inter-urban rail service that operated from Vancouver to Langley until 1953. Now it is a dedicated long haul freight and cross-Canada passenger service.

Figure 8 Case 3 route to transit

Case 3 has both shelter and transitional housing. There are 16 shelter beds, two are single units, and the rest are for either doubles or couples. Pets are allowed. There are 12 transitional housing units for up to two years of residency. There is no waiting list maintained for the shelter, it operates on a more immediate response of first come first served. The transitional housing is filled both through the shelter and also from the community at-large. Residents in both programs can receive support with case management to work on their goals, and get help to secure permanent housing.

There is a parking lot for 10 vehicles in front of the shelter. A person must be buzzed into the building to enter, and pass through a small admissions/intake office before going into the main portion of the shelter. There is a commercial kitchen providing three meals a day and snacks. Residents are expected to assist with a number of chores including meal preparation and clean-up of the kitchen and lunchroom. There is minimal transit service available to residents of this shelter.

To get to the closest bus stop a resident would need to walk down Colebrook Road and then along 176th Street, across the railway overpass and then up to 56th Ave., in the Cloverdale town centre. This is just over two kilometres (measured through personal observation recording the number of paces taken through the *Pacer* app on my phone), on roads with no sidewalks and not designed for pedestrian foot traffic.

Figure 9 Case 3 route to transit

Alternatively, to reduce the trip to one kilometre, residents could/do cut across the three railway lines to the north of the shelter, then across a field and then through the parking lots surrounding an industrial park. Staff said numerous residents of the shelter have cars (some operable and some with storage insurance only) in the parking lot.

Cloverdale is the eastern most of the six town centres recognized by the City of Surrey (see Figure 2, page 103). It is just west of the Township of Langley. It was first settled by Europeans in 1870, on Katzie Traditional Territory.[143] Over the last 50 years there have been an acceleration of Cloverdale's population growth from 5,000 in 1968, to 51,000 in 2006, to 72,970 in 2016 (StatsCanada) – a 1200% increase – as the area has been changing from predominantly agricultural to more suburban.

[143] There are approximately 13,000 people who identify as Aboriginal in the City of Surrey. https://www.surrey.ca/community/18417.aspx

Part of the City of Surrey's economic strategy for the community is to promote its small town image; branding for film and TV productions. It served as 'Main Street USA' for the television show, *Smallville*. Numerous other movies and TV shows have used the small town feel of the main high street, as a stand-in for small town USA, including *Super Natural* and numerous Hallmark movie seasonal specials.

Summary

These shelters provide services to a homeless population within a context of increasing suburban homelessness, increased aging of the population, and rapid growth and re-development of the City of Surrey. The residents of each Case have distinct access to public transit services within the different neighbourhood contexts. Case 1 residents have regional access (SkyTrain) and multiple bus routes close by. Case 2 residents have service out front of the building heading south, when the residents mostly want to go north. Case 3 residents have a two kilometre walk to the closest bus stop. .

Chapter 6 – Case Study: Homeless Transit Policy Context

In this Chapter, I discuss the policy context of homeless transit access, with a description of transit policy and programs for the homeless. This will include a review of the development of transit access programs and policies, identified through the literature review and informal discussions with transit planners and community transit activists, in Metro Vancouver and other jurisdictions in Canada and the USA.

Part of my work with the TWG committee was researching transit access programs and services in other urban centres. Was the lack of any program or service for the homeless sector in Metro Vancouver the situation in all transit systems? We found out this was not the case. I further developed and expanded the research work for this dissertation.

Between the years 2013 and 2019, the TWG met with City and transit staff in: Vancouver, BC; Surrey, BC; Calgary, Alberta; Seattle, Washington State; Kitsap County, Washington State; and Montreal, Quebec. Minimally all of these centres had some sort of partnership between the City and local transit companies to provide homeless shelter residents with transit tickets. Metro Vancouver was unique in having no partnership program in place. Perhaps the lack of a partnership reflected the comprehensive service provided by the shelter sector in Metro Vancouver. In Metro Vancouver the shelter sector provided transit tickets to their residents directly, independent of any transit program.

Homeless Transit Access Metro Vancouver

The focus of the TWG was getting people who are homeless to and from shelters, and once in a shelter to their various critical appointments including medical treatment, housing, employment and education. In 2012, there were three significant changes made with the operation of the Metro Vancouver transit system. Homeless individuals accessing public transit in the region have been impacted, both individually and cumulatively, by these changes.

In 2012 the Province and TransLink announced changes to the *South Coast Transportation Authority Act* (SCTAA), introduced fare gates at SkyTrain stations, and began the use of the electronic fare card, the Compass Card. By this time, the TWG advocacy position had evolved from free transit access to a discounted bulk transit fare program for shelter operators, where operators could purchase transit tickets at 50% of the face value, to distribute to shelter residents[144]. The TWG also included the need for a process to waive fines for people in extreme poverty, as well as the need to develop an overall regional transit plan for people who were homeless.

The TWG began to advocate with local governments and over the course of the next two years the TWG received endorsements for this three-part program, from the City

[144] The TWG was advised by the ADM to keep the ask small and attainable rather than tackle the entire issue of poverty- and transit access- this was the reason for the approach in the original plan- this advice however was confidential and not outlined in the proposal for that reason. In many ways this was similar to the BC Transit Ticket Assistance Program (BCTTAP), in place in Greater Victoria since 1997, provided by the BC Transit Commission. The BCTTAP allowed 60+ non-profit agencies to purchase a share of 95,000 tickets and two monthly passes each per year, at 50% of the face value.

Councils of Vancouver, Surrey, Richmond and New Westminster. The motion passed by the City of Vancouver in May, 2013 said:

> WHEREAS
>
> 1. Access to transit is vital for homeless people to travel to shelters or to critical appointments;
> 2. A very limited number of transit tickets, paid for by the Provincial Government, have been available through shelters and service providers;
> 3. The homeless normally do not have the resources to pay transit fares and by necessity have often been forced to travel without proper fare payment;
> 4. The implementation of the Compass card system will trigger a new urgency to recognize and manage the current informal arrangements.
>
> THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the City of Vancouver endorse the call of the Vancouver Urban Core Community Workers' Association (VUCCWA), a coalition of organizations providing shelter, outreach and other services to the homeless, to establish a task force with representation of provincial ministries responsible for public transit, health and housing and VUCCWA to develop a Regional Homeless Transit Plan that makes the system accessible to homeless people while minimizing costs to TransLink;

> BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the City of Vancouver urge Metro Vancouver and other member municipalities to endorse the development of a Regional Homeless Transit Plan.

In the spring of 2013 the TWG met with TransLink officials regarding homeless access to transit. We outlined the need for a 50% bulk discount for homeless agencies, a process to waive fines, and the need for a homeless transit plan for Metro Vancouver. We were told TransLink did not provide individual sector subsidies, but TransLink was interested in developing a corporate social responsibility policy of which this could be a part. Surprisingly to TWG, the most interest from TransLink was the need to develop a Homeless Transit Plan. With support from senior officials at TransLink, Transit Police, BC Housing and the TWG we formed the Metro Vancouver Homeless Transit Planning Committee (MVHTPC).

In meeting with TransLink another specific issue identified concerned a change to single use tickets resulting from the introduction of the electronic Compass Card. At the time there was a FareSaver ticket book for busses which sold at $21.00 for 10 adult fares. This represented a 23% discount off the adult fare of $2.75[145]. These were available to individuals and agencies at retail outlets. In the absence of any TransLink supported program for homeless citizens, the FareSaver tickets were purchased by shelter operators in numbers limited by their funding to provide some basic access for as many residents as possible to the transit system. With the introduction of the Compass electronic card

[145] As of July 1, 2019 single one zone fares at $3.00 with a discounted fare of $2.40 with uploaded stored value on the Compass Card.

system, the FareSaver books were to be replaced with a Compass book of 50 single use electronic paper tickets. These tickets would be available via pre-order only to agencies, not to individuals. Similar to the FareSavers, these compass tickets were one use tickets with a time limit of 90 minutes upon commencement of the trip. However, for individuals to take advantage of the discounted fare, a Compass card would need to be purchased for $6 dollars. Letters were written to the Minister of Social Development to have this $6 cost covered for Ministry clients.

The change from FareSavers to the Compass system brought with it a proposed change in the discounted amount. The discount was to be reduced to 15% (from 23%) with an individual fare changing from $2.10 to $2.35 (which was described as not a $.25 price increase, but rather a discount decrease). The TWG managed to get a commitment from TransLink the existing 23% FareSaver bulk discount would not be reduced for the homeless sector with the introduction of the Compass system. The eventual fare system enacted maintained the full 23% discount, directly attributed to the work of the TWG, effectively preventing an increase of $.25 per transit fare per ticket for every agency purchasing the books of 50 and all individuals using stored value on their Compass cards.[146]

In Metro Vancouver, for people who are homeless, or otherwise living in extreme poverty, sneaking onto the SkyTrain without paying a fare, with the attendant risk of receiving a fine, had been the unofficial means of accessing transit before the fare gates

[146] City of Calgary Staff Report, reports that in a comparison of fare prices in Canadian cities, Metro Vancouver 's were the highest for adults: https://pub-calgary.escribemeetings.com/filestream.ashx?DocumentId=109808

and Compass Card systems were implemented in 2012. Since the beginning of operations in 1986, the SkyTrain system had operated on a barrier-free honour system for access and fare payment. SkyTrain security personnel executed random checks on the trains, to monitor fare payments, issue fines, monitor behavior of riders and respond to issues from the public.

On May 4, 2012, the Province of British Columbia introduced legislation to amend the *South Coast Transportation Authority Act* (SCTAA). This provincial legislation governs the operations of the Metro Vancouver public transit system. The purpose of the legislation was to make changes to the methods used to enforce payment of fare evasion fines. The fine for fare evasion has remained at $173 per offence. Second, TransLink[147] through numerous subsidiaries, operates the Metro Vancouver region's buses, light rail trains and ferries, announced, on April 29, 2009, a plan to have fare gates installed at each of the 47 SkyTrain stations (as of September, 2017 there are now 53 stations). Third, in conjunction with the fare gates, an electronic card system, the Compass Card, would be implemented.

The SCTAA fine amendments provided alternative enforcement mechanisms for fare evasion fines including collection agents, denial of the renewal of a driver's license and

[147] TransLink is controlled by two boards: the Mayors' Council on Regional Transit and the TransLink Board of Directors. The Mayors' Council is composed of the 21 mayors in Metro Vancouver, the Chief of the Tsawwassen First Nation and the elected representative of Electoral Area A. It appoints seven of the nine TransLink's Board members, approves long-term transportation strategies and the 'fare collection bylaw,' which establishes procedures for fines regarding the transit system. The full responsibilities are outlined in Provincial legislation, the South Coast British Columbia Transportation Authority Act (SCTAA). TransLink's remaining two Board positions may be appointed by the Province of British Columbia. Among its responsibilities, the Board appoints the CEO of TransLink as well as supervises the over-all management of TransLink.

prohibiting the person from using public transit in Metro Vancouver. Where the legislative amendments made no change, however, there continued to be no distinction between persons who could afford to pay transit fares but did not, and persons who, due to extreme poverty, could not pay their transit fares.

The fare gates and the Compass Card were two parts of an integrated initiative. The commencement of fare gates was designed to block access to the Sky Train transit for anyone who did not have a Compass card to open the gates. This was an initiative intended to both reduce the amount of fare evasion – estimated at less than 3% of trips – and also provide raw data on transit trips for planning purposes. The electronic card system was designed to require a 'tap-in' at the fare gate with the Compass Card to access the system (a maximum three zone fare would be automatically deducted from the stored value on the card), and then a tap-out of the fare gate when a rider left the system (with value then credited back to the card if the rider travelled only one or two zones). In addition, a transit rider paid a $6 deposit or administrative cost to purchase a Compass Card.

In one way the amendments to the SCTAA were a positive step. The authorization of alternative enforcement mechanisms allowed for enforcement to be taken out of the court system. Before the legislation, a person with an unpaid fine would receive a court summons. If the person did not appear in court, the legal issue became one of not obeying a court issued document, which added, not only the unpaid fine but also, potentially, a bench warrant which could lead to an arrest.[148] Ignoring a court order made the fine a matter for law enforcement. If a person was stopped for some non-transit related reason, but happened to have an outstanding warrant, there was the possibility of landing in jail, not for the unpaid fine, but for the non-appearance in court. However, these changes did not reduce barriers to transportation for people who are homeless and did not consider the mediating role of transportation in accessing the social determinants of health[149].

In October, 2013, the TWG and TransLink staff made a trip to the Metro Seattle area. Over two days we met with City, County and Transit staff in Seattle/King County and Kitsap County to review their homeless related transit programs. Later research involved travel to Calgary and Montreal to interview non-profit service agency staff and City and Transit Planners.

In December, 2013, to better understand the transit experience of people who are trying to access the emergency shelter system, the TWG conducted a survey (Greenwell et al., 2014) on access to shelter and/or outreach services[150]. The survey sample of 131 homeless individuals was drawn equally from five shelters (in Langley, North Vancouver, Vancouver, Surrey, New Westminster) and one drop-in centre (in Burnaby) to provide a Metro Vancouver region-wide sample. We worked closely with shelter staff beforehand so they would understand the nature and purpose of the study.

[148] Conversation with Constable Heather Brown, Vancouver Police Department, October 21, 2015

[149] In conversation with Doug King (Staff lawyer, PIVOT Legal Society) I was told that ‘security of the person’ under Section 7 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, would be the legal route for any potential test case regarding lack of transit access (April, 2017)

[150] https://transitworkinggroup.com/category/twg-resources/twg-reports/

With the TWG survey, most comments on improvement spoke about increased access through either lower cost, or bus passes being available to a larger number of people including an accessible low-income yearly pass. The survey showed the high level of dependence on the public transit system by this sample of shelter residents.

The TWG survey found the following:

- 41% of people had at some point been unable to get to a shelter because of no transit access;
- 26% of people had received a fine for non-payment of fares in the last 12 months;
- 70% of people had used transit more than 15 trips per month; and
- Less than 2% did not use transit

The feedback we received from staff, volunteers and residents was transportation is an important issue faced every day by residents and people wanted to talk about it. However, the survey was focussed on getting to shelters rather than leaving shelters. While there are commonalities with both situations, they are also opposite situations in some ways. The TWG survey did not address how the public transit system, largely an impersonal and inflexible system (with fixed schedules, routes, fares and fines), responds to the personal needs of those individuals in shelters and what role transit plays in their access to housing, health care, job, education, social services and support networks. This would require further research.

In August, 2015 TransLink announced a three-month phase-in period for the gates and Compass Card, starting with the least busy stations, so transit users could get familiar with tapping in and out of the system. There was concern with maintaining efficient movement of people onto and off a very busy and at times crowded system.[151] The tap in and tap out requirements of the Compass Card provided transit planners with information on the beginning and end points of hundreds of millions of individual SkyTrain transit trips.

The phase-in period was extended due to the difficulties that emerged with transfers between the bus and SkyTrain systems. Bus tickets were recognized by SkyTrain, but SkyTrain tickets were not recognized by the busses. This issue was resolved with a policy change rather than technically. Rather than further delaying the full introduction of the Compass Card system, the bus system was changed from a three-zone system to a one-zone system. The SkyTrain remained a three-zone system, creating somewhat of a two-tiered system, with the more efficient, grade separated, regional light rail service more expensive than the cheaper, slower local busses, hindered by traffic.

By November 2, 2015 the transit system was fully covered by the Compass card for the general public. Since April 4, 2016, Compass Cards or Compass individual use tickets have been required for all trips taken on the SkyTrain, SeaBus, and West Coast Express. In June 2016, TransLink reported 100 percent of monthly pass users and 95 percent of all

[151] Electronic cards were being introduced across Canada, in line with the five-year priorities of the Canadian Urban Transit Association (CUTA) Strategic Plan (2015), TransLink is a member organization

other users had converted to the new electronic format[152], a total of more than 915,000 customers.

In 2016-2017, in Vancouver, through the work of the MVHTPC, BC Housing and TransLink provided $40,000 in funding for a two-part homeless transit pilot program – *Access to Transit* – to provide additional single-use transit fares to homeless shelter residents.[153] As well, tickets were provided to people to access extreme weather shelters (also known as irregular mat programs), opened temporarily when the weather is below 0^{o}C. Numerous churches and shelters either open up or expand existing services overnight as part of this response across the region.

With the *Access to Transit* program the Greater Vancouver Shelter Strategy (GVSS)[154], the umbrella group of all regional shelters and outreach programs, administered the pilot program, and received single use transit tickets to distribute amongst shelters in Surrey. Surrey was chosen for the pilot because of the long distances between the limited services available in the City. The tickets were provided so residents could get to critical appointments, whether housing, income or social support. With the TWG, TransLink also agreed to publicize extreme weather shelter openings at SkyTrain stations[155] and later, through the MVHTPC, Transit Police agreed to be available to provide rides to people

[152] As an observation on, where there is a will there is a way, King County Metro Transit, at the same time had about a 35% coverage rate for their electronic ORCA Card, which was introduced before the Compass Card

[153] An outcome of policy advocacy work by the Transit Working Group with BC Housing, TransLink and local municipalities

[154] The GVSS and ShelterNet BC merged and become the Homeless Services Association (HSA) in October, 2017

[155] Conversation with Karen O'Shannacery, these Transit initiatives required a "great deal of advocacy."

needing assistance with getting to shelters. The pilot ran from November 1, 2016 – March 31, 2017.

In April, 2017 the pilot program was extended until June 30, 2018 with an additional $100,000 in cost shared funding from TransLink and BC Housing. The scope of the pilot was expanded to include youth safe houses and transition houses, and to cover the entire region not just the City of Surrey. Information on the type of transit pass used (one, two or three zone fare), and type of appointment were recorded by the individual shelters and forwarded to the GVSS for compilation.

As of yet, an exact break-down is not available. Anecdotally, we have been told one and three zone tickets were most commonly used, as people were either traveling locally or going to some sort of regional specialist appointment. In September, 2018 there was an agreement between TransLink and BC Housing to make it a permanent commitment with the program name *Access Transit*.

Another explanation for the lack of any regional program may be from the complicated governance structure of TransLink with a fractured political leadership amongst the Mayors' Council, Board of Directors and the provincial Minister of Transportation. Other urban centres we visited had much simpler governance structures; for example, Calgary City Council is able to make political decisions on homeless services, such as offering a discounted monthly base based on income, and then directs Calgary Transit to implement them.

Homeless Transit Access Programs in Canada and USA

In homeless shelters, both in Metro Vancouver and other jurisdictions, transit needs of residents range from giving directions, to bus tickets, to personal assistance with public transit. Ticket programs in Victoria, Calgary, Edmonton, Montreal, Toronto, Seattle and Kitsap County (Washington State) attempted to address emergency single trip travel needs of residents[156] and/or people at-risk of homelessness or otherwise living in extreme poverty (regardless of age, gender, family status or mobility).

All of these single-use access programs include on-off transit access for people using homeless shelters and/or outreach services. Funding systems are unique to each city. For example, Edmonton uses a charity model with a city-operated foundation – *Donate-a-Ride* – conducting an annual Christmas fundraising campaign to fund the emergency transit ticket program. Seattle has annually approved funding within its city budget for an emergency ticket program.

These are examples of the range of different models for either single-use programs and/or for on-going needs (see Table 2 below). Generally, these programs operate on individual assessment and each time a shelter resident requires a transit fare they must explain and justify their trip to a shelter staff member before a single use fare is issued.

[156] *Three Ways to Home* (2003), the Metro Vancouver regional homeless plan, makes no mention of transportation access as a support service need for people who are homeless.

Table 2Transit Program Characteristics

Emergency programs	Single use tickets dispersed by shelter staff requiring resident to explain/qualify for each transit fare used
On-going Need	Monthly pass available for discounted purchase price with no individual trip monitoring
Demographic based program	Discounted fares based on demographic group such as seniors, students, disabled and may or may not require an income qualification
Income based program	Discounted fares based only on ability to pay – without reference to a demographic group - for example the LICO[157] level in Canada

The information presented in the following section includes programs that would impact homeless populations, whether the program was specific to the homeless population or also available to low-income people in general with income-based discount programs for transit. The purpose of this data collection was to find best practices, learn about impacts, and to provide evidence of how/if other urban centres and transit systems were addressing homeless transportation needs.

The programs are ones that emerged individually in different localities. Numerous jurisdictions have acknowledged, through these programs, the importance of basic transportation needs amongst homeless and low-income people. Both Portland and Seattle have City and County policies regarding the need for local services to address poverty, as does the City of Calgary's Transportation Policy (p. 84). In Metro Vancouver, and the other cities cited homeless transit needs exist in a policy vacuum.

In the cities of Calgary, Edmonton, Ottawa, Toronto, Halifax, Guelph, Hamilton, Kingston, Waterloo, Windsor, Portland, Seattle, Kitsap County and Everett, income-

[157] Statistics Canada's Low-Income Cut-off level (LICO)

based, and means-tested, discounted transit access programs have been implemented with individual application processes. In Canada, Stats Canada's Low-Income Cut-off (LICO) is most typically used to establish the cut-off, while in the States of Washington and Oregon 200% of the Federal Poverty Rate is used. With these programs, individual trips do not need to be justified to staff, so there is more individual autonomy. These low-income programs are often implemented in partnerships with social assistance/disability programs and agencies.

Most programs highlighted are open to all qualified low-income people, whether working, on disability pensions or social assistance. One program in Hamilton is exclusive to employed low-income people. Each program I contacted made the same observation: the need was not fully met. Financial audits and participant input have been undertaken for Waterloo, Calgary and Hamilton programs. Take up of programs vary.

The policy context for each of these programs varies from one urban area to the next. In the case of Calgary there is clear policy direction within the *Calgary Transportation Plan* (2012). The *Fair Entry* program in place in Calgary fits within a policy framework which acknowledges low-income and dependence on public transit. The *Calgary Transportation Plan* makes specific mention of low-income riders and access in regional transit priorities in *Part Three: Transportation Policies*: *Social considerations*

n. A range of affordable, accessible, fixed-route and specialized door-to-door transit services should be provided to address the mobility needs of persons with disabilities and low income Calgarians who depend on public transit for their mobility.[158]

Seattle

In Seattle/King County we learned $3.1 million per year was budgeted to provide an 80% discount on bulk tickets purchased by non-profit agencies through King County Transit Authority.[159] Agency feedback to County officials was there were not enough tickets available for distribution by the individual agencies. The transit program had become more well-known with no budget increase for many years. Transit access was considered a scarce and needed resource and priorities had to be used to decide on individual ticket distribution.

There are over-lapping county and regional transit systems in Greater Seattle, with both Metro Transit and Sound Transit. We were told King County is a diverse area to provide transit service – very urban to very rural – and the suburban residents were more isolated to services and harder to integrate into the homeless transit ticket program. Both Metro and Sound Transit offered a special ticket for shelter residents who could be utilized on light rail and bus – it looked like a day pass and it was dated by agencies on day of use.

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[158] http://www.calgary.ca/PDA/pd/Documents/Publications/calgary-transportation-plan.pdf

[159] In Washington State transit is largely funded through sales tax. The 2009 recession resulted in the State Legislature passing legislation to allow counties to charge a $20 vehicle levy to make up for retail sales tax funding shortfalls during the recession. King County brought in the $20 vehicle licensing fee levy, with an option of receiving or donating 8 bus tickets to the Human Services Fare program.[159] Donated tickets boosted the number of tickets available to homeless serving agencies during the time of the vehicle levy.

King County's Housing and Homeless Programs, within the Department of Community and Human Services, supervised service contracts and managed policy, applications and administration for agencies receiving the discounted fare bus tickets. Seattle/King County had 77 agencies participating in the bulk discount ticket program.[160] Much like the discounted ticket program TWG was advocating with TransLink, the King County program was emergency based and personal documentation of income was required. Also, the program had come under scrutiny from the County Auditors' Office – the Auditor felt there was a need to develop policies concerning how tickets were distributed, accounted for, who they were given to, and under what criteria[161]. Starting in 2014, there was a foil tab added to the single use ticket so they could not be photocopied.

The month prior to meeting with the TWG, King County Transit had made a significant change to downtown transit services. In September, 2013 Seattle ended its free transit service in the downtown core. This service had been instituted in downtown Seattle in the 1970's for efficiency of the rolling stock, not for any reasons of access and/or poverty. People could get on and off the bus quicker if they were not paying fares, so more trips could be made with the same number of busses. However, as an example of the importance of transit access, over the course of the free transit zone's 35 years of existence, many homeless service agencies had located within this zone including a major shelter, food bank and health clinic.

[160] Web link to program: http://www.kingcounty.gov/operations/DCHS/Business/BusTicketProgram.aspx

[161] There was a review of the effectiveness of program done in 2014 but I have been unable to access a copy of this program assessment

In October, 2013, acknowledging the need for transit access amongst the homeless, Metro Transit instituted the free Downtown Circulator within the old free zone as a pilot program. Metro Transit donated two new buses for the Downtown Circulator with a budget of up to $400,000 covered by Metro Transit. There were seven stops on the route, based on the location of shelters, food and medical services. The Downtown Circulator ran in one directional loop every 15-20 minutes from 7am to 4pm daily, five days a week.

Metro Transit had not publicized the Downtown Circulator amongst the general public but through targeting participants of targeted downtown agencies. The first day of service fewer than 75 people used it – this increased to over 400 people each day after one month. Drivers recorded how many people exited at each stop. This service did not extend to outlying areas or through the middle of downtown as Metro Transit determined there was too much transit traffic in the area, so it circumnavigated the downtown core. As part of our tour we rode the Downtown Circulator through its route.

In 2014 Seattle voters approved the Seattle Transportation Benefit District (STBD), with four objectives. One of the objectives was expanding the number of free transit passes available to Seattle high school students (Grade 9-12) and middle school students (Grade 6-8), see Table 3 below. The City has funded 3,000 free One Regional Card for All (ORCA)[162] transit passes for qualifying high school (2,600) and middle school (400)

[162] King County Metro Transit passengers used ORCA cards for more than 60 percent of boardings as of the third quarter of 2017

students; and the school board provided 8,000 free transit passes to high school (6,200) and middle school (1,800) students.

The school district continues their contributions to funding student passes. In August, 2018 an additional $7 million per year was approved, with the intention of providing an additional 10,200 free ORCA transit passes to Seattle public high school students.

Table 3 Monthly Passes Distributed at 100% discount in Seattle

	School Board	City of Seattle	STBD	TOTAL Board/City	TOTAL Board/STBD
High School Students	6,200	2,600	10,200	8,800	16,400
Middle School	1,800	400	500	2,200	2,300
Seattle Promise College	0	0	300		300
TOTAL	8,000	3,000	8,000	11,000	19,000

Councilmember Rob Johnson said "the funding limit could mean the city could fund additional passes for other students, including those at private schools since the terms of the legislation are not overly prescriptive." Also included were an additional 500 middle school students and 300 Seattle Promise community college students (Table 3).

In June, 2018 Seattle City Council passed funding to provide high school and income-eligible middle school students at Seattle Public Schools with a free, unlimited 12-month ORCA card valid until August 31, 2020. The ORCA cards provide unlimited no-cost access to King County Metro, King County Water Taxi, Seattle Streetcar, Sound Transit, Community Transit, Pierce Transit, Kitsap Transit, Everett Transit, and Seattle Center Monorail. All of Seattle Public High School students are eligible for this ORCA card program. Middle school students must be income-qualified, as well as ineligible for transportation from within the Seattle public school system.

On November 23, 2018, the King County Council, in its 2019-2020 budget documents, voted in favour of moving forward with discussions on an income-based transit pass. The wording of the motion included:

The Executive should provide an oral briefing to the mobility committee, or its Successor, on the progress of developing the program by June 30, 2019, and should file the income-based fare program implementation plan and a motion required by this proviso by September 30, 2019, along with any necessary legislation to implement the program by March 3I, 2020

The stakeholder consultation group began meeting in March, 2019 with the presentation of four options to select from to improve access. These options included expanding the income range for the *ORCA Lift* card, deepening the discount for the existing income range, and expanding the discounted individual transit fare tickets distributed through the social services network of King County. Recommendations were scheduled to be made in June, 2019, with a report to the County Executive in September, 2019 for an implementation strategy for a March, 2020 roll out of a program for expanded access for people living in poverty.

Kitsap County, Washington State

In Kitsap County, in October, 2013, we met with John Claussen, CEO, Kitsap Transit and the Director of Customer Services. Kitsap County is a ferry ride across Puget Sound from downtown Seattle. The two major population centres are Bremerton and the Bangor Naval Base, the third largest naval base in the USA. Kitsap Transit was established in 1986. From the outset, Kitsap Transit has provided a low-income transit pass to those households below 200% of the USA federal poverty level (this served as the model for the *ORCA Lift* pass instituted by King County Transit in April, 2015).

We were told by Claussen sales taxes accounted for close to 75% of transit funding and during the 2009 recession; transit faced the financial burden of reduced sales tax funding. In 2009 rather than eliminate the low-income transit pass, Kitsap Transit opted to end Sunday bus service to meet budgetary restrictions.

In 2012, with some recovery from the recession, Kitsap Transit began a free-ride ticket program. The intent, according to Claussen, was to get people into the system and able to get to food banks and other community services, and hopefully at some point transition them into the low-fare program. The free-ride ticket program commenced as a pilot program and served both people who were homeless and residents of transition houses.[163]

Kitsap Transit worked with emergency housing agencies and gave them tickets to provide to their residents and program participants. Six thousand single use tickets were

[163] Temporary housing for women with or without children fleeing violence

distributed in the first year with about 3300 redeemed. Ticket usage was tracked by serial numbers on the tickets deposited into the fare box. It became evident some agencies were saving the tickets so Kitsap Transit re-connected with agencies to remind them to use the tickets. We were told this program was extremely well received by the social service agencies – even though it was an additional administrative duty for the agency responsible for the distribution.

The actual cost to the transit system was considered to be $300; essentially this was the cost of printing the tickets. There was no fare revenue loss – meaning no cost to the transit agency. The program largely filled unused mid-day seats. Kitsap Transit had some standing room only loads on some commuter routes and there had been a concern about possible public push back from existing riders on those routes.

Calgary

Through 2014 – 2016, I also met several times with staff from the City of Calgary and Calgary Transit, and community transit activists with FairFares Calgary. In April, 2014 I met with Derek Cook, Issue Strategist, Strategy and Partnerships Division, City of Calgary, Bonnie Pacaud and Colleen Huston with FairFares Calgary, and Marina Giacomim, Vibrant Calgary regarding public transit programs and services available for people who are homeless in Calgary. Through a step by step process, Calgary Transit, with political direction from Calgary's City Council, has provided the most accessible system I have found in Canada for low-income people.

There is a free transit zone in downtown Calgary, and both the major shelter and resource centre are within this area. In addition, there is a Participation and Integration Community Program (PIC), a free ticket program providing 42,000 transit tickets to the homeless sector distributed through shelters and drop-in centres. There is also a banded income based discounted monthly pass, with a $5.35 per month pass available for people on the lowest welfare rate.

Calgary has taken an incremental approach that began in 2005 following a long transit strike and system shutdown. In 2005 the City of Calgary initially agreed to support a pilot Low-Income Transit pass program for people on Assured Income for Severely Handicapped (AISH), with eventual agreement the pilot be open to anyone below 75% of Statistics Canada's Low-Income Cut-off (LICO) rate. Bonnie Pacaud, FareFairs Calgary, felt this was a foot in the door for an eventual low-income pass program. Within the year, the City of Calgary extended the qualification to 85% of LICO and then finally 100% of LICO.[164]

In the beginning, the low-income pass was just for people between 18-64 years of age and then, in 2009, the City of Calgary agreed to include youth between the ages of 5-17. This meant anyone[165] in Calgary with an income of less than about $2,200 per month could qualify for a 50% discount on a monthly pass, resulting in a $44 cost per pass.[166]

[164] In conversation April 2, 2015 Calgary Planner Derek Cook said that the impetus for the program followed a transit strike in 2002 where numerous people were house bound/stranded and the City established an emergency taxi subsidy program during the course of the strike to meet individual emergency needs

[165] Calgary Transit also has an annual pass for anyone over the age of 65 for $95 per year

[166] Increases to the monthly pass cost were not applied to the discounted pass, so the discounted increase over time from 50% to 55%

This program aimed to address the chronic on-going issue of transit access; the PIC program (discussed above) aims to meet the emergency transit needs for people in extreme poverty.

With the initial program in Calgary (2005-2017) people who had incomes approaching the LICO levels were more likely to purchase a pass than those at greater levels of poverty. After 12 years the $44 monthly pass in Calgary was determined to be unaffordable to those on welfare or otherwise in extreme poverty. In response Calgary Transit, under direction from Calgary City Council, introduced a system in April, 2017 with different levels of discount based on four income bands. With the four price brackets, the lowest bracket, for a single person on welfare, would have a cost of $5.35 per month for a full transit pass (detailed below).

In November, 2014 Calgary City Council voted to review transit fares charged by Calgary Transit. Part of the review was a shift from a demographic-based qualification transit pass to an income-based qualification transit pass, with a low-income pass available at a sliding scale discount available between 50% - 100% of LICO. In April, 2017 Calgary Transit implemented the sliding-scale low-income transit pass, with the support of a $13 million three-year grant from the Province of Alberta. After a year's time the demand for discounted passes exceeded estimates, with a year over year increase of 70% for both the discounted transit passes and number of individuals who have bought the passes. In particular, it is the most highly discounted passes, set at the welfare rate income level, which exceeded estimates. Discounted passes now account for 17% of the ridership with Calgary Transit. The current program has the following criteria:

- Resident of Calgary[167]
- Low Income Cut-Off[168]
- Youths aged 6 to 17 are eligible to apply
- Youths not living at home and attending school may bring in a letter from the principal or guidance counsellor of their school; eligibility period will be for six months.
- An approval letter from the Child and Youth Support Program of Alberta Children's Services dated within the previous 30 days; either the expiry date on the letter or 6 months eligibility

From 2016 to 2017 there was an overall decrease in ridership on Calgary transit, attributed to the economic downturn with the drop in world oil prices. So far, in 2018 there has been a slight ridership recovery. The Director of Transit said the low-income program now accounts for 17% of ridership.

Details of the low-income pass growth in recent years are given in Table 4 below. These numbers are the total number of passes sold, and the number of people buying the passes from April, 2016 to March, 2017, the year before the sliding scale was introduced, and

[167] Different from Seattle ORCA Lift program where residency in Seattle is not required, recognizing the number of service workers who have been priced out of the Metro Seattle housing market

[168] For example, 2013 StatsCan Low-Income Cut Off (LICO) rate for a single person was $23,861.00 (before tax [gross] income)

from April, 2017 to March, 2018, the year after the sliding-scale was introduced. Private selling of passes is monitored by Calgary staff through Craigslist and Kijiji, and is reported in the 10's of passes. Often these sales are someone moving out of town mid-month with no further use for their monthly pass. Planning staff described the situation as having "traded traditional fare evasion for petty fraud." It was considered a reasonable trade-off given the levels.

Table 4 Comparison Sliding Scale Passes Sold 2016 to 2018

	April 2016-March, 2017	**April 2017-March 2018**	**Percent Increase**
Monthly Passes sold	200,273	343,870	71.7%
Unique Clients purchasing	32,848	53,154	61.8%
Passes bought per client	6.1	6.5	6.6%

Passes are available up to 15 days prior to the beginning of the month, and may be purchased from five locations around the City. (See: http://www.calgarytransit.com/fares-passes/passes/low-income-monthly-pass)

There was a significant increase in both the number of passes sold and the number of clients who bought them, but with the number of passes increasing by a higher rate, which means each client was able to buy a larger number of passes through the year. Part of this increase results from larger households buying more passes (e.g. anecdotally a family of 5 pre-sliding scale bought 2 passes and post sliding scale bought 5 passes). Anecdotally, United Way (charitable foundation) has reported higher high school completion rates since the inception of the sliding scale discounted pass[169]. In November, 2017 Calgary City Council approved one-time funds totaling $4 million dollars to offset the program revenue loss. The sliding-scale transit pass was part of the November, 2018 three-year budget projection discussions as well.

In October, 2019 the newly elected government of Province of Alberta committed to continue to provide provincial funding for the sliding-scale bus pass. However, in an October 23, 2019 report[170] to City of Calgary Council, planning staff outlined additional financial support was needed to continue the program; there were various staff recommendations on options to modify the existing sliding-scale fare discounts, to make the program more financially sustainable for the City. The greatest percentage increase will be with the current lowest fare band, from $5.45 to $18.55.

Montreal

Ville-Marie is an inner-city borough of Montreal which funds a program to assist people who are homeless on the Société de transport de Montréal (STM) system. There is no discounted ticket system in Montreal for the homeless sector. In 2013 Montreal had begun a three-year pilot project where five downtown metro stations (Atwater, Berri-UQAM, Bonaventure, Place-des-Arts and McGill metros) double as service points for people living on the streets. The project began with one outreach worker helping

[169] Conversation with Rob Wilmot, Calgary Planner, April 19, 2019

[170] Staff Report to Calgary City Council, October 23, 2019 https://pub-calgary.escribemeetings.com/filestream.ashx?DocumentId=109802

homeless people at the Place-des-Arts Metro Station approximately 10 hours per week. In 2014-2015, more than 400 people received services. The pilot project eventually added two additional social workers, so there is three staff in the five metro stations.

In addition, the Old Brewery Shelter operates a year-round shuttle bus service for people who are homeless. The shuttle service, in partnership with the STM, makes a scheduled stop at Bonaventure station after midnight to pick up anyone 'loitering' in the Métro system at closing time. In October, 2017 I spoke with the shelter's shuttle outreach workers and was told they "try and coax people to come in from the cold. This is an offer of a ride. Hopefully, people will not leave a warm bus once they're aboard." When STM staffers escort the homeless to the Métro doors, the shuttle offers them a ride to the Welcome Hall Mission and Maison du Père shelters. From personal observation, emptying the Metro station seemed to be the priority activity of STM staff.

Halifax

A new anti-poverty program will boost funding for some community organizations and provide bus passes for 11,000 people in the Halifax Regional Municipality. The Halifax Transit passes will be given to people who receive employment supports and income that live within a half-kilometre of a bus stop. Their spouses and children will also receive passes. As well, $600,000 has been set aside for a program called Building Vibrant Communities. Community organizations, First Nations communities, registered charities, municipalities, social enterprises, and private-sector businesses, if they partner with non-profit organizations, can apply for $50,000 grants for individual projects. The current program runs until March 31, 2020.

In Appendix B I have provided an expanded listing of the income based discounted transit programs available, initially completed for Toronto Public Health (Sengupta et al., 2013), to include new Canadian and additional Washington State information as of 2019. These are not programs specific to homeless populations, but do provide for people living in poverty, and as such, would be part of a prevention of homelessness ethos.

Non-Payment of Fares Fines and Enforcement Reforms

Another significant issue for homeless shelter residents is, not only being able to afford to pay a transit fare, but the consequences that can result if you do not pay. Public transit fare evasion fines and enforcement are a form of structural violence.[171] An example of this is children aging out of the foster care system with unpaid fare evasion fines. They will be reported to credit agencies per TransLink's enforcement policy for unpaid fines, resulting in an additional impediment to youth successfully renting and transitioning out of care.

In February, 2019 I conducted a survey[172] of non-profit agencies in Metro Vancouver, on behalf of the BC Poverty Reduction Coalition, regarding transit access issues for

[171] TriMet (2017), Dr. Brian Renauer, Criminal Justice Policy Research Institute, Portland State University, on compliance results and efficacy of 'get tough policies.'

[172] https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/K25L35W

(predominately) low-income people using their programs. 43 agencies responded. There were five agencies (mostly youth serving ones) that had budgeted money to assist youth with paying off transit fines[173]. Following up, I was told these were not official policies but discretionary, considered on a case by case basis.

Similar to BC in 2012, in 2016 the Province of Alberta fare evasion and jay walking fines were also removed from the criminal justice system. (In 2015, in Alberta, a tragic situation occurred when Barry Stewart chose five days in jail instead of paying $287 in fare evasion and jay walking tickets[174] and then died in remand.)

Recent initiatives in Portland and Seattle address the structural violence aspect of fare evasion fines with: removing fare evasion fines from the court system, the monetary amount of the fines; and providing alternative dispute mechanisms. Portland and Seattle, working under State and County policies on equity and social justice, are implementing reforms Metro Vancouver's TransLink is not currently considering. TriMet and Metro Transit's approaches are discussed below.

In 2018 both TriMet (Portland) and King County Metro Transit (Seattle)[175] decriminalized fare evasion. Importantly these two transit systems are also making

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[173] 29 of the 43 agencies had budgeted money to pay the transit fare costs to assist people using programs, to get to their location. One of the agencies had budgeted $20,000 for transit fare tickets.

[174] News article here: https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/edmonton/alberta-bill-proposes-end-to-arrests-for-transit-fare-jaywalking-scofflaws-1.3534395

[175] Washington DC Council voted to support the *Fare Evasion Decriminalization Act 2018*, November 13, 2018 http://lims.dccouncil.us/Download/38590/B22-0408-CommitteeReport1.pdf

significant changes to the level of fare evasion fines and the process and objectives of the enforcement mechanisms being implemented.

Both TriMet and King County Metro Transit, after the completion of audits[176] on their fare evasion citation programs (considering effectiveness and cost-recovery), concluded their existing fare evasion and enforcement procedures were punitive to particular population groups (i.e. structural violence) and, in addition, were not cost-effective. The King County Audit said Metro Transit "cannot determine whether its model of fare enforcement makes sense, in terms of costs and outcomes, or identify ways to improve it." Both transit systems elected to establish, with extensive community discussions and research of approaches in other USA cities, programs that had multiple resolution options in a non-court-based framework.

Portland TriMet

TriMet[177] issues approximately 20,000 fare evasion tickets per year[178]. The agency completes an annual fare evasion survey; and in 2017 the estimated fare evasion rate was 13.1 percent. This percentage is high compared with other transit systems and represented a challenge for TriMet fare enforcement. Repeat violations (i.e. getting caught with either

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[176] Portland had a third-party independent audit completed, and Seattle's was an internal audit

[177] Portland's regional transit system[177], TriMet, has a seven-member Board of Directors appointed by the Governor of Oregon. The General Manager answers to the Board of Directors.

[178] In a September, 2018 Appellate Court decision, not specifically related to fare evasion, but deemed to be applicable, the issue of checking for fares evasion without probably cause, was deemed unconstitutional, as the process lacked reasonable suspicion. TriMet will modify their fare checking process. The issue does not come up with non-police security. Full report here: https://trimet.org/meetings/board/pdfs/2018-11-14/ord-351.pdf

no fare or improper fare more than once in the two years of data) comprise 25.5% of all enforcement incidents.

In 2017 TriMet had a third-party independent review conducted. This review revealed a growing fare evasion rate, as well as a need for a fare enforcement regime that included both opportunities to make consequences less punitive, while maintaining an effective incentive for riders to pay their fares. The independent review considered the fare enforcement practices used by other transit systems including Dallas, Los Angeles, Minneapolis, New York, Phoenix, Buffalo, and San Francisco.

Beginning July 1, 2018 TriMet rolled out, in conjunction with the implementation of a low-income fare program, a revised fare evasion enforcement plan. TriMet's previous fine was similar to TransLink's fare evasion ticket, with a $175 fine per infraction. State legislation was enacted to allow TriMet to hold fare evasion citations for 90 days[179], to allow for alternative dispute resolution, before the citation was registered with the Court. The new system is a hybrid system that provides adults, riding without a valid fare, with three options:

1. Fine
2. Community service
3. Enrollment in the Low income/Honored Citizen program

[179] The violation statute (ORS 153.054) used to say that the citing officer "shall cause" the citation to be delivered to the court. Oregon changed the statute so now it says that except as provided in ORS 267.153 (which is where the administrative fine option is outlined). So TriMet has the clear authority to not file until after 90 days, and not file at all if the person resolved administratively. *Knight versus Spokane*, Washington State Court ruling from the 1970's, a ticket must be served within 3 days of issuance (this addressed graft issue with officers 'issuing' tickets, but paid to them directly, and then not filed with Court).

If completed within 90 days, the citation is not referred to the Court system. If it is not resolved, then it continues to be referred to Court.[180] It should be noted an appeal process, regarding proof of payment only, is available for citations issued for non-payment. Essentially a passenger is given a second chance to produce proof of payment (for example, when a monthly employee pass was paid for but forgotten and not shown at the time of the citation). There is no appeal for extenuating circumstances. If the citation is unresolved within the 90 days, then administratively it is referred to the Court system. Tiered fines were introduced as a response to the extensive discussions to determine fine levels, to find a balance between effective deterrence without being punitive. This discussion was informed by empirical research undertaken by Dr. Brian Renauer, Criminal Justice Policy Research Institute, Portland State University, on compliance results and the efficacy of 'get tough policies' (structural violence). The fine structure approved is tiered[181] based on the number of fare evasion violations:[182]

- First offense: $75
- Second offense: $100
- Third offense: $150
- Fourth offense and beyond: $175 (no reduction options available)

TriMet developed relationships with five larger agencies that already had an established relationship with the Court system, for the completion of community service hours (see

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[180] Los Angeles opted for a completely internal system for adjudicating citations, without referral to court system, and has had difficulties with compliance enforcement

[181] Calgary Transit also has a tiered fine system, but at much higher rates, $250 (1st fine), $500 (2nd) and $750 (3rd)

[182] If paid during the 90-day stay period

list here: https://trimet.org/citation/communityservice/). A person who receives a citation must register with one of the five agencies, complete the required hours, and have the agency report back to TriMet within 90 days of the citation being issued, to avoid a referral of the citation to the Court system. An adult fare evader may have the option to complete community service in lieu of a fine:

- First offense: 4 hours ($18.75/hour in-kind service)
- Second offense: 7 hours ($14.28/hour in-kind service)
- Third offense: 12 hours ($12.50/hour in-kind service)
- Fourth offense and beyond: 15 hours ($11.66/hour in-kind service)

For low income/Honored Citizen Program enrollees, TriMet waives the fare evasion citation if an adult rider meets ALL of the following criteria:

- Eligible for, but not enrolled in, TriMet's low income fare program (July 2018) or the agency's Honored Citizen program, https://trimet.org/citation/programs/
- Successfully enroll in the low income or Honored Citizen program during the 90-day stay period.
- Load a minimum of $10 on their reloadable HOP Fastpass™ fare card during the 90-day stay period.

The above ticket resolution options are only available to adults for fare evasion citations, and not for other violations (such as behavior) of the TriMet Code have been committed.

Seattle King County Metro Transit

Fare enforcement on King County Metro Transit[183] started in 2010. Currently, the RapidRide lines are the only bus lines in the Metro Transit system with fare enforcement[184]. On the regular buses, much like in Metro Vancouver, operators may ask for proof of payment, but do not enforce payment or issue tickets for fare evasion[185]. King County Metro Transit contracts with a private company, Securitas, the same company used by Sound Transit, for fare enforcement. Sound Transit runs the regional light rail system. Metro Transit adopted the same fare enforcement practices used on Sound Transit. Metro Transit operates in a different policy environment from TransLink; they have their *Service Guidelines* – similar to TransLink's *10-Year Vision* – but in addition they operate within the *King County 2016-2022 Equity and Social Justice Strategic Plan*, which outlines the need to consider the equity impacts of County services. This is an example of both a recognition and policy response to structural violence. Metro Vancouver's *Metro 2040,* does not have explicit social equity goals.

In 2016 the Securitas enforcement officers checked almost 300,000 passengers, or about 1.4 percent of RapidRide ridership. Of those 300,000 checks, officers encountered 9,352 instances where riders could not show proof of payment. Depending on the number of

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[183] Metro King County Transit has 1/3 of the County workforce, and is being elevated from a Division of the Transportation Department, to its own department.

[184] Starting March, 2019, no Metro Transit busses will run through the downtown transit tunnel, Sound Transit light rail only. Most busses will be rerouted onto the 3rd Street transit corridor, where all busses, including non-RapidRide, will be subject to proof of payment enforcement

[185] Practice in Seattle, a bus operator might provide a transfer to a non-paying person, so that if a fare inspector is on the bus, the rider will have 'proof of payment' – to prevent situation where the rider says the bus driver let me on, but not having proof.

times a person has been encountered by officers without valid proof of payment or deceitful behavior, officers could:

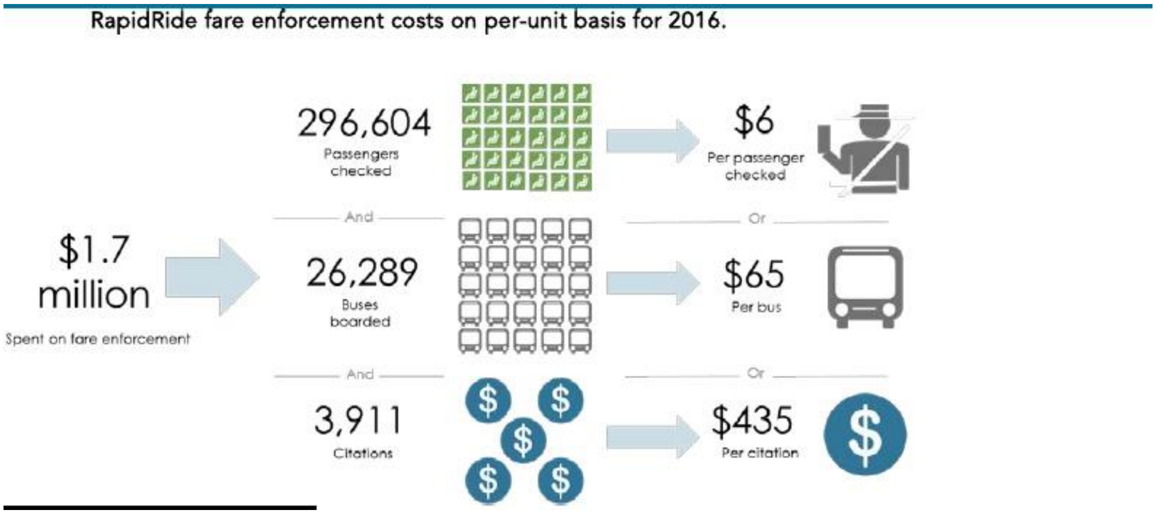
- issue a verbal warning
- a $124 fine[186], or
- recommend a misdemeanor to Metro Transit Police (adults only)

Almost 19,000 people received penalties between 2015 and 2017. Of those people, 99 individuals (0.5 percent) received a total of 1,589 penalties or six percent of all penalties in this time period. One person received 53 penalties over two years. The majority of this group are people of color, people who experienced housing instability during this time, or both. An Auditor's report on the existing fare evasion system found about 10% of people given warnings were homeless or experiencing housing instability, 25% of citations were given to this group of people, and nearly 30% of misdemeanors were to this category of people.[187] Figure 10, below, details the approximate cost of the past fare evasion ticket system for various activities

[186] Under State Law, Theft in 3rd Degree (theft of services) which is a criminal gross misdemeanor, as there is a real value being stolen, and could be referred to the County Prosecutor

[187] During interviews, officers stated they try to use their discretion in enforcement with individuals they encounter frequently or who may be experiencing housing instability, but their tools were limited and their primary task is fare evasion enforcement.

Figure 10 Enforcements Costs in Seattle[188].



According to the King County Executive, the past process was intended to provide a deterrent to fare evasion, however, a King County Auditor's Office report found most infractions went unresolved.

The District Court estimated processing fare evasion tickets cost more than $343,760 in staff time in 2016, with only $4,338—about 1.3 percent— recovered in payments to the county. The District Court began charging Transit for the remainder of its ticket processing costs. With Metro Transit expanding fare enforcement to additional RapidRide lines, these costs were expected to increase. By 2025 Metro Transit has plans to increase the RapidRide bus lines from six lines to 19 lines, and 26 lines by 2040.

In early 2017 there was an internal review of fare enforcement. The fare evasion citation is a civil infraction such as a red-light infraction. Infractions were reviewed to look for

[188] From staff report to King County Executive, September 8, 2018

trends with race, geography and at ways to address/prevent them (for example, parking a police vehicle near a transit stop with frequent evasion boarding). Officers were rotated through the system so everyone should have the same ticketing profile, and no statistically significant trends were observed amongst the officers. The position of Quality Assurance Supervisor was created, to review all complaints, uses of force and look for any undesirable trends.

On September 8, 2018 the King County Council approved Ordinance 2018-0377 to amend the *King County Code*, to replace the existing infraction system for fare evasion on RapidRide buses and replace it with an alternative resolution process. The Ordinance directs the creation of an internal Metro Transit process, where customers will have several options for resolution of any fare violation. The intent is to provide offenders with an option to resolve the citation, outside of court, and not face debt collection and subsequent penalties. The new system will allow for several options for resolution—an opportunity to mitigate a fine by early payment, allow for community service in lieu of a fine, or provide for the ability to administratively cancel a fine. In January, 2019 new tickets will be issued.[189]

The following transit fare evasion penalties and resolutions by Metro King County Transit, on the RapidRide busses, have every step based on 'a fresh start.' Two people have been hired to administer the program, one person responsible for outreach, – their

[189] In the transition period Metro Transit has stopped referring adult citations to prosecutor (youth citations have not been referred for two years with an additional warning given before ticketing). Currently doing a Title 6 check (compliance with the Civil Rights Act), which is why the program is likely not in place until January, 2019.

job is to connect with violators and explain/work through the prevention and/or resolution steps. The proposed fines and resolutions are:

$50 Infraction

WITHIN 30 DAYS

- Paying infraction = fine halved

  WITHIN 90 DAYS (TBD)

- LIFT enrollment the fine is waived
- 4 hours Community Service the fine is waived. On the back of the infraction form is a certification form to be filled out and signed by the agency where hours completed, a self-addressed stamped envelope is provided.
- Add $25 stored value to ORCA Lift the fine is waived (limited to once per year)
- Add $50 to ORCA the fine is waived (limited to once per year)
- Appealed to
    - 1st – Metro Adjudicator[190]
    - 2nd – Mitigation Panel[191]

  IF UNRESOLVED AFTER 90 DAYS

  The ticketed person's name would be added to the "Pending Suspension" list. The next failure to pay will result in a 30-day suspension, per unresolved infraction. After 30 days, the infraction is considered to be resolved. The link maintained to

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[190] The new position of Metro Adjudicator, within Transit Security, was created with the goal of engaging people in violation with resolution options.

[191] The final step is an appeal to the Mitigation Panel (an existing process used for suspensions). The Mitigation Panel has five members representing: Transit Security, Operations, Diversity, Customer Service and ParaTransit.

the Court system[192] is that non-payment of a fare during a suspension could have transit police either issue a ticket for criminal trespass, ask the rider to deboard the bus (under King County's Code *RideRight* can have civil or criminal charges depending on infraction), or take the person to jail. A 30-day suspension can be issued anytime during the 365 days.

Summary

In this Chapter, I have discussed the development of existing transit services policy around homelessness in Metro Vancouver. As well I have described programs and services available in other jurisdictions in Canada and the USA. There is much Metro Vancouver and TransLink can learn from the experience of other transit agencies. The earliest income based discounted program I found began in 1986 in Kitsap County. This small system's program, served as the model for the first discounted program in Seattle 30 years later. There is a growing trend to have transit systems develop fare structures based on income group rather than demographics. As well transit systems are beginning to review how and why transit fare evasion tickets are issued and enforced. Both access and fare evasion ticketing raise issues of structural violence for homeless residents. When a person is functionally unable to access an essential public service due to a user fee there can be predictable and unnecessary harms to a category of people.

[192] Los Angeles Metro Transit brought both fare evasion/enforcement and parking tickets in-house: https://www.metro.net/about/transit-court/, including an inability to pay waiver, http://media.metro.net/about_us/transit_court/images/waiver_transitcourt_declaration_inability_to_pay.pdf

Chapter 7 – Case Study Findings

In this Chapter, I present my findings from the review and coding of the transcript data from the sample of shelter residents from the homeless shelters described in Chapter 5.[193] The interview guide for residents included demographic questions on age, gender and ethnicity. Demographic information was not asked of staff for privacy reason, as it was a very small sample size of two people per Case. The demographic profile of the residents surveyed has been provided in Chapter 5.

Dimensions from Coding of Data

I identified four dimensions from the high-level coding of the resident and staff transcripts to characterize and describe the data: physical, temporal, social and financial (PTSF). However, the emphasis and the amount of time spent by residents on each of the four dimensions were different than in the staff interviews. These differences will be described more in depth below.

I will define the four dimensions, first, before presenting the findings from the three cases.

Physical Dimension: The physical dimension covers both the experience of the geography of the transit system as well as the general accessibility of the busses

[193] The demographic information of residents, collected at the beginning of the interview guide, has been presented in the sampling discussion of Chapter 4.

and SkyTrain. The geographic aspect reflects comments concerning the number of bus stops, the bus stop's distance from the shelters, and the ease or difficulty of the route to access the bus stops. The physical accessibility of the busses included things such as whether busses had ramps or kneeled, or if they could accommodate scooters. Physical dimension comments were made, in particular with answers to questions 4, 7, 11, 12 and 15 of the interview guide (see Appendix D and Appendix E).

Temporal Dimension: The temporal dimension includes aspects of time in relation to the transit system and for residents. For transit this meant scheduling of bus routes and delays. For residents this included, the number of transit routes and their scheduling/frequency, time limits on transit transfers, as well as the time-consuming nature of transit to meet multiple needs at separate locations (trip chaining, page 20). The temporal dimension was included frequently in response to questions 7, 12 and 14 (Appendix D and Appendix E).

Social Dimension: The social dimension includes issues of crowding on the transit system, types of services and supports accessed by shelter residents, and commentary on the transit system's impact on a sense of social inclusion. Social dimension comments were mostly in response to questions 4, 10, 13, 14 and 19 (Appendix D and Appendix E).

Financial Dimension: The financial dimension includes fare evasion, fines and collections as well as the cost of transit fares and/or discounted passes, and any free ticket programs available through the shelters. If punitive actions from the transit system emerged, impacting on resident access, it was with this aspect. The financial dimension frequently included comments from questions 4, 7, 12, 15 and 16 (Appendix D and Appendix E).

I present findings from the three individual cases below. I will use a number of quotes from the resident and staff interviews as a means of exemplifying the four dimensions I have identified from the high-level coding of interviews (Appendix G). Staff interviews provided additional information for each of the cases (Appendix H). After presenting the individual case results, I will do a cross-case comparison.

Case 1 Shelter North Surrey

These interviewees had the youngest average age amongst the three cases at 42 years old.[194] It was the only Case where the number of Aboriginal interviewees was similar to the percentage reported for the Surrey/Langley sub-region of the 2020 Homeless Count[195] (20%).

[194] I wasn't able to compare average ages with the 2020 Regional Homeless Count as only age group frequencies were reported, numbers of seniors and youth, but not average ages.

[195] The next regional homeless count conducted March, 2020, with results in June, 2020 at earliest

Residents of Case 1 used transit every day, and from Question 2 all 12 residents rated the SkyTrain as the most important form of transportation for them. Part of the geographic context for this answer is that only Case 1 residents are with walking distance of the Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction Office (welfare), the Dell and Central Surrey shopping malls, temporary employment agencies, City Centre branch of the public library, and the Gateway SkyTrain station.

Physical Dimension

The physical dimension of transit access was, for the most part, viewed positively from Case 1 shelter residents. The system was seen as extensive across the region. One resident said: “it works [it] covers the lower mainland.” For the most part, it was seen as reliable: “they don’t seem to break down, and are usually on time, not very often problems.” The location of accessing transit was not mentioned as an issue or barrier faced by the residents.

Residents spoke more about the physical aspect of the transit system than did staff. For example, a variety of route options was mentioned by two residents: “going to girlfriend’s house, and take a different route. One takes through Guildford and one takes you to court house at #10 and King George.” There wasn’t a specific staff comment related to the physical accessibility of transit. No residents of Case 1 mentioned using a bicycle as part of their journey to access transit or other services.

Temporal Dimension

The temporal aspect focused on difficulties people have with transit scheduling and any impacts on timing of appointments, work and/or other commitments. Five of the 12 respondents identified missing busses because of rush hour crowding as the most significant temporal issue.

In some instances, timing problems were more of an inconvenience, and a bus pass ameliorated the situation (as the resident didn't need to worry about a 1 ½ hour transfer expiring). Some residents, for example those working in construction, did not have the time-sovereignty to adjust the time of their trip to avoid rush hour crowding. As one resident said:

> Overcrowding, I missed busses because they are full, which is a problem for getting to work, and when you pay that kind of money it should be dependable.

For temporal access after school was also identified as an issue. However, it was not as difficult to avoid, as no one I interviewed had childcare responsibilities requiring travel during those hours. One resident commented: "Crowding, so need to time my trip, so I miss rush hour and also after school time."

Case 1 residents did not mention specific fare transfer issues. Those residents traveling long distance across the region started those journeys on the SkyTrain with trains running every five minutes. Lack of concern was either due to immediate access to a SkyTrain station and partly as a result of having a discounted monthly pass (provincial senior/disability pass program) which makes transfers moot.

Social Dimension

Within the social dimension residents referred to both the experience of being on the bus and/or SkyTrain and access to support. Three residents were positive about transit impact on their social situation. One resident said: "[I] use it to get to appointments I would never get to otherwise. It's useful to see people you need to." Another said: "Helped me get to work." Another resident described a trip which exhibited a sense of freedom.

> I was going to White Rock for the first time. It took about an hour, because we had to take two busses. We had a nice day, it was really nice. I couldn't take a barbeque so we had to buy our own food, and wound up paying $35 for two fish and chips. Bus took a bit longer to get back

The comment in the quote below, regarding a resident's brother was unique. No other resident at Case 1 mentioned family assistance of any sort.

> In to New West, I had an appointment and, it's confusing in New West, because one train if you don't look at it close, one goes to Surrey and one goes to Coquitlam. I got on the wrong train and wound up in Coquitlam. Then I had to wait and retrace my steps back to New West. But because I have a pass, didn't have any transfer problem. Brother pays for all my bills, like the yearly bus pass.

Depending on the time of day the bus was described as overcrowded and unpleasant, and residents mentioned crowding as a stress factor. One resident said: "Noisy – both the bus and the people. People talking loudly because the bus is noisy and you hear a lot going on." Another said: "Judged – I feel out of place on the bus sometimes." Both Case 1 staff mentioned the impact of stigmatization with reduced access to services and missing appointments and "further isolation".

The TransLink system received mixed reviews in terms of its social dimension regarding customer support, with transit schedule information and with routes. One resident felt the customer service system was: "Helpful – to get where I need to go, helpful information-wise. I ask the driver where to go and how to get there and he'll know." Another said: "When I call 953-3333 – the times are just [an] estimate and the bus shows up 10 minutes early." Specific positive comments on transit assistance related more to face to face interactions. With phone-in assistance residents were dependent on either calling from the shelter and getting to the transit stop on time, or having a phone of their own. Everyone under 50 had a mobile phone, some over 50 did not. Staff did not make comments on bus information and schedules.

Financial Dimension

The financial aspect was important in Case 1. The Case 1 population was on average younger (42 years old), and only one person had a discounted annual transit pass. Fines for non-payment of transit fares were reported frequently at this shelter. Four of 12 residents interviewed reported unpaid fines. There were residents at this shelter who wanted to re-new their drivers' licenses but couldn't. The province's South Coast Transportation Authority Act, outlines non-renewals as an enforcement mechanism for unpaid fines. So they were not only aware of their fines but also the total amount owing.

There were two residents who said they had more than $900 in unpaid transit fines. One resident said: “Transit fines, two years ago, went to renew my insurance and they said you can’t renew because you didn’t pay $900 in fines.” This issue was recognized by staff and summarized in this comment:

> Clients cannot get where they need to go or otherwise have to risk fines and interactions with law enforcement in order to do so. If they have fines, it can impact their credit rating and ability to renew a driver's license

Four of the residents interviewed did not know if they had any transit fines. They had not recently tried to renew either their car insurance or their driver’s license and so perhaps this might have been the reason they were unaware if they had an outstanding fines, or the total amount owing.

Case 2 (Newton/Surrey)

With Case 2 there were two residents who relied on scooters as part of their transit journey. Residents were on average 54 years old, ranging from 28 to 69 (Table 6 page 184). No one identified as Aboriginal. One person identified as South Asian, which is the most numerous non-white ethnicity in the local community.

The geography of Case 2 shelter is typically suburban: long blocks (1/2 kilometre to the nearest intersection), six lane wide busy street, a 60km/hour speed limit zone, for north bound travel a 1kilometre distance to the bus stop with a limited choice of routes (two north bound and two south bound).

Physical Dimension

With the physical dimension of the system, Case 2 residents spoke of the maintenance of the bus fleet and the location of bus stops. One resident said: “It works – it’s well maintained, very few busses are broken down and if there is they’re on it fast.”

In terms of the spatial context of transit, if a resident wants to travel north they need to cross King George Boulevard. There are six lanes of traffic, with an additional seventh lane (shared north/south for turning) in the middle of the street, with the nearest pedestrian crossing at 64th Ave, some 400 metres south. One resident explained:

> I went to 108/104 to go to the Ministry Office. Took the bus along King George. It took 20 minutes. Ran across six lanes of traffic to get to the bus stop.

There were two alternative routes to the nearest north bound bus stop described to me: walking half a kilometre south to the pedestrian crosswalk at 64th Ave, crossing King George Boulevard and from there walking one half of a kilometre back north to the bus stop (total distance 1+ kilometre); or taking the bus southbound to 62nd, and using the pedestrian crossing of King George Boulevard to get to the bus stop for the north bound bus.

The physical distance to the bus stop was an important barrier. An older resident with a physical disability said: “Distance to the bus stop across the street. When you’re not as mobile as everyone else, it’s a problem getting to the bus, not on the bus, to the bus. Some bus drivers can be insensitive, and they don’t want to use the lift to get off the bus.”

One resident, whose motorized scooter was too large for the bus, and could not get to the bus stop by walker, combined a taxi trip[196] to the Newton Bus Exchange (six blocks north), then caught a bus from there to a Tim Horton's at the King's Cross Shopping Mall. The purpose of the trip was to use the free Wi-Fi (the shelter does not offer public Wi-Fi for residents) to conduct a housing search on-line.

Another resident noted for him: "Coverage – you can get to pretty well anywhere you want" and another resident said "Destination – every place has a bus stop." When asked the best thing about transit, six of 12 interviewees immediately said – "it's there." When asked what that meant, they talked about dependability and how it was a necessary (if not always optimal) choice. They needed it and it was there.

Temporal Dimension

Residents at Case 2 had clear opinions on the bus system: when the busses would be crowded, when drivers had their shift changes; how the routes were designed to serve commuters traveling to a SkyTrain connection. As one respondent said:

> Its sucks, I don't know what going on at peak hours, they don't have enough busses during peak periods, it's a busy route ... it goes from White Rock to Surrey Central. Afternoon peak hours 3:30pm – busses say 'Not in Service' for shift change, heading down to the depot on the outside lane – the depot is down by 132 St. and 76 Ave.

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196 With the *FareSaver* program, people with disabilities can access taxi services at the same price as a transit fare.

Reflecting on crowding a resident said: "[It's] fast – as long as it connects with the next bus or SkyTrain its fast, but leave at least a ½ hour early just in case." Still another said: "Convenient, bus comes every 10 minutes. This morning drove past, was full." The temporal dimension residents spoke of was not specifically about the scheduling of nesses but crowding and how overcrowding impacted on their ability to depend on the bus schedule. Residents needed to leave extra time to spare, to factor in full busses driving past.

For the resident relying on a transfer, instead of a monthly pass, this posed a problem with accessing the SkyTrain. Transfers are good for 1 ½ hours only. The ticket gates at stations are not always staffed, and residents might not have the opportunity to ask for staff assistance, and perhaps permission, to access the gate without the fare.[197]

There were comments from three residents about commuter issues. However, there were no comments which described the bus service as focused on local community needs in the design of routes and the schedules transit used.

> When it comes to planning routes, the people doing the planning don't ride the bus[198]. Because there are a lot of areas with excellent bus service but no one takes the bus. 152 bus over to north east of the freeway. When the trailer park was there you'd have to walk 5 blocks to get to a stop. Now bus service is set up for kids to get to school

[197] I was surprised that residents were unaware that the fare gates could be forced open with 85 pounds of pressure due to fire regulations for exits.

[198] Three of the four Transit Planners that worked with the Metro Vancouver Homeless Transit Plan Committee are regular transit users.

The time it took to look for housing using transit was expressed by one of the interviewees: “Spending more time looking for a place rather than with my family or friends.” Four Case 2 residents, when speaking of their destinations, focussed on local community locations including the welfare office, mall, friends and classes. Residents perceived the transit system as focussed on regional commuter needs, given the comments about bus routes and schedules and SkyTrain connections.

Social Dimension

Residents at Case 2 spoke about crowding on transit and how it made them feel, with both positive and negative expressions. A resident described a negative impact: “Hate crowded busses, get real agitated and need to get off. I have ADD and can’t stand being packed in like a sardine.” Another resident described a positive impact: “Crowded, when carrying a bunch of groceries, really appreciate being given a seat.” Being noticed and considered produced positive feelings about transit.

Case 2 residents appreciated bus drivers letting them ride without a fare and the drivers’ ability to manage difficult behaviors. One resident described his experience: “The bus drivers will let people get on without embarrassing the shit out of them, and help people.” Another resident was also positive on experiences with drivers: “most bus drivers are very courteous.” At Case 2 social support (classes, shopping, personal trips) was mentioned more often than appointments with professionals or for work. A disabled resident told me:

> I might lose some more weight … I put on 100 pounds in last two years, since my scooter was stolen. I go to community classes. I like to go places and sketch. Makes life difficult, when you can't go and do what you want to do, when you want to do it.

Another resident glowed in his description of transit as a means of traveling: "I play flamenco [guitar], I think of myself as a gypsy, being mobile is who I am, I've been traveling all my life."

The same resident described another trip:

> I took a cab to the Newton Bus Loop. 96B bus to Surrey Central. Then SkyTrain to Lucky Mart at the Del Plaza for bbq pork and rice. At Newton Bus Loop pulled out guitar and played Bruce Springsteen's *Fire* acoustically. Took me 40 minutes round trip.

These descriptions spoke to the role of transit in terms of social inclusion. There were times when the bus trip, for two residents in particular, had more than a mediating role. It was the trip itself, not only the destination that was valued for a broader sense of inclusion.

Financial Dimension

The financial aspect for Case 2 residents concerned the transit fare cost, for people without passes, and did not concern fines. TransLink's fare structure and fare payment hardware can have bus riders paying more than SkyTrain passengers. To travel from Surrey to Vancouver is a three-zone trip. A round trip would require purchasing either a day pass ($10.50) or two three-zone fares ($11.50). A day pass can be purchased at a SkyTrain Station but not on a bus. This discrepancy increases the cost for people who start a three-zone trip on a bus before transferring to SkyTrain, the situation for Case 2 residents. The increased cost disproportionately impacts people in extreme poverty. One resident, working in construction in Vancouver, described a daily trip to work:

> Made me broke paying all the bus fare, too high … need to make the passes longer and get rid of zones. Purpose was for work, south Marine Drive station, had to go one block from there for work. Had to take bus to Surrey Central (#321), then SkyTrain to Waterfront, then Canada Line to Southeast Marine station, then I called TransLink for directions to the job site … and they looked it up for me! Took 1 hour 40 minutes there, and 2 hour 45 minutes on the way back. Traffic for the #321 bus, coming back, was slower. Paid transfer fare $11 dollars each day.[199] Can't buy the $9.50 day pass on the bus, so wind up paying fare on bus, and then can't upgrade fare to day pass at SkyTrain Station.

In addition to the cost increase, the day pass also provides greater flexibility as there is no one and a half hour transfer time limit involved.

In denser urban neighbourhoods, such as the West End neighbourhood in Vancouver, apartment managers will often list vacancies with a lawn sign and telephone number, rather than post on-line due the overwhelming number of responses. In low density neighbourhoods, such as Newton in Surrey, on-line listings (such as on-line platforms such as Craigslist or Kijiji) are more typical.[200] The resident with a disability described this journey to utilize Wi-Fi service for her housing search, because she could not afford a data plan.

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[199] July 1, 2019 the Day Pass cost increased to 10.50 and a return trip of 3-zones costs $11.50 on TransLink system

[200] Discussion with shelter workers at Case 2

> The #321, on the other side of the street. I took bus down [south from the shelter] to the intersection, and then went across street at 64th Ave to get to the bus stop. To go to the Surrey Centre Mall Tim Horton's, took a cab from the bus stop to Tim Horton's. I needed to use the Wi-Fi at Tim Horton's.

The shelter did not have Wi-Fi service for residents to conduct a housing search, due to concerns with 'policing' use of Wi-Fi amongst residents. For this resident transit access was a means to compensate for the lack of a mobile phone data plan.

Residents who had a monthly discounted transit pass (either low-income senior or disability) but had lost it raised the issue of fines for traveling without their pass. Three residents reported this situation. One resident said: "Lost my bus pass, I lost it a few times. I didn't know you could get a replacement right away, I've got fines because of it." The resident had been told there was no immediate way for transit staff to determine if a person had a disability/senior's annual transit pass. The residents were unaware of any appeal process for not showing their transit pass when asked by transit security or transit police.

Case 3 Surrey South

The average age of residents at Case 3 was 56.5 years, ranging from 41 to 71 years old. One resident had been homeless for four years. No one had been homeless for less than three months. Three of the residents interviewed were women, similar to the sub-regional figures for Surrey/Langley from 2020 regional homeless count. One person identified as Metis.

Physical Dimension

The dominant physical aspect of transit for residents of Case 3 shelter was the distance to bus stops. As the crow flies, the bus stop almost one kilometre north of the shelter, but that distance required cutting across three lines of railway tracks, climbing through a fence on the other side, going across the parking lot of an industrial park and then a further three blocks to the Number 10 Highway.

The other route to the bus stop is to walk west on Colebrook Road for ½ kilometre, then south on 176 St. for another ½ kilometre, then cross over the six-lane overpass for 1 kilometre, up to Number 10 Highway and finally across 10 lanes of highway traffic to the bus stop (total of 2.1+ kilometres).

Getting to the bus stop was a complicated journey in and of itself, as described by one resident:

> A stop closer to here would be a bonus. With the bike I need to cross the tracks close to the overpass. And the area where you can take your bike through, that's where they put logs down. There were cement barricades … you could go around them … but now there are logs that block it, and have to lift bike over the barricade.

Interviewees expressed concern not only about the distance but also safety concerns about permission to cut across three rail lines and potential ticketing from Canadian National Railroad (CNR). No one reported having been ticketed by CNR, the owner operator of the haulage rail route, but they did mention having heard it was possible the

CNR would fine people if they were caught cutting across the tracks.[201] Four residents said they used bicycles as a means to access the bus stop, including a 66-year-old woman, new to biking for the single reason of getting to the bus.

Temporal Dimension

The temporal dimension was front and centre with residents of Case 3 shelter. This was a group of residents who had a very detailed knowledge of the bus routes. Residents in Case 3 shelter had detailed knowledge of all local bus routes, how and where they connect and alternative transfers which they had worked out amongst themselves. Morning and evening service was raised in particular. With the evening service, residents had to be back for the shelter curfew of 10pm, and the last bus from the Newton Exchange left at 9:20pm. In the morning, the concern was with early morning rush hour crowding and not being able to get on the bus.

> White Rock bus #320 – has a different spot in downtown Cloverdale. Faster to walk to the #342 bus stop. Get across Highway 10 really quickly, and then switch to #345 White Rock/King George bus that is very fast, however, the #342 shows up two minutes after the #345 leaves, for most part. Connecting bus to get to King George, the #342 – is the only way to get to SkyTrain. 8am it was standing room only, with a sign "bus full" on it.

[201] Since the time of the interviews the Case 3 shelter has changed its policy about crossing the railway tracks at the Case 3 shelter. As of the week of June 3, 2019 Case 3 staff no longer terminate the residency of a shelter resident if they cut across the railway tracks. Cutting across the railway tracks cuts the distance to the bus stop in half. The reason for the rule change was that the shelter management decided to use the same rationale for the railway tracks as for substance use. On-site behavior is enforced, for example, no substance use. But off-site behavior is not enforced, and the railway tracks are off-site (across the street).

Four of the 12 residents seemed quite agitated about busses being on schedule and hoping they were not already full (during morning commute hours) when they got to the bus stop.

The temporal aspect of transit concerned both the schedule of busses and the amount of time it takes to get to the bus stop. Every resident at Case 3 mentioned the time to get to the bus stop, depending on mobility and age, which ranged from 20-35 minutes, except for the residents who had bikes; 40% of residents used their bikes as part of their everyday transportation needs. One resident said: “it’s a full day just to get to the bus stop, with a car you can do multiple things during the day, on the bus, back and forth to the welfare office on cheque issue … it’s a full day.” Case 3 shelter interviewees mentioned discussions amongst residents on alternate routes options and times (ones which TransLink information had not worked out and suggested).

Two newly homeless residents (one and three months) outlined trips to distant storage lockers, one in North Surrey and the other in Burnaby.

> The #345 doesn’t run on the weekend. I got on, at the Edmonds SkyTrain [location of the storage locker], got to the Surrey Central station and got on the #342 in order to get to the #502, because hoping to beat the #320 to 152 St. and the Fraser Highway [intersection]. Get to King George Station, get on the #502, it leaves, get off at Fraser Highway at 152 St., and I didn’t beat the #320, waited 42 minutes for the bus. When bus finally came the transfer was expired. Not only did it take 2 hours to get home, but also had to ask bus driver to let me on the bus. I couldn’t do the complete trip in that time. I got the transfer from the shelter for the trip.
>
> Storage locker near Surrey Central. Forgot it was Saturday and there is a different schedule. Leaving from Surrey Central at 8:15pm got there at 8pm and different schedule. Bus left just before 8pm. Had to wait almost an hour for the next bus. I

> had to be back at the shelter by 10pm for curfew. If going to be late you can phone, don't have to be here physically by 10pm, need to check in and say when you will be back by 10pm.

The temporal concern raised by both residents was the length of time a trip with multiple connections took, and not being able to complete the trip within the 1 ½ hour window of a fare transfer.[202] Both residents relied on free tickets provided by the shelter staff as they did not qualify for a transit pass.

Social Dimension

The social dimension of transit did not emerge as a focus for residents of Case 3 shelter. Two people commented on being able to get tasks done, that transit access served as an opportunity and as a connection. One staff member mentioned not being able to access transit as "part of the poverty trap."

Financial Dimension

The financial aspect was mentioned by three residents, one person regarding fines and the others on the expense of the transit fares. The transit fare issue did allow for some agency on the part of residents. In interactions with the bus driver they could, and did, ask to ride without paying: "gets you where you need to go and if you don't have money the bus drivers for the most part are accommodating about that, a wink and a transfer."

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[202] Metro King County Transit (Seattle) and Calgary Transit have two-hour transfer periods. At Phase 1 Community Consultation, April, 2018, conducted by TransLink as part of their fare review process, transfer times of two hours was identified as important.

For the resident who described a concern with fines, it wasn't focussed on transit fare fines. He had motor vehicle fines in addition to transit fines. "Seat belt fines, two sky train fines, 3 – 24-hour suspensions. There's a $1000 defensive driving course I'd have to take before my license's renewed." He was clearer on the vehicle fines, as it was employment related for him, and the transit fines were not.

Staff commented on the financial dimension in this way: "as an agency, we are forced to pick and choose who we give tickets to and how to make a limited budget last." Another staff member described previous choices residents had to make due to financial poverty: "some people on disability would forfeit the bus pass subsidy for money for food and shelter." This comment was related to a provincial policy change, since rescinded, where recipients of disability welfare could opt to give up their transit pass, and have an 'extra' $56 added to their monthly support cheque.

Cross-Case Analysis

For the cross-case analysis I will use a matrix to demonstrate the high-level coding that emerged from the interviews at the three case studies. Dimensions are on the vertical axis and cases are along the horizontal axis (see Table 5, page 177).

These four dimensions are not discrete categories. There are times when one statement may have been coded more than once, and is reflected in more than one dimension. For example, the physical dimension included comments about the physical accessibility of the bus, the location of bus stop, and personal mobility. The bus stop location was also mentioned with the temporal dimension. Why? There is both the distance of the bus stop, as well as the length of time it takes to get there. The same bus stop may take longer to get to depending on the personal mobility and/or age of the resident I interviewed.

Table 5 Cross-Case Analysis: Responses Coded for Shelter Residents

	Case1	**Case 2**	**Case 3**
Physical Dimension	• Bus connections	• Bus stop distance • Difficulty of route to bus stop • Bus maintenance • Connection	• Bus stop distance • Difficulty of route to bus stop
Temporal Dimension	• Missed busses • Transfers	• Bus schedule • Transfers running out during trip • Bike and walking • Efficiency	• Bus schedule • Missed busses • Transfers running out during trip • Bike and walking • Not dependable
Social Dimension	• Crowded • Interaction with transit staff • Social connection	• Stigma • Independence • Social connections • Interaction with transit staff	• Stigma • Isolation • Safety • Interaction with other residents
Financial Dimension	• Transit fines • Cost of transit fare • Staff priorities	• Cost of transit fare • Hardware issue bus more expensive than SkyTrain	• Cost of transit fare

The responses from the residents at Case 1 aligned more with staff comments, with their emphasis on the financial and social dimensions, than did the responses from residents at Case 2 and Case 3.

Physical Dimension

Case 1 is located in a neighbourhood much better served by transit compared to Case 2 and Case 3 – better in terms of the number of bus stops located close to the shelter, the number of different bus routes to choose from, and the proximity to the Gateway SkyTrain Station (allowing regional-wide transit access). Four residents of Case 3 described bike rides as part of their strategy of getting to a bus stop. At Case 1 staff and residents' views diverged with the physical dimension. Staff views were negative, while Case 1 residents' views were positive.

The poorer the transit service, the more residents needed to know specific information about the system they were using. Case 1 residents were generally positive about transit access, but were not specific at all in terms of describing the route to the bus stop or where particular routes would take them. Case 2 residents focussed on two bus routes, one traveling north to the Surrey Central SkyTrain or a mall, and the same bus traveling south to the City of White Rock. The comments made were specific and related to personal experiences. Case 3 residents expressed even more detailed knowledge of multiple bus routes and transfer points, how they connected and how often they ran. For Case 3 residents there was a web of transit routes they needed to know about in order to navigate their journeys. Four residents described detailed routes to locations, naming individual bus routes, labeling them with specific times, and where, when and how they connected. Two residents offered several alternative routes to be taken.

The physical dimension was very prevalent with residents interviewed at the Case 2 shelter. The distance to the bus stop could also lead to a discussion of timing and scheduling of busses (temporal dimension) about the number of busses that are on the King George Boulevard route that are full, or pass by with 'not in service'. This was a particular concern with north bound busses just before rush hour, probably related to commuter traffic from the SkyTrain Stations.

The physical dimension was additionally expressed at Case 2 by being able to not only get to the bus but also with getting on the bus. Case 2 residents were most likely to describe personal physical issues with transit access. At Case 2 two interview subjects used scooters, a third resident had a walker and a fourth resident had a cane[203]. There were many more comments about the actual maintenance and cleanliness of the bus amongst Case 2 residents.

Temporal Dimension

Case 3 residents were the most concerned with the temporal dimension. Case 3 is the most geographically isolated shelter. Major concerns focussed on the length of time it took to get to the bus stop, and the scheduling of busses and whether or not the busses would be full. Busses were referred to by not only the route number but also the time of the bus, for example the 7:42am bus. This neighbourhood had the fewest bus routes, with the most infrequent service. Two residents at Case 3 also mentioned not being able to get

[203] In terms of sampling bias, I was interviewing during the day, and may have inadvertently biased against younger men, working, most likely in construction.

back to the shelter at night before curfew, because the busses stopped running. The latest transit service to Case 3 was a 9:20pm bus from the Newton Exchange. No one at Case 2 or Case 1 mentioned this as an issue. The SkyTrain near Case 1 runs until 1:12am.

At both Case 1 and Case 2 a resident could see a bus stop from the shelter even if it was, for Case 2 residents, somewhat difficult to get to. This was not the situation for Case 3 residents.

Social Dimension

The shelter population was older in Case 2 and Case 3 than Case 1. The social dimension did not emerge from the comments made by Case 1 residents. Case 3 residents were very much on personal journeys of a task-oriented nature, getting to their storage locker, or an appointment. The social dimension, in terms of community connections and socialization, was most important for Case 2 residents. This was particularly the case for older residents who were longer term shelter residents, with discounted annual transit passes. They had found places they liked to ‘hang out’ and had the ability to get there with their transit passes. Three older residents mentioned three months of shelter residence or longer.

Financial Dimension

The financial dimension of transit use emerged most significantly with residents interviewed at Case 1 shelter. These residents were younger and did not have discounted annual transit passes. However, it was the cost of fines that was the financial concern for Case 1 residents. These comments were consistent amongst both residents and staff at the Case 1 shelter.

The staff I spoke with said they had to prioritize certain appointment needs over other ones, due to the limited number of free transit fare tickets (financial dimension) they were able to distribute to residents. When a limited resource (free transit tickets) are being rationed, a different sense of what needs are most important and prioritized becomes significant. This can be seen as an example of structural violence, where all trips are of value, but staff is limited to rationing a needed resource.

No one at Case 2 or Case 3 spoke of transit fines as a primary concern. They may have had fines, but across all three cases residents only mentioned fines in relation to something else they wanted to do, such as renew a driver's license or car insurance. Not the fine itself, but the impediment it presented; an example of structural violence. Case 2 residents didn't mention driving, and Case 3 residents had opted for bicycles, with insurance requirements or cost, as part of their transportation strategy.

The impact of the financial dimension on transit access was more of a concern for Case 1 residents, than for residents at Case 2 and Case 3.

Summary of Findings

Residents raised the same dimensions as shelter staff, but the emphasis and details were different. While the financial and social aspects of transit remained important amongst residents, there was also much more detail provided about the physical and temporal dimensions of transit access. The physical dimension concerned, most frequently, the geography of the transit system and the distance and/or inaccessibility of bus stops.

I found there was a consistency amongst the six staff interviews in terms of dimensions identified and emphasis amongst the dimensions. Case 2 and Case 3 are operated by the same non-profit society and share staff, between the two locations. This may have affected the consistency of responses in terms of the dimensions and the emphasis.

An observation I think is significant with the staff interviews is that competence (discussed on page 23), for example skills and abilities with schedule and routes, did not get mentioned as an issue. I suspect, rather than being a non-issue from the perspective of staff, the other dimensions were just more dominant in the shorter survey completed with staff.

As well, given the level of empathy of staff they may not have focussed on transit access issues that could be blamed (for example, not knowing the bus schedule) on shelter residents. Perhaps, I hope, there was an innate recognition amongst the shelter staff who I interviewed, of a structural violence existing for residents with the transit system.

The ranked order of the dimensions amongst the residents in Case 2 and Case 3, was an unanticipated finding. Reflecting back on the interviews before the analysis, when I first thought about my data collection, before coding, I expected a different result than what emerged with the final analysis of the coded transcripts. My expectation was people would be most concerned about fares and fines. While they did speak of those issues, in addition, and with significantly more detail, they spoke of the physical and temporal dimensions of transit, accessing bus stops and managing schedules and connections. These were the dimensions which they had the least individual agency with. This different emphasis on dimensions for Case 2 and Case 3 residents was the most significant divergence from my initial assumptions and with the interviews done with staff.

Chapter 8 – Case Study Discussion

In this chapter I will present my analysis and conceptualizations from this study. I will reference the literature related to suburban homelessness transit access, as well as my review of policy initiatives at the regional and provincial levels regarding public transportation and homelessness.

Table 6 below compares the demographic data on age group, gender and Aboriginal status between the information gathered through the 2020 Metro Vancouver Regional Homeless Count (Surrey sub-region) and the three case study shelters. The resident profile of Case 1 was most similar to the 2020 Homeless Count data.

Table 6 Shelter Resident Demographics vs Regional Homeless Count 2020

Demographic Variable	**Case 1**	**Case 2**	**Case 3**	**2020 Count Surrey Sub-region**
Age: Seniors 55+	27%	56%	66%	25%
Age: Adult 19-54	73%	44%	33%	73%
Aboriginal	27%	0%	11%	20%
Gender	16% Female 84% Male	16% Female 84% Male	33% Female 66% Male	30% Female 69% Male 1% Trans

A larger percentage of residents were over the age of 55 at both Case 2 and Case 3, compared to the Homeless Count statistics. The average age at Case 3 was 57 years old and at Case 2 54 years old. Case 1 residents were younger with an average of 42 years old. Potential biases with an older sample compared to the population in general include, an increased percentage of people with annual transit passes (low-income seniors 65+) and decreased mobility (disability pass). I cannot compare transit pass access with regional homeless count information as this was not a question in that survey. No transit related information was asked in the regional homeless count.

Case 3 had a slightly higher percentage of female residents than the regional count, while both Case 2 and Case 1 were about half of the sub-regional percentage. The regional homeless count had about 2% of the total homeless population self-identify as non-binary for gender. I did not have anyone who identified as non-binary for this research.

With Aboriginal representation the sample interviewed at Case 1 mirrored the sub-regional percentage. The other two shelters had a much lower Aboriginal representation. Case 2 did have 12% of the sample identify as South Asian, which reflected the immediate community around the shelter.

Within the suburban context of this research, the accessibility of the transit system was not solely focussed on the bus. Several residents said the busses were 100% physically accessible with a preference for the kneeling busses. The accessibility focus was on the geography of the transit system, bus stops in particular. The distance to the bus stop, between bus stops and the need to make numerous transfers, was mentioned more frequently as a barrier to the transit system, than was the cost. This was particularly true with residents at Case 2 and Case 3 that provided housing for older residents in communities less well served by transit. In Case 2 and 3 people began their journey on the bus, which runs less frequently with less capacity than does the SkyTrain.

My understanding of this prioritizing is that with the temporal and spatial dimensions, residents are confronted with the most practical day-to-day issues in order to use transit. With the financial and social dimensions perhaps more ‘conceptual’ aspects of transit access. In practice, the bus stop is where the bus stop is, it’s a fixed factor. Personal agency doesn’t change that physically. The bus schedule has the bus arriving at a fixed time. Personal agency won’t change the frequency of busses or the time duration of a trip with multiple transfers. This is a fixed factor as well. These dimensions fit with resilience as described by Coe & Jordhus-Lier (2010). These dimensions have the least interaction with transit staff. They are the two most impersonal of the four dimensions identified. A person needs to get to the bus stop and needs to get there on time.

Financially, everyone without an annual discounted transit pass could be faced with asking the driver if they could ride for free. There was some level of personal contact between resident and driver and there were increased options for personal agency. Agency is relational (Coe & Jordhus-Lier, 2010) and the social and financial dimensions are relational in a way that the physical and temporal dimensions are not. This did not provide a right to access, there was mixed response from drivers, but it did provide ‘wiggle room’ for personal agency. This overlaps with the social dimension, asking for permission to board for free, potentially exposes the residents to negative comments from other passengers. These dimensions open the possibilities for residents reworking conditions of existence. While not a right to access it does ‘allow’ for personal agency which does provide some personal wiggle room to effect the situation.

The difference in individual control with the basic day to day dimensions of space and time and more conceptualized social and financial dimensions may, in reality be slim distinctions. The difference I have parsed between these practical and conceptual understandings has to do with a certain ‘wiggle room’ for personal agency. Coe & Jordhus-Lier[204] in their description of agency refer to ‘wiggle room’ to make a distinction between the levels of constraint of ‘resilience’ and ‘reworking’. They describe resilience as “small acts of getting by that help individuals and groups cope with everyday realities” (Coe & Jordhus-Lier, 2010, page 215). Reworking is described as an “intermediate category that reflects people’s efforts to materially improve their conditions of existence” (Coe & Jordhus-Lier, 2010, page 15).

Over-coming the constraints of space to access informal networks for work, leisure, friendship and family help, can reduce social exclusion. The financial and social dimensions of transit access may reflect the opportunity staff has for personal agency with empathy. The financial dimension is the one dimension staff can affect directly with the distribution of free transit tickets through the *Access Transit* program. The social dimension can be affected by an empathic response from staff, with the demonstrated interest staff has in being kind to residents.

[204] Neil Coe & David Jordhus-Lier (2010), Constrained Agency, Revaluating the Geographies of Labour page 215.

Why is there more recognition from staff on the financial and social dimensions? Staff spoke of how residents needed to put themselves in uncomfortable positions to exercise personal agency with these two dimensions. However, I think it might more indicate a lack of appreciation of the completely practical aspects of transit access, the dimensions less impacted by residents' individual agency – the physical organization of the system and the scheduling of routes and the frequency of busses.

As discussed in the literature review, transportation-related social exclusion occurs at different levels simultaneously, including:

- Individual, for example seniors and people with disabilities, generally have fewer private transportation options with an increased reliance on public services;
- Local area (urban structure), for example a lack of available or adequate public transportation, non-walkable neighbourhoods, a lack of affordable and appropriate housing, health and social services; and
- National and/or global, for example economic re-structuring of the labour market resulting in a dispersed low-wage service sector with poor transit availability (Lucas et al., 2012) can result in increased travel times and more complicated 'trip chaining'.

The role of transportation in terms of urban development has been recognized by the Metro Vancouver regional government with the harmonizing of transportation planning with long-range land use planning. Transit investments are seen as a driver to focus future regional growth patterns and minimize sprawl. The *Regional Growth Strategy*[205] (Metro Vancouver, 2016) identifies *Frequent Transit Networks*. These corridors focus future re-development and densification through transit capital and service investments. Re-development is to be focussed at SkyTrain stations (nodal development), and densification (secondary suites, laneway housing, four-plexes, row housing, low rise apartments) along Rapid Bus and prioritized B-Line express bus services. Transit service in Metro Vancouver has continued to expand in the neo-liberal era. However, transit service has not responded/adapted to address the suburbanization of poverty. Rather, it has had a focus on rail expansion and ridership goals, rather than coverage goals in impoverishing suburban communities.

Metro Vancouver Regional District planning staff has been studying the link between housing affordability and transportation, most recently with the *Transit Oriented Affordable Housing Study*.[206]. The impact of transportation on housing affordability is the focus of this report. The impact of transit on housing is being studied, however the reverse, the impact housing affordability has on transit dependent populations, has not been studied by Metro Vancouver and its research partners (BC Housing, VanCity Credit Union and the BC Non-Profit Housing Association). How is this different and why is it important?

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[205] http://www.metrovancouver.org/services/regional-planning/PlanningPublications/MapB1.pdf

[206] Received by the Metro Vancouver Board in April, 2019, http://www.metrovancouver.org/services/regional-planning/PlanningPublications/RPL_2019-Apr-5_AGE-StaffReport.PDF

First, the focus of the report is on policy tools to develop rental housing[207] around SkyTrain stations. The rationale outlined is that if people are close to transit, they will not need to spend as much of their income on a private vehicle. Therefore, there will be more disposable income available to spend on housing. Housing would not be cheaper. However it would be more affordable by reducing transportation expenditures allowing more household income to be dedicated to housing costs. In 2015 Metro Vancouver began to publish calculations on the combined cost of housing and transportation[208] across the region. Transportation included both car and transit related costs. Within the older urban core of Vancouver, Burnaby and New Westminster the cost ranged from $5,400 to $13,500, and in the Surrey/Langley area the range was much higher at $10,900 to $17,700.

These suburban communities, with significantly higher transportation costs, are the same communities becoming more impoverished with the shifting demographics demonstrated by Ley & Hulchanski2012. The cost of housing in Metro Vancouver has resulted in a drive to housing affordability. People have moved to the suburbs in search of more affordable market housing. The City of Surrey is home to 14% of the welfare case load in the Province of British Columbia. The Newton neighbourhood (where Case 2 is located) has the second lowest median income level in the region, after the Downtown Eastside (the location of the poorest postal code in Canada).

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[207] Affordability is defined in the report as 30% of $60,000 family income, or approximately $1,500 per month rent.

[208] http://www.metrovancouver.org/services/regional-planning/PlanningPublications/HousingAndTransportationCostBurden.pdf

Regional homeless counts have quantified the increasing number of people who are homeless in the suburbs. The impact this has on the transit system and the financial cost for transit dependent populations has not been a focus of study by TransLink and Metro Vancouver.

The recently released provincial poverty reduction plan, *TogetherBC: British Columbia's Poverty Reduction Strategy*, also does not consider transit service through a poverty lens.[209] For example, there is no mention of an income-based transit fare structure. The transportation section of the report presents two examples of improved transportation affordability; the elimination of vehicle tolls on the Port Mann Bridge, and additional capital expenditures on SkyTrain expansion.[210] The first example runs counter to the regional planning goal of focussing future growth on transit routes to avoid sprawl, by prioritizing car centred transportation. The second example generally benefits higher income transit users, and is an example of Jarrett's ridership focus, rather than an equity and social service concern with a coverage focus. This choice of priority relates to the issue of structural violence, as described by Marion Young (2013):

> Structural injustice occurs as a consequence of many individual and institutions acting to pursue their particular goals, for the most part within the limits of accepted rules and norms[211].

Young (2013) outlines a statement of John Rawl's "the subject of justice is the basic structure of society." She discusses and reformulates the statement with a rephrasing to

[209] As have other poverty reduction plans, for example Nova Scotia in 2018

[210] Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction, *TogetherBC*, page 55

[211] Iris Marion Young, Responsibility for Justice, page 52

"the subject of justice is structure."[212] In the urban morphology of Metro Vancouver an example of Young's "justice is structure" can be seen with transit infrastructure developed before neo-liberal policies reduced social investments. In Metro Vancouver the older cities of Vancouver, Burnaby and New Westminster have 37% of the region's population[213] and more than 70% of the region's SkyTrain stations. These SkyTrain stations are the service hubs for 85% of the bus routes.

In geography there is discussion of place and space, where place is understood to be a space made meaningful; place is pause while space is movement.[214] The de-housing process (Hulchanski, 2009) of the last 30 years has furthered the fragmentation of tenure forms within the housing system beyond owners and renters, to include an increasing number of people who are homelessness with no rights of tenure, no right to place. Given that shelters, are by their nature, are transitional housing, is the shelter more of a meaningless space than a place for homeless residents? Does a 'meaningless' transitory space have an impact on the ability of people experiencing homelessness to exercise agency? Coe & Jordhus (2010) describe a constraint on agency from the 'inherently geographic character' (Coe & Jordhus, 2010, page 225) of the fragmentation within the labour force (migrant workers/temporary jobs/outsourcing), creating obstacles for joint action. In this research the only non-individualized transit experience expressed was in Case 3 with a mention of information sharing on bus route connections. Homelessness as a temporary space likely impedes joint action on structural issues.

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[212] Young, *Responsibility for Justice*, page 44

[213] http://www.metrovancouver.org/services/regional-planning/data-statistics/census-bulletins/Pages/default.aspx

[214] Yi-Fu Tuan, Space and Place, The Perspective of Experience, page 54

Young describes structural violence as “not direct violence, but the echo of violence from the past effects of actions.” TransLink provides a service,[215] and in my work with the TWG TransLink representatives told us if there are particular sub-groups (homeless people) requiring a deeper subsidy it is the responsibility of some other service or agency[216] to cover the cost. This leaves a situation where people living in poverty need to seek out cheaper housing in neighbourhoods that are deficient in social infrastructure (Lo et al., 2015) while at the same time being more reliant on the service. Structural violence is normalized violence, with the objective structures representing the materialized effects of past actions.[217]

The homeless ‘problem’ for TransLink in Metro Vancouver, is, somewhat unique for Canadian and USA transit systems, as it primarily concerns homeless people being able to get around the region – a problem that speaks to TransLink’s’ purpose. It was noted in the National Academies of Science, Medicine and Engineering (NASME), *Transit Agency Practices in Interacting with People Who Are Homeless* (2016) report that transit and libraries both serve as public spaces to congregate during the day when shelters are closed, full or otherwise unavailable. The shelter system in Metro Vancouver provides a

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[215] Conversations with Ian Jarvis, CEO TransLink April, 2014, and Andrew McCurran, Manager, Planning, TransLink, October, 2016.

[216] This is not unique to TransLink, the financing for targeted discounts is provided through non-transit sources in other jurisdictions as well. For example in the City of Calgary, the grant of $10.5 million dollars provided by the Province of Alberta for three years (for the sliding scale discounted fares), is managed by the City of Calgary’s Social Services Department, rather than Calgary Transit directly, so as not to be seen as a subsidy from the transit system https://www.calgary.ca/SitePages/cocis/Scripts/SubCategory-FairEntry-Grid.aspx

[217] Lo et al in *Social Infrastructure and Vulnerability in the Suburbs*, p.11, describes how the suburbs are particularly susceptible to the impact of neo-liberalism, in that they lack the historic infrastructure that is found in central cities.

largely 24/7 service, with meals and supports. For TransLink complaints from other transit riders, homeless transit riders was not mentioned as a concern.

In this research I consider the relation of social cohesion and access to mobility through dependence on public transportation, and the impact of any private resources available either personally or through family and/or friends. It affects both, the quality of life of individuals and the equity, equality and cohesion of society as a whole.[218]

In hindsight there are questions I could have included that were not covered through the interview guide. In future, the first question I would ask is: "Tell me about getting on the bus." Focussing on the start of the journey, simplifies the issue and minimizes assumptions and values laid onto someone else's journey – where are you going and why? This is the first question from staff when providing a free transit fare through the *Access Transit* program. To me, this is consistent with a structural violence perspective, and shifting from 'personal responsibility to a structural responsibility', for a system like transit. Anther more specific but relevant question: "Do you have a Compass Card?" Important to ascertain if the $6 is a barrier and also to ask if people are aware of the 23% discount available to all transit users when they have uploaded stored value onto their Compass cards.

[218] PEACE Programs identified transportation as one of the five main barriers to providing support in the 2019 24-hour census of BC Society of Transition Houses' members: https://bcsth.ca/publications/peace-program-training-video/

The individual non-discounted e-card requires a $6 deposit. With this card a person can take advantage of a single fare discount of $2.40[219] per trip instead of $3.00. The $6 may create a barrier to accessing the only universally available discount for adults. In reviewing the interview transcripts no one mentioned a personal Compass Card or being able to take advantage of this discount, through adding stored value onto the electronic transit card. Residents commented on either, relying on individual tickets provided by the shelter staff, or asking bus drivers to let them on the bus without paying.

The social impacts of transportation can be significant, especially for already disadvantaged population groups, including those experiencing homelessness (Lucas and Jones, 2012). People with insufficient mobility may be unable to participate in the economic, political and social life of their community (Kenyon, Lyons & Rafferty, 2003). My research question was addressed in multiple ways. The first, and obvious, is that transit has an essential and important role for this sample of people. The other responses are more complex, and are not uniform amongst the people I interviewed, comments varied significantly depending on physical abilities. Urry & Sheller (2006) described three elements of mobility; access, competence and appropriation. Of these three elements, access and appropriation overlap the most with the discussion of the four dimensions I present in this research.

In this Chapter, I have discussed how the mediating role of transportation, as an essential means of accessing social services and support in suburban geographies, in particular, has

[219] As of July 1, 2019

not been embraced by any one provincial, regional or municipal government or agency. While there are numerous provincial and regional agencies whose ‘clients’ depend on transit for accessing services, there has not been any one single agency or level of government has taken responsibility for making the system more available to homeless residents.

Chapter 9 – Conclusions

I undertook this research because of the difficulty the homeless people I worked with were experiencing with transit. I wanted to better understand their experience with transit. I also wanted to document what I learned with the intention of informing policy advocacy to improve transit access and service for people who are homeless. Every staff member and resident I spoke with was engaged in this topic. Interviews were animated and full of details and specifics the person had thought about and worked through, long before I had asked them the question. This never felt like an academic exercise.

For people experiencing homelessness in Surrey, walking to supports is not as viable a transportation alternative, as it may be in the Downtown Eastside (DTES) neighbourhood in the downtown core of the City of Vancouver. For a resident of the Case 3 shelter in this research, the closest BC Employment and Assistance Office (welfare) in Surrey is a two hour and 39 minute walk, as estimated by Google maps. Many of the residents interviewed have physical or other disabilities that make walking long distances difficult. Transit plays a critical role in the lives of these suburban homeless shelter residents.

I have spoken with planners, municipal Councillors, homeless individuals, service providers, researchers, community advocates and Members of Parliament, over the last six years of working on this research project. I have interviewed transit planners from multiple jurisdictions, including municipal and regional planners and staff with provincial agencies involved with housing, homelessness and poverty reduction and with people experiencing homelessness themselves. I have spoken with staff at non-profit agencies both within the homeless sector as well as the broader social service sector in Vancouver, Calgary, Seattle and Montreal. I have interviewed staff and the residents of homeless shelters located in the City of Surrey. I have also reviewed academic and policy documents on homeless transit access. After a review of the literature on homeless shelters, transportation and social inclusion, the question I posed for this research was:

> What role does public transit have for suburban homeless shelter residents in Surrey trying to access housing, essential services and social supports?

From the literature review and my experience of working with people experiencing homelessness I resolved a useful and important set of objectives for this research were the following:

- Document the self-perceived transportation needs as expressed by residents in three suburban homeless shelters
- Document transportation needs of residents as perceived by staff
- Understand the nature of transportation barriers and/or aids, as they relate to housing, essential services and social supports for these suburban homeless shelter residents
- Understand and conceptualize the role of transit for this group of people as part of the process in accessing housing, essential services and social supports

- Understand the self-perceived benefit of improved transportation and mobility to this group of socially excluded people

My task was to use the spatial-fix understanding of Harvey to examine the lived experience of homeless shelter residents through the lens of structural violence. Social exclusion can leave people relying on the shelter system for temporary accommodation rather than friends or family, resulting in experiencing personal issues through an impersonal system. While building better shelters is important, building opportunities to access all of the wider sets of social infrastructure is essential. Social exclusion focuses not only on the individual experience of disadvantage but also on the associated economic and social outcomes of this condition (Lucas, 2012).

In reviewing the question and objectives, and after collecting and analyzing the data for this project, I have a number of conclusions. My conclusions are different to what I initially expected when posing my research question and undertaking interviews, although the conclusions are complementary to my pre-research assumptions.

My first conclusion, and perhaps an obvious statement, is that a different methodology can result in divergent data from the sampling of a similar population group. I have conducted two separate interviews with homeless shelter residents over the last five years. The first, in 2014 used a method of a one-page survey of short answer questions. The interviews conducted for this dissertation, used open-ended questions to allow for interviewee led topics to emerge; the coding of these transcriptions identified the dimensions central to the data analysis.

The results I obtained from the two sets of resident interviews were complementary but distinct. The data from the 2014 interviews confirmed a number of assumptions I had in developing the survey. The data from the research for this dissertation provided a more nuanced understanding of the priorities of homeless shelter residents, with reduced researcher bias in the data collected. The conclusion I have from this research is not only the conceptualization of physical, temporal, social support and financial dimensions of transit access for these residents, but also being able to rank them in importance. In the analysis of this data, I was able to move from counted data to ranked data. I do not have the full story, but I do have a more complete story.

The theoretical perspective of structural violence was a useful framework for the conceptualizing and presentation of prioritization of the physical and temporal dimensions and the social and financial dimensions that emerged from the high-level coding in data analysis. The prioritization of the dimensions helps understand the relative importance of impacts from the structural organization of the transit system. The transit system, as social infrastructure (Lo, et al., 2015), has not developed in consort with the de-housing process and suburbanization of poverty we have experienced since the 1990s with neo-liberal policies (Hulchanski, 2009).

Suburban homelessness is a by-product of our neo-liberal housing system (Hulchanski, 2009, page 4). This dissertation details specific aspects of transit system structure and how the geography of suburban homelessness impedes social inclusion. The real estate adage of the importance of ‘location, location, location’, is as true for homeless shelters as it is for other forms of housing within the housing continuum. Case 2 and Case 3 were located in what has become evident as difficult locations for transit access to non-shelter based resources and supports. This may be an example of malign planning neglect (Cloke et al., 2010) and the appeasement of NIMBYism concerns as a form of structural violence.

Lefebvre (Castells, 1983) distinguishes the spaces produced in a class divided society into social space and abstract space, identifying them as sites of conflict. The suburbanization of poverty (Ley & Lynch, 2012) is the result of escalating land values through the process of gentrification of inner-city neighbourhoods and an internationalized property market. This spatial fix can result in a conflict between the ‘abstract space’ of development and the ‘social space’ of low-income residents, sometimes resulting in homelessness.

Cultural/symbolic violence (Lyon-Callo &Brinn-Hyatt, 2003) can be depoliticizing (Farmer, 2004) with an acceptance of “how things are.” Recognizing homeless shelter residents as socially and politically situated subjects, with a re-politicizing of the homeless experience, supports a politic of agency.

Policy Recommendations

The Province of BC's Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction should incorporate the transportation needs of low-income residents into future policy and planning for both *TogetherBC*, the Poverty Reduction Strategy, and the Provincial Office for Homeless Coordination (which seeks to "coordinate actions across provincial and local government and community partners"), in relation to transit access policies and programs.

TransLink and Metro Vancouver Regional District should include specific language concerning poverty and complete communities, within the updated regional transportation strategy *Transport: 2050*. Proposals to add social housing and services for those with addiction and/or mental health issues to other Metro Vancouver neighborhoods are often met with NIMBYism.[220]

Michael Shier et al[221] (2007) state NIMBYism as "a phenomenon describing sometimes aggressive response by communities when members perceive a local development as a threat to their land values, way of life, or health and safety … While NIMBYism can be a positive manifestation of community solidarity … it also reveals significant economic and power disparities between community members." A 2012 poll of Metro Vancouver residents found nine out of 10 of those surveyed wanted the homeless to have access to

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[220] Ludvigsen, Mykle (Summer, 2005). *Not in My Backyard: Nimby alive and well in Vancouver* Visions. 2 (6) 15–16.

[221] Michael Shier et al (2007), *Conceptualizing Optimum Homeless Shelter Delivery*, page 67

services they need, but the majority (54%) also believed that "housing in their community should be for the people who can afford it."[222]

Program Recommendations

Shelter providers and BC Housing should consider the existing transportation infrastructure when developing future shelter facilities and work closely with local City Social Planning and Transportation Planning staff to assess ways municipalities may augment access to existing transit infrastructure (for example, this could include additional pedestrian control crossings or re-location of bus stops).

Research Recommendations

Future homeless counts should include transit related questions in the survey, including whether the person has a driver's license, a discounted bus pass, a Compass card (providing access to the only universally available discounted fare) or any outstanding fines.

Metro Vancouver Regional District should be encouraged to continue its research and policy work on integrating transportation and housing. An expansion of the research should consider not just transportation infrastructures' impact on housing affordability (transit-oriented development near SkyTrain stations and Frequent Transit Corridors) but

[222] Woo, Andrea (October, 2012). *NIMBYism based on 'fear of the unknown'*. The Globe and Mail. Toronto.

also, the impact housing affordability has on the ability of existing transit infrastructure and coverage goals with service to suburban communities.

The *Access Transit* program, funded by BC Housing and TransLink, has provided transit fare tickets to homeless shelter residents for three years. Each of the fare ticket booklets provided to shelters are number coded. Each of these transit tickets provided to residents are used by 'tapping in' and 'tapping out' at SkyTrain stations, and 'tap in' only with the busses. There is a wealth of data available that could be analyzed, completely anonymized, to look at the transit trips homeless shelter residents have taken over the last three years. This would be useful information for future planning and geographic location of future shelters.

Undertake an assessment of transit access of residents throughout the existing regional homeless shelter network based on the 18-point measurement tool developed by Delbosc and Currie (2011). This could provide a base line for current levels of mobility access for residents and pin point strengths and weakness of access that is available across the various communities in the Metro Vancouver region. As well, the research could provide the information needed to develop a mobility assessment tool on future sites proposed for homeless shelters and/or affordable housing developments more generally.

Summary

The City of Surrey is a community in transition, with an urban form that spans from a substantial amount of land protected within the Agricultural Land Reserve, to a defined urban core, identified and promoted in the Metro Vancouver Regional Growth Strategy (Metro Vancouver, 2016). The City of Surrey has seen a steady increase in the number of people who are homeless in shelters and/or on the street (Regional Homeless Count 2020). Homelessness can be looked at structurally and individually. In this research I have tried to do both. Listening and documenting individual experiences to animate a wider view of the effects created through neo-liberal political decisions. Political decisions have created the current homeless numbers, and the immobility that has emerged is a form of structural violence.

I met and interviewed ‘Emma,’ a senior woman with a disability, reliant on a scooter to get where she needs to go faced with divergent life choices due to an eviction. Emma’s situation is similar to that of ‘Sandy’ who Young (2013) described as a single mother faced with life divergent choices, due to a condominium conversion of her apartment. ‘Emma’ lost her apartment in North Surrey, in her case it was due to re-development.

‘Emma’ lives in a suburban shelter with no Wi-Fi availability to begin her search for available housing. ‘Emma’ cannot afford a data plan, for her mobile phone, on her disability pension. ‘Emma’s’ name is on the social housing wait list. Due to her age and income she does qualify for a transit pass. Those are individual circumstances.

The structural issues she faces? There has been no social housing unit available for her,[223] with a lengthy waiting list.[224] Her disability pension level means market housing provides limited options, in terms of finances and physically accessibility. The available units, close to the shelter, are mostly basement suites in non-transit serviced neighbourhoods. Viewing housing units identified is complicated. Her shelter is in a suburban neighbourhood where many streets have no sidewalks. To search for what housing may be available for her, she needs to rely on public transit services to access a Wi-Fi service. 'Emma' has managed with the financial and social dimensions of her accessibility, and the physical and temporal dimensions of her accessibility are a more significant challenge. The physical structure of the transit system, the location of the bus stop and a minimal network of routes, makes for an hour travel time for a four-kilometre journey.

In this research I have used Harvey's (2005) conception of spatial sorting as a means of understanding the suburbanization of poverty. This suburbanization of poverty has been described and mapped in the research of Ley & Lynch (2012). From the 1990s to 2020 the housing market has changed in Metro Vancouver. There is no longer a 23% vacancy rate in the SRO hotels that could serve as an informal shelter system for the temporarily unhoused. As general rent levels have increased there has been a filtering downward of tenants (Hulchanski, 2007) seeking cheaper housing; the result of monetarist[225] economic

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[223] As of March 31, 2019 there were a total 7,275 senior applicants waiting in BC on the application list with BC Housing. This was a 14% increase over 2018. The average wait time for applicants was 2.4 years with a median wait time of 1.5 years.

[224] In 2018 there were 594 seniors on BC Housing waiting list in the City of Surrey. *Surrey Housing Profile*, December, 2018. Page 43. https://www.surrey.ca/files/Surrey%20Housing%20Profile%20FINAL.pdf

[225] The International Monetary Fund's, *What is Monetarism?* Monetarism is described as fundamentally about the quantity theory of money. It is an accounting theory that says "the money supply multiplied by velocity

policy where people were de-housed into worse conditions rather than re-housed into better ones (Hulchanski, 2007). The SRO vacancy rate disappeared in the 2000s and there has been the suburbanization of poverty and rising levels of homelessness in Metro Vancouver's suburban communities. The walkability of inner-city poverty in the Downtown Eastside community has not replicated or addressed in the car-oriented development pattern of the suburbs.

Young (2013) describes than an important understanding of societal injustice is that the subject of justice is structure.[226] In this research, I have related it is the structure of the transit system that is unjust. In this suburban community, transit planning has emphasized ridership goals[227] rather than coverage goals of equity and social service, (Walker, 2012) leaving many people who are experiencing homelessness with a transitory nature of place in publicly created space.

(the rate at which money changes hands) equals nominal expenditures in the economy (the number of goods and services sold multiplied by the average price paid for them)".Politically it is identified with the economic policies of Ronald Reagan and Margaret Thatcher. https://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/fandd/2014/03/basics.htm

[226] Young (2013), *Responsibility for Justice*, page 44

[227] Walker (2012), *Human Transit*, page 118

APPENDIX A

Review of Initiatives in Canada to Improve Affordability of Public Transit for People on Low Income

This brief summary is adapted and updated from a report which was completed for Toronto Public Health by Beth Dempster & Eric Tucs of The Civics Research Co-operative 2012. There are two tables which summarize the program: Table 1 concerns meeting emergency needs through discounted tickets; Table 2 concerns chronic on-going needs met through discounted passes.

Public transit provides access to the elements that contribute to health; food, employment, education, health services, social and recreational activities. Public transit also reinforces non-system social support by helping to keep people connected with family and friends. The cost associated with public transit is a significant barrier for people living on a low income and contributes to social exclusion.

When identifying these programs an internet key word search was used. Also the twenty four communities that comprise the Canadian Federation of Municipalities' Quality of Life Reporting System were considered as these are urban centers with public transit systems. There are fifteen larger jurisdictions currently implementing discount transit programs (as well as numerous smaller ones such as Banff).

Note: almost every transit system in Canada has passes specific to particular population groups – seniors, people with disabilities, students – these are for the most part not included. Here the focus is on poverty without an additional condition applied.

APPENDIX A: Table 1: Washington State Discount Transit programs for emergency and on-going need for low-income

Program Location	Start Date	Type	Eligibility	Price for person	Notes
Kitsap County	2013	Tickets	Through community agencies	Free	3,300 free tickets
Kitsap County	1986	Monthly pass	200% of federal poverty line	$36 – a 50% discount level	Built into budgeting for overall revenue projection
Seattle – Housing and Homeless Programs Dept.		Tickets	Through community agencies	Free	$3.2 million budget to cover 80% discount on face value of tickets
Seattle – Metro Transit	2015	Discounted tickets not a monthly pass	200% of federal poverty in - $23,340 for individual and $47,700 for family of four	Price reduced to $1.50 per ticket rather than $2.50 - $3.25	

Table 2: Canadian discount monthly transit pass programs (on-going need)

City Program	Cost	Funding Source	Allocation	Partners - establishment	Partners - operation	Notes
Calgary – Low-Income Monthly Transit Pass	2011: $2 million	Municipal tax levy	Calgary Transit	City, Council and departments, and Calgary Transit and Fair Fares	Calgary Transit; feedback from FairFares Calgary	evaluation in 2007, positive results
Edmonton – Low-Income Monthly Transit Pass	2015: $6.4mill (est.)	Municipal tax levy	Edmonton Transit	City Council, Edmonton Transit	Edmonton Transit	
Guelph – Subsidized Bus Pass for Adults (with low incomes) Pilot Program	2012: estimated at $135,350	Municipal tax levy	Unknown	Guelph and Wellington Task Force for Poverty Elimination, Guelph Transit, Community Voices, Community and Social Services	Guelph Transit, Guelph Operations, Guelph Community and Social Services	no cap; 2 year pilot
Hamilton – Affordable Transit Pass Program	2011: $300,000 and $103,000 (includes admin)	Hamilton Social Services Initiative Reserve Fund and OMCSS	Community Services Department; Hamilton Street Railway (admin only)	Community Services Department; some consultation with Transit Sub-Committee and Hamilton Roundtable for Poverty Reduction	Community Services Department; some Public Works; some consultation with Transit Sub-Committee and Hamilton Roundtable for Poverty Reduction	evaluation in 2008, positive results
Kingston – Affordable Transit Pass (part of Municipal Fee Assistance Program)	2010: $165,000	Municipal tax levy	Kingston Transit	Mayor's Task Force on Poverty, Kingston Community Roundtable on Poverty, Kingston Transit, Community and Family Services	Kingston Transit, Community and Family Services	no cap; Municipal Fee Assistance Program also provides for recreation
Waterloo Region – Transit for Reduced Income Program	2012: $746,000	Municipal tax levy and gas tax revenue	Employment and Income Support (EIS)	EIS, Transit Development Planning, Grand River Transit, The Working Centre, Lutherwood, community groups	Employment and Income Support, Transit Development Planning, Grand River Transit, The Working Centre, Lutherwood	honour-based application through community agencies; evaluation in 2004
Waterloo Region – Transit Assistance Pass Program	2012: $300,000	Municipal tax levy (initially also OMCSS)	Employment and Income Support	Employment and Income Support, Transit Development Planning, Grand River Transit, The Working Centre, Lutherwood	Employment and Income Support, Grand River Transit	
Windsor – Affordable Pass Program	2012 $125,000 ($375,000 allocated)	Windsor's Pathway to Potential Fund	Transit Windsor	Pathway to Potential, City of Windsor, Transit Windsor, Voices against Poverty	Pathway to Potential, City of Windsor, Transit Windsor, Voices against Poverty	no cap on program; seniors pass is also $40
York Region – Transit Fare Subsidies (Pilot)	2012 $1,327,400(includes admin)	York Region Social Assistance Reserve Fund	Community and Health Services	Community and Health Services and Transportation Services Departments, local municipalities, ODSP (York Region Office)	Community and Health Services and Transportation Services Departments, local municipalities	Pilot 2012

APPENDIX B

Summary Transit Access Programs for Homeless/Low-Income Populations

Calgary

Calgary Transit has the PIC program[228] where 65,000 tickets[229] per year are distributed free of charge to local shelters, drop-ins and outreach programs. The continued need for the program has been questioned by Calgary Transit since the expansion of the low-income transit plan to the level of 100% of LICO, with push back from community concerning the different need met – emergency one-off trips versus chronic on-going (and more planned) needs.[230] At the current rate of $44 per month the low-income pass is not a realistic option for people who are homeless. A program assessment has been completed by Calgary Transit, but this appears to be an internal document as no one I have contacted in Calgary has been able to source a copy of the report as of yet. I have an email into a transit friendly City Councillor to see if he will be able to find a copy of this program assessment.

Edmonton

The City of Edmonton established a city operated non-profit charity in 1996 called *Donate-a-Ride* to provide for emergency transit access needs of homeless and other identified groups of people. It was started by then-councillor turned mayor, Allan Bolstad. This is a charity based model of program delivery, with an annual campaign launched in mid-December running until the end of January. In 2014 there was a donation drive with a target of $200,000, donation are made to either Edmonton Transit or United Way. From these donations there were 85,000 tickets provided to 70 community agencies to disburse amongst people accessing their services.
http://www.donatearide.ab.ca/about_us.html

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[228] No one seems to know what the acronym PIC stands for

[229] Number of tickets for PIC determined by Calgary Transit at rate of 6% of Calgary's population in the previous year

[230] Conversation with Bonnie Pacaud, FairFares Calgary

Kitsap Transit[231], Washington State

The free-ride ticket program began as a pilot program in 2012 and serves both the homeless and transition houses. The intent was to get people into the system and able to get to food banks etc. and then could transition over into the low-fare system. Kitsap Transit worked with emergency housing agencies and provided them with tickets to give out. Six thousand single use tickets were distributed in the first year with about 3300 redeemed. It has been extremely well received by the social service agencies – willing to take on the administrative issue and the majority of processing is done though the agency that does the distribution. The cost to the transit system was $300 to print off the tickets. Largely the program fills an unused seat mid-day – have standing loads on some routes during commutes and might be some public push back if on those routes – but mostly empty seats. Essentially there was no fare revenue loss – so no cost to the transit agency. There was tracking of the ticket serial numbers through the fare box. It became evident some agencies were not using the tickets so Kitsap Transit re-connected with agencies to remind them to use the tickets.

Montreal

The Old Brewery operates a year-round shuttle bus service for people who are homeless. The shuttle service, in partnership with the Société de transport de Montréal (STM) transit authority, makes a scheduled stop at Bonaventure station after midnight to pick up anyone 'loitering'[232] in the Métro system at closing time. When STM staffers escort the homeless to the Métro doors, the shuttle offers them a ride to the Welcome Hall Mission and Maison du Père shelters. Outreach workers from the shelter are aboard to try and coax people to come in from the cold. This is an offer of a ride not a forced one, "hopefully, people will not leave a warm bus once they're aboard."

In 2013 Montreal also began a three year pilot project where five downtown metro stations double as service points for people living on the streets including: Atwater, Berri-UQAM, Bonaventure, Place-des-Arts and McGill metros. The project began with one

[231] Kitsap County is in the Greater Seattle area, a ferry ride from downtown.

[232] Description used in email from Société de Transport de Montreal

outreach worker helping homeless people at the Place-des-Arts Metro Station approximately 10 hours per week. In 2014, more than 400 people received services. The pilot project eventually added two additional social workers, so there are three people working in five metro stations. The project involves several partners, including the STM, Ville-Marie Social Development Society and the Ville-Marie borough.

Seattle

Housing and Homeless Programs, King County, supervises contracts for services and works with community agencies and manages policy, applications, administration for agencies that receive the reduce fare bus tickets. There are 77 agencies that pay 20% of face value of single fares with Metro covering (subsidizing) 80%.[233] King County is a diverse area – very urban to very rural – a person needs to be connected to a service to get a ticket with suburban residents more isolated and harder to connect.

It is emergency based and documentation is required. This is a scarce resource so they have to decide on priorities for the individual tickets. The program has come under scrutiny from the auditors' office – auditor felt there was a need for developing policies concerning how the tickets were distributed and accounted for and who they were given to and under what criteria[234]. Transit is largely funded through sales tax and in 2009 with recession the State Legislature passed enabling legislation to allow counties to charge a $20 vehicle levy to make up for retail sales tax funding shortfalls during the recession. King County brought in the $20 vehicle licensing fee levy, with an option of receiving or donating 8 bus tickets to the Human Services Fare program.[235] Donated tickets boosted the number of tickets available to homeless serving agencies for the years of this temporary vehicle levy.

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[233] Web link to program: http://www.kingcounty.gov/operations/DCHS/Business/BusTicketProgram.aspx

[234] There was a review of the effectiveness of program done in 2014 but I have been unable to access a copy of this program assessment

[235] http://kingcounty.gov/transportation/kcdot/NewsCenter/NewsReleases/2012/September/nr_091912_TransitIncentiveTix.aspx

There are over-lapping county and regional transit systems in Greater Seattle, Metro Transit and Sound Transit. Both systems offer a special ticket that is good on light rail and bus – it looked like a day pass and it was dated by agencies on day of use. Starting in 2014, there was a foil tab on the single use ticket so they could not be photocopied. Agency assessment is that there are not enough tickets available for distribution by the individual agencies as it becomes more well-known and the budget stays the same.

In the fall of 2013 downtown free transit zone ended. This impacted on service delivery for downtown human services, as an example of the role of transit access many services located based on the free zone service area of the previous 35 years. The free Downtown Circulator was instituted as a replacement in 2013. Metro Transit donated the two new buses for the downtown circulator with a budget of up to $400,000 covered by Metro Transit. There are 7 stops on the route based on where services are including shelters, food and medical services. Initially they did not publicize this to the general public – targeted downtown agencies to get word out to locals. The first day of service less than 75 people used it – 7am to 4pm daily 5 days a week, stop every 15-20 minutes, this has increased to over 200 people on each bus each day. This service does not go to outlying areas and ca not go through the middle of downtown as Metro Transit determined there was too much transit traffic in that area.

Toronto

The Toronto Transit Commission (TTC) does not have discounted fares or fare exemptions for homeless people although there are discounted passes for seniors and students. There is no line item in the budget of the City of Toronto's Shelter, Support and Housing Administration for public transportation for clients. Although many of the agencies funded to provide shelters, drop-ins, housing assistance, and other housing and homelessness services, through SSHA, often provide transit tokens to clients.

There is no standard set of rules for when someone would receive a transit token and each agency has their own criteria for when this would happen, although shelters are supposed to provide tokens to those people seeking shelter if they do not have a suitable bed. Many drop-ins try to provide transportation assistance if they can to someone looking to get to a medical appointment.

There is one program dedicated to providing transit tokens to homeless people seeking shelter during Extreme Cold Weather Alerts. SSHA directly supplies tokens to 19 drop in services that provide these to clients needing transportation to shelter. During the winter of 2014/15 SSHA has given 5,050 tokens to 19 agencies and they have distributed 3,000 tokens to clients to help them travel to shelters. Access to public transit for people who are experiencing homelessness is a huge issue year round. When it's extremely cold outside, it is an even bigger issue.[236]

Victoria

Victoria has had a bulk purchase program for single tickets and monthly passes for many years. It is administered through the Community Social Planning Council (CSPC) of Victoria. BC Transit creates an annual limit for tickets in the program (currently set at 135,000). This limit is apportioned to 60 different agencies in Greater Victoria. If the agency wants to participate they buy one ticket and get one ticket free up to their allotted amount. They can also buy one monthly bus pass and get an additional monthly bus pass free. BC Transit does not get the full amount of the value of the one ticket purchased – CSPC receives about 10% of the value for administration of the program – essentially BC Transit receives 45% payment for 2 tickets distributed. The program is popular with agencies which would like to have a higher allotment. This program goes beyond the emergency needs of the homeless sector.

Transit Access Programs meeting chronic on-going needs by location

All of the Canadian examples summarized below use similar qualifications related to Statistics Canada's Low-Income Cut-Off (LICO) rates and proof of income through Revenue Canada, Aboriginal Status or Social Assistance. An example of a local non-transit program in Metro Vancouver using similar financial qualifications and proof of

[236] TransLink and BC Housing have jointly funded a pilot program with additional emergency transit tickets for the fall/winter of 2015/2016 for shelters within the City of Surrey.

income information to these transit programs is the Vancouver Parks Board's *Leisure Access Card* which requires either latest Notice of Assessment from Revenue Canada, Aboriginal Status Card or income verification sign off from a provincial government ministry.[237]

Edmonton

On May 7, 2014 Edmonton Council's Transportation Committee approved a motion to establish a low-income transit pass with a report back from staff on various options. On Wednesday April 22, 2015 the Transportation Committee received a report from staff outlining three different levels of subsidy from 35% - 60%. The Transportation Committee voted in favour a 60% discount, resulting in a monthly pass of $35 for households below 100% of LICO levels. The Committee recommendation will need to be approved by Edmonton Council. The estimated revenue 'loss' per year is $6.4 million. It is estimated that 84,000 Edmonton area residents would be eligible for the program, and that 30% would apply.
http://sirepub.edmonton.ca/sirepub/mtgviewer.aspx?meetid=1414&doctype=AGENDA

Everett, Washington

Everett is the smallest transit system in Puget Sound area. In 2012 they implemented a reduced fare with the elimination of the paper transfers – this became a mostly revenue neutral policy change with the revenue loss (with the reduced fare) and the expense reduction (by elimination of paper transfer).

Guelph Affordable Bus Pass Program

The Affordable Bus Pass Program came into effect in July, 2012 and provides a lower cost pass ($30 per month) for people with incomes below the LICO levels of StatsCan. The City of Guelph called the program "an investment in our community aimed at minimizing these barriers for people living on a low income." The intent of the program is to reduce barriers for people to get to work, to recreation programs or just get around the community. There are 9,540 people estimated to be eligible for the low-income pass

[237] Web link: http://vancouver.ca/parks-recreation-culture/leisure-access-card.aspx

(8.3% of the population) with an estimated cost to the system of $135,000 covered through a municipal tax levy. Youth, adults, and seniors are eligible if they are:

1. Residents of Guelph
2. Experiencing barriers to accessing public transit based on their low family income, Statistics Canada's Low-Income Cut-Off table is used to determine eligibility
3. Post-secondary students may apply with the exception of University of Guelph full-time students who receive a U-pass included in their student fees

People who want to apply for the program fill out an application, and submit it to either City Hall or various community facilities with the required income verification documentation (Canada Revenue Agency Personal Income Tax Notice of Assessment; or Ontario Disability Support Program Statement of Deposit including address portion and Drug Benefit Eligibility Card; or Ontario Works Statement of Deposit including address portion and Drug Benefit Eligibility Card or Benefit Unit Summary Page from your Ontario Works office).

Web link to program and newspaper article on program below:
http://guelph.ca/wp-content/uploads/Affordable_Bus_Pass_Application.pdf
http://www.guelphmercury.com/news-story/2790712-affordable-bus-pass-program-increasing-ridership-costs/

Hamilton Affordable Transit Pass Program

The Affordable Transit Pass Program is available to employed residents of the City of Hamilton with a low income. The adult monthly bus pass from the Hamilton Street Railway (HSR) is half price. There are 70,638 people estimated to be eligible for the low-income pass (14% of the population). But there are only a limited number of passes available – 500 passes total – and they are sold on a first come, first served basis, representing 0.7% of those estimated to qualify. The estimated cost of the program is

$403,000 covered through Hamilton Social Services Initiative Reserve Fund. To qualify a person must meet all of the following:

- Live in the City of Hamilton
- Currently work full time, part time or casual positions (does not include self-employed)
- Between ages of 18 to 64 (does not include people who qualify for HSR's student/senior fares)
- Receive assistance from Ontario Works, the Ontario Disability Support Program but not receiving transportation costs for other activities (e.g. medical transportation);
- Family income falls below the 2013 Statistics Canada Low-Income Cut-Off for applicable family size, able to provide last year's Notice of Assessment from the Canada Revenue Agency and pay stubs that show 4 weeks in a row of work (weekly, bi-weekly, monthly)

If approved monthly Affordable Transit Pass is purchased at the HSR Ticket Office with presentation of approval lettered in the Hamilton GO Station. The letter must be shown each month in order to purchase the next monthly transit pass; it will be initialed each time the pass is purchased, re-application every six months. This pass is only valid for HSR transit, and does not include the disability DARTS system. Web link for program here:
http://www.hamilton.ca/HealthandSocialServices/SocialServices/SupportPrograms/AffordableTransitPass.htm

Kingston Affordable Transit Pass

The Municipal Fee Assistance program offers low-income residents of Kingston a discount on a Kingston Transit monthly My Card (and reduced-cost access to municipal and community sports, wellness, cultural, and other recreation and leisure opportunities all through one application process). There are 13,010 people estimated to be eligible for the low-income pass (11.1% of the population) with an estimated cost to the system of $165,000 covered through a municipal tax levy. Eligible applicants to the Municipal Fee Assistance Program can gain access to:

- The *Affordable Transit Pass,* a renewable reduced-cost monthly transit pass. The discount is good for a full year. The 32 per cent discount makes Monthly My Cards $46.75 for Adults, $34.25 for Youth and $34.75 for Seniors (Full price Monthly My Cards are $68.25 for Adults, $50.50 for Youth, and $46.25 for Seniors)
- The *Subsidy Program for Affordable Recreation* in Kingston (SPARK) - allowing all ages reduced-cost eligibility to city recreation and leisure programs
- The *Positive Recreational Opportunities for Kids* (P.R.O. Kids) program helps children and youths a chance to participate in a variety of community recreational programs at a lower cost.

The City determines a household's eligibility using current Statistics Canada LICO. All households below the LICO are eligible for both the transit discounts and full recreation subsidies. All household members living in households with earnings below the LICO will qualify for:

- The 32 per cent Affordable Transit Pass discount, and
- 100 per cent of the Subsidy Program for Affordable Recreation in Kingston (SPARK) subsidy.

Web links for transit pass information:
http://archive.cityofkingston.ca/residents/transportation/transit/fee-assistance/
https://www.cityofkingston.ca/residents/transit/fares
http://wheelchairdemon-transit.blogspot.ca/2012/03/kingston-continues-discriminatory.html

Kitsap County, Washington State

Kitsap Transit has a total of about 4 million boarding a year. Major funding for the transit system comes through retail sales tax. Service reductions of 22% resulted in 2012 due to on-going sales tax revenue reductions from on-going recession. Not operated by County government directly so the $20 vehicle licensing fee approved by State Legislature was not available to Kitsap Transit. As of 2012 the system operates 6 days a week. The fare box recovery is about 24%, compared with about 36% for TransLink.

Kitsap Transit sees itself almost as a social service with the understanding that "we are big enough to do something; we are small enough to do something."[238] They have been doing a low-fare program since the 1980s and it's become ingrained into system. As it was instituted at the time of the creation of the system it's built into the system's income stream of the system. It is called a low-fare program rather than a low-income program – and the low fare available to low-income, seniors and disable (with overlaps amongst groups). With the student population – there was a "political" decision to create an incentive for kids to stay in school so the discount is for students under 18 years old and in school.

Other agencies have their criteria which will allow them to qualify people – e.g. corrections – and then the person comes to the kiosk with a letter from agency for the ORCA low-income fare card issuance. Once they are approved people are qualified for 1 year. It is a non-stigmatized card as the only difference is the expiry date on the back. The low-income fare portion has been dropping as an overall portion of ridership.

Seattle Metro Transit

Following passage of a County Board resolution a *Low-Income Fare Committee* was struck in late 2011 to represent various stakeholder groups to look at low-income access to the transit system[239]. Following from this work the *Orca Lift* low-income fare transit

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[238] Conversation with John Clauson, DEO, Kitsap Transit

[239] In the United States there are federal legal requirements to provide seniors 65+ and disabled (off-peak) at 50% discounts of full-fare

program[240] started on March 1, 2015. The *Low-Income Fare Committee* debated whether to combine with the existing bulk ticket discount system with the low-income card and agreed to maintain them as separate systems; recognizing them as two different programs that serve two different population groups and needs.

Qualifying income levels were debated for some time and eventually agreed on 200% of the federal poverty level so the administrative function of determining qualifications would coincide with administrative work already being done by other agencies and programs. In 2014 this was calculated for individuals as $23,340 and as $47,700 or less for a family of four. This is similar to the StatsCan LICO levels used by Canadian transit systems. This income level represents about 25% of Seattle households, generally a higher level than LICO levels in Canada.

A demographic trend recognized in Seattle was that new households were either well-off or poor. From 1999 to 2012, 95 percent of the new households in King County earned either more than $125,000 a year or less than $33,000, with hardly anything in between. With low-wage earners moving outside the City to find affordable housing, transit access has been raised as an economic concern for the City's economy. The low-income pass will work on the regular ORCA card, and $1.50 per trip will be deducted from the card instead of $3 providing a 50% discount. A question remains how many of the 25% will go through the process of qualification for a low-income access card.

Toronto

Currently, there is no reduced fare program in Toronto that is income based. However, this policy need is on the radar of Toronto Council and the Toronto Transit Commission. In June, 2014 the Executive Committee of Toronto City Council discussed the need for a policy framework for Toronto Transit Fare Equity. The basis of the discussion was the need to prepare a 'complementary transit plan focused on affordability' recognizing the need for affordability for lower income riders. The report says "while there is no financial impact associated with the recommendations … Council approval of the

[240] Web link to program: http://metro.kingcounty.gov/programs-projects/orca-lift/

development of a formal policy framework for Toronto Transit Fare Equity will clarify assumptions; define goals; and ultimately identify any funding requirements for sustaining transit discounts for low income residents." Time-line for Council to consider a policy framework is the end of 2015.

Waterloo Region

For people on a reduced income, the *Transit for Reduced Income Program* (T.R.I.P) provides a 45% discount on the monthly pass – rather than $76 the reduced pass is $42.50. People must have incomes below the LICO cut-off as determined by Statistics Canada (students and seniors are not eligible for T.R.I.P.) Proof of gross annual income before taxes and the source of that income are required.

A 2013 customer survey of 322 TRIP pass holders found the following information:

- An overwhelming majority (99%) of TRIP customers indicated having access to a reduced monthly bus pass through TRIP made a positive difference in their life
- TRIP customers experience increased community inclusion and socialization, and increased access to training, volunteer, and employment opportunities that they would not experience without access to a discounted monthly bus pass
- The majority (62%) of TRIP customers purchased the discounted monthly bus pass every month

Web link for program:
http://www.regionofwaterloo.ca/en/servicesForYou/TransitReducedIncomeProgram.asp
http://communityservices.regionofwaterloo.ca/en/employmentFinancialAssistance/resources/1508909-v1-TRIP_CUSTOMER_SURVEY_REPORT_for_EISCAC.pdf

Windsor

The *Affordable Pass Program* (APP) was approved by Windsor City Council in 2008. The program provides an adult or student bus pass at a 50% discount – currently $43.50. There are estimated to be 30,739 people eligible (14% of the population); although there are only 800 passes available, 2.6% of those eligible. Like Hamilton, Windsor has one of the higher poverty rates amongst the cities with low-income transit passes, while at the same time having a severely limited supply of passes available. Any individual and their spouse/partner and/or dependents may apply if their combined household income falls below the 2013 Statistics Canada LICO. Combined household income is defined as the combined income of the primary applicant, their spouse/partner and/or their dependents. The spouse/partner of the Primary Applicant and/or dependents may also be eligible to receive a discounted bus pass, provided they are living in the same household. Dependents must be under the age of 18 years old.

Along with the APP application form, applicants must submit proof of their eligibility, including: most recent Notice of Assessment from Revenue Canada, most current Canada Child Benefit Notice or Ontario Child Benefit Notice, verification of Ontario Disability Support Program benefits or verification of current Ontario Works benefits. A "Free Forms Assistance Service" is available to all applicants through calling 211.
Web link: http://www.citywindsor.ca/residents/transitwindsor/Rider-Programs/Pages/Affordable-Pass-Program-(APP).aspx

APPENDIX C

Example: Garstang and Newcastle study (2001)

The following schedule was used for all interviews, although in practice it was interpreted flexibly in response to previous answers, the contingent circumstances of the particular case, and the time available.

How often do you use the (service)?

How long have you been using it?

How did you get about before the (service) started?

Do you still use lift-sharing or other informal travel arrangements?

Do you use the (service) to get to Garstang/West Denton, or to access other places en route?

Do you travel from (hub) to elsewhere?

What are you using the (service) to access? [Shops, doctor, friends, transport etc.]

Are there other destinations you wish the (service) could get you to?

How did you find out about the (service)?

What other public transport serves your home?

Has the (service) allowed you to do new things, or changed how you get to the places you do these things?

APPENDIX D

Semi-structure interview guide for resident of Surrey homeless shelters

PART I: INTRODUCTION

Hello, my name is Peter Greenwell. I am a PhD student in the Social Dimensions of Health Program at the University of Victoria. I am interviewing residents of the shelter about their experiences with public transit. I have worked on this issue over the last couple of years. This interview will take about 45 minutes. If you have any questions about what I am asking or why, please ask and I will do my best to answer.

I would like to record this interview, so that afterwards I can type out a transcript of our conversation, rather than rely on notes. If you want to review the transcript – to either add or correct information – you are welcome to do that.

The purpose of this research is to examine the role public transit has for homeless shelter residents in Surrey trying to access housing, essential services and social supports.

- Your name will not be shared with anyone
- You can choose not to answer any question or stop the interview at any time
- The University of Victoria ethics board has reviewed my research including this interview guide
- I am not receiving funding by any agency or foundation to conduct this research
- There are a few short questions about age and gender etc. the rest of the questions are asking your thoughts, opinions and experience with transit

Shelter Name: ____

Interview date and time: ____

Name: ____

Code: _______

Semi-structure Interview questions
My first questions are some basic information about you.
Age:
Gender:
Ethnicity:
Length of time homeless:
Do you currently use public transit? Yes No

Do you have a current bus pass? Yes No Type of pass? ____________________

1. Can you tell me all of the types of transportation you use while at this shelter?

2. Which ones are most important to you? And why?

3. Are there any other transportation options available to you in the neighbourhood that you do not use? Why?

4. What are some of the factors that impact on your use of public transit?

5. How often do you use public transit per day ___, per week _____, or per month _____?

6. How important is public transit to you to do the following activities?

(1 very important, 2 important, 3 neither, 4 unimportant and 5 very unimportant)

a. Looking for housing 1 2 3 4 5

b. Looking for work 1 2 3 4 5

c. Getting to/from medical appointments 1 2 3 4 5

d. Shopping 1 2 3 4 5

e. Getting to other appointments 1 2 3 4 5

f. Any other needs (e.g. Ministry, cultural support) etc.)

____________ 1 2 3 4 5

7. Can you tell me five words that describe transit for you?

I will record and write down the five words on a card and repeat them back to make sure I have them right or if the person wants to substitute another word.

Please rank these five words from most to least important. And tell me about each of them. (If there is difficultly with this I would ask them just the one most and least important word to them.)

Tell me about word 1

Tell me about word 2

Tell me about word 3

Tell me about word 4

Tell me about word 5

8. How has being able to use transit affected you?

9. While living in the shelter how do you feel, towards your family/friends or other social support?
   a. Connected
   b. Isolated
   c. Neither
   d. Both

10. Can you explain your answer to the previous question?

11. What family or friends are within walking distance of this shelter?

12. I would like to ask you about your experience with transit. Can you tell me about the last transit trip that you took from leaving the shelter to getting back to the shelter?

    a. What was the purpose of your last trip?
    b. How did you find out the route and schedule time information for your trip?
    c. How did you arrange for your transit fare?
    d. How was it getting to the transit stop?
    e. Can you describe the experience of getting on the bus/SkyTrain/HandyDart?
    f. How long did it take to get where you were going and back to the shelter again?

13. Can you tell me the best thing about public transit

14. Can you tell me the worst thing about public transit

15. What would help you get around better?

16. What is the number one change that transit could make to help you find and keep housing?

17. Can you describe how that would help you?

18. To finish I have 20 (for example it may be less) index cards with a word written on it (shopping, family, welfare, housing, laundry, doctor, job, education etc.) that would cover the potential types of trips (movement and activities, Health-related, Financial related, Community related) and ask you to pick five cards that represented the most important trips for you. And then amongst these 5 cards can you rank them from most to least important. (If this became a sticking point, I might just ask them to pick one most important and one least important. I would then go through the five cards and ask them how/if this trip was one that was related to getting out of homelessness.)

    Card 1 …

    Card 2 …

    Card 3 …

    Card 4 …

    Card 5 …

19. What does being mobile mean to you?

This is my card with my contact information is you have any questions or additional thoughts please tell me. Thank you for your thoughts, opinions and time.

APPENDIX E

Semi-structure interview guide for staff of Surrey homeless shelters

PART I: INTRODUCTION

Hello, my name is Peter Greenwell. I am a PhD student in the Social Dimensions of Health Program at the University of Victoria. As you know I am interviewing residents of the shelter about their experiences with public transit, as well as a few staff. I have worked on this issue over the last couple of years. This interview will take about 30-45 minutes. If you have any questions about what I am asking or why, please ask and I will do my best to answer.

I would like to record this interview, so that afterwards I can type out a transcript of our conversation, rather than rely on notes. If you want to review the transcript – to either add or correct information – you are welcome to do that.

The purpose of this research is to examine the role public transit has for homeless shelter residents in Surrey trying to access housing, essential services and social supports.

- Your name will not be recorded or shared with anyone
- You can choose not to answer any question or stop the interview at any time
- The University of Victoria ethics board has reviewed my research including this interview guide
- I am not receiving funding by any agency or foundation to conduct this research
- There are a few short questions about age and gender etc. the rest of the questions are asking your thoughts, opinions and experience with transit

Shelter Name: ____

Interview date and time: ____

Name: ____

Code: _______

Semi-structure Interview questions

1. Can you tell me all of the types of transportation residents use while at this shelter?

2. Which ones are most important to them? Why?

3. Are there any other transportation options available in the neighbourhood that they do not use? Why?

4. What are some of the factors that impact on residents’ use of public transit?

5. How often do residents’ use public transit per day ___, per week _____, or per month _____?

6. How important is public transit to residents’ to do the following activities? (1 very important, 2 important, 3 neither, 4 unimportant and 5 very unimportant)

a.	Looking for housing	1	2	3	4	5
b.	Looking for work	1	2	3	4	5
c.	Getting to/from medical appt 1	2	3	4	5	
d.	Shopping	1	2	3	4	5
e.	Getting to other appointments	1	2	3	4	5
f.	Any other needs (e.g. Ministry, cultural support, etc.) ____________	1	2	3	4	5

7. Can you tell me five words that describe transit for shelter residents?

I will record and write down the five words on a card and repeat them back to make sure I have them right or if the person wants to substitute another word.

Please rank these five words from most to least important. And tell me about each of them. (If there is difficultly with this I would ask them just the one most and least important word to them.)

Tell me about word 1

Tell me about word 2

Tell me about word 3

Tell me about word 4

Tell me about word 5

8. While living in the shelter how do you think resident’s feel about their connections to family/friends or other social support?
   a. Connected
   b. Isolated
   c. Neither
   d. Both

10. Can you explain your answer to the previous question?

11. Do residents' have family or friends within walking distance of this shelter?

12. Can you tell me about a specific story that comes to mind about a resident's transit trip from leaving the shelter to getting back to the shelter?

    a. What was the purpose of your last trip?
    b. How did they find out the route and schedule time information for the trip?
    c. How did they arrange for the transit fare?
    d. How long did it take to get where they were going and back to the shelter again?

13. Can you tell me the best thing about public transit for residents?

14. Can you tell me the worst thing about public transit for residents?

15. What would help them get around better?

16. What is the number one change that transit could make to help them find and keep housing?

17. Can you describe how that would help them?

18. To finish I have 20 (for example it may be less) index cards with a word written on it (shopping, family, welfare, housing, laundry, doctor, job, education etc.) that would cover the potential types of trips (movement and activities, Health-related, Financial related, Community related) and ask you to pick five cards that represented the most important trips for shelter residents. And then amongst these 5 cards can you rank them from most to least important. (If this became a sticking point, I might just ask them to pick one most important and one least important. I would then go through the five cards and ask them how/if this trip was one that was related to getting out of homelessness.)

    Card 1 …

    Card 2 …

    Card 3 …

    Card 4 …

    Card 5 …

19. What does being mobile mean to shelter residents?

This is my card with my contact information is you have any questions or additional thoughts please tell me. Thank you for your thoughts, opinions and time.

APPENDIX F

Participants Needed for Research on Access to Public Transit

Hi, my name is Peter Greenwell, and I am looking for volunteers to interview about their experience with the local transit system for this interview. You must be:

- *A resident of this shelter?*
- *Over 19 years of age?*
- *Use public transit*

Interviews will take about 45 minutes. Residents that participate in an interview receive a $15 gift card at the end of the interview. All information from interviews will remain anonymous and no individual information would be identified.

For more information, or to volunteer for this study please contact:

Peter Greenwell at pgreenwe@uvic.ca or

Or leave a message for Peter at the reception desk. I will get in touch with you here.

The interviews will be audiotaped, so that I can type up a transcript. You can see the transcript to make corrections.

I am doing this research project as part of my PhD in the Social Dimensions of Health program at the University of Victoria.

Thank you

Peter Greenwell

APPENDIX G

Semi-structure interview qualitative data residents of Surrey homeless shelters

Case 1 Resident Comments: Physical Dimension

It works, covers the lower mainland
Reliable – they don't seem to break down, and are usually on time, not very often problem
On craigslist looking for housing, find a place you're interested, I take transit to get there, but transit? What does transit have to do with that?
Going to girlfriends house, and take a different route. One takes through Guildford and one takes you to court house at #10 and King George. Surprised her where it took her, but eventually got there. Instead of taking one bus all the way, and switched at surrey central at about the same time.
Using the bike a lot more. Dollar store has combination locks that can change the combinations.

Case 1 Resident Comments: Temporal Dimension

Overcrowding, I missed busses because they are full, which is a problem for getting to work, and when you pay that kind of money it should be dependable
Do okay with it now, busses being on time … if the route is full put more busses on it
Crowding so need to time my trip, with missing rush hour and also after school time
Enjoyable because it's not overcrowded, other than Surrey Central, the best transit system on the coast
Rude driver – will drive away while you are switching busses and making a transfer
Busy – just the people, the bustle, the bus drivers are in a hurry, it's crowded

Case 1 Resident Comments: Social Dimension

Overcrowded
Judged – I feel out of place on the bus sometimes
Helped me get to work
When I call 953-3333 – the times are just estimates and the bus shows up 10 minutes early
Noisy, the bus and the people. People talking loudly because the bus is noisy, you hear a lot going on
Helpful – to get where I need to go, helpful information-wise. I ask the driver where to go and how to get there and he'll know
Use it to get to appointments I would never get to otherwise. It's useful to see people you need to.

Case 1 Residents Comments: Financial Dimension

Lost my bus pass, I lost it a few times. I didn't know you could get a replacement right away, and I've got fines because of it.
Enables me to do things I would have done with my vehicle. I couldn't use my vehicle, drivers' license isn't valid. I surrendered my license in 2007, had too many points.
Fines. 12 fines. I get a few reminders of the fines from collection agency. Credit rating has been battered by Roger's mobile phone; there are three accounts with collection agency.

Transit fines, two years ago went to renew my insurance and they said you can't renew because you didn't pay $900 fine. Only thing we can guess is it's from transit. Uploaded files, and lost the reason.
I did get a fine, and had a fare ticket, didn't acknowledge it. I found the ticket and found the fine and they crossed the ticket through, no fine

Case 2 Residents Comments: Physical Dimension

Works – it's well maintained, very few busses are broken down and if there is they're on it fast
Coverage – you can get to pretty well anywhere you want
The routes get you close to an area but there's a lot of walking involved
Distance to the bus stop across the street. When you're not as mobile as everyone else, it's a problem getting to the bus, not on the bus, to the bus. Some bus drivers can be insensitive, and they don't want to use the lift to get off the bus. All the busses either kneel or have lifts.
Great – good coverage across the lower mainland
Destination – every place has a bus stop
I went to 108/104 to go to the Ministry Office. Took the bus along King George. It took 20 minutes. Ran across 6 lanes of traffic to get to the bus stop.

Case 2 Residents Comments: Temporal Dimension

Fast – as long as it connects with the next bus or SkyTrain its fast, but leave at least a ½ hour early just in case
Pretty good customer service – call 953 number for route planning if you are lost
Transit makes life easier – instead of walking everywhere … but it shuts down early on weekends. Worked nights and couldn't take the bus home too late.
Convenience, bus comes every 10 minutes. This morning drove past, as was full
Some bus drivers are rude and bad drivers, drive too fast, and don't make proper stops
Spending more time looking for a place rather than with my family or friends
Efficient, made it to optometrist appointment in downtown Vancouver, left at 9am, and back by 1pm
Too good – when I was young no bus service out here, took the Pacific Stage Coach in from Surrey.
Too crowded … does everyone need to go everywhere else just to work? Doesn't seem cost effective, why do you need to live in Surrey if you work downtown? Often times take the Millennium Line and change at Columbia station, because it was less crowded than the Expo Line
From here any of the busses to the King George Station, and take SkyTrain to connect the dots. Metrotown, work construction, trades, temp agency at Stadium Station …TLC (Trade Labour Corporation) – temp agency for trades (1st aid and safety officer). How long from here to stadium – 20 minute walk to bus stop, wait 10 minutes for bus, 30-40 minutes to King George (320), 30 minutes to Stadium.
I went to 108/104 to go to the Ministry Office.

Case 2 Resident Comments: Social Dimension

Hate crowded busses, get real agitated and need to get off. I have ADD and can't stand being packed in like a sardine

Courteous – most bus drivers are very courteous
Spending more time looking for a place rather than with my family or friends
Crowded, when carrying a bunch of groceries, really appreciate being given a seat
I play flamenco [guitar], think of myself as a gypsy, being mobile is who I am, I've been traveling all my life
I might lose some more weight … I put on 100 pounds in last two years, since my scooter was stolen. I go to community classes. I like to go places and sketch. Makes life difficult, when you can't go and do what you want to do, when you want to do it.
The bus drivers will let people get on without embarrassing the shit out of them, and help people
Crowded – some busses are very crowded – lots of strollers on the bus, several at a time
Managed – bus drivers deal with drunks and arguments well on certain routes
I took a cab to the Newton Bus Loop. 96B bus to Surrey Central. Then SkyTrain to Lucky Mart at the Del Plaza for bbq pork and rice. At Newton Bus Loop pulled out guitar and played Bruce Springsteen's Fire acoustically. Took me 40 minutes round trip.

Case 2 Residents Comments: Financial Dimension

I took a cab to the Newton Bus Loop. 96B bus to Surrey Central. Then SkyTrain to Lucky Mart at the Del Plaza for bbq pork and rice. At Newton Bus Loop pulled out guitar and played Bruce Springsteen's Fire acoustically. Took me 40 minutes round trip.
We would be helpless without it, need to get food and to eat, and get to appointments, used the bus system all my life. We depend on it.
The #321, on the other side of the street. I took bus down to the intersection, and then went across street at 64th Ave to get to the bus stop. To go to the Surrey Centre Mall Tim Horton's, took a cab from the bus stop to Tim Horton's. I needed to use the Wi-Fi at Tim Horton's.
Longer transfer times. Sometimes have to pay again because it's longer than 1 ½ hours to get home
Charged $10 for first replacement card, $20 for second, and $50 for third. I have to pay off the fine first, before I get the card replaced
Two fines. Lost my pass. And ticket people didn't have a way to find out if I had a pass. So I was paying for the pass, but I didn't have it.

Case 3 Resident Comments: Physical Dimension

It's a long way to SkyTrain, only busses here
As of last week we can cut across the railway tracks. Before that we'd be evicted from the shelter for cutting across the tracks.
#342 bus is a ½ hour walk to bus stop, closer to get to the bus, but [it's a] further five minutes on the way back because its's a different bus stop (the two stops aren't close, 10 minute walk difference)
A stop closer to here would be a bonus. With the bike I need to cross the tracks close to the overpass. And the area where you can take your bike through, that's where they put logs down. There were cement barricades … you could go around them … but now there are logs that block it, and have to lift bike over the barricade.
#320 to Langley bus stop is the further bus stop, from Highway 10 and 15th Ave. it's a 10 minute walk between

Case 3 Resident Comments: Temporal Dimension

Too far – it's a full day just to get to the bus stop, with a car you can do multiple things during the day, on the bus, back and forth to the welfare office on cheque issue … it's a full day
I had a cell phone, so I could phone TransLink 953 and check the GPS of the bus.
No one bus that is a straight shot to the SkyTrain, they all go about in a roundabout route
Newton 9:20pm is the last bus – #321 to Newton from Surrey Central, #342 last run from Newton here [Case 3 shelter] is 9:20pm
Not dependable
Poor service schedule
Learned from other resident to use quicker routes – two ways to get there – #320 in downtown Cloverdale will get you to Surrey Central direct, but also go on the same route of #502, the #502 takes 10 minutes, the #320 takes 40 minutes, anywhere along Fraser Highway. The route is more direct.
#320 runs until midnight – however, the #345 last bus is 9:05 leaving King George SkyTrain, connect 15 minute wait, last one to connect with is the 9:37 to connect at 152 St. and Highway 10 to the #342. Wind up here at 10:10pm.
Only give scheduled information, for delays you have to talk to a person, not pre-recorded information. With bus coming in 8 minutes, I'm afraid that I could miss both busses with not know which stop to go to, when both are far away … could miss both of them if you aren't very fast.

Case 3 Resident Comments: Social Dimension

Opportunity – all the things you'd drive to with your car
Connect – able to get tasks done and get to resources

Case 3 Residents Comments: Financial Dimension

Great – gets you where you need to know and if you don't have money the bus drivers for the most part are accommodating about that, a wink and a transfer
Fines. Seat belt fines, two sky train fines, 3 – 24 hour suspensions. There's a $1000 defensive driving course I'd have to take before my license's renewed.
Need money to travel around, so pretty much stuck

APPENDIX H

Semi-structure interview guide for staff of Surrey homeless shelters

Physical	Temporal	Social	Financial
transportation is also a bigger barrier for our clients, who cannot easily travel between a shelter and our location	The time involved in getting to multiple needs, (training and education, gaining employment, addiction recovery) leads to further isolation	Our clients often cannot afford transit fairs to attend appointments with our clinic or go to see specialists leaving them suffering from treatable health issues and leading to declining health.	Clients cannot get where they need to go or otherwise have to risk fines and interactions with law enforcement in order to do so. If they have fines, it can impact their credit rating and ability to renew a driver's license
the community I work in is poorly serviced by transit	not being able to make progress on personal and educational goals, part of poverty trap	For some clients, they can only make the most necessary appointments but cannot do other social and recreational activities like go to a support group.	Barriers for our clients we serve who need to use transit to get to appointments - employment opportunities- avoiding fines for going through gates without paying
		Some people panhandle and use buses for a free ride. It causes more of a stigma for those who cannot afford a bus ride.	We have folk on low income wanting to volunteer with our organization and gain skills and experience but cannot afford the transportation costs to get to our building.
		Not being able to conduct basic activities such as job interviews, accessing medical care, appointments, viewing housing etc.	Unable to afford public transit; some people on Provincial disability benefits would forfeit the bus pass subsidy for money for food and shelter
		People will skip critical appointments like medical appointments or job interviews	Unable to get to necessary appointments or fear of going on transit without adequate fare.
		Clients missing appointments or not booking appointments for services they need. Often this results in the problem worsening	As an agency, we are forced to pick and choose who we give tickets to and how to make a limited budget last.
		The "red" bus pass causes stigma and discrimination to users by the general public	Increased transit prices have resulted in clients being unable to attend services/programs.
		Clients have to wait for rides from family members or friends to come for services.	Fines to transit for $1,000.00 plus and an inability to get driver's licence or insurance for vehicle
		Our clients are unable to attend programs	Clients report being judged and called out by drivers for not having adequate fare.
		A fear to even try accessing services, if no bus pass	
		Without the transit support clients cannot access the services	
		People are frustrated with the transit system and with the process of getting a bus pass. This leads them to not go to appointments	
		People forego health care services for themselves	

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