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Region of Peel Immigration Discussion Paper

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Neighbourhood Patterns and Housing Choices of Immigrants

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1. Introduction

Where immigrants choose to plant new roots and where they migrate to as they adapt to their new surroundings can greatly affect their experience in Canada. Trends in settlement location and migration appear to be changing, and so the delivery of services must change with them. This paper attempts to answer two sets of questions:

- How important is geography and neighbourhood pattern in affecting family life and human service needs among newcomers? What are the implications of ethnic concentrations? What is the desirable mix of residential, commercial and industrial development to promote social interaction in a diverse community?
- What housing choices will immigrant families make as they grow and mature in their country? Will current trends towards high persons-per-unit (PPU) of housing in immigrant neighbourhoods continue, and for how long?

The literature search related to the above research questions, in whole or in part, was conducted in the following four broad subject areas: ethnic concentration and human service needs and delivery; ethnic concentrations; mixed land use, compact development and diversity; and immigrant and household size. Very little literature is available on the above topic questions except ethnic concentrations. Still, some assertions and ideas for future research and policy implications have been put forward for further consideration. In order to assess the policy implications, the analyses tend to rely on those studies that are pan-Canadian and not specific to one ethnic group.

The rest of this segment of the paper is divided into six sections. Barring the concluding section, every other section attempts to answer the above questions in the order in which they are listed and explain the issues and present solutions, ideas and policy implications. The concluding section wraps up the discussion and presents a list of potential strategies, gaps in the literature and future research inquiries for Region of Peel to consider.

1.1 Ethnic concentration and human service needs

A number of studies in the U.S. done a decade or so ago, mostly in California, have examined the effect of ethnic matching, in which members of minority groups have the opportunity to be served by members of their own group. Reitz' (1995) work concludes that the "ethnic match" increases service utilization and reduces dropout. Reitz could not measure the effects on service outcomes, but he did point to positive outcomes and of gains in cost-effectiveness of ethnic matching.

Sue et al. (1991) report a major study of a sample of approximately 13,000 outpatients in the Los Angeles County Department of Health, during a five-year period, in four major racial-ethnic groups: African Americans, Asian Americans, Mexican Americans and Whites.

Support was found for the benefits of ethnic match between patient and therapist, using two length-of-service measures; dropping out and length of treatment. The benefits were found in each instance except for that of dropping out by African Americans. There were effects of ethnic match on treatment outcomes only for Mexican Americans.

Flaskerud and Liu (1990) studied 543 Vietnamese and Cambodian clients in the L.A. County mental health facilities between 1983 and 1988; they found an effect of ethnic match and language match on numbers of sessions, but not on length of treatment (Cambodian language match seemed to increase the dropout rate, but the effect was marginally significant, statistically).

Wu and Windle (1980) provide some national data. They report a study of 220 federally funded mental health centres, looking at the impact on minorities in areas of minority population concentration. It found that the larger the proportion of minority staff in a mental health centre, the higher the utilization rate by that minority. The result could be spurious if both outcomes are influenced by the ideology of the centre administration, but they are also consistent with the hypothesis that increasing minority therapists will increase minority use of therapy.

Snowden et al. (1995a) produced data suggesting that ethnic matching of clients and clinicians can reduce program costs. In a large county mental health system, they found that ethnic matching of clients and clinicians led to less frequent use of emergency services. This suggests that ethnic matching leads to treatment success because a crisis of sufficient magnitude to require emergency intervention is avoided.

Neighbourhoods with high concentrations of immigrants or ethnic groups may facilitate the delivery of some linguistically and culturally sensitive services because of the presence of a large group of people of a similar background and needs in one area. Locating agencies in areas of ethnic concentration could address a perennial problem that services are often located in central areas and away from the places where there is a need (Agrawal et al. 2007). These agencies could also provide ethnically and culturally appropriate services needed in the area. "Ethnic match," the term used by Reitz (1995), could have impacts on access and utilization.

The policymakers, however, must keep in mind that such neighbourhoods are transient in nature, so the type and nature of delivery of services must keep up with the changing social make-up of the area and the ensuing demands. The impact of ethnicity on demand for services comes into play at the level of operational policies and program management, and not so much in terms of types of services.

2. Ethnic Concentrations

There is plenty of literature available on ethnic residential concentrations (Peach, 2005; Marcuse 2005; Qadeer, 2005; Pouslen et al. 2002). Contrary to the prevailing view in the U.S., which emphasizes the negative aspects of residential segregation, Canadian scholars generally view ethnic enclaves in a positive light. However, the debate over the advantages and disadvantages of residential concentrations has not been fully settled in the Canadian context. Some scholars believe that ethnic groups are segregated within an environment where their social mobility is confined and that segregation is “negative” and is a sign of a deep social problem. While for others who argue that enclaves provide resources to immigrant/ethnic minorities and generally improve individual and group life chances, ethnic concentration is a “positive” form of segregation.

In the case of the latter, ethnic concentrations are seen as an intermediary space where immigrants and ethnic minorities are permitted to develop places of belonging while engaging with the broader multicultural society. Residential and business enclaves provide opportunities for sustaining culture and for galvanizing political and economic power. Furthermore, enclaves eventually become part of the fabric of the city and therefore acculturation (the process of adapting to the cultural traits and social patterns of the host culture) is a two-way process, at least where multiculturalism is part of the urban ethos. The two schools of thought, however, agree on one thing - that good segregation is voluntary, while bad segregation is imposed (Peach, 1996; Qadeer and Kumar 2006).

The following Table 1, adapted from Qadeer (2003) summarizes the social advantages and disadvantages of ethnic enclaves.

Table 1: Advantages and disadvantages of ethnic enclaves

<u>Advantages</u>	<u>Disadvantages</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A protected housing sub-market for immigrants of a specific ethnicity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May constrain immigrants housing choices.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ease of access to housing for immigrant-ethnics. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Under certain conditions, may “Ghettoize” immigrant/minorities.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustains “community life” and helps foster social networks, neighbourliness, mutual support and recreation, particularly for stay-at-home women, reducing immigrants’ isolation and facilitating their resettlement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inhibits social mixing with others and participation in the mainstream culture(s). May result in a mono-culture community.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotes the viability of community-based facilities, services and institutions with the concentration of consumers and self-help initiatives (e.g., eldercare, day care centres, religious congregations, mosques, temples). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Isolates the children of immigrants and impedes their acculturation to diversity.

Table 1: Advantages and disadvantages of ethnic enclaves (Continued)

<u>Advantages</u>	<u>Disadvantages</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lays the basis of ethnic economy and the emergence of ethnic business districts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Restricts immigrant employment opportunities by limiting their encounters and opportunities to network with people of different backgrounds.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promotes cultural and physical diversity of a city's neighbourhood, creates centres of interest and entertainment for the city as a whole. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Impedes the social integration and growth of civic life of the city/society.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Helps reduce the suburban monotony and sameness by fostering "cultural landscapes." 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Runs the risk of becoming a tourist area.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides an economy of scale to offer health and health-related services. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> May stereotype families or the entire community regarding an illness or disability; may restrict individuals or families in asking for help as the issue or illness (especially domestic, psychological and mental) may be a taboo in the community.

Traditionally, the inner city played an important role as a "port of entry" and reception area for immigrants. Ethnic concentration historically has been seen as a way to retain mutual support from co-ethnic people and avoid the potential discrimination from the dominant group. Today, this is no longer the typical trajectory for immigrants, who bypass the traditional inner city focal points and directly settle in suburban areas, either in a dispersed pattern or retaining the concentration in ethnic clusters or "ethnoburbs," a term generated by Li (1998b).

Due to the complexity and dynamism of adaptation processes by different ethnocultural groups, it is hard to depict immigrants' settlement patterns, or answer "why some groups concentrate in specific areas of the city while others are widely dispersed" (Kobayashi, 1993, p.145). Several intertwined factors, including heterogeneous regional background, varying economic class and other factors, may affect the convergence or divergence of their settlement.

The following three theoretical frameworks have been generally accepted for the formation of ethnic concentrations: Spatial assimilation model, place stratification theory and choice. Canadian scholars tend to subscribe to spatial assimilation and choice theories.

According to the spatial assimilation model, residential segregation reflects group differences in socioeconomic status, such as education, income and occupational standing. New immigrants often enter the host society at the bottom of the socioeconomic ladder and are therefore restricted to poor neighbourhoods, where cheap housing, kinship ties and community bonds unite them with other new immigrants of the same origin. As immigrants acquire greater economic resources, they convert these resources into higher-quality housing and neighbourhoods with more and better amenities. Since the non-immigrant majority usually dominates such areas, the move to better housing is usually associated with exit from immigrant enclaves and, hence, “assimilation” (Massey and Denton, 1985, p. 94).

Spatial assimilation does not always occur, however. To cite one example, building on the historical experience of American Blacks, place stratification theory highlights the constraints and restrictions imposed on racial minority groups’ residential choices by more advantaged groups through various discriminatory practices (Alba and Logan, 1993; Logan, 1978; Massey and Denton, 1993). The place stratification theory, therefore, implies that group membership, in addition to income and other sociodemographic characteristics, affects the locational attainment of racial minorities because majority groups use mechanisms of exclusion to maintain social distance between themselves and racial minorities.

Residential concentration could also be the result of choice. Own-group preference in choosing neighbours, either on the part of minority group members to stay in proximity to each other, or on the part of dominant group members to practise avoidance of other ethnic groups, preserves residential segregation (Clark, 1989; Farley et al., 1997; Krysan and Farley, 2002; Schelling, 1971). Own-group preferences seem increasingly important in residential concentration (Fong and Wilkes, 1999; Logan et al., 2002), especially as some new immigrant groups with high levels of human and financial capital are quickly able to realize their preference for residing with own-group members in neighbourhoods with high socioeconomic status.

2.1 Social Implications

Unlike the U.S., in Canada there has been more emphasis on the positive role of ethnic segregation in enhancing the institutional completeness and ultimate integration of immigrant communities. According to Qadeer (2003) and Qadeer and Kumar (2006), the social advantages of ethnic enclaves outweigh their disadvantages. According to these two authors, in the Canadian context, ethnic enclaves are largely expressions of preferences, common interests, social networks and the cultural and/or religious needs of their residents. They serve as the basis for their integration into the Canadian economy and society. Ethnic enclaves are especially helpful to women, children and seniors, particularly those who are not fluent in English and who are accustomed to the supportive presence of friends and relatives.

Although ethnic enclaves are rich in social capital, mutual support networks and community organizations, they can also be a barrier to residents' meeting and networking in the mainstream society and economy. In most cases, ethnic enclaves are a form of voluntary segregation, not an instrument or product of overt discrimination.

Hou and Picot (2004) raise the spectre of ethnic concentration as places of social isolation. They say such neighbourhoods could reduce minorities' incentives to acquire the host-country language or to gain work experience and educational qualifications. For them, neighbourhoods with a large concentration of visible minorities tend to have poor economic status, in terms of high unemployment rates and low income rates.

Kazemipur and Halli analyzed the causes of rising poverty rates in Canada in the 1990s, particularly in urban areas. Their comprehensive study led them to the conclusion that, "spatial concentration of poverty in Canada has not followed the American Cities" (Kazemipur and Halli 2000, p.136). They further conclude that, "race does not influence social trends drastically in Canada... even ethnicity is far from creating rigid boundaries among people" (p. 157).

The Ley et al. (1997) study of the 1971-91 period examined the existence of immigrants as an underclass in Canadian cities. The concept of underclass is more wide ranging than poverty of individuals and families. It refers to multiple deprivations and has a spatial dimension. Neighbourhoods with high rates of welfare, unemployment, mother-led families, deficient work or education skills are the elements that define the term "underclass" (Ley and Smith 1997, p.1).

Measuring the incidence of these indicators at the census tract (CT) level in Toronto, Montreal and Vancouver, Ley and Smith concludes that, "while immigration plays a role in membership of multiple-deprived tracts, deprivation displays far greater heterogeneity and indeed a majority of members in such tracts are native-born (Ley and Smith 1997, p.35). They observe that the "underclass concept has limited purchase in Canada's largest cities" (p. 41). Both of these studies point to the weak correlation between immigrant concentrations and neighbourhood poverty. It points out that broader economic conditions and societal institutions have a determining influence on poverty and deprivation.

More recently the United Way of Greater Toronto examined the geography of neighbourhood poverty in the city of Toronto, not the Census Metropolitan Area (CMA), for the period 1981-2001. From our perspective, the key findings are: 1) poor neighbourhoods are concentrated in the city and they have increased over time, 2) visible minority and immigrant families make up a large percentage of the total poor families in these neighbourhoods (United Way of Greater Toronto 2004, p.4).

On the surface, this report may suggest that immigrant neighbourhoods and poverty are one and the same. But on reflection, it is obvious that because immigrants typically start at the socioeconomic bottom, and with continual immigration, many poor are likely to be immigrants. Yet it does not mean that most immigrants are poor. Furthermore ethnicity is a characteristic of both immigrants and Canadian-born residents. Therefore, ethnic enclaves are not just places of immigrants' concentration and poverty.

Myles and Hou's (2003) study based on micro data from the 1996 Census concludes that the residential settlement patterns of South Asians and, strikingly, Blacks fit the expectations of the conventional spatial assimilation model rather well. Initial settlement is in disadvantaged immigrant enclaves from which longer-term, more successful migrants subsequently exit as they purchase homes in more affluent neighbourhoods. Although Toronto's "black neighbourhoods" are decidedly poorer than other minority neighbourhoods, most Blacks do not live in these neighbourhoods. In contrast, Chinese immigrants move quickly to purchase homes in somewhat more affluent and enduring ethnic communities.

Haan's (2005) study looks at how ethnic enclaves alter residential behaviour, finding that only a quarter of all the ethnic groups studied consider proximity to same-group members as part of their decision to locate themselves and buy homes. Among them, Chinese and Italians have above-average levels of ethnic capital and tend to seek homes close to other group members in their homeownership decision.

2.2 Economic implications

In the 20th century, ethnic enclaves like Chinatowns and Little Italies provided a social and economic refuge to new immigrants (Portes et al., 1985; Murdie and Teixeira, 2000). The economic and social significance of ethnic enclaves was apparent at a time when immigrants primarily consisted of manual labourers, and the places of residence and places of work were closely located.

Galster, Metzger and Waite (1999) note that positive features of ethnic concentrations might include the encouragement of: 1) social capital formation; 2) informal on-the-job training and business apprenticeship with ethnically based companies; 3) higher productivity in these companies by clustering same-language workers; 4) a denser network of job-sharing information, and 5) acknowledgement and valuation by ethnic employers of foreign education credentials. However, some potential negative effects may be associated with working within an ethnic economy (Galster, Metzger and Waite 1999). Employment in an ethnic economy is often associated with poor working conditions and low wages (Reitz 1990).

The impact of the ethnic economy and ethnic networks may vary among groups, depending on their group cohesion and the nature of the ethnic economy. For instance, in Toronto, the Chinese ethnic economy developed from a traditional Chinese economy that was primarily small scale, located in Chinese neighbourhoods, and focused on consumer goods and services, to one that is rapidly diversifying in size, location and industrial structure. Chinese businesses in finance, real estate, insurance and high technology are also emerging (Lo et al. 2000). In contrast to the Chinese population, which is relatively homogenous in their traditional culture and language, Blacks in Toronto are fragmented by language, country of origin and religion. Blacks' neighbourhood concentration is lower than other major visible minority groups. Compared with other groups, Black businesses rely less on their community resources, are more dispersed and tend to be smaller in size (Teixeira 2000).

Another line of reasoning argues that there is a diminishing role of neighbourhoods in people's daily lives, as contemporary society witnesses an ever-expanding spatial scale of social relations (Bolt, Burgers & van Kempen 1998; Qadeer and Kumar, 2006). People now can function in different social networks that are not strongly limited by physical barriers and spatial obstacles. Social ties and economic opportunities are no longer attached or confined to the neighbourhood. Applying this line of reasoning would suggest that ethnic enclaves have a reduced influence on the social and economic integration of immigrants.

In contemporary societies, the association between living ethnic enclaves and immigrants' labour market has been explored in the literature, but no consensus has been reached. In fact, Hou and Picot's (2003) national study shows that generally the association between living in enclaves and employment earnings was negative and generally not significant. However, they found that a few ethnic groups behave differently. The relationship between living in enclaves and employment earnings is the weakest among Chinese immigrants, but is negative, and is strong among Black immigrants.

2.3 Health implications

Literature connecting ethnic enclave and health is sparse. What exists is inconclusive. Contrary to the prevailing notion of the "healthy immigrant effect," Glazier et al. (2004) noted a considerably higher reliance on hospitals and potentially more serious morbidity rates in areas with high proportions of immigrants. While Hou and Chen (2003) found that there is a significant relationship between poor perceived health and low income and income inequality at the neighbourhood level. A follow-up study by Hou and Myles (2004) found that controlling socioeconomic factors at an individual level mitigated this effect.

Hou and Myles' 2004 and 2005 studies found that individuals were able to gain positive health benefits from sharing neighbourhoods with higher incomes and better-educated neighbours, irrespective of their personal income levels. These studies do help establish a relationship between poor perceived health and some effect at the neighbourhood level in the immigrant population, but the studies are limited in their assessment to a few socio-economic determinants (like income and education). But we know that social capital, informal and formal sources of affiliation, social cohesion and power relations all come into play as social determinants; the assessment of these factors at the neighbourhood level is an essential part of solving the neighbourhood-health question (Cattell, 2001; Coburn 2000).

A recent national-level study by Abada et al. (2007) examines the effects of neighbourhood concentration of racial minorities on general health status and depressive symptoms of Canadian adolescents. They also examine the role of perceived neighbourhood cohesion and the extent to which it contributes to adolescent health. The findings show that the racial concentration of ethnic minorities represents a health disadvantage for visible minority youth while perceived neighbourhood cohesion is found to be a protective factor for both health outcomes. Perceived neighbourhood cohesion is beneficial for the general health status (but not depression) of adolescents residing in neighbourhoods with a high concentration of racial minorities.

2.4 Ethnic concentration and public services

According to a recent report by the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (2009), the settlement patterns of new immigrant groups outside higher-density, inner-city neighbourhoods have created challenges in allocating services that provide orientation to new immigrants and help them learn an official language, find jobs, locate housing, place children in the education system and develop social networks.

Although not directly focused on ethnic concentrations, the Lo et al. (2007) study of immigration services in the Toronto Census Metropolitan Area (CMA) concluded that there exists a spatial mismatch between the supply of and demand for settlement services in the CMA, more so for newer immigrant groups than for other groups. Even for groups with longer immigration histories, more services are needed in suburbs. In terms of service needs, the study found few differences between those living in the city core and those in the suburbs in terms of official language skills and unemployment or underemployment rates. However, an overwhelming majority of agencies offering employment services were still in the city core. Language instruction courses funded Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) had suburbanized, but their capacity had not caught up with the population increases in those areas.

Ethnic concentrations could help to organize services for a particular ethnic group. For instance, they could offer services in one or two languages spoken in the enclave and deploy caseworkers who are familiar with particular cultures into the enclaves.

Conversely, enclaves can be barriers. Enclaves can create a restrictive environment in which immigrants cannot express themselves individually.

Some immigrants do not seek help from government agencies because they do not want their compatriots to know the kinds of help they are seeking, especially if the help is related to financial, domestic, psychological and mental issues that may be considered taboo in their cultures. Internal supports do exist in ethnic enclaves but sometimes misinformation and rumours can compound simple problems.

In terms of the physical implications, ethnic concentrations could significantly impact the overall structure of a metropolis area. Ethnic concentrations tend to spawn ethnic economies and a wide range of ethnic commercial and service establishments as well as religious and cultural institutions. All this could affect the current metropolitan structure, especially the traditional hierarchy of standardized neighbourhood, community and regional shopping centres.

Ethnic concentrations could also have an effect on the demand for certain types of municipal, provincial and federal government services because of its “critical mass” effect, i.e., the presence of a large number of persons of similar background and needs in one area. More studies are needed to systematically understand the physical and social structure of such neighbourhoods and how it changes over time, their role in the overall development of a region and their special service needs.

3. Mixed Land Use, Compact Development and Social Interaction

There is an abundance of research in the planning literature on mixed use, compact development and their benefits. However, very little research exists that explicitly details the “right mix” of urban elements in order to promote social interaction in an “ethnically” diverse community. Whatever few exist are U.S.-based.

Through the few reports on social interaction, it is apparent that housing mix is seen as a key feature of a socially-inclusive and interactive community. Throughout the U.S., U.K. and Australia, social plans have been developed and implemented that seek to mix income groups through different housing forms and tenures. The results are mixed, with some criticizing this policy as a means to make poverty and deprivation invisible from census figures, with others noting that social mixing does not ensure inclusive and greater access to better opportunities for marginalized groups. It has been documented that even within these “mixed” communities, a new experience of stigmatization occurs that reinforces deprivation and social exclusion. In terms of local institutions, support for faith-based service providers is considered one of the keys to promoting greater service access for newcomers, but there is little said about how this might influence social interaction.

It would seem likely in the context of multiculturalism, that when planning and service practices ensure the participation and cooperation of ethnic minority and immigrant communities, there is greater potential for social inclusion, though it is not certain how this might affect social interaction.

Evidence assembled by Myers (2001) suggests that the growing Latino population can help planners create more compact cities in California. The same amount of population growth requires many fewer housing units and less acreage among Latinos than among non-Latinos. Latino workers are also much more likely to be compact commuters travelling shorter distances by transit, bicycle or walking. Myers also finds that Latinos lost much of their compact-city lifestyle orientation over time. It is new immigrants who are most oriented toward compact-city behaviour; after 20 years of residence in the U.S. their propensity to live in apartments or to be compact commuters declines even below the level of non-Latinos. Myers attributes this reorientation to upward mobility, residential assimilation and adaptation to the main lifestyle in California. In his opinion, what is required, in essence, is a redefinition of what constitutes the desired middle-class lifestyle in California, so that when immigrants spatially assimilate they have other models than suburban sprawl, for example, new urbanist communities.

According to Yu’s (2004) study, in the U.S., many immigrants come from countries of high residential density, and may therefore prefer high-density environments. This idea has been echoed in Canada as well, but has not been empirically tested. Bae’s (2004) study also concludes that most immigrants were (prior to their entry in the United States)

accustomed to living in high-density living environments. She suggests that if developers were more proactive with “smart growth” projects, immigrant households may make an easier demand match to the new sources of supply.

New urbanist communities such as Cornell in the Town of Markham and others in Canada and the U.S. supposedly present good examples of desirable mix of land use. They are based on principles of the Charter of New Urbanism that support compact, pedestrian-friendly and mixed-use neighbourhoods. So, what do the studies say about social interaction in new urbanist communities? Grant (2005) concludes that new urbanism fails to address issues of power, equity and participation. “It’s potential to contribute to wider theoretical debates is reduced. Its claim to have discovered the formula for the good community may be challenged by those who believe that good communities have to be much more than beautiful places” (p. xxi). She argues further that the costs of new urbanist design are high enough to make such housing less affordable, that making suburbs pretty does not stop sprawl, and that good design cannot cure a sick society and undo injustice.

Perhaps future studies could look closely at the intersection of new urbanist developments and ethnicity. Do immigrants prefer to buy homes and live in new urbanist communities? The fact is that most new immigrants to Canada come from countries where the physical environment is largely the result of intensification, mixed land use, compact community design and higher-density housing forms. And they are presumably more familiar with the use of transit. Are the immigrants with a history of living in these environments more open to planning initiatives like mixed-use, intensification and compact developments, which are relatively new to this country when applied to new developments?

3.1 Housing choices of immigrant families

The housing choices of immigrants will depend on their immigration class, lifestyle stages, trend in upward mobility, length of stay in the country and affordability.

It is generally held that as immigrants assimilate language, values and habits in North American countries they develop preferences for suburban single-detached communities. This view used to be part of a widely-accepted assumption that suburbanization of settled immigrants meant increasing dispersion away from ethnic enclaves, and “spatial/residential assimilation” within a largely White suburban middle class. This view is now opposed by a growing body of evidence that some groups of immigrants have developed new suburban ethnic enclaves.

Why are new immigrants developing suburban ethnic enclaves, where they hope to maintain ethnic networks, when they could perhaps more easily settle already well-established ones in the central city? It is generally thought that upwardly mobile

immigrants, when seeking to own homes, are discouraged from buying in the central city by the lack of affordable housing (for first-buyers). Like many other buyers looking in the suburbs, they are therefore, partly driven by the relative affordability of suburban homes. But what seems more influential is not the market restriction from owning in the central city, but a widespread preference for lower-density suburban homes. While there is practically no research documenting housing preferences of immigrants, surveys of the general population (in the U.S.) generally indicate overwhelming preference for low-density, single-detached homes in the suburbs.

The U.S. literature focuses on the extent of segregation within the central city and suburbs, as well as a highly-politicized debate over the relationship between immigration and suburban sprawl. In Canada, on the other hand, research on immigrant housing attainment and emerging spatial patterns of immigrants' settlement emphasizes the differential experiences of immigrant groups, usually based around their socioeconomic experiences in Canadian cities.

In the Canadian context, the settlement patterns of ethnic groups in Toronto have changed considerably in the last century. Some groups, such as the Jews, Chinese, Italians, Portuguese and Greeks, who arrived prior to the 1960s, settled initially in inner city immigrant reception areas. There, they formed distinctive, culturally compact and institutionally complete ethnic neighbourhoods. Later, these groups moved to the suburbs, with most retaining some form of segregated settlement pattern. Some groups, such as the Jews and Italians, moved outwards in a sectoral fashion, drawing their commercial cores and institutional structures with them. Others, like the Portuguese, resegregated in the suburbs but retained a strong visible presence, both residentially and commercially, in the inner city. Still others, such as the Chinese, developed a nucleated pattern of Chinatowns initially in the inner city and more recently in the suburbs.

Preston et al. (2007) points to the direct settlement of recent Hong Kong Chinese immigrants in Toronto's suburbs as a significant shift in the residential patterns of immigrants to Toronto.

The Hong Kong immigrants, as well as other post-1960 immigrant groups, have largely bypassed the traditional inner city immigrant reception areas in favour of immediate settlement in Toronto's suburbs. Their economic status and the nature of Toronto's housing market determine the residential choices of these groups as well as the constraints that they face in Toronto's restrictive rental market. The majority of immigrants now settle directly in suburban areas.

Different ethnic groups perform differently in the housing market. The rate of homeownership varies from one immigrant to the other. In 1996, there was virtually no difference in homeownership rates between immigrant and non-immigrant households. Both had rates of about 60%.

For immigrants, however, there was substantial variation by place of birth. Of those countries above the average for all immigrants, those from Italy had the highest rate of homeownership (95 %) followed by Hong Kong, Portugal, Germany, the People's Republic of China, The Netherlands, The U.K. and India. The list represents both early post World War II immigrants and more recent arrivals.

There is no clear trend as to how immigrant families make their housing choices. According to Preston et al. (2007), immigrants and refugees form three housing classes that consist of successful homeowners, households whose housing situations are financially precarious and vulnerable renters. Their study finds that affordability is definitely an issue in the first six months of arrival. Their analysis confirms that the slow rate at which immigrants' incomes now converge with those of the Canadian-born in the Toronto metropolitan area contributes to their financial vulnerability in the housing market.

The Preston et al. (2007) study further confirms that family-class immigrants (those who have family already in Canada) in multiple-family households and business-class immigrants (investors, entrepreneurs and self-employed) are more likely than any other class of immigrants to be living in owner-occupied accommodation within six months of arrival. Both groups also have more financial assets at this stage of settlement, reporting higher incomes than other classes of immigrants. For family-class, living in a multiple-family household may have provided access to pooled household resources, including a home owned by family members who immigrated earlier to Canada. Skilled immigrants tend to face severe financial difficulties at the beginning of their housing careers. The patterns of housing conditions across ethnic origins and visible minority subgroups vary substantially, in part because of their household composition and immigration class.

3.2 Trend of high persons per unit (PPU) among immigrant households

The trend of high persons per household will depend on several factors, particularly, housing affordability, length of stay in the country, supply volumes and labour market experiences of household members. It also depends on cultural preferences of different ethnic groups of immigrants.

According to Yu's (2004) study in the U.S., many immigrants come from countries of high residential density, and may therefore prefer high-density environments. This idea has been echoed in Canada as well, but has not been empirically tested. Immigrants also may depend on social networks and ethnic supports that are more accessible in ethnic residential districts (Logan et al., 2002; Newbold, 1999).

In addition for new immigrants who have no acquaintance and do not speak English, it may be challenging to find housing outside ethnic enclaves. For these immigrants, residence in an outlying suburban area may not be as attractive as it is to native-born residents and White immigrants.

Yu (2004) concludes that, over time, immigrant preferences to resemble the preferences of the native-born (that is, desire for low-density suburban single-detached homes). This conclusion closely resembles sociologists' expectations that immigrants would move away from the central city ethnic enclaves where they initially settled with time and increasing prosperity (Adelman et al. 2001; Massey and Denton 1997). This research is rooted in Massey and Denton's notions of "spatial assimilation" – basically, locational proof of successful immigrant settlement and acculturation (Massey and Denton 1995).

Immigrants' closer resemblance to the residential behaviour of native-born White residents is a desirable outcome from the perspective of immigrants' residential assimilation, but may present a concern to urban land use. New immigrants have been instrumental in revitalizing many old neighbourhoods.

These new arrivals have provided a solid base upon which urban planners can revitalize urban areas. In one possible scenario, the new immigrants would maintain their preferences for compact-city living, develop a sustained attachment to the high-density areas, and eventually transform those older neighbourhoods into more attractive residential areas. It is then possible to draw more native-born residents back to the city, thus reversing the trend of sprawl. If planners consider urban sprawl as a negative form of urban development (at least this is true in the Canadian context), they need to recognize the unique characteristics of immigrants and better understand their preferences for compact-city living.

Yu's study further tells us that compared with Whites, immigrants on average have a higher residential density and a lower probability of residing in new residential districts. While homeownership and residential mobility propel the process of spatial dispersion, immigrants do not suburbanize substantially faster than native-born and White immigrants. Having said this, Yu finds large differences between Latino and Asian immigrants. Asian immigrants are more likely to reside in areas of low density and new housing than Latino immigrants. In addition, the duration of U.S. residence is positively associated with suburbanization. For immigrants, the longer one resides in the U.S., the higher the probability of spatial dispersion. It is unclear, however, the extent to which the residential differences are due to the differences in socioeconomic status and household conditions.

Myers' (2001) study of Latinos in California tells us that household sizes of Latinos were substantially larger than non-Latinos, implying that more than one-third fewer housing units are required to house the same number of Latino residents than non-Latinos. His study further concludes that the household size differential is not function of poverty. Instead, it is likely a matter of custom among Latinos to live in larger family groups. In the Canadian context, there is some preliminary evidence from the Region of Peel that suburban municipalities like Mississauga and Brampton are experiencing this phenomenon, largely in the South Asian concentrations.

The following Tables 2 and 3, produced by the author using 2006 Census data, show the average household size and percentage of households in multiple family situations in the Toronto CMA by major ethnicities. South Asian households are clearly above the average household size across the Toronto CMA. Many of these large households are a result of two or more family units living together under one roof.

Table 4 indicates that increasing numbers of households in Peel now include more than two family units. Since 1971, the proportion of multiple-family households has doubled in Peel. While there is little research available, multiple-family households represent an economic well-being strategy, relating to the labour market conditions, immigration as well as cultural arrangements. Whether this current trend will continue in the future is hard to predict. However, the relatively high average household size and incidents of multiple families could be attributed to the high proportion of South Asians living in Peel Region (15.7% in 2001 vs. 23.6% in 2006; an increase of 75.9% over five years). This trend is likely to continue as long as Peel remains the major destination for immigrants from South Asia.

Table 2: Major Ethnic Clusters by Average Household Size

	Avg. HH Size (People)
All Households	2.8
Chinese	3.0
South Asian	3.4
Italian	3.1
Jewish	2.8
Portuguese	2.6

Table 3: Major Ethnic Clusters by Percentage Multiple-family Households

	Total	Multiple-family %
Toronto CMA	1,797,365	4.2
Chinese	189,665	6.9
South Asian	257,135	8.9
Italian	95,305	5.1
Jewish	57,285	2
Portuguese	33,145	5

Table 4: Household structure in Peel 1976-2006

	1971	%	1981	%	1991	%	2006	%
Multi-Family Households	1,691	2.5	3,255	2.2	7,995	3.5	23,040	6.4

Based on national-level data, Bae's (2004) U.S. study concludes with the following five assertions:

- Recent immigration in the U.S. is limited to a few metropolitan areas, most of which are relatively high-density and are either becoming more dense or are sprawling much less than the national metropolitan average.
- The household size of immigrants is significantly larger than that of the native born (Latino-origin households are typically about twice as large as the White and African-American native born). Therefore, they contribute to higher dwelling densities (PPU) independent of land consumption effects.
- Immigrants are initially more likely to live in the central cities than in the suburbs when compared with the native-born, and hence contribute more to compactness; they provide an important offset to suburbanization and exurbanization trends.
- In the longer run, many of them may begin to adopt the lifestyles and the residential preferences of the native-born (spatial assimilation).
- Most immigrants were (prior to their entry in the U.S.) accustomed to living in high density living environments. If developers were more proactive with "smart growth" projects, immigrant households may make an easier demand match to the new sources of supply.

According to Light, this "place entrepreneur" negotiated the dual desire of Gujaratis for sustaining an ethnic enclave whilst owning a home in the suburbs. Teixeira's account of Portuguese real estate agents in Toronto documents how real estate agents have helped to sustain the Portuguese composition of the older enclave areas, while expanding into the suburbs.

Although based on a small sample, Agrawal's (2006) study suggests that immigrants, especially South Asians, tend not to live in neighbourhoods dominated by South Asians. They prefer to live in good, stable and affluent neighbourhoods, primarily in suburban areas. There is also a tendency among South Asians to either live or desire to live in a horizontally or vertically extended family in the future. The study further states that among immigrants, acculturation, upward mobility (and thus spatial assimilation) and life cycle stages (that match average Canadians' life cycle stages) to a large extent determine their housing behaviour and choices.

Housing needs expand rapidly in the early stage of adulthood, as a result of life cycle events such as marriage and child-rearing. Along with growing household size, families are likely to express a strong desire for larger dwelling space and become more sensitive to the social and physical environment of the residence. In contrast, empty-nesters or older families have a lower propensity for space (Morris and Winter 1975). Therefore,

young unmarried individuals and widows may find it more convenient to live in the central city, while married couples with children may desire to reside in a suburban environment (Foote et al. 1960; Kochera 1999b; Lansing and Mueller 1964).

If the suburbanization patterns of immigrants are analyzed closely, making concessions for the lack of precise spatial units in the suburbs, it may in fact be true that immigrants are becoming more segregated – even in the suburbs. Against the traditional expectation that immigrant suburbanization, as a noted form of assimilation, leads to dispersion. Lo and Wang (1997) for instance argue that immigrant and ethnic concentrations are increasing not diminishing in Toronto.

We can conclude from the above discussion that further detailed research is needed at a pan-Canadian level to explore the propensity of higher PPU among all or certain groups of immigrants. Their housing and location choices must be explored longitudinally in detail as well.

The future studies should take into account a multitude of factors such as immigrants' race/ethnicity, length of stay in the country, geographic location, life cycle stages as well as their level of acculturation.

4. Research Issues, Priorities and Possible Policy Directions

Very little in the existing literature informs us on the issues related to physical and social geography of neighbourhoods and the delivery of human services. Also, any future trend about housing choices of immigrants and the idea of vertical and horizontal families living together is difficult to predict. A number of factors could come into play including the availability of type of housing, cultural preferences, immigration policies and so on. There is a need for further research on all of the above areas that can systematically explain the underlying causes of each of the phenomena we are witnessing today.

With respect to services to immigrants, over time their needs are largely undifferentiated from the needs of the mainstream at large in the type and scope of services. However, there is certainly room for the delivery of services to be culturally sensitive. The impact of ethnicity on demand for services comes into play at the level of operational policies and program management, and not so much in terms of types of services.

Immigrants form a large segment of new ethnic groups that change and grow over time. Their needs are not static. What they need on arrival may not be required a year or two later. Every passing year results in the subsuming of immigrants' needs into those of the mainstream. All this has an impact on their service needs, housing and locational choice and their household size. But ethnicity as a dimension of population requires cultural and linguistic sensitivity, particularly in the delivery of social infrastructure and in designing public policies. Appropriate language training and the streamlining of procedures could help immigrants in accessing services easily.

Cultural sensitivity may be formally operationalized at two levels, 1) by increasing diversity training of frontline staff; and 2) by reviewing program standards and planning norms to make them inclusive of immigrants and ethnics. Some of the standards and norms may originate from provincial and federal governments. The Region's role in such cases may be that of advocate for changes.

Social geography of neighbourhoods can help organize services in the cultural and linguistic idioms of the residents. For instance, the Regional government could offer services in one or two languages spoken in the enclave and deploy caseworkers who are familiar with particular cultures into the enclaves. Ethnic concentrations do not precipitate any new demand, but could come into play in the supply of services.

Concentration of immigrants of a particular ethnicity in an area can facilitate effective delivery of linguistically and culturally relevant services to targeted clients. Region of Peel should examine the feasibility of identifying and branding enclaves for programming educational, child and public health and other human services in culturally sensitive ways.

Suitable employment is the primary need of immigrants, both on arrival and after settling down. Of course, it is also the need of those Canadian-born. Peel Region has witnessed the emergence of ethnic economic niches in the form of businesses and industrial/service establishments producing ethnic goods and services. Such “ethnic economies” tend to be based in enclaves. Employment needs of immigrants are largely looked at as a matter of finding pre-existing jobs. How about being proactive and promoting immigrants’ entrepreneurship?

Such a role would include programs of promoting and supporting small businesses, establishing business incubators and initiating employment development and mentoring programs. The Region of Peel, in partnership with other agencies, may review the possibility of formulating and organizing business development programs for immigrants, in particular, and planning appropriate physical facilities.

“Ethno-specific” agencies and religious institutions could address some of the problems faced by immigrants and newcomers. Ethno-specific agencies, both those fostered by provincial and local government initiatives, and those arising from within the ethnic communities, have significant beneficial effects in boosting service utilization. The impact on client well-being is more difficult to assess, because of outcome measurement problems. However, the available evidence does suggest that in many instances, services provided by ethno-specific agencies are of at least equivalent quality, and may be more effective because they are more closely suited to client needs. One study suggests that cost efficiencies are achieved because the burden on emergency services is reduced. Many specific features of models for ethno-specific agencies have not been evaluated fully (e.g., forms of inter-agency cooperation).

Spatial location of services may also help, especially, locating services in ethnically concentrated areas. But of course the Region must be aware of the transient nature of demographic and socioeconomic nature of enclaves. Service agencies and the services offered must change according to the changing needs and demands of the residents of the concentration.

Partnering with other agencies and different levels of government and consolidating services across jurisdictions of government will further strengthen settlement programs. Such partnerships would allow public professionals to network and share their experiences and knowledge about various delivery-related issues among the suppliers of the services. Multi-service centres such as the Malton Neighbourhood Services and Dixie Bloor Neighbourhood Centre should be used as a model for any future partnerships. These centres offer a variety of programs funded and managed by different levels of government.

For instance, they offer the federal government’s LINC program; the province of Ontario’s Early Years program; the Region of Peel’s Families First program; employment programs in partnership with Region of Peel’s Ontario Works; settlement support like employment, counselling and translation, youth programs; and services such as mentoring and seniors’ programs, such as caregiver information, education and language classes.

Peel Youth Village is another example of a successful model that offers residential as well as supportive program components such as recreation, employment, health and child care, in a single setting.

Further detailed research is needed at a pan-Canadian level to explore the propensity of higher PPU among all or certain immigrant groups. Immigrants' housing and locational choices must also be explored in detail, longitudinally. The issues around compact development and household size raise a number of professional as well as ethical questions. How much of the compactness desired by planners should be focused on the lifestyle of only one population group? Immigrants clearly change their preferences over time due to upward mobility and/or spatial assimilation. And they should be allowed to select the locations and housing types that best meet their needs at the time.

But the question remains: what interventions and strategies can planners employ that build on and take advantage of the attributes/propensities of compactness among certain groups of immigrants? What can planners do to promote the idea of compact development to include the participation of non-immigrants? To do otherwise would be to build a divided city.

Crowded housing (or high PPU) poses another dilemma for planners. If the situation is not viewed as a problem by the affected cultural group, should planners still treat it as a problem? Should they adopt policies to encourage or deter such housing conditions? If so, what could those policies be and how can they be crafted so that they are not discriminatory in nature?

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