

**Institutional solutions to jurisdictional fragmentation:  
The implications of regional special purpose bodies for how city-regions  
are governed in Canada**

**by**

**Tamara Krawchenko**

**A dissertation submitted to  
The Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Affairs  
Carleton University  
Ottawa, Ontario  
Canada**

**in partial fulfillment of the requirements  
for the degree of**

**Doctor of Philosophy**

**in**

**Public Policy: Political Economy**

**Carleton University, Ottawa**

**©2012**

**Krawchenko, Tamara**



Library and Archives  
Canada

Published Heritage  
Branch

395 Wellington Street  
Ottawa ON K1A 0N4  
Canada

Bibliothèque et  
Archives Canada

Direction du  
Patrimoine de l'édition

395, rue Wellington  
Ottawa ON K1A 0N4  
Canada

*Your file Votre référence*

*ISBN: 978-0-494-89340-1*

*Our file Notre référence*

*ISBN: 978-0-494-89340-1*

#### NOTICE:

The author has granted a non-exclusive license allowing Library and Archives Canada to reproduce, publish, archive, preserve, conserve, communicate to the public by telecommunication or on the Internet, loan, distribute and sell theses worldwide, for commercial or non-commercial purposes, in microform, paper, electronic and/or any other formats.

The author retains copyright ownership and moral rights in this thesis. Neither the thesis nor substantial extracts from it may be printed or otherwise reproduced without the author's permission.

#### AVIS:

L'auteur a accordé une licence non exclusive permettant à la Bibliothèque et Archives Canada de reproduire, publier, archiver, sauvegarder, conserver, transmettre au public par télécommunication ou par l'Internet, prêter, distribuer et vendre des thèses partout dans le monde, à des fins commerciales ou autres, sur support microforme, papier, électronique et/ou autres formats.

L'auteur conserve la propriété du droit d'auteur et des droits moraux qui protègent cette thèse. Ni la thèse ni des extraits substantiels de celle-ci ne doivent être imprimés ou autrement reproduits sans son autorisation.

---

In compliance with the Canadian Privacy Act some supporting forms may have been removed from this thesis.

While these forms may be included in the document page count, their removal does not represent any loss of content from the thesis.

Conformément à la loi canadienne sur la protection de la vie privée, quelques formulaires secondaires ont été enlevés de cette thèse.

Bien que ces formulaires aient inclus dans la pagination, il n'y aura aucun contenu manquant.

Canada

## ABSTRACT

Continued patterns of urbanization are leading to ever larger and more complex urban regions. Regional institutions have arisen as a governance solution to address the problems of coordination across large, jurisdictionally fragmented urban regions. Regional special purpose bodies (RSPBs) are one such regional institutional arrangement. This dissertation examines RSPBs for transportation and transit governance in Canada, through the case studies of Translink (in Greater Vancouver) and Metrolinx (in Greater Toronto and Hamilton). This dissertation adds to the empirical research on the construction of regional political spaces, emerging institutional forms and their resultant implications for urban-regional governance. It focuses on a specific type of institutional shift in urban-regional governance, its causes and its consequences. Ongoing processes of urbanization make regional coordination a pressing issue—particularly in the area of transportation, which is of great importance to the environmental sustainability, social inclusivity, economic development, and livability of city regions. The adoption of RSPBs are symptomatic of the recognition that many aspects of planning are best addressed at a regional scale. They are reflective of an institutional evolution towards a regional ‘policy need,’ which raises the question of what such coordination at the regional scale means for the structure of politics in the longer term.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

To my parents—who are both educators—I give thanks for their constant support and encouragement throughout my many years of studies. My parents have taught me a love of learning and a great respect for education. I am immeasurably grateful for this. I also thank my infinitely patient husband for his support throughout this process.

To my dissertation supervisor—Dr. Christopher Stoney—I thank you for your guidance, patience, engagement and constant humor. I am very fortunate to have had someone so knowledgeable guide me through this process.

I also give great thanks to my committee members—Dr. Susan Phillips and Dr. Fran Klodawsky. You both provided invaluable support and direction throughout this process and pushed me to address difficult questions. I am extremely grateful for this and have a better dissertation because of it.

I would also like to thank my external committee members—Dr. Patricia Ballamingie who provided a valuable and unique perspective to my defense and Dr. Patrick J. Smith whose many thoughtful comments have pushed my thinking on this topic. I also thank Dr. Smith for his graciousness in aiding me with my Vancouver-based research and for speaking with me at length on this topic. Thank you!

I have benefited from a truly interdisciplinary education at the School of Public Policy and Administration. I would like to thank all of my professors there. A special thanks to Dr. Leslie A. Pal (SPPA PhD supervisor)—for all of his direction and encouragement throughout this process.

My research has been in large part based on long interviews with key stakeholders. I would like to thank all of those who participated in this study for their time and insights. I could not have understood this topic without the depth of knowledge these interviews brought.

Finally, I would like to thank the M-dash. I overuse and abuse you. You are my crutch. I could not have written this dissertation without you.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter 1: Institutional responses to urban-regional growth and complexity: The adoption of regional special purpose bodies.....	pg. 1
Chapter 2: Theoretical framework and methods.....	pg. 16
Chapter 3: Governance, complexity and the politics of regionalism.....	pg. 46
Chapter 4: Regional special purpose bodies in comparative perspective: The United Kingdom, the United States and Canada.....	pg. 85
Chapter 5: Greater Vancouver and Translink.....	pg. 122
Chapter 6: Greater Toronto and Hamilton and Metrolinx.....	pg. 178
Chapter 7: Translink and Metrolinx: Interpreting institutional change and impacts.....	pg. 228
Chapter 8: Conclusion.....	pg. 255
Appendix.....	pg. 265
Bibliography.....	pg. 268

## LIST OF CHARTS AND TABLES

- 1.1 Summary of regionalist debates/positions
- 2.1 New institutionalisms: differences and commonalities in their conception of institutions
- 2.2 Comparison of new institutionalist approaches
- 2.3 Combining the frameworks: Historical institutionalism and regime theory
- 2.4 Types and use of evidence/data
- 3.1 Types of regional governance models
- 3.2 Regional governance models: institutionally heavy to institutionally light
- 3.3 Entities along a public-private continuum
- 3.4 Organizational forms in public transport
- 3.5 RSPBs by function
- 3.6 Types of accountability
- 3.7 New versus old regionalism
- 3.8 Corporate versus competitive regionalism
- 4.1 RSPBs for transportation and transit in Western European urban areas with a population over one million
- 4.2 Metropolitan Planning Organizations by State, Count
- 4.3. Census of special district governments for transportation operation by function
- 4.4 Population density for select cities in Canada
- 5.1 Local governments of Metro Vancouver
- 5.2 Local Governments of Metro Vancouver, population 2007
- 5.3 Division of responsibilities under the UTA Act in Greater Vancouver
- 5.4 Timeline of major events up to the creation of Translink
- 5.5 Organizational chart of BC Transit prior to 1998
- 5.6 City of Vancouver, proposed governance models, 1997
- 5.7 Translink organizational chart 1999-2007
- 5.8 Translink organizational chart 2007 to present
- 5.9 Translink: transportation and financial plans
- 5.10 Comparison of existing and proposed funding mechanisms for Translink
- 5.11 Translink: total revenue and transit service hours, 2001-2010
- 6.1 The Greater Toronto Hamilton Area (GTHA)
- 6.2 GTHA Population and population density 2001-2006
- 6.3 Initiatives under the Places to Grow Act (2005)
- 6.4 Metrolinx draft funding strategy overview – potential funding sources
- 6.6 Metrolinx revenue concept 2011-2021

## ACRONYMS

ARL	Air Rail Link (Toronto)
CMA	Census Metropolitan Area
CRP	Calgary Regional Partnerships
GT Transit	Greater Toronto Transit
GTA	Greater Toronto Area
GTHA	Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area
GTSB	Greater Toronto Services Board
GVRD	Greater Vancouver Regional District (Metro Vancouver)
GVTA	Greater Vancouver Transportation Authority
HI	Historical Institutionalism
HOT	High Occupancy Toll
LRSP	Livable Region Strategic Plan
LRT	Light Rail Transit
MoT	Ministry of Transportation
MPP	Member of Provincial Parliament
NDP	New Democratic Party
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
OMB	Ontario Municipal Board
PC	Progressive Conservative
PPP	Public Private Partnership
RAV	Richmond Airport Vancouver line
RCI	Rational Choice Institutionalism
RSPB	Regional Special Purpose Body
SCBCTA	South Coast British Columbia Transportation Authority Act
SI	Sociological Institutionalism
SPB	Special Purpose Body
TfL	Transport for London
TTC	Toronto Transit Commission
UBCM	Union of British Columbia Municipalities
UTA	Urban Transit Association

## Chapter 1 INSTITUTIONAL RESPONSES TO URBAN-REGIONAL GROWTH AND COMPLEXITY: THE ADOPTION OF RSPBS

---

This century, for the first time in history, the world's population will hit a tipping point whereby more people will live in an urban environment than in a rural one. Large metropolises will be an increasingly common feature of modern society. For example, fifty per cent of Canada's population presently lives in the four largest urban-regions—a figure that is only expected to increase (CUTA 2010: 23). A large part of current and projected population and employment growth is taking place in suburban areas, creating pressures to expand jurisdictional boundaries outwards. This has brought the importance of regions and their impact on politics at other scales to the fore (Brenner 2000, 2004; Jonas & Ward 2002; Keating 1997; Kemp 2003; Norris 2001b; Orfield 1997; Sagan & Halker 2005; Savitch & Vogel 2006; Smith 1995; Vogel & Nezelkewicz 2002; Wanop 1995). Experts from diverse backgrounds are lauding regional institutional structures as the solution to the governance of complex, fragmented, metropolitan areas. The adoption of *regional special purpose bodies* (RSPBs) offers one such institutional response.<sup>1</sup> They are part of a discernable shift from local *government* toward urban-regional *governance* across North America and Western Europe (Goldsmith 2005: 243).

RSPBs are being adopted as an institutional response to interjurisdictional collective action problems requiring coordination between diverse actors across a

---

<sup>1</sup> The term 'special purpose body' is used here in a manner that is purposefully broad in scope. It can encompass institutions along the public/private spectrum with a host of different functions (e.g. agencies, boards commissions). At the most basic level, it implies an entity with a specialized policy focus that operates at a regional scale. The various institutional typologies under this umbrella term are further discussed in Chapter IV.

metropolitan region and their constituent political units.<sup>2</sup> They are bodies that are regional in scope with a narrow policy focus. They may be created by local, state/provincial or federal/national governments and may be structured as agencies, boards, commissions, crown corporations, or more informally, as networks. The adoption of RSPBs adds another layer of complexity to regional governance and raises issues concerning: the allocation of resources in a city-region; the appropriate political and administrative units for the provision of such services and policy development; and the structure of decision-making and accountability.

This dissertation examines how RSPBs have been adopted as an institutional strategy for regional governance. It focuses on large-scale RSPBs that have responsibilities for transportation, transit, land use and regional planning.<sup>3</sup> Specifically, it looks at the implication of the adoption of these entities in two of Canada largest cities regions through Metrolinx in Greater Toronto and Hamilton (est. 2006) and Translink in Greater Vancouver (est. 1998). Both entities are multimodal transportation authorities. Metrolinx is a crown agency of the provincial government and presently has a corporate board. Translink is a regional authority but “is not an agent of the government” (SCBCTA Act 1998: 2.3). It too has a corporate board. However, there is an important distinction between the two in that Translink’s board reports to a council of mayors for the region while for Metrolinx, the provincial government fulfills that role. Both organizations command massive budgets, are responsible for huge infrastructure projects,

---

<sup>2</sup> The term ‘special purpose body’ is broad and can imply governance at different geographic scales and with differing institutional composition and policy or service delivery focus. The term ‘bodies’ is used throughout the dissertation to be inclusive of the various institutional types (e.g., agencies, boards, commissions).

<sup>3</sup> Regional planning can take on economic (focused on economic development and growth), social (focus on equity) or physical (so as to take advantage of economies of scale in the provision of services or the harmonization of services) dimensions.

and are in the processes of expanding their revenue sources towards a variety of instruments that have not yet been widely used in Canada. They are institutions that impact quality of life for residents, facilitate goods movement and influence urban form and development. The scale, scope and policy concentrations of these entities are a relatively new phenomenon in Canada and an innovation that can be expected to influence local government reforms elsewhere in the country, meriting an examination of these approaches.

The primary research question that this study seeks to answer is: *what impacts have the adoption of these RSPBs had on governance and policy development across the urban-region?* This research is framed by historical institutionalism and focuses on the historical/political context through which these entities were adopted as a way of understanding and explaining institutional evolution and change. The adoption of RSPBs cannot be considered as whole-scale institutional change. Rather their adoption is conceived of as an institutional shift—an opening up of political space at the regional level. The concepts of layering (where agency and structure are added to an existing institutional framework), drift (where rules remain the same but their impact changes as a result of exogenous conditions) and conversion (where rules formally remain the same, but are interpreted in new ways)—offered by Mahoney and Thelen—are used to structure explanations of incremental institutional change where the resulting structures are understood as molded by existing political and institutional contexts (2010: 8). While both RSPBs are *organizations*, of interest is how they interact with processes of *institutionalisation*, and in doing so, solidify their presence as regional actors.

Through the application of historical institutionalism we see common trajectories across the two case studies wherein their governance structures are reconceived surrounding similar debates on the merits of political versus corporate board representation. Herein lies a tension as these entities struggle with their public versus private nature. We further see a common narrative emerge amongst the two cases studies as they position themselves within the regional political economy and navigate multi level government relations. Both RSPBs are part of the politics of scale where competing interests seek to “to define or redefine the appropriate location of political power and the territorial extent of specific policies and regulation” (McCann 2003: 160). Regime theory is used to examine the nature of these emerging regional collaborations.

This dissertation adds to the empirical research on the construction of regional political spaces, emerging institutional forms and their resultant implications for urban-regional governance. It focuses on a specific type of institutional shift in urban-regional governance, its causes and its consequences. Ongoing processes of urbanization make regional coordination a pressing issue—particularly in the area of transportation, which is of great importance to the environmental sustainability, social inclusivity, economic development, and livability of city regions. The adoption of RSPBs are symptomatic of the recognition that many aspects of planning are best addressed at a regional scale. They are reflective of an institutional evolution towards a regional ‘policy need,’ which raises the question of what such coordination at the regional scale means for the structure of politics in the longer term.

Throughout this dissertation it will be argued and shown that *governance* and *scale* matter. The adoption of RSPBs in our two case studies impacts who makes

decisions, the kinds of decisions that are made, and how they are made. Here we turn to an exploration of where RSPBs fit within the debates on local public administration.

### The emergence of RSPBs as an institutional solution to complexity and jurisdictional fragmentation

There are various ways to deal with the issue of local government fragmentation. One option is amalgamation—the creation of a single, bigger local government structure.

Many Canadian cities experienced such amalgamations in the late 1990s and early 2000s (e.g., amalgamated Toronto). However, there are costs to the creation of amalgamated government. Amalgamation can be expensive, disruptive and unpopular (Sancton 2000).

Debates on local government administration have turned to more flexible solutions through the adoption of specialized regional institutions.<sup>4</sup> Speaking to this, Gerston and Hass comment, “with government boundaries and modern political problems increasingly not confluent, leaders and citizens alike must devise new schemes to overcome old jurisdictional lines” (quoted in Vogel 1997: 141). In a similar vein, Stephens and Wikstrom write that “...virtually all scholars of urban affairs, including those of the public-choice school, agree with reform advocates that some services—such as mass transportation.... due to their basic operating character and the benefits derived from economies of scale—should be delivered on a regional basis” (2000: 490). In this way flexible regionalism is increasingly seen as an institutional solution to the problems of a fragmented metropolis. RSPBs are one such institutional type—they have been adopted

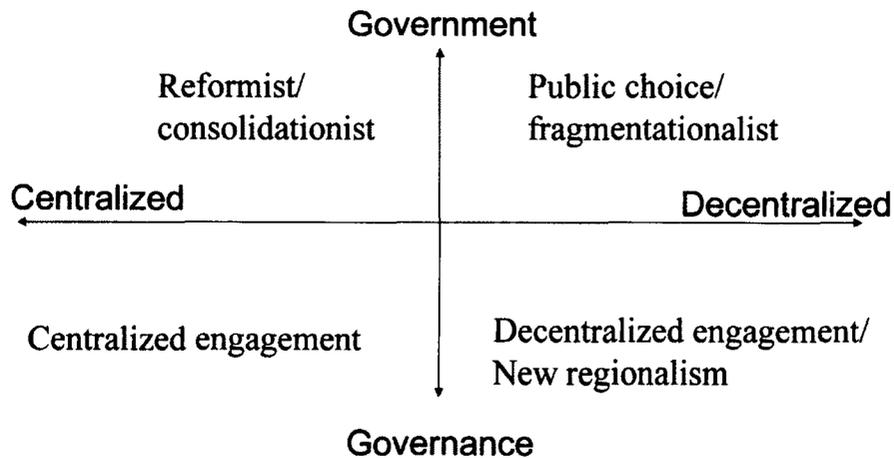
---

<sup>4</sup> There are differing perspectives on how local administration should be organized. Debates in the United States have focused in the past on metropolitan fragmentation (governance bodies that compete to meet citizen preferences) versus consolidation (where boundaries are expanded to cover the functional area). In Canada, little attention has been paid to the former option (Sancton 1994: 45). Much of the debate between these opposing perspectives—public choice (fragmentation) and reformist (consolidation)—has since moved on to a focus on flexible regional institutional solutions.

in many countries with the greatest prevalence seen in the United States. As a basic institutional form, special purpose bodies have been around for a very long time. For example, as early as 1532 a general law was enacted in England authorizing special purpose bodies under the Statute of Sewers (Webb 1922: 61). However, the scale, scope, functions and governance of contemporary RSPBs make them a new institutional phenomenon.

As an institutional type, RSPBs fit into the bottom quadrants of the chart below where they are conceptualized as institutional responses to regional complexity involving multi-level governance relations, task specific jurisdictions, intersecting memberships, multiple jurisdictional levels and flexible institutional design (Hooghe & Marks 2003: 236). The two Canadian case studies of Metrolinx and Translink are a form of *governance* because of how they engage across levels of government and with other actors (e.g., industry and business associations). Both have had, at one time, locally elected representatives on their respective boards and both collaborate with other levels of governments. Their mandates are inter-jurisdictional, as is often their membership.

#### 1.1 Summary of regionalist debates/positions



In a review of multi-disciplinary literature that engages with the concept of ‘governance’ van Kersbergen & van Waarden find that there have been broad-scale shifts with implications for “governing capabilities (i.e., the extent to which societal institutions and spheres can in fact be steered), as well as in styles of governance (i.e., the processes of decision making and implementation, including the manner in which the organizations involved relate to each other)” (2004: 155). The dissertation contributes to this literature through an exploration of such governance shifts across the regional sphere, including: i) downward vertical shifts (from upper level governments to the regional level), ii) upward vertical shifts (from local government actors to the regional level); and iii) horizontal public shifts (from public to semi-public organizations and governance). The adoption of RSPBs, particularly in the Canadian context is a very new phenomenon and as yet, there is very little written about how these entities impact regional governance.

RSPBs are seen as offering both a compromise and a potential for regional collective action amongst diverse actors within a particular policy sphere. Because of the way that they engage with various political scales, they occupy a political space between bodies that have separate (and often conflicting) agendas and interests. They are adopted with the express purpose of conceiving of policy issues along regional lines—a perspective that has distributional consequences. As such, these entities arise out of cooperation and conflict amongst a diverse set of actors, where institutional outcomes “may not reflect the goals of any particular group [but may in fact] be the unintended outcome of conflict among groups or the result of ‘ambiguous compromises’ among actors who can coordinate on institutional means even if they differ on substantive goals” (Schickler 2001; Palier 2005; in Mahoney and Thelen 2010: 8). A major feature of these

institutions is that, while they arise as a response to complexity, they also increase the complexity of the governance process whereby more actors are involved, and lines of accountability may become unclear, particularly where major decisions are made by non-elected board members.

#### The adoption of RSPBs: Rationales

There are multiple rationales for the adoption of RSPBs. This section presents a summary of these rationales as drawn from the (relatively limited) literature on this subject.

First, and foremost is that of a functional rationale: cities continue to grow beyond current jurisdictional boundaries requiring some kind of administrative body to operate in certain policy spheres to either provide programs or services and/or planning capacity (Miller in Atkins & Hamilton eds. 2008; Boddy & Parkinson 2004; Kemp ed. 2003; Lorinc 2006; Schechter 1996). As the preceding section has discussed, RSPBs have arisen as flexible institutions to fill in this gap without requiring formal reorganization of local government. Second, special purpose bodies can be better placed than local government to meet planning or service delivery needs due to their tendency to specialize in a particular policy area (Stephens & Wikstrom 2000). Most special purpose bodies are 'special' in so much as they have been adopted to address a very specific area for policy action. Third, they have been advocated as important institutional mechanisms to address allocative or redistributive concerns across a regional area (Foster 2000, 2001; Sandler 1992). Where there are regional disparities, they may be adopted to overcome spatial inequalities. Fourth, the creation of such bodies has been viewed as a solution to the fractious interests and shortsighted planning of ward-centric systems of local government where there are constant jurisdictional negotiations at the community/neighbourhood

level (Katz 2000). RSPBs are advocated as a way to move the level of decision making away from local politics towards a platform where the 'regional good' can be considered. In doing so, they are thought to provide a level of coordination and collaboration that would be otherwise difficult to achieve across metro-regions where there are entrenched interests. In this way, they represent a shift towards a form of governance understood as the "public administration of inter-jurisdictional relations and third party policy implementation" (Frederickson, 2008: 132).<sup>5</sup>

While RSPBs are sometimes advocated as a way of moving decision making one tier away from ward-centric and parochial local politics, they can also provide a strong counter-weight to planning decisions dominated by business-led regimes, depending on their composition (Stone 1993). Fainstein comments: "movement towards a normative vision of the city requires the development of counter-institutions capable of reframing issues in broad terms and of mobilizing organizational and financial resources to fight for their aims" (1999: 26). In these ways, regional governance structures can be an effective mechanism to address such issues as metropolitan inequalities and environmental preservation because of the joint resources they command and the territory they cover (e.g., Metropolitan Planning Organizations in Oregon, U.S.).

Others have advocated the adoption of such bodies based on the understanding of cities as important nodes in an international system, requiring empowerment to adjust their boundaries and the financial resources to maintain economic competitiveness

---

<sup>5</sup> There are multiple definitions of the term 'governance' across the scholarly literature. Frederickson, in a review of the scholarly and conceptual uses of the term, finds that there are four major definitions. He writes, "i) it is substantively the same as already established perspectives in public administration, although in a different language; ii) it is essentially the study of contextual influences that shape the practice of public administration, rather than the study of public administration; iii) it is the study of interjurisdictional relations and third party policy implementation in public administration; and iv) it is the study of the influence and power of non-state and non jurisdictional public collectives" (2008: 132). For the purposes of this dissertation, the focus is on the third definition that emphasizes interjurisdictional relations.

(Lefebvre 1998: 22).<sup>6</sup> In recent years the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) has become an influential advocate of this approach, which proposes market-driven processes to achieve public goals, encouraging private sector behaviours in policy and planning—e.g., risk taking, city branding/marketing, and innovation with a profit motivation (Krawchenko 2009).<sup>7</sup> In the case of transportation and transit provision and land use considerations, regional SPB's are advocated as a promising institutional mechanism to reduce urban sprawl, traffic congestion and carbon monoxide emissions – particularly for those that are multimodal in scope. Other aims are to facilitate goods movement and trade, reduce commuting times and create regional transportation linkages.

Overall, while there is a growing body of literature on the potential benefits and uses of RSPBs in city-regions, there are far fewer studies that combine an empirical analysis of how they have in fact been adopted and implemented in different contexts. This is particularly true in the case of Canada where RSPBs are less common and a newer phenomenon. We will turn to an exploration of 'rationales' again in Chapter 7 through an assessment and comparison of the two case studies against such propositions.

### RSPBs: Implications

The adoption of RSPBs is not benign; on the contrary, they have profound social, environmental, political and economic implications. Though there are differences by

---

<sup>6</sup> Regionalism based upon this type of competitive cities thesis is becoming increasingly influential and is grounded in a specific understanding of globalization as part of a linear trend towards global economic integration.

<sup>7</sup> Their approach has been outlined in two horizontal synthesis reports titled *Competitive cities in a global economy* (OECD 2006) and *Competitive cities: a new entrepreneurial paradigm in SPBtial development* (OECD 2007). The OECD's the territorial reviews and policy recommendations in the area of urban affairs are conducted by the Working Party on Territorial Policy in Urban Areas (WPURB, est. 1999).

institutional type, RSPBs have a tendency to insulate the public and administrative accountability of policy decisions at the regional level (Goldsmith 2002: 328). While such criticism of the role of boards and agencies in urban affairs go back as far as the turn of the century (Lightbody 1995: 18), a disconnectedness from elected accountability is particularly prevalent in RSPBs where there is a corporate board structure. In some cases, a corporate rather than political board structure may be adopted so as to facilitate large-scale investments that may otherwise be the subject of long political debate and consultation. Further, RSPBs often involve either a close, direct relationship with other levels of government (as a hierarchy) or collaboration as a network with other levels of government. In this way they add to the complexity of governance at the regional scale and another layer in multi-level government relations.

Planning operates in a nested fashion. Local planning initiatives are guided by locally derived planning requirements (e.g., official plans, by-laws and regulations) but must also adhere to the planning regulations of upper level governments and planning bodies. Federal, provincial and municipal regulations and official plans together constitute the planning environment and create constraints and focus planning in certain ways. RSPBs often add another layer to this nested planning environment – thereby impacting the planning policies at other scales.

Further, the creation of RSPBs alters the allocation of resources in a city region. For example, evidence from the United States suggests that metropolitan areas with specialized service delivery allocate proportionally more resources to those services than areas that do not have such bodies (Foster 1999: 22). In this way, they act in their policy capacities to heighten their agendas and focus resources.

As regionally-conceived institutions they contain diverse interests and conflicts between groups is an inevitable product of this. Regions do not have *a priori* defined boundaries and, as such, reside within a contentious political space. This is heightened by their often-opaque relationship with citizens, who have a far greater attachment to politics at the city and neighbourhood scale. Regionally-scaled transportation governance inevitably needs to navigate conflict between the interests of the central city, satellite cities and rural communities. The politics surrounding transportation and transit provision are particularly contentious due to their visible and fixed physical nature. They dramatically impact quality of life for residents (e.g., air quality, commuter times) and the local economy (e.g., through property assessments and taxation). Unlike more hidden physical investments such as water mains, transportation and transit investments are a particular source of conflict in urban politics and a mainstay of debate in local media. The gains of cooperation are more difficult to achieve where the ‘good’ being provided is a fixed physical asset. Also, they are often associated with large-scale mega-projects. Such activities have a substantial impact upon urban development as well as broad fiscal and equity implications.

In the words of Foster, special purpose governance bodies “are not policy neutral substitutes for general purpose governance – [i]nstitutional choices matter” (1999: 22). As urbanization continues and coordination and service delivery across large city-regions becomes increasingly problematic, undoubtedly these types of entities will continue to be adopted—meriting an examination of a governance approach that will be subjected to increasing public and political scrutiny.

## Framing the research

This dissertation is institutionalist in orientation: it considers institutional contexts and institutional change. Specifically, historical institutionalism (HI) is used as a major theoretical framework in guiding the research, supplemented by regime theory. The research explores the impact of RSPBs on governance and policy development. It focuses on how the adoption of these entities has impacted the kinds of decisions and transportation investments that are made and by whom as well as the implications of these changes for different types of accountability. This involves an analysis of formal structure contrasted against informal governance mechanisms. The types of investments that have been made, major policy decisions over time, and the financial contributions from different levels of government and differing funding mechanisms are analyzed. The politics surrounding large capital investments are illustrative of how politics operates at a regional level through special purpose bodies. For each case study, the implications of the creation of these entities for political and administrative accountability are discussed.

Garcea and LeSage write that there has been little evaluatory research on the outcomes of governance reform. They comment, “given that so much of municipal reform policy has been pursued in the absence of detailed empirical research findings, a strong case can be made for conducting systemic research into policy outcomes” (Garcea & Le Sage 2005: 336). In order to understand the impact of the new regional governance structure on transportation and transit planning in Vancouver and Toronto, the previous mechanisms for decision making in these areas are examined. Specifically, the processes whereby transportation and transit decisions were made (under what structure) are

described from the post war period onwards. Regime theory is used as a way of exploring the coalition of actors involved in these decisions and how this has changed over time.

This study employs long-interviews with key stakeholders, a review of historical and primary documents and some descriptive statistics. Studies in local government/governance tend to be richly descriptive in an attempt to capture historical and context specific nuances. Much of the recent research in this area has employed comparative case study to allow exploration of the often-unquantifiable variables affecting the evolution of urban regions (Wheeler 2002: 273). This study follows in this tradition with two in depth case studies of Metrolinx and Translink. However, in order to place these developments within the context of broader historical trends, developments in Western Europe (with a focus on the United Kingdom) and the United States have also been examined (these are not treated as full case studies).

While this dissertation is relatively narrow in focus—concentrating on RSPBs for transportation and transit governance—it has broader implications and engages in the debates and empirical research on how metropolitanization is evolving through different governance structures and its impact on multi-level governance and citizen-government relations. Though focused on one policy sphere—transportation and transit—it also provides a contrast against other areas of metropolitanization and the differences in coordination and engagement between actors depending on policy area. Further, these entities are symptomatic of a trend towards the adoption of semi-public agencies in certain policy spheres. These phenomena are part of broader “changes in the forms and mechanisms of governance by which institutional and organizational societal sectors and spheres are governed, as well as in the location of governance from where command,

administration, management and control of societal institutions and spheres are conducted” (van Kersbergen & van Waarden 2004: 143).

## OUTLINE OF DISSERTATION

This dissertation is organized as follows. Chapter two presents the different theoretical frameworks that inform this work with a focus on historical institutionalism and regime theory and outlines the methods used in this dissertation. The third chapter reviews major debates surrounding institutional shifts towards governance, increasing urban-regional complexity and the politics of regionalism, as they relate to transportation, transit and land use decisions. The fourth chapter examines the historical development of RSPBs in broad terms, with a focus on their adoption in the United Kingdom and the United States. Thus, the Canadian case studies can be situated and viewed in a broader historical and country-comparative context. The two succeeding chapters present the case studies of Metrolinx in Greater Vancouver and of Translink in the Greater Toronto and Hamilton area (Chapters 5 and 6). Chapter 7 assesses the most important kinds of institutional change that have occurred and explains processes of incremental institutional change. It also compares the two case studies and assesses findings against major propositions drawn from the literature on RSPBs. The concluding chapter focuses on the implications of this research and considers the future evolution of RSPBs in the Canadian context.

## CHAPTER 2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND METHODS

---

This dissertation is concerned with the adoption of special purpose bodies at the regional scale and the consequences of such an institutional shift on governance, policy formulation and decision-making. It applies an institutional lens to political analysis and considers institutions as key factors (but by no means the only ones) that constrain and shape political actions and strategies. This approach takes a wide view of the entities being examined—one that considers their adoption and impact within the context of the broader institutional environment, its politics and history.

Understanding the *impact* of RSPBs on governance and policy also necessarily requires an understanding of how the institutions emerged and what came before them. Historical institutionalism (HI), with its temporal and contextual focus, does just this. It informs this research in five main ways. First, HI emphasizes the importance of institutional contexts. RSPBs differ greatly and are very much a reflection of the distinct historical/political contexts in which they are situated. This is why we see such great institutional variation among them. HI brings this analysis to the foreground. Second, the RSPBs being examined are themselves organizations that are part of broader institutional governance in their respective regions. HI provides a distinction between organizations and institutions and shows how they relate to each other. Third, HI places an emphasis on the internal dynamics of institutions and the role of agency. This is important for an understanding of how these entities engage with other institutions and are themselves ‘institutionalized’ in the process. Fourth, HI offers a framework for understanding *incremental* institutional change, using the complementary concepts of layering,

conversion, drift and displacement. As will be shown, the creation of these organizations and their supporting regulatory frameworks represent an institutional *shift* rather than wholesale institutional *change*. The adoption of RSPBs in our case studies adds another institutional layer without displacing the existing framework. This is done in incremental stages, involving political debate, negotiation and sometimes, forcefulness amongst the various actors. Finally, an emphasis is placed in the analysis on the role of ideas and their interaction with politics, history and institutions. On this last point we turn to regime theory.

Like HI, regime theory brings a useful analytical frame through which to view institutional shifts. However, its focus on the urban-regional scale makes it particularly suited to analyses of the complex array of actors involved in the governing process at that scale. At its broadest, a regime is a coalition of groups and interests which, through processes like ‘power bargaining,’ seek support for their own ideas, beliefs and agendas. Regime theory brings *ideas* and *politics* to the foreground of the analysis and asks questions about the underlying motivations and goals of those involved in local governance. In highlighting the purpose behind coalitions and the policies that they adopt, regime theory “provides a link between ideas and power” (Stone 2005: 324). Critically, this forwards explanations for why certain policies or paths are adopted and the interests that guide them.

HI and regime theory are complementary frameworks. Together they bring certain variables/factors to the foreground of analysis and explanation, the three most prominent of which are political/historical context, institutions and regimes (power, priorities and ideas). These elements are central to the explanations pursued in this dissertation. This

chapter outlines how HI and regime theory guide, frame and explain certain aspects of the research. The final part of this chapter presents the research methodology—a comparative case study with both qualitative and quantitative components.

## INSTITUTIONS: HISTORY, POLITICS, CONTEXT AND CHANGE

At a very basic level, research that is historical institutionalist in orientation asks why a certain choice, at a particular time and in a specific context, was made and/or why a certain outcome occurred (Steinmo 2008:163). This is the basic structure of the research questions pursued in this dissertation. Embedded within it are a number of assumptions and concepts. The purpose of this chapter is to be explicit about these and how they are used in this work.

This section first discusses what is meant by ‘institutions’ and situates HI within the other dominant approaches to the study of institutions. It then proceeds to discuss the relationship between institutions and organizations, and accounts of institutional change in HI.

### Situating Historical Institutionalism

Borrowing a well used definition from March and Olsen, institutions can be understood as:

A relatively enduring collection of rules and organized practices, embedded in structures of meaning and resources that are relatively invariant in the face of turnover of individuals and relatively resilient to the idiosyncratic preferences and expectations of individuals and changing external circumstances. (1989, 1995, 2006)

This interpretation stresses that institutional rules and practices inform and guide actor behaviour while ‘structures of meaning’ or common purposes “explain, justify and

legitimate behavioural codes” (March & Olsen 2006: 3). Actions are further structured through institutional resources where only certain actions are feasible given institutional constraints. Institutions themselves can “empower and constrain actors differently and make them more or less capable of acting according to prescriptive rules of appropriateness” –in this way there is an element of institutional socialization (ibid.: 3). This definition of institutions highlights their ‘stickiness’–there is stability to them and where change does occur, it does so within existing institutional contexts. From this reasoning, the structures of the RSPBs that have been adopted have been shaped, molded and guided by these institutional contexts.

Institutionalism takes a value-critical stance on the structure of who is involved in decision making at the local level. The inclusion or privileging of certain actors is not conceived of as ‘value-neutral,’ but rather something that is structured and carried by institutional frameworks (ibid.: 157). This approach offers a valuable analytical framework with which to explore the multi-level character of urban politics and to distinguish between centralizing and decentralizing elements. Institutions operate at multiple scales. Though this dissertation is focused on *RSPBs*, these bodies are adopted and operate within a multi scalar institutional environment with pressures at the macro, meso and micro levels, all acting to constrain, frame and guide the feasibility of certain approaches such as institutional and organizational formation and change, and policy adoption and implementation. In short, institutions, temporality and scale matter. These are complex variables, and it is partly because of this that in depth case studies have been chosen as the mode of analysis (something that will be explained in greater detail in the methodology section of this chapter).

Interpretations of institutions and how they structure behaviour and constrain/impact actions have changed over time. Earlier institutionalism (or 'old' institutionalism) focused more on formal/legal aspects of institutions and was less explanatory in its approach<sup>8</sup> whereas 'new' institutionalism has evolved from separate critiques of ahistorical behaviouralism<sup>9</sup>, organizational theory and the methodological individualism of rational choice approaches and expands the concept of institutions significantly beyond that of 'old' institutionalism. This approach focuses on such questions as: what are institutions; how do they emerge and persist; how do they affect human behaviour (i.e., policy choices); and how and why do institutions change? New institutionalism is more of "a persuasion or an emphasis than a fixed blueprint for political analysis" (Robertson 1993: 2). The three most widely recognized variants of this approach are rational choice institutionalism (RCI), historical institutionalism (HI) and sociological institutionalism (SI).<sup>10</sup> The various institutionalist research programs borrow

---

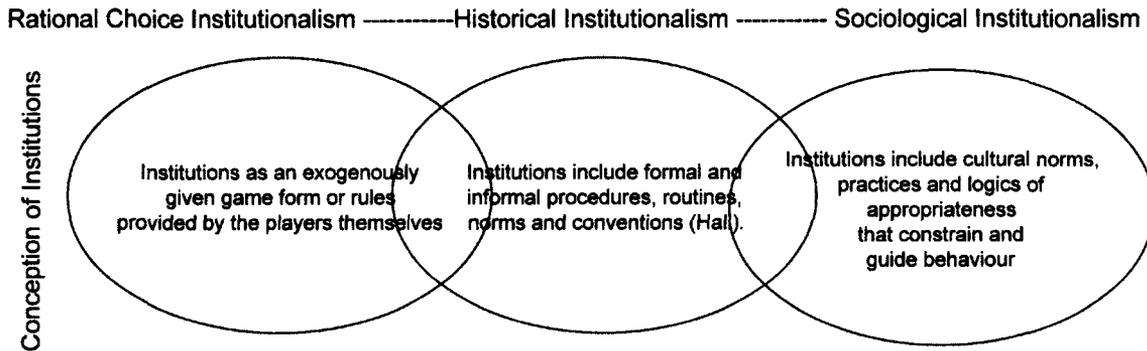
<sup>8</sup> Rhodes et al. describe old institutionalism as "...rooted in law and legal institutions, focussing not only on how "the rules" channelled behaviour, but also on how and why the rules worked on behalf of the common good" (2006: xii). New institutionalism, in contrast to old institutionalism, views informal institutions as inherent to formal structures. Informal rules exist alongside formal ones and may be complementary or undermining of formal institutions. In this manner, the question of interests is not if informal institutions exist, but rather, which ones impact the formal institutions being examined and the way in which they influence politics. The dynamics between the informal and formal institutions are important to an understanding of politics.

<sup>9</sup> The 'behavioural revolution' of the 1950's and 1960's emerged as a rejection of the focus on formal laws, rules and administrative structures. Behaviouralists argued that in order to understand actual political behaviour and policy outcomes, analysts should focus instead on the distributions of power, attitudes and political behaviour (Thelen and Steinmo 1992: 3-4). New institutionalists reject the premise that behaviour is capable of explaining the different phenomena of government, arguing that behaviour occurs in the context of institutions and "...can only be so understood" (Immergut 1998: 6). See Robertson (1993) "The return to history and the New Institutionalism in American Political Science," for a discussion of the increasing dissatisfaction with ahistorical behaviouralism in American Political Science that emerged in the mid to late 1960s.

<sup>10</sup> Others have identified further streams of new institutionalism. For example, Guy Peters (1999) proposes that beyond the three mentioned here, there can also be added normative, empirical, interest representation and international branches. Peters categorization has been described as "ad hoc and unsystematized" by Jessop (2005: 1218). Colin Hay in *The Oxford Handbook of Political Science* describes constructivist institutionalism, which has a focus on ideational explanations of institutional change (2008: 72). He makes a case that this is a separate variant of institutionalism—though one that is heavily influenced by HI. Still

significantly from one another and are best viewed along a spectrum with SI differing most greatly from RCI (such as depicted in the chart below).<sup>11</sup>

2.1 New institutionalisms: differences and commonalities in their conception of institutions



The table below highlights the major difference between the three dominant institutionalist approaches.

2.2 Comparison of New Institutional approaches

	Rational choice	Historical	Sociological
Definition of institutions	Includes formal organizations as well as a broad range of informal rules and procedures that define interests and structure conduct. (Emphasis on regulative dimension)	The formal or informal procedures, routines, norms and conventions embedded in the organizational structure of the polity or political economy (Hall & Taylor 1996: 938). Thelen and Mahoney place an emphasis on the distributional implications of institutions with a focus on power dynamics (2010:8). (Emphasis on formal structures, e.g., branches of government)	Expands the concept of institutions further than HI and RCI to include symbol systems, cognitive scripts and moral templates that provide meaning to action. (Emphasis on normative and cognitive dimensions).
Role of institutions	Institutions are established and endure because they are the desired gains of cooperation from rational actors (logic of	A mid-way between RCI (calculus approach) and SI (cultural approach) explanations. Is less actor centric than RCI and uses the	Institutions have a role in constructing the reality in which decisions are made Norms, ideas and values are culturally embedded.

other categorizations describe the variants of institutionalism under the frameworks of regulative, normative and cognitive dimensions (Scott 1995). These roughly correspond to the RCI, HI, SI delineation used here.

<sup>11</sup> Rigid RCI interpretations with strong rationality assumptions differ considerably from work that incorporates normative elements and bounded rationality – for example, the analytic narratives approach adopted by Robert H. Bates, Avner Grief, Margaret Levi, Jean-Laurent and others (Bates, Levi, Rosenthal & Weingast 1998). There been some effort to incorporate normative and cognitive explanations of institutions such as those emphasized by SI into rational choice explanations. For example, see the work of Fritz W. Scharpf (2000: 784) and of Milan Zafirovski (2000).

	instrumentality) – in this way they reflect an institutional equilibrium. Institutions define interests and structure conduct.	concept of institutional norms, values and ideas as being culturally embedded.	
Role of actors	Actors have a fixed and consistent set of preferences (self interested, rational, preference maximizes). Rational actors cooperate to establish institutions and are sometimes induced through leadership (e.g., policy entrepreneurs).	Actors are “rule following satisfiers”.	Both institutional design and actor behaviour follow the ‘logic of appropriateness’ whereby choices are made according to what is viewed as socially valuable or suitable rather than a rational ‘logic of consequence’.
Preference formation	Exogenously determined	Endogenously determined	Endogenously determined
Approach to the study of institutions	Actor-centered understanding of institutions where institutions provide the rules of the game and analysis focuses on uncovering laws of political behaviour and action in order to help predict said behaviour. For RCI, “breadth trumps depth” (Fiorina 1995: 110-111).	Focus on historical contingency and path dependence in explanations of institutions.	Tends to take the broadest view of institutions that can include such aspects as norms, ideas and values. Sociological approaches are methodologically diverse and may include everything from quantitative analyses to discourse analysis.
Institutional change	Occurs when institutions become dysfunctional or yield suboptimal results, requiring actors to change them.	Focuses on long-term processes. Have been critiqued for weak explanations of institutional change given focus on path dependency.	SI emphasizes the role of social legitimacy in institutional change. Change can occur for a variety of reasons (e.g., through elite intervention). There is a utilitarian aspect to institutional change in SI that is similar to RCI approaches.

HI privileges the importance of *history* and *context* in understanding political behaviour and outcomes. From this perspective, the special purpose bodies are evaluated not for their collective action applications (e.g., through game theory), but for how existing and past institutional relationships influence behaviour and outcomes through historical process tracing. This “allows the scholar to test for the arrow of causality in a way in which simple correlation analysis cannot [and]... is an instrument that helps the

researcher to be sensitive to the temporal boundaries, or period effects, with respect to the specific causal claims being forwarded” (Steinmo 2008: 178).

HI applies an inductive model of reasoning and thereby implies a specific mode of analysis (methodology). Thelen and Steinmo describe this approach as constructing a bridge “between state-centered and society-centered analyses by looking at the institutional arrangements that structure the relationships between the two and between grand theories that highlight broad cross-national regularities and narrower accounts of particular national cases by focusing on intermediate level variables that illuminate sources of variation on a common theme” (1992: 10). There is a balance with this approach. It accounts well for the complex pressures shaping institutional development at a regional scale, allowing a broader array of explanations to emerge.

#### Institutions, organizations and urban politics

*Institutions* and *organizations* are not one and the same, so some explanation of why institutionalism is being used as a framework (when the entities being examined are at the most basic level organizations) is in order. In the formal sense, both of the regional special purpose bodies being studied are organizations and are classed as corporate entities: Metrolinx is a crown agency and Translink is a corporate authority. As a crown agency, Metrolinx is an agent of the provincial government. Translink is classed as a public body created the provincial government, but is not an agent of government. As the definition of institutions included in the previous section shows, they are more than organizations. Institutions have a degree of stability or permanency over time and create regularity to behaviour where norms, values and identities guide behaviour. In the words of Boin and Kuipers, “organizations can take on institutional characteristics” (2008:

46).<sup>12</sup> Public institutions, such as those being examined, “have an institutionalized character and an institutionalizing role” (Ingraham, Moynihan & Andrews 2008: 81). How these factors are captured in the organizations being studied is important because they provide an indication of the extent to which an organization is “no longer expendable, because it serves activities or functions that become valued beyond the technical requirements at hand” (Selznick 1957: 17 quoted in Boin and Kuipers 2008: 46). In other words, this can show us how the organizations themselves become institutionalized. The extent to which this is seen in each of the cases differs, as Translink is the more established of the two.

Institutionalism emphasizes that the organizations themselves cannot be considered apart from broader institutional contexts. Scott summarizes the connection well in stating that:

institutionalists remind us that no organization can be properly understood apart from its wider social and cultural context. These environments create the infrastructures—regulative, normative, and cognitive—that constrain and support the operation of individual organizations. The formal structures of organizations are seen, as least in part, to represent theories of action that embody the prevailing cultural logics. Rationalities are contextualized. (1995: 151)

This approach has particular relevance to the study of urban politics where there are trends towards organizational fragmentation and a blurring of public private boundaries in urban environments, such as in the case studies at hand. HI presents an ideal framework for the study of urban politics because it provides, in the words of Lowndes, the tools with which to analyse: “the overarching rules of local governance; the complex

---

<sup>12</sup> For example, the work of Amin and Thrift operationalizes this idea through the concept of ‘institutional thickness’ where institutions are understood as “a plethora of organizations that interact intensively, generating shared understandings, socializing costs, and developing mutual awareness of being involved in a common project to promote and sustain local or regional economic development” (Amin & Thrift 1995, quoted in Jessop 2005: 1221).

nature of local governance environments; and the contested and uncertain nature of local governance change” (2008: 157). Institutional rules can be understood as formal/legal (e.g., local government acts and official plans) or informal (e.g., codes, customs, norms of behaviour). Cases where there is a divergence between formal and informal rules in terms of actual practice indicate that the formal rules may have become less relevant. This is an important factor to consider in an analysis of the two case studies where the purposes of reform and the formal rules that structure that process may not match with practice. How this is borne out may impact the legitimacy of an organization as well as its accountability and transparency. Further, this approach takes a broad view of the network of organizations and interests that inform and impact upon urban politics. Most critically, it recognizes that urban politics cannot be reduced to the authority of locally elected governments. Rather, in the “increasingly fragmented and differentiated world of local governance, service-delivery and policy making involve private and voluntary as well as public sector actors, and partnerships and networks are as important as hierarchal and interorganizational relationships” (Lowndes 2008: 157).

The advantage of HI over other bodies of literature that engage with the question of policy change—e.g., Kingdon’s ‘policy windows’ (2003) and the literature on policy communities (Atkinson & Coleman 1992; Borzel 1998; Cleman & Skogstad 1990; Sabatier & Jenkins-Smith 1993) is that HI takes a longer view of institutions and institutional change by focusing on political/historical contexts and institutional creation, change and regularization over time. The policy communities and policy networks literature is more focused on how policy change occurs. Further, the policy

communities/network approach is actor-centric in its interpretations. HI is favored over this approach for its contextual depth and broader analytic scope.

### Institutions and change

A core lesson from HI is that institutional contexts guide, shape and constrain the realm of organizational and policy strategies that might be pursued. Existing frameworks shape the realm of what is possible and, hence, institutions exhibit a path dependency. Given this, explanations of change in HI have tended to focus on exogenous shocks to the system where the rules of the game are so dramatically changed, that institutions and actors must adopt new strategies given a different context. A search for causes and agents of institutional change in HI has also tended to focus on the role of ideas as normative and relational and how they might serve as a mobilizing force for action by social groups that want to create or change institutions.

This approach is not without its shortfalls. Commenting on this, Steimo & Thelen write that it can sometimes lead to an overly deterministic interpretation of institutions (where they are overly privileged as the key important variable in shaping political outcomes) and an overemphasis on ‘comparative statics’ (stable institutional configurations) (1992: 14). If institutions are ‘path dependent’, how then does one account for change? In response to these criticisms, various scholars have proposed a method of ‘institutional dynamism’ that examines how the same institutions can produce different outcomes over time. This method explores the role of socioeconomic context, power shifts and exogenous changes on institutions and how actors accommodate these changes (ibid: 16).

Thelen, with various co-authors over the years (Steinmo and Thelen 1992; Thelen 2000; Streeck & Thelen 2005; Mahoney & Thelen 2010), have developed an alternative approach that instead focuses on *incremental* institutional change. This approach responds to criticisms that institutional frameworks have tended to draw an overly sharp distinction between institutional stability and change. In her most recent work with co-author Mahoney (Mahoney & Thelen 2010), typologies for incremental institutional change are delineated and applied, providing useful insights as to how to operationalize these concepts through research.

Thelen and Mahoney's explanation of incremental institutional change focuses on four concepts: layering, conversion, drift and displacement. An application of these concepts to the questions considered in this dissertation provides analytical clarity as well as an important focus on incremental institutional change. The concept of layering is related to the literature on incremental policy change where agency (e.g., actors, organizations, layers of government) and/or structure (e.g., rules, laws, control mechanisms) are added to existing institutions and where, overtime, layering gradually changes the status and structure of an institution. In a review of the four concepts, Heijden describes layering as the most developed mode of incremental change and the one that has been the most applied in contemporary literature (Heijden 2010: 232). This has variously been done through a focus on the additions of "(i) agency (e.g. actors, organizations, layers of government) to existing institutions (e.g. Ackrill & Kay 2006); (ii) structure (e.g. rules, laws, control modes) to existing institutions (e.g. Thatcher & Coen 2008); or (iii) both agency and structure to existing institutions (e.g. Bruszt 2008)" (Heijden 2010: 232). Applied to our cases, the regional special purpose bodies would be

seen to add an additional institutional layer that bring with them a new set of rules and practices to the existing institutional architecture, impacting upon both urban politics and multi-level government relations.

Conversion refers to the redeployment of institutions toward new or changed purposes. While the institutions might not themselves change, they are used in a different way than previously or are oriented towards a changed set of goals. Hajjer notes “those who study conversion often do so alongside layering (e.g. Hacker 2004; Boas 2007; Barnes 2008; Thatcher & Coen 2008)” (2010: 233). Drift refers to a situation where “changes in the operation or effect of policies [...] occur without significant changes in those policies’ structure” (Hacker 2004: 246). Drift is characterized by the absence of updating of existing institutions to changing circumstances—which can be an active strategy for some actors: ‘it may be the result of active attempts to block adaptation of institutions to changing circumstances’ (Hacker 2004: 248). Drift differs from conversion in that it is changing circumstances that alter the effects of institutions and policies, not vice versa. The term displacement refers to a situation where “new models emerge and diffuse which call into question existing, previously taken-for-granted organizational forms and practices” (Streeck & Thelen 2005b: 19). This differs from layering because in the case of displacement, the new institution will eventually replace the former one in entirety. In a review of the application of the four concepts within scholarly literature, Heijden finds that the concepts of drift and displacement have been the least applied (2010: 233-234).

The concepts of layering, conversion, drift and displacement are useful for this dissertation. The RSPBs that have been adopted in Greater Vancouver and Greater

Toronto have been created in a manner where the existing institutional framework is little changed. The creation of these new entities can, however, change the 'rules of the game'. These entities are part of an 'upscaling' of urban governance that can alter the actors, resources and priorities in different policy areas. This is related to the concept introduced earlier of the possibility of organizations taking on an 'institutionalizing' role as they progress. Explanations of incremental change account for internal processes of change within institutions themselves. These concepts expand the tools at our disposal to explain change beyond that of exogenous shocks in path dependent explanations.

In summary, HI is used in this work as the dominant lens with which to structure the research questions (with their focus on institutional context, change over time and how institutional formation impacts upon behaviour and public policy), guide analysis and organize evidence. Its major precepts place a focus on context, history and the temporal sequence of events and interpret preference formation and institutional change as endogenous. Importantly, HI highlights the importance of the state and state institutions as pivotal in shaping policy. It also normatively acknowledges the role of government actors and institutions in addressing collective action problems and, borrowing from sociological institutionalism, highlights the relationship between ideas and institutional formation and change.

While HI is used as the major theoretical lens with which to guide the research, regime theory is found to be supplemental to this approach given the focus of the research on regional institutions that involve collaboration amongst various groups and jurisdictions. Regime theory highlights how such actors collaborate and combine

resources to influence policy while stressing both the increasing complexity and informality inherent to urban governance.

#### REGIMES: COALITIONS, POWER DYNAMICS, IDEAS AND POLICY

Urban regime theory is complementary to the primary conceptual framework of historical institutionalism—it too expands the lens of analysis to the broader governance network and privileges history and context in an understanding of institutional outcomes.

Specifically, it focuses on the role of informal coalitions and non-governmental actors in policy formation in an urban-regional context where the strength and longevity of a governance regime becomes an explanatory factor in institutional stability (as well as the opposite case). This approach highlights the relationship between power, ideas and regime formation and policy development.

Regime theory can be seen as a variant of HI, but it stems from different roots. Critical political economy in urban theory arose as a challenge to the urban ecology perspective that focused on social-spatial organization in which competition plays a central explanatory role.<sup>13</sup> Political-economy approaches stress an understanding of urban growth as “a consequence of capitalistic modes of capital accumulation, conflictual class relations and exploitation of the powerless” (Palen in Vogel 1997: 34). While the urban ecology perspective focuses on change induced by “economic processes and technology, the political-economy approach stresses class conflict and deliberate action by economic and political elites (ibid.). Regime theory arose from this urban-regional political economy tradition.

---

<sup>13</sup> The urban ecology perspective emphasizes spatial patterns as determined by competition from different social groups, rather than as a result of planning or government action.

Urban regime theory has been referred to as the dominant theory in the study of local politics and is variously applied normatively, prescriptively or empirically (Imbroscio, 1998 in Davies, 2002: 1).<sup>14</sup> It focuses on the processes of inducing cooperation between various actors at the local level. Therefore, related theories include pluralist theory, elite theory and urban growth machines.<sup>15</sup> Mossenberger and Stoker summarize the four major properties of urban regimes as follows:

- partners [are] drawn from government and non-governmental sources, requiring but not limited to business participation;
- collaboration [is] based on social production—the need to bring together fragmented resources for the power to accomplish tasks;
- [there are] identifiable policy agendas that can be related to the composition of the participants in the coalition and;
- [there is] a longstanding pattern of cooperation rather than a temporary coalition. (2001: 829)

This framework is useful in analyses of phenomena that fall under the catch-all term ‘governance’ and has facilitated the analysis of politics beyond that of formal institutions. (Gissendanner 2003: 663). This is particularly relevant given the changing context for urban policy where urban issues are not domestically bound (e.g., financial and population flows), there is a prevalence of new social movements and interest formation, and there is a phenomenon of shifting responsibilities for urban governance towards a wider array of actors involved in the governance process (Graham et al., 2002: 8-9). The complexity of urban issues and the resources necessary to produce and implement effective policy requires a coalition of institutional actors who control core resources. This is particularly the case with RSPBs that are part of the trend towards more complex and informal governance (Stoker, 2006, in Rhodes et al.: 498). This informality, where

---

<sup>14</sup> Seminal works using regime theory include Dahl (1961), C.N. Stone (1980, 1989, 1993), G. Stoker (1991) and M. Castells (1983), with each approaching regimes in different ways.

<sup>15</sup> Note: there are debates within in the literature as the extent to which these actually constitute theories.

one can often see a divergence between formal structure and informal practices, can present a difficulty in the conduct of comparative research.<sup>16</sup> Regime theory presents a framework through which to analyse both sets of practices.

There are two main components to urban regime theory. The first concerns *how regimes come into being*. Here, regime theory is used to focus in on such questions as: “how an agenda came to be framed in a particular way, what brought coalition partners together (or after a period of time, what caused a break), [and] why coalition partners devised the scheme of cooperation they did” (Stone 2005: 331). The aim of regime theory in this respect is not to be predictive, but to provide an analytical framework with which to pursue historical and descriptive research grounded in in-depth understandings of local political economies. A key concept here is ‘power bargaining’, which refers to how various authorities and individuals seek support for their own ideas and agendas over that of others. Within this process, regime theory highlights the power differences between various actors by using such concepts as systemic power, command power and coalition power. In doing so, particular attention is paid to the different positions, resources, knowledge and reputation of those within a coalition and how these factors are used to forward a particular agenda.

The second major focus of regime theory is to provide *models of how governing arrangements operate* in practice (Stoker 2001). This had led to the development of various regime typologies. For example, Elkin (1987) has described pluralist, federalist and entrepreneurial or corporatist regimes, Stone (1993) delineates between maintenance,

---

<sup>16</sup> For example, Stoker comments that while local government in the UK is weak in structure, in practice many local governments have been able to seize an agenda and accomplish a great deal (2006: 498). A classification system that attempts to unite these informal and formal components has been developed by Hesse and Sharpe (1991).

developmental, middle class progressive and lower class opportunity expansion regimes, while Imbroscio (2010) identifies community-based, local bourgeois and local-statist regimes. This is to name just a few.<sup>17</sup> There are common elements between these various typologies – e.g., their attention to issues of class, power and capital. While these typologies guide the framework of analysis for this dissertation, they are not rigorously applied to the cases. Rather, regime identification is based on the nature of the agenda, the commitment or availability of resources and alignment of key actors as key elements that can be used to ascertain the strength of a regime as well as its durability and stability over time. In this, regime theory aims to be predictive of coalition outcomes (Stone 2005: 331). This highlights the elements critical to the success of certain governing coalitions, as well as the failure of others.

As has been discussed, RSPBs differ greatly across jurisdictions. According to Mossenburger and Stoker's definition of regimes (2001), some RSPBs could themselves be considered the institutional centrepiece of a governance regime. For others, the adoption of a RSPB could be considered a continuation of an existing one. Understanding how a RSPB is adopted speaks a great deal to the aims, purpose, composition and membership of the body and those who support its aims. This then in turn impacts the resulting structure of the governance model. Are they solidifying the presence of an existing regime, or does their emergence indicate the coalescing of a new one? How did key actors frame collaboration on the issues of transportation and transit before the creation of these bodies and how has this changed after their adoption (if at all)? The power bargaining of groups through these processes can be seen as critical to both

---

<sup>17</sup> E.g., Kantor, Savitch and Haddock (1997) present a typology of eight regime types constrained by different bargaining contexts with the private sector.

institutional formation and, potentially, regime formation. This approach places a focus on the resources (and influence) that members bring to a governing coalition and how patterns of interaction are mediated despite the inclusion of sometimes very diverse members within a regime. In the words of Stone,

Urban regime analysis thus concerns how local agency fits into the play of larger forces. Local actors are shaped by and respond to large structures, but the appropriate lens for viewing this wider field is local agency—what motivates actors at this level, what affects their ability to cooperate or puts them into conflict, the leverage they can gain in tackling problems, and in general what they make of the structural forces in which they are enmeshed. These forces manifest themselves locally through such phenomena as agenda feasibility, coalition formation, resource mobilization, and the ways in which modes of cooperation are worked out. Capitalism is a very large presence in these processes, but it is not the only one. (2005: 324)

Much of the literature in this area has stressed the role of business interests in local politics and their influence on urban morphology (e.g., community power debate, urban growth machine) (Sandercock 1975, 1979; Sclar 2000; Davis 1992). For example, urban regime analysis has been applied to explanations of why and how cities pursue outward dominated growth.<sup>18</sup> A seminal work in this area is Dahl's *Who Governs?* (1961), which provided a case study of political power and representation in New Haven, Connecticut. This book was influential in proposing a pluralist approach to the understanding of politics where many interests compete in the political sphere with the government acting as mediator. Also influential have been the various works by Stone (1980, 1989, 1993), Stoker (1991) and Castells (1983). Stone has argued, "regime

---

<sup>18</sup> Regime theory has been applied to the greatest extent to American examples and often as single case study analysis (Dahl 2005; Hunter 1953; Stone 1989; DeLeon 1992; Swanstrom 1985; Ferman 1996). An exception to this is H. Whitt Kilbur's study, titled "Explaining U.S. urban regimes: A qualitative comparative analysis" (2004), which offers an example of regime theory empirically applied and tested across fourteen American cities by variables relating to market and democratic conditions. It is an example of broad comparative research that tries to get beyond the limitations of case study analysis in order to find universal factors that contribute to regime formation.

analysis is centrally about governance, not land-use practices” (Stone 1997: 1). This perspective emphasizes how different contexts produce different types of urban governance and the consequences of those arrangements (Pierre 2005: 451). This directly ties into the question of how the adoption of RSPBs has impacted decision-making and policy development. For example, does their adoption signify a shift in the types of actors at the regional level and, if so, what are the consequences of this changed governance configuration?

Keil summarizes the urban regime theory approach as providing “an excellent toolbox for understanding the complexities of urban political decision making and social struggles” (1998: 633). However, it is not without its detractors. For example, Sartori (1991) observes that urban regime literature can fall into the trap of parochialism, misclassification, ‘degreeism’ and concept stretching. There are criticisms that the idea of urban regimes is overly fluid, where urban regimes are seen everywhere—diluting its original meaning. This has led to various efforts to categorize regime types.

Regime theory will be used specifically to examine how the creation of a regional body for transit and land use impacts the coalition of institutional actors who control core resources in this policy sphere. Because of their regional focus, RSPBs redraw the boundaries around a policy area and, related to this, the actors involved. Of note is how this impacts the nature of coalitions in urban regions and any new players that may rise to the forefront through this reconfiguration. For example, within the context of competitive regions, coalitions or regimes take on a distinct role to promote industry and trade. Here we see a strong role for upper level governments and distinct state spatial strategies. The role of private sector interests has often been central in urban regime analysis; how such

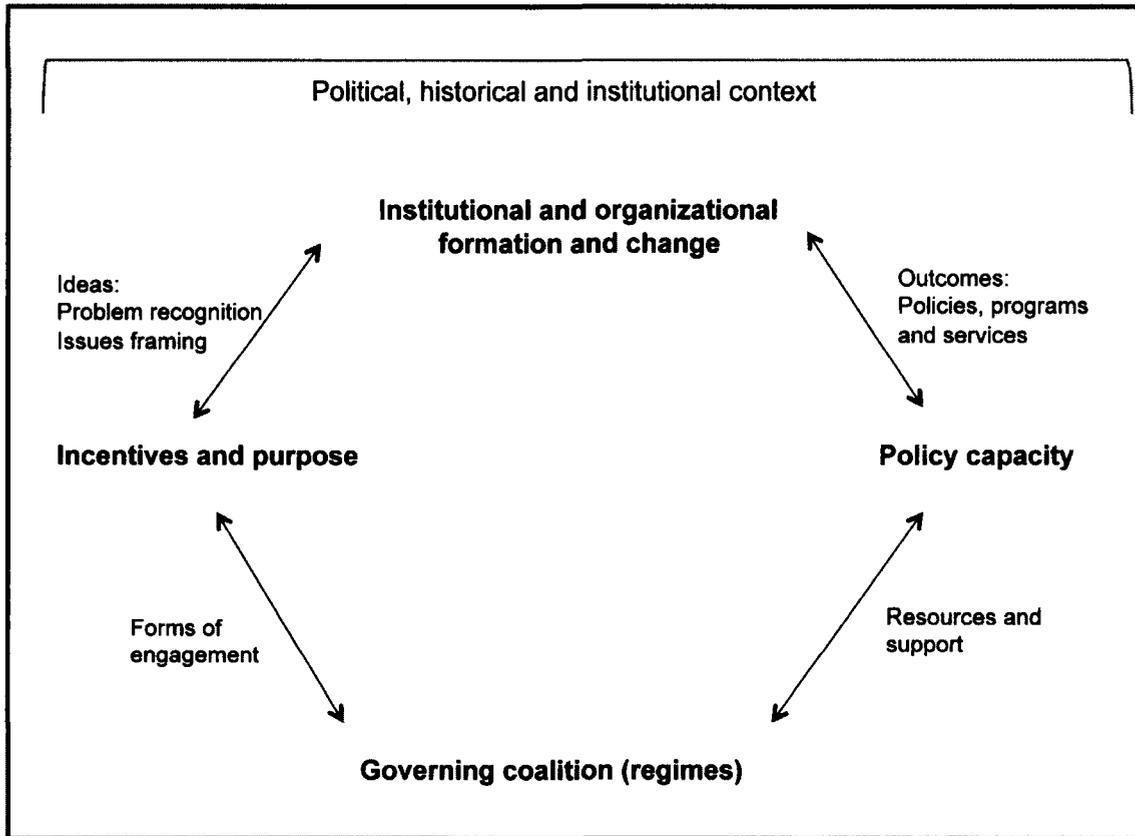
interests are expressed at the regional level has obvious relevance as well. Finally, the presence of a regime is as important as the lack of one. The comparison of the two cases will help draw out key variables related to the success of regional politics and its capacity to act on issues of regional transportation and transit.

The application of regime concepts at the regional level is relatively new. As a framework that seeks to provide analytical clarity around the complexity of contemporary governance processes, its application at the regional levels makes sense. The responses of different regions within the context of wider macroeconomic forces remain the products of local “social struggle, conflict and negotiation, coalition building and visioning, involving a wide variety of stakeholders across the region” (Donald 2002: 191). In the words of Mossenburger and Stoker, the use of regime theory “at the regional level is promising... especially in examining cooperation in an evermore fragmented and tenuous environment” (2001: 827).

### Combining the frameworks: regime, institutions and change

Between HI and regime theory there are common themes and approaches. These have been combined in the diagram below to highlight the variables that are key to our analysis of RSPBs and how they are linked to one another.

### 2.3 Combining the frameworks: Historical institutionalism and regime theory



Source: diagram influenced by Stone (2001:24).

Stemming from the major precept of historical institutionalism, our case studies are framed by their political historical and institutional contexts. Contextual, scalar and temporal dynamics and patterns are key to explanations of why certain cooperation has occurred and why the organizations were adopted in the form they have been. They constrain how ideas are framed, the nature of governing coalitions and resulting policy capacities.

The arrows depicted in this diagram are bidirectional to indicate the feedback between the different components. Ideas frame problem recognition. Hence, this 'issues framing' drives the purpose of intended policies as well as the forms of engagement. The

purpose and incentives of various policy approaches or organizational strategies impact upon the types of governing coalitions or regimes that may form through patterns of negotiation, compromise, cooperation and conflict. The membership and nature of a governing coalition in turn impacts upon resources and support for a particular agenda. ‘Support’ can include various levels of government, private sector or business interests as well as citizen support. Political legitimacy is one aspect of this. The strength of the governing coalition and the resources and support that it commands will in turn determine its policy capacity. There will be strong policy capacity in cases of strong coalitions, resources and support, and weaker policy capacity when the opposite is true. The capacity to deliver policies is directly tied to outcomes. The strength of these outcomes (strong or weak) in turn impacts institutional formation and change. This includes both formal and informal institutional components. The degree of institutional change—e.g., a complete disjuncture resulting in a totally new governing coalition, or a more subtle layering of new roles and responsibilities with overarching membership—is dependent upon shifts in the other components. Radically changed external conditions or major shifts in terms of driving ideas and ‘issues framing’ will have a resulting impact on institutional formation and change—the greater the disjuncture, the greater the resulting institutional impact.

These processes and how they relate to one another will be used to guide the case study narratives of Translink in Greater Vancouver (Chapter 5) and Metrolinx in Greater Toronto (Chapter 6). They provide a framework through which to interpret and structure the emergence and impact of these bodies.

## METHODOLOGY

Historical institutionalists “look at the forests as well as the trees” (Pierson & Skocpol 2006 in Steinmo 2008: 178). Institutional structures of government, patterns of metropolitan growth and development and political context are but a few of the contextual factors that impact the evolution of metropolitan form (Barlow 1991: 43). As such, studies in local government/governance tend to be richly descriptive in an attempt to capture these nuances. Much of the recent research in this area has employed comparative case study to allow exploration of the often unquantifiable variables affecting the evolution of urban regions (Wheeler 2002: 273). This study follows in this tradition with two in depth case studies of Metrolinx and Translink.

Through this study we want to know how these organizations came about and what their impact has been on governance and policy development in their respective regions. Understanding the *impact* requires knowledge of what preceded the organizations. In other words, how did their adoption change the status quo? Also, this dissertation posits that RSPBs are an increasingly common institutional trend—that we are probably going to be seeing more of them across various city regions and that they are important to study because of this. In order to establish that this is the case, developments in Western Europe (with a focus on the United Kingdom) and the United States have also been examined.

These questions are examined through a mixed-methods approach with three main components: i) long interviews with key stakeholders; ii) historical methods; and iii) quantitative analysis of core indicators. The research was pursued in an inductive manner, with explanations emerging from the data collected. Semi-structured interviews were

conducted with 30 officials, politicians and interested parties for both case studies. The distribution of the interviews is as follows: five academics; three federal officials; six provincial officials; three local government political representatives; six local government officials; five regional special purpose body officials; and five other stakeholders. The vast majority of interviewees chose to have the content of the interviews attributable to them. Interviews were scheduled in advance with officials, but while conducting the research, additional contacts were made and followed up on recommendation of the interviewees. Further, phone interviews were conducted in some cases to fill in any gaps in understanding or to get a grasp of emerging trends of interest. All interviews were transcribed and analyzed using a coding system in order to pull out and make sense of major debates and themes. Historical methods were used to ground the perspectives presented by different interviewees. Specifically, this involved content analysis of primary documents (e.g., Government Acts, policy documents, planning documents, public records of board and council meetings, and Hansard debates) and secondary documents such as government and practitioner studies/reports, academic literature, public histories and a review of media content (including social media blogs). Some of these were obtained through access to information requests. These sources were supplemented by an analysis of Translink's and Metrolinx's Annual Reports for indicators such as capital expenditures, government transfers and transit performance indicators and use of the Canadian Census (Statistics Canada) for population data. Descriptive statistics were used primarily as a way of gauging the scale of transit operations and for the purpose of comparability between cases (e.g., population distribution, population density and projected population growth). The chart below

summarizes the types of data/evidence that were drawn on for this study and how it was used.

#### 2.4 Types and use of evidence/data

Type of evidence/data	How it was used in the study
Semi structured interview with 30 'key stakeholders'	Used to understand informal and formal aspects of institutions. Used to understand the positions of various stakeholders (e.g., the federal government) their perceptions of relationships with other actors, their preferences and their interests. Used to verify evidence and seek more in depth explanations of certain issues, particularly the informal aspects of institutions and relationships between actors. Used to supplement/inform and verify historical accounts.
Primary documents (laws, record of council and legislative debates)	Used to understand/interpret the formal institutional context in the case of laws/Acts. Used to reflect the major debates/arguments and perspectives at the time of the creation of RSPBs. Important as a historical tool to show how thinking and positions have evolved. This includes issues framing and agenda setting.
Secondary documents <sup>19</sup> (academic papers)	Used to ground the study in the academic literature and debates. Used to substantiate evidence from other sources. Used as a source of historical explanation and narrative.
Statistics Canada Census and Labour Force estimates	Used at a high level to indicate population density, demographic shifts, socioeconomic and immigration indicators. These indicators impact upon transportation and transit planning.
Quantitative analysis of RSPBs in Western Europe and North America	This combined a web search for those in Western Europe and the use of the US Census for those in the United States. This was used to gauge the prevalence of these entities and differences between institutional types and trends in their adoption in evolution as an institutional form.

Case study is the favored method in urban political research (DeLeon in Vogel, 1997: 20). DeLeon in "Research methods in urban politics and policy" writes that while case studies excel at description, "theories are typically the products rather than the motivators of such research" (1997: 20). There are, however, notorious difficulties in pursuing this type of case study research. For example, Garcea and LeSage (2005) highlight difficulties in establishing causal linkages between reforms and direct or

<sup>19</sup> The distinction between primary and secondary sources is not always a clear one. Much of it depends on how the document it used – whether as an original source of information (primary) or as a commentary/opinion/analysis/argument based on original sources. In tracing the geology of formative ideas and concepts, secondary sources may become primary ones.

indirect effects or outcomes. They also describe the problem of defining proper indicators (and relevant data) by which the effect or outcomes of reforms can be measured. Garcea and LeSage recommend that the research should proceed in a scientific fashion, “buil[t] in increments from a sound agenda that identifies the truly important issues and proceed[s] in some systematic form” (Garcea & LeSage 2005: 366). The analytical framework constructed in the previous section aims to do just this. It guides the deeply contextual narrative that emerges in the case studies.

There are a number of ways in which I propose to address some of the difficulties inherent to case study research. One ‘rule of thumb’ in case study selection recommends that the cases be “as similar as possible in as many ways as possible to minimize the set of remaining differences that might be theorized as causes of the dependent variable” (DeLeon in Vogel 1997: 23).<sup>20</sup> By limiting the study to transportation and transit planning in two city-regions, the case studies functionally match up. Second, the outcomes of transportation and transit policy decisions are more readily apparent and systematically comparable than in some other policy areas. They are decisions with material consequences (infrastructure) that impact how individuals use various modes of transport. Quantitative data tracking transportation and transit investments as well as user statistics are readily available and go back many years. Questions such as the relative investments in different modes of transportation can be investigated fairly easily. This data can be used in a number of ways—to track different investment decisions over time (e.g., spatial and modal focus) or to examine the financial contributions of different levels of government. This information can be combined with primary research and in-depth

---

<sup>20</sup> Other perspectives in case study selection (in small N studies) recommend comparison of ‘most different systems’ or ‘maximisation of causal complexity’ as approaches (DeLeon in Vogel 1997: 23).

interviews with key stakeholders to chart historical shifts in transportation and transit project objectives and priorities.

There are certain methodological problems inherent to comparative research on local government that remain unavoidable. One issue of central importance is the extent to which one can say conclusively that structure (or institutional reform) makes a difference to outcomes. In the words of Reece:

structure is really only a framework for how governance occurs and that structure is filtered through and colored by local political practices, historical patterns of behaviour and local civic cultures or ways of governance. Thus, structure is only the background set within which the drama of local governance takes place. And, like a stage set it creates a mood and constrains in some ways what is possible in the play, but does not predetermine the patterns of interaction among the players. (2004: 608)

The empirical research on the impact of structure on outcomes has been mixed.

Summarizing research in this area, Elaine B. Sharo finds that “reform structures clearly have an impact on descriptive representation and certain features of governance process” (in Vogel 2009: 281). However, she counters that “empirical research has not been fruitful in showing a link between reforms and the policy views of elected officials or aggregate policy outcomes in such areas as taxation,” thereby negating the notion that reform institutions make any difference (ibid.: 281). Where reform structures have been empirically linked to policy outcomes is when one limits the study to one narrow policy sphere—as I have attempted to do so in my own work (ibid.: 282). Overall, the ‘structure-outcomes’ debate cannot be interpreted as a reason not to pursue such research. Rather, most studies of this nature tend to focus on providing a richly contextual and compelling narrative through in-depth case studies.

Leslie Pal comments that case studies “are generalizable to theoretical propositions

and not to populations or universes” (2006: 233). Furthermore, “well selected cases can be thought of as experiments that corroborate or refute a particular theoretical hypothesis” (ibid.: 233). Pal notes that “the capacity to cast light on theory depends on the apriori relationship between the case and that theory” (ibid.: 233). Translink and Metrolinx are examples of unique governance models in Canada and therefore serve to “cast light on new developments and emerging realities” (ibid.: 234). However, the critical test of any theory that emerges from the case study hinges on there being “a clear set of propositions as well as the circumstances within which the propositions are believed to be true” (Yin 1989: 47 in Pal 2006). The great variation between local governance contexts has made such generalizability problematic in analyses of urban-regional politics where there is great institutional and organizational specificity. This dissertation’s generalizability and applicability to theory rests on the robustness of the analysis of key influencing variables in the cases. Of interest are the common patterns and issues that arise through the case study analysis and what might be said about these issues more broadly as they relate to RSPBs as an organizational form.

There have been numerous studies pointing to an emerging trend of regional governance in North America and Europe. In the words of Adams and Savitch, “what is needed are more case studies of the actual experience regions are having and consideration of whether regional governance can effectively substitute for formal metropolitan government” (1997: 194). This dissertation aims to forward one aspect of such a research agenda.

## Conclusion

This chapter has presented the main theoretical frameworks and methodology that will be employed in this study as well as rationales and justification for their use. Historical institutionalism as a theoretical framework places a strong emphasis on the role of context in institutional configurations and outcomes. This emphasis on context will be a dominant component of the case study narrative and explanations and comparisons between the two cases. The following chapter focuses on context at a broad level by examining the major debates surrounding the shift towards governance, increasing urban-regional complexity and the politics of regionalism as they relate to RSPBs.

The adoption of RSPBs is part of an institutional trend towards greater urban/regional complexity, a broader array of actors involved in the governing process, and expansion into the regional political space as an area for policy action. For a fuller understanding of why and how RSPBs are being advocated and adopted as an institutional solution, it is important to trace the major debates that have informed their evolution and to examine the literature that engages with this subject. Such debates and the relevant literature are the focus of this chapter. It is organized into two major sections, the first dealing with the theme of *governance amidst complexity*, and the second examining the *contested nature of the regional political space*.

The first section outlines the major debates around how to organize local public administration and the shift towards regional solutions as a response to increasing metropolitan complexity. Typologies and classifications of RSPBs are presented in order to provide nuance to what we see as a governance trend and to explore in greater detail their institutional and administrative composition. The goal here is not to present an overarching system for the categorization of these entities, but to advance ways of thinking about their administration, levels of coordination, activities and functions. This helps to place the two case studies of Metrolinx and Translink within a broader institutional context. Finally, the adoption of RSPBs adds another layer to governance in a region and consequently impacts upon traditional forms of accountability. The final part of this section discusses this with reference to different types of accountability.

The second section examines *contested regionalisms* where the regional political space is understood not as an apriori definition, but rather as the result of negotiations and collaborations between actors. The ideas driving conceptions of this political space as well as the actors and institutions that come to define them impact how regional policy problems are understood and acted upon. Because the term ‘new regionalism’ has arisen in the literature on regional governance to describe emerging trends in this area, I have paid specific attention to how this concept is being described and used and its relevance to the study at hand. Finally, the major features of transportation and transit planning as an area of public policy intervention are examined.

Overall, this chapter seeks to frame the rationales underlying the creation of RSPBs and their policy implications. The major themes and debates arising from an exploration of governance, complexity and the politics of regionalism provide a broader context in which to situate the analysis of these entities. Such context is critical to the historical institutionalist approach taken in this dissertation.

## GOVERNANCE AND COMPLEXITY

### Debates about local government administration and the emergence of regional governance

A fundamental factor in the effective governance of metropolitan areas is geography; metropolitan government inherently involves the spatial structure and spatial effectiveness of government and hence reforms have often focused on spatial reorganization. Barlow defines the problem of effective metropolitan government as one which arises from “a lack of correspondence between government structure and the spatial activity systems and community patterns that characterize modern society; it

manifests itself in the imperfect spatial organization and distribution of public service; it generates heated debate on the size and configuration of local government areas and the location of boundaries; and it fuels demands for the creation of new spatial forms of government” (1991: 1). Reflecting this view, much of the literature on local government has focused on spatial form as a determinant of outcomes from either the fragmentationalist or consolidationist<sup>21</sup> side of the debate and the many permutations in between. In concert with the issue of spatial form come debates surrounding the functions, jurisdictional power, internal organization, and bilateral and horizontal relationships of local governments—issues that are interconnected.

An understanding of how regional special purpose bodies have come to be proposed as an institutional solution to the problems of a fragmented metropolis first requires a detailing of the debates underlying their formation. Fundamentally, these debates centre on what is the most appropriate scale and institutional composition for dealing with metropolitan or regional problems. And so, underlying the proposed solutions is a problem definition. How regional issues are problematized will influence the proposed institutional solutions and their scale of adoption. For example, burgeoning literature on border regions problematizes issues across borders and therefore recommends institutional solutions that involve the cooperation of nation states as well as sub-national levels of government across a regional territory.<sup>22</sup>

In the United States and to a lesser extent in Canada, debates about the appropriate and most effective scale for local government were initially focused on consolidation and fragmentation. Briefly summarized, the debates for and against –

---

<sup>21</sup> Consolidationists favour municipal consolidations (larger local government), while fragmentationists favour smaller units of government.

<sup>22</sup> For an example of this work see Brunet-Jailly and Smith (2007).

consolidation surround the question of which structures best promote: i) efficiency in terms of the most services for the least cost; ii) democracy in terms of accountability and citizen control; iii) effective and equitable distribution of taxes and services; and iv) economic growth and development (Keating 1995: 117). Such debates are not new—the deliberations surrounding the municipal consolidations of London (1855) and New York (1855) in many ways echo contemporary ones.<sup>23</sup> The arguments for consolidation propose that larger units of government can exploit economies of scale, thereby delivering services more efficiently. Keating points out that “it is also sometimes argued that large-scale governments will be more democratic since they can be given greater powers and functional competence, thus giving more local control over policy (ibid.: 119). Related to this, it is thought that local government covering an entire urban area will deliver better service coordination and clearer accountability. It is further argued that larger units of government will be more effective in promoting economic growth and development through comprehensive and large-scale planning and will serve an important distributive function for taxes across a metropolitan area (ibid.: 117-120).<sup>24</sup> The drawbacks of this approach are that governments of this type may become overly large and bureaucratic, which could in turn reduce citizen access to government and accountability. In Canada, many amalgamations were pursued on the basis that they would lead to cost savings. However, evidence from amalgamations suggests that costs in fact increased due to such factors as the standardization of labour/employment contacts and expansion of services (Slack 2000: 24).

---

<sup>23</sup> For an overview of these debates see Sir Peter Hall’s (1998) *Cities in Civilization*.

<sup>24</sup> From the American tradition this position is also referred to as *reformist*, proposing reform through consolidation of the traditionally decentralized systems of local government in the United States.

Alternatively, the fragmentationalist approach (stemming from public choice theory) holds that government structures that best approximate markets and promote competition will thereby maximize citizen choice and lead to allocative efficiency. Tiebout (1956) was an early proponent of this approach of treating local governments as firms and citizens as consumers who reveal their preferences by 'voting with their feet'. Other public choice approaches that have evolved from the Tiebout model (but place less emphasis on preferences being expressed through mobility) include Parks and Oakerson (1989), Stein (1989) and Ostrom et al. (1988). Studies based on this school of thought have emphasized the importance of informal relationships amongst diverse entities that in fact create coherence and coordination in the face of seemingly uncoordinated formal structures. For example, Donald Chisholm's (1989) study of transportation systems in the San Francisco Bay area in the 1970s found that seemingly fragmented and overlapping systems were in fact coordinated through complex patterns of interdependence, formal institutions and informal networks. Critics of this approach argue that fragmentationalists have been more focused on theoretical elaboration than practical application and empirical testing of their approaches (Leach 1998: 58). Further, it has been argued that such models are structurally inequitable, where the needs of low-income groups are neglected in a model focused on market structure and expressions of choice through mobility (ibid.).

The debates between proponents of consolidation and fragmentation, which have been a particular preoccupation of the American literature on local government reform, are unlikely to be resolved any time soon. Both the normative aspects of the debate on local government administration and the difficulties in empirically assessing the relative

merits of various structures mean that a paradigm for effective local government remains elusive and new forms are constantly emerging<sup>25</sup>. Much of this debate has since moved on to a focus on the role of special purpose bodies at a regional level; within academic literature in particular, there is increasing consensus between both the public choice and reformist positions that some local governance functions are best pursued at a regional level. For example, Stephens and Wikstrom write that they are persuaded of the necessity of some kind of regional governmental structure to “promote region-wide political leadership, address issues of demonstrable region-wide import on a regional basis, and deliver system maintenance services” (2000: 167). Skaburkis writes, “the problems of the post-modern metropolis require regional planning” (2004: 39). For him, “the increasing size of cities with the spread of low-density suburban development increases the costs of internalized externalities and the importance of metropolitan area planning and region-wide coordination of policies” (ibid.: 39). Barlow, in *Metropolitan Government*, similarly highlights such a shift in governance, describing it as ‘metropolitan governance without government’ (1991). According to Barlow, there has been a worldwide retreat in metropolitan government institutions wherein:

...reliance is [instead] placed on special purpose bodies, the joint efforts of local governments, and arrangements between levels of government. There is considerable fragmentation, both functional and territorial, and it is only by means of an array of institutional arrangements among the various agencies and governments that coordination and integration can be achieved. Metropolitan governance, therefore, is a system of governing in which intergovernmental relations—in the broadest sense—play a major role. (1991: 294)

---

<sup>25</sup> However, in the Canadian context, very little attention has been paid to the public choice perspective outside of university economics departments (Sancton 1994: 45).

From Barlow's perspective, such a system requires an umbrella body to promote coordination and integration across the metropolitan area (1991: 295). Rothblatt echoes this call in recommending that metropolitan regions require "an overarching institutional arrangement with the capacity to build a consensus on the long-term comprehensive shared image of where the region is and where it should be going" (1994: 516). This is a tall order.

Arguments for regional governance are no less normative than the debates that have come before it. Embedded within the call for regional governance are assumptions about external trends and conditions and the required policy responses. In this way, "the line between analysis and advocacy has been very thin, and there is certainly reason to question researchers' objectivity (Rich 1980 quoted in Vogel 1997: 191). Regional institutional reforms cannot be divorced from the politics, rationales and contexts that spur them. This is a point that will be explored in greater detail in the second section of this chapter (on the politics of regionalism).

There are various ways in which to structure regional governance. The table below (summarized from Slack et al. 2006) presents four regional governance models and briefly discusses their benefits and drawbacks. RSPBs are but one among a variety of options. They are most often adopted in countries where there is a history of strong and autonomous local governments. RSPBs may coordinate/collaborate with other regional models of the type listed or contain elements of them. Some may rely more heavily on voluntary cooperation between parties or may have a higher degree of provincial involvement/control as in the case of Canada, to be discussed later.

### 3.1 Types of regional governance models

Description	Benefits	Drawbacks
<b>Two tier models:</b>		
Consists of an upper tier governing body (e.g., region, district, metropolitan government) encompassing a large geographic area, and a lower tier or area of a municipality (e.g., city, town). The upper tier provides region-wide services characterized by economies of scale and externalities and the lower tiers are responsible for services of a local nature.	Helps resolve “conflict among the various criteria for designing government structure -- economies of scale, externalities, and redistribution on the one hand and subsidiarity, access and accountability on the other” (Slack et al. 2006: 76). Can lead to better decision making at the regional level where region wide issues are considered apart from local dynamics.	Can lead to higher costs because of waste and duplication of services. Governance may be less transparent and more confusing to tax payers. There may be conflict between the two tiers, particularly when the upper tier was created by a higher order government (and imposed rather than adopted voluntarily).
<b>Voluntary cooperation:</b>		
An “area-wide body based on voluntary cooperation between existing units of local government in the agglomeration with no permanent, independent institutional status” (Sharpe 1995: 12). Can involve collaboration between multiple levels of government, NGO and profit sectors or intermunicipal agreements.	Recognizes interrelationship of municipalities without requiring a new or altered form of government. Municipalities can retain their autonomy with respect to expenditure and tax decisions, but gain economies of scale. Can work well where policy objectives are shared by all.	Can be problems of accountability, particularly where multiple stakeholders are involved. Does not work well where there are divergent objectives, differences in local resources or where social services are involved.
<b>Regional special purpose bodies:</b>		
Single or multiple purpose special body. May have one or more policy or service delivery focuses. Used more commonly in countries with a history of strong and autonomous local governments.	Service spill-over can be addressed on an individual basis. Also, “the delivery of services by professionals with decision-making somewhat removed from political influence; services can be provided using more professional expertise than may be available to the municipal government; and dedicated revenues from user fees could be used to finance capital expenditures” (Bahl & Linn 1992: 407).	If each body is responsible for a separate service, then they are not required to make tradeoffs between different types of service expenditures. Creates a profusion of government bodies, difficult for citizens to navigate. There may be no direct link between expenditure decisions by special purpose bodies and local councils (who collect taxes). This can reduce accountability. If accountability is lacking, there may be no incentive to be efficient. With many SPBs, it may be difficult to coordinate interrelated activities. <sup>26</sup>
<b>Provincial government as regional government:</b>		
Provincial government assumes responsibility for	Region wide planning capacity would reduce fragmentation and	May not represent the desires of local government and citizens if policies are

<sup>26</sup> Bahl and Linn suggest three ways to overcome problems of coordination for special purpose bodies: i) have overlapping membership across boards, ii) encourage the formation of special purpose bodies with multiple (as opposed to single) functions, iii) control operations of the districts so that they remain separate authorities but are still subject to political considerations in decision making (1992: 419).

functions to be addressed on region wide basis such as transportation and land use planning.	duplications of services and allow for enhanced coordination.	imposed from higher level of government.
Summarized from Slack et al 2006.		

There are tradeoffs apparent for every model. For RSPBs, Slack et al. describe the drawbacks as stemming from a profusion of different government bodies that may not coordinate or make tradeoffs in a cohesive manner. They further discuss how such bodies can have weak accountability both to citizens and to locally elected politicians. Slack et al argue that this can reduce the efficiency of such bodies. The efficiency-accountably tradeoffs are a topic we will return to in the last part of this section.

#### Regional special purpose bodies: typologies and classifications

As the previous section has shown, regional institutional structures, of which RSPBs are one type, are increasingly being advocated as a solution to the problems of the fragmented metropolis. However, this term ‘regional special purpose body’ remains very broad. Common features among these entities are that they have the authority to undertake public activities, have the ability to enter into a contract, have the right to sue and be sued, and have the ability determine a budget. This description leaves a great deal of room for variation. The vast growth in quasi-autonomous agencies like RSPBs and institutional hybrids makes categorization amongst institutional types difficult and challenges traditional notions of public sector classification.<sup>27</sup>

This section explores various typologies and classifications for the purposes of better placing and comparing the two case studies of Metrolinx and Translink. It does so

---

<sup>27</sup> As described by Wettenhall (2003) where the three most common public sector divisions are: i) departments (that form the central core of government), ii) local authorities (providing services that are decentralized from the core) and, iii) “the rest,” meaning quasi autonomous agencies.

through the identification of several themes: i) governance versus government; ii) decentralization versus centralization; iii) public versus private; and iv) the spectrum of transportation functions and levels of integration.

*i) Governance versus government*

One way of describing RSPBs would be to view them on a spectrum, from institutionally heavy or rigid structures (e.g., formal government) to those that are institutionally light or flexible (e.g., models involving voluntary cooperation)<sup>28</sup>. Regional special purpose bodies can be considered somewhere in the middle on such a spectrum. They are often described as ‘governance’ bodies, implying that they occupy a middle ground between formal government and informal cooperative mechanisms. For example, in the chart below, summarized from a 2006 OECD document, special purpose bodies are placed in the middle of the spectrum—as a form of cooperative arrangement.<sup>29</sup>

3.2 Regional governance models: institutionally heavy to institutionally light

Institutionally Heavy-----◆-----Institutionally Light			
Type	Functional models	Cooperative arrangements	Informal coordination
Institutional features	Governance matches functional social-economic area with decision-making power at the regional level distinct and autonomous. Cross-sectoral competencies. Metropolitan reform tradition.	Inter-municipal joint authorities, voluntary or ad hoc. Can entail a single purpose or sectoral authority or a multi-purpose regional body.	Platforms, associations, strategic planning partnerships. Do not necessarily follow the logic of territorial boundaries. Often emerges in the preparation of strategic plans.
Source: Table content summarized from OECD, <i>Cities in a Global Economy</i> (2006:156-200).			

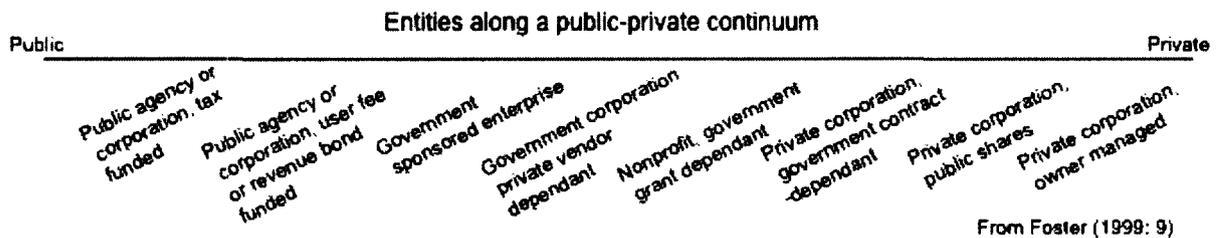
<sup>28</sup> The institutionally light configuration of ‘informal coordination’ has also been referred to in European regional governance literature as a ‘strategic region’. Andersen and Pierre use this term in “Exploring the strategic region; rationality, context and institutional collective action,” describing strategic regions as “emerging through bottom-up processes among neighboring municipalities with the objective of creating concerted, collective action among local institutional actors” (2010: 219).

<sup>29</sup> Herrschel and Newman in *Governance of Europe’s City Regions*, present a similar outline of three major types in their discussion of regional planning systems (2002: 70).

*ii) Public versus private*

Related to the distinction between governance types, confusion often occurs over the public or private status of SPBs (Foster 1999: 8). Foster outlines a continuum of bodies along the public-private spectrum. Her study of special purpose government does not specifically focus on regional special purpose bodies, but the continuum can be fruitfully applied to them. The left-hand side shows the ‘public’ side of the spectrum and begins with ‘government departments’, while the right-hand side depicts the ‘private’ side of the spectrum ending with ‘private corporation, owner managed’. Regional special purpose bodies tend to fall in the middle-left of the spectrum.

3.3 Entities along a public-private continuum



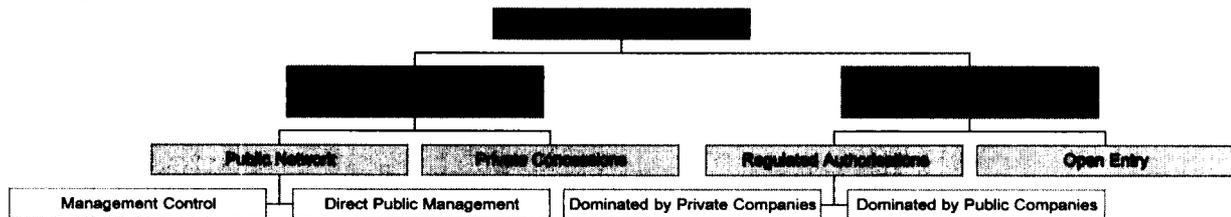
SPBs are not government departments where there are clear lines of accountability and authority stemming from an elected model of representation with either ministerial responsibility at the state/province or federal level or mayoral/council responsibility at the municipal level.<sup>30</sup> Rather, they can be seen as occupying a part of Foster’s continuum beginning at ‘public agency or corporation, tax funded’ and possibly extending to ‘non

<sup>30</sup> In a broad discussion of the types of models used across developed countries, Mees comments that the provision of transportation and transit by government “is much less popular than it used to be, because close political control can work against efficient operations, while the bureaucratic culture of a government department may not be the best environment to foster innovative tactical planning” (2010: 73).

profit, government grant dependent’ – though there are arguments to be made that ‘non-profit, government grant dependent agencies’ should be included.

Velde (1999) presents a classification of organizational forms in public transport that similarly summarizes the public–private divide, categorizing ‘authority’ led and ‘market’ led initiatives. These are examples of “pure organizational form” (ibid.: 151) and real world examples do not tend to correspond to these delineations. Rather, they tend to incorporate a mixture of the two elements.

### 3.4 Organizational forms in public transport



Source: Velde (1999), Organisational forms and entrepreneurship in public transport Part 1: classifying organisational forms, *Transport Policy*, 6, 149.

‘Authority initiatives’ are those regimes where services can only legally be delivered through action by the authority (i.e., there is no legal route for the autonomous provision of services). Within entities of this type a distinction is made between those that are based on public ownership and those that offer concessioning (where some private company is set up to operate an element of the system). Velde further delineates between public network entities where assets are owned and run by the authority directly (direct public management) or through delegated management by a private operator (management control) (ibid.: 151). Authorities under ‘market led initiatives’ are described as either: i) regulatory authorities (that place controls on safety or emissions requirements, or grant exclusivity); ii) subsidizing authorities (that make unprofitable markets profitable ones); or iii) supplier authorities. Market initiative regimes are described as varying from “fully

competitive open regimes to restricted authorization regimes where the operators are granted a more or less permanent and extensive level of exclusivity” (ibid.: 150). Within ‘regulated authorizations’ a distinction is made between the domination of public versus private companies; the latter is increasingly rare in Europe (ibid.:151).

Public agencies or corporations are the most common institutional type of regional special purpose body for transportation and transit. A public agency (or corporation) is generally distinct from that of a department or ministry and is created under its own Act and is not a term that is usually applied to bodies created under local government authorities. In Canada, the 1951 federal Financial Administration Act (FAA) declared that crown corporations are ultimately accountable to Parliament through a minister, but are not subject to budgetary systems or direct control of a minister in the same way that government departments are (Langford 1982: 620). The Greater Toronto Transportation Authority (Translink), for example, is a government agency created under its own Act by the Ontario provincial government and is currently tax funded (though this is expected to change after 2013). A central rationale for the creation of government agencies is that they permit a public entity to undertake commercial operations without constant government intervention and oversight—allowing for “more scope for efficiency at the tactical and operational levels” (ibid.). A related type is the public transport federation or *verkehrsverbund*, as it is often called because the model originated in Germany (in 1965). This model is a corporation or authority as defined above (depending on the level of government involved) but with a major distinction being that it is jointly

held by governments and is typically focused more on strategic and tactical level planning while leaving the existing transport agencies intact.<sup>31</sup>

As one moves from the left to the right of the public-private continuum there is an inherent trade-off between the democratic value of full public-representativeness with public accountability and the diminishment of efficiencies that are purportedly gained through insulation from publicly accountable decision-making. Much of this is also dependent upon the organizational structure and, related to this, organizational culture. For example, some public agencies have adopted corporate style boards, while others in the area of transportation and transit planning have elected representatives from different levels of government on their boards. Hence, the organizational and governance structure of regional special purpose bodies is a further factor to consider in a description of typologies. Whether an organization has elected (or appointed-elected) representatives or non-elected representatives is a major distinction.

### *iii) The spectrum of transportation functions*

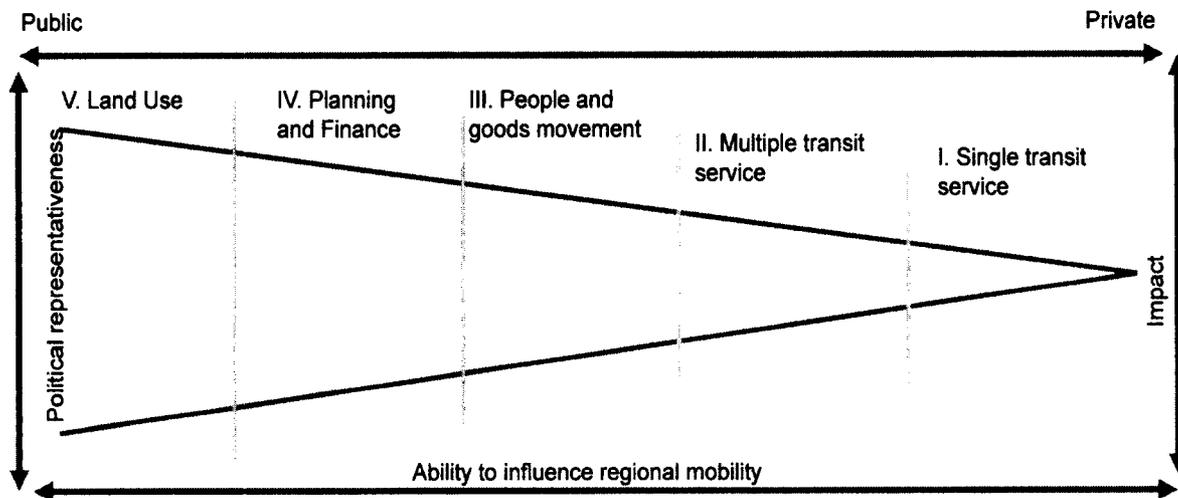
The capacity to act and influence policy in a city-region is very much linked to the types of functions for which an entity is responsible. The chart below depicts such functions on a spectrum, from those that provide a single transit service to those that are empowered to pursue land use planning. The greater the number of functions, the greater the entity's ability to influence regional mobility and hence its overall regional impact. Planning and

---

<sup>31</sup> In outlining the various options it is useful to distinguish between the types of activities that such authorities may engage in—namely, strategic, tactical or operational activities (Vuchic 2005: 456-459; Inno-V et al. 2008: 32-35; Mees 2010: 72). At the strategic level, overarching objectives are set, such as those of environmental sustainability or equity (Mees 2010: 72). At the tactical level, the objectives that are often stated in regional plans are expressed as service wide strategies, while the operational level deals with the day-to-day service delivery (ibid.).

finance activities enable an SPB to influence individual behavior through price mechanisms and to create a system of incentives and disincentives by modal type.

### 3.5 RSPBs by function



Graphic influenced by Conference Board of Canada, 2005: 50.

Land use planning functions allow an SPB to pursue investments in a strategic manner and to determine growth patterns over a longer term, shaping a city's urban morphology.

The chart above also incorporates the model depicting entities along the private-public continuum. There are several features of note. Empirically, in my own review of RSPBs in the area of transportation it is found that entities that include land use, planning and finance functions tend to be closer to the public end of the spectrum. These functions are extremely influential and require a greater degree of political representativeness due to their broad impacts. The levels of government under which these powers would fall would be unlikely to cede control in this policy area, given its importance. Further, such an action could be perceived as undemocratic, insulating an important policy sphere from electoral accountability (despite, in the case of RSPBs, there rarely being directly elected accountability). While the model presented above is based on a jurisdictional review of regional special purpose bodies, it can also be considered a normative model as it

proposes that entities which incorporate land use, planning and financing functions have a greater ability to influence regional mobility and that such entities have a tendency to be closer to the public side of the spectrum. Hence, those RSPBs of the more public variety have a greater ability to influence regional transportation mobility.

*iv) Degree of government involvement*

The previous discussion requires a further qualification—that of the degree of government involvement. Planning and policy influence over transportation and land use operate in a nested fashion, with upper level governments often having greater control in terms of both regulatory measures and funding. Therefore, the ability to influence regional transportation issues can be greater for upper tier governments. This will differ depending on the jurisdictional responsibility for urban affairs in a nation state. Federal governments can, for example, influence the creation of RSPBs—they can mandate the necessity for them to be in place in order to receive federal funding (e.g., in the case of Metropolitan Planning Organizations in the United States). They can also regulate the types of technologies being adopted across a sector (e.g., engine size, emissions abatement technologies), and can structure environmental transportation inducements through program funding. Similarly, provincial or state governments can employ regulatory and financial measures to create a system of incentives and disincentives regarding transportation across a regional area as well as determine land use. Comparatively, local governments have less influence over these policy measures to induce change and may instead be required to structure investments according to the requirements of upper tier governments. As such, their ability to impact regional mobility may be compromised and they may be more likely to enter into voluntary agreements when the impetus is local.

However, this is in part dependent on the degree to which they are financially beholden to upper tier governments and their degree of local autonomy. Another important factor is the geographic scale at which the entities are operating.

#### *Application to cases*

In applying the various categorizations to the two Canadian case studies of Metrolinx and Translink it is clear that they are closer to the public side of the spectrum: both are public authorities or corporations (referring to Diagram 2.5 Entities along a public-private continuum). A difference, however, is that Metrolinx is a Crown Agency (within the meaning of the Ontario *Crown Agency Act*, 2006, c. 16, s. 3:1), whereas Translink is a public authority (incorporated under the *South Coast British Columbia Transportation Authority Act*, SBC 1998) but “not an agent of the government” (SCBCTA Act 2:3). Both Metrolinx and Translink fit somewhere between the functional and cooperative arrangements as presented in Table 2.4, Models of Regional Governance. Prior to the 2007 amendments to its Act, Metrolinx could have been considered more of a cooperative model in terms of its governance composition. The 2007 change to its governance model replaced local government politicians (the Mayor’s Council consisting of all mayors of the 21 municipalities within Metro Vancouver) with an appointed board of professionals. Translink saw a similar change, with a board of composed of local government representatives being replaced with a corporate board (with no local government representatives) through the 2009 amendments to its Act (*Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area Transit Implementation Act 2009*).

In terms of the entities’ ability to influence regional mobility, both Metrolinx and Translink have broad functions that include multimodal planning and finance (as related

to Diagram 2.7 RSPBs by function). However, the critical element of land use planning is a collaborative endeavor. Metrolinx has responsibility for the development of a Transportation Plan, but this must be done in accordance with the regional growth plan (as set out in the *Places to Grow Act 2005*) as well as municipal land use regulations. Translink's land use policies should conform to those of the regional plan developed by the Greater Vancouver Regional District and also to local land use regulations. Hence, the entities operate in a nested planning environment. Finally, with regards to Diagram 2.6 (Organizational forms in public transport), both case studies are examples of authority initiative regimes, where the transport authorities are given first right to create services. For Metrolinx this 'first right' pertains to the regional transportation system; local transit provision may be entered into by the affected municipality (Metrolinx Act 2006: 16, 2). For Translink, this first right extends to the transportation service region corresponding to GVRD (Translink Act 2008: 5,1). These issues will be further explored in the case study chapters (Chapters 4 and 5).

### Complexity, governance and accountability

The adoption of RSPBs can have an impact upon traditional forms of accountability (Cavill & Sohail 2004). The extent to which this is the case will depend on the organizational composition of the entity and its relationship to other institutions and levels of government. For example, entities that are closer to the private side of the governance spectrum without elected representation will have weaker accountability than the more public variety with elected representation.

There is also a scalar dimension to accountability. The roles and responsibilities of *RSPBs* and their relationship to other levels of government can be opaque to citizens. Citizens tend to have a closer association to neighbourhood-based issues. While *RSPBs* impact certain neighborhoods, they rarely have directly elected representatives (although there are exceptions to this such as Portland’s MPO which is also a regional tier of government). It can be unclear to citizens how the entities are funded, how decisions are made, and where accountability lies. *RSPBs* can reduce political accountability (as described in the chart below) because of the nature of institutional complexity and multi-level government relations.

### 3.6 Types of accountability

<b>Type of Accountability</b>	<b>Features</b>	<b>Mechanisms of Accountability</b>	<b>Context (Structure)</b>
Political Accountability	Democratic, external	Democratic elections, chain of accountability	Democratic state
Bureaucratic Accountability	Hierarchical, legal	Rules, regulations, supervision	Bureaucracy
Personal Accountability	Internal, normative, moral	Culture, values, ethics	Collective
Professional Accountability	Complex, ‘deference to expertise’, peer-oriented	Expert scrutiny, peer review, professional role	Expert organization
Performance	Output or client centered	Competition, self regulation	Market
Deliberation	Interactive, deliberative, open, public	Public debate, deliberation, transparency, access to information	Public sphere

Source: Erkkila, T. (2007). Governance and accountability – a shift in conceptualization. *Public Administration Quarterly*, 31(1), 8.

Further, the institutional hybridity of *RSPBs* means that the public or private nature of such bodies is often ambiguous; there is a grey area of organizations that are neither fully governmental nor fully non-governmental or private (Martin 2004). The terms quasi-

governmental and quasi-non-governmental have emerged to partially describe these nuances.<sup>32</sup> Such features can complicate bureaucratic or hierarchal accountability (Wettenhall 2003: 219). RSPBs for transportation and transit can be particularly prone to this (depending on how they are set up) because of the complexity introduced through multi-government coordination that is a common feature of such entities, as well as the use of public-private-partnerships and corporate subsidiaries for the delivery of infrastructure and services.

RSPBs in transportation tend to engage in performance-based accountability related to the use of their services (e.g., transit usage statistics, opinion polls, customer surveys). Similarly, deliberative practices of accountability are critical to public consensus or agreement for many planning functions. This is particularly the case for large infrastructure investments that can be both costly and disruptive. Personal and professional accountability speaks to cultural and professional practices. Accountability is contextual, and practices will differ depending on their institutional environment.

The issue of accountability emerges as a major theme throughout the case studies. It would appear to be a major drawback to the adoption of RSPBs as an organizational form. However, as the case studies also illustrate, there are various ways to structure these organizations that may strengthen or weaken the various types of accountability.

---

<sup>32</sup> Quasi-governmental entities, abbreviated as *quagos*, are “statutory authorities/corporations and companies established by governments but with a degree of autonomy from the policy cores” while quasi-non-governmental, *quangos*, are “privately established bodies performing functions of a public character and probably drawing some funding from the state” (Wettenhall 2003: 230). However, there are debates about the utility of these delineations (ibid).

## THE POLITICS OF REGIONALISM

### Contested regionalisms and the politics of scale

In “Metropolis Unbound: Legislators and Interpreters of Urban Form,” Isin describes the issue of ‘governing the metropolis’ as “one of the most complex questions of modern democratic societies of this century” and metropolitan or regional planning as “the oxymoron of the century”, where solutions within multiple and conflicting jurisdictions remain elusive (1996: 114). Regionalism in local government broadly involves ideas about rescaling the metropolis to more effectively meet urban challenges. As has been discussed, merits and drawbacks of various governance options are a major preoccupation in the literature on urban/local governance and reform.

The ‘regional space’ presents itself as a particularly problematic concept since its boundaries are often fluidly conceived. Dictionary definitions of the term ‘region’ variously describe it as an indefinitely defined area, a broad geographic area distinguished by similar features and/or an administrative area division or district. This fluidity means that any established regional boundary will have cause for contestation--a point that is articulated well by Sancton in *The Limits of Boundaries* (2008). Hence, regional governance models are contested both in terms of spatial form and function.

Canada has seen different periods of regionalism—from post war two-tier regional governments, to the amalgamations of the 1990s, to the creation of special purpose bodies and regional economic development authorities. The term ‘regionalism’ is therefore very broad and may encompass a wide body of literature. It is also a term whose usage has changed over time. This section focuses on contemporary approaches to regionalism—often termed ‘new regionalism.’ Both of the regional SPB case studies

incorporate new regionalist elements. For example, Razin and Smith comment that Greater Vancouver (including Translink) offers a “much praised” example of new regionalism, but one that is much more reflective of Canadian political culture (as opposed to American) and is “characterized by greater acceptance of senior levels of government as fair brokers, trust in a culture of negotiation, compromise and consensus building that supports notions such as ‘gentle imposition’” (2006: 22). This section attempts to ‘unpack’ this concept.

### New Regionalisms

First, it should be stated that the term *new regionalism* is not an altogether new term—it was used as early as 1938 by Howard W. Odum and Harry Estill Moore to refer to the synthesis of cultural and political regionalism (Odum and Moore 1938: 3 in Wheeler 2002: 267).<sup>33</sup> However, in the contemporary period it has come to take on different meanings. In a review of regional planning, Wheeler (2002) distinguishes four historical periods out of which new regionalism has evolved: i) ecological regionalism (early 20<sup>th</sup> century), ii) regional science (late 1940s to the present), iii) Neo-Marxist regional economic geography (1960’s to present), and iv) public choice regionalism (1960’s to the present).<sup>34</sup> Throughout these eras of regional planning, the description of what constitutes

---

<sup>33</sup> Well known examples of new regionalist literature include *Cities Without Suburbs* (Rusk 1995) and *Citistates* (Peirce, Johnson & Hall 1993); both authors advocate coordinated regional approaches to dealing with metropolitan issues.

<sup>34</sup> ‘Ecological regionalism’ was concerned with the overcrowding of industrial cities and prescribed decentralization. Wheeler describes this as a “holistic, normative and place oriented’ approach to planning (2002: 269). In contrast, the later ‘regional science’ approach placed an emphasis on regional economic development and planning through quantitative analysis and social science methods. The Neo-Marxist approach of the late 1960’s emphasizes urban power dynamics and social movements while the concurrent ‘public choice regionalism’ focuses on metropolitan efficiency and effectiveness through the expression of citizen preferences in tax composition and service delivery. While Wheeler describes these as eras of

a 'region' has changed according to problem definition and priorities. For the early regionalists, the region designates the city and surrounding countryside, whereas later descriptions have emphasized regions as nodes of linked economic activity where territory is more fluid. The four eras of regional planning described by Wheeler are often lumped together as 'old regionalism' in the face of the emergence of 'new regionalism', which both borrows from previous traditions and can be seen as a response to the problems of contemporary urban regions (e.g., physically large, polycentric, complex and politically fragmented).

New regionalism emerged in the 1990s as a tool for holistic and integrated "physical planning, urban design and equity planning with the focus on regional economic geography" (2002: 268). It grew out of an American planning tradition and is a movement that is practitioner driven and has yet to be systematically analyzed or defined. The key features of new regionalism (through a survey of recent regional initiatives) can be described as follows:

- i. Focuses on specific territories and spatial planning;
- ii. Tries to address problems related to the growth and fragmentation of postmodern metropolitan regions;
- iii. Takes a more holistic approach to planning that often integrates planning specialties such as transportation and land use as well as environmental, economic and equity goals;
- iv. Emphasizes physical planning, urban design and sense of place as well as social and economic planning; and
- v. Often adopts a normative or activist stance. (Wheeler 2002: 270)

---

regional *planning*, these approaches reflect various disciplinary stances, involving political economy, sociology, economics and geography.

The final point that Wheeler makes about the expressly normative<sup>35</sup> or activist approach of new regionalism identifies one of the greatest delineations from past regionalisms. It has ushered in a new language in planning with ideas of livability, sustainability, equity and civic engagement becoming increasingly important. This is a departure from previous regionalisms that have emphasized "...abstract, aspatial analysis, the goal of regional economic development, quantitative social science methods, and a stance of scientific detachment" (ibid.: 274). The normative aspects of new regionalism have led to the development of planning manifestos and have placed importance on collaborative community planning exercises and long term strategic plans to guide future development in cities. It is an expressly environmentally conscious movement that seeks to limit urban sprawl. In this way, new regionalism encapsulates aspects of normative and prescriptive theories of urban politics.

Wheeler's exploration of the characteristics of new regionalism focuses on how it addresses space, emerging metropolitan challenges and collective/community goals. Savitch and Vogel offer a similar description, but place an emphasis on the governance implications of this approach (Savitch & Vogel in Razin & Smith 2006: 225). They describe new regionalism as focusing on economic development, regional infrastructure and development policy and growing social and economic disparities between the core and periphery of city-regions. In institutional form, this is described as "combin[ing] government with governance, formal and informal cooperation, centralization and decentralization in altogether new ways" (ibid.). Savitch and Vogel state that:

---

<sup>35</sup> While it is often emphasized that new regionalism is an expressly normative approach, all planning approaches similarly encapsulate normative values or assumptions. Planning necessarily interacts with fundamental questions concerning the role of the state in social and spatial planning.

Reterritorialization is merely one aspect of new regionalism. Innovative policies and new management techniques are emerging and could replace over-centralized hierarchies. Cities and city regions are experimenting in how to govern a sprawling metropolitan region and develop collaborative relationships with other governments in the area, state and nation alongside local and international private and nonprofit organizations. The challenge is to ensure that traditional concerns about efficiency, effectiveness, equity, and democracy are not lost in the building of new regionalism. (ibid.: 241)

This definition is but one of many that try to characterize a relatively new, complex and fluid phenomenon. Alan Wallis' (2002) description of new regionalism set against the features of old regionalisms also focuses on the institutional features that new regionalism might embody. He describes new regionalism as having a focus on governance (versus government)<sup>36</sup>, process (versus structure), open/fluid boundaries (versus defined territoriality), collaboration and voluntary agreements (versus coordination and hierarchy), trust (versus accountability) and empowerment (versus power) (Wallis 2002).

### 3.7 New versus old regionalism

<i>New Regionalism</i>	<i>Old Regionalism</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Governance: focus on vision and goals, multi-sector and shared responsibilities</li> <li>• Focus on process: visioning, strategic planning, conflict resolution, consensus building</li> <li>• Open boundaries/territory</li> <li>• Collaboration: voluntary agreements among equals</li> <li>• Trust</li> <li>• Empowerment: network-based approach</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Government: inserting a new layer into state-local relations</li> <li>• Focus on structure: city/county consolidation</li> <li>• Closed boundaries: territory well defined</li> <li>• Coordination: implying hierarchy</li> <li>• Accountability</li> <li>• Power: formal and institutionalized</li> </ul>
<p>Note: table is based on a speech by Allan Wallis, titled "The New Regionalism" delivered at a symposium for elected officials, University of Alberta (2000), URL: <a href="http://www.munimall.net/eos/2002/wallis_regionalism.nclk">http://www.munimall.net/eos/2002/wallis_regionalism.nclk</a> [Dec. 15, 2008]</p>	

<sup>36</sup> Savitch and Vogel (2006) distinguish between government and governance by stating that the former implies formal and vertical institutions to enhance efficiency, effectiveness, accountability and transparency while the later instead emphasizes informal horizontal networks and is "concerned with reducing disparities between the central cities and suburbs" (in Razin & Smith eds.: 214).

Canadian policy makers have recently shown a great deal of interest in aspects of new regionalism (Sancton 2001). But few cities offer a holistic case study of new regionalist approaches and there are debates amongst adherents to this planning paradigm as to how one might implement new regionalist ideas. Much of the literature advocating new regionalism is an example of a normative application of regime theory where inclusive governing coalitions of diverse interests (and across institutional boundaries) are the desired form of governance. In doing so, it embraces pluralism, in asserting that power should be dispersed. Similarly, new regionalism can be thought of as a prescriptive or instrumental application of regime theory as it implies mechanisms for achieving the desired condition of cohesive regional planning to counter the effects of a sprawling metropolis.

The implementation of new regionalism suggests new institutional arrangements and governance reforms. Across North America and Western Europe there has been a discernable shift from local government toward local/regional governance (Goldsmith 2005: 243). The implementation of new regionalist ideas has been part of this shift. Wheeler writes that such implementation requires “work on regional planning processes and institutions including flexible governance options, incentive structures to bring about better physical planning and improve equity, steps to nurture social capital within a region and methods of supporting regional social movements around growth, environmental, or equity issues” (2002: 274). In practice there are tradeoffs between these various components; social equity, environmental goals and economic growth are not necessarily compatible aims. New regionalism has been defined in varying ways by the different authors that have been reviewed here, and includes a rather broad spectrum

of activities. In this way, it may have become an overused concept—one better delineated by narrower descriptions. Wheeler's (2002) description of new regionalism as expressly activist and normative with a focus on social justice and environmental sustainability is at the heart of the planning movement's original intentions. Others (e.g., Wallis 2000; Savitch & Vogel 2006) place an emphasis on the institutional mechanisms required to achieve new regionalist aims. This is in contrast to the 'new regionalisms' advocated by the competitive or entrepreneurial cities approach in which calls for regionalism are based on an understanding of cities as important nodes in an international system, requiring empowerment to adjust their boundaries and the financial resources to maintain economic competitiveness (Lefebvre 1998: 22).

Regionalism based upon this type of competitive cities thesis is becoming increasingly influential and is grounded in a specific understanding of globalization as part of a linear trend towards global economic integration. RSPBs in this context offer a flexible institutional tool with which to act competitively. In recent years the OECD has become an influential advocate of this position that sees all policy spheres, environmental and social, through the lens of market competition; environmental sustainability, social cohesion and equality are important inasmuch as they impact the attractiveness of the area to investment.<sup>37</sup> In this way, the focus on city competition frames all policy issues from an economic perspective—determining problem definition and policy recommendations. This approach advocates market-driven processes to achieve public goals, encouraging private sector behaviours in policy planning—e.g., risk taking, city

---

<sup>37</sup> Their approach has been outlined in two horizontal synthesis reports titled *Competitive cities in a global economy* (OECD 2006) and *Competitive cities: a new entrepreneurial paradigm in spatial development* (OECD 2007). The OECD's territorial reviews and policy recommendations in the area of urban affairs are conducted by the Working Party on Territorial Policy in Urban Areas (WPURB, est. 1999).

branding/marketing, and innovation with a profit motivation (ibid.: 8). It also favours public private partnerships as a mode of service delivery.

There is a significant amount of urban politics literature that looks at the application and impacts of the competitive cities approach. For example, Macleod (2002) uses a regulation approach<sup>38</sup> to describe the emergence of the competitive cities paradigm in Glasgow. For MacLeod, the competitive cities position arose as a response to such circumstances as deindustrialization, the suburban “flight” of high-income earners, and a concurrent concentration of impoverished residents in inner city areas. At the same time as these factors were placing great strain on urban governmental administrations, there was a decline of national fiscal support for city governance in North America and Western Europe. These processes facilitated the emergence of urban entrepreneurialism as a dominant discourse in local governance/government reform. Summarizing this transformation, MacLeod writes:

Over the past fifteen years or so, a number of scholars have come to interpret these features as a generalized transformation from urban managerialism to urban entrepreneurialism. Guided by the axial principles of Keynesian economics and a politics of redistribution associated with postwar Fordism, the managerialist mode had been largely concerned with extending the provision of public services and decommodified components of welfare and “collective consumption” to local city populations. In sharp contrast, and in accordance with a neoliberal syllabus, the entrepreneurial regime is essentially concerned with reviving the competitive position of urban economies, especially through the “liberation” of private enterprise and an associated demunicipalization and recommodification of social and economic life. (2002: 604)

---

<sup>38</sup> Regulation theory in urban political economy has been instrumental in unpacking and deconstructing the contextual factors underlying the emergence of these different positions, as well as in illuminating their governance implications. Originating in France in the 1970s and early 1980s through the work of Marxist economists, regulation theory has become a predominant mode of thought in urban political economy. It looks at different modes of regulation in economic life—“ones that are neither wholly deliberate nor automatic” (Painter 2002: 93). Related concepts stemming from this approach are: regimes of accumulation (the nature of the economic relationship), and modes of regulation (the political and sociocultural institutions that reinforce said relationship) (ibid.: 93).

In these ways, global restructuring and fluidity of capital and labour have grounded urban policy in a context of economic competition and development, which brings with it its own set of policy responses. In the context of urban policy, these shifts have affected policies, institutions, social relations and urban morphology.<sup>39</sup> In these ways, the current challenges facing cities are explained by the crisis and breakdown of the Fordist system. Many writers from a regulation approach have focused on interpreting the shift from a Fordist to a post-Fordist mode of regulation and the resultant implications. For example, like MacLeod, Jessop characterizes the broadly neoliberal policies of many Western governments as characteristic of a Schumpeterian Workforce State that focuses on the “...structural competitiveness of open economies mainly through supply-side intervention and ...subordinate[s] social policy to the demands of labour market flexibility and structural competitiveness” (1993:19). These traits imply a policy shift from inclusive welfare programs and broad social protection towards spatially targeted policies and economic competitiveness. This has led to calls for increased local government autonomy—with a reduction of welfare state functions being part of this trend (Brenner 2004; Keil, 1998). Others have pointed out that a neoliberal version of post-Fordism (and accompanying social-spatial inequalities) will lead to increasingly authoritarian measures of social control and policing (Edwards & Hallsworth: 1992).

The capricious nature of local government—particularly in a federated state such as Canada where municipalities are creatures of the provinces<sup>40</sup>—means that local

---

<sup>39</sup> For example, post-war Fordism depended upon and led to a suburbanization driven by growing consumer demands such as car and home ownership—a major reason why many American and Canadian cities look the way they do today. This was supported by government policies (such as infrastructure investments). In the United States and to a lesser extent in Canada, the type of segregated city that was spawned from this mode of regulation led to distressed urban areas.

<sup>40</sup> Under section 92 (8) of *The Constitution Act* (1867) municipal institutions are included as one of the “Classes of Subjects” for which each Province “may exclusively make Laws.”

government institutions are malleable and change in tandem with and/or in response to shifting historical, cultural, ideological and territorial contexts (i.e., they are not constitutionally enshrined government institutions). This has affected both governance form and function. Local spaces of regulation arise in part because of the unevenness of capitalist development and also because local agencies are often the mechanism through which regulatory practices are interpreted and delivered. In these ways, the local state is an important part of such modes of regulation and can be implicated in any transition from one mode to another (though responses differ by scale, territory and context).

There are distinct differences between regionalisms based upon the competitive cities thesis versus those that are more focused on redistributive goals. While they are both reacting to similar phenomena—e.g., globalization, population growth, regional disparity—their proposed institutional and policy solutions are distinct.<sup>41</sup> Jonas and Ward contrast these distinct ‘regionalisms’ in their article “A world of regionalisms? Towards a US-UK urban and regional policy framework comparison” (2002). In doing so they distinguish between a shift from corporatist to competitive regionalism and the ways in which the latter is framed across national political-institutional contexts (the table below outlines these differences).

### 3.8 Corporate versus competitive regionalism

	Corporate Regionalism	Competitive Regionalism
Cultural/ideological base	Liberal reform view: •Federal intervention in metropolitan areas to address the urban fiscal crisis •Reduce inter-jurisdictional and fiscal social disparities •Break down mechanisms of suburban	Neoliberal view: •Restore/reassert the role of state and local governments in the federal system •Promote the economic development of metropolitan areas in local decision making

<sup>41</sup> For literature exploring the consequences and impacts of the entrepreneurial city approach to planning see Boddy & Parkinson 2004; Gleeson 2003; Norris 2001b; Kipfer & Kiel 2002; Orfield 1997; Skaburkis 2004.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>political exclusion</li> <li>•Promote efficiency and equity in public service provision</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Encourage citizen participation in local decision making</li> <li>•Facilitate local policy experimentation around economic, social and environmental goals</li> </ul>
Discursive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Construction of urban crisis as a crisis of the central city</li> <li>•Promotion of metropolitan region as a territorial scale of problem resolution</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Discursive rendering of cities and city-regions as competitive nodes in the global economy</li> <li>•Emphasis on linking entrepreneurialism to regional coordination and cooperation</li> </ul>
Economic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Serving the interests of monopoly capital</li> <li>•Emphasis on economies of scale and rationalization of land use planning, service structures and public administration through metropolitan and regional frameworks</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Serving the interests of global capital and local economic clusters</li> <li>•Emphasis on economies of scope and the advantages of economic specialization</li> <li>•Elevating the significance of the city-region as a competitive territorial unit in the global economy</li> </ul>
Political	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Metropolitan government seen as a vehicle for achieving fiscal and social equity and supporting national economic growth.</li> <li>•Metropolitan growth coalitions activated</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Emphasis on regional entrepreneurial governance and political leadership</li> <li>•Stronger regional cooperation is encouraged</li> <li>•Strategic role for state governments in enabling regional public-private partnerships</li> </ul>
Institutional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Emphasis on metropolitan consolidation</li> <li>•Creation of regional councils of government</li> <li>•Federal funds available for regional government</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Emphasis on voluntary and semi formal agreements between counties, cities, special districts and other local governments</li> <li>•Incentives provided for regional cooperation</li> <li>•Emphasis on use of state and local rather than federal resources</li> </ul>
<p>Source: Jonas, A. E. G., and Ward, K. G. (2002). A world of regionalisms? Towards a US-UK urban and regional policy framework comparison. <i>Journal of Urban Affairs</i>, 24(4), 390.</p>		

There are elements here of the distinction between the ‘old’ and ‘new’ regionalisms as described by Wallis, most notably in the description of political and institutional features (2002). However, Jonas and Ward present a particularly nuanced view of the redistributive goals and spatial politics of these two approaches. In their study of the policy contexts in the United States and the United Kingdom they point out that

subnational politics in the US has been focused in the past on the urban-suburban divide and particularly on issues of racial and class segregation, whereas in the United Kingdom the politics of redistribution have focused more on regional economic growth through demand side interventions. While there has been policy convergence in both countries around the concept of competitive regionalism and the axioms of globalization, governance (the inclusion of more diverse actors and institutions in the governing process) and city regions as a key locus for policy action, they do find country specific differences, leading them to conclude that there remain distinctive ways in which competitive regionalism is being implemented.

Jonas and Ward conclude with three propositions that they believe should frame urban and regional policy comparisons. First, that urban policy debates “need to be interpreted alongside analyses that emphasize the roles played by different levels of government” (Jonas & Ward 2002: 396). Second, that despite an often apparent convergence in discourse and practice around such concepts as competitive regionalism, there remain distinct national and subnational differences that are “central to the orchestration and re-scaling of state functions in urban areas and regions” (ibid). And third, that competitive regionalism is unevenly applied—there remain elements of past regionalisms that may co exist with emerging policies and institutions where the logic underpinning different models can be very different (ibid). Jonas and Ward present these three propositions to guide UK and US policy comparisons, but they may equally be applied to Canadian case analysis. This analysis stresses the *politics* of regionalism and the role of the political subsystem in directing policy interventions and investments. In the words of Simmons and McCann, the political subsystem refers to:

The movement of political influence and the exchange of money both within and among political jurisdictions. Movement and exchange are illustrated by tax revenues that flow to governments from firms and individuals and by transfer payments and services that flow in other directions.... This subsystem is more closed than open, with connections moving through the urban hierarchy from Ottawa or the provincial capitals to other places in the national urban system: connections are seldom international. Different levels of government (especially federal and provincial) redistribute funds in an attempt to mediate tensions between economic change and the resistant, more immobile demographic structure. Traditionally, this has been accomplished largely through federal policies that support declining regions by taxing areas of growth—i.e., a kind of subsidization of geography. (Simmons and McCann 2006: 46-47)

Competitive regionalism and the policies that accompany it offer a very different set of practices than the traditional approach with its focus on development for declining regions (termed corporate regionalism by Jonas & Ward 2002).

This section has focused on contemporary understandings and practices of regionalism, and in doing so we have encountered multiple and often competing interpretations and practices. Both of the RSPBs being studied employ the language of new regionalism. As this section has shown, this approach can have disparate and sometimes competing elements. In application, careful attention needs to be paid to the underlying practices of these bodies in order to grasp the ideas and intentions that drive policy.

### Regional planning, transportation and transit

Transportation, transit and land use planning are the major policy focuses of the case studies and are an area of planning that engages directly with issues of environmental sustainability, economic development, social equity, housing affordability and other

social/scalar dynamics.<sup>42</sup> The purpose of this section is to highlight the major features of transportation and transit as a policy area; namely its relationship to land use and urban form and the strong role of government for its funding and provision.

Historically, modes of transportation have been the main force shaping the form and structure of cities (Hutchinson 1991: 264). The historical development of Canadian cities is reflected in the dominant modes of transportation of the time—from the early ‘horse and cart-pedestrian’ cities of the Maritimes in the late 1800s to the automobile-dominated suburban spread seen in the 1960s and 1970s. Urban population growth, shifting industrial composition (away from a manufacturing and staples based economy and towards the service sector), technological developments, the spatial characteristics of inequality (e.g., access to services, employment and concentrations of low income earners) and environmental issues are some of the major factors that have influenced thinking about transportation and transit planning in past decades. As transportation planning technologies have progressed in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the ability to map and understand regional transportation flows has increased, hence increasing regional planning capacities.<sup>43</sup> RSPBs in transportation and transit are proposed as a response to seemingly ever-expanding urban regions with the accompanying problems of grid-lock,

---

<sup>42</sup> This literature includes: the federal government in transportation issues, (Wilfred 1976), the role of informal ties among transportation stakeholders (Gainsborough and Wallis 2006), metropolitan planning organizations (Goetz, Dempsey & Larson 2002; Vogel & Nezelkewicz 2002; Kar 2001; Goldman & Deakin 2000); the links between land use and transportation (Cervero 1989), the effectiveness of transportation (Ross 1983), regional coordination in transportation (Weir, Rongerude & Christopher 2008), the conflict of interests between the core and periphery of cities in transportation planning (Smith 1987). For an excellent review of the field’s evolution see “Models of transportation and land use change: a guide to the territory” by Iacono, Levinson, and El-Geneidy (2008).

<sup>43</sup> Developments in computing and analysis in the early 1960s increased the profile of regional transportation issues and facilitated the development of regional transportation studies (Hall 2002: 112).

long commutes, expensive infrastructure, social inequality and unsustainable land use and environmental practices.

As the report of the Greater Toronto Area Task Force notes, there is a direct link between the costs of transportation and infrastructure provision and urban form (1996). More compact urban development and comprehensively planned infrastructure links can save city regions billions of dollars: “the capital, operating, and indirect costs of local roads and services, arterial roads, expressways, transit, sewer and water networks are closely related to patterns of development” (ibid.: 14). It is through recognition of this that multimodal RSPBs with combined focus on land use are being adopted.

The relationship between infrastructure, service provision and urban form will become increasingly important in the coming decades. Canada’s four largest metropolitan areas are home to 50 per cent of the nation’s population and this is expected to increase. Much of the current and projected population and employment growth is taking place in suburban areas of city regions, requiring better transportation and transit linkages across these spaces. Increasing commute times across urban areas makes mobility of goods and people a pressing issue. This raises environmental concerns. Passenger transport is the second largest source of greenhouse gas emissions in Canada representing 27 per cent of total GHG emissions—a rate that is expected to increase over the next two decades (CUTA 2010: 27). Meanwhile, there has been a shift in responsibility for road infrastructure over the past forty years from the provincial to the local level (Gaudreault & Lemire 1996: 7). In terms of demographics, Canada has an aging population (the number of those aged 65 and older is expected to double by 2050) (ibid: 20). This shift will impact demand for mobility, uses of social and health care

services and the size of the tax base. Canada's urban system has been described as relatively open to external influences such as the movement of goods, capital and immigration. This means that Canada has the "potential for rapid change in directions that are often unpredictable" (Bourne & Simmons 2002: 393).

Amidst these pressures, transit is increasingly important and usage is projected to increase: the Canadian Urban Transit Associations estimates an increase in national transit ridership to 86 per cent by 2040 (ibid.: 56).<sup>44</sup> These issues have prompted a focus on how regional scale planning can direct growth and create more livable, equitable, prosperous and sustainable cities (Calthrope & Fulton 2001; Newman & Kenworthy 1999; Robinson 2000). As a response, we are witnessing attempts to 're-spatialise' the city where the adoption of regional SBPs is one aspect of this. This raises such questions as: "does the newly redefined metropolitan frame favour better regional transportation planning; what happens in terms of the traditional centre-suburbs conflict on these issues; at what scale will investment be made; what is the governance structure; does the realization of regional transportation bottlenecks lead to regional solutions or even to collective action at that scale in transportation governance; what images of regionalism are employed (Roger & Douglas 2008: 729)? Conceiving of transportation and transit issues through a regional lens will have varying impacts on land use depending on how regulations, investments and policies are structured. Many RSPBs are adopted with the express purpose of combating urban sprawl, described by Pindus, Wial, and Wolman (2008: 11) as "the decentralization of population and jobs and the resulting consequences of congestion, air pollution, energy consumption, loss of open space and more recently obesity and global climate change." The intention is to accomplish this through transit

---

<sup>44</sup> This is based on assumptions about targeted annual growth rates and projected investments.

oriented development—creating density (or as some prefer, intensity) around key nodes and corridors. However, a regional vision of transportation planning could also have the opposite impact by facilitating the further outward expansion of city regions with the growth of hub cities that rely on the central city for employment. A regionalism of this type could raise such issues as the spatialization of poverty and unfairly shared tax burdens.

The interactions between transportation, transit and land use and the choices in terms of how investments are structured and funded is a huge topic area involving issues that connect with demographic, micro and macro economic, technological, environmental, cultural and social trends. The case studies aim to describe, at a relatively high level, the types of policy/planning/investment choices that are made by the entities and the implications of this for regional development. Kennedy (2004) describes four pillars of transportation policy as being:

- i) Representation (where local/community needs need to be brought to the attention of higher level government);
- ii) Structure (where decoupled organization and hierarchical organization are at two ends of a continuum);
- iii) Democracy (with decision-making split between elected representatives and non-elected professionals); and
- iv) Market philosophy (where free-market beliefs square off with command and control practices). (Kennedy 2004; see also Kennedy et al. 2005)

There are contradictions among these pillars, where a focus on one can require trade-offs and compromises in another. These pillars echo themes that have been discussed throughout this chapter.

A final point in this section is that transportation and transit investments are major areas of government planning/policy direction and funding. While private sector partners

are of course common in various aspects of designing, building, operation and maintenance, governments provide the impetus for most projects and are typically the major funder. Such investments require a long-term frame, particularly when it comes to transit (which requires behavioural change and modal shift). The scale and scope of many of these investments can mean that decisions made today will financially impact taxpayers and users well into the future. Because of this, the decision to fund different types of transportation investments is extremely contentious. Further, because they are fixed physical assets, their allocation benefits some more than others, both in terms of access to resources and in the case of transit investments, increases in property/real estate values. Transportation and transit decisions are intensely political, with a large array of vested interests such as community/neighborhood groups and business interests.

Urban regime theory has been used as a framework to analyze how diverse groups come together to assert their policy priorities in such areas as transportation and transit provision and, related to this, land use. The outward expansion of North America's cities and the influence of developers (who often directly fund the campaigns of municipal politicians) are a well-known phenomenon. In every city there are battles being fought over these issues. A major point here is to stress the political nature of these decisions and their long-term impacts as a major area of policy intervention. Of particular interest is how these politics are manifested at a regional level through the involvement of RSPBs. Bringing the discussion back to the research question: how does the adoption of these entities impact governance (who makes decisions) and public policy (what kinds of decisions are made)? Conceivably, the types of business interests influencing regional level politics will be different from those at the urban level, but how? This is an issue that

will be explored in our case analysis.

## CONCLUSION

This chapter has explored debates and issues related to the adoption of RSPBs through two major themes: i) governance and complexity, and ii) the politics of regionalism. It has focused on unpacking concepts and highlighting key issues that arise with the adoption of these entities such as the degree of government and private sector involvement, the structure and allocation of funding, the degree of representativeness and its relationship to issues of accountability and transparency as well as the politics of different regionalisms and the values that they express through policies, plans and priorities.

The following chapter explores how RSPBs have been adopted in the United Kingdom, the United States and Canada. Canada, as a relatively recent adopter of RSPBs, has been influenced by developments in the other countries. By contrasting different approaches, major variables in our Canadian cases emerge—most notably the strong role of provincial government in the creation, funding and policy direction of these entities and a relative lack of federal direction in comparison to the other two country case studies.

## CHAPTER 4 REGIONAL SPECIAL PURPOSE BODIES IN COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE: THE UNITED KINGDOM, THE UNITED STATES AND CANADA

---

The number of regional special purpose bodies has increased significantly in the United Kingdom, the United States and Canada in the past two decades (Newton and Van Deth 2005: 90). In the United States, such entities have now become the most common type of local government body, far surpassing the total number of municipalities.<sup>45</sup> Similarly, in Europe there is a “stronger political will and action to regionalization and a shift of responsibilities and obligations for local public transport from the state to the region” (2010). In contrast, the RSPBs in Canada are newer and fewer than those seen in Europe and the United States and they have drawn on the experiences in other regions.

This chapter examines the history of the adoption of RSPBs for transportation and transit governance in these countries. The main purpose is to show that the adoption of RSPBs is *indeed an increasingly common institutional trend* as well as to highlight the *differences* and *commonalities* seen across the Canadian, European and American cases. Notably, three factors emerge as pivotal to explanations of regional SPB adoption: i) the structure and degree of fragmentation or privatization of the transport sector; ii) the size, scope and functions of local government bodies; and iii) the policy directions of upper level governments (provincial/state and national levels). While national policies can strongly impact the formation of RSPBs (e.g., by tying funding to institutional mechanisms), there nevertheless remains a great deal of variation at the local scale in

---

<sup>45</sup> Figures from 1992 show 31,555 special districts or regional governance authorities in the United States. This figure surpasses the second most common government type—municipalities—by over 12,000 units (data from U.S. Bureau of the Census 1992, cited in Foster 1997: 2). These are also commonly referred to as special purpose districts in the United States.

terms of the types of RSPBs that are adopted. Despite similar pressures in some cases, the structure of RSPBs and the coalitions that form around them are very much a product of local processes and circumstances. In Canada, the legacies of municipal amalgamation and the strong role of provincial governments for the creation, funding and policy direction of RSPBs present a major differentiation from the other country cases. The federal government in Canada is less involved through the structuring of national programs directed towards transportation initiatives than that of the United States and United Kingdom. Canada is the only central government among G7 nations that does not have some form of predictable and dedicated funding for transit (Hjartarson, Hinton & Szala 2011: 1). Such variations, revealed through analysis of comparative contexts, are important for understanding the specificities of our Canadian case studies and why they have emerged in the form that they have.

#### THE HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF REGIONAL SPECIAL PURPOSE BODIES: THE UNITED KINGDOM, UNITED STATES AND CANADA

When transit began operating at the turn of the twentieth century, it was largely provided by private companies. Government involvement during this early period was generally limited to projects with large infrastructure investment—e.g., metro and subway systems. As cities continued to grow, problems with privately provided transit became apparent: i) low density and low income areas were under-served by private, profit motivated companies; ii) a tendency for cutthroat competition between firms developed, with the eventual outcome of consolidation and monopoly by one firm which would thereafter increase fees, and iii) uncontrolled competition led to uncoordinated and duplicated transit services (Vuchic 2005: 430). Over time, pressures for public ownership grew—

particularly given the mass urbanization of the period and the increasing use of private automobiles. After the First World War and throughout the interwar period, public takeover of private transit systems became common in Canada, Britain and to a lesser extent, in the United States. The need for government control was realized based on several factors: i) the large scale investments required by transit systems; ii) their characteristics of a natural monopoly; iii) their importance as an essential public service and; iv) their impact on urban land use and growth (Vuchic 2005: 430). The ideological turn of New Public Management in the 1980s and a commitment to smaller government again saw a shift back to private transportation and transit provision—though this was more the case in Britain (under the influence of PM Margaret Thatcher) and the United States (under the influence of President Ronald Reagan) than in the case of Canada. In this manner, the trajectory of government involvement in the transportation and transit sectors of the city region has not been linear. Rather, it has shifted over time and according to functional needs, economic growth and the ideological tenets of the day.

Private transit companies and city area public transit agencies have been found in many instances to inadequately serve the outer areas of cities in a coordinated manner. This is not solely the problem of transportation and transit—governance structure has simply not kept pace with the development of large metropolitan regions. It is within this environment that RSPBs have been adopted as a flexible institutional solution where the benefits of comprehensive multimodal planning across a city region are increasingly apparent.

In a discussion of the general direction of change for metropolitan governance, Hall writes that there has been “more governance than government” across metro-

regions, but that “regional governance is simply not as sustained, coherent, complete or competent as it could be” (in Phares eds. 2004: 22).<sup>46</sup> Wallis, in a historical overview of the evolution of metro-regions, points to three waves of overlapping reforms (1994 in Phares eds. 2004: 22). The first wave typically involves consolidation and annexation, where the region is economically dominated by the central city. In the second wave of reform, a fragmentation occurs, where metro-regions evolve into polycentric structures and where jurisdictional competition is meant to act as the driver for enhanced service delivery. The third wave is described as ‘responses to new realities’, driven by capacity factors (e.g., more consensual decision making, the involvement of private and non-profit decision making at the regional scale and the willingness of elected representatives to negotiate across a metro region) and demand factors (e.g., allocative, redistributive and services delivery issues). In examining how RSPBs have been adopted across the United Kingdom, the United States and Canada, we can recognize these three stages quite often. However, they have not always occurred in the order described above, reinforcing Hall’s earlier point. The adoption of RSPBs is part of the third wave of regionalism (a shift towards governance and coordination between multiple actors), yet the structures of these entities are intimately tied to the political/historical dynamics of earlier regionalisms. RSPBs are a product of distinct urban system dynamics that have changed over time—e.g., post war reconstruction, population growth, industrial decline and, later, environmental sustainability agendas and the push for economic competitiveness.

---

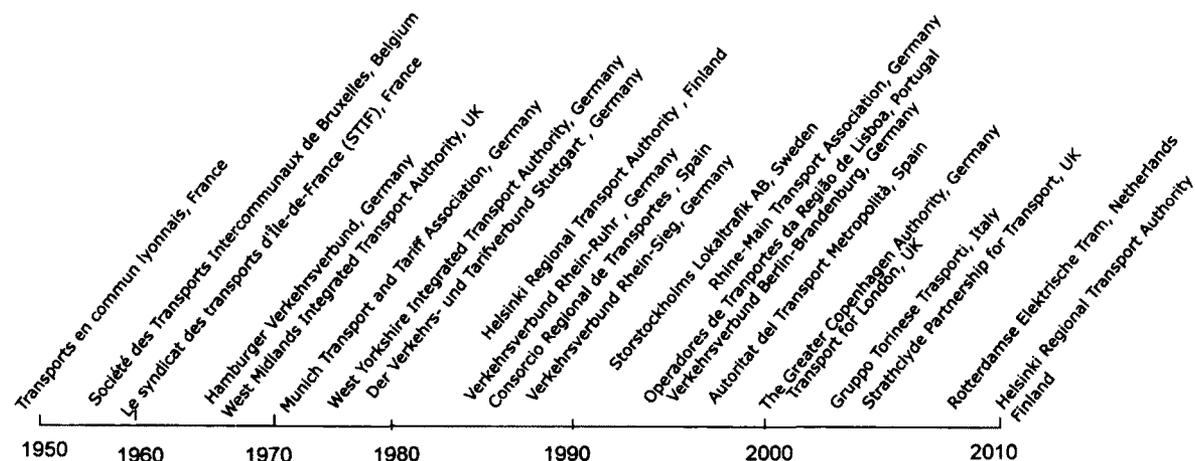
<sup>46</sup> See also Graham, Phillips & Maslove (1998) where this issue is discussed.

Are RSPBs for transportation an emerging institutional trend?

To what extent are RSPBs for transportation and transit being adopted? Is this truly an identifiable institutional phenomenon? Finding an answer to this question is quite complex. The wide variation in institutional types makes comparative assessments problematic (something that has been discussed in the previous chapter in the section on typologies). Urban/regional boundaries and definitions of municipalities differ substantially across countries and there is remarkably little comparative research on these entities (Skelcher 2006: 64). National statistics do not capture these bodies well, so an assessment of their prevalence requires identifying individual cases. With these factors in mind, I have attempted to answer the question by compiling individual counts of RSPBs in Western Europe and the United States. Because of the sheer magnitude of such data, it has been necessary to limit the scope of the analysis to cities with a population above one million. Thus, the analysis is by no means a comprehensive assessment of this institutional phenomenon, but is a more focused attempt to grasp overarching institutional trends in larger cities. In the case of the US, the Census of Governments has been used to identify various RSPBs. Detailed work to identify comparable characteristics of regional special purpose bodies is an important, emerging field of inquiry. With it comes a swath of methodological conundrums related to “whether large-N analysis can be undertaken or whether a better approach [involves] selective studies of special purpose governments sampled by type or within comparable localities” (Skelcher 2006: 74). In depth large N comparative work is beyond the scope of this dissertation.

RSPBs are increasingly common in Western Europe. In a count of urban areas in Western Europe with above one million inhabitants<sup>47</sup>, it was found that 60 per cent have RSPBs for transportation and transit. These bodies are variously termed: public bodies, public entities, regional coordinating bodies, transport associations (e.g., Verkehrsverb), public benefit corporations, intercommunal authorities or regional transportation partnerships—highlighting the institutional breadth of these entities. The diagram below depicts the Western European RSPBs that were examined along a timeline of their creation. As is evident from the diagram, from the mid 1990s onwards entities of this type are increasingly common in Western Europe—reflecting an institutional trend towards the regionalization of transportation governance.

#### 4.1 RSPBs for transportation and transit in Western European urban areas with a population over one million



The oldest entity shown in the chart above is that of the Transports en Commun Lyonnais (founded in 1942), which evolved out of a need for more integrated transport following post war reconstruction in Lyon, France. It is now the second largest public

<sup>47</sup> Most European statistical offices only define urban areas (not metropolitan areas). An exception to this is France where metropolitan areas are computed. Urban areas are contiguous built-up areas where houses are not more than 200 meters apart (discounting rivers, parks, roads, industrial fields, etc.). A metropolitan area is an urban area plus the satellite cities around the urban area and the agricultural land in between.

transport system in France (after Paris), covering 62 communes.<sup>48</sup> A number of the RSPBs shown in the diagram above are of the German Verkehrsverbund model of regional transportation. The Verkehrsverbund organization was first adopted in Hamburg in 1967 and subsequently it has been a common model for regional transportation governance seen throughout Germany, Switzerland and Austria. Under the Verkehrsverbund model, public transport services are coordinated while the individual identities of the component firms that are responsible for the delivery of services remain intact (Purcher & Kurth 1996: 280). The Verkehrsverbund coordinates the system such that, from the users' perspective, the transfer between the services of different firms is seamless. In this they also take on a marketing and financing role. The Verkehrsverbund is typically directed by representatives of the state (Laender), local governments and component firms. Several RSPBs were adopted in the 1950s and 1960s to deal with post war growth and reconstruction. In the 1970s and 1980s, European cities were dealing with employment losses through deindustrialization and there was a concerted focus by many national governments to focus on regional development policies, one component of which involved transportation and transit investments. The 1990s saw a surge in population growth in city regions of Europe and, unsurprisingly, it is around this time that RSPBs were increasingly adopted.

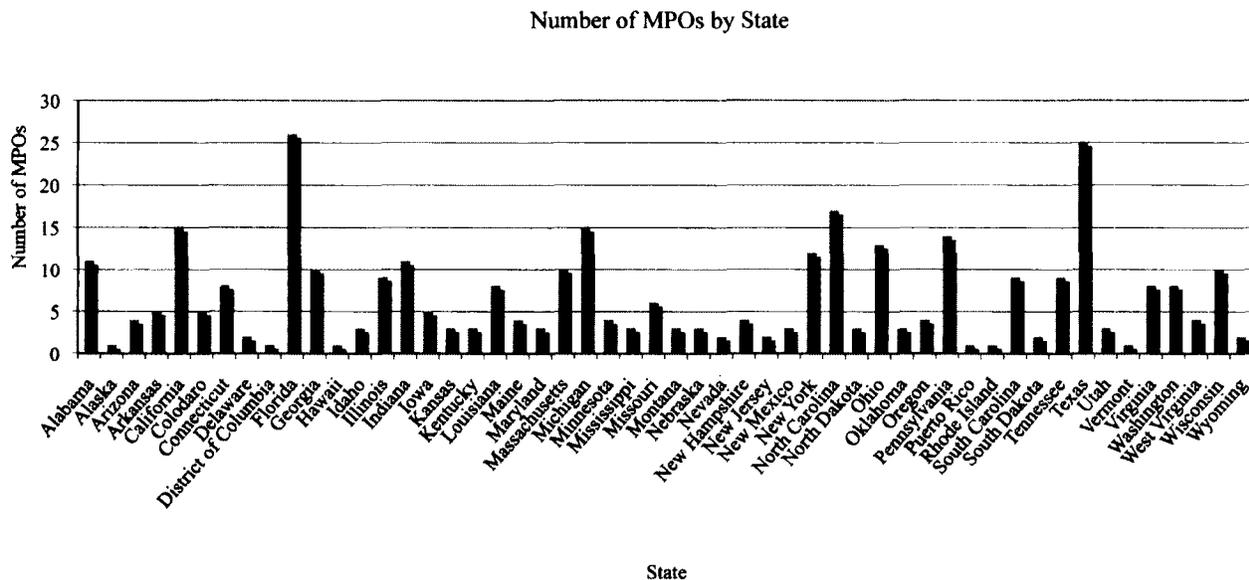
The United States has a vast number of RSPBs that exhibit a wide variety of institutional characteristics. In the areas of transportation and transit planning, three major types stand out: i) federally mandated Metropolitan Planning Organizations; ii) special purpose districts for transportation and iii) regional transportation authorities.

---

<sup>48</sup> A commune is the lowest level of administrative division in the French Republic. Communes are roughly equivalent to incorporated municipalities or villages in the United States and Canada or gemeinden in Germany.

Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) were created through federal mandate in 1962. They require urbanized areas with a population greater than 50,000 to coordinate on transportation issues (e.g., to create strategic plans). There are currently 342 MPOs across the United States. The chart below depicts the number of MPOs by state as a percentage of the total. Florida has the greatest number of MPOs (26) followed by Texas (25).

#### 4.2 Metropolitan Planning Organizations by state, count



Source: Data compiled from the Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations, <http://www.ampo.org>

The second type of RSPB is classed as special-purpose districts or special district governments. These bodies exist as separate administrative and fiscal units from general-purpose local governments. The 2002 US Census of Government lists 948 single purpose special district governments for transportation<sup>49</sup>, of which the specialization of highways constituted the largest majority (78.2 per cent out of the total) (U.S. Census Bureau 2002: 13). Unfortunately, the Census of Governments does not provide very detailed information on the nature of such districts, making it difficult to quantify the number of

<sup>49</sup> This figure excludes the category of single purpose special district governments for air transportation.

entities that pursue transportation and transit planning functions of the type relevant to our analysis. In a breakdown of special district governments for transportation by function (see chart below), it is found that the majority counted in the 2002 Census were entities that provide programs or services by contractual arrangements, closely followed by entities that directly provide programs or services with their own employees.<sup>50</sup>

#### 4.3. Census of special district governments for transportation operation by function

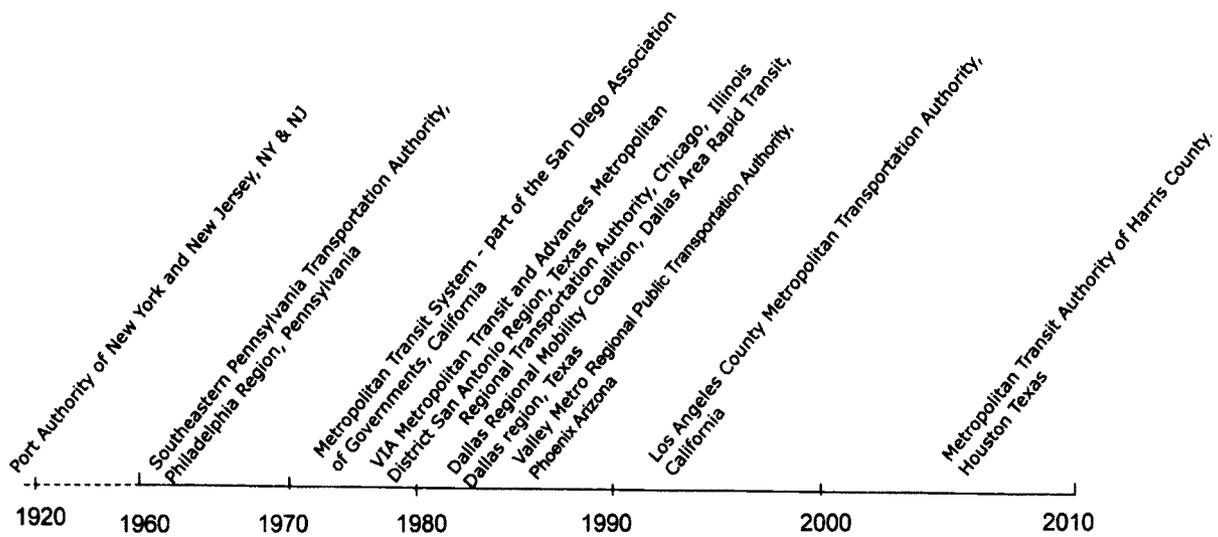
Function	All special district governments	Directly provides program or service with own employees	Indirectly provides program or service by contractual arrangements	Constructs public facilities by contract with own employees	Finances public facilities by issuing public debt	Leases public buildings of facilities to others	Not answered
Transportation	948	229	235	154	63	78	475

Source: US Census Bureau (2002) Census of Governments, 1(1), Government Organization, December.

The third type are regional transportation authorities. These most closely resemble the Canadian case studies of Metrolinx and Translink. A count of such bodies in cities with a population above one million is provided below. This provides just a small sub-sample of the various authorities of this type that exist in urban regions across the United States.

<sup>50</sup> However, it should be noted that the non-response rate for this particular question is high (approximately 50 per cent did not answer).

#### 4.4 RSPBs for transportation and transit in urban areas of the United States with a population over one million



As is shown, the oldest regional transportation authority is the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey. This is a fascinating public body operating across two state boundaries and pursuing a wide array of functions (running most of the region's transportation infrastructure) covering a population of over 8 million.

Currently, Canada has only a few RSPBs for transportation and transit, with some being more 'institutionalized' than others. Compared to the other countries examined here, they are a newer and less prevalent phenomenon, although interest in them is certainly growing. This will be discussed in greater detail in the upcoming sections.

This section has identified RSPBs as an institutional phenomenon and has delineated several organizational 'types' in the areas of transportation and transit. The growth of quasi-organizations like RSPBs has placed traditional public sector classification under stress. In conducting this analysis, it became apparent that large-scale studies of this phenomenon are hampered by a lack of comparable data. An interview with Stephen Owens, the Branch Chief of Government Organization for the US Census Bureau, illustrates this point (Owens, personal interview, May 7<sup>th</sup> 2010). Owens

commented that the Census of Governments in the United States has not been able to keep pace with emerging forms of governance at the urban/regional scale. For example, the Census of Government Bodies has not changed its treatment of planning functions since the 1970s (e.g., MPOs are not separately classed in the Census and their planning functions are instead included under their constituent local government units). Here we turn in greater detail to the historical and political contexts informing the adoption of these entities in the UK, US and Canada.

#### RSPBs in the United Kingdom: from light coordination to public authority

Local government in the United Kingdom has been through successive waves of major reform—in 1973, and then partially in 1986 and the 1990s. These reforms, similar to those seen in Canada, have led to local government amalgamations (e.g., the creation of unitary authorities) and an expansion in the types of actors involved in the provision of services and infrastructures at the local level (i.e., a shift towards governance)<sup>51</sup>.

Concurrently, certain policy spheres such as transportation have moved from public ownership towards fragmented private service delivery. It is within the context of a fragmented transportation system and its associated problems that RSPBs have emerged in the UK. They have been adopted as a way of creating a cohesive system across disparate parts.

The United Kingdom is a unitary parliamentary democracy with devolved national administration in Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales. Unlike in Canada and the United States, there is no provincial or state level of government. The national

---

<sup>51</sup> For example, Lowndes and Squelcher (1998) discusses the trend towards governance and specifically, offer a delineation between networked modes of governance and multi organizational partnerships that have become prevalent in the United Kingdom, particularly in the areas of urban regeneration and land use.

government plays a stronger role in local affairs than is seen in Canada or the United States and regionalism takes on a specific meaning as a political unit across the United Kingdom. For example, England is divided into nine regions of which some, like London, have an elected political body, while others are governed by appointed board members. The 1973 reforms under the Conservative government of Edward Heath established two-tier metropolitan and non-metropolitan county and district councils in England and Scotland.<sup>52</sup> The 1973 reforms were driven by ideological, political and practical imperatives. Smaller government (and less government) was favored, meaning that local government units became both larger and fewer in number. Also, the conservatives' main political strength at the time lay "in counties, rather than the cities, and the Act of 1973 reflects this interest by effectively abolishing county borough status" (Robson 1974: 517)<sup>53</sup>. The existing fragmentation of local government units was deemed duplicative and ineffective.

Commenting on the impact of these reforms, Stoker writes: "Various functions and responsibilities were stripped away from local authorities or organized in a way that obliged local authorities to work in partnership with other public and private agencies in the carrying out of functions" (1999: 1). Hence, a movement towards governance and an increasing array of partnerships at the local level characterized the reforms. Metropolitan county councils were abolished in 1986, and in the 1990s, unitary authorities were adopted in many areas. Local government reforms continue piecemeal—for example, in 2009 a further nine unitary authorities were created. Summarizing the impacts of these

---

<sup>52</sup> In Scotland a separate Act was adopted that effectively regionalized local government (Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973).

<sup>53</sup> In England, counties generally form the top level in a two-tier system of administration. The Local Government Act of 1888 created boroughs some of which were entirely self-governing and independent from county council administration (comparable to urban districts).

successive reforms, Atkinson and Wilks-Heeg write that “elected local government is now just one of a number of actors involved in the shaping and delivery of local services [and that] the involvement of new agencies in service delivery and the development of non-elected local government have given rise to concerns about both democratic accountability and the future of elected government” (2000: 120). The central government has a very strong role in the United Kingdom (collecting and distributing approximately 95 per cent of all public funds), and historically it has taken the lead on policies affecting cities and regions (Berube & Webber 2008).

Corresponding to the significant local government reforms seen in the 1970s, the Conservative government also ushered in changes to the transportation sector over the 1970s and 1980s—specifically, the privatization of transit operations. Significant pieces of legislation over this time were: the 1980 *Transport Act* that deregulated express coach services and liberalized bus operation; the 1984 *London Regional Transportation Act* that took public transport in London away from local government control and introduced comprehensive tendering; the 1985 *Transport Act* that deregulated the supply of local bus services; the 1993 *Rails Act* that established passenger rail services that were let to the private sector; and the 2000 *Transport Act* that, among other things, provided for some re-regulation in parts of the transport sector and led to the creation of the short-lived Strategic Rail Authority. The 2008 *Local Transport Act* created Integrated Transport Authorities (renamed from Passenger Transport Authorities), strengthening their power to regulate bus services and giving them sole authority over transport planning in their areas. The successive reforms have had lasting repercussions on service delivery and transportation and transit governance. In an assessment of these changes, Young writes

that the “privatization led to the fragmentation of public transport undertakings and made it much more difficult to promote integrated investment programs” (1999: 189).

Successive Conservative governments between 1979 and 1997 favored private sector delivery of services. It is within the context of fragmented and privatized transport services that regional special purpose bodies have arisen in Britain.

There are two major types of RSPB for transit and transportation functions in the UK—regional transportation authorities (e.g., Integrated Transport Authorities) and joint boards/committees. Joint *committees* are the most informal of all RSPBs in the UK. They are voluntary bodies and are not legal entities. In contrast, joint *boards* are required by law and are legal entities. An example in the area of regional transportation is the Passenger Transport Executives that coordinate public transport by acting in partnership with private operators. These bodies are responsible to Integrated Transport Authorities (formerly known as Passenger Transport Authorities prior to the 2008 *Local Government Act*). Joint boards for transportation tend to have no operational or service responsibilities and are composed of elected representatives and municipal public servants. They are a form of institutionally light/informal coordination. Integrated Transport Authorities provide funding and policy direction. They are also composed of locally elected and then appointed councillors from the respective jurisdictions covered by the body. Local contributions to the funding of transportation objectives (such as the subsidization of routes deemed socially necessary but unprofitable) are negotiated through ITAs. ITAs, together with metropolitan boroughs, have joint responsibility for the adoption of local transport plans.

Transport for London (TfL) is also an example of a transport authority, but it is an outlier in terms of its governance structure. It is a regional, multimodal transport authority for Greater London with a direct line of accountability to the Mayor of London (Greater London) who appoints the entity's board members. The organization made worldwide headlines for the introduction of London's central city congestion charge in 2003, the largest such congestion pricing scheme in the world. All surpluses raised from the congestion pricing must be reinvested by law into transportation infrastructure. This was achieved under the leadership of Mayor Ken Livingstone who was elected under a 'congestion charge' platform, and reelected after its implementation. Hull highlights the effectiveness of the Greater London Authority (GLA) and TfL as examples of entities that have "used their institutional resources and competencies, which have extended well beyond unitary authority boundaries, to hold at bay the disintegration of public transport services in the capital" (ibid). The GLA is a strategic regional authority governing TfL and is composed of the directly elected London Mayor and a 25 member elected assembly. Both ITAs and PTAs have lobbied the government to increase their regulatory capacities along the lines of TfL, particularly with regards to the regulation of busses.

Public accountability and inclusion in planning processes are issues that are continuously raised in discussions of RSPBs, and this is no less the case in the UK. For example, in a review of public involvement in transport planning in the UK, Booth and Richardson find that post-hoc public involvement has become a feature of transport planning, particularly at the regional and corridor levels (2001: 148). They further comment that "it appears that an inverse relationship has been established between the scale and financial and political significance of transport schemes, and the attention and

weight given to public involvement, with public attention being focused on micro-level schemes (ibid.: 149). By Booth and Richardson's analysis, RSPBs have the poorest track record for public consultation, particularly when undertaking large-scale projects. However, in the case of RSPBs like TfL there are clear lines of accountability. With TfL specifically, the elected Mayor of Greater London is ultimately accountable for the decisions. The adoption of significantly unpopular policies by TfL would presumably result in election losses, so the public has recourse and policy decisions are not insulated.

A major feature of RSPBs in the UK is the strong role of the national government in their operation and funding as well as in the setting of strategic priorities. For example, although TfL operates under the governance of the Greater London Authority and the Mayor of London, it is a key component of the national government's transportation strategy.<sup>54</sup> One way in which this control is expressed is through TfL's heavy reliance on government funding and grants. Transport grants comprised, on average, 41.46 per cent of TfL's total revenues over the four full accounting years from 2001/2002–2004/2005 (Moody's 2006: 4). One implication of the level of TfL's government support means that it is able to pursue long term investments, not just those that are deemed viable in the present environment. Commenting on this, DiGaetano and Klemanski argue that the strong role of the central state in the UK means that national urban/regional policy also often becomes local policy and also that "local authorities are fiscally far less vulnerable to fluctuations in economic cycles" (1999: 252). They link this analysis to regime theory and argue that because of these features, local authorities in the UK are less reliant on the local business elites and, related to this, the demands of pro-growth governing agendas.

---

<sup>54</sup> TfL's legal status is that of a local authority and as such it is subject to those acts and regulations—e.g., borrowing limits, legal obligation to set a balanced budget annually, annual external audits.

Another important difference with local politics in the UK is that there is strong party organization at the local level making political campaign contributions less reliant on business interests (ibid.: 253). DiGaetano and Klemanski present a compelling argument that these factors (centralized state, strong party tradition at local level, and broad powers of local authorities) are a major explanatory factor for the different types of pro-growth politics that are seen in the United Kingdom versus in the United States.

Overall, two models generally characterize RSPBs in the United Kingdom. Dominant city regions have adopted stronger institutional models (regional transportation authorities) with TfL and its political direction from the GLA having the strongest powers of any such authority (granted under the 1999 *Greater London Authority Act* and the 1999 *Greater London Transport Act*). The predominant models found across the UK are a form of institutionally light collaboration through either informal joint committees or more formal joint boards. Both types of structure have been adopted in the wake of privatized passenger rail and bus services stemming from the reforms of the 1980s. They arose as a policy response to system fragmentation. As a unitary parliamentary democracy, national level policies have been particularly strong in setting the policy direction for transportation initiatives. While local actors have adopted informal joint cooperative models, the national government has exerted influence on the adoption of RSPBs through the creation of ITAs and their subordinates. It has been particularly instrumental in granting strong powers and authority over transportation governance in Greater London. A major feature of RSPBs in the UK is that they are of the more *public* variety, having local government representation on their boards. This is in contrast to the corporate board membership models seen in the United States and Canada.

## RSPBs in the United States: local government fragmentation and an abundance of regional institutional responses

As with the United Kingdom, fragmented government at the local level also characterizes the United States, though comparatively much more so. Local government amalgamations of the type seen in parts of the UK and in Canada are far less common in the United States and the degree of local government fragmentation in the US is on the rise (Rothblatt 1994: 518). Further, similar to the British experience, the United States has had a strong reliance on private sector delivery of transportation and transit services (Glaister 2006: 246). This being the case, it is unsurprising that RSPBs are so common in the United States. A major distinction in the US compared to the UK experience is that local government (under the 10<sup>th</sup> amendment of the US Constitution) falls under the purview of state rather than federal law. Under what is known as Dillion's Rule,<sup>55</sup> state governments determine municipal government powers, akin to the role of provinces in determining municipal powers in Canada. In part because of this, we see a wide variety of RSPBs across the United States—from those that are more public to those that are more private and everything in between. As noted previously, there are three major types of RSPB in the US: i) federally mandated Metropolitan Planning Organizations, ii) special purpose districts for transportation and iii) regional transportation authorities. Each is discussed here in turn.

Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) are an interesting form of regional SPB in that they are a federal creation. In 1962, the US Congress passed legislation

---

<sup>55</sup> Named after the legal doctrine established by Judge John Forrest Dillon in 1872. There are a few exceptions to Dillion's Rule for those local governments that have been afforded home rule, such as New Jersey.

requiring the creation of a Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for any urbanized area with a population greater than 50,000. MPOs were adopted to ensure that federal transportation resources were put to appropriate use in a strategic manner—conforming to a regional strategic vision. They also serve to facilitate intergovernmental collaboration and cooperation within the transportation sector and engagement with the broader public. This process is referred to as the 3Cs—a ‘continuing, comprehensive and cooperative planning process’.

These bodies have a long history—they can trace their roots to the Progressive Era of planning, 1900-1920s (Solof 2010). It was during this period that the need for regional scope and coordination among planning processes was recognized and an increased role for the federal government in this area was advocated. Some of the first regional special purpose authorities were adopted during this time, such as the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey (1921).<sup>56</sup> The Great Depression of the 1930s saw a heightened level of federal involvement in regional transportation planning, in line with national priorities. Later, the post war boom would usher in another era of such investment and the formation of Councils of Government was promoted to collaborate on regional plans. By the 1950s, federal funding was focused greatly on highway expansion. The increased levels of federal funding over this time and into the 1960s provided a major rationale for the 1962 legislation that mandated the creation of MPOs.

---

<sup>56</sup> Solof writes, “the experience of the Port of New York Authority did not bode well for achieving voluntary compliance. Lacking power to force cooperation among the highly competitive freight rail companies in the region, the Port Authority was blocked in implementing many elements of its plan for creating an integrated freight rail network. Critics argued that the recommendations of the Regional Plan of New York, and of comprehensive plans elsewhere in the country, would be similarly blocked by the competing interests of local governments. One planning professor, Thomas Reed, in 1925 contended that the only way to insure effective regional planning was the creation of “area-wide” governments with power over municipalities in setting policies for regional infrastructure” (2010).

---

By the 1970s, there was increasing pressure for MPOs to address environmental concerns (the first wave of environmentalism) and it was during this time that their focus became increasingly multimodal.<sup>57</sup> This was also an era that saw a democratization of MPOs with the stipulation added in 1975 that they must include representation from ‘principle elected officials’. The politics of regionalism in the United States took shape against the backdrop of an urban/suburban divide characterized by social, economic and racial inequalities. Urban and regional policies within this context have focused on income distributional effects of service provision and on establishing a role for the federal government in economic and infrastructure development. Many urban studies of this time, such as Danielson’s *The Politics of Exclusion* (1976), focused on the spatial nature of these divisions. The 1980s saw a strong reversal in federal involvement in regional transportation planning. The Reagan administration abolished 38 of the 39 federal programs that underwrote regional planning for transportation. While the requirement for MPOs was sustained, it was subsequently left up to each state to define its role. As a consequence, the functions of MPOs differ vastly from state to state to this day.

In the 1990s, the enactment of the 1991 Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) expanded the mandate, authority and funding of MPOs.<sup>58</sup> This was an ambitious Act, meant to shift responsibility for transportation investment decisions towards the regional and local levels, “where—it was argued—decisions could be made by those whose interests were most directly affected” (Goldman & Deakin 2000:

---

<sup>57</sup> In 1972-73, environmental advocates were instrumental in blocking the passage of a highway bill until it included the provision to authorize the use of highway monies for mass transit.

<sup>58</sup> The 1991 ISTEA strengthened the role of local officials and the public and placed a greater emphasis on multi modal transportation initiatives. Planning also had to be pursued in a strategic and directed manner with multi year agendas with projects matched to available funds—instead of ‘wish lists’.

---

47). With the expansion of the ISTEA, MPOs came to focus on sustainable development and regional governance. Significantly, the Association of MPOs writes that the enactment of the ISTEA “encouraged movement away from modal parochialism toward integrated, modally mixed strategies for greater system efficiency, mobility and access” (2010). Federal MPO funding was also significantly increased after the adoption of the ISTEA. However, this shift was not without its challenges. In some states, this devolved approach to transportation planning was heavily contested and the regional agencies’ legitimacy and competence were called into question (Goldman & Deakin 2000: 47).

MPOs are allocated federal and state funding (e.g., through matching grants) and typically do not have the authority to raise their own funds. The majority of MPOs are governed by a policy committee which includes elected or appointed officials from local government, representatives of different transit modes, state agency officials and non voting members and staff advisors (where locally-elected officials are appointed to the MPO, not directly elected to it). One of the few exceptions to this is Portland’s Metropolitan Planning Organization, which is the only directly elected MPO in the United States. In some cases, existing organizations such as counties, councils of governments, independent government organizations or regional governments have come to function as MPOs. For Portland, Metro (the regional government) is the MPO, while in Minneapolis-St. Paul, Minnesota metropolitan area, the Metropolitan Council is the MPO. Both of these MPOs are considered amongst the most enabled (in terms of authority and scope) to pursue regional planning. Notably, both agencies administer urban growth boundaries for their respective regions. There is a growing body of literature that seeks to assess the nature of partnerships between MPOs, different levels of

government, the private and non profit sectors and citizens, as well as to evaluate the circumstances under which they are perceived as working effectively or not (Goldman & Deakin 2000). The outcomes of such assessments have been mixed. This is not altogether surprising given the diversity of institutional forms.

MPOs are a very interesting institutional phenomenon. From their early inception they have shifted according to external conditions and emerging priorities. In some cases they have evolved to be hugely influential public bodies. In other cases, they have expanded little beyond their initial mandates. Local and state support and coalitions of interests have certainly played a strong role in these divergent outcomes. In certain states the powers of RSPBs have been greatly expanded, with many of them taking on expressly multi modal and environmentally sustainable approaches to planning. Metro in Portland is perhaps the best example of this. It has the most comprehensive range of functions as well as directly elected representatives. Metro is often showcased as a region with exemplary, environmentally progressive urban planning programmes (Irazabal 2005). Not surprisingly, as Metro's roles and functions have expanded, so too has its capacity and diversity of revenue sources; a sizable portion of Metro's budget comes from property and excise taxes (Portland Metro 2011). Metro's diversification of revenue means that it is less reliant on grants from different levels of government (although these still form a portion of its budget). Comparisons between Portland and Vancouver are often made because of their perceived progressive planning practices (Punter 2003: 147-148). Excerpts from legislative debates in BC illustrate this. NDP Member of the Legislative Assembly (MLA) Rob Fleming holds up Metro Portland as an ideal model, calling it "one of the greenest, most advanced public transit systems in North America,"

arguing that the entity's effectiveness stems from its "ambition, power and authority being *local*" (my emphasis 2007: 9230).

A review of MPOs by Goldman and Deakin (2000) finds that there has been a general reluctance by many states to expand the powers of regional agencies. They argue that, in the absence of political will by state governments, regional agencies will gain their power through "an incremental process of establishing legitimacy and building capacity" (ibid.: 52). Here, consensus and partnership building have been highlighted as key factors for the successful expansion of capacities and responsibilities. The Metropolitan Council of Minneapolis/St. Paul is an often-cited example of this incremental and partnership-driven approach.

Regional special purpose districts present yet another type of regional SPB. In order to be counted as a special district government (rather than be classified as an agency for a county, municipality, town/township or state government) an entity must have the following attributes: existence as an organized entity, governmental character and substantial autonomy (US Census Bureau 2002a: vii). For example, the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) of New York—the largest public transportation provider in the Western Hemisphere—is classed as a public benefit corporation but is also a transportation district. The New York MPO for this area is a separate entity—the New York Metropolitan Transportation Council.<sup>59</sup> The MTA has a 17 member corporate board. Board members are nominated by the jurisdictions covered by the Authority and are then confirmed by the New York State Senate. In contrast, other notable transportation district entities such as the Central Puget Sound Regional Transit Authority

---

<sup>59</sup> The New York Metropolitan Transportation Council is an association of governments, transportation providers and environmental agencies and it also the Metropolitan Planning Organization for New York City, Long Island and the lower Hudson Valley (<http://www.nymtc.org/>).

(Sound Transit) in Greater Seattle and the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transit Authority have board membership composed of local mayors and city and county council members.

The proliferation of regional special purpose districts for transportation and transit are important institutional phenomena. Such entities often have distinct taxation powers granted through state statutes and have widely differing accountability structures. A review of these entities in Washington State found that “the number of special purposes districts that are formed, become inactive, dissolve or merge changes yearly [and that] no one knows exactly how many districts are active at any given time, even though the statutes set up a centralized reporting mechanism” (Municipal Research and Services Center 2003: 37). Further, there is no single, uniform definition of these entities and their powers; financial autonomy and governance differ greatly. The Washington Local Governance Study Commission has observed that

little consistency exists in the laws granting similar powers to different special districts. The inconsistencies are historical products whose elimination would require major time investment by legislative staff and committees. But they are unjustifiable and confusing to all.... When time permits, a systematic recodification of these statutes should be conducted. (quoted in Municipal Research and Services Center 2003: 37)

As the study highlights, these entities are taking on increasingly important roles for the delivery of programs and services to citizens and yet they are extremely difficult to track, categorize and study/evaluate. Needless to say, the huge diversity of practices and poor tracking create a major problem for the conduct of research on RSPBs in the United States.

The final types of RSPB are regional transportation authorities that are classed under the Census of local governments as subordinate agencies of a government. The

regulation of these entities, again, differs considerably by state. In some cases—e.g., Idaho—such entities can be established by a city, county or highway district subject to voter approval (US Census Bureau 2002b: 75). In other cases—e.g., Arizona—such entities can only be adopted if the governing body constitutes 51 per cent of the population of the county (or counties) and where a policy board is elected (ibid.: 14). In the cases of Arizona and Michigan, such entities are given the financial powers to issue bonds, levy a metropolitan public transit authority property tax and fix fares and other charges.

In a comparison of the three major types of RSPB, one can generalize that MPOs tend to function at the strategic planning level, while districts and authorities tend to focus more on tactical and operational capacities. Further, districts tend to denote a geographic boundary area, while authorities may not have such boundaries. However, across states, the meaning of any such typology becomes blurred as there are many exceptions across cases. Entities that have revenue-generating authority tend to have greater political representation or linkages to political accountability (i.e., locally elected representatives appointed to their boards).

In the US, the high degree of local government fragmentation has led to the widespread adoption of RSPBs in various forms. At the federal level, there has been increasing support for regionally-scaled planning practices that go beyond the early imperatives for regional highway systems and move toward more multimodal mandates. Successive pieces of legislation at the federal level have increased the scope of responsibilities of MPOs in certain policy areas—e.g. monitoring of air quality. With this impetus, some MPOs have evolved to be extremely influential regional institutions. Their

ability to do so is determined by the coalition of interests at the state and local levels. Aside from federal influences, there has been a growth of special district and authority type governments to deal with regional transportation and transit planning in the United States. The increasing desire to raise revenues where they are spent through the use of user fees, polls, local taxes and the like has raised the profile of these entities and problematised how demands for increasing revenue generation of these entities can be balanced with political accountability (Institute of Transportation Studies 2005). The structure of governance amidst these pressures is a major issue that will influence the scope, roles and authority of these institutions in the coming years. While there is a growth of regional institutions such as the three types reviewed here (Institute of Transportation Planning 2005: 12), the capacities of such regional institutions in the United States has in many cases been hampered by a lack of state, local government and public support.

It is difficult to establish and nourish public regional machinery... Our three tiered governmental structure may not accommodate all the problem solving and service rendering we demand, but the heavy presumption is in favor of performance or attempted performance by a single city or county, a single state, or an agency of the National Government. Those who would have it otherwise must bear the burden of inventing a new creature and explaining why the more familiar and already entrenched mechanism cannot or will not do the job. They must make their explanations to bureaucracies which sometimes view a newly proposed agency as a potential competitor; to legislatures who look upon it as a new mouth to feed; and to a public that constantly wonders whether the burdens and restrictions lurking in the new creature's organic act will be sufficiently compensated by the yet unproven benefits. (ACIR 1972, 163 quoted in Institute of Transportation Studies 2005: 65-66)

The adoption of these entities requires good faith and collective action at multiple scales. In many cases, it requires that other levels of government cede some control. These tensions and their implications for political accountability are issues that arise time and again in considerations of these entities.

## Regional Special Purpose Bodies in Canada

While local governance in the United States and to a lesser extent in the United Kingdom is characterized by fragmentation, private transit operation and national level direction and funding, this is much less the case in Canada. Many cities across Canada have experienced amalgamation, expanding their jurisdictional boundaries. Canada never experienced the levels of transit privatization seen in the UK and US and has not seen the level of national involvement in urban affairs characterized by the United Kingdom and to a lesser extent, the United States. Because of this, RSPBs in Canada have arisen in very different contexts than their counterparts in the US and UK. This section will present specific examples of Canadian RSPBs—of which there are relatively few.

In Canada, local administration constitutionally falls under the purview of provincial governments and, because of this, local government can differ considerably by province. The most common class of local government is the municipality with a directly elected council.<sup>60</sup> In the 1940s and 50s, post war urban growth in Canada began to necessitate some form of metropolitan regional planning. Entities such as Manitoba's Metropolitan Planning Commission of Greater Winnipeg, British Columbia's Lower Mainland Regional Planning Board, Victoria's Capital Regional Planning Board and Edmonton and Calgary's planning commissions were created over this period (Hooge & Robinson 2001: 233). By the 1980s most of these structures either changed significantly in form or were abolished (*ibid.*). There were also post war local government reforms, led by Ontario, which created two-tier metropolitan government. Two-tier government,

---

<sup>60</sup> There are different classes of municipality with a major distinction between the functions of rural and municipal types where rural classes (e.g., townships) generally have far fewer responsibilities and are focused more on physical investments and less on a broad range of service delivery. Urban municipal governments can be considered general purpose – they are meant to oversee a wide range of issues.

where constituent municipalities elect or appoint representatives to a regional body, are now less common in Canada. Many were abolished through a host of municipal amalgamations to a one-tier system in the 1990s and 2000s. There are exceptions to this—for example in British Columbia, where regional districts remain as a form of two-tier local government.

The large-scale amalgamations seen in many cities across Canada in the 1990s and later were an attempt to deal with service delivery and coordination across city regions. These amalgamations have resulted in municipalities of vastly different sizes. For example, the table below shows the population of the amalgamated cities as a ratio of their size (in square miles).

#### 4.5 Population density for select cities in Canada

Municipality	Population (2006)	Size (sq miles)	Population density
Toronto	2,503,281	243.2	10293.10
Montreal	1,620,693	140.98	11495.91
Ottawa	812,129	1,072.90	756.95
Halifax	372,679	2,119.80	175.81

Source: Statistics Canada, Census 2006, by Census subdivisions.

Halifax has one of the lowest population densities of all amalgamated cities in Canada, encompassing a vast swath of territory; Toronto's, in contrast, is very high. Halifax's amalgamation has encompassed all of the developed territory of the city, including vast rural lands around it. Because of this, it has a wide reaching general government in place already and has little need of regional special purpose bodies. No SPB would be adopted in Halifax's case if jurisdictional coordination were to be the major rationale. Ottawa is a special consideration, given that the functional city is split between Gatineau on the Quebec side and Ottawa on the Ontario side, and also includes large federal land holdings

governed by the National Capital Commission. The chart above refers to the city of Ottawa's population (excluding Gatineau).

Canada's biggest city, Toronto, experienced amalgamation a number of times throughout its history—most recently in 1998. Despite this 'upscaling', however, jurisdictional boundaries do not entirely match the functional geography. Expressing this view, Le Blanc writes, "Toronto has failed so far to meet the challenges posed by governance on a broader regional scale in line with the boundaries of an extended regional economy" (2006: 582). Given this, it is unsurprising that a regional, multimodal special purpose authority—Metrolinx—has been adopted for the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area (GTHA). It is an agency of the Provincial government. Similarly, the Montreal region has functionally extended beyond its jurisdictional boundaries and the Quebec government has also created a provincial agency—Agence Métropolitaine de Transport (AMT)—for regional transportation. AMT encompasses 83 municipalities and the Kahnawake Mohawk Reserve. It has the least comprehensive mandate of the three Canadian examples and it is for this reason that it has not been included as a major case study. AMT is looking with interest to Translink and Metrolinx. However, for the time being, it is largely focused on delivering inter-regional rail.

In contrast, British Columbia's municipalities, which did not experience amalgamations of the type seen in much of the rest of Canada, have a regional district system of government with appointed-elected representatives of local governments forming the upper tier. In some cases, such as in Greater Vancouver, transportation and transit functions have been made the purview of a regional special purpose authority. Whereas finance and land use functions for AMT and Metrolinx require the approval of

the Provincial Ministries of Transportation under whose authority they fall, in Translink's case budgetary decisions fall to the authority of the Mayor's Council, albeit the role of the Province remains strong.<sup>61</sup>

Local government-provincial relations have been described as “hyper-factionalized quazi-subordination” in the case of Ontario (Dupre: 1968), and as “gentle imposition” in the case of British Columbia (Tennant & Zirnhelt: 1973). This characterization serves to explain the differences between how regional SPBs have evolved in both provinces. In the case of Ontario, Dupre's point about “hyper factionalization” refers to the multiplicity of bodies involved in urban governance. Further, Dupre's use of the term “quasi-subordination” implies limits to provincial authorities. Dupre was writing in 1968—long before the province of Ontario's forced amalgamations and its increasing role in land use and transportation planning (including transit). In contrast, British Columbia's RSPB for transportation and transit is governed by a council of locally-elected representatives, but with a corporate board. In terms of planning functions, British Columbia has devolved authority in this policy sphere more than any other provincial government across Canada. Artibise, Cameron and Seelig note that in the case of Translink and the GVRD, “...the mandate to plan is less important than the will to plan” (in Phares eds. 2004: 209). Legal status over certain functions certainly aids and facilitates local influence. However, it is by no means the only way for an entity to exert such influence. The political-historical dynamics in British Columbia serve to illustrate this point.

---

<sup>61</sup> E.g., Metrolinx and AMT submit their budgets to their respective Ministries for approval, while Translink submit its budgets for approval to the Mayor's Council that is composed of the 22 mayor's of the region. Prior to the 2007 changes to the Act creating Translink, the budgetary approval fell under the purview of the GVRD.

Both RSPBs for transportation and transit in BC and Ontario have gone through two major restructurings of their governance models. Currently, the board members of the entities are all appointed members of the community, such as business interests and academics.<sup>62</sup> In the case of Metrolinx (in the GTHA) the Province appoints the Board, while in the case of Translink (Greater Vancouver), the Board is appointed by the Mayor's Council from a short list provided by the Province. Quebec's approach in the case of AMT differs in that the Province appoints half of the board members, while the local governments appoint the other half. Aside from determining formal chains of authority (e.g., budgetary approval processes from the Ministers of Transport in the cases of AMT and Metrolinx and the Mayor's Council in the case of Translink), board composition is an important factor in the broad understanding of public accountability.

In greater Calgary we find an RSPB of a very different type. Calgary Regional Partnerships (CRPs) was established in 2004. It is a local collaborative model of regional governance akin to the local boards seen in the UK. It is composed of fifteen communities in the Calgary area and covers 1.2 million residents. When conducting my research interviews in Vancouver, I found myself following the path of members from Calgary Regional Partnerships who had gone there on a fact finding mission to consider Translink's governance model. I was able to interview the Executive Director of Calgary Regional Partnerships, Coleen Sheppard, to find out how such a body would be structured to meet the specificities of Calgary's region. She recounts:

The difficulties here lay in the perceived power the city might have because of its size and scope. But it's more mythology than reality. The city has a good

---

<sup>62</sup> Metrolinx is now in its second iteration of board governance, having moved from a board constituting the elected representatives of the local governments of the region towards a corporate board appointed by the Provincial government, while Translink is in its fifth board iteration with a corporate board appointed by the GVRD.

relationship with regional partners. They do have most of the population. We have a provincial funding package for capital funding. The city is building the backbone of increasing regional capacity. They work very proactively to assist communities – for example by conducting transit feasibility studies at cost. So they will bring their expertise out to communities in a low cost way. The city of Calgary receives funding through the Green Trip program from the provincial government. The city was willing to take the back seat on that funding and give it to the regional communities. They wanted to support the region. Some of the communities just weren't ready for this – but, the good will was there and it goes a long way. (Personal interview, Coleen Sheppard, Aug 7<sup>th</sup>, 2010)

CRPs evolved from a short term to a longer term board model. Currently, each of the fifteen municipalities in the partnership appoints three representatives to the General Assemble of CRP. This group meets twice a year on high level issues such as the business plan and major policy decisions. There is an executive group with members from the Assembly that meets on a monthly basis to guide the work of the partnership.

Coleen Sheppard explains:

We aren't trying to create a constraining legal system. We are finding that if it's less rigid we can do more with it. Because our communities are each implementing pieces of the regional transit plan on their own – and they hold the capital assets. It's not like the Calgary regional Transit authority is going to hold the capital assets – but we are going to brand it as a regional system. But the model is going to be one of community participation. (Personal interview, Coleen Sheppard, Aug 7<sup>th</sup>, 2010)

As with other systems across Canada, sustainable funding and particularly the use of economic incentives to fund transit initiatives (particularly on the operational side) are being considered, but at the present time there is little political or public support: “there is a need of a culture shift” (Personal interview, Coleen Sheppard, Aug 7<sup>th</sup>, 2010). The experiences of CRP are interesting in that an incremental, consensus-oriented, non-binding model has been employed. Given central-city dominance in many of Canada's urban regions, CRP offers an example of how RSPBs might evolve in other places.

Writing in 2003 on the implications of increasing urbanization in Canada, Bourne and Simmons argue that:

Virtually none of the emerging metropolitan regions has anything approaching an effective government agency or elected public authority that is seriously attempting to manage growth. Most are dependent on the whims of provincial governments that are often mesmerized by other priorities, and on individual departments that typically act as if they operate in silos. No one, it seems, is taking collective responsibility for our urban future. (2003: 31)

As we can see, RSPBs have arisen as one response to this issue. Their adoption in some of Canada's largest metropolitan regions suggests an important governance innovation. The involvement of respective levels of government with RSPBs cannot be considered to follow a linear trajectory. For example, while the Province of Ontario has strongly controlled Metrolinx's developments to date (particularly as it is currently funded solely through general taxation), this is likely to change as the organization is expected to implement its own funding models by 2013. While the cases of RSPBs for transportation and transit planning that have been explored here have been closer to the public side of the spectrum (with a mixture of tax funded and other instruments), the levels of government involvement and the nature of the relationship between the constituent municipalities and that of the regional bodies differ greatly. Further, while the federal government's policies towards the urban realm in Canada are less articulated than those seen in the United Kingdom and the United States, *de facto* policies do exist, particularly in the areas of transportation and transit through various infrastructure projects and funding programs. The federal government role in Canadian urban affairs has tended to go through periods of engagement and extrication, depending on the politics and fiscal environment of the day. These issues will be discussed further in the case study chapters.

## Comparisons and conclusions

Of the three countries examined here, the United States has the greatest number of RSPBs with the greatest variation amongst institutional types. The United Kingdom has two general types of RSPB with the majority being joint boards—bodies arising from local government collaboration. Canada’s experiences with RSPBs for transportation and transit suggest a mixed approach. Greater Montréal and Greater Toronto have provincially-led regional transportation bodies. In the case of Metrolinx (Toronto) there is no elected representation on the board, while in the case of AMT (Montreal) there is a mixture of local and provincial representation through non-elected appointees). Greater Vancouver is an example of a local government driven RSPB. However, like Metrolinx, it has a corporate style board with non-elected representatives. Overall, provincial involvement is very strong in the three Canadian cases. It is a defining feature of multi-level government relations in the Canadian cases.

Given the history of local government reform in the three countries examined, it is not surprising that the United States would have the most fragmentation and institutional complexity. Both Canada and the UK have had successive pieces of legislation that resulted in consolidated government for many urban areas. In this way, the problem of coordination across urban regions was mitigated by the presence of a local government body covering the functional area. Goldberg and Mercer (1986) argue that “the high degree of American metropolitan political fragmentation reflects the more individualistic market orientation of the American political ethos and makes centralized metropolitan planning and management more difficult in the United States than in Canada, where more value is placed on collective and government action” (cited in Rothblatt 1994: 517).

Golberg and Mercer's argument is based on a cultural analysis. However, there are also historical-institutional reasons why this is the case. For example, in contrasting early municipal development in Canada and the United States, Imbroscio notes "... whereas the nineteenth-century US municipal corporation reflected pressures from below for political openness, in Canada the municipal corporation reflected pressures from above for political-administrative control" (1996: 601). The size of many amalgamated municipal governments in Canada can put them at odds with their surrounding regions. Collaborations between large amalgamated central cities and smaller surrounding ones necessarily occur on an unequal basis. However, as the example of Calgary's Regional Partnerships shows, a strong show of good faith on behalf of such central city regions can overcome this imbalance.

In a comparison of the Canadian and U.S. planning systems and RSPBs, several authors have concluded that planning in Canadian urban regions has a tendency to be more economically and fiscally robust due to the level of involvement of provincial governments in contrast to their American counterparts (Goldberg and Mercer 1986; Artibise 1988; Rothblatt 1994). However, the literature in this area would suggest that there is a tradeoff between the regional impacts of these institutions and political representativeness. While a provincial government may be able to achieve a great deal when it strongly controls a regional SPB through political imperative and funding capacities, it is less attuned and responsive to local issues. Here, the internal organization of the entity is an important consideration. The corporate-style boards governing Metrolinx (GTHA) and Translink (GVRD) insulate decision-making from local politics and board meetings are held in camera.

Portland's Metro in the United States and London's TfL are often held up as entities that have forwarded progressive and environmentally sustainable policies and practices. Both have elected representation at the local level and a strong political voice driving policy decisions. Also, both have expanded their revenue sources to rely less heavily on government grants and programmes and have broadened their responsibilities to include a multimodal focus. The chart "RSPBs by function" in the previous chapter presented a model for explaining the capacity or impact of RSPBs where those with jurisdiction over the greatest number of functions have also tended to have more public representation and be of a more public model (with elected local representation). We see this confirmed in the review of RSPBs in the UK and US. These issues will be explored in greater detail in the case studies of Translink and Metrolinx.

The presence of RSPBs can raise new problems for transportation/transit coordination and service delivery—just at a different scale. For many SPBs, the issues of technical and jurisdictional representation have been very difficult to resolve (DeSalvo 1973: 306). Furthermore, the incorporation of citizen interests has been problematic. Commenting on this, DeSalvo writes that this often results from the "insistence on judgments based upon the demand for system continuity for the whole metropolitan area—that analytically convenient but invisible region which corresponds to no one's personal interest" (1973: 306). Depending on the scale at which the body operates, rural, suburban and urban interests often collide. Given this, some fragmentation may also be necessary or desirable. This point was raised in an interview with the former Chief City Planner of Toronto and current board member on Metrolinx, Paul Bedford. He comments that:

There are some mayoral candidates that are talking about should we amalgamate TTC into Metrolinx. I don't think that's the right answer. I think you need the power of the two-tier structure with Metrolinx doing the big planning and the funding. I think it would be a big mistake for Metrolinx to operate the buses and TTC everything else. It's too complicated. I don't want some suburban jerk in Brampton telling me how many busses should run on Yonge Street. They don't have the frame of reference and probably own three cars anyways. I think there is power in the two-tier system. Metrolinx's role should be planning, funding and networks—the big picture stuff. Not a piece here and piece there kind of stuff. (P. Bedford, personal interview, March 11 2010)

As an institutional solution to fragmented transportation and transit planning, RSPBs will not necessarily resolve underlying divisions across an urban region—they may instead lead to the creation of new ones. The variation across regional SPB typologies is indicative that political and historical context plays an important role in shaping these entities. For some, RSPBs that combine strategic, tactical and operational capacities would be politically undesirable and extremely divisive.

The increasing adoption of RSPBs in the three countries examined represents an important governance trend—and one that will undoubtedly have lasting impacts across city regions. This chapter has examined the differences across the UK, US and Canada. A more nuanced understanding of RSPBs in Canada is examined through the case studies of Metrolinx and Translink. The rate at which such entities are being adopted and the ongoing changes to their governance frameworks make this a constantly changing field of study and one that merits increasing attention—particularly in the case of Canada where such entities are relatively new.

Here we turn to the first case study of Translink in Greater Vancouver. It is a body that was adopted as a collective and locally derived solution to regional transportation issues. Relationships at the regional level are complex, and as will be seen, Translink is a contentious organization that is variously extolled for promoting innovative and environmental practices or criticized as authoritarian, undemocratic and dysfunctional.

Local government in British Columbia has been characterized as being subject to 'gentle imposition' by the province (Tennant & Zirnherlt 1973) and this remains a commonly held view. Relations between the province and local governments are often perceived as more conciliatory and cooperative compared to other provinces (Tindal & Tindal 2004: 86). In this case study, local-provincial relations are central; operating at the regional scale, Translink is often placed in a push and pull situation between these actors. The federal government is also a player because of its interest in facilitating trade flows across the region. Regional institutions navigate a complicated political space.

In order to understand the impact of Translink on regional transportation governance and the policy process, we first need to understand what preceded it (a basic premise of historical institutionalism). Preexisting institutions, relationships, culture and norms have shaped the politics of the region. Translink arose out of the specificities of Greater Vancouver's historical political economy and distinct multi-level government relations. This case study is divided into three time periods: i) the period prior to the creation of Translink when the Provincial government was in charge of transportation and transit functions in Greater Vancouver (prior to 1998); ii) the period after the creation of

Translink up until a significant revision to its Act in 2007 (1998-2007); and the period of the revised Act (2007 to the present). The chapter explores the particulars of how Translink was created, with a focus on its impact on the region in terms of policy and governance. Political, historical and institutional contexts, the incentives and purposes driving reforms, the governing coalitions that support them, and resulting policies (and policy capacities) are the major elements that are used to explain institutional formation and change in this case study and the next.

In the creation of Translink, we see an institutional layering where both agency and structure have been added to the existing institutional architecture. This in turn has altered the status and structure of transportation governance in the region. Changes to the governance structure of Translink from 2007 onwards, which includes the appointment of a corporate board of directors, represent a clear shift away from local government control. The accountability of the regional body, both to the electorate and to other levels of government, is a major theme that arises throughout the case study. Underlying it are debates surrounding *who should make decisions* for the city region in this policy area. It has been argued that Translink, under its present configuration, has a growing accountability and legitimacy gap (Smith 2009). This tension, and what it means for the configuration of RSPBs in this case study and for RSPBs more generally, will be explored here and in the subsequent chapters. This raises a further question of institutional conversion—whether through this shift, Translink has been reoriented towards a new or changed purpose.

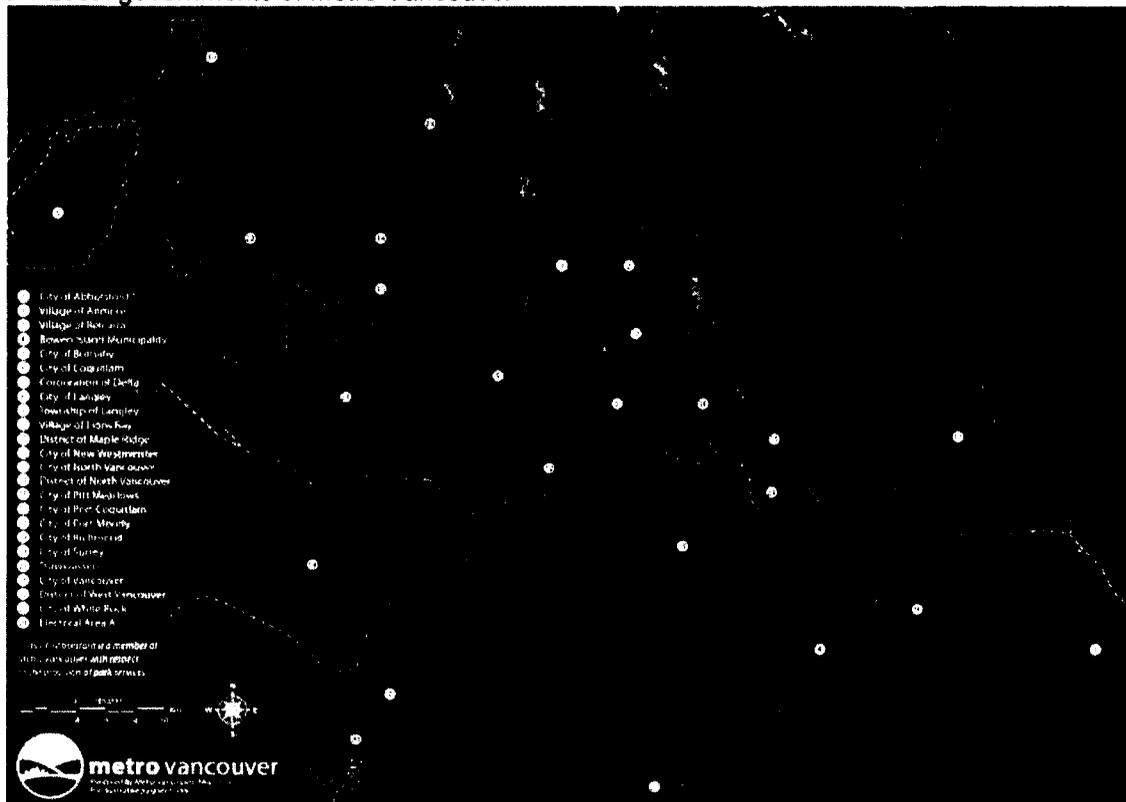
## SETTING THE SCENE—GREATER VANCOUVER: PLACE, PEOPLE, POLITICS

Vancouver sits amidst breathtaking scenery in the lower mainland of BC surrounded by the coastal harbour on the west, the Rocky Mountains to the north, the Fraser Valley to the east and the United States border to the south. Given its isolation from much of the rest of Canada and its early development as a staples-based economy (e.g., mining, logging), transportation has played an important part in the region's development. Approximately 50 per cent of Greater Vancouver's economic activity is directly tied to transportation (ITSC 2010). Having Canada's busiest port, it is a major transport connection for trade with Asia Pacific. Our area of study is the region covered by Translink, which corresponds to the Greater Vancouver Regional District as well as to Statistics Canada's Census Metropolitan Area definition of Vancouver. This area includes 21 incorporated municipalities, one unincorporated area and the Tsawwassen First Nation. There are also 17 Aboriginal reserves within this regional area that are not part of the governance structures of the municipalities, regional district or Translink. Greater Vancouver is the third most populous region in Canada and has a diverse population:<sup>63</sup> a map of this area and the population distribution by municipality are shown below.

---

<sup>63</sup> According to the most recently available Census figures (2006), 41.9 per cent of the population has a mother tongue that is neither English nor French, 39.6 percent are immigrants, and 41.7 per cent are visible minorities with Chinese being the largest such cohort (18.2 per cent out of the total CMA population) followed by South Asian (9.8 per cent out of the total CMA population). The region also has the third largest urban aboriginal population in Canada, comprising approximately two per cent of its population (Statistics Canada 2007).

## 5.1 Local governments of Metro Vancouver



Source: Metro Vancouver, Local Government Boundaries, May 10, 2010, accessed online 6/8/11  
<http://www.metrovancouver.org/about/maps/Pages/default.aspx>

## 5.2 Local Governments of Metro Vancouver, population, 2007

Name	Type	Population count, 2007	Percentage out of total population, 2007
Anmore	Village	1,992	0.09%
Belcarra	Village	701	0.03%
Bowen Island	Island municipality	3,551	0.16%
Burnaby	City	216,336	9.62%
Coquitlam	City	120,512	5.36%
Delta	District municipality	101,668	4.52%
Langley	City	25,134	1.12%
Langley	District municipality	100,049	4.45%
Lions Bay	Village	1,394	0.06%
Maple Ridge	District municipality	73,248	3.26%
New Westminster	City	62,607	2.78%
North Vancouver	City	47,463	2.11%
North Vancouver	District municipality	86,954	3.87%
Pitt Meadows	City	16,757	0.74%
Port Coquitlam	City	55,735	2.48%
Port Moody	City	30,004	1.33%

Richmond	City	186,628	8.30%
Surrey	City	394,976	17.56%
Vancouver	City	578,041	25.69%
West Vancouver	District municipality	44,097	1.96%
White Rock	City	19,839	0.88%
Electoral Area A	Unincorporated area	19,252	0.86%

Source: Statistics Canada, 2007. Community Profiles.

These communities have very different histories and outlooks towards transportation, transit integration and land use. The City of Vancouver has the largest population (25.69 per cent out of the total), the highest population density and is the best linked in terms of transit investments. Transit investments have a longer history in the City of Vancouver, so there are arguments to be made that the populace has already adapted to transit usage, whereas newer communities have yet to evolve such behavioural shifts. The integration of Greater Vancouver as a transportation system is by no means uniform and the equity of investments across this space is an issue often raised by interviewees.

Vancouver, with its moniker *lotusland*, is often highlighted as a ‘livable city’ and a ‘sustainable city’. Books about Vancouver’s urban planning experiences variously refer to it as *Dream City* (Berelowitz 2005) and *The Vancouver Achievement* (Punter 2003). Its design practices include a focus on density while balancing community and recreational space and have often led to comparisons with Portland, Oregon. Vancouver has been awarded the title of “world’s most livable city” five years in a row by *The Economist* magazine.<sup>64</sup> For the most part these accolades refer to the city of Vancouver and not to the broader region (corresponding to the map above). Low-density, single family housing with regional or town centres acting as nodal and commercial focal points

---

<sup>64</sup> “Livability ranking – where the livin’ (sic) is easiest,” (2011). *The Economist*, accessed 6/8/121 [http://www.economist.com/blogs/gulliver/2011/02/liveability\\_ranking](http://www.economist.com/blogs/gulliver/2011/02/liveability_ranking)

characterizes much of Greater Vancouver. Housing prices in the region are approximately double that of the Canadian average, making housing affordability a major issue. While steep housing prices are partly a product of market demand and population growth, they are also a product of immigration to the region. The capital brought by skilled and wealthy immigrants, largely from Asia, has decoupled local housing from the local labour market—a phenomenon referred to as the globalization of urban housing markets by Moos and Skaburskis (2010). Housing affordability and continued population growth, which is projected to reach 3.4 million in 2041, place distinct pressures on planning, transportation and transit services and infrastructure, as well as on the protection of conservation areas, greenways, parks, watersheds and agricultural lands (Metro Vancouver 2011). It also raises the class dimensions of the ‘livable city’ concept.<sup>65</sup> Amidst these pressures, regional coordination is, and will become, increasingly important.

A distinct feature of local government in British Columbia is that the province never enacted municipal amalgamations like those seen in Ontario, and local government units have therefore remained smaller, as is the case of Greater Vancouver. Because of this, there are longer standing governance structures to coordinate across these bodies than are seen in provinces where municipal amalgamations took place. The Greater Vancouver Regional District is one such regional structure. It plays a central role in this case study because of its responsibilities for regional growth management. This is in contrast to Metrolinx in Greater Toronto where no such regional political body exists. Herein lies a key difference between the two case studies: when Translink in Greater

---

<sup>65</sup> Reid (1991) discusses this issue in the “Primer on the corporate city,” which examines how the terms ‘world class city’ and ‘livable city’ have been used by reformers to the exclusion of equity concerns in Canadian cities.

Vancouver was created in 1999 it was adopted in the context of an already defined region with an existing regional coordinating body.

The province created regional districts in 1965 with only one firm function—solid waste disposal.<sup>66</sup> Additional functions have been mandated and have evolved over time.<sup>67</sup> It was left to the incorporated municipalities and the citizens of unincorporated areas to determine the functions of the regional districts and service adoption was voluntary (Bish 2000: 75). A statement by the Minister of Municipal Affairs for British Columbia at the time, Dan Campbell, makes the original intention of the regional districts clear: “Regional districts are not conceived of as a fourth level of government, but as a functional rather than political amalgamation” (Campbell 1976 quoted in Razin & Smith 2006: 157). However, despite Dan Campbell’s insistence that the new structures were not in fact another tier of local government, a number of commentators have disagreed (Donald Higgins 1986; Bob Bish in Razin & Smith 2006). The province’s primer on regional districts describes their functions as threefold: i) to provide regional political representation and services, ii) to provide a political and administrative framework for inter-municipal or sub-regional service partnerships and iii) to provide land use and planning regulation in rural areas (British Columbia 2006: 5-6). Each district is governed by a board of directors with appointed councillors/mayors from incorporated municipalities and directly elected representatives from unincorporated areas.

Both Translink and the GVRD (known as Metro Vancouver) have been lauded as

---

<sup>66</sup> At this time 30 Regional Districts were created, 27 of which remain today.

<sup>67</sup> For example, in relation to financing, the 1970 *Municipal Finance Authority Act* mandated that all municipalities, with the exception of the City of Vancouver and special boards, had to borrow money through their regional districts. With regards to regional planning, regional districts lost their mandatory responsibility in this area in 1985, only to have it since reinstated on a voluntary basis through the *Growth Strategies Act* of 1995.

effective and innovative in meeting urban challenges. Translink has won a number of prestigious awards and has been called "...a model for the type of regional governance agency, well suited to this country's situation" (Golden & Brender 2007: 3). Writing in 1994, Andrew Sancton praised the GVRD, stating, "all Canadian city-regions require institutions similar to the GVRD" (quoted in Razin & Smith 2006: 161). Others have offered scrutinizing criticism. For example, Patrick J. Smith writes:

Citizens in Metro Vancouver increasingly are wondering who is responsible for making more and more important and expensive decisions—on transportation, infrastructure, maybe policing and beyond. Perhaps this accountability dilemma is illustrated nowhere more obviously than in the case of Greater Vancouver's Transportation Authority—Translink. (Smith 2009: 251)

In the following sections we turn to transportation and transit governance in Vancouver from the period leading up to the creation of Translink to the present. The relations between GVRD, the cities of Greater Vancouver and the provincial and federal governments form a dominant component of this narrative.

#### TRANSPORTATION AND TRANSIT IN GREATER VANCOUVER PRE 1998: FROM PROVINCIAL CROWN CORPORATION TO THE CREATION OF TRANSLINK

Transit operation in Greater Vancouver has evolved from the early days of privately owned street car and rail car system to provincial ownership and, later, to the creation of Translink. The pre-Translink period reviewed here shows where the impetus for change came from and the ideas and coalitions that led to Translink's eventual formation. This prehistory speaks to original intentions in the creation of Translink and the various alternatives that were considered.

Like most cities in Canada, transit provision began with private operation and moved to public delivery when there was a need for system expansion. The early private

operator, the British Columbia Railway Company, was founded in the 1890s with a focus on streetcar expansion, later followed by buses (in the 1920s) and the electric trolleys (in 1945) (BC Transit 2011). In 1962 this company was purchased by the province to be operated by BC Hydro—a merger that led to the creation of the BC Power and Hydro Authority (Kadota 2010: 10). Transit was by no means a primary focus of BC Hydro and although investments were made, this period saw a growth in automobile use and road expansions. In 1973, the Department of Municipal Affairs established a Bureau of Transit Services with a mandate both to coordinate and support existing systems in Greater Vancouver and to establish new ones in urban and rural communities. Not long after this, the province created the Urban Transit Authority (UTA, created in 1978), which was given responsibility for systems outside of Vancouver and Victoria. A major impetus for its creation was “to provide local governments with an increased role in the decision making and funding of their community transit systems” (BC Transit 2011). This marks the beginning of calls for devolved authority for transit decisions.

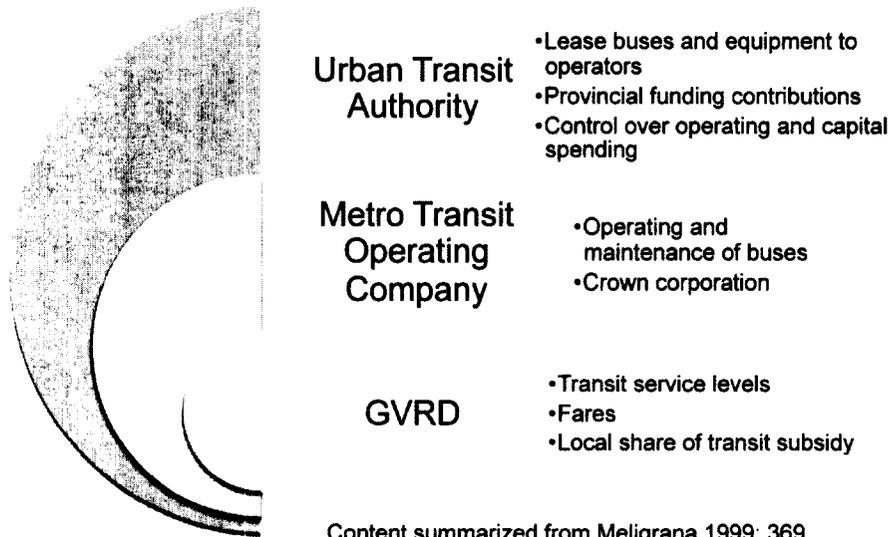
The *Urban Transit Authority Act* (1978) established a transit department in the Greater Vancouver Regional District<sup>68</sup> with the authority to set service and fare levels. However, the province retained control over operation and maintenance of transit in Greater Vancouver through the Metro Transit Operating Company, which was a crown corporation created in 1980. Under the *Urban Transit Authority Act* (1978), the responsibilities for transit were outlined as per the chart below.<sup>69</sup>

---

<sup>68</sup> The GVRD was formed in 1967—prior to this time, two regional bodies were already in existence in this area: the Greater Vancouver Water District (incorporated 1926 but existing since 1889) and the Greater Vancouver Sewerage and Drainage District (incorporated 1956 but existing since 1914). These two legal entities as well as the Metro Vancouver Housing Corporation (MVHC) still co-exist alongside Metro Vancouver.

<sup>69</sup> The exception to this is the West Vancouver transit that owned and operated its own bus system between 1912 and 1980 (Meligrana 1999: 370).

### 5.3 Division of responsibilities under the UTA Act in Greater Vancouver



The Metro Transit Operating Company was created to operate and maintain buses, while a transit division of the GVRD determined service level and fares and was responsible for the local government contributions to transit functions. There were three potential taxation sources: (i) property taxation, (ii) a surcharge on electric power bills, or (iii) a gas tax (Meligrana 1999: 369). Meligrana writes that “friction between the GVRD and the Province over the funding and control of public transit... [resulted in the] provincial removal of the transit planning function of the GVRD in 1983” (ibid.).

Tensions between local control, regional interests and the provincial government are an almost constant feature of transportation and transit governance in Greater Vancouver. A review of legislative debates around the time of the adoption of the *UTA Act* illustrates these concerns. Gary Vernon Lauk (NDP MLA for Vancouver Center) argued in the legislative debates on the bill that:

This total bill is a Trojan horse.... in Section 4 we will get a pro-Victoria government transit system for the lower mainland imposed upon us by a partisan board appointed by the partisan administration. It is not expressing good faith at all to the good people of the city of Vancouver and the regional district of Vancouver by saying that the government will appoint these members. Why don't you leave it

up to the councils themselves, Mr. Chairman? Why is the Minister so frightened that we can't get a good and fair representation on that board through a democratic process? There are only four. He is still outnumbered by eight members of the government. I don't see anywhere in the Act that the government is going to be paying more than the regional districts and the municipalities. Is that in the statute? They are paying only half the cost but they want two-thirds of the say. (Lauk 1978: 2470)

In subsequent years the UTA's name was changed to BC Transit and the system took over responsibility for transit provision in Greater Vancouver. These events are outlined in the timeline below.

#### 5.4 Timeline of major events up to the creation of Translink

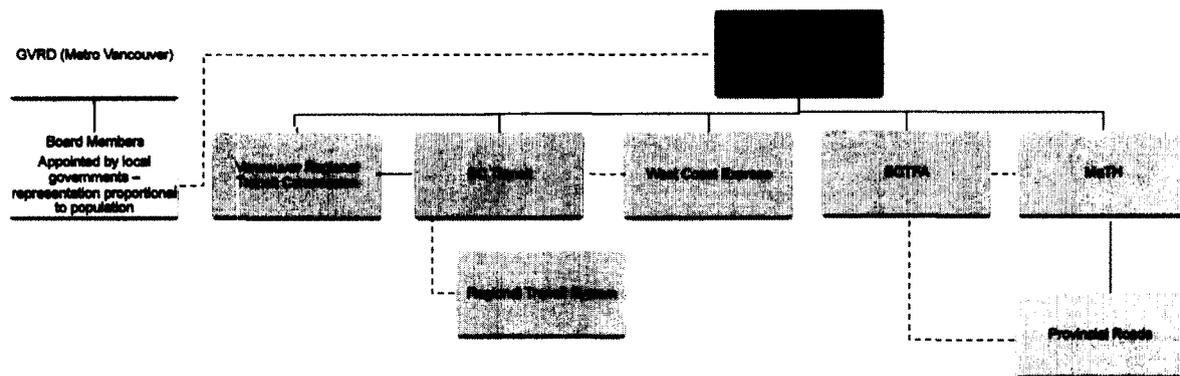
1999	-Creation of Translink
1998	-GVTA Act Approved
1997	-Negotiations between GVRD and Province
1996	-GVRD Livable Region Strategic Plan
1993	-GVRD and Provincial Government release Transport 2021 Plan
1985	-The Metro Transit Operating Company and BC Transit are merged
1982	-The Urban Transit Authority's name is changed to BC Transit
1980	-Metro Transit Operating Company takes over operation of buses in Victoria and Vancouver from BC Hydro
1978	-Urban Transit Authority Act
1976	-Transportation system assigned to Bureau of Transit Services (later BC Transit)
1973	-Dept. of Municipal Affairs establishes Bureau of Transit Services
1962	-BC Electric Railway company purchased by the Province (operated by BC Hydro)
1961	-Power Development Act
1897	-BC Electric Railway Company founded (operating in Victoria and Vancouver)

Sources: Yearwood-Lee, E. (2007). Transit in British Columbia: Governance and major development timelines. Legislative Library of British Columbia, Background Brief 2007: 05  
 BC Transit (2011). *BC Transit History*, accessed 11/06/11 from [http://www.bctransit.com/corporate/general\\_info/history.cfm](http://www.bctransit.com/corporate/general_info/history.cfm)

BC Transit is mandated: “to plan, acquire, construct or cause to be constructed public passenger transportation systems and rail systems that support regional growth strategies, official community plans, and the economic development of transit service areas”, [and] “to provide for the maintenance and operation of those systems” (*BC Transit Act* 1996: 3.1). Transit systems and the nature of service delivery differ

depending on the nature of the transit service partnership.<sup>70</sup> In larger metropolitan areas, like Victoria and Greater Vancouver, the system in the 1990s operated through regional transit commissions. The Vancouver Regional Transit Commission’s revenue came from “fares, non-residential municipal property taxes, and two provincial levies whose revenues have been allocated to the commission—one on residential electric bills, and the other on gasoline” (Auditor General of British Columbia 1996: 7). The commission was composed of locally elected representatives of their constituent municipalities, with the Chair of the regional commission also sitting on BC Transit’s board. As mandated by the Act, BC Transit’s board is a mixture of provincial appointments and locally elected representatives. The board reports through its Chair to the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure. The organizational chart below illustrates these various relationships.

#### 5.5 Organizational chart of BC Transit prior to 1998



Derek Corrigan was Chair of BC Transit from 1994 to 1997 and is presently the Mayor of Burnaby. He describes BC Transit’s role in Greater Vancouver in the mid 1990’s thus:

The system we had then, these local transit commissions were responsible for the operation of the bus system and making sure that it dealt with the issues in their communities. And it worked extremely well to do it that way. But it was always

<sup>70</sup> In most cases, transit services are “provided through a partnership between BC Transit, local government and a contracted transit management company” (BC Transit 2010: 5). The local governments act as a joint funder of the system and “transit related decisions are made in open sessions of sponsoring municipal councils of regional district boards” (ibid.).

dependent on how much room the commissions were given. If the chairs were given more power to make those decisions, then they tended to be happier and were more accountable to the decisions that were made. Whereas, if it was imposed upon them, the less accountable they were. (D. Corrigan, personal interview, May 12 2010)

In contrast to other provinces at the time, the BC government's role through its Department of Municipal Affairs and the crown corporation BC Transit was very strong. Transit governance differs across Canada, but in most provinces it is, and has been, the sole responsibility of municipal governments. The relationship between local governments and BC Transit speaks of 'partnership' and 'consultation'.<sup>71</sup> However, the wording in the *BC Transit Act* signifies a hierarchal relationship. For example, under articles 8.3 and 8.5 of the Act:

- If a municipality fails or refuses to enter into an agreement that the authority considers necessary for the purposes of this Act, the Lieutenant Governor in Council may, on the recommendation of the authority, establish the contents of the agreement and order that it be binding on the parties named in it [and also]
- The Lieutenant Governor in Council may, on the recommendation of the authority, order a regional district to undertake, vary or terminate a transit function, and, despite the *Local Government Act*, grant to or limit or impose conditions on the objects, functions, obligations, powers and duties of a regional district to the extent considered necessary to implement the order. (*BC Transit Act* 1996)

Through these articles it is clear that under BC Transit, the provincial government maintained the right to exert its preferences and priorities for transit investments and services, regardless of the desires of local government.

---

<sup>71</sup> See BC Transit (2011). *About Us*, accessed 11/06/11 from <http://www.bctransit.com/corporate/?p=1.txt>

## Ideas and institutional change—transportation studies and calls for regional transportation governance

Under BC Transit and the systems that came before it, Greater Vancouver's transportation system has been governed by a patchwork of different commissions, companies, the GVRD and the provincial government. A major feature of governance over the period reviewed here is that transportation, transit and strategic land use decisions were separate—there was no system wide planning. In part because of developments in regional transportation and transit modeling in the late 1980s and early 1990s, it became increasingly clear that a system wide architecture was required.

Transportation demand modeling as well as the administration of a household travel survey for the Greater Vancouver region showed that the present transportation scenarios would be under increasing stress in the years to come (Krajczar 1990: 2-3). Several transportation studies conducted around this time raised the profile of these issues: *Freedom to Move—Report of the Greater Vancouver Transportation Task Force* (1988); *Transport 2021: A Long-Range Transportation Plan for Greater Vancouver* (1993); and its follow up report the *South Coast Transportation System Plan* (1994). The Transport 2021 report, under NDP Premier Mike Harcourt, identified four policy levers: control of land use, transportation demand management, transport service levels and increasing transport supply. Its recommendations prioritized transit over that of goods movement—e.g., it did not support the expansion of the intra-regional roads system. The development of these reports signified collaboration between the provincial government (through BC Transit and the Ministry of Transport), and the GVRD and local governments. However, under BC Transit, transportation and transit governance proceeded in a consensual manner with “no agreed upon regional transportation plan or

system [and]... no governing body to plan for and implement transportation policies for the entire Greater Vancouver Region” (Meligrana 1999: 372). A 1997 planning document from the City of Vancouver indicated disappointment with progress stemming from *Transport 2021*, stating, “limited progress has been achieved” (City of Vancouver 1997). Transportation and transit investments were not keeping up with the goals of the *Livable Regional Strategic Plan*. These reports were critical in terms of *problem recognition* and *issues framing*. They would establish a need for a system wide architecture and a regional frame of thinking. This raised the question of how transportation should be *governed* in Greater Vancouver.

#### Debates on regional transportation governance: the big players—the provincial government, the GVRD and local governments

Through the policy reports discussed above there were increasing calls to change the status quo. This opened a period of debate between the major players in the region in terms of how to structure transportation governance and the nature of the relationship between the key actors: the provincial government, the GVRD and local governments.

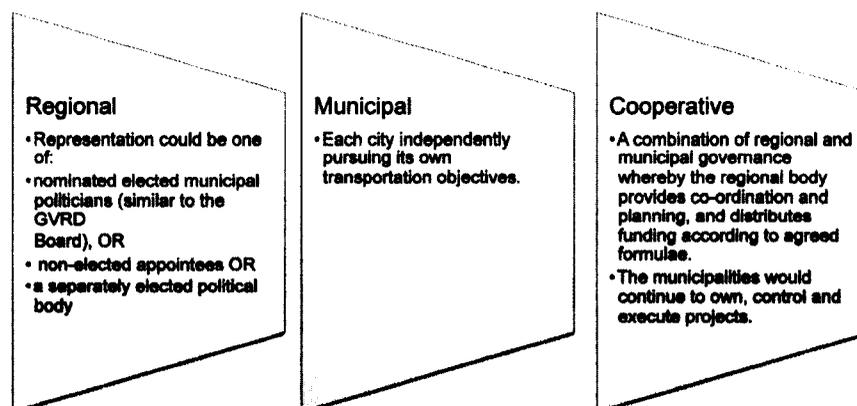
The GVRD outlined its preferences for future developments in the five principles described below:

- i. **Comprehensive:** with regard to coordination and modal type, operators and financing.
- ii. **Regional and local control:** management by local government with respect to a regional dimension of transportation.
- iii. **Appropriate and equitable financing:** in the collection of financial resources from appropriate sources and their allocation.
- iv. **Political responsibility and accountability:** establishing a clear connection between transportation governance and funding decision makers.
- v. **Effective management and operations:** service at an appropriate and economic scale. (Meligrana 1999: 372)

These broad principles still raised many issues surrounding how such an entity would be structured, funded and governed. For example, GVRD documents from this time say little about the private sector's potential role in transportation in the region (Meligrana 1999: 372).

A policy report from the City of Vancouver in 1997 gives an indication of the perspective of local governments at the time. Three broad options are presented for transportation governance—a regional, municipal or cooperative model.

#### 5.6 City of Vancouver, proposed governance models, 1997



Text from proposed governance models outlined in: City of Vancouver (1997). Transportation and Transit Committee Agenda, Support item no. 3, policy report for traffic and transit, July 4, 1997, file no. 4101, cc file 5500, accessed 6/6/11 from <http://vancouver.ca/ctyclerk/cclerk/970729/tt3.htm>

The municipal model (where each city would own its own transit system) is dismissed, as economies of scale and system wide planning would be lost. Preference is instead weighed between the benefits of a *regional* versus *cooperative* model. A regional model could provide:

centralized and quicker decision-making. However, it would also be required to make decisions on local issues, perhaps without full knowledge of the implications. It would still be required to rule on such politically sensitive and technically complex issues such as how to balance service between the suburbs and the core metropolitan area. (City of Vancouver 1997)

Concerns about a regional model stem from it being either “too centralized (e.g., the existing transit system) or too dispersed (which can lead to lack of co-ordination and

parochial decisions)” (City of Vancouver 1997). It is said that the cooperative model “attempts to avoid these extremes, and is worthy of further development” (ibid.). The document further notes that: “the public is generally unaware of the negotiations underway. The GVRD has just released a program of public communication... However, this program gives relatively low priority to dealing with the public directly, describ[ing] them as a ‘tertiary audience’” (ibid).

The debates leading up to the formation of Translink are echoed both in the literature on RSPBs and in the present debates. They capture the complexity of regional governance and tradeoffs between decentralized versus centralized models. Again, the issues of accountability and public awareness are raised with the public described as being treated as a tenuous ‘tertiary audience’. Documents from the City of Vancouver at the time speak at length to the desire for more stable funding mechanisms, concerted contributions from upper level governments for capital and operational investments and a need to diversify funding away from a disproportionate reliance on property taxes. A recently released history of Translink cites unpredictable funding as the main rationale for the creation of Translink. BC Transit’s funding was determined by the Province on a year-by-year basis, making long-term planning for the region very difficult (Translink 2008a: 7). The City of Vancouver recommended that the Provincial Government “establish a Regional Transit Authority, with a mandate to develop a Regional Transit Plan” (ibid.). Similar calls were made in the other cities in GVRD at the time. Differences in terms of what such a system should achieve were seen between the more suburban versus more urban cities. How to balance investments and services between these divisions was then, as it is now, “politically sensitive and technically complex” (ibid.).

A provincial appetite for devolution and the creation of Translink

Adequate funding, increased planning capacity at the local/regional level, a need for increased local representation and more cohesive planning between transit and transportation functions (and other modes) are all major themes leading up to calls for a new system for transportation governance in the region. During the late 1990s, under the NDP government of Premier Clark, “positive provincial-municipal relations were placed high on [the government’s] agenda”—the political environment at the time was conducive to negotiation on urban-regional issues (Garea and LeSage 2005: 30). From the province’s perspective there was an inherent inequity with a transit system that is largely funded from provincial general revenue. In the words of Ken Cameron (general manager of GVRD transport and planning in the 1990s):

[the province] wanted to get out of spending \$250 million a year on subsidies and collecting taxes across the province for [transit in Greater Vancouver]. I mean, raise property taxes in Prince George for buses in Vancouver. How does that work? (Wales 2008: 19)

This sentiment was echoed in my interviews with provincial representatives.

Considerations such as how to best structure funding for transportation and transit would become a major part of the eventual negotiations. Funding that would be more directly tied to those who were benefiting from the system appealed to the province for political reasons but also to many municipalities of the GVRD who wanted more control over transportation investments.

Translink’s official history titled *The Road Less Travelled* points to two key events that facilitated the entity’s eventual creation: i) the appointment of transportation advocates (e.g., George Puil as Chair of the GVRD board) to influential positions and ii) the reclassification of 600 kilometers of provincial secondary highway as a municipal

responsibility (Wales 2008: 15). The issue of road reclassification led to an opening for funding negotiations between municipalities and the province. It also meant that these negotiations were multimodal in scope—ultimately leading to the creation of a transportation-oriented regional SPB, rather than a solely transit-oriented one. In several interviews it was also expressed that there was a will on behalf of the provincial government to distance themselves from politically contentious transportation decisions in the region. For example, Penny Ballem, the City Manager for the City of Vancouver states:

.... the building of the Skytrain was very destructive to communities and I suspect the government decided that it was better to devolve the accountability of that where there was public consternation and to try and distance themselves from that accountability. So, they set up the regional construct—but really it was most likely to distance themselves. (P. Ballem, personal interview, May 14 2010)

During the time of negotiations, various vested interests expressed their preferred transportation governance models. On the issue of board composition, the Auditor General of BC has summarized the various positions well in stating that:

The GVRD wanted a large board with strong municipal representation. The Province wanted local politicians to be represented but favoured a smaller board with broader representation. Larger municipalities wanted board representation commensurate with their population. Smaller municipalities feared that if this were the case they would have little opportunity to participate directly on the board. The business community wanted business representatives, and other groups suggested transit users be represented. (2001: 42)

In 1997, the GVRD began negotiations with the province to transfer responsibilities for transit and other aspects of transportation to the region. Separately, both parties also negotiated the construction of rapid transit lines in greater Vancouver. The major issues for both parties in the negotiations were how to structure funding and the composition of governance. A basis for funding agreements required consensus on growth scenarios.

The GVRD projected a more aggressive 10-year growth scenario for BC Transit.

Through negotiations, a mid point between these two perspectives was agreed upon.

Translink's official history also cites labour concerns as a very important area of negotiations for the NDP provincial government at the time, as well as "the integration of the road system, breaking the new authority into more manageable units with the ability to contract out, plus environmental issues" (Wales 2008: 17). Through the negotiations that led to the creation of Translink, the province and the GVRD agreed to three key points:

- i. The region would have responsibility for managing its own transportation system, including transit;
- ii. The transportation system would be integrated; and
- iii. Translink's success would hinge on it having secure, adequate and appropriate funding, specifically including the use of new revenue sources. (Auditor General of BC 2001: 12)

Further, the provincial government committed to: "providing continuing provincial funding for transit (through tax transfers), and cooperating with Translink when it raised regional funding; taking responsibility for much of the transit system's existing infrastructure debt; and expanding SkyTrain [and] the GVRD committed to: taking responsibility for the integrated management of transportation; expanding transit, with funding from local sources for a substantial part of its operation and expansion; and cooperating with the provincial government's SkyTrain expansion" (Auditor General of BC 2001: 12). These are important points that would be tested in the coming years of the entity's operations.

Once an agreement was finalized between the GVRD and the Province, a consultation process was conducted prior to its ratification involving all 21 municipalities and stakeholders such as the BC Trucking Association and BC Automobile Associations.

A major concern for the municipalities was how the agreement would impact property taxes (Wales 2008: 19). Out of these negotiations and consultations a final agreement was determined and ratified by the GVRD board and the provincial cabinet. The *Greater Vancouver Transportation Authority Act* was passed July 29, 1998 (Bill 36).<sup>72</sup> A governance structure and funding arrangement were finally agreed upon.

#### ENTER TRANSLINK: TRANSPORTATION GOVERNANCE IN GREATER VANCOUVER—1999-2007

Translink began operations on April 1<sup>st</sup>, 1999—becoming the world’s first multimodal regional transportation authority (Translink 2008a: 2). The impetus for its creation, as we have seen, came from a variety of sources but with the Province and the GVRD leading discussions and negotiations. Several influential reports over the decades were formative in describing a need for multimodal functions, local/regional control, coordination of transportation and transit with land use plans and expanded and stable funding. Translink, originally named the Greater Vancouver Transportation Authority (GVTA), came to incorporate many of these features. The characteristics of the existing political and institutional context are evident in how the organization would be structured, funded and governed. As is often stated by those who were closely involved in the creation of Translink, it is a distinctly “made in BC solution”.<sup>73</sup>

RSPBs are most often adopted in the context of fragmented systems where different cities in a region are operating separate transit/transportation systems and require greater

---

<sup>72</sup> Other Acts that apply to Translink are *the Local Government Act* (section referring to the GVRD and municipal politicians), the *Vancouver Charter* (with regards to municipal politicians) and the *Company Act* (which applies to Translink’s subsidiaries) (Auditor General of British Columbia 2001: 44). Translink is also subject to the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* and it discloses financial information under the *Financial Information Act*.

<sup>73</sup> For example, BC Premier from 1991-1996 Mike Harcourt expresses this in the preface to Translink’s official history, *The road less travelled* (Wales 2008).

coordination between them. This was not the case for Translink, since a provincial entity previously had responsibility for the transit system of Greater Vancouver as a whole. Rather, it was borne out of a desire to increase local/regional involvement in transportation planning, to expand the capacity of the system and to increasingly tie revenue generation to 'place' (the principle of raising revenues where they are spent). There was also a clear provincial will and interest to devolve authority on this issue to local actors and to distance itself from politically contentious transportation decisions.

#### Translink's governance structure (1998-2007)

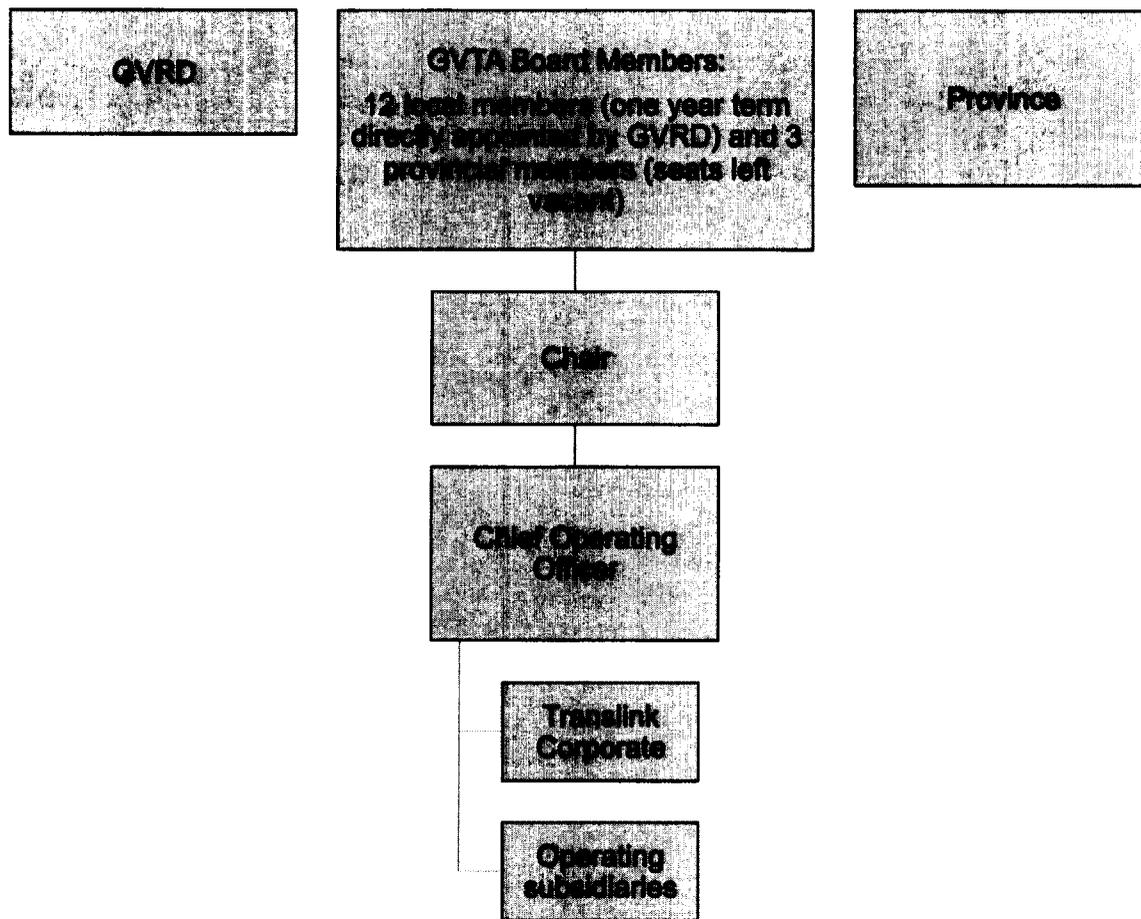
In the period leading up to the creation of Translink we can see distinct periods of problem recognition and issues framing (through various reports) as well as coalition formation (whereby the major actors articulated their governance preferences). These would come to influence Translink's resulting governance structure, scope and capacity, which we turn to now.

Under the GVTA Act, Translink's purpose is twofold: i) to move people and goods and ii) to support the regional growth strategy and the air quality objectives and economic development of the transportation service region (GVTA Act 1998: 1.3). While the entity took over all aspects of planning, financing and managing public transit from BC Transit and its subsidiary corporations, it also took on new functions with responsibility for major regional roads and bridges, cycling and commuting, provincial emissions standards (through Air Care) and transportation demand management. To fund its initiatives, Translink was given the authority to raise revenues through taxes, levies, project toll charges, user fees and motor vehicle charges (GVTA Act 1998: 6.1-2). The entity was also given the authority to "make bylaws, and may recommend regulations, permitted

under this Act and required for the regional transportation system” and to “provide transportation services, and any other services it offers, to areas outside the transportation service region” (GVTA Act 1998: 6.1-2).

Translink’s governance structure as it was specified in 1998 is depicted in the organizational chart below. The GVRD and the provincial government are included because of their role in appointing respective board members to Translink.

5.7 Translink organizational chart 1999-2007



Although Translink is a separate legal entity from the GVRD, a report from the Auditor General of BC describes it as a “controlling shareholder” of Translink (2001: 44).<sup>74</sup> The

<sup>74</sup> For example, the report notes that the GVRD’s 2000 financial statements describe Translink as “controlled by the GVRD and accountable to the GVRD board and—through them—to the local electorate (Auditor General of British Columbia 2001: 44).

Board consisted of 12 members appointed by the GVRD for which each member must be a mayor of a municipality or a member of the GVRD's board of directors (a municipally elected official) and three members appointed by the province specified as either a member of the Legislative Assembly or a minister of municipal affairs. The GVRD appointments have a further clause indicating which municipalities the board appointments should be derived from and in what numbers. Meligrana summarizes the nature of this connection between the GVRD and Translink with regards to accountability, stating:

Although the GVTA is not directly elected, accountability is maintained through three key facets: one, the GVTA is composed entirely of elected officials—thus there is an established method of accountability, albeit indirectly, through the electoral process both at the provincial and municipal level; two, the GVTA is bound by the fundamental objectives of the Livable Region Strategic Plan; and three, increases in taxation and borrowing limits must be ratified by the GVRD Board. The last two are methods whereby the GVRD board can exercise some control over the activities of the GVTA. All in all, the GVTA should be seen as a new and important component of the GVRD federation. (Meligrana 1999: 375)

A 2001 report from the Auditor General of BC describes GVRD's oversight of Translink as "based primarily on the overlap between the two boards, and on ratification requirements," describing them as "informal mechanisms" (BC Auditor General 2001: 46).

The provincial appointments to the board were filled for only a brief period. In 2000, an Order in Council was passed removing provincial representation to the Board.<sup>75</sup> Frank Blasetti, Assistant Deputy Minister with the Partnerships Division for the Province

---

<sup>75</sup> Members Tim Stevenson, Fred Randall & John Cashore were rescinded as members of the GVTA board by the Order in Council 1715, December 12, 2000 (<http://www.qp.gov.bc.ca/statreg/oic/2000/resume30.htm>). This was done under the NDP government. Upon the change in government in 2000 with the Liberal party gaining a majority, Provincial board representation on Translink remained vacant.

of British Columbia explains:

The reason [the Province didn't fill those board seats] is that at the end of the day the Act says they have to be MLAs and after the legislation was passed it became apparent that those members would be in a conflict of interest. Translink does a lot of business with the province and negotiates with the province and those board appointees would be under fiduciary obligation to Translink but would also be under obligation to the legislature—so that's why they never sat on it. (F. Blasetti, personal interview, July 6, 2010)

This conflict of interest was highlighted when the Translink board voted to adopt a vehicle levy tax that was subsequently not supported by the Province. The organizational chart depicted above shows Translink's board in between the Province and the GVRD.

This is quite fitting. The Province and the GVRD have separate and often conflicting interests in terms of how decisions ought to be made and finances structured. This is a theme that arises time and again across the interviews with key stakeholders. The GVRD board, with its compilation of municipalities large and small, suburban and central, contains diverse interests. Despite these diverse perspectives, they are in agreement on the principle that there is little room for property tax increases as a funding component for regional transportation expansions. Robert Paddon, Vice President of Corporate and Public Affairs for Translink describes this:

It's all about money—it's always been all about money. So when you look at that, the challenge of having them collaborate and agree is something that we haven't resolved. How do we get agreement about who should pay? [...] The Province thinks increased levels of property taxation should go into funding transportation. The Mayors of the Region believe enough has gone into property tax. Until those two resolve that, we can't move forward. (R. Paddon, personal interview, May 10 2010)

This places Translink in a difficult position. The politics of 'who should pay' for transportation investments at a regional level are contentious, particularly for large capital

projects. The fixed physical nature of these assets means that there are clear spatial beneficiaries of these investments.

The politics of funding: Who should pay?

The GVTA Act (1998) gave Translink a variety of ways to raise revenues. When the agreement creating Translink was negotiated, the region's contribution to hospital capital through property taxes was taken over by the Province, freeing up property tax room for the funding of regional transportation. Because of this, property taxes became a more important funding source for transportation in the region than was the case under BC Transit. As has been mentioned, Translink was given a variety of methods to fund its activities (e.g., property taxes, levies, project toll charges, user fees and motor vehicle charges) (GVTA Act 1998: 6.1-2). The decision to use any of these requires the agreement and collaboration of other actors, in most cases the municipalities of GVRD.<sup>76</sup>

As was briefly mentioned in the case of the vehicle levy, provincial cooperation was required both through legislative changes and collection mechanisms. It was viewed as an unpopular revenue tool and met with provincial political opposition when efforts to implement it in 2000 were undertaken. The issue of the vehicle levy serves to illustrate a broader point. Despite the creation of a transportation authority with a broad array of powers, collaboration amongst the major actors (the province, the GVRD and its constituent municipalities, and to a lesser extent the federal government) remains a pivotal function. This is especially true of large-scale projects for which a significant amount of capital contributions are provided by the provincial and federal governments.

---

<sup>76</sup> Under the GVTA Act all funding mechanisms must be ratified by a resolution of the Greater Vancouver Regional District board of directors (1998: 25.3, 29.5).

## Regional planning and coordination: Translink and the GVRD

While funding for transportation governance requires a consensual process, so too does the coordination of regional planning. Under the GVTA Act, Translink is mandated to support the regional growth strategy of the GVRD (GVTA Act 1998: 3b). Some explanation of how these plans were first adopted and formulated is merited.

Through an extensive consultation process, the GVRD adopted its first regional plan in 1976, entitled *The Livable Region Plan*. The plan included goals for increased density, reduced car use, increased transit use, as well as population growth targets with concentrations around regional town centres. In 1983 the planning powers of the GVRD and other districts in BC were eliminated. This was done under a Social Credit government on the rationale that these powers trespassed on those of local government. As a result of this, the GVRD's role became advisory. It lacked the statutory authority to enforce targets, and subsequent growth management plans proceeded with extensive consultation with member municipalities and the public. The updated plan that came out of this laborious, consensus driven process was the *Livable Region Strategic Plan* (LRSP), adopted by the GVRD board in 1996. This plan was given clout by the adoption of Growth Strategies legislation through revisions to the *Local Government Act* under an NDP provincial government in 1996. Planning operates in a nested fashion. Through the Growth Strategies legislation, mechanisms for horizontal integration of the GVRD's LRSP with that of provincial priorities and municipal strategies were formalized. The *Local Government Act* requires that municipalities submit plans two years after the adoption of the LRSP to show how they meet its objectives. These municipal plans are then approved at the level of the GVRD board. In cases where there is disagreement, the

Province acts as arbiter. In the most recently completed LRSP (2011), the municipality of Coquitlam has voted against the plan and the issue has gone to provincial arbitration.<sup>77</sup>

Like the municipalities of the GVRD, Translink's transportation plans must also correspond to LRSP.

In an explanatory guide to the Growth Strategies legislation adopted in 1995, the provincial government outlines nine basic principles guiding the legislation, the first of which is "no new institutions" (Province of BC 1995: 8).<sup>78</sup> It is explained that:

The provincial government has a strong local planning system that should be strengthened and extended, *rather than create special purpose bodies* or a new level of government in updating the planning system. Building on this established system has the benefit of providing access to existing political structures, administrative systems, professional staff and communications networks. It also avoids creating another layer of administration with considerable set-up and ongoing costs. (Province of BC 1995: 8, my italics)

The growth strategies legislation was adopted under the NDP government of Mike Harcourt (1991-1996). Despite this strongly stated aim for no new special purpose bodies, it was under the subsequent NDP government of Glen Clark that Translink would be adopted (1996-1999). The province expresses its preferences through the growth strategies legislation at a relatively high level as outlined in section 849(2) of the *Local Government Act*. The provincial goals are:

- Avoiding urban sprawl and ensuring that development takes place where adequate facilities exist or can be provided in a timely, economic and efficient manner;
- Settlement patterns that minimize the use of automobiles and encourage

---

<sup>77</sup> The municipality of Coquitlam's resolution on this matter cites an increased level of control by the GVRD (Metro Vancouver) as a primary reason for non-acceptance. It further argues that the land use designations in the 2011 LRSP exceed what is required under the growth strategy (City of Coquitlam 2011).

<sup>78</sup> The other eight principles outlined in the document are: local participation... most of the time; compatibility... a bias towards agreement; dispute resolution as a last resort; broad-based consultation early and often; regional diversity/flexibility; provincial direction and support; early provincial involvement; and, provincial commitment to be guided by the regional growth strategies (Province of BC 1995: 8).

- walking, bicycling and the efficient use of public transit;
  - The efficient movement of goods and people while making effective use of transportation and utility corridors;
  - Protecting environmentally sensitive areas;
  - Maintaining the integrity of a secure and productive resource base, including the agricultural and forest land reserves;
  - Economic development that supports the unique character of communities;
  - Reducing and preventing air, land and water pollution;
  - Adequate, affordable and appropriate housing;
  - Adequate inventories of suitable land and resources for future settlement;
  - Protecting the quality and quantity of ground water and surface water;
  - Settlement patterns that minimize the risks associated with natural hazards;
  - Preserving, creating and linking urban and rural open space including parks and recreation areas;
  - Planning for energy supply and promoting efficient use, conservation and alternative forms of energy; and,
  - Good stewardship of land, sites and structures with cultural heritage value.
- (Province of BC 1995: 8)

All regional growth plans, including that of the GVRD as well as the plans adopted by Translink and by municipalities are meant to support these provincially determined goals. More detailed policy guidelines may also be adopted by the Minister to provide direction to municipalities—but only after consultation with the Union of British Columbia Municipalities (Province of BC 1995: 9). The *Explanatory Guide* to the legislation from 1995 states that the regional growth strategies legislation is meant to provide a framework for provincial investment in a region (Province of BC 1995: 9). Ultimately, however, it is provincial priorities that prevail: “any ministerial order made in relation to a sub-regional or multi-regional RGS will prevail over a provision in the *Local Government Act*” (Province of BC 1995: 9).

An understanding of the nestedness of the planning in the GVRD is essential for positioning Translink within the broader political context. The processes described in the growth strategies legislation and by the GVRD in the work of developing these strategies

are based on negotiation, compromise and consultation. However, a hierarchy is embedded within the legislation with provincial priorities guiding the process and potentially usurping locally derived plans should there be cause. As was mentioned in the introduction to this chapter, the Province of BC's relationship with local governments has been described as 'gentle imposition'. We see this expressed both in formal legislation and in informal relations. Conciliatory processes are punctuated by periods of strong provincial direction.<sup>79</sup> The conflict surrounding the development of the Richmond-Airport-Vancouver (RAV) rapid transit project exemplifies one such period. A lack of support for the province's plan by many members of the GVRD and GVTA boards led to a governance review of Translink and ultimately to a change in its Act whereby locally elected representatives were replaced with a corporate board. Here we turn to the RAV line case, which exemplifies the politics of *big* infrastructure and *big* events.

**Big infrastructure and big events: the RAV line, the Olympics and multi-scalar politics**

The RAV line (later renamed the Canada line in 2005) would connect Richmond and Vancouver's major airport to central Vancouver. Proposals for such a line are evident in planning documents from before the creation of Translink, such as *Transport 2021* in 1993. However, a major impetus for this project stemmed from the planned 2010 Vancouver Olympic Games. Significant funding for the capital costs of the line was committed from the provincial and federal governments as well as the Vancouver Airport Authority. Conditions of this funding included a stipulation that the project proceed as a

---

<sup>79</sup> As an example of conciliatory municipal-provincial relations, BC adopted the first local government legislation in Canada to establish a full set of principles for municipal-provincial relations in 2003 through the *Community Charter* (Bill 14). The act "recognizes municipalities and their councils as an order of government within their jurisdiction, including the need for adequate powers and authority" (British Columbia 2011).

public private partnership agreement (PPP).<sup>80</sup>

The combination of *big infrastructure* (like the RAV line) and *big events* (like the 2010 Olympics) can be flash points for conflict. Simply put, the stakes are high for projects and events such as these. Huge sums of money and tight deadlines are involved. Borrowing a UNCHS-Habitat definition, these types of mega projects “conform to a model of urban development that favors high-profile strategic projects with the potential to satisfy immediate aims, attract external capital and redefine a neighborhood or the city as a whole” (2004). Such projects are part of global competitive strategies to attract tourism, capital and prestige. The scale of projects such as these often requires complex and novel funding arrangements between multiple levels of government and private partners. The scale, scope, expediency and complexity of such projects increase risk and can limit public accountability and engagement (Flyvbjerg, Bruzelius, & Rothengatter 2003; Flyvbjerg 2009).

The RAV project sparked a huge amount of debate. Several prominent business groups were supportive of the project<sup>81</sup>, while other groups, such as the BC Federation of Labour and the Canadian Union of Public Employees, were opposed to the PPP structure of the project. Translink board members expressed opposition to the route, arguing that it was not the region’s top priority. Concerns were also expressed regarding the decision to tunnel a significant portion of the project and to use Skytrain technology. These decisions on route and technology significantly increased the cost of the project—money that many

---

<sup>80</sup> Funding for the line was committed under the federal Liberal government of PM Jean Chretien through the Canada Strategic Infrastructure Fund. The amounts committed by the federal government for this project were later increased under the subsequent Liberal government of PM Paul Martin. Provincial commitment for a RAV rapid transit line were expressed in 1998 by the Minister in Charge of B.C. Transit, Joy McPhail (source: [canada-line.co.tv/](http://canada-line.co.tv/)).

<sup>81</sup> E.g., The Vancouver Board of Trade, the Council of Tourism Associations, and Tourism Vancouver

municipalities argued could have otherwise gone to other projects of greater priority. Concerns were also raised about the operational costs of the eventual line; about Translink's contractual obligations under the PPP; and about the level of risk to which this exposed the organization. Finally, the line has led to density in Richmond (e.g., through a new high rise community) that was in contradiction to the GVRD's regional growth strategy.<sup>82</sup>

The Mayor of Burnaby, Derek Corrigan, was a Translink board member at the time and was one of the most vocal opponents of the proposed project. He describes the situation thus:

There was name calling [by the provincial government and by the media] that we were dysfunctional because we were refusing 800 million in federal and provincial money. But we thought—why should the taxpayers pay for something that we don't agree is a priority investment? We should put the money where we say the greatest need is. That is the argument. And the dysfunction is that we disagreed with them and were eventually pushed into a different position. (D. Corrigan, personal interview, May 12 2010)

Translink's board voted down the RAV line project twice. On its third consideration, the board passed the motion with the stipulation that the project could not proceed unless the bid for the project met the approved budget of \$1.35 billion. The project was eventually awarded to SNC Lavalin and Serco and the line was opened in 2009.<sup>83</sup>

Much of the conflict surrounding the RAV line project stemmed from its structure as a PPP using a design-build-finance-operate model. Because of the competitive bidding process, commercial confidentiality clauses prevented full and open disclosure of the proposed contracts. A paper by Siemiatycki examines the RAV Line PPP process and

---

<sup>82</sup> The GVRD's growth strategy designates specific growth areas. Richmond was excluded because it is located on a flood plain and in order to protect its agricultural lands.

<sup>83</sup> The budget stipulations set by the Translink board were met through revisions to the RFP/cost cutting measures and a further provincial commitment of funding of 65 million dollars.

finds that “during the planning process, no information was released to the public about the exact terms of the two proposals, including the technical and design specifications of the line, the total cost of the line, the terms of the financing package, or the construction methods that would be used to build the line” (2006: 145). Further, some information was withheld from the GVRD board of regional politicians who would need to vote on financing approval for the project (ibid.). The confidentiality requirement of the PPP process is at odds with the goals of transparency, accountability and public engagement. Siemiatycki’s analysis further finds that many of the firms that conducted the critical reports that assessed the degree of risk and value for money “were explicit supporters of public private partnerships [and] some had a large stake in the proliferation of [the PPP] planning model [...some having] donated large amounts of money to the provincial and federal levels of government” (2006: 146). Despite such evidence of corporate conflict of interest, calls for an independent review of the PPP proposal by the Auditor General of British Columbia were denied (Siemiatycki 2006: 145).

The conflicts, brought forward through the RAV line project, marked a low point in local government-provincial relations. All those interviewed in this study have conceded this point. In the words of Victor Wei, Director of Transportation for the City of Richmond: “Through that process there were a lot of ugly words exchanged [...] and there were a lot of negative stories on the front page of the newspaper. It was really ugly” (Victor Wei, personal interview, May 12, 2010). These conflicts illustrate a much bigger issue: the way in which tensions are borne out among various interests at the regional scale. Here we have a case where many regional politicians were arguing for a more equitable allocation of funding and projects, one that would serve more people across

Greater Vancouver by choosing alternate technologies and routes, and would conform to the priority areas that had been cooperatively established by Translink and the GVRD. However, the provincial and federal governments and various business interests held different concerns. They wanted a ‘world class’ system that would be ready in time for the Olympics. Also, the City of Vancouver exerted pressure to have much of the tunnel sunk so as not to disrupt the street level—a decision that would significantly raise costs. Upper level governments hold significant political and financial clout. In this case, it would be their interests and that of the private sector actors aligned to them, which would succeed against the pushback of many local actors.

#### Disjuncture and governance review

Subsequent to the debates stemming from the RAV project, the provincial government called for a governance review of the entity. A three-person panel appointed by the Minister of Transportation for the province, Kevin Falcon, produced a series of recommendations for Translink in the areas of planning, governance and finance/revenue (Translink Governance Review Panel 2007).<sup>84</sup> These recommendations were endorsed by the provincial government and formed the basis of what would become significant revisions to Translink’s Act. Stemming from these recommendations, the provincial government contended that “the current structure [of Translink] is not accountable to the public [because]:

- Less than half of the municipalities are represented on Translink’s board at any given time;

---

<sup>84</sup> These recommendations were informed by 120 written submissions and 30 meetings with stakeholders.

- One-year board terms are not conducive to effective long-term planning and make it difficult for all board members to gain an understanding of a complex operation;
- The public doesn't generally know who their representative is;
- It's not clear who the ultimate decision maker is—Translink or the GVRD. (The two organizations have been on opposite sides on some key transportation issues such as Gateway, and the priority of Canada Line vs. Evergreen Line); and
- The expenditure side of Translink plans is often fully developed, while the sources of revenue necessary to fund those plans are usually not identified beyond the immediate short-term requirements. (BC Ministry of Transportation 2007).

One-year board terms had been mandated to allow for revolving representation of all municipalities. The issue of accountability to the public is raised time and again with regional special purpose bodies. It is a conundrum that is a feature of their institutional design in cases where representatives are not directly elected.

In the legislative debates leading up to the creation of Translink in 1998, Gordon Campbell, Liberal MLA for Vancouver Point Grey, was an outspoken advocate for regional control over transportation issues in Greater Vancouver. At the time he stated:

Everyone understands that transportation improvements ... are almost a bottomless pit in terms of cost... There are not going to be enough resources there to make every single decision that every community in every region may want. But I do believe it's important that we allow those decisions to be made directly by regional authorities as opposed to being imposed, influenced and driven by provincial dollars that, in fact, move away from regional transportation decision-making and move towards provincial political decision-making. I want to be clear about this: it is not a problem that is unique to the New Democrats; it was a problem that took place with previous governments as well. In fact, I think it's an institutional problem that we have to overcome to make sure that transportation decisions are made so they reflect the best interests of the region. (Campbell 1998: 10698-9)

He then went on to recount how the provincial government has made several unilateral decisions in this area that show poor faith, namely those involving the Rapid Transit (SkyTrain) project. Gordon Campbell went on to be Premier of BC from 2001-2011 and

it was under his government that the significant changes to Translink's Act took place, reducing local involvement in the operations of Translink.

Translink was created with the intention of increasing regional control over transportation functions in Greater Vancouver. However, as debates that arose with the RAV (or Canada) line show, such control presents difficulties when there is a lack of alignment between provincial and local/regional interests. Patrick J. Smith describes the changes in orientation made to Translink's Act in 2007 as 'New Public Management' (Smith 2008). He says this raises the classic public administration dilemma identified by Self (1977) on the relationship between the counterpoints of accountability versus efficiency and argues that, for Translink, efficiency claims have won out and local accountability/control has been lost (Smith 2008). At this point we turn to a new chapter in Translink's relatively short history—the shift to a corporate board.

#### TRANSLINK REVISED: THE SHIFT TO A CORPORATE BOARD (2007 TO PRESENT)

In November 2007, the provincial legislature significantly amended the act creating Translink (through Bill 43)<sup>85</sup> by: extending the service area (subject to entering into Service agreements with municipal jurisdictions); implementing a new governance framework; and making changes to the planning and funding structures.<sup>86</sup> It was a contentious piece of legislation. In legislative debates, the governance changes are variously referred to as “authoritarian-style” and “undemocratic” by members of the

---

<sup>85</sup> Changing the name of the *GVTA Act* to the *South Coast British Columbia Transportation Authority Act* (“SCBCTA Act”).

<sup>86</sup> Previously, Translink's service area was coterminous with GVRD boundaries. The revisions to the Act added the ability to expand beyond these boundaries by entering into agreements with municipalities. This regional expansion is reflected in the name change from *Greater Vancouver Transportation Authority Act* (1998) to *South Coast BC Transportation Authority Act* (SCBCTA Act, 2007). It also gave Translink the authority to practice land banking, leading to the creation of a real estate arm of the organization (SCBATA 2007: 5).

opposition (e.g., NDP MLA Robertson 2007: 1700). Translink's governance overhaul would remove locally elected representatives from its board, replacing them instead with a corporate board as the legal governing body of the entity.

Under the former governance model there was a strong link between Translink and the GVRD. This was altered by the creation of a Mayors' Council on Regional Transportation. The Mayors' Council, as its name suggests, consists of all of the Mayors of the GVRD's constituent municipalities and the head of treaty First Nations whose treaty lands are in the transportation service region.<sup>87</sup> Though there is overlap between those who sit on the GVRD and the Mayors' Council (though the GVRD is bigger because of weighted representation), they are now separate entities when it comes to the governance of Translink.<sup>88</sup> The role of the Mayors' Council is to approve the appointment of Translink's board membership (from a pre-approved shortlist of candidates) and to approve strategic plans involving taxation measures, transit fare increases and new borrowing. Under the new Act, Translink's relationship to the GVRD is less hierarchal and more consultative in orientation. The GVRD is treated under the SCBCTA Act as a body to consult with whereas in the past there was a very direct link wherein the board of the GVRD could block Translink's long range plans as well as place limits on borrowing and property tax increases. Under the *Community Charter Act* (2003), Translink is treated as a municipal entity affected by the GVRD's regional growth strategy and its approval is required for the strategy to be passed.

The short list of candidate Board Members is provided to the Mayor's Council by a screening committee composed of one member appointed by each of the following

---

<sup>87</sup> As of May 2009, the Chief of the Tsawwassen First Nation is a member (Translink 2008a: 9).

<sup>88</sup> Under the revised Act, voting by the Mayors' Council is weighted but only for certain issues. For example, voting on board appointments is not weighted while voting on supplemental plans is.

bodies: the Minister of Transportation; the Institute of Chartered Accountants of BC; the Vancouver Board of Trade; and the Greater Vancouver Gateway Society.<sup>89</sup> This represents a major shift towards corporate and business interests influencing appointments. The Institute of Chartered Accountants of BC is the regulatory body for the accounting profession in the province. The Vancouver Board of Trade is the province's leading business group and has long been outspoken on transportation issues in the region. Importantly, it stood in support of the province's position on the RAV line. Similarly, the interests of the Greater Vancouver Gateway Society (presently known as the Greater Vancouver Gateway Council) are aligned to the facilitation of commerce and international trade. They are an industry led organization of senior executives engaged in the Gateway transportation business. Those appointed to the Board of Directors are expected to act only in the best interests of Translink (and not to represent any other interests or constituencies) (Translink 2008a: 9). The board is composed of nine part-time directors. At the present time seven members of the board have a corporate background (e.g., corporate directors, a corporate lawyer, a consultant and business owners). Of the remaining two members, one is a professional engineer and one is a professor of economics and public policy.

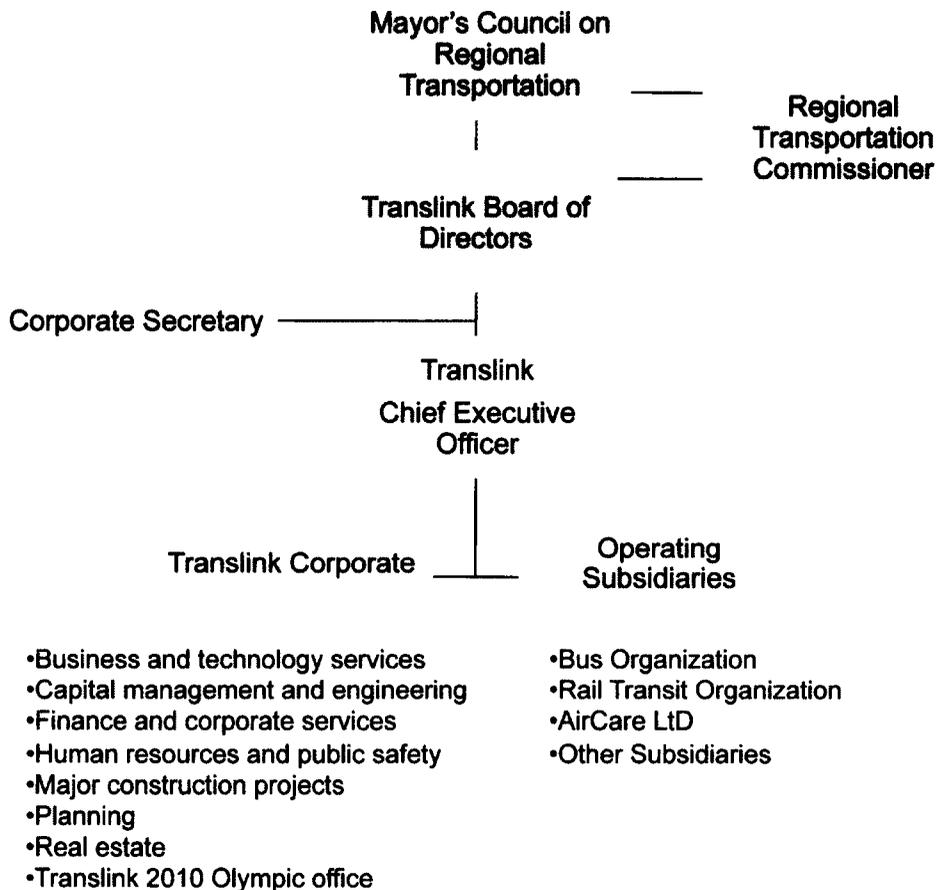
The legislative changes to the Act also created the position of Regional Transportation Commissioner, whose role is to independently consider fare increases and review the organization's plans and initiatives. The Commissioner acts as an accountability check and reports annually to the Mayors' Council on Translink's

---

<sup>89</sup> Under the Act, the "screening panel must provide to the mayors' council on regional transportation a list of at least 15 qualified individuals to be considered for appointment as directors of the authority" (SCBCTA Act 2007). The panel also recommends remuneration for directors. After it has performed its duties with the appointment of members, the screening panel is disestablished.

decisions and performance. The organizational chart below shows Translink’s corporate profile and governance structure.

5.8 Translink organizational chart 2007 to present



Source: Translink (2008b). *2009 – 2018 Base Plan Report to the Regional Transportation Commissioner*. Burnaby, BC.

The decision to replace Translink’s board with non-elected individuals has raised a great deal of debate surrounding the organization’s role in regional governance and its relationship to bureaucratic/hierarchal accountability as well as accountability in terms of public representativeness. Explaining the provincial government’s position, Minister of Municipal Affairs Kevin Falcon argues:

Politicians need to be the bigger-picture people. They should be the ones that select the transportation vision for the region and see that there be a board of professionals with the right skill set that have the ability to execute that vision.

[...] “public confidence in the existing model has been severely tested. The public record is replete with comments from current and past members of this Translink board who have publicly stated how ungovernable the existing board structure is. (Falcon 2007: 8809)

The benefits of dividing governance between the Mayor’s Council for high level decisions and the corporate board for operational issues was explained by Penny Ballem, City Manager for Vancouver. She noted:

I think the model they set up is a good one—the 2007 model. You had the combination of a responsible board, yet they were forced to interact at the political level with the people who were responsible to citizens in offering services too. That is a nice tension to have—you need to step up to the plate and understand how difficult it is to govern. You have to have integrity through the relationship with the senior level of government. When they set out specific expectations but have not honoured them—that is the most difficult link. How do you get the senior level of government to honour the integrity of the plan? Value for money, respect for citizens’ needs and responsibility to local authorities—that’s a good construct. (P. Ballem, personal interview, May 4 2010)

Comments from BC NDP MLA Maurine Karagianis illustrate the contrary perspective. Karagianis was a vocal opponent of the 2007 governance model during legislative debates of the amendments to Translink’s Act. She argues:

Nowhere in there do I see anyone that brings social policy expertise, transportation expertise, climate change expertise — none of the very significant pieces of policy overlay and a lens that needs to be put on all transportation planning and strategies in the future. Do I see that there? No.... It is very evident to me that we are seeing a profound shift in how the transportation decisions for the next 30 years and beyond will be made in the lower mainland. [...] We are going to have a business-centric organization running one of the largest and most significant transportation strategies that will set the stage for the lower mainland for decades to come—and beyond the lower mainland. Nowhere in there do we have elected representation or all of the other policy considerations that we believe should be in there. [...] The Board] are able to cherry-pick where they purchase land and then release it to municipalities or developers. And let’s see: who are the biggest funders of the Liberal Party? Well, developers. Do we think that they might be one of the first to get a pre-emptive look at where land banking is going to be released, and then they can go in and capitalize on that? (Karagianis 2007: 1055)

Echoing these comments, City of Surrey Councillor and past Translink board member, Marvin Hunt, describes the Mayors' Council as a "rubber stamp" that is "completely disassociated from the decision making processes of Translink" (M. Hunt, personal interview, May 17, 2010). From his perspective, Translink "is no longer a regional body—it's a corporate body [with] no relationship to the local government which is where they are trying to get the money to pay for these things" (ibid.). Citizens groups such as Keep Translink Public ([www.keeptranslinkpublic.ca](http://www.keeptranslinkpublic.ca)) sprang up as a response to the 2007 governance changes. The group states that the new Act:

...represents a dramatic step backwards in the creation of a more accountable, responsive and transparent system of regional transportation governance. Decision making over local issues like transit should be placed in the hands of people who the system serves. This will result in more accountable, responsive, and democratic government. (Keep Translink Public 2011)

As the title of this citizens' coalition indicates, they perceive the governance changes as a 'corporatization' of Translink and a shift towards a more private sector orientation for the institution.

The merits of a corporate, non-elected board for Translink were something that had been discussed in previous years. For example, such a recommendation was put forth in an earlier report from the Auditor General of BC (2001: 28). However, this recommendation was premised on GVRD overseeing and appointing such members (maintaining locally-elected accountability), which is not the case under the 2007 changes to the Act. Similarly, a 2009 governance review of Translink by the Comptroller General of BC recommended that the Mayors' Council be responsible for the appointment of Translink's Board and that these selections remain competency based (2009: 61). The Comptroller General's review found that the roles and responsibilities of

the various parties involved in the governance framework are unclear. Specifically the governance review noted:

There is no dedicated section in the Act that clearly sets out the all of the current Mayors' Council's roles and responsibilities. It is unclear to the Mayors' Council what level of consultation and information it is entitled to under the Act. It is unclear how the Mayors' Council means to feed into the planning process as well as if and how it will hold Translink accountable to its established goals and priorities.[...] The Act does not specify the Ministry of Transportation's role in the governance structure. (Office of the Comptroller General 2009: 55)

The report went on to make a number of recommendations. Briefly summarized, these included: amending Translink's legislation to clarify the roles of the Mayors' Council, transportation priorities (and transportation governance more generally); adding provincial representation to the Mayors' Council (to a maximum of 20 per cent of total seats); extending the Mayors' Council's authority over executive appointments and compensation; making the timelines more flexible for consultation practices in the legislation; ensuring that cost containment strategies are employed and existing funding sources fully used before exploring alternatives; recommending that Translink's Commissioner be made a provincial appointment (through the Lieutenant Governor in Council) (Office of the Comptroller General 2009: 79-82).<sup>90</sup> The provincial government has yet to offer a fully formed response to these recommendations. However, the proposed funding agreement between the province and the Mayors' Council for the 2011 Supplemental Plan addresses one aspect of the concerns raised through the report.

---

<sup>90</sup> These recommendations were based on the four principles of: protecting ratepayers' interests; ii) protecting customer service levels; minimizing the costs to BC taxpayers of provincially funded grants; and improving transparency and public accountability for decisions and performance levels (Office of the Comptroller General 2009: 9).

### Bill 43: Planning and Funding

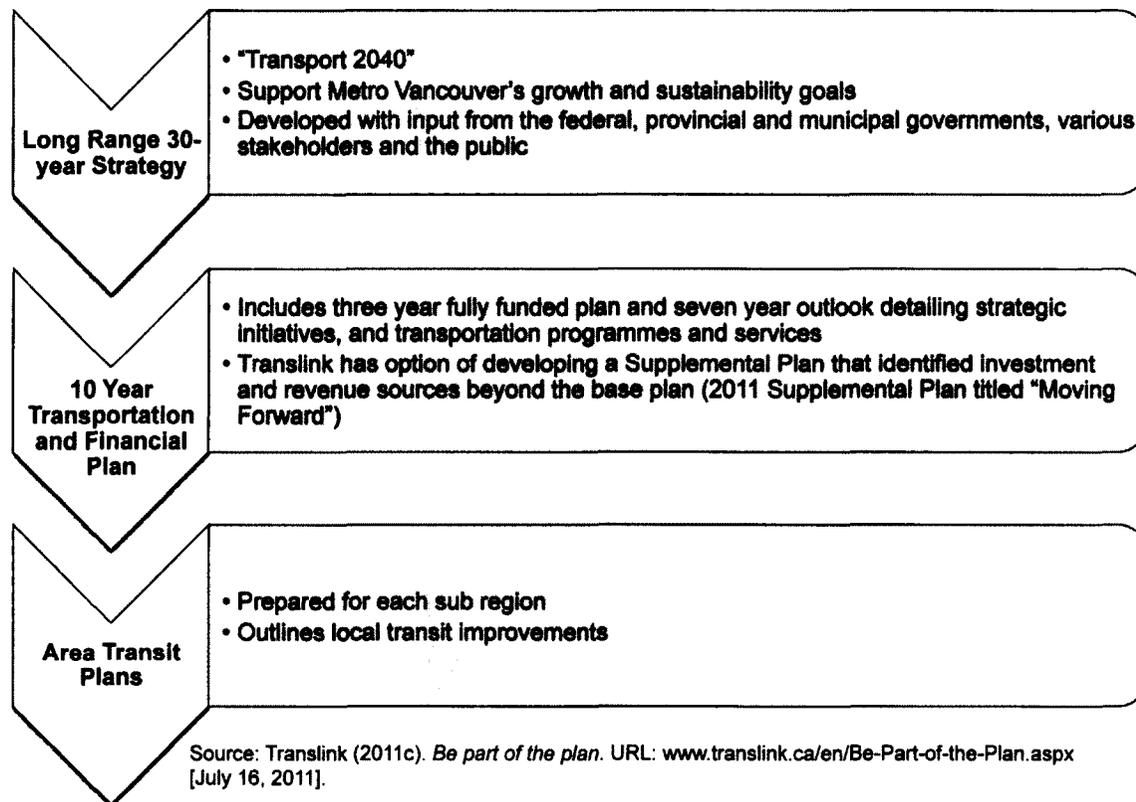
The revised Act requires Translink to produce a number of medium and long-term strategies: a 30-year long-term plan and a 10-year fully funded transportation and financial plan.<sup>91</sup> Amendments adopted in 2010 through Bill 20 again changed these strategic planning requirements to a fully funded three year base plan; a seven year outlook and a 30-year long term plan to be updated every five years; and a rolling 10-year plan to be updated annually.<sup>92</sup> The long term strategy is required to consider “regional land use objectives, provincial and regional environmental objectives, including air quality and greenhouse gas emission reduction objectives, and anticipated population growth in, and economic development of, the transportation service region.” It also requires that Translink consult with the public, GVRD, municipalities and relevant agencies and the provincial minister (SCBCTA Act 2007: 193.3). Consultation processes with different levels of government, the public and key stakeholders are employed for all plans. These plans are shown in the chart below.

---

<sup>91</sup> When Translink was first created in 1999, it was mandated to produce a strategic plan initially set at five years. However, it was not adopted because it had the vehicle levy as the primary way to fund expansion and this was not supported by the provincial government. At that time there was an 80 million dollar funding gap that was eventually addressed through a combination of increased fares and property taxes (R. Paddon, personal interview, May 10, 2010).

<sup>92</sup> This was done in part to increase the accuracy of fully funded plans. The greater the number of projected years, the less accurate the assumptions underlying the plan (e.g., revenue from gas tax).

## 5.9 Translink: transportation and financial plans



Bill 43 also included changes to Translink's revenue tools, giving it the ability to "increase the fuel tax rate in the service region by up to three cents per litre [...] on the condition that additional revenues from any increase in fuel taxes [be] balanced with increases in property taxes and other revenues including fares" (BC Ministry of Transportation 2007). It also eliminated the politically unpopular parking stall tax.<sup>93</sup> A review of Translink's governance legislation by the City of Burnaby argues that the revised Act:

<sup>93</sup> The tax on pay parking (non residential) was structured as either an ad valorem tax or as an area/stall tax. Higher density/high employment cities such as the City of Vancouver have contended that the parking taxes are disproportionately putative, favouring suburban areas that tend to have free parking. Translink's board supported elimination of the latter revenue measure for this reason (the area/stall parking tax), on the condition that the Province grant an alternative funding source to compensate for its loss (see Greater Vancouver Transportation Authority Board of Directors Regular Meeting, Wednesday, April 19, 2006).

...fails to address Translink's needs for stable long term funding. The structure relies on increases to existing overburdened funding sources. Growth in fuel tax revenues is explicitly constrained. Growth in fare revenues is possible only with the approval of the Commissioner. This leaves property taxes as the most likely source for additional Translink revenues. (City of Burnaby 2007)

Local governments continue to seek alternatives to the property tax as a major funding source for transportation improvements—an issue that transit systems across Canada struggle with. The provincial and federal governments provide capital contributions to major infrastructure projects, which funds expansions but puts stress on operational funding. This is something that Translink has struggled with, having fallen into a structural deficit<sup>94</sup> in years past. Translink's Vice President of Corporate Affairs, Robert Paddon, explains that Translink can only recommend the use of certain funding sources (e.g., road pricing), and that:

...the new focus is to find mechanisms for them to sort some of this out in advance. We can't really do anything. We can't get in the middle of that. But until both of the elected officials in the governance structure agree to move taxpayers' money into whatever it is we are recommending, you are not going to have anything happen. (R. Paddon, personal interview, May 10 2010)

In July of 2011, the Mayors' Council and the province announced a new funding formula that includes “a two cent per litre increase in motor fuel taxes in April 2012 plus, by 2013, either a property tax increase averaging about \$23 per year for the average Metro Vancouver residential property or a new, long-term source of funding” (Translink 2011a). This funding package is earmarked for Translink's 2011 supplemental plan and includes the proposed Evergreen line in the northeast. The federal government has provided stable programmatic funding through the Gas Tax Fund.<sup>95</sup> The chart below

---

<sup>94</sup> This is when projected revenue streams fall short of increasing operational expenses and carrying costs.

<sup>95</sup> By agreement of the GVRD and UBCM (who administers the funding for the province), the cities of Greater Vancouver agreed to allot their portions of Gas Tax Funding to Translink.

describes Translink’s present funding mechanisms and proposed future ones. Of the proposed measures, only the transportation improvement fee is enabled in Translink’s present legislation.

#### 5.10 Comparison of existing and proposed funding mechanisms for Translink

<i>Existing types of funding mechanism</i>		<i>Proposed types of funding mechanism</i>	
<b>Type</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Description</b>
Transit Fares	Revenue from transit fares includes all fares collected on single cash trips, faresaver tickets and passes. Transit fare revenue increases due to service expansion, population growth and fare rate increases.	Transportation improvement fee	Translink has the legislative authority to enact a registration fee on vehicles and a proposal to establish a similar fee was approved in 1999 by both the Translink and Metro Vancouver Boards, but was never implemented.
Fuel Tax	The province collects \$0.12/L on Translink's behalf on all fuel sold within Metro Vancouver. The provincial and federal governments also collect tax on fuel sales.	Carbon Tax	The Province currently collects a tax on the purchase of fossil fuels. The Province estimates that the carbon tax will generate \$2.3 billion in revenue over the three-year period from July 2008-July 2011. The Province has established legislation that the carbon tax will be revenue neutral until 2012. Some people feel that a portion of this revenue could be used to fund public transportation in Metro Vancouver.
Hydro Levy	Translink receives a hydro levy of \$1.90 per month from each BC Hydro account within the service region. The levy is collected by BC Hydro on Translink's behalf.	Property Transfer Tax	The Province collects a one-time tax on transfers of property: 1% on the first \$200,000 and 2% on additional value. A portion of the existing revenues collected in Metro Vancouver or a rate increase could generate revenue for Translink in the amount of \$60 million dollars annually.
Property Tax	Translink receives a portion of the property tax assessed in Metro Vancouver.	Road User Fees	These fees would be applied based on usage of the road network, level of congestion or time travelled. These charges can be applied to encourage people to shift their travel behaviour to more cycling, walking and ride-sharing. This option has the opportunity to raise additional revenue of \$200 million annually.
Parking Sales Tax	Translink currently collects a 7 per cent parking sales tax which is applied to the purchase price of paid off-	Goods Movement Fee	This is a charge that would recognize the importance of the transportation system and the Pacific Gateway to regional, provincial and national

	street parking within Translink's service region.		economies.
Real Estate	Translink is able to acquire and manage real estate in Metro Vancouver and currently owns a variety of properties. The sale and lease of these assets can produce additional revenue. Revenue from land assets is variable year to year.		
Advertising Revenue	Advertising revenue is generated by the advertisements placed on Translink's assets, such as buses, trains and stations (shelters at bus stops are under municipal jurisdiction).		
Capital contributions (Prov. & Fed. Gov'ts)	Capital contributions are negotiated with these levels of government on a project basis.		

Source: Translink (2011). Translink funding choices. URL: <http://www.translink.ca/en/Be-Part-of-the-Plan/Public-Consultation/Previous-Consultations/2010-10-Year-Plan/Funding-Choices/Funding-Options/Current-Funding-Sources.aspx> [July 7, 2011].

Between 2011 and 2012 the Mayor's Council, Translink and the Province will be discussing long term funding sources for regional transportation. The Province has committed to the introduction of legislation in the spring of 2012 to enable a new long term funding source (Translink 2011b: 48). If the funding source is not implemented before the end of 2012, the required funding increases would be met by limited increases on property tax revenue. Translink has for many years now been seeking alternative long term revenue sources and has considered such tools as road pricing, robust tolling, carbon tax, value capture schemes, development cost charges or area benefitting capture tax and demand management tools. Many of these are used in other transportation systems worldwide but would be new in the Canadian context. British Columbia has recently

implemented a carbon tax and is the only province in Canada to do so. They are extremely progressive in their environmental outlook, given that Canada has failed to participate in binding international climate agreements (the Kyoto Protocol). BC's carbon tax applies to all fossil fuels sold in the province; the size of the tax is relative to the amount of greenhouse gases contributed by fuel type. At present the carbon tax is structured as 'revenue neutral'. The tax aims to lessen the fuel consumption of individuals and firms by increasing its cost. By legislation, the value captured in the tax must be returned to individuals and firms through a proportional decrease in their income tax rate, hence, revenue neutrality. Because of this, the proceeds from the tax do not at present flow to transportation. In the future, though, there may be good reason to link the two where increases in the price of fuel create an incentive to use public transportation requiring system expansion.

There are many potential revenue sources that are not at present being used by Translink, or anywhere across Canada for that matter. Translink's interest in alternative revenue sources—particularly ones that affect behavioral change—is being closely watched by other transportation systems in Canada. The creation of a real estate division within Translink could support future land value capture schemes, development cost charges or area benefitting capture taxes. The real estate arm expands Translink's relationship to urban planning and development, but it also has the potential to structure revenue sources so that the gains of transportation investments are captured by the public purse, rather than by private developers. Such tools are increasingly being used in the United States. Translink's ability to move forward with these measures will require a close working relationship and alignment of policy goals with those of the provincial

government.

Translink has made environmental sustainability a priority (e.g., as signatory to the International Association of Public Transport (UIPT) Charter for Sustainable Development in 2009). The Province of BC has shown itself to be more progressive on environmental measures than its counterparts and, perhaps because of this, the Province together with Translink may be the first regional transit system to implement behavioural revenue measures. Strategic visions and goals at a very high level of detail have tended to be remarkably well aligned between different levels of government in BC. That ambitious goals are set at all is a testament to the progressive planning culture of the region— “planners from all levels of government, along with academics, private consultants and urban activists seem to agree on the main elements that need to be put in place in order to move towards regional sustainability; [t]his helps to account for the remarkable consistency in the vision that has sustained planning discourse in the region for 25 years or more” (Tomalty 2002: 25). However, much of the coordination on planning issues has been left to moral suasion as a mechanism for enforcement, such that “the oscillation between visionary principles and the evident reluctance of many Vancouverites to cede to dramatic changes in their living and travel arrangements lie behind much of the conflict and debates over growth management in the region” (Tomalty 2002: 25). The expansion of funding tools for transportation initiatives through such measures as tolls, gas taxes and user fees exemplifies such difficulties.

While Translink’s formal organization is that of a corporate board with direction from the Mayors’ Council, *informally* the organization’s policy capacity (its ability to deliver programs and services) is intimately tied to the prerogatives of the provincial

government. Given this, many have questioned why this relationship remains an informal one (e.g., Office of the Comptroller General, 2009). There is an inherent unevenness to this relationship. The Provincial Government has many ways to ensure that its policy preferences take precedence. As was illustrated during the debate over the RAV line, the informality of this relationship pushes issues into the public arena. With the shift to a corporate board, the opportunities for this kind of debate are lessened as the Mayors' Council meets less regularly and only on high level budgetary issues. Translink's Board of Directors is a less public body—it is not composed of elected representatives and meetings are held in camera. While Translink undoubtedly has a focus on environmental sustainability, it is also a body that is tied into the region's Asia Pacific Gateway strategy. These twin prerogatives are not necessarily aligned. With the facilitation of trade comes an increase in carbon emissions. The federal government is a key player in this strategy. Its Asia Pacific Gateway and Corridor Initiative (APGCI) has invested millions of dollars in the region, much of it focused on expanding the road network for the trucking industry.<sup>96</sup> While the Gateway Initiatives may bring many economic benefits to the region, they also place stress on local communities. The project website for one such initiative states that that project partners “have endeavoured to align the local interest in quality of life with the national interest in trade competitiveness during increasingly challenging economic times” (Roberts Bank Rail Corridor Program 2011). However, there are undeniable tensions between these twin aims. While the Provincial Government is a partner on the APGCI, it also acknowledges this stress on the regional transportation

---

<sup>96</sup> For example, through the APGCI, Translink and other partners worked to improve the Roberts Bank Corridor, a major trucking corridor linked to the shipping industry. This project involved the collaboration of 13 partners and combined funding of approximately \$360 million (Roberts Bank Rail Corridor Program 2011).

system and has created the Gateway program to fund system expansions in Greater Vancouver.<sup>97</sup>

Translink has been in existence for 12 years at the time of this writing and has undergone one major change to its governance structure in addition to many smaller changes to its plans and funding. As the many recommendations made by both the earlier governance review of the Auditor General of BC (2001) and the more recent one by the Office of the Comptroller General (2009) suggest, the organization's role in transportation governance in the region is a work in progress and will undoubtedly continue to shift and change in concert with external and internal pressures and demands.

Under Translink a great deal has been achieved. Services have expanded considerably along with capital infrastructure, budgets, scope and capacities. In the time since 1997 (the last year that transportation was provided by the Vancouver Regional Transit System), expenditures on transportation have increased over two and a half times.<sup>98</sup> Service hours have also increased dramatically—from 3.19 thousand service hours in 1997 to 515 thousand service hours in 2009.<sup>99</sup> As an indication of these achievements, the charts below depict increases in revenue and transit service levels over the past decade. There has been a strong growth in the capacity of the transportation

---

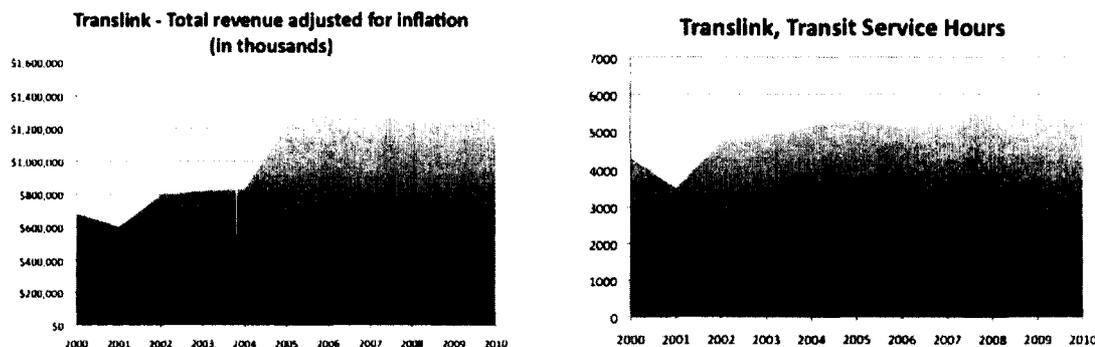
<sup>97</sup> The Province of BC's Gateway program aims to: reduce congestion and travel times; move people, goods and transit more efficiently; improve access to key economic gateways; improve safety and reliability on the region's road network; improve quality of life in communities (keeping major traffic to main arteries); reduce congestion-related idling; and better integrate transit, cycling and pedestrian networks (Government of British Columbia 2011). At present the program funds one interchange, two major perimeter road projects and the Port Mann Bridge/Highway 1 project.

<sup>98</sup> Total expenditures under the Vancouver Regional Transit System (of BC Transit) in 1997 were \$527,580 million. In 2010, total expenditures were \$1,416,120.58 million. Over these years the scope and functions of regional transportation have been significantly expanded through Translink's activities. Sources: Annual report of BC Transit 1997 (obtained through access to information request) and Metrolinx Annual Report 2009.

<sup>99</sup> Sources: Annual report of BC Transit 1997 (obtained through access to information request) and Metrolinx Annual Report 2009.

system.<sup>100</sup> This was a major aim of the entity upon its creation and one that it can reasonably be said to have achieved.

#### 5.11 Translink: total revenue and transit service hours, 2001-2010



Source: Translink Annual Reports (2001-2010).

As we have seen, regional politics navigate a complicated political space and Translink finds itself squarely in the middle of often competing interests and priorities. Robert Paddon, VP of Corporate Affairs of Translink argues that the structure of government ultimately does not matter because regional transportation requires collaborative relationships between multiple partners.

You can make almost any structure work so long as the people and the practices within the structure have the desire to make things work. You can have the most perfect governance model fail if the people in that structure want it to fail. So much of governance and decision making to be effective is about building strong relationships and reaching common agreement and making that happen. The other part of it—regardless of who is on our board or not on it—look at all of the other things we have to do and how we have to consult on various decisions. And so what that really forces is that under the law you must consult and collaborate and bring all of the stakeholder interests together. The amount of money ultimately comes from one taxpayer. And the amounts are so large that you need to have that consensus. That is what we are forced to do—obtain a very

<sup>100</sup> Since the first Skytrain line was completed in 1985 to support Expo 86, the system has expanded to include the Millennium Line (2002), the Richmond Airport Vancouver line (RAV or Canada Line, 2009) and is now considering expansion of the Millennium line onto the northeast sector through what is separately called the Evergreen line. The system further includes the Seabus, commuter rail (West Coast Express) and various bus services.

open consensus. The fact that our board happens to sit behind closed doors to debate operational considerations—everything that is meaningful and significant happens in the open. (R. Paddon, personal interview, May 10, 2010)

It is true that Translink is a remarkably collaborative organization. It needs to be. But here I disagree with VP Robert Paddon and propose that governance structures *do indeed* matter a great deal. As this case study has shown, Translink was established with the goal of empowering regional actors to address their transportation concerns in a collaborative manner consistent with the strategic directions set by the GVRD. A regional apparatus remains through the Mayors' Council and Translink *is* a remarkably collaborative organization. However, the governance changes brought forth in 2007 represent an undeniable shift away from having day-to-day decision making on regional transportation issues be made by locally elected representatives. The Translink Board's multiple votes on the RAV line illustrate the considerations of local politics at the regional scale. Defining ideas, governing coalitions, resulting policy capacities and institutional formation and change are intimately tied to one another. Structure cannot be divorced from outcomes. Moreover, governance structure is intimately tied to accountability, and as Smith describes, efficiency.

The new directors are insulated from any direct democratic accountability, only being replaceable by an internal Board vote. More importantly, they have powers of taxation, including the power to alter property classifications re: property taxation and re: other forms, to buy and sell property, and to run their own (and now armed) police force, to go with their lack of representation. Colonial wars in the Americas were fought on no more than this. Rare 'public add-ons' to closed board meetings will do little to overcome the very real representation—and accountability—deficit. According to John Winter, BC Chamber of Commerce president, with the Mayors' Council, "I don't know how much more democracy we need." The past success of BC's Regional Districts has been tied to a high level of local 'buy-in' as well as the [Regional District] system's flexibility. It is early days for the newest BC regional governing structure; it may well prove to be more efficient; it already represents a diminution in local democratic control and

accountability. But any reader of the Canadian experience on the central issues of efficiency and accountability would do well to remember the conclusions of the 1979 (Lambert) Royal Commission on Financial Management and Accountability *Report*: ‘the essential ingredient in making a democratic government efficient is accountability.’ In sum, in a democracy, you cannot have efficiency without accountability. British Columbia’s new Translink fails that democratic test. (Smith 2008)

Robert Paddon’s earlier quote describes the importance of what Errikla calls *deliberative* and *performance* accountability while Smith’s focus is on *political* accountability at the regional level (2007). They point to different conceptions of Translink as a political entity—the former as a form of regional governance serving citizens and the latter as a corporate entity providing services. Presently, Translink is engaging more with a corporate model in comparison to past configurations. In-camera board meetings and the confidentiality clauses in PPPs test deliberative accountability by stifling public debate and transparency. In time, the robustness of a corporate model for transportation governance will be tested. In Translink’s relatively short lifespan as an organization there have been significant governance changes and more are sure to follow. In Oberlander and Smith’s assessment, despite Metro Vancouver and Translink being “largely a positive, locally-inspired, policy, governance and intergovernmental experience” they feel “it is time to raise serious questions about whether that achievement of the last half century can endure long into the 21<sup>st</sup> century” (in Razin & Smith 2006: 161-162). I am much in agreement with this assessment.

## CONCLUSION

Transportation governance in the Vancouver region in the past several decades has shifted from that of a provincial crown corporation delivering transit services, towards

the creation of the world's first multimodal transportation authority—Translink. The entity's occupation of the regional political space in the area of transportation governance places the organization in a push and pull situation between often-competing priorities and interests. In an interview with Penny Ballem, City Manager for the City of Vancouver, the position of Translink within such pressures was described thus:

It's all about slow or more rapid swings in power and access to resources. And so when governments devolve authority around certain functions to lower levels of government or to constructs like regions, they usually do that at a time when it's inconvenient to be responsible for that. And then they change their mind at a time when it's convenient to have someone else responsible for that. But, it's always framed in the construct that it's the best for the people or it gets it closer to the ground. That kind of spin and sort of rhetoric around it just suits the purposes of the day and it's all about strategy. Unfortunately the nature of democracy and its associated discipline—politics—is that the landing place is never permanent and it often shifts quite radically and depending on where you live in this country and the balance of power it may shift more often than in places like Alberta where it is one tune for 30 years and such changes are less frequent. At the end of the day, regional governance is only as good as it's allowed to be *regional* governance. It always has its pros and cons. (P. Ballem, personal interview, May 4 2010, my italics)

RSPBs like Translink have the difficult task of working through changes in political leadership and then realigning strategic priorities to the policy priorities of various governments as they change over time. Processes of institutionalization create regularity around the priorities of different governments and how they interact with RSPBs. This is most evident in clearly articulated and long-term funding arrangements such as the allocation of the federal Gas Tax Fund and the provincial fuel sales tax to Translink. In contrast to such structured agreements, the multi-level government negotiations surrounding capital investments are far less formally structured. The institutional rules surrounding these interactions are less established, making outcomes less certain. This is illustrated by the politics surrounding the RAV Line and compounded by the information

asymmetries inherent to PPP processes. Where priorities are not aligned between major partners, we see disjuncture. Amidst the major players, there is an inherently uneven relationship. Translink is, after all, a creation of the provincial government. Institutional robustness and regularity will in part depend on Translink's ability to gain stable long term funding sources. It will also depend on the entity's legitimacy, accountability and, as Smith (2008) describes, efficiency.

In the following chapter we turn to our second case study—Metrolinx in Greater Toronto. Metrolinx has been adopted in a very different context and is an agency of the Ontario government. Despite these differences, many of the issues raised in this case study are also evident in the next.

Siegal characterizes the history of local government in Ontario as one where “there is a combination of relatively short periods of frantic, politically contentious activity, punctuated by lengthy periods of quietude and incremental change” (in Garcea & Lesage 2005: 127). We see this in the case of Greater Toronto. The creation of Metrolinx<sup>101</sup> along with several pieces of legislation on planning and municipal government in Greater Toronto is part of a period of strong provincial engagement in local affairs—particularly in the area of regional transportation. Metrolinx is a crown agency of the Province of Ontario and although efforts are being made to expand its funding sources, it is at present predominantly funded through provincial government transfers.

Metrolinx operates at a regional level and in coordination with local service providers, giving it a different scope than that of Translink which operates the system as a whole. Bourne et. al describe the Greater Toronto region well in stating:

The distinguishing features of the region include its rapid growth and decentralized form, and its diverse, if not eclectic, social and built environments, all of which are played out on a fragmented political landscape in which many and varied interest groups compete for space and access to amenities. The tensions involved in articulating a vision for this huge region are intense and the contradictions in establishing both public policies and political priorities are manifest. (2003: 264)

RSPBs are adopted as a governance solution to fragmented complexity such as that seen across the Greater Toronto region. Metrolinx’s forms, functions and responsibilities as an RSPB are more empowered than those that have preceded it in the Toronto region.

---

<sup>101</sup> A note on name changes. This case study is structured historically. Over time, there have been name changes to the various acts and entities being described. For example, Metrolinx was originally named the Greater Toronto Transportation Authority. For the sake of consistency, the term ‘Metrolinx’ is used throughout. The same is done in other instances, where appropriate.

Whereas Greater Vancouver has a long established regional identity and institutions stemming from service needs, regionalism takes on a different connotation in the case of Metrolinx. It is very much a contemporary-derived regionalism—one that focuses on economic competitiveness as a major policy rationale. The economic costs of traffic congestion in the Greater Toronto and Hamilton region for both commuters and commerce have raised the importance of transportation and infrastructure investments. Metrolinx is newer than its Vancouver counterpart Translink, having been adopted in 2006. While it is still trying to find its place within the broader institutional landscape, the creation of Metrolinx and its supporting legislation has layered additional *agency* (Metrolinx) and *structure* (rules, laws and policies) onto existing regional institutions. As will be discussed, this has had an impact upon urban politics, multi-level government relations and intra government relations (between Metrolinx and the Ministry of Transportation). Through the creation of Metrolinx, the Province has entered into planning in a way that has been unseen since the major highway expansions in the 1960s. Also, the creation of an expressly multimodal entity has shifted the scope and focus of regional planning.

This case study is structured like the preceding one. Context is provided on the Greater Toronto region and the structure of local government. This is followed by a description of the key initiatives and events leading up to the creation of Metrolinx in 2006, and the later revision to its Act in 2009. The 2009 revisions to Metrolinx's Act replaced a board composed of local/regional representatives for the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area (GTHA) with a corporate board. This shift and the debates that arose surrounding this decision in many ways mimic those seen in the preceding case of

Translink's adoption of a corporate board. Akin to the previous case study, we pay particular attention to processes of institutional formation and change, including political/historical contexts and conditions, ideas, coalitions and policy capacities that influence these processes.

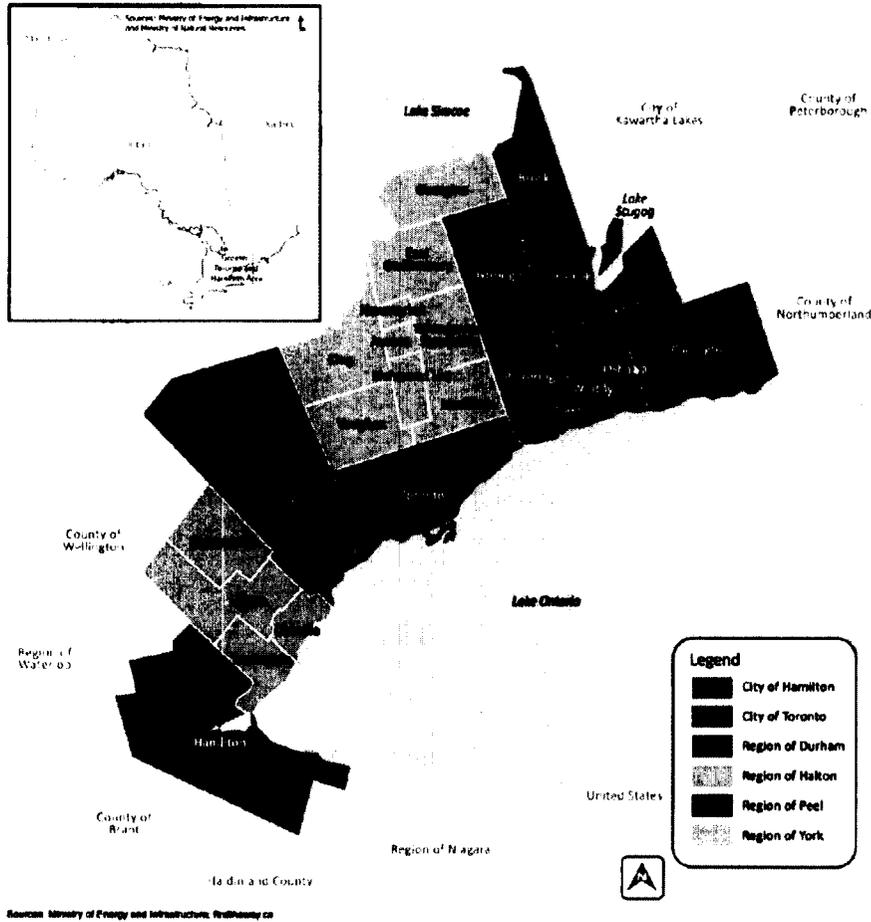
#### SETTING THE SCENE—CONSTRUCTING REGIONALISMS IN GREATER TORONTO

Regionalism takes on a different connotation in Southern Ontario than in Greater Vancouver with its district level of regional government and hence, historically and institutionally defined regional space. There are multiple, mutable regionalisms in Greater Toronto, each engaging in a different politics of scale. This is in part evident in the various geographical descriptions of the regional space.

The City of Toronto, with a population of 2.48 million (2006), sits on the shores of Lake Ontario and is the region's economic centre. The greater economic region—often referred to as the 'Greater Golden Horseshoe'—is based on population density, industrial/economic activity and transportation flows that extend south to Lake Erie and North to the Georgian Bay. The 'Greater Golden Horseshoe' is hedged in by southern Ontario's Greenbelt—an area of environmentally sensitive land and farmland 1.8 million acres in size that is protected under legislation from various aspects of development (through Bill 135, *the Greenbelt Act*, 2005). The inner ring of the Greater Golden Horseshoe is known as the Greater Toronto Area (GTA)—a term used to describe the City of Toronto and the surrounding regional two-tier governments of Durham, Halton, Peel and York. Together these regional municipalities represent 24 local governments. As Bourne et al. discuss, the GTA "is a concept—a label of convenience, not of governance" (2003: 257). No political entity encapsulates its space. The area of interest to this case

study corresponds to Metrolinx’s service/planning area and includes both the Greater Toronto Area and Hamilton Area (GTHA, see map below).

### 6.1 The Greater Toronto Hamilton Area (GTHA)



Source: Metrolinx 2008c: 4.

The GTHA has a population of over six million people and this is expected to increase to 8.6 million by 2031 (Metrolinx 2008c: 3). In recent years, there has been large population growth in suburban cities surrounding Toronto, as shown in the table below. These cities have much lower population densities than the city of Toronto, and their expansion places pressure on the existing stock of transportation infrastructure.

## 6.2 GTHA Population and population density 2001-2006

<b>Geography</b>	<b>Population 2001</b>	<b>Population 2006</b>	<b>Population change</b>	<b>Population density per sq. km 2006</b>
Halton Regional Municipality	375,229	439,256	17.1	454.2
Durham Regional Municipality	506,901	561,258	10.7	222.4
Peel Regional Municipality	988,958	1,159,405	17.2	933.2
York Regional Municipality	729,254	892,712	22.4	506.7
City of Toronto	2,481,494	2,503,281	0.9	3,972.4
Hamilton	490,268	504,559	9.0	451.6

Source: Statistics Canada. 2007. Toronto, Ontario (Code3520) (table). 2006 Community Profiles. 2006 Census. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 92-591-XWE. Ottawa. Released March 13, 2007. <http://www12.statcan.ca/census-recensement/2006/dp-pd/prof/92-591/index.cfm?Lang=E> (accessed July 19, 2011).

Major contributions to population growth in the GTHA include some interprovincial in-migration, but more importantly, immigration. The city of Toronto alone accounts for 30 per cent of all recent immigration to Canada (in 2006) despite accounting for 8 per cent of the country's population.<sup>102</sup> This growth places distinct pressures on the transportation system. Newcomers are increasingly settling in suburban regions, making transportation linkages all the more important (Shalaby & Alshalalfah 2011).<sup>103</sup>

Regionalism in Greater Toronto is, in the words of Roger Keil, multi level and multi layered and multi scaled.

At one level you have the contradiction between the 416 and the 905 [urban and suburban areas codes] that is a demarcated division and has increased in

<sup>102</sup> Half of the city of Toronto's population was born outside of Toronto. The cities and regions surrounding Toronto are equally diverse. 41.41 per cent of the population in Peel region are immigrants (as per the Statistics Canada definition, 2006). Certain cities have even higher concentrations. For example, 51.56 per cent of the population are immigrants in the city of Mississauga (located in the Peel region, 2006).

<sup>103</sup> Solomon's history of sprawl in the Greater Toronto region charts how settlement patterns in the region are the product of public policy – through various “subsidies and prohibitions” (2007: 72). Recent immigrant settlement patterns differ from those seen during the post war immigration boom with present day immigrant settlement taking place outside of the central core (Friskin, Bourne, Gad & Murray 2001: 76). This contributes to the racialization and spatialization of social inequality evident in the GTHA where “there has been a profound shift in the resident profile of higher poverty neighbourhoods, with ‘poor’ visible minority and immigrant families making up far larger percentages of the total ‘poor’ family population in these neighbourhoods today, than twenty years ago” (United Way 2004:4).<sup>103</sup>

significance since the Harris reforms that have cemented this division. The Steeles demarcation is one of material difference. You did have a dichotomous picture—but inside these larger divisions are sub logics that set themselves apart from other places inside those regions. There would have to be an empirical study to see how that breaks down. So you have new ethnic suburbs which define the traditional logic of politics—inner city versus outer city are breaking down in a number of ways like on questions of identity—and also have the others things in mind as they think about the rights to the city, e.g., 300,000 South Asians in Brampton and 150,000 Chinese in Markham. Here you have a different set of political claims coming from those places. So, when you say the larger reproduces the smaller, you need to account for the fact that it's more of a patchwork mosaic. (R. Keil, personal interview, March 8 2010)

It is within this “patchwork mosaic” that Metrolinx operates. In doing so it adds another layer to the complexity of governance in the region and reorients the political frame towards a regional level—capturing diverse and often conflicting interests.

#### A short history of municipal reforms

As Toronto and the surrounding municipalities have grown over the past century, there have been a number of local government reforms that have increased the size of municipal jurisdictions. Most important to this case study is the amalgamation of the City of Toronto in 1998. Amalgamation (or using American terminology, ‘consolidation’) has rescaled the city and shifted urban politics across the region towards suburban interests.

A foundational piece of legislation to local government in Ontario is the *Municipal Corporations Act* of 1849 (also known as the *Baldwin Act*), which established rules for local government elections, councils, finances, administration and public accountability. Population growth has placed pressures on local government administration and there have been successive waves of reform. In the mid 1970s the county governments of Peel, Halton, York, Durham and Hamilton-Wentworth were replaced with regional two-tier governments. The city of Toronto was first incorporated

in 1834 (prior to that time it was a hamlet with no taxation powers to provide services). In 1954 a provincial commission<sup>104</sup> created the municipality of metropolitan Toronto—a regional structure under which the old jurisdictions remained (13 municipalities). Within this structure, the twenty-five-member council of metropolitan Toronto dealt with concerns common to the member municipalities (such as transportation, revenue, urban and urban growth) and with local governments focusing on neighborhood issues. In 1967, the corporation of metropolitan Toronto was again reorganized and the thirteen lower tier municipalities were reduced to six. The reorganization was accompanied by an extension of metropolitan responsibilities in the areas of social services, urban renewal and waste disposal. In the late 1980s there were discussions at different levels of government about how to coordinate across the GTA. During this time the Province created the Office of the Greater Toronto Area to foster regional cooperation (est. 1988).

By the 1990s it was clear that many regions, including Toronto, had “outgrown the existing jurisdictional boundaries and the taxpayers could no longer afford to finance growing service demands for roads, transit, water, fire and police protection, social services and the like” (Donald 2002: 190). There was discontentment with the existing system around such issues as the preservation of parkland and numerous suburban-central city conflicts. This decade saw another round of local government reforms. In 1995 the Ontario Government created the Task Force on the Greater Toronto Area, chaired by Anne Golden. This Task Force, created under the NDP Government of Bob Rae, recommended that local government in the GTA be strengthened while at the same time a Greater Toronto Council be established to coordinate on issues of regional importance.

---

<sup>104</sup> The two-tier structure was recommend after a review of various options by the Ontario Municipal Board.

There were a number of other reports during this period from both within government and outside of it that proposed various local government reforms. In 1995 the Progressive Conservatives under Premier Mike Harris formed the Ontario Government. The recession of the 1990s and subsequent deficit spending from the previous NDP government had left Ontario in a precarious fiscal position. Harris' government expressed an imperative to correct this with a twin strategy of what would be called *The Common Sense Revolution* and what Couchene refers to as "the municipal institutional revolution" (2001: 164). Under these 'revolutions', local government reforms proceeded to realign services between the Province and municipalities and to reform the property tax system.<sup>105</sup> As a consequence of this shift, Ontario's municipalities to this day have a far greater role in social welfare functions than is seen in other provinces. Further to these reforms, in 1998 the municipality of metropolitan Toronto and six surrounding cities were amalgamated to form the new City of Toronto (City of Toronto Act 1998). McAllister characterizes this period as an unprecedented departure from the more conciliatory and collaborative local government reforms of the past in Ontario, where affected communities would be consulted (2005: 99). Many municipalities across Ontario during this period were either asked to implement their own restructuring plans or had them provincially imposed by a restructuring commission. As a consequence of these local government reforms, almost half of Ontario's municipalities ceased to exist through amalgamation, the number of regional governments was reduced and the number of municipally elected representatives was reduced (through the *Fewer Municipal Politicians Act*, 1999). The period leading up to the amalgamation of Toronto saw a widespread citizen- and community-based

---

<sup>105</sup> This system provides a uniform assessment based on 'current value' (interpreted as market value).

movement in opposition to the reforms. In the 1997 referendum, 76 per cent of Metro Toronto's population voted against these reforms (Benn: 2006). The Harris government's "common sense revolution" has had major impacts on local government in Ontario that remain to this day. Hamilton-Wentworth regional municipality experienced a later amalgamation in 2001, forming the City of Hamilton.

Regional governance and the role of the provincial government in local/regional affairs have gone through various periods of engagement and disengagement in the past century.<sup>106</sup> There have been various efforts to rescale metropolitan areas based on the rationale of reducing duplication and delivering services in a way that takes advantage of economies of scale. However, as Boudreau, Keil and Young (2009) and others have pointed out, despite the ideologically driven discourse of smaller and more efficient government, a major underlying rationale for amalgamation was the downloading of costs to the municipal level, particularly in the area of social services (2009: 71). Revenues for these new responsibilities came from changes in property taxation and, in particular, large property tax increases for central Toronto (ibid.). Importantly, the amalgamated City of Toronto has shifted politically through a "weakening [of] Toronto's left-of-center reformism by merging it with more conservative-friendly suburban municipalities (ibid. 73).

Through jurisdictional 'upscaling' there remains a provincial interest in ensuring that large metropolitan areas, and the city of Toronto in particular, do not tip the balance of power in the province. In 2006, the provincial government introduced the *City of Toronto Act*, the purpose of which is:

---

<sup>106</sup> Such patterns are evident in Frisken's study of governance in the Toronto region that charts the political dynamics of various regionalisms and multi-level government interactions over the past century (2007).

to create a framework of broad powers for the City which balances the interests of the Province and the City and which recognizes that the City must be able to do the following things in order to provide good government:

- i. Determine what is in the public interest for the City.
- ii. Respond to the needs of the City.
- iii. Determine the appropriate structure for governing the City.
- iv. Ensure that the City is accountable to the public and that the process for making decisions is transparent.
- v. Determine the appropriate mechanisms for delivering municipal services in the City.
- vi. Determine the appropriate levels of municipal spending and municipal taxation for the City.
- vii. Use fiscal tools to support the activities of the City. (*City of Toronto Act 2006*, c. 11, Sched. A, s. 2.)

The need to balance the interests of the City with that of the Province is explicit in the legislation. In the words of Frisken, “whatever the arguments for a unified governance structure [...] the provincial government had a clear, if unspoken, interest in allowing the region to remain politically fragmented in order to protect its own jurisdictional supremacy and its political importance in Canada” (2007: 237). Efforts at regional governance have struggled against this. The amalgamated City of Toronto and the changes to its Act in 2006 have empowered the city in many respects. However, as Boudreau, Keil and Young note, the legislation increases the ability of the Province to intervene in local affairs (2009: 82).<sup>107</sup> A political structure that would extend beyond these boundaries would be a major force in provincial politics. Provincial hesitations to create such a regional body as well as the dominance of the City of Toronto in regionally collaborative efforts are two main issues that interviewees have noted as hampering strong regional institutional formation. Within the *City of Toronto Act*, the language of competitive cities is dominant. The Act’s preamble focuses on the role of Toronto as “an economic engine of Ontario, [...and as critical] in creating and supporting economic

---

<sup>107</sup> It has also increased executive powers for the Mayor and executive committee – a move that has enabled the Mayor of Toronto and his supporters on council to set strong policy priorities for the city.

prosperity and a high quality of life” (*City of Toronto Act 2006*). As will be discussed, this language is also dominant in recent Acts pertaining to planning and transportation in the region.

#### REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION GOVERNANCE PRIOR TO THE CREATION OF TRANSLINK (PRIOR TO 2006)

The post war period of transportation development across the GTHA is characterized by a difficult balance between the accommodation of outward growth and investment in transit and urban density. The development of interior highways has been a particular area of conflict with projects such as the Spadina Expressway coming up against widespread citizen opposition.<sup>108</sup> Golden and Slack (2006) write that, during the post war period, Toronto’s transportation policies have been remarkably balanced between the needs of roads and transit, where investments in each have been roughly equivalent (in Razin & Smith: 33). However, many would offer a contrary assessment. For example, Pond finds that “between 1986 and 2001 the supply of new road lanes increased by 53 per cent and highways by 38 per cent, while the expansion of mass transit has been negligible” (2009: 417). Further, throughout the past two decades, transit ridership (annual passengers per capital) has decreased everywhere in the GTHA with the exception of Peel Region (Pond 2007: 717). The nature of transportation investments in the GTHA speaks to very different visions of the city and what Keil and Young point to as an ‘internal contradiction’ within the dominant discourse of urban-policy and regional-policy formulation in Toronto, “between land use value and exchange value—that is, between the quality of life of people as they travel in and through the region, and the

---

<sup>108</sup> The originally proposed route was halted by the Progressive Conservative provincial government of William Davis in the face of public pressure (Dunn 2006).

efficient movement of commodities in and through the region” (2008: 732). This section focuses on regional transportation governance in the GTHA where the contradictions between land use value and exchange value are ever apparent. It focuses on the post war period up until the creation of Metrolinx in 2006. It charts past institutional solutions to regional coordination for transportation issues and the issues and problem framing that led to the eventual adoption of Metrolinx across the GTHA.

#### Commuter rail: GO Transit

The creation of GO Transit under the operating body of the Toronto Area Transit Operating Authority<sup>109</sup> and the later Greater Toronto Services Board and Metrolinx was one of the first efforts at regional transportation through the development of commuter rail. GO Transit was created by the Province of Ontario in 1967 to respond to regional rail demands stemming from the post war growth of the GTHA. Prior to this, the Canadian National Rail Company provided some services linking regional areas. GO Transit is a key piece of the region’s transportation infrastructure. It has expanded through the decades and in 1970 regional buses were added to the system. Its longevity despite changing governance models and funding models illustrates its centrality. It is from this narrow mandate of regional passenger rail that regional transportation governance has expanded.

The central issue that the commuter rail deals with is how to link the suburbs where people live to central urban employment in Toronto (for the most part). GO Transit

---

<sup>109</sup> The Toronto Area Transit Operating Authority was created in 1990 by the Provincial Government to act as a financing authority for regional transit (*Toronto Area Transit Operating Authority Act* R.S.O. 1990, Ch. T.13). Its membership was composed of the Deputy Ministers of Finance, Municipal Affairs and Housing or Transportation.

was but one of a number of transit authorities operating in the GTHA.<sup>110</sup> The successful integration of the regional rail system requires coordination with municipal systems.

Such integration has not gone smoothly.

Efforts to integrate transit structures and rationalize fare structures began in the early 1970's and have continued into the 1990s, with only limited success. Municipal officials and local transit operators, worried about the potential cost increases and loss of control, were never cooperative and the provincial government was unwilling to impose its own solution. (Frisken, Bourne, Gad & Murray 2000: 89)

The comments of Frisken et al. describe a governance void with no overarching entity being able to impose a coordinated approach to regional transportation systems as a whole. The Greater Toronto Services Board was created in part to overcome these difficulties.

#### The short-lived Greater Toronto Services Board

The late 1990s were a tumultuous time for local government administration in Ontario. The Progressive Conservative Harris Government's cutbacks and realignment of services also affected transportation provision and funding. In 1998, following the amalgamation of the City of Toronto, the Greater Toronto Services Board (GTSB) was created under the *Greater Toronto Services Act* by the Province of Ontario. It was granted the power to deal with school taxes and oversaw the operation and financial responsibility for GO Transit. During this time the provincial government pulled back from its funding commitments to the capital and operating expenses not recovered from the fare box for GO Transit. The GTSB board was composed of elected representatives of the area's

---

<sup>110</sup> Others (both public and privately owned) include: the Toronto Transportation Commission, York Region Transit (including Viva bus rapid transit), Mississauga Transit, Brampton Transit, Durham Region Transit, VIA Rail (including Amtrak) and Greyhound Canada.

constituent regional governments and municipalities weighted by population.<sup>111</sup> As stated in its Act, the objectives of the GTSB were to: “promote and facilitate coordinated decision making among the municipalities in the Greater Toronto Area [and] to exercise general direction and control over GT Transit and allocate the costs of GT Transit” (GTSB Act 1998: 3.1-2). In order to accomplish this, the GTSB could adopt by bylaw “strategies for municipalities within the GTA with respect to the provision and optimal use of infrastructure; and a countryside strategy for the rural areas of the GTA that reflects the importance of rural and agricultural matters to the GTA” (GTSB Act 1998: 22.1).

Transcripts from the Standing Committee on General Government for Ontario at the time that the GTSB Act was being debated indicate that it was always meant to be an institutional stepping-stone to something with stronger authority and greater powers (1998). The transcripts reveal a debate amongst MPPs regarding whether or not to include such future directions within its enabling legislation. NDP MPP Silipo advocated that provisions be included in the GTSB Act to “move from the Greater Toronto Services Board to a new body, which would be the Greater Toronto area regional council, and that body would become the regional level of government in the Greater Toronto area” (Standing Committee on General Government 1998).

The intent of [this proposed] amendment is to be clear about the direction we are moving in, to go beyond what the present bill does, which is to say that this will lead to something else, and that something else is a new regional level of government. Having been in government, I can understand why the government might not want to go in that direction today. We would be creating a regional government that would be representative of some 40 per cent of the population of the Province. But I just want to remind members of the government that they had no hesitation in proceeding with establishing one council to have responsibilities

---

<sup>111</sup> The GTSB included Hamilton-Wentworth (Hamilton prior to amalgamation, because GO Transit serviced that area.

for both the regional as well as local responsibilities within the city of Toronto. [...] mark my words, this is going to be the direction we have to move in, regardless of who forms the next government. I think the longer we leave it, the longer we do a disservice to proper planning and proper moving forward towards the real restructuring that has to take place at the regional level in an area that, after all, is home to some 4.5 million people. (Silipo in Standing Committee on General Government 1998: 1650)

Silipo's proposed amendment was rejected. However, it led to a discussion of future directions for such a regional body in which there was a clear divide between those who saw regional governance evolving from municipal coordination (and from locally derived requests for enhanced legislation) versus those that saw it as evolving from provincial guidance and direction.

The GTSB was disbanded in 2001. Policy adoption on behalf of municipalities was always voluntary in GTSB legislation. A lack of strong enabling powers has been cited as a major reason for the GTSB's demise (Boudreau, Keil & Young 2009: 178). A 2001 governance review of the GTSB recommended that its roles and powers be strengthened through legislation so that it could adopt a growth management and transportation strategy for the region (City of Toronto 2004: 8). However, there was no provincial appetite to proceed in this way.

#### Growing Provincial interest in regional transportation and planning

With the disbanding of the GTSB, the need for regional coordination did not go away.

The Greater Toronto Area Mayors formed a group to collaborate on regional issues.

However, the group came to focus more on advocacy for the needs of the region than as a body to implement collective policy responses. Soon after, the Government of Ontario established the Central Ontario Smart Growth Panel (est. 2002). This was just one of five

panels across the province tasked with producing a series of reports and strategies to increase regional coordination in a variety of areas, including recommendations for growth management and investments in transportation and infrastructure. The report described a need for balanced growth with concentrations around nodes and corridors while balancing protection of agricultural and heritage lands. The panel's final report recommended that the Province:

- Establish an accountable stakeholder body, advisory to the Province, with the authority and resources to co-ordinate implementation of elements of a Provincial Smart Growth strategy that cross municipal boundaries;
  - Establish a body/provincial facilitator within the provincial government with the authority and resources to co-ordinate and ensure that the policies of all provincial government ministries support Smart Growth goals and strategic directions;
  - Identify legislation to give appropriate status to the Smart Growth strategy.
- (Central Ontario Smart Growth Panel 2003: 6)

In an assessment of these smart growth initiatives, Bourne et al. comment that they are “mostly wishful thinking”, stating that the initiatives

...offer few examples of the most appropriate planning instruments, and identify only limited sources for the vast capital sums necessary for achieving its goals. Moreover, it offers little for the enhanced security of rural-agricultural areas. Indeed, smart growth appears to some—notably rural-based observers—as an urban-based global construct, self-serving in terms of its emphasis on new urbanism, and void of any attempt to reduce the conflicts between urban and rural places in the region. In other words, the future of the Toronto peri-urban region promises to be more of the same, but on an even larger geographical canvas.

(Bourne et al. 2003: 265-266)

The research of Roger Keil and others at the City Institute at York University has focused on this regional void—the ‘in-between’ spaces that are an often forgotten area of regional policy development.

If regional governance cannot come up with a concept to govern the ‘in-between’ spaces, then they are not really pursuing regional governance. Instead it will be a point specific individualistic and nodal form of governance while the systemic in-between aspects are overlooked. This is a critical aspect and the only example

where I know right now where this is being dealt with is Paris. Tom Sieverts, who we use as the main influence for the in-between cities concept, sat on the committee of Sarkozy (Cities without Cities). (R. Keil, personal interview, March 8 2010)

It is out of the Central Ontario Smart Growth Panel reports that the Province would then go on to adopt the *Places to Grow Act* (2005). The Act sets out provincial policy for growth and development for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, though the Act can be expanded to cover other regions of Ontario as well. It is an overarching policy statement to which regional and local plans must conform. The purposes of the Act are:

- (a) To enable decisions about growth to be made in ways that sustain a robust economy, build strong communities and promote a healthy environment and a culture of conservation;
- (b) To promote a rational and balanced approach to decisions about growth that builds on community priorities, strengths and opportunities and makes efficient use of infrastructure;
- (c) To enable planning for growth in a manner that reflects a broad geographical perspective and is integrated across natural and municipal boundaries;
- (d) To ensure that a long-term vision and long-term goals guide decision-making about growth and provide for the co-ordination of growth policies among all levels of government. (*Places to Grow Act* 2005, 13.1)

The Act focuses on economic prosperity and quality of life issues where planning for growth “sustains a robust economy, builds complete and strong communities that use land, resources and existing infrastructure efficiently; and promotes a healthy environment and a culture of conservation” (Ontario Ministry of Infrastructure 2011b). In a review of the research resources linked to the *Places to Grow Act*, one finds papers on new urbanism, innovation and creativity, labour market development and the effects of urban sprawl on human health (Ontario Ministry of Infrastructure 2011a). The discourse in these documents (which are both internal and external to government)

engages most directly with economic competitiveness, or in the words of the OECD “sustainable competitiveness” over that of other literatures (OECD 2010a: 12).

The Act provides overall direction for growth management in the Greater Golden Horseshoe. It has also been expanded to cover other areas such as development in Northern Ontario where a very different set of challenges is faced. A number of initiatives and pieces of supporting legislation fall under the prerogative of the Act. Metrolinx was created as one aspect of the Act’s implementation. The Places to Grow initiative is coordinated by the Ontario Growth Secretariat of the Ministry of Infrastructure. The chart below describes the various initiatives that fall under the *Places to Grow Act*.

### 6.3 Initiatives under the *Places to Grow Act* (2005)

Places to Grow Initiative	Description
ReNew Ontario	Infrastructure investment plan established in May 2005 to invest in schools, hospitals, roads and public transit. Duration of five years.
The Greenbelt Plan	Ontario’s Greenbelt, located in the Greater Golden Horseshoe, includes 1.8 million acres of protected land. Related legislation is the Greenbelt Act (2005).
Metrolinx	Metrolinx is responsible for developing a transportation plan in coordination with the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe to tackle congestion and create an integrated transit system in the GTHA, coordinate the purchase of transit vehicles for municipalities, and manage the fare card system.
Planning Act Reform (Bill 51)	The <i>Planning and Conservation Land Statute Law Amendment Act, 2006</i> strengthens Ontario’s land-use planning system and includes revisions to the Ontario Municipal Board.
Brownfields Ontario	Focuses on land use planning and development of former industrial sites.
Northern Development Councils	Advisory councils that are part of the Government’s Northern Prosperity Plan and will contribute to the Growth Plan for Northern Ontario.
Source: Ontario Ministry of Infrastructure (2011c). Places to Grow: related provincial initiatives. URL: <a href="https://www.placestogrow.ca/index.php?option=com_content&amp;task=view&amp;id=52&amp;Itemid=64">https://www.placestogrow.ca/index.php?option=com_content&amp;task=view&amp;id=52&amp;Itemid=64</a> [July 18 2011].	

Writing in 2003 on the potential for smart growth policies in Greater Toronto, Miller and Soberman made the following astute comment:

Probably the single most important barrier to implementation of new planning and transportation strategies derives from a general unwillingness to relinquish control [by local governments and authorities], unless doing so is tied to new and generous sources of revenue that filter through to the local level. (2003, 52)

In creating Metrolinx, the Government of Ontario did just this. They created a Crown Agency with strong supporting legislation and major provincial funding attached to it. Through this, the GTHA would finally have one entity responsible for transportation planning across the region.

#### METROLINX AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN (2006-2009)

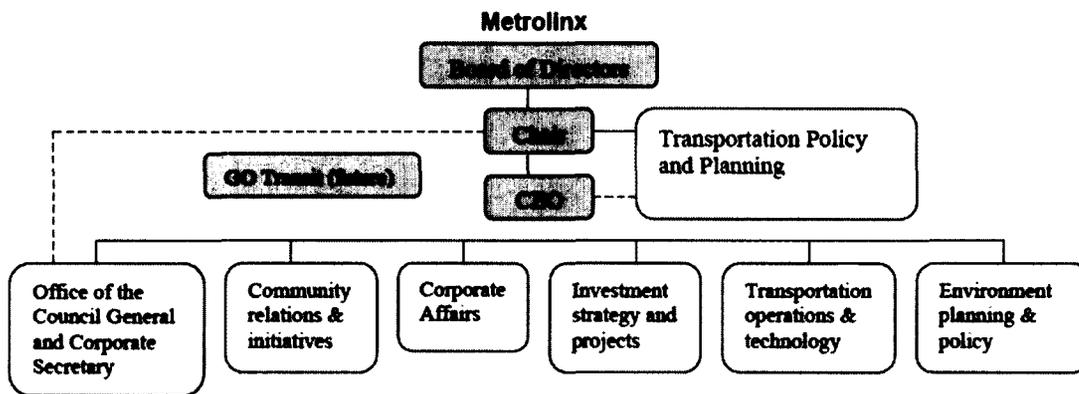
The creation of Metrolinx as a regional transportation agency for the GTHA was a long time in the making and resulted from a variety of incremental changes. Under successive governments, the need for regional coordination across the GTHA and the institutional mechanisms that should deliver it were defined and redefined, leading to its current manifestation in Metrolinx. Unlike Translink, wherein the provincial government created an entity independent of government with strong local representation (in its first iteration), Metrolinx is an expansion of provincial responsibilities into the urban-regional realm. The creation of Metrolinx layers agency and structure for transportation governance in the region. It does not dismantle existing municipal systems such as the TTC, but it does impact upon transit systems, regional planning, land use and funding.

As we can see from the foundational documents that were influential in Metrolinx's creation (discussed in the preceding section), the entity promotes a competitive cities brand of regionalism. Within this are embedded often-contradictory aims, along with an inherent glossing over of the divergent interests of urban, suburban

and rural areas when it comes to land use and transportation planning (Bourne et al. 2003).

Metrolinx was created through the *Greater Toronto Transportation Authority Act* (GTTA Act) in 2006.<sup>112</sup> It is responsible for creating an integrated, multimodal system for the delivery of transportation services (e.g., GO Transit and Presto card) and for creating regional planning and infrastructure investment strategies (which must be prepared and approved under the *Places to Grow Act*, 2005). It is headed by a board of directors, Chair and CEO (as shown in the chart below). The GTTA Act stipulates that the board of directors be comprised of eleven members, two of whom are appointed by the Province, with the remainder recommended by regional and municipal councils across the GTHA, as well as the chair of the Toronto Transit Commission.<sup>113</sup>

#### 6.4 Metrolinx Organizational Chart 2006



<sup>112</sup> Metrolinx was first known as the Greater Toronto Transportation Authority. Its name was changed in 2007 to Metrolinx.

<sup>113</sup> In 2007/08 the board was composed of Rob MacIsaac (Chair), Peter Smith (Vice-Chair Metrolinx, President and Co-owner, Andrin Limited, Chair, GO Transit), Roger Anderson (Chair, Region of Durham), Paul Bedford (Toronto), Gary Carr (Regional Municipality of Halton), Fred Eisenberger (Mayor, City of Hamilton), Bill Fisch (Regional Municipality of York), Adam Giambrone (Toronto Transit Commission), Norm Kelly (Toronto), Hazel McCallion (Mayor of Mississauga), David Miller (Mayor of Toronto), Brian Ashton (Toronto Councillor).

The creation of a new organization for transportation governance in the GTHA was not without its critics. During legislative debates on Metrolinx's Act in 2006, NDP MPP Andrea Horwath (Hamilton East) gave this assessment: "The last thing we want is another group of people sitting around talking about things; we want to see some real action" (Horwath 2006:1520). Progressive Conservative MPP John O'Toole commented:

The Greater Toronto Transportation Authority is perhaps a good idea, but with a questionable composition, a questionable mandate and questionable funding. We'll certainly hear more about that in the future. (O'Toole 2006: 1410)

For some, the inclusion of politicians on the entity's board would lead to an overly politicized entity. For example, Progressive Conservative MPP Norman W. Sterling stated:

My greatest concern with regard to the GTTA [is] that we're creating this board, again with heavy political interests—and I quote Mr. Grunwald, who is [the head of the] Toronto Board of Trade. He has expressed his concerns about the new organization being "far too politicized." I believe those were his words. While he and his organization have been a strong proponent of the Greater Toronto Transportation Authority [...] he has some concerns about this bill in that I believe of the eleven, nine will potentially be municipal politicians representing different areas. I suspect that as we go down the road, we will hear again that the GTTA is not moving forward as perhaps people would like it to move forward because of the highly politicized nature of the new GTTA. (Sterling 2006: 1620)

Others would question the ability of the board to collaborate, given the division of urban/suburban interests. For example, Keil and Young expressed skepticism as to whether Metrolinx, which is "...headed by a suburban mayor but is balanced—or so it seems—with heavyweights of downtown interests (like retired Toronto planning chief Paul Bedford)" would be able to cooperate effectively rather than descend into policy gridlock (2008: 749).

Defending the government's position, Harinder S. Takhar (Minister of Transportation) countered:

Our legislation proposes a balanced governance model, a clear agenda and a focused mandate for the integration of transit in the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area [...] we are also using what we have learned from the experiences in other jurisdictions. Vancouver, for example, began with a small authority, which now works very well integrating transit and transportation over a wide area. (Takhar 2006: 1550)

It is interesting to note how much Vancouver's experiences have influenced Metrolinx's development. They are pointed to time and again in the interviews with key stakeholders as a model that has achieved a great deal and is one to emulate. Debates on board structure have been a major feature of both Metrolinx's and Translink's development. Board composition defines how the transportation authority will operate as a political body and how it will relate to citizens and other levels of government. The initial decision to have local representation on the board helped to build local support for the new entity and was also critical for one of the first tasks of Metrolinx—the development of a transportation plan for the GTHA.

#### Metrolinx and regional planning

The purpose of the transportation plan (as directed in the *Metrolinx Act*) was to: “i) take into account all modes of transportation; ii) make use of intelligent transportation systems; iii) promote the integration of local transit systems in the regional transportation area with each other and with the GO Transit system; iv) work toward easing congestion and commute times and reducing transportation-related emissions of smog precursors and greenhouse gases; and v) promote transit supportive development and the viability and optimization of transit infrastructure” (Metrolinx 2008c: 15). The plan sought to provide guidance 25 years into the future and was the final piece of the GTHA's growth strategy

as envisioned through the *Places to Grow Plan* and the *Greenbelt Plan*. Various papers were commissioned to define the approach that would be taken and extensive consultation on the plan was conducted. The plan, entitled “The Big Move”, was adopted in November of 2008. Complementary to this initiative, the Province announced \$17.5 billion in funding for 52 transit projects in the GTHA through MoveOntario 2020.<sup>114</sup> Under this initiative, the provincial government has made a two-thirds funding commitment for the transit projects, while federal funding covers the remainder.

Through the creation of Metrolinx, the adoption of “The Big Move” and the funding of MoveOntario 2020, the Province of Ontario has entered into a major period of engagement in transportation infrastructure investments unseen since the period of infrastructure expansion in the 1960s. In an assessment of this renewed engagement, Paul Bedford (former Chief Planner for the City of Toronto and Metrolinx board member) comments that through these initiatives,

...the Province got back to big picture planning. But, the truth of the matter is that now, the Province is the super regional government. And that’s ok. You don’t need to reinvent the wheel and go through the process of what this thing would look like and fight over powers. The Province has all the powers that they need and the political power to use it. So, I would argue that we do have a regional government—it’s just called the Province of Ontario and Metrolinx is one of its actions to demonstrate the regional picture through “The Big Move”. (P. Bedford, personal interview, March 11 2010)

One issue that this raises is how a focus on transit investments may impact existing priorities as delivered under the Ministry of Transportation (MoT). In an interview with MoT officials it was noted that these commitments do not create a displacement effect.

It is not like the spending and investment on highways has gone down and transit has gone up. I think we have record levels of investment in rehabbing and

---

<sup>114</sup> Metrolinx announced this funding commitment prior to the release of the final regional transportation plan in June 2007.

expanding highway facilities as well. (S. Thompson, personal interview, March 9 2010)

Metrolinx and its related initiatives represent a significant engagement and funding commitment by the Province, primarily for transit investments. However, this does not appear to mean a reorientation away from roads infrastructure. The competitive cities discourse has been adopted in Metrolinx's regional transportation plan. The plan promises to reclaim the region's "traditional transportation advantage, but also to bolster our global competitiveness, protect our environment, and improve our quality of life," and states: "The Big Move is about values as much as it is about vehicles" (Metrolinx 2008b: i).

The three aims of economic competitiveness, environmental sustainability and quality of life are common to many RSPBs that have been reviewed here. They are also part of the 'triple bottom line' (sometimes referred to as people, planet and profit) that many local governments subscribe to in their own planning practices. Of course, these three aims are often in contradiction with one another, leading to the primacy of one over the others in some manner (Fainstein 2000). In consideration of these elements, scale matters. The scale at which Metrolinx operates means that it is very much focused on easing regional traffic congestion, which is largely a product of suburban or exurban commutes to the central city for employment. Reducing traffic congestion will have positive environmental impacts. For example, the expansion of GO Transit's commuter rail services will reduce the number of cars on the road. This will benefit the goods movement industries by freeing up road space (hence, an economic benefit as well). But there are broader consequences to consider. For example, the easing of commutes to

suburban and exurban areas could further promote the development and growth of those areas, and the easing of locational transportation costs could open up rural areas for further development. These policies could therefore be considered expansionist as opposed to promoting density, and would be antithetical to the aims of environmental sustainability. It is too soon to assess the extent to which Metrolinx is facilitating regional growth. However, by conceiving of issues at a regional scale across the GTHA, it necessarily seeks to promote linkages across the region that could do just that.

#### Calls for a corporate board

Soon after the release of “The Big Move” transportation plan, a number of influential groups lobbied for Metrolinx’s board to be replaced with a corporate board consisting of private sector experts. Most vocal among these groups was the Toronto Board of Trade and their President and CEO Carol Wilding. Wilding argued that once the plan had been determined with local government support and consultation, implementation should be turned over to a corporate board with expertise in finance and transportation infrastructure construction and management. In her words:

You really need to leverage private sector experience. It is critical that that governance body has to be one whose priorities are really focused beyond election cycles and any changes in political agendas. (Wilding quoted in Artuso 2008)

Calls for a corporate board for Metrolinx coincided with major funding commitments for transit investments in the GTHA as well as with the onset of the 2007 economic crisis and the imperative for infrastructure stimulus spending. In debates in the media during this time, municipal representatives on Metrolinx’s board defended their ability to think regionally against those who would call them parochial. They blamed any perception of

Metrolinx's slow implementation on the organization being very new, requiring time to build capacity. From the perspective of Halton Regional Chair Gary Carr:

We really were not parochial. There was give and take. But I recognize the Province is the one spending the money and [if the Province is] funding it, they obviously have the right to say who's on there. (Quoted in Foran 2009)

Rob MacIsaac, chair of Metrolinx at the time, stated: "I would love for things to be moving faster than they are, but the tools that I've been given are basically consensus-based and so that's the model that I'm working with—that sometimes takes longer than you might like" (quoted in Artuso 2008). Implied here is that consensus based decisions are slow and decision-making insulated from these requirements can move along more expeditiously—i.e., the efficiency-accountability tradeoff. However, to say that the organization's activities in the first few years were slow is not entirely accurate. Efforts were made to move forward quickly with project implementation. Through the funding provided by MoveOntario 2020, Metrolinx was given the responsibility to evaluate, prioritize and recommend projects. In late 2007, the board allocated \$750 million to "Quick Win" transit investments and, in doing so, a Metrolinx report states that they and their board "dispelled the skepticism of many that a cross section of municipal leadership from across the GTHA would not be able to agree on a priority based and technically supportable set of investment priorities" (Metrolinx 2008d: 16).

The shift to a corporate board and the debates about its merits and drawbacks mimic those seen in Greater Vancouver surrounding its adoption of a corporate board in 2006. In 2009 the Province proposed legislation that would merge Metrolinx with GO Transit and supplant the politicians who sat on the GO Transit board and the local representation on the Metrolinx board with experts in planning, finance and development.

For NDP MPP Cheri DiNovo, the proposed bill would reduce transparency and accountability of both organizations and forward a privatization agenda.

This bill speaks to a bureaucracy that will not be transparent, will not be accountable, even less transparent and even less accountable than has been our experience at GO and Metrolinx already.... [Also...] this opens the door to privatization in transportation. And don't think that agenda isn't there; certainly, it is there. [...] That is probably our primary concern next to the lack of accountability and transparency, that this is in fact a backdoor method of privatizing some of what should be our public transportation strategy in Ontario. (DiNovo 2009: 0949-0950)

NDP MPP Peter Tabuns adds that the bill does not set transit as a priority. Rather, he argues, it places all transportation modes on equal terms.

This is one disturbing bill. [...] This bill before us is one that doesn't set public transit as the highest priority. It reduces democratic control, reduces the importance of the partnership with municipalities and opens the door to greater privatization. These are not positive things. (Tabuns 2009, 1700)

On May 14, 2009, Bill 163 received royal assent, thereby amending the *Greater Toronto Transportation Authority Act* (2006) and changing its name to the *Metrolinx Act*. The board composition of the *Metrolinx Act* was written in negative terms, specifying that no federal, provincial or municipal representatives or public servants may act as board members. The new 15 member corporate board of directors includes a mixture of lawyers and corporate executives.<sup>115</sup>

---

<sup>115</sup> Board composition is as follows as of 2011: J. Robert S. Prichard (Chair), Peter Smith (Vice-Chair), Jennifer Babe (Partner, Miller Thomson LLP), Paul Bedford (Urban Mentor and Chief Planner Emeritus, City of Toronto), Rahul Bhardwaj (President and CEO, Toronto Community Foundation), Tony Gagliano (Executive Chairman and CEO, St. Joseph Communications), Joseph Halstead (former Commissioner, Economic Development, Culture and Tourism, City of Toronto), Richard Koroscil (President and CEO, John C Munro Hamilton International Airport), Nicholas Mutton (Executive Vice President, Human Resources and Administration, Four Seasons Hotels and Resorts), Lee Parsons (Founding Partner, Malone, Given Parsons Ltd.), Rose Patten (Senior Executive Vice-President, Head of Human Resources and Senior Leadership Advisor, BMO Financial Group), Stephen Smith (Chairman and President of First National Financial LP), Douglas Turnbull (Deputy Chairman, TD Securities).

## METROLINX REVISED: BILL 163 (2009 TO PRESENT)

The 2009 revisions to Metrolinx's Act led to a merger with GO Transit, making it an operating division of Metrolinx. Through this merger the size of the organization grew, both in terms of its employees and total revenue. In 2008, total revenue for Metrolinx was approximately 11 million dollars. With the addition of GO Transit operations in 2009 this increased to over 513 million. Beyond the change to board composition, the revisions to the Act also established Provincial ownership over select new regional transit infrastructure and enabled the Minister of Transportation to issue transportation planning policy statements based on the Regional Transportation Plan (in consultation with GHTA municipalities). Metrolinx currently has several major initiatives other than GO Transit: a smart-card fare payment system (Presto) that is being rolled out across Ontario as a way of harmonizing fare payment; the construction of the Union Pearson rail link; bus rapid transit projects; a transit procurement initiative (for all local governments and transit service providers in Ontario); an active travel pilot project ("Stepping it Up"); a service that facilitates car pooling; and various transit projects.

The following section looks at Metrolinx since the 2009 revisions to its Act. Specifically, it explores Metrolinx's horizontal and vertical relationships between the organization and other levels of government, citizens and other key stakeholders (e.g., business interests). It also examines the politics of planning and transportation provision in the GTHA, placing the organization within the broader framework of regional governance and assessing its impact.

From a political to a corporate board—what does it matter?

The calls for a corporate board in the cases of Metrolinx and Translink came from

different sources. For Translink, they arose from a governance review sparked by a very open conflict between local governments across the GVRD and the Province on the issue of the RAV line. For Metrolinx, the calls for a corporate board came from such actors as the Toronto Board of Trade and took place once the task of a comprehensive plan had been agreed upon by participating local governments. There was no single event or great disjuncture between the Province and Metrolinx's board. However, the calls for a corporate board were made at a critical time when the organization would turn to the implementation of many high level projects. The resulting shift brought criticism from many quarters that the organization would be less accountable and transparent and would open the door to privatization.

The Chair of Metrolinx's board, Rob MacIsaac, describes the activities of the corporate board thus:

Big strategic policy kinds of issues go to the board. The budget, we bring benefits-case analysis work to the board. It's a lot of types of conversations. But the best way to describe the board is it develops strategy for the organization. So, there are traditional board governance functions—governance, audit, finance, HR, all those things that a corporate board would traditionally oversee. It has a fiduciary kind of role—then a strategy setting role. And then to the extent that they actually delve into the business of the organization, it tends to be in approving reports that come forward like the benefits case analysis work. Also, the way in which we are developing our investment strategy is being overseen at a high level by the board and how to engage the region and discussions about the investment strategy. Staff came forward with a draft strategy. The board then made comments and [revisions that are up for discussion]. (R. MacIsaac, personal interview, March 12 2010)

Of interest is how vertical and horizontal relationships differ in the instance of a corporate board. Under the previous board model, municipalities had a direct link to the workings of Metrolinx. They were tied into the bureaucracy through political representation. This increased the capacity for alignment within the planning process.

The Manager of Strategic Planning for the city of Hamilton, Jillian Stephen, describes how the new board has impacted the way they work with Metrolinx:

The model with the mayors and chairs worked really well for us. [...] With the new board, we don't have the same opportunity for direct involvement— I don't mean to say that they are not accessible, but it's one other thing that they do atop of their regular job. They don't sit near us, they don't speak to for the City [of Hamilton] so they can't really lobby. That has been a challenge that we are trying to get through. [...] We were all still under the impression that Metrolinx would work as an advisory group in terms of recommending projects for implementation. That has changed with this new board. They are working very closely with the Province, [...] they will do the analysis, provide the benefits and costs of different alternatives and then the cities and municipalities have to build their cases for what they want. They don't want to box the Province in and the Province doesn't want to force anything on people either. It is becoming more of an involved process than we initially realized. It is more back and forth. (J. Stephen, personal interview, March 26 2010)

A major implication of the shift from a political to a corporate board is the relationship between the local government politicians and bureaucracy, and Metrolinx and other provincial actors. Metrolinx works directly with city staff on the projects that are relevant to them. However, without political representation on the board there is less connection between local governments and regional issues as a whole. Rather, they engage separately on their specific projects with Metrolinx. Stephen offers the following recommendation on how one could increase regional coordination within this model:

I think that something that would be helpful for other cities or regions if this model was taken forward would be some kind of working group of staff that meets regularly so that we can see what other people are doing. There is nothing to stop us from initiating that ourselves. No one has taken that on to do it. We have a Hamilton representative for Metrolinx and he is knowledgeable, but when we talk to him we focus on our own issues. It would be good to know what other people are up to as well. That is one thing that I would consider if other people are looking into this. (J. Stephen, personal interview, March 26 2010)

Efforts have been made in the past to bring together the mayors of GTHA to discuss issues of regional importance. The longtime mayor of Mississauga, Hazel McCallion, started this initiative, but meetings have been irregular and in the past several years the group has not met. There is also a Greater Toronto Countryside Mayors Alliance, formed in 2004, which focuses on monitoring research and on advocacy. However, there is nothing formalized at the level that Jillian Stephen describes.

Paul Bedford was the Chief Planner of the City of Toronto for eight years and before that worked as a planner for the city for 30 years. He is the only member to have sat on Metrolinx's board under both the old and new configurations. He describes the differences between the two board types and a preferred governance model as follows:

I would say that both versions work well with a couple of differences. The first board always met in public and did business in public. I was very comfortable with that because that's the municipal way. The new board meets mostly in private and a little in public. I don't like that. They are spending billions of public funds and I continue to push to meet more in public. We are getting there but it's slow. All of the other board people from the private sector are scared [bleep] of the public—the people from the corporate boards don't meet in public. The second difference is the frequency of meetings. We used to meet every month and now we meet every two to three months. That to me is not enough. I spoke to the Translink people and they meet every two months. I think that should be the absolute minimum. The third difference that I find is that the new Metrolinx board is much more in the provincial model of the Province calling the shots. And I understand why, because they bring all the money. But it's very much a control kind of mind set. Those are the three differences that I feel. But I'm working on all of those things because I think it should be much more public.

I think that it should be an upper tier umbrella with planning and funding functions—an 'open for business' public body. I don't think it needs to be elected. I don't really care as long as I'm on it. I think anything can work if you want it to. But there is some truth to the fact that if it is all elected, you have people only representing their territory. You can have municipal-elected and then appointed—that would be fine. Translink is all appointed and I think that they have some issues that they are dealing with up there. They don't have enough money. There is robustness with the Province being behind Metrolinx. It is different in BC. The CEO of Translink left a while ago... he wasn't getting support from the Province. (P. Bedford, personal interview, March 11 2010)

While Paul Bedford expresses a preference for a more public model, Metrolinx Chair Rob MacIsaac extols the virtues of a more private one, saying: “boards are for governing and you shouldn’t confuse consultation and access with governance” (R. MacIsaac, personal interview, March 12 2010). He describes Metrolinx and its board as a different sort of political entity:

I think we are reasonably transparent in the way that we are doing things. I know that there are a lot of folks who would like us not to do anything in camera. But we are not a municipality. Our function is to develop a plan and to implement it. I think that, frankly, board meetings are not especially great places to conduct consultation. We have 6 million people in this region; six million people can’t come to our board meetings. There is a defined set of people who have the ability to attend the board meeting and who are interested in the topic of transit, who will disagree with the way that we are proceeding. My opinion is that public consultation is public consultation and that you should design a set of instruments to get out there and effectively consult. (R. MacIsaac, personal interview, March 12 2010)

This raises another issue—how can RSPBs like Metrolinx meaningfully consult with such a large population on projects that affect them? Such difficulties are illustrated by Metrolinx’s development of a rail link between Toronto Pearson Airport and downtown Toronto.

#### The politics of big infrastructure: The Air Rail Link

As in the case of Translink, major infrastructure investments have been the locus of conflict between the various actors in Metrolinx. Citizen opposition to the Pearson Airport-Union Air Rail Link (ARL) is illustrative of the tensions between exchange value and land use value. These pressures are compounded by the political demand for the ARL to be completed in time for Toronto’s hosting of the Pan American Games in 2015, which

mimics Vancouver's experience preparing for the Olympics. The ARL link illustrates how citizens relate to Metrolinx and forward opposition to its projects.

In July of 2010, the Province approached Metrolinx to build, own and operate an express rail shuttle service linking the Toronto Pearson International Airport with the Central Union Station downtown. The airport is Canada's largest and busiest, and the need for an efficient transit link has long been discussed. Currently, TTC buses serve the airport. Major opposition to the project has stemmed from the decision to use diesel trains rather than electric ones. One of the most vocal of such groups is the Clean Train Coalition—a coalition of citizens advocating for the use of electric trains. The issue is that the project would run 400 or more diesel trains a day through west end neighbourhoods. The Clean Train Coalition estimates that the ARL would “generate pollution equivalent to having 4,000 trucks a day driving through densely populated neighbourhoods” (Clean Train Coalition 2011). The Clean Train Coalition and other advocacy groups have quite effectively advocated for their position at all levels of government. There have been protests and attendance at Metrolinx's quarterly board meetings that are open to the public. As a conciliatory measure, the Minister of Environment has added the stipulation to the train's procurement that the cleanest-burning Tier 4 diesel engines must be used “when commercially available” (ibid.).

In order to address the concerns of resident groups, Metrolinx created a Community Advisory Committee to examine the options for electrification of ARL. The group was created solely to tackle this issue, with its terms of reference indicating the group will be disbanded once it has filled its mandate. The Community Advisory Committee includes members from the Ministry of Health, Ryerson University, the

Ontario Home Builders Association, the Ministry of Transportation and several environmental and resident groups such as Pollution Probe and the Clean Train Coalition. Separately, Metrolinx commenced a study on the possibility of electrification of all GO Transit trains in 2009. Both studies show the strong benefits of electrification in terms of more positive health and environmental impacts. Further, the higher initial cost of electric trains is recouped through a reduction of operating costs and electric trains would be able to make more stops serving a broader area. Metrolinx has stated that electrification remains a future goal. Despite this, the board of Metrolinx has entered into a contract to purchase 12 diesel trains from Sumitomo Corporation of America. President of Metrolinx Gary McNeil states that diesel was chosen over the benefits of electrification because “it can't be electrified in time for the Pan Am Games” (Grant 2010). Early efforts to structure the ARL as a public-private partnership between Ontario and the Union Pearson AirLink Group fell through and Metrolinx is now solely responsible for the designing, building and operating the ARL. The federal government is also contributing a significant amount of funding for this project. As in Vancouver’s case, with the ARL a big event has dominated the policy agenda and the avenues through which citizen groups are able to interact with Metrolinx are limited. Readiness on time for the Pan Am Games has dominated decision-making on the Air Rail Link to the detriment of long term thinking about community impacts.

How Metrolinx engages with citizens and stakeholder groups seems to evolve depending on the issue at hand. There are standard engagement practices linked to specific projects wherein feedback from the public is solicited. Jillian Stephen discusses Metrolinx’s relationship with the public in Hamilton:

The Metrolinx board meetings have largely been in camera since the board structure was changed. We're getting the sense that people don't know what is going and they would like to be more involved in the Metrolinx process. When Metrolinx did "The Big Move" they went to each municipality and they did a public workshop event and outside of Toronto, Hamilton's was the best in terms of attendance and had high participation. We have an interested population—they are interested in transportation issues and want to be involved in making changes. We have a grass roots group called Hamilton Light Rail that has been advocating for Light Rail for a long time. The change to the Board structure has limited the involvement of the public because we don't have one of the big five projects that are out for construction. (J. Stephen, personal interview, March 26 2010)

Within local government, citizens have the opportunity to sit on transportation committees that then act as advisory committees to council. There is also political accountability at the local level where constituents can raise issues with their area councillors. At the level of service delivery, transit bodies have feedback mechanisms; so too does GO Transit. Stephen's comments point out that engagement with Metrolinx takes a different form. It is project specific, and polarizing issues such as the ARL are dealt with in more in-depth ways—e.g., through the creation of a Community Advisory Committee.

The coordination of regional planning: Metrolinx, the Ministry of Transportation, the Ontario Municipal Board and local governments

RSPBs are adopted as a way to coordinate across jurisdictions and one component of this is the harmonization of planning practices so they work in a nested and mutually reinforcing fashion from the Province to the city/community level. This is the goal. The reality, however, can be different. As we have seen, the Province through the *Places to*

*Grow Act*, the *Greenbelt Act*, and Provincial Policy Statements<sup>116</sup> has asserted preferences for land use planning in the region at a high level. The Ministry of Transportation and Metrolinx then adopt more specific plans (e.g., Metrolinx’s regional transportation plan). Municipal plans are meant to conform to these higher-level plans. Ontario also has an Ontario Municipal Board—the only institution of its type in Canada—where appeals on planning decisions can be submitted by individuals or businesses (e.g., developers). Under the *Places to Grow Act* a stipulation was added that OMB decisions conform to its planning objectives. In the words of Rob MacIsaac:

There are still lots of silos here, but the coordination is manifest in The Big Move. We are still such a young organization—what Metrolinx looks like ten years from now will be significantly different than where we are today. Our legislation provides that we will do an RTP, that the Minister will produce policy statements that will fall out of the plan and that municipalities doing their plans and master plans need to be consistent with those plans and policies. And that’s the basis for coordination going forward. (R. MacIsaac, personal interview, March 12 2010)

A common thread across the interviews is that the relationship between various actors in the transportation sphere is evolving. Conflicting agendas do remain, even between provincial bodies—for example, between the Ministry of Transportation (MoT) and Metrolinx. The MoT primarily focuses on building or upgrading road capacity, and this can be at odds with Metrolinx’s transit focus. John Howe, Vice President, Investment Strategy and Project Evaluation for Metrolinx comments on this relationship:

There was a huge amount of resistance by the Ministry of Transportation (MoT) and there was territorialism and scarce resources and an inherent fear that a Regional Transportation Authority was created and that it would come at the expense of resources that came into the MoT and resources to build and maintain the highway program. But working in the Ministry of Finance you can skip

---

<sup>116</sup> The Provincial Policy Statement (PPS) was introduced in 2005 and is issued under the authority of the *Planning Act* and provides direction on land use planning and development. All decisions relating to land use and planning need to be consistent with the PPS.

through this through the budget process. (J. Howe, personal interview, May 9 2010)

As recounted earlier, in an interview with the MoT representatives, they said they did not perceive any displacement of funds for their activities through the creation of Metrolinx. But John Howe's statement above speaks to inherent tensions between the activities of the two bodies. Rob MacIsaac expands on this:

There is a very close relationship between Metrolinx and MoT—there are daily conversations at the highest levels between the two organizations. I think that the agendas aren't always perfectly aligned, but I think, looking at it from 30,000 ft, hopefully there is a creative and positive tension between the two organizations with Metrolinx hoping to push progressive transportation policy at MTO. (R. MacIsaac, personal interview, March 12 2010)

From the perspective of a municipal planner, Jillian Stephen states that the relationship between Metrolinx and MoT:

...[d]oesn't seem matched up very well. From my perspective, we deal with a lot of people at the Ministry for a lot of different things and I think the Ministry is still trying to figure out how they and Metrolinx work together and they haven't really aligned the two priorities. One really positive sign was when I went to the Board meeting, I sat next to someone from MTO. So, they are trying to get better aligned. (J. Stephen, personal interview, March 26 2010)

Metrolinx spends the bulk of its time meeting with local transit providers, with the Toronto Transit Commission (TTC) being their major focus given its size and importance. Rob MacIsaac describes these interactions:

It's on an informal basis between our CEO, VP of Infrastructure Jack Collins, the VP of Planning and Policy. I'm guessing that not a day goes by that there isn't a meeting held with the TTC at that level. There are meetings going on across the region on a regular basis for sure. But the TTC is the biggest consumer of time. (R. MacIsaac, personal interview, March 12 2010)

Despite the nestedness of planning requirements, more informal processes are also an important mechanism through which planning proceeds; particularly when it comes to land use planning, Metrolinx does not have comprehensive land use planning as part of its mandate. This begs the question of how Metrolinx can create viable transport investments given this context. This question was put to Rob MacIsaac, who responded:

That's a good question—the more fundamental question is, are we trying to retrofit existing corridors or to lead development in new corridors. Where we are trying to make up for what hasn't happened in the past, the plan is designed to take advantage of existing land use densities. So there is a reactionary element of the plan—we are reacting to what's on the ground and making sure that we're being prudent about putting transit where it's going to be cost effective given what's already there. Where we have lines that are intended to lead development, there are tools at our disposal that still require further development but that are reasonable. We have funding agreements with municipalities for these transit lines and my view is that that's a good opportunity for us to insert requirements around land use, and to some extent we have control over some of these stations through GO Transit and so that gives us the opportunity to look at a mix of land uses that will be supportive of our GO Transit network. Frequently, the municipalities are the biggest lobbyists for these infrastructure improvements, so Metrolinx would say to them, we'll make the investment but you need to show us that your land use policies are supportive of the investment. And then there is the other issue of the Minister's transportation policy statements, which the municipalities are required to have official plan and transportation planning consistency with. (R. MacIsaac, personal interview, March 12 2010)

Despite these mechanisms, political shifts in the commitment to transit priorities can significantly hinder the work of Metrolinx. The election of Mayor Ford in the City of Toronto in October of 2010 with his 'roads are for cars and cars alone' mantra has significantly reoriented the City of Toronto's commitment to the previous mayor's Transit City Plan (which was supported by Metrolinx). A major issue is Mayor Ford's insistence that the Sheppard Line extension be completed as a subway rather than using Light Rail Transit Technology. Metrolinx has already been working on the premise that

the extension would be delivered with LRT technology and the project has significant sunk costs. An analysis of the two transit technologies by the Pembina Institute finds that LRT would cost less, better serve low income residents, service more people, have a significantly lower environmental impact and be delivered years ahead of Mayor Ford's subway option (Pembina Institute 2011). Importantly, Mayor Ford's insistence on subway technology significantly increases the costs of the project and has meant that a planned transit project to service low income neighbourhoods along Finch Avenue will no longer be pursued. Despite this, Mayor Ford's agenda is dominating discussions and reorienting agreed upon transit projects. These discussions are currently taking place and the final outcome is not clear. However, the Mayor's commitment to the Sheppard subway extension has led Metrolinx to shift its involvement to other priority lines and to cancel outright the proposed Finch line. Metrolinx and the Province together approved Mayor Ford's plans for the Sheppard line; in doing so, however, the City of Toronto will assume all financial responsibility for the project. The City of Toronto is presently exploring funding options for the Sheppard subway extension, particularly the feasibility of a PPP model. Metrolinx's board has met and discussed Mayor Ford's 'Transportation City' plan (referred to as '*Transportation City*' in order to contrast against former Toronto Mayor David Miller's '*Transit City*' plan). However, the negotiations also very much took place directly between Mayor Ford and Premier Dalton McGuinty. Through this, Metrolinx was painted in the media as a balanced expert organization, separate from the back and forth posturing that took place between the Ford and McGuinty. There have been other disagreements between the Province and Metrolinx on one side and Toronto and the TTC on the other. For example, Metrolinx developed the Presto Card fare

technology to harmonize payment methods across municipal and regional systems.

Toronto and the TTC were extremely critical of the Presto Card's proprietary technology and refused to implement the system. For some time they were the only jurisdiction in the GTHA to have not adopted the system. This was recently rectified with the provincial and federal governments committing significant funding to the implementation of the new fare system.<sup>117</sup> The inducement for Toronto's cooperation with the project was financial.

These cases illustrate that despite the intended nestedness of the planning environment, there remains a great deal of negotiation between local governments and the Province through Metrolinx or in some cases bilaterally, depending on the scale of the issue. Further, it shows how local political imperatives can usurp regionally conceived plans and reshape priorities. Through the strengthened powers of the executive in the *City of Toronto Act*, Mayor Ford has been able to shift public policy in quite a dramatic way towards a car-centered platform. In his words, "the war on the car is over" (Kalinowski & Rider 2011). The Mayor's transportation policy privileges a suburban agenda, which is where he gained the greatest electoral support. Despite Metrolinx being a provincially driven model, there remains a great deal of negotiation and compromise when it comes to the implementation of plans. Furthermore, as Keil notes: "*The Places to Grow Act* provides guidelines but the municipalities are still interested in increasing the rent on their territory by building subdivisions and exerting development fees with no respect for the broader issues in the region" (R. Keil, personal interview, March 8 2010).

---

<sup>117</sup> The Presto Card fare system was officially adopted by Toronto and the TTC in June of 2011.

## Metrolinx and corporate/business interests

A central rationale for the adoption of RSPBs is that they can insulate decision making from ward-centric politics. An extension of this argument is that RSPBs also insulate decision-making from the influence of business interests that may dominate at the city level because of their financial support for political electoral campaigns, as well as from close relationships between developers and city planning departments. Metrolinx Chair Rob MacIsaac touches on these issues, saying:

Our plan—while not ignoring local politics, which would be done at your peril—really does promote a sense of... it is aimed at the regional traveler. I think that the big real-estate developer interests...I haven't seen a lot of [lobbying], not like I saw as a municipal politician. I certainly had developers come and talk to me about what they thought was important. But, again I think that you are dealing with an organization that is so new that people haven't really figured out what its role is going to be and how much power and influence it's going to have over these things. In the fullness of time—and if Metrolinx is able to fulfill its mandate—then I'm sure developers will be knocking on the door here. I think that transportation is going to lead to development in a way that it historically has across the country. On a micro level, water and sewer have been more influential in development than transportation. As we move forward, there will be an ascendancy of transportation over where development goes. As the transportation corridors become more and more clogged, transportation will be a greater factor going forward. (R. MacIsaac, personal interview, March 12 2010)

Aside from Metrolinx's focus on the experience of the regional traveler and land use related to transit investments, the organization also has a mandate to facilitate goods movement in the GTHA. This is in an area that will require collaboration between all levels of government. It is also an issue for which the federal government is particularly active since they have jurisdiction over ports, railways, airports and international border crossings. Metrolinx is presently conducting studies to forward a goods movement strategy. Rob MacIsaac discusses this:

We are still feeling our way with that. It is an area that the Province feels a certain ownership over. Our plan does extend goods movement into our mandate. We have set up a round table of people who have a key interest in goods movement and we are working with them and the Province to develop a strategy. At the same time, the goods movement needs to be dealt with at an interregional/intercity level. There are big corridors that start on the east coast of Canada, extend through Quebec into Ontario and then into the US. We need to recognize that, from a goods movement perspective, we need to be part of a bigger system. There are certainly intra regional goods movement issues that I think Metrolinx can, in the fullness of time, have a positive influence on. It is an area that there is a lot of work to do. (R. MacIsaac, personal interview, March 12 2010)

The goods movement strategy will have to balance exchange and use values—that is, the needs of commerce against quality of life for residents and compatibility with other modes of transportation. Southern Ontario has very powerful industrial interests. As Roger Keil points out, the organization and influence of various interests are not evenly balanced in the region.

These are highly political issues. They are powerful interests connected among themselves but also to the major and still active manufacturing industries and particularly the auto industries with ‘just in time’ production. They want open and clear roads. I think in that sense—I can’t tell you about the selection of the board members—but it’s impossible to discount them as a major organized interest. It is difficult to find an organized political force on the side of transit users. (R. Keil, personal interview, March 8 2010)

The interests of business and commerce are always an important feature of local politics. It remains to be seen how Metrolinx will interact with business/industry interest and how such interests may differ at the level of a regional entity.

In the coming years, the federal government will be an increasingly influential actor in the region through the Ontario-Quebec Continental Gateway program. The program is but one part of Canada’s National Policy Framework for Strategic Gateways and Trade Corridors (2009), which aims to facilitate trade through strategic investments in gateways and corridors. The governments of Ontario, Quebec and Canada signed a

memorandum of understanding for the development of gateway and corridor initiatives in 2007. There is significant funding attached to the development of border crossings, ports, airports, railway lines and major highways across the region. As activities related to the federal government’s Continental Gateway program increase, interactions with industries related to trade (trucking, freight) will surely become a more important feature of Metrolinx’s work. The Continental Gateways program further ‘upscales’ the regional space by interpreting it along trade and economic terms. In doing so, it presents yet another type of regionalism for actors in the GTHA to engage (and reconcile) with.

**Metrolinx’s investment strategy and the politics of funding**

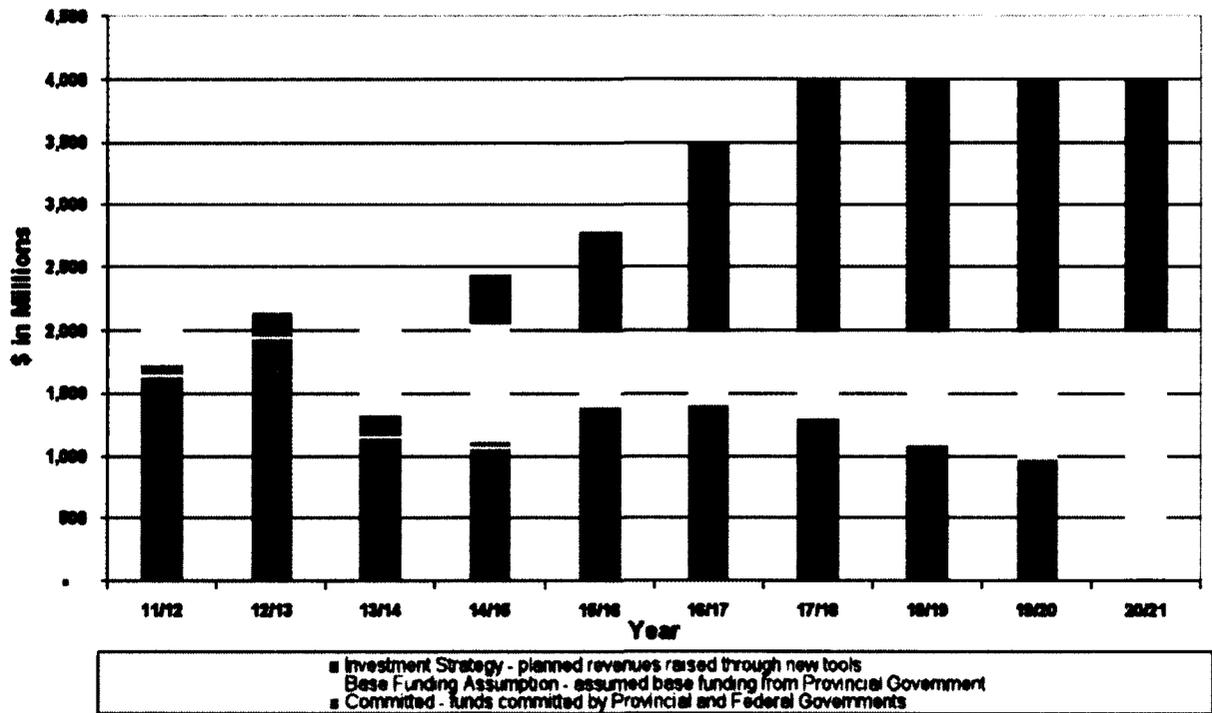
In the coming years, Metrolinx will face the challenge of expanding its revenue base using a variety of tools. The revised act sets a deadline of 2013 for Metrolinx to have an investment strategy in place to fund the \$50 billion in investments called for by its Regional Transportation Plan over the next 25 years. This is for the funding of capital assets beyond 2015 (or 2018 depending on the level of federal government support). A 2008 draft investment strategy gives some indication of the revenue tools that are being explored in order to fund future development (see chart below for overview).

**6.5 Metrolinx draft funding strategy overview—potential funding sources**

Funding type	Description
Traditional government sources	Capital fund, grant, trust, etc. Operating subsidies
Beneficiary fees	Property tax Development charges Participation/contribution agreement by developers Land value capture Sales tax Payroll tax

User fees	Gas tax Driver license fees Vehicle registration fees and sales tax Parking tax Tolls on specific transportation facilities System-wide real-time capacity pricing Transit fares
Debt financing	Borrowing/mortgaging Equity investments Infrastructure bonds Tax increment financing
Source: Metrolinx (2008e). <i>Investment strategy overview</i> . Sept. 2008, Toronto Ont.	

6.6 Metrolinx revenue concept 2011-2021



Source: Metrolinx (2011). *Metrolinx five year strategy: 2011-2016*. Toronto Ont., June.

It is an ambitious amount of money that will need to be raised in order to meet Metrolinx’s intended investment plans, with many of the proposed tools being controversial. As can be seen in the chart above, Metrolinx’s revenue concept is for provincial and federal funds to decline over time such that by 2020/21 the organization’s

activities would be fully funded through a fifty/fifty split of base funding (provincial contributions) and new revenue tools (i.e., investment strategy). Several high profile organizations have raised the issue of the need for expanded revenue tools for transportation and transit investment. For example, a recent OECD Territorial Review of Greater Toronto proposes that financial incentives “such as congestion charges, high-occupancy toll (HOT) lanes, local fuel taxes and parking taxes” should be considered in order to tackle the issue of road congestion. Paul Bedford discusses this issue:

The money [committed] so far is small potatoes. The money that the premier has committed now—the ten billion for transit lines—that’s all borrowed money against the future. But the real problem is where is the rest of the money is going to come from. The number was 50 billion in “The Big Move.” That’s [not the case]. That has to do with the priority lines that were listed, and that’s only capital. The real figure is closer to 80 billion over 25 years when you account for operational expenses. Where is the revenue going to come from? It is not from the Province. Some of it will be, but most of it will be regional road pricing and all of these controversial tools that nobody wants to talk about. And Translink has done some of that stuff. The ownership differences add to the other complications. The TTC is not doing well right now at all. The conversation of funding has just started. The premier has asked us to come up with a comprehensive investment strategy by June 2013—after the next election, for obvious reasons. Every single one of the options will need to be discussed and put forward and the media and people will go nuts. But I don’t [care] because that’s what needs to happen. It could be regional taxes, car fees, parking fees, sales tax, income tax, but it needs to be regional. Any of the options needs to be regional. If the will is there to do this stuff, we can easily come up with 80 billion over 20 years. But it will be tough going. I’m looking forward to seeing part of it. The reality is, ‘ok, you guys want this network to be built but none of you want to pay anything for it, then you need to pay for the consequences’. Smog, people fleeing the area, terrible growth, roads everywhere—that is the choice. (P. Bedford, personal interview, March 11 2010)

It is too early to comment on the development of the investment strategy. However, it is worth noting that Metrolinx is perhaps the best-placed organization to propose such revenue tools. The revenue raised through tools such as these will go directly to transportation/infrastructure improvements. This is the ‘user pays and payee benefits’

principle that local finance expert Enid Slack is an advocate of.<sup>118</sup> Were the Province or local governments to be responsible for such revenue generation, the link to spending directly on transportation/transit investments could be less clear and might instead be allocated to other priorities.

The use of such funding tools, particularly visible user fees such as congestion pricing (e.g., capacity pricing) is little used in Canada. Translink has expanded its revenue generation more than any other entity—e.g., through the allocation of the provincial sales tax and expansion into land value capture. As entities such as Metrolinx expand their funding sources, this will give them greater revenue stability (they will no longer be as tied to provincial political imperatives), further cementing them as a part of the regional institutional landscape. Their policy capacities would be enhanced with the development of independent revenue streams, providing regularity and a degree of permanency. However, the implementation of many of these tools is very controversial and this may be compounded by Metrolinx’s lack of local representation on its board. Metrolinx’s inducement for local government cooperation—particularly in the case of Toronto which, as a large city with a massive transit agency (TTC) has a significant amount of clout and independence—has in many instances been financial in orientation, with the federal government also making contributions through matching grants. Revenue generation directly from local users could change this relationship. At present, the major transit investments being made by Metrolinx are determined by provincial priority. They are strategic investments and monies are not equally geographically distributed. A

---

<sup>118</sup> For example, Slack advocates that “[l]ocal governments should, wherever possible, charge directly for services... so as to “allow residents and businesses to know how much they are paying for the services they receive from local governments” (2010: 506). This is particularly the case for goods/services that are confined to individual consumers (e.g., public transit).

reorientation of funding to economic instruments would have to be carefully structured so those who pay the tools see meaningful improvements in the system in an equitable manner.

## Conclusion

Metrolinx, as a relatively new entity, is still finding its place within the regional political landscape. But despite its infancy as an institution, it has already made a mark on regional planning and governance. The Province through Metrolinx has forwarded a vision for regional development that has raised the profile of transportation and infrastructure issues, framed around the economic costs of congestion and sprawl.

Metrolinx supports the objectives of sustainability, quality of life and economic growth within a competitive cities framework. However, there are inherent tensions across these three aims. The case of citizen opposition to the diesel trains purchased for the ARL link illustrates how these aims are very often a trade-off rather than mutually compatible.

The increasing profile of regional issues has contributed to the institutionalization of the GTHA as a political space and has cemented it as a scale for policy response.

Commenting on this, Young and Keil write:

There has been talk about various 'fixes', including a 'sustainability fix' (While et al., 2004), which attempts to envision the modern region as a place that can be governed in a bounded way. This has its roots, of course, in quite pragmatic considerations as the container logic of the official political process tends to re-capture the political in territorially re-scaled but still bounded forms. (2009: 93)

Metrolinx is part of this spatial fix. Through Metrolinx, the Province is far more actively engaged in urban/regional transportation planning than in the past, and in doing so, is taking on a very different role than that of the Ministry of Transportation. As interviewees have noted, the two organizations have very different outlooks and ways of

working with local governments. Unlike the MoT, Metrolinx has an expressly multimodal mandate. However, active forms of transportation (e.g., bike paths) remain a very small percentage of the organization's activities, which are predominantly focused on regional rail and transit connections. In the future this focus will expand to goods movement—an area that the federal government is involved in through the Continental Gateways Program.

As a new organization, Metrolinx is still in the process of institutionalizing. Its relationship with other regional actors is constantly shifting. This was shown in part by the disjuncture of Mayor Ford's vision for transit for the region, which was in marked contrast to the Transit City vision of his predecessor. The *Places to Grow Act* (2005) sets out a nested policy-planning framework where the plans of Metrolinx, the OMB and local governments are meant to conform to its overarching objectives. But as we have seen, there remains disjuncture and Metrolinx is often placed in the middle of conflicts between provincial and local politics.

The future of the organization and its institutional stability will be determined in large part by its ability to secure long term funding sources other than provincial and federal contributions. This is a task for the coming years and a difficult one at that. It will require a great deal of political support and maneuvering. Many of the proposed tools are little used in Canada and their implementation will require public support. As has been explored in the case study, Metrolinx relates to citizens in different ways, depending on the issue. They conduct a great deal of public consultation and, for more polarizing issues such as the ARL, have created advisory committees. Much of the public consultation surrounds the implementation of specific initiatives.

It remains to be seen how Metrolinx, under the governance of a corporate board, can gain public support for the types of expanded revenue tools that are being proposed. In one sense they are better placed to implement such tools because they are somewhat distanced from both local and provincial politics. On the other hand, there may be strong public resistance to the implementation of revenue tools such as the use of a portion of the property or sales tax by an organization like Metrolinx. Translink has more expanded revenue sources than those of Metrolinx. However, these were agreed upon by the municipalities through the Mayors' Council. Metrolinx does not at present incorporate local government representation into its governance structure in this way. It remains to be seen how Metrolinx can navigate the politically contentious issue of economic instruments like tolls or other charges that have been so little used to date in Canada.

A common opinion expressed by interviewees for this case study was that Metrolinx would continue to evolve and that the organization would have longevity. Metrolinx's "the Big Move" hypothesizes that, as its activities go forward:

*new or refined authorities may be needed, includ[ing] project and program management and delivery; [the] authority to enter into long-term, performance-based agreements with project partners; [the] ability to draw on sustained financial resources and the flexibility to deploy those resources as needed, similar to funding models that already exist in other regional Canadian jurisdictions, such as Translink in Greater Vancouver, and the Agence Métropolitaine de Transport in Montréal; service and technology integration and coordination; dispute resolution, mediation and arbitration; [the] establishment of development corporations; and fare integration. (Metrolinx 2008c: 84, my italics)*

This statement clearly implies an expansion of existing authorities and activities. Some of these activities have been realized—e.g., fare integration through the implementation of the Presto system. Going forward, the structure of funding, the nature of local-regional collaboration and links to accountability will be major factors influencing the

organization's development. Open criticism of Metrolinx by local governments show a push for change in the direction of increased accountability and transparency. For example, in June of 2010, Toronto City Council passed a resolution that was highly critical of Metrolinx, stating that the entity is "highly streamlined, one-way, and not in any way meaningful or respectful of community input" and that the agency should become more "open, transparent, and accountable to the public by requiring it to conduct its meetings in public... provide advance public notice of meetings; allow public deputations; and publish all reports, agendas, and minutes" (Norman 2010). Some efforts to address these concerns are being addressed by Metrolinx, but it remains to be seen if they will be considered adequate and if they will lead to improved relations with local governments such as Toronto that exhibit clear frustration with existing practices.

The following chapter compares the two case studies of Metrolinx and Translink, drawing out commonalities and differences between these two Canadian RSPBs, with a focus on interpreting institutional change.

Translink and Metrolinx are relatively new institutional phenomena in the Canadian context, just thirteen and seven years old respectively at the time of this writing. Despite their relative infancy, they have already had a big impact on the regions in which they operate. They command large resources, have multimodal mandates, and have strong supporting legislation and coordination with land use planning. Other regions across Canada are looking with interest at how these RSPBs develop and how such entities might be applied in other contexts. These bodies have gained national attention, regularly appearing in the national media. They are treated as distinctive entities by federal departments such as Transport Canada, who meet with them separately on issues of mutual interest (Transport Canada, non-attributable personal interview, January 4 2011). They have been important entities in the work of federally led infrastructure projects such as the Asia Pacific and Quebec-Ontario Corridors and Gateways Initiatives. Further, the breadth of these entities' mandates means that they impact upon and influence the direction of economic development, urban form, environmental sustainability, quality of life and the accessibility and affordability of movement across city-regions for both goods and people.

In both case studies we see similar developments. In both regions, the coordination of regional transportation was raised as an important issue through various reports and recommendations from provincial and local governments, academics, business associations and think tanks. Through these debates, the 'problems' of the present systems were articulated and institutional solutions were proposed. This 'problem

definition' has had multiple focuses. We see functional arguments based on a need for reduced car congestion, more compact urban form, increased transit services and improved infrastructure and transportation links to move goods and people. Strong economic rationales were also prevalent in these debates, wherein a need for policy action was centred on the competitive cities thesis and a need for world-class infrastructure to support economic development. Further, environmental rationales have been forwarded where urban regional sustainability is linked to quality of life. The articulation of a social equity perspective to address regional spatial inequalities has been less prevalent in this discourse. These issues have been largely brought forward by academics such as Roger Keil in his research into 'in-between' urban spaces, rather than through governmental research and reports. Finally, a major rationale for the adoption of these institutions stems from an understanding that city-regions require mechanisms for coordination across boundaries. The importance of city-regions has raised 'regionalism' and the construction of regional institutions to the fore of Canadian urban politics. It has articulated 'the region' as the appropriate scale for policy action, impacting the nature of planning, land use and transportation investments. As has been stressed throughout this dissertation, the concept of 'the region' is an amorphous one. The scale at which policies are conceived is political.

The final institutional structures that were adopted in both case studies were provincial creations and were given strong provincial support and funding in the early years of operations. In BC, Translink was created under the NDP provincial government of Glen Clark (in 1998) while in Ontario, Metrolinx was created under the Liberal provincial government of Dalton McGuinty (in 2006). Upon initial creation, both entities

were tasked with establishing a strategic transportation plan for their respective regions and this was done with locally-elected representatives appointed to their board and in consultation with key stakeholders. This initial period was important because it set a framework for future developments and, critically, cemented local support for the organizations' operations. Once these strategic plans were created, we saw a shift towards a corporate board. Amidst the debates that emerged around these governance shifts, some expressed support for the adoption of a corporate board, as necessary for implementation. Others interpreted the move to a corporate board as a way for provincial and business interests to dominate regional politics in this area. In both cases, the respective provincial governments expressed the view that that local politics 'gets in the way' of implementation and that a corporate board would be more efficient and effective. Finally, we see that it is under the corporate boards of the two RSPBs that the task now turns to expanding the existing set of revenue tools beyond a reliance on government contributions, basic fare box revenue and, in the case of Translink, on property tax contributions. This task, to be undertaken in the coming years, will be politically contentious and a true test of the organizations' ability to navigate divisive politics. It will raise the profile of these organizations and may bring into question the legitimacy of non-elected corporate boards for such decision-making.

While the similarities between these two cases have been stressed here, there are also important differences. These regions have varied experiences with regional planning and cooperation. Greater Vancouver has smaller and more balanced cities (in terms of relative size) and there is a long history of regional cooperation. The Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area (GTHA) does not have such a long history of regional institutions and the

relationships between the municipalities and regional governments that make up the GTHA are uneven. In the GTHA, amalgamated Toronto dominates.<sup>119</sup> Importantly, Metrolinx is an agency of the provincial government, whereas Translink was created by the provincial government, but is not an agency of government. While both have corporate boards running day-to-day affairs, this distinction is an important one.

This chapter has two sections. The first part uses comparative analysis to draw out the most important institutional factors that have produced change. It assesses the kinds of change that have occurred and focuses on explanations of *incremental* institutional change. The second part provides a summary of the impact of these institutions on governance in their respective regions. Throughout this dissertation it is has argued that *governance* and *scale* matter. The adoption of RSPBs in our two case studies is not benign. It has impacted who makes decisions, the kinds of decisions that are made and how they are made in both city-regions.

#### INTERPRETING INCREMENTAL INSTITUTIONAL CHANGE: MAJOR SHIFTS AND DRIVERS

In both cases, the adoption of an RSPB has been interpreted as an incremental institutional shift. The creation of these organizations and the related Acts that support their mandates are an institutional layering—adding another dimension to regional politics. Thelen and Mahoney interpret the drivers of institutional change as stemming from the characteristics of the political context, the characteristics of institutions and the types of dominant change agents (2010a: 15). These characteristics and change agents influence the type of incremental institutional change that is experienced (layering,

---

<sup>119</sup> The City of Toronto accounts for 41 per cent of the population of the GTHA, while the City of Vancouver accounts for 26 per cent of the population of the GVRD.

conversion, drift, displacement). These characteristics, as they apply to each case study, are discussed here.

#### Political and institutional contexts and dominant change agents

The political and institutional contexts differ quite significantly in our two case studies. Translink in Greater Vancouver was adopted where there were already well-defined regional institutions such as the GVRD and the Vancouver Regional Transit System of BC Transit, as well as existing mechanisms to coordinate growth management (through the Livable Regions Strategic Plan). In contrast, the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area did not have such institutions and its constituent municipalities do not have a history of close cooperation like that which is seen across the municipalities of Greater Vancouver (which never experienced amalgamation). Because of this, the creation of Metrolinx has, in a sense, been more formative in defining the regional political space. It is the first such organization to operate across the GTHA, other than the short-lived Greater Toronto Services Board.

The dominant agents of change leading to the adoption of these entities come from a variety of sources. For Greater Vancouver a number of influential reports and studies on the need for integrated multimodal transportation planning raised the profile of transportation governance in the 1980s and 1990s. These reports, combined with a view that the existing system was inadequate and fragmented, opened the dialogue for institutional reform. This was a period of problem recognition and issues framing that would guide the forms of engagement, resources, support and scope of a regional entity.

Documents from this time stress a need for regional and local control.<sup>120</sup> The NDP government of Premier Clark placed a focus on urban/regional affairs and was amenable to dialogue with the GVRD and its constituent municipalities. At the same time, the funding structure for BC Transit was called into question. It was increasingly thought that revenue for transportation investments should be raised closer to the regions where it is spent, rather than through general revenue contributions of the provincial government. In the political context of a supportive provincial government and with strong advocacy from the GVRD and its municipalities, there was impetus for reform of transportation governance. These actors, along with influential business and industry associations, acted as the dominant change agents for reform. The resulting organization—Translink—was a negotiation between the provincial government, the GVRD and its constituent municipalities, where there was already a strong connection within the governance structure among these groups. The scope of their thinking led to Translink being the world’s first multimodal transportation authority. It also resulted in an organization that was, in its first manifestation (1999-2007), led by municipalities and linked by governance structure to the GVRD.

As in the case of Greater Vancouver, a series of reports raised the profile of transportation and transit issues for the Greater Toronto region in the late 1990s and early 2000s. In particular, there was a focus on the costs of congestion, both in economic and environmental terms. Like in Greater Vancouver’s case, this period was one of problem recognition and issues framing wherein the need for regional policy action was identified. The Greater Toronto Services Board was instrumental in identifying regional problems

---

<sup>120</sup> E.g., *Freedom to Move—Report of the Greater Vancouver Transportation Task Force* (1988); *Transport 2021: A Long-Range Transportation Plan for Greater Vancouver* (1993); the *South Coast Transportation System Plan* (1994).

and areas for action. However, it was given a limited mandate and no resources. This significantly limited the policy capacity of the board and it was eventually disbanded. In the creation of Metrolinx, the dominant change agent was very much the Liberal Provincial Government of Dalton McGuinty. The Province initiated the Central Ontario Smart Growth Panel. From the panel's reports stemmed a number of recommendations and initiatives known as "Places to Grow." Metrolinx was created as part of this strategy. While other actors across the GTHA had raised the need for increased coordination on transportation and land use, the final Places to Grow Strategy (2005) was very much provincially derived and provincially-funded. Both the strategy and Metrolinx were formative in the institutionalization of the GTHA region.

Through the creation of these two entities, both provincial governments have entered into a period of strong involvement in regional affairs, but in different ways. In Greater Vancouver, British Columbia had been the regional transportation services provider (through BC Transit) prior to the creation of Translink. The creation of Translink was a devolution of power to the local/regional level. Local governments took increased financial responsibility for transportation provision and were the controlling board members of the entity. Translink was created as a multimodal transportation authority by the provincial government, but as is stated in its Act, "the authority is not an agent of the government" (SCBCTA Act 1998: 2.3). A report from the Auditor General of BC describes the GVRD as a "controlling shareholder" of Translink (2001: 44). In contrast, Metrolinx was created as a Crown Agency, which makes it an agent of the provincial government. Initially, its governance structure included local representation. As an institution, however, it is closely tied into provincial prerogatives through "Places

to Grow” and is largely provincially funded. Also, with Metrolinx, it is the Ontario Minister of Transportation who may issue directives to the organization and gives the final approval for yearly business plans. With Translink, it is the Mayors’ Council that fulfills these roles.

The concept of path dependency is often used in historical institutionalist analyses like this one. Certainly, we can see that existing political, historical and institutional contexts have distinctly framed policy responses and interactions in each region. Developments in Greater Vancouver, and particularly the relationships between provincial, regional and local governments surrounding the creation of Translink, are consistent with past interactions. They are consistent with the characterization of “gentle imposition” that is so often used to describe local-provincial relations in BC (Tennant & Zirnherlt 1973). There was no great disjuncture or external shock wherein a new pathway of institutional change was established. Similarly, the interactions surrounding the creation of Metrolinx are consistent with previous developments in the region, such as a willingness by the provincial government to strongly assert its preferences when it comes to local/regional affairs. But path dependency does not tell the whole story. While patterns of interactions and context constrain the range of options that are available (path dependency), this does not delineate the nature of this change. For this we turn to the concepts of incremental institutional change outlined by Thelen and others (Steinmo and Thelen 1992; Thelen 2000; Streeck & Thelen 2005; Mahoney & Thelen 2010).

#### Explanations of change: layering

With institutional layering, agency (e.g., actors, organizations, layers of government) and/or structure (e.g., rules, laws, control modes) are added to existing institutions.

Applied to our cases, the RSPBs exhibit such layering where a new set of rules and practices is added to the existing institutional architecture, thereby altering the structure (through the addition of a new one). This has impacted both urban politics and multi-level government relations in both regions.

When each RSPB was created, a preexisting planning framework was in place that operated in a nested fashion with local plans requiring the compatibility of higher level ones (e.g., at the provincial level and in the case of BC, at the regional level through the GVRD). The creation of Metrolinx and Translink added *agency* to the existing framework—they are separate from the preexisting institutional architecture. Their creation also altered the *structure* of transportation governance in the region—in both cases their respective Acts give them the authority to create ‘rules’ and ‘laws’ governing the region such as transportation plans that require conformity at the local level and authority over certain revenue measures. Also, as has been discussed in the case studies, both RSPBs have taken on an ‘institutionalizing’ role. They are increasingly an independent force in regional politics. An example of this is how they interact with the federal government in a way that is not seen with other entities. They are treated as different and separate.

The 2007 revisions to Translink’s Act reinforced this separateness by divesting the GVRD from its governance structure. Many interpreted the adoption of a corporate board at this time as a way increasing provincial control of the entity. However, Translink’s corporate board still reports to municipally elected representatives on strategic issues through the Mayors’ Council (the Mayors’ Council was created under the 2007 revisions to the SCBCTA Act). The separation of GVRD’s board from the

governance of Translink by the creation of the Mayors' Council increases its independence from the regional district, cementing it as an independent actor in the region. This is partly evident in how Translink is treated within the GVRD's regional planning process—akin to a local government.

The case of Metrolinx is different. Metrolinx, as an agency of the provincial government, is intimately bound to it. This is particularly the case because Metrolinx at present relies so heavily on provincial funding. Even in this case, however, we see some evidence of 'separateness'. As was discussed in Chapter 6, Metrolinx has a distinct organizational culture from that of the MoT. Also, although provincial priorities and Metrolinx are very much intertwined, in many respects Metrolinx is treated by the media as a separate entity. It is often painted as an intermediary expert organization—a technocracy. Such discourse was evident in the media reports surrounding Toronto and the TTC's pushback on Presto card integration. As a newer organization than that of Translink, Metrolinx's processes of 'institutionalization' are in their infancy.

Overall, both institutions have added another layer to regional governance in their respective regions and interactions within the regional political architecture have shifted because of this. The issues of transparency and accountability, the adoption of a corporate board, the increasing use of public private partnerships and the expansion of new revenue tools into uncharted waters raise questions about how these entities will be evolving in future years. Could they be setting transportation governance in their regions on dramatically different course? To consider this question further, we turn now to the concepts of conversion, drift and displacement.

Evidence of conversion, drift or displacement?

RSPBs exhibit features of hybrid institutions. These were described in chapter 3 on a range of spectrums—from governance to government, from decentralized to centralized and from public to private. Both case studies are of relatively new institutions; nevertheless, we see in their short histories a mutability wherein they shift along these spectrums. In Greater Vancouver, citizens groups like ‘Keep Translink Public’ have arisen to push back on what they see as a drift towards the privatization and corporatization of the entity. Similarly, groups such as the ‘Clean Train Coalition’ have struggled to engage with Translink, and have called on them to be more open and accountable to the public. These actors, along with local governments, regional actors and business associations have tried to influence the direction of change in the two RSPBs, to varying degrees of success. How far has such change gone? Do we see evidence of conversion, drift or displacement?

*Conversion* refers to the redeployment of institutions toward new or changed purposes wherein the institutions themselves might not change, but are used in a different way than before or are changed towards a new set of goals. We can see the possibilities for this in our two case studies, particularly in the case of Metrolinx, which could expand its functions beyond that of regional transit and towards local service provision. Further, as was expressed by a number of interviewees, it is anticipated that transportation investments will play an increasingly important role in guiding growth in the region. These could expand their presence in land use planning. This is something that Translink is already pursuing through the creation of a real estate arm. The scope of these institutions could also be increased, redeploying them to a new purpose. This could be

achieved through a layering of new responsibilities or a reorientation of activities towards, for example, a broader economic development mandate. Translink has now operated under both an NDP provincial government and, now, a Liberal one. As yet, Metrolinx has only operated under the provincial government of Liberal Dalton McGuinty. A change in provincial leadership could certainly lead to the conversion of these institutions towards a new or changed purpose, should the incoming government favour a different approach. Both entities have already experienced significant legislative changes and future changes can surely be expected. It is just not clear what form they would take.

*Drift* refers to a situation where there is little change in structure, but rather a change in policy direction characterized by the absence of updating existing institutions to changing circumstances. As Hacker notes, this can be an active strategy for some actors (2004: 248). In this way, changing sets of circumstances alter the effects of institutions and policies. Both Translink and Metrolinx are beholden to other levels of government for their funding. We could see drift in the future resulting from a shift in government funding, priorities and support. In addition, as both Metrolinx and Translink seek to expand their revenue sources, there could be an increasing disconnect between the entities' governance structures and their powers of taxation, with corporate board members as the key decision makers on these issues. As Smith has surmised, a disconnect such as this could increasingly undermine the legitimacy of these organizations. He writes:

In Vancouver, crunch time has come. Metro Vancouver and related regional authorities such as Translink increasingly lack the mandate to make regional decisions without an appropriate accountability base.... That leaves the question, "What next"? If not now, then very shortly, the Province of British Columbia and

Metro Vancouver (and the GVTA and its successor the SCBCTA) will be forced to recognize that accountability concerns may overwhelm the considerable regional successes of this past century in BC's largest metropolitan district. It will be reactions to new regional charges/services that will tip the balance.... Whatever the backbreaking straw, the regional camel in metropolitan Vancouver will increasingly be under structural pressure and citizen scrutiny over its governance. (Smith 2009: 257)

These are developments to pay close attention to in the coming years.

Institutional *displacement* refers to a situation where new models emerge, eventually displacing the existing institution in its entirety. Certainly, a major lesson from our case studies is that regional institutions are changeable. Institutional displacement is nowhere evident in our case studies at present, but should not be discounted as a future possibility. One theme that we see across the case studies is an up-scaling of regional policy problems. In the words of Delaney and Leitner,

The politics surrounding changes in contemporary urban policy-making is a politics of scale. In these politics, scale is not a neutral background. Rather, it is a discursive frame used by competing interests to define or redefine the appropriate location of political power and the territorial extent of specific policies and regulations. (Delaney & Leitner 1997 quoted in McCann 2003: 160)

It is possible that institutional displacement could stem from such an avenue—by conceiving of policy issues at an even broader geographic scale that would hence require new institutions to govern across this space. The federal government's major investments in the Asia Pacific and Ontario-Quebec Gateways and Corridors Initiatives are examples of such regional upscaling—conceiving of the regions in economic and trade terms. In this way policy scope could be expanded, whereby existing institutions would be displaced by others with a more encompassing mandate. In the case of Greater Vancouver, the GVRD has a broad mandate and works with Translink, but not above it.

Feasibly, this could change in the future with Translink being displaced by the GVRD or a similar type of institution.

We have used historical institutionalism in this study as a frame to: delineate between organizations and institutions; emphasize the importance of context; interpret the internal dynamics of institutions and the role of agency; and finally, to interpret how change occurs. In both cases, the impacts of the creation of RSPBs on the regions have been significant. But the process has also been relatively gradual; hence, we found that delineating the nature of change through incremental interpretations is useful. In particular, we see evidence of institutional layering in both cases through the additions of agency and structure. The concepts of conversion, drift and displacement have been applied to our cases, but at the present time we do not see evidence of these elements of incremental institutional change.

#### IMPACT OF RSPBs ON REGIONAL GOVERNANCE

Through the two case studies, this dissertation has explored how RSPBs impact regional politics, the nature of their relationship with other levels of government and citizens and their impacts on accountability. In the relatively limited literature on RSPBs, several propositions are evident. For example, that their adoption:

- i. Promotes regional coordination in specific policy spheres (Foster 2000);
- ii. Increases planning capacity (Miller in Atkins & Hamilton eds. 2008; Boddy & Parkinson 2004; Kemp ed. 2003; Lorinc 2006; Schechter 1996);
- iii. Creates a platform to consider the 'regional good' (Katz 2000);
- iv. Creates functional specialization (Stephens & Wikstrom 2000);
- v. Increases resources in their areas of specialization (Foster 1999);
- vi. Can more equitably allocate or distribute resources across a region (Foster 2000, 2001; Sandler 1992);
- vii. Offers a counter-weight to planning decisions dominated by business-led regimes (Stone 1993)

- viii. Is part of an emerging trend towards ‘new-state spaces’ that prioritize development for certain economic regions so as to meet the needs of international competition (Brenner 2000, 2004; Brenner & Theodore 2002b; Brenner, Jessop, Jones & Macleod 2003); and,
- ix. Can insulate regional decision-making from accountability. (Smith 2009; Frisken 2007)

This section will now apply each of these propositions as a way of assessing the impact of Metrolinx and Translink in their respective regions.

On the first four propositions, we see that both entities have indeed promoted regional coordination, increased planning capacity in their respective areas, created a platform for regional issues, and are functionally specialized in the area of transportation. Regional coordination has been supported by the development of regional transportation plans in both cases. In Greater Vancouver, the regional transportation plan is meant to be consistent with the broader Livable Regions Plan of the GVRD, while in GTHA, Metrolinx’s transportation plan is part of the Province’s growth strategy (*Places to Grow Act* 2005). These plans are nested, with local government plans needing to conform to the regional transportation strategy and, above that, to the growth strategies. In the case of Toronto, the regional growth strategy and the regional transportation plan both fall under the purview of the province. In Greater Vancouver, the 2007 revisions to the *SCBCTA Act* removed the direct link to the GVRD in Translink’s governance structure, and some interviewees expressed their feeling that there is a disconnect now between the two processes. The regional growth strategy is determined by local government consensus through the GVRD, where Translink is also treated as a local government stakeholder in the process (requiring ratification of the plan). The updating of the growth strategy requires an inordinate amount of consultation between all of the actors and the

resulting document is one built on compromise and negotiation. The GTHA, on the other hand, is provincially-directed (through consultation with municipalities and districts as part of the process). When it comes down to the implementation of specific projects, there remains a great deal of negotiation between the various partners. Both the Richmond-Airport-Vancouver line (or Canada line) in Greater Vancouver and the Airport-Rail-Link in Greater Toronto are examples of how the politics of large infrastructure are negotiated in practice. Both RSPBs have increased regional coordination on transportation issues, but in different ways, and their organizational structure impacts the connection between various interests.

Related to mechanisms for regional coordination, both entities have increased planning capacity, created a platform for regional issues, and are functionally specialized (propositions two to four). These capacities are related to the fifth proposition—that RSPBs increase the number of resources dedicated to their policy areas. We see that the creation of these bodies signifies a focus on the importance of regional, multimodal transportation to economic development, quality of life and environmental sustainability in their respective city regions. It raises the profile of these regional issues. Both entities have expanded their functions, revenue and employment since their creation—a sure indication that they have been successful in attracting resources. Their sheer size and their policy focus gives them leverage over other bodies. As expressed in an interview with Transport Canada:

I think we will see more of these entities in Canada. It will help with transportation. I think they will be more common. In the growing urban areas and especially the bigger the cities—Montréal, Toronto, Vancouver—if you don't have an entity like this, then the province will do it and they are not good at doing it. (Transport Canada, non-attributable personal interview, January 4 2011)

Provincial Ministries of Transportation have a very different focus than that of these RSPBs. They are more interested in the expansion of the highway and roads system. The multimodal mandates of RSPBs makes them enviable for other Canadian regions.

Evidence of the sixth proposition—that RSPBs more equitably allocate or distribute resources across a region—is unclear. Interviewees from suburban municipalities in both case studies felt that their areas were underserved and that the location of resources was inequitable. Large-scale transportation projects are ranked according to priority and many regional areas will not see the benefits of these investments. Further, as Keil and others have pointed out (2009; 2010), these entities are often focused on specific nodal development and, because of this, they overlook parts of the ‘in-between’ city. Equitability could be interpreted in a number of ways: equity in terms of forwarding the goals of social inclusivity (affordability) or equity in terms of geographically dispersed services and investments. Translink goes further than Metrolinx in expressing inclusivity and affordability as a stated aim. For example, procedurally, Translink has checks to ensure the fairness and accessibility of transit fares. Expressions of geographic equity are different for Translink and Metrolinx as Translink is responsible for the transit system as a whole while Metrolinx is focused on regional structures. The debates over the RAV line between Translink’s board and the province illustrate the issue of geography equity. Members of the board preferred an alternative and more affordable technology and route because it would allow more of the region to benefit (the line could be expanded to more areas). With pressure from the provincial government, this line of reasoning lost out. Some RSPBs in other countries do hold equity and social inclusivity as explicit organizational aims (Foster 2000, 2001; Sandler 1992). The relative absence of

articulated policy goals in this area in Canadian RSPBs is worth noting. Both Metrolinx and Translink engage more with 'quality of life' than with social equity discourse.

The seventh proposition is that RSPBs may offer a counter-weight to planning decisions dominated by business-led regimes (Stone 1993). The inclusion of business interests is important to the mandates of Metrolinx and Translink, particularly through their goods movement strategies. However, in interviews with Metrolinx and Translink executives, both conceded that engagement with the business community was underdeveloped at present and an area that they would be focusing on much more in the future as they further develop their goods movement strategies. There is little evidence of the types of 'business regimes' that Stone describes (1993) in the activities of Translink and Metrolinx. Both organizations have transit-oriented mandates and support nodal development. This is a different logic than that of the urban growth machine paradigm described by Stone (1993). However, while the pressures may be different, RSPBs can certainly facilitate urban growth. Expanding service delivery and planning across a regional area could be said to facilitate suburban and rural growth by increasing mobility in those areas, and this expansion would be favoured by developers as it could open up lower cost land for development.

While there is little evidence to support claims of Metrolinx and Trnaslink being engaged in "business regimes", there is evidence of engagement in a larger scale regime, involving not just the business sector, but major industrial and trade actors. I will refer to this as a regional *trade* regime. The four major properties of regimes are that they involve partners from both governmental and non-governmental sources, that collaboration is based on social production (resources linked to policy capacity), that there are

identifiable policy agendas and that there is a longstanding pattern of cooperation (Mossenberger and Stoker 2001: 829). We see such properties in our two case studies as they engage with regional trade imperatives. I will explain.

Metrolinx and Translink have partnered with provincial and federal economic development initiatives linked to international trade. These initiatives exhibit features of regional trade regime formation. Partnerships surrounding the development of gateways and corridors in both regions involve close relationships between governmental and non-governmental (specifically trade related industries) actors. This collaboration has significant resources attached to it and a high degree of policy capacity because of this. It is part of a broader national strategy that aims to enhance Canada's position in international trade through multibillion-dollar investments, and this is being done through a regional lens. Investments are being focused in Greater Vancouver through the Asia Pacific Gateway, in the Greater Toronto and Montreal through the Ontario-Quebec Gateways and Corridor Initiatives and in Atlantic Canada through the Atlantic Gateway and Trade Corridor. These initiatives are further supported by what the federal government is calling 'foreign trade zones'. The zones refer to measures to make Canada a business friendly tax regime in order to attract new investment and to facilitate export trade. As part of these measures, the federal government's 2009 budget eliminated a wide range of machinery and equipment tariffs and created export friendly programs such as the duty deferral program, the export distribution program and the exporters of processing services program (Government of Canada 2011). Though the federal government refers to these programs and tariff reductions as "foreign trade zone" they are not in fact restricted to a zone, but apply to the whole of Canada. Those involved in this

regional trade regime have an identifiable policy agenda, and it is one that is very much nationally driven.

While Metrolinx and Translink both engage with the ‘competitive cities’ frame, they are also increasingly being pulled into this emerging trade agenda. While Canada’s major gateways and corridors have long been part of a national strategy and have been central to Canada’s early development as a staples economy, there is something new about the present manifestations of these initiatives. Brenner and co-authors have described new state spaces emerging out of coalitions for regional growth.

Brenner hypothesizes on the emergence of new state spaces via the construction of new coalitions for regional growth. National economic systems would bring their most advanced economic regions into a more privileged and autonomous position in order to meet the highly competitive standards in the rivalry between national states (Brenner et al. 2003; Brenner 2004). In this way, regional development policies are made part of changing national and international policy coalitions. (Majoor and Salet 2008)

We see evidence of Canada engaging in these strategies not just through the Gateways and Corridors initiatives but also through the creation of a new regional economic development agency—the Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario (FedDev Ontario, est. 2009). In the past, regional economic development agencies were created with the aim of helping struggling regions (e.g., Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, est. 1987) or promoting economic diversification (e.g., Western Economic Diversification Canada, est. 1987). FedDev Ontario is quite a different creation as it is focused on Canada’s most advanced economic region, placing it in yet a more “privileged and autonomous position” (ibid.).

While the coalitions that are forming around the regional trade imperatives in Greater Vancouver and Southern Ontario-Quebec exhibit features of regime formation against the definition offered by Mossenberger and Stoker (2001: 829), one critical element is missing. These coalitions cannot yet be said to have longevity in their present manifestation. There is a newness to the approach that is being taken, with many of these initiatives being adopted as recently as 2009. Brenner's hypothesis that the emergence of new state spaces for regional growth is centred on international competitiveness certainly has pertinence to the issues discussed here. Regional actors such as Translink and Metrolinx are very central to such an agenda where the frame of reference is no longer competitive cities, but rather that of strategically competitive regions. Applications of these concepts will be an important area for future research, particularly as they relate to the place of RSPBs within broader state strategies.

This leads us to the final proposition—that RSPBs can reduce accountability. This issue has been prevalent across our two case studies. Frisken explains:

The special purpose authority tends to be favoured by those who want to ensure the 'businesslike' operation of special services (in other words, to make a service more financially independent of government, or to distance it from direct interference by elected politicians) while retaining some political control through the appointment and budget review process. Because the authority's members are usually appointed rather than elected, however, this approach is often criticized as an undemocratic way of providing city regional services. (2007: 41-42)

This is undoubtedly a major implication of the adoption of these bodies, which can be lessened or heightened depending on their governance composition (e.g., the inclusion of locally-elected and then appointed board members).

As we have seen in our case studies, citizens struggle to relate to these entities. Regional institutions are simply that much more distanced from local, neighbourhood and

community issues. Their hybrid structures also make them more difficult for citizens to readily engage with and understand. They are corporate structures that deliver services to clients, and yet they are much more. They play an important role in growth management and land use and in our two cases their sets of revenue tools are in the process of being expanded. They are at once beholden to provincial direction and yet coordinate closely with local governments. They are increasingly being pulled into national strategies as well. When citizen groups attempt to lobby these entities, they often do so at multiple scales. For example, the Clean Train Coalition in Greater Toronto has lobbied local government councilors and Members of Provincial Parliament in addition to the board of Metrolinx on the issue of rail corridor electrification. The collaborative nature of RSPBs means that there is dispersed agency. All of these actors may influence policy direction. Given this, chains of accountability are undeniably murkier than in a traditional bureaucracy.

In our two case studies, political and bureaucratic accountability are expressed differently. Metrolinx is a Crown Agency with a corporate board and no local government representation. It is accountable to the Provincial Government through the Minister of Transportation. Metrolinx partners with local governments, but it retains sole ownership and control of any transit assets throughout their life. Translink is a regional transportation authority and not an agent of government; it has a corporate board and, above that, a council of mayors of the region responsible for budgetary approvals. Political accountability in Translink's case is more dispersed between local governments and the provincial government. Related to this, local governments contribute to the entity through property taxation and by allocating their portions of the Gas Tax Fund to the

entity. Transportation is certainly an important provincial issue, but it is rarely a major focus of electoral campaigns. Opportunities to influence the political direction of RSPBs through provincial elections can be expected to be fewer than at the local level where transportation is a major focus. Therefore, RSPBs that are highly provincially directed, such as Metrolinx, have less political engagement with citizens through democratic accountability. The claims of inefficiency and parochialism made against local government representatives during calls for a corporate board in our two case studies were unsupported and unproven. The local government representatives that I interviewed contested these claims, made by actors such as the Boards of Trade and the provincial governments in both cases. Such claims are of course quite subjective. What can be said is that locally elected and then appointed board members will often make different kinds of decisions than that of a corporate board. The RAV line in Vancouver is one illustration of this, where many representatives favored system expansion over certain technological and route considerations.

Apart from political and bureaucratic forms of accountability, these entities engage with professional, performance related and deliberative forms of accountability. As specialist or expert organizations, both Metrolinx and Translink open themselves up to “professional accountability” through expert scrutiny and peer review (Erkkila 2007). These entities have a great deal of internal expertise and also hire outside consultants. As service delivery organizations, they are focused on output measurements and are client centred. This forms a large component of their reporting wherein client feedback is solicited and incorporated. For the adoption of large-scale projects, deliberative accountability becomes particularly important. Deliberative accountability refers to

public debate, transparency and access to information where the institutional features of such accountability are described as interactive, open and public (Erikkla 2007). Both Metrolinx and Translink have public consultation strategies, with Translink's being the more developed of the two through its "Be part of the plan" portal (Translink 2011c). Metrolinx's quarterly meetings are now public and meeting summaries are available in most cases. Similarly, meeting minutes are made available for Translink's board meetings and the public has the opportunity to present at any of its meetings (of which six are held a year). Key reports, white and green papers are all made available on both organizations' websites. The extensive document/transcript analysis that was conducted in undertaking the two case studies does reveal that debates on the various issues were more public under the locally represented board configuration. The process was more transparent, and dissention and multiple perspectives were made evident to the public. Under the corporate board configuration, on the other hand, a united front on decisions was presented to the public. Debates among board members (if they happened) are not accessible as a matter of public record; meeting minutes do not record such interactions and the voting record of the board members is not made public. Many issues are raised and debated in subcommittees, which are also not a matter of public record.

While the regional level presents an inherent difficulty when it comes to citizen engagement, this is particularly true as it relates to deliberative accountability. As new institutions, the relationships between these entities and citizens are also new and evolving. The hybridity and complexity of their structures, with multiple subsidiary companies, complicates these interactions. But even more, both organizations' use of PPPs presents a major obstacle to deliberative accountability.

PPPs involve the public sector partnership with a private party wherein the private sector assumes substantial financial, technical and operational risk in the project as opposed to the traditional procurement where risk is more public.<sup>121</sup> Both Metrolinx's proposed Air Rail Link and Translink's Richmond Airport Line (or Canada Line) are structured as PPPs. While contractors under traditional procurement are unbundled multiple firms, under PPPs they are bundled consortia. PPPs are often adopted at a much earlier stage of project development than in traditional procurement, thereby having greater influence over the scope and form of a project. A major feature of PPPs is that they introduce a greater degree of complexity to procurement processes and, in doing so, they problematize transparency, accountability and public engagement. Importantly, the confidentiality requirements of PPPs mean that full contract details are not generally made publicly available. Commercial confidentiality clauses stifle public debate where the details of contracts may be unknown. Further, the longevity of PPP contracts means that their duration may outlast many governments and election cycles. Unlike publicly delivered programs and services, PPPs (due to the nature of contractual obligations) do not open themselves up to debate in the way that public services do, particularly at election time. The way that PPPs are accounted for in budgets can also obfuscate the true cost of the venture.

In Canada, PPP options *must* be considered as a delivery model in order to be eligible for certain funding programs. For example, the federal Government's Building Canada Fund for economic stimulus included a stipulation that for any project receiving \$50 million or more, a PPP delivery option must be fully considered. PPPs are an

---

<sup>121</sup> Risk may be defined as: i) exogenous versus endogenous risk (e.g., variables that can or cannot be controlled) or, ii) legal/policy/political versus commercial risks (OECD 2010b: 19).

increasingly common vehicle through which to deliver infrastructure projects, and over half of OECD governments now have a dedicated PPP unit of some type (OECD 2010b: 11).<sup>122</sup> As part of this trend, Canada created the federal crown corporation Public Private Partnerships Canada in 2008. Six provincial governments have dedicated departments and agencies for the PPP model.<sup>123</sup> Of these, the Province of British Columbia has been the most active in using PPPs. It also has greatest number of acts and regulations for PPP management, which is understandable since it was an early adopter of these practices and has a dedicated PPP office. No Canadian acts or regulations regarding PPPs set standards of practice for community consultation for the specific case of PPPs. The use of PPPs by Metrolinx and Translink, particularly when combined with the political expediency of big infrastructure and big events, presents serious impediments to accountability.

Each of the accountabilities discussed here has a different structure or logic: political accountability operates through the structure of a democratic state; bureaucratic accountability through hierarchal and legal bureaucracies; professional accountability through expert organizations; performance accountability through a market structure; and, deliberative accountability through the public sphere (Erikklä 2007). Through the various debates that have emerged in the history of Metrolinx and Translink, we can clearly see the push and pull between these different logics.

---

<sup>122</sup> Countries with dedicated PPP units at the national level are: Australia, Belgium, Canada, Czech Republic, Denmark, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Korea, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, United Kingdom. Source: OECD 2010b:11).

<sup>123</sup> These are: Alberta (through the Alberta Treasury Board); British Columbia (through Partnerships BC); New Brunswick (through the Department of Supply and Services and the New Brunswick Department of Transportation); Nova Scotia (through Strategic Infrastructure Partnerships); Ontario (through Infrastructure Ontario) and; Quebec (through Infrastructure Quebec and Transport Quebec).

## CONCLUSION

This chapter has explored the nature of institutional change through the adoption of RSPBs in Greater Vancouver and Greater Toronto. It has focused on the dominant agents of change in both cases and has stressed explanations of incremental change. It has also compared the two case studies against major propositions drawn from the literature on this topic.

Throughout this chapter and the two preceding ones (Chapters 5 and 6), the impacts of Metrolinx and Translink in their respective regions have been demonstrated and discussed. We have argued, in agreement with Foster, that *institutional choices matter* (1999: 22). The adoption of RSPBs in two of Canada's city regions is not benign. It does change patterns of decision making, including *who* decides, *what* is decided and *how* it is decided. However, this impact can be subtle, and as we have argued here, is best interpreted at present as an institutional layering. Future patterns of institutional change will be intimately bound to the structure of funding and, related to this, accountability, testing the robustness and permanency of these relatively new institutions.

Next we turn to the concluding chapter, where the contributions and implications of the research are discussed.

*...[S]cale is not a neutral background. Rather, it is a discursive frame used by competing interests to define or redefine the appropriate location of political power and the territorial extent of specific policies and regulation. (McCann 2003: 160)*

RSPBs are a form of regional governance. These two basic characteristics (*regional* and *governance*) have been central to the explanations pursued in this dissertation.

Throughout, it has been argued and shown that both *scale* and *institutional choice* matter.

Policy development at the regional scale leads to specific configurations of co-operation and conflict between actors. RSPBs find themselves in a contest among the different visions, logics and needs of the urban region where the aims of inclusivity, environmental sustainability, economic competitiveness and livability converge and often compete. There is an imbalance among these aims as they are played out through these regional institutions. In Canada, state strategies (and funding) and provincial political imperatives can strongly influence policy development through the RSPBs. While they are a new institutional phenomenon in the Canadian context, they remain, like local governments, creatures of the provinces. Where RSPBs have been given agency, it has been tentative. Canada's major urban regions are the locus of substantial economic activity and, as such, are an important scale of policy intervention for provincial and federal governments. For upper level governments, regional issues can be too important to leave to the decision making of urban-regional actors.

This dissertation has explored the adoption of RSPBs. My review of these entities in Western Europe and North America has shown that they are indeed an emerging institutional phenomenon and that their structures are very much shaped by existing

political, historical and institutional dynamics. The two case studies of Metrolinx and Translink have delved into the details of how RSPBs are adopted in practice, and have examined the dominant change agents and the impacts of these institutions on governance and decision making in their respective regions. Each case study has highlighted major debates and conflicts, particularly around the issues of big infrastructure projects and big events. We have found that locating policy at the regional scale through the creation of these institutions does have specific impacts. Both Metrolinx and Translink have adopted progressive multimodal strategies for both the shorter and longer terms. They have been a catalyst for 'big thinking' on the future of both regions and on the measures that can be taken to ensure continued livability, sustainability and economic growth.

We have seen that RSPBs are flexible institutions and that this flexibility also means they are changeable. As evidence of this, both Metrolinx and Translink have shifted in their short existences from more locally engaged public bodies to more corporate ones. Both entities have struggled with the issue of political accountability and, specifically, with the inclusion of local actors and priorities in the policy process. Arguments that 'local politics gets in the way of implementation' have been levied against both RSPBs. Both entities have had broad ranging impacts on the regions in which they operate, but their roles and relationships to other actors and citizens are not always clear. These issues are linked to the dispersed agency inherent to *governance* as opposed to *government*.

Finally, the institutional changes apparent in both of the case studies have been interpreted as a *layering*, where agency and structure have been added to the existing architecture. This dissertation has stressed understandings of *incremental* institutional

change. It has also considered the impacts of RSPBs in the longer term by applying the concepts of conversion, drift and displacement. At this point, we turn concluding comments and offer some speculations about aspects of transit and transportation policy and the future directions of RSPBs.

#### Transportation and transit policy: Future directions for RSPBs

The success of Metrolinx and Translink has made them attractive to other regions in Canada. As has been discussed, these entities raise the profile of transportation and transit issues in their respective regions and, in doing so, they garner interest and support. The fact that Transportation Canada officials meet separately with both bodies is evidence of this (Transport Canada, non-attributable personal interview, January 4 2011).

Interviewees for both case studies were consistent in their assessment that both Metrolinx and Translink would have longevity. There was, however, divergence in opinion on what the governance structure of these entities will look like in the longer term. The ideas driving these institutions, the coalitions of actors that form around them and the resulting policies that are pursued will be major factors influencing future directions and institutional change. In all of this, the attainment of stable, long term funding will be critical to how these institutions and collaborations evolve.

In the absence of stable, long term funding, Metrolinx and Translink will be beholden to provincial and federal contributions, particularly for capital investments. As a result, the provincial and federal governments will have a significant influence on the organizations' strategic projects and priorities (which they already do). More importantly, in the absence of such funding, they would be subject to a changeable operating climate. This makes the adoption of strategic infrastructure projects requiring large-scale

investments difficult—and this is something that local governments in Canada are all too familiar with.

Penny Ballem, city manager for the City of Vancouver, addressed these issues in my interview with her. She asked:

How do you hold senior levels of governments more accountable to the expectations that they have laid out in these corporations? None of the academics actually answer this question. They focus instead on what is wrong with these organizations. There are some problems there, but the real issue is that the governments to whom they are accountable are not playing by the rules. (Penny Ballem, personal interview, May 4, 2010)

Her comments speak to the often-expressed frustration of local and regional actors that they constantly need to shift priorities in the face of changing political climates, making long term planning extremely difficult. We have seen that both Metrolinx and Translink are subject to such shifts. This is particularly true of Metrolinx, which, as a provincial agency, is intimately tied to Premier Dalton McGuinty's vision for development. Were there to be a change in government, the priorities of Metrolinx could shift significantly.

In the areas of transportation and transit policy, the creation of a national transit strategy would be one way to regularize policy priorities and funding. Canada is the only G8 country without a national transit strategy (OECD 2010a). Also, spending levels on transportation overall are lower than in many other OECD countries. For example, in comparison to European countries, Canada spends less on transport overall<sup>124</sup> (OECD 2010a). Organizations such as the Federation of Canadian Municipalities have called on the Government of Canada to create more stable transportation funding and to adopt a national transit strategy (FCM 2009). In a similar vein, an OECD territorial review of

---

<sup>124</sup> Federal spending on transportation in Canada (combined with spending on economic affairs) as a share of total government spending was less than that of other OECD countries in 2005 (OECD 2010a: 12).

Toronto states that federal funding for transportation and transit initiatives could be significantly increased in Canada, akin to what is seen amongst OECD peer countries (OECD 2010a). Hjartarson, Hinton and Szala also comment on these issues, stating:

The transit sector is rife with blame-avoidance, credit-taking, and intergovernmental tension. Transit governance in this country needs to be rationalized. Local transit authorities should be uploaded to regional transport agencies. And, all funding, including federal, needs to be directed at this regional level. Efficient public transit is crucial to the success of large city regions. And successful large city regions are lynchpins of a vibrant economy in a globalized world. These facts are widely accepted. Most countries have adjusted their public policies accordingly. Canada, however, is a laggard. Put simply, a well-designed national strategy and targeted strategy will generate more value and go further. (Hjartarson, Hinton & Szala 2011).

They argue for the adoption of national strategies within a competitive city-regions framework, but also assert that responsibilities for transit should be uploaded to regional agencies (i.e., the Translink model). Apart from a national transit strategy, provincial governments can also create such regularized funding. For example, British Columbia has done this by allocating a portion of the provincial hydro levy and fuel tax to Translink. Here, I join the call of many others for the provision of stable, expanded and long term funding for transportation and transit by the provincial and federal governments.

There is yet another option. Both Metrolinx and Translink are entering periods where they seek to secure a wider range of revenue tools linked to economic instruments. These could take the form of a carbon tax, road user fees (e.g., a congestion charge) or other types of tolls and charges. Such economic instruments, which aim to incentivize certain behavior, are little used in Canada at present. Their adoption would be contentious. As both Metrolinx and Translink seek to expand their revenue tools, they will have to grapple with the inherent accountability issues of such measures. For

example, citizens may question the role of non-elected authorities with corporate boards in making such important revenue decisions for their regions. The adoption of such measures would have to carefully balance these concerns. The expanded use of economic and other instruments would also have important implications for the institutionalization of these entities in the longer term. It would set them on a more independent and steady course, distancing them from provincial, federal and local political swings.

The need for stable independence is a key point. RSPBs are advocated as institutional solutions to interjurisdictional fragmentation and lack of coordination, because of certain features that they are meant to embody. Ideally, they should have:

...the capacity to build a consensus for a comprehensive long-term shared image of where the region is, and where it should be going; [...] strong incentives for the broad institutional participation of, and power sharing among, all interested public, private and non-profit organizations within the region [...] facilitated through a bottom-up sub regional planning process, and community outreach programs; the participation of the next higher level of government (state, province, republic) so as to provide appropriate devolution of power, coordination and administrative processes for dealing with local governments and the eventual expansion of development beyond the initial geographic boundaries of the regional institution; appropriate authority, resources, and incentives to help implement regionally approved policies; [...and]; some built-in procedure for dispute resolution leading to binding agreements, such as mediation and arbitration. (Rothblatt 1999: 25-26)

These institutional features are a tall order. Their realization could lead to transformative policy development across city-regions. Both Translink and Metrolinx have progressive visions for the future of their respective regions. For example, Metrolinx's "the Big Move" aims to revitalize communities, encourage healthy lifestyles and reduce our society's dependence on fossil fuels (2008c). Translink's "Transport 2040" also encompasses these aims. Both entities' long-term strategies seek to combat the

destructive impacts of sprawl and congestion endemic to our urban-regions. These are societal-level transformations. They aim to change not just how we move about a city, but also how we relate to each other through our communities by helping people make a shift to more sustainable lifestyles. The capacity of both entities to meet these goals will depend on the characteristics outlined by Rothblatt above. Independent, long term funding and meaningful partnerships will be critical to these aims.

#### Contributions, limitations and outstanding research questions

The major contribution of this dissertation has been the examination of a relatively new institutional phenomenon—RSPBs—and their impact on governance and decision making through case studies in two of Canada’s urban-regions. While there is great interest in the applicability of these institutional forms to other contexts, there is very little empirical literature on RSPBs, particularly here in Canada. This dissertation has sought to contribute in some small way to filling this void. We have also tracked RSPBs as a trend across North America and Western Europe in order to assess their prevalence and variation across these areas. As part of this work, we have developed and applied various typologies to this emerging institutional phenomenon in an effort to better describe and understand them. These typologies also assist in the comparative assessment of these entities, which, as we have seen, can differ significantly across contexts.

The dissertation has also made some theoretical contributions. It has applied the concepts of incremental institutional change drawn from the works of Thelen and others to this phenomenon (Steinmo and Thelen 1992; Thelen 2000; Streeck & Thelen 2005; Mahoney & Thelen 2010). This is a relatively new approach within historical institutionalism and one that has been found to provide clarity to the complexities

inherent in regional governance as a concept. A final major contribution of the dissertation has been the application of regime theory at the regional scale. Although I have been tentative in my assessment of regimes, the concepts drawn from regime theory have been useful in illuminating the strategies of actors at this level.

Next we must identify certain limitations of this dissertation. First, because it examines a relatively new institutional phenomenon, the conclusions that can be drawn from an assessment of these institutions are somewhat limited. Both Metrolinx and Translink are continuing to evolve. As has been discussed, the ability of these entities to obtain stable long term independent funding (a task to which they are both now turning) will be a major factor influencing future institutional change. The direction of this change is as yet unknown. Second, we opted to conduct in-depth case study analysis over large N analysis (depth over breath) as the research method for this dissertation. In doing so, the conclusions that are drawn about these entities are limited largely the two cases. While there are good reasons for choosing case study analysis (i.e., institutional contexts differ so dramatically that comparisons can be difficult to justify), there are also important lessons that could be learned from large-scale analyses. Also, the relationship between citizens and RSPBs has not been a major focus of this research. Interactions between citizen groups in both cases have been examined, but there remain questions about how citizens interact with, relate to and understand RSPBs more generally. Investigation of this issue has been outside of the scope of this research, but it is important. Finally, this work has focused on governance and decision making processes and has not rigorously *evaluated* the efficiency and effectiveness of these entities (e.g., through performance indicators). We chose to focus on certain variables (institutions, ideas, coalitions and

policy capacities) over other options and some might consider this a limitation.

While the dissertation has sought to answer certain questions, in doing so, it has also posed new ones. Because RSPBs are such a new phenomenon, there are many areas into which research could be expanded. My focus was on transportation and transit governance, and these appear to be one of the most common types of RSPB. But are these bodies also being created in other policy areas? Related to this, what are the implications of having multiple RSPBs working across policy domains with intersecting memberships? Have some RSPBs for transportation and transit taken on additional functions (e.g., economic development roles) in other contexts? What are the implications of this? There is a great deal to be learned from comparative work in this area. Further, my dissertation examines RSPBs of the more formal variety, but as was mentioned in the review of RSPBs in the United Kingdom and in the case of greater Calgary (through Calgary Regional Partnerships), there are also more informal networks of actors that are emerging in these issues. There is work to be done in terms of understanding how more informal RSPBs can induce collaboration and partnership. As has been discussed throughout this dissertation, the relationship between RSPBs and citizens is a very important one. How do citizens understand, relate to and interact with RSPBs and what forms of accountability do these relationships imply? There could be important lessons to be drawn from comparative research on these issues. For example, are some RSPBs able to better engage citizens, why? Finally, this dissertation has primarily focused on developments in Canada (and to a lesser extent Western Europe and the United States). However, it is Asian, Indian, and Central and South American cities that are experiencing the greatest growth in their urban regions. Megacities such as Guangzhou, Delhi and

Mexico City are staggeringly large and complex.<sup>125</sup> Future research on RSPBs could focus on their possibilities and uses in these contexts.

Ongoing patterns of urbanization make the study of urban-regional governance increasingly important. Canada's urban regions have only just begun to adapt governance structures to deal with the myriad of issues faced at this scale, such as the need for comprehensive regional transit strategies and integrated land use to support this. It is hoped that this dissertation makes a small contribution to future policy developments in this area by examining one promising type of institutional response—RSPBs.

---

<sup>125</sup> Megacities are usually defined as metropolitan areas with a population excess of 10 million people.

## APPENDIX

### List of research interviews

Name Last	Name First	Organization	Position	Date of Interview	Attribution
Addie	Jean Paul	York University	PhD Student at the City Institute	08-Mar-10	Attributable
Ballem	Penny	City of Vancouver	City Manager	14-May-10	Attributable
Bedford	Paul	Metrolinx	Board Member and former head of planning for the City of Toronto	11-Mar-10	Attributable
Blasetti	Frank	Province of British Columbia	Assistant Deputy Minister for the Partnerships Department	06-Jul-10	Attributable
Corrigan	Derek	City of Burnaby	Mayor and Chair of BC Transit (1994-1997), former Chair of GVRD, member of Translink Mayor's Council	12-May-10	Attributable
Higgenbotham	John	Carleton University	Senior Distinguished Fellow, Past Assistant Deputy Minister at Transport Canada	17-Jan-11	Attributable
Howe	John	Metrolinx	Vice President of Investment Strategy and Project Evaluation	09-Mar-10	Attributable
Hunt	Marvin	City of Surrey	City councilor and past board member of Translink	17-May-10	Attributable
Jackson	Lois E.	City of Delta	Mayor, Chair of GVRD and member of Mayor's Council for Translink	13-May-10	Attributable
Jones	Pamela Goldsmith	City of West Vancouver	Mayor and member of Mayor's Council for Translink	18-May-10	Attributable
Keil	Roger	York University	Director of the City Institute	08-Mar-10	Attributable

Khan	Raymond	Metro Vancouver (GVRD)	Senior Regional Planner	14-May-10	Attributable
MacIsaac	Rob	Metrolinx	Chair of Metrolinx Board	12-Mar-10	Attributable
McArdle	Terry	CN Rail	Transportation Executive	10-May-10	Attributable
Moore	Greg	Port Coquitlam	Mayor and member of Mayor's Council for Translink	21-May-10	Attributable
N/A	N/A	Transport Canada	N/A	04-Jan-11	Non Attributable
N/A	N/A	Transport Canada	N/A	04-Jan-11	Non Attributable
N/A	N/A	Translink	N/A	10-May-10	Non Attributable
N/A	N/A	City of Burnaby	N/A	20-May-10	Non Attributable
N/A	N/A	City of Toronto	N/A	15-Mar-10	Non Attributable
N/A	N/A	City of Toronto	N/A	15-Mar-10	Non Attributable
N/A	N/A	Clean Train Coalition	Member	13-Mar-10	Non attributable
Olewiler	Nancy	Translink and Simon Fraser University	Board member of Translink	19-May-10	Attributable
Paddon	Robert	Translink	Vice President of Corporate and Public Affairs	10-May-10	Attributable
Polsuns	Andrew	Ontario Ministry of Transportation	Director of Transit Policy	09-Mar-10	Attributable
Pratt	Courtney	Toronto Region Research Alliance	Chairman	10-Mar-10	Attributable
Smith	Patrick J.	Simon Fraser University	Director of the Institute for Governance Studies	12-May-10	Attributable

Stephen	Jillian	City of Hamilton	Manager of Strategic Planning	26-Mar-10	Attributable
Thompson	Scott	Ontario Ministry of Transportation	Assistant Deputy Minister of Policy and Planning for the Ministry of Transportation	09-Mar-10	Attributable
Wei	Victor	City of Richmond	Director of Transportation Division	12-May-10	Attributable

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

---

- Adams, D. H. & Savitch, H. V. (1997). Central cities and suburbs. In R. K. Vogel (eds.), *Handbook of Research on Urban Politics and Policy in the United States*. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press.
- Alexander, E. R. (2005). Institutional transformation and planning: From institutionalization theory to institutional design. *Planning Theory* 4(3), 209-233.
- Alexander, E.R. (1993). Interorganizational coordination: Theory and practice. *Journal of Planning Literature* 7(4), 328-343.
- Andersen, O. J., & Pierre, J. (2010). Exploring the strategic region: Rationality, context, and institutional collective action. *Urban Affairs Review* 46, 218-240.
- Artibise, A.F.J. (1998). Regional government without regional governance, background report. Ottawa: Regional Municipality of Ottawa, Carleton.
- Artuso, A. (2009). Province eyes Metrolinx shakeup. *The Toronto Sun*, Feb. 15, 2009.
- Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations (2010). *About MPOs: A brief history*. URL: [www.ampo.org/content/index.php?pid=15](http://www.ampo.org/content/index.php?pid=15) [May 5th, 2010].
- Atkinson, H. P. & Wilks-Heeg, S. (2000). *Local Government from Thatcher to Blair: The Politics of Creative Autonomy*. Malden, Mass.: Polity Press.
- Atkinson, M. M. & Coleman, W. D., (1992). Policy networks, policy communities and the problems of governance. *Governance* 5(2), 154-180.
- Auditor General of British Columbia (1996). BC Transit: Managing operator productivity - its success as a market focused organization, performance audit. Victoria, BC.

- Auditor General of British Columbia (2001). *Transportation in Greater Vancouver: a review of agreements between the Province and Translink's and of Translink's governance structure*. Victoria, British Columbia.
- Bach, S. (2003). *The Development of the Urban Welfare State: A Case Study of the Regional Municipality of York*. Ottawa: Carleton University Dissertation.
- Bahl, R. & Linn. J. (1998). *Urban Public Finance in Developing Countries*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Barlow, I. M. (1991). *Metropolitan Government*. London; New York: Routledge.
- Bates, R. H., Levi, M., Rosenthal, J. L. & Weingast, B. R. (1998). *Analytic Narratives*. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press.
- Baumol, W. & Oates, W., (1988). *The Theory of Environmental Policy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- BC Transit (2011). *BC Transit History*. URL [www.bctransit.com/corporate/general\\_info/history.cfm](http://www.bctransit.com/corporate/general_info/history.cfm) [June 6, 2011].
- BCMC. (2007). *National Transit Strategy*. Ottawa: Federation of Canadian Municipalities Big City Mayor's Caucus.
- Benn, C. (2006). The history of Toronto: An 11,000 year journey. City of Toronto. URL [www.toronto.ca/culture/history/credits.htm](http://www.toronto.ca/culture/history/credits.htm) [January 1, 2009].
- Berelowitz, L. (2005). *Dream City: Vancouver and the Global Imagination*. Vancouver, Toronto, Berkley: Douglas and McIntyre.
- Berube, A. & Webber, C. (2008). Smarter, stronger cities: UK urban policy innovations and lessons for the United States. *Metropolitan Policy Program*, Brookings Institute: Center for Cities, 1-14.

- Bhattacharya, M., & Chakrabarty, B. (2008). *The Governance Discourse: A Reader*. New Delhi; New York: Oxford University Press.
- Bish, R. L. (2000). Evolutionary alternatives for metropolitan areas: The capital region of British Columbia. *Canadian Journal of Regional Science* 23, 1-19.
- Black, E. R. (1996). British Columbia: 'The spoilt child of confederation' in politics, policy. In R.K. Carty (ed.), *Politics, Policy and Government in British Columbia*. UBC Press, 18-31.
- Boddy, M., & Parkinson, M. (2004). Competitiveness, cohesion and urban governance. In M. Boddy, & M. Parkinson (eds.), *City Matters: Competitiveness, Cohesion and Urban Governance*. Bristol: Policy Press.
- Boin A., Kuipers, S. (2008). Institutional theory and the public policy field: A promising perspective for perennial problems. In J. Pierre, B. G. Peters & G. Stoker (eds.), *Debating Institutionalism*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.
- Booth, C., Richardson, T. (2001). Placing the public in integrated transport planning. *Transport Policy* 8, 141-149.
- Boothe, P., Dahlby, B., Rosen, H. S., & Smith, R. S. (2003). *Public Finance in Canada*. McGraw-Hill Ryerson.
- Borzel, T. A. (1998). Organizing Babylon - On the different conceptions of policy networks. *Public Administration* 76, 253-273.
- Boudreau, J.-A. (1999). Megacity Toronto: Struggles over differing aspects of middle-class politics. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 25(2), 771-781.

- Boudreau, J.-A. (2007). Making new political spaces: Mobilizing spatial imaginaries, instrumentalizing spatial practices, and strategically using spatial tools. *Environment & Planning A* 39(11), 2593- 2611.
- Boudreau, J.-A., Hamel, P., Jouve, B., & Keil, R. (2007). New state spaces in Canada: Metropolitanization in Montreal and Toronto compared. *Urban Geography* 28(1), 30-53.
- Boudreau, J.-A., Keil, R. & Young, D. (2009). *Changing Toronto: Governing Urban Neoliberalism*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
- Bourne, L. S., & Simmons, J. (2003). New fault lines? Recent trends in the Canadian urban system and their implications for planning and public policy. *Canadian Journal of Urban Research* 12(1), 22-35.
- Bourne, L. S., & Simmons, J. W. (2002). The dynamics of the Canadian urban system. *International Handbook of Urban System: Studies of Urbanization and Migration in Advanced and Developing Economies*. Edward Elgar Publishing.
- Bourne, L. S., Bunce, M., Taylor, L. & Luka, N. (2003). Contested ground: The dynamics of peri-urban growth in the Toronto Region. *Canadian Journal of Regional Science* 26(2-3), 251-269.
- Brenner, N. (2000). Building 'Euro-Regions': Locational politics and the political geography of neoliberalism in post-unification Germany. *European Urban and Regional Studies* 7(4), 319-345.
- Brenner, N. (2004). *New state spaces: Urban governance and the rescaling of statehood*. Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press.

Brenner, N. & Theodore, N. (2002a). Preface: From the “New Localism” to the spaces of neoliberalism. *Antipode* 34, 341–347.

Brenner, N., & Theodore, N. (Eds.). (2002b). *Spaces of Neoliberalism: Urban Restructuring in North America and Western Europe*. Malden, MA: Blackwell.

Brenner, N., Jessop, B., Jones, M., & G. Macleod (Eds.). (2003). *State/Space—A Reader Regulating Risk*. Oxford: Blackwell.

British Columbia (2006). A primer on regional districts. Local Government Department.

URL:

[www.cd.gov.bc.ca/lgd/gov\\_structure/library/Primer\\_on\\_Regional\\_Districts\\_in\\_BC.pdf](http://www.cd.gov.bc.ca/lgd/gov_structure/library/Primer_on_Regional_Districts_in_BC.pdf) [May 4, 2009].

British Columbia (2011). Highlights of the Community Charter, Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development. URL:

[www.cscd.gov.bc.ca/lgd/gov\\_structure/community\\_charter/legislation/charter\\_highlights.htm](http://www.cscd.gov.bc.ca/lgd/gov_structure/community_charter/legislation/charter_highlights.htm) [July 1, 2011].

British Columbia Ministry of Transportation (2007). Backgrounder: amendments to the GVTA Act. Document no. TRAN0017-000525, Victoria, BC.

British Columbia Transit Act (1996). *BC Transit Act*. RSBC 1996, Queen’s Printer, Victoria, BC.

British Columbia, Legislative Assembly (1995). *Growth Strategies Act*. Victoria, BC.

British Columbia, Legislative Assembly (1998). *Greater Vancouver Transportation Authority Act*. [Title changed to South Coast British Columbia Transportation Authority Act by the Greater Vancouver Transportation Authority Amendment

Act, 2007, SBC2007, c. 41, s. 1, effective November 30, 2007 (BC Reg 399/2007)].

Brunet-Jailly E., & Smith, P. J. (2007). Cascadia: The emergence of a North American border region. *Canadian Political Science Review*, (September) Special Issue.

Bula, F. (2010). Mayors fear province will create new tax for TransLink: Funding needed for \$1.4-billion Evergreen Line northeast of Vancouver. *The Globe and Mail*, March 18, 2010. URL: [www.theglobeandmail.com/news/national/british-columbia/mayors-fear-province-will-create-new-tax-for-translink/article1505216/](http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/national/british-columbia/mayors-fear-province-will-create-new-tax-for-translink/article1505216/) [March 18, 2010].

Bulmer, S. (1998). New institutionalism and the governance of the Single European Market. *Journal of European Public Policy* 5(3), 365 – 386.

Bunting, T. E., & Filion, P. (Eds.). (1991). *Canadian Cities in Transition*. Toronto: Oxford University Press.

Calthorpe, P., & Fulton, W. B. (2001). *The Regional City: Planning for the End of Sprawl*. Washington, D.C.: Island Press.

Campbell, G. (1998). Legislative session: Third session, 36th Parliamentary Hansard. Official Report of debates of the Legislative Assembly, Wednesday, July 29, 1998, Afternoon Sitting, Queen's Printer, Victoria, British Columbia, Canada, 12:11.

Campbell, S. & Fainstein, S. (2002). *Readings in Urban Theory*. Oxford, U.K.: Blackwell Publishers.

Castells, M. (1983). *The City and the Grassroots: A Cross-cultural Theory of Urban Social Movements*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

- Central Ontario Smart Growth Panel (2003). *Shape the future: Final report*. Government of Ontario.
- Cervero, R. (1989.). *America's Suburban Centers: The Land Use-Transportation Link*. Boston: Unwin Hyman.
- Children's Aid Society of Toronto (2008). *Child Poverty in the GTA*. Toronto: ON.
- Chisholm, D.W. (1989). *Coordination Without Hierarchy: Informal Structures in Multiorganizational Systems*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- City of Burnaby (2007). Translink governance legislation Bill 36: Report to Council. May 11, 2007, file no. 1750-20.
- City of Coquitlam (2011). Response to proposed Metro Vancouver Regional Growth Strategy bylaw no. 1136, 2010. Planning and Development Department. March 22, 2011, document no. 1047382v.1.
- City of Toronto (2004). Amalgamation in the City of Toronto: A case study. Strategic and corporate policy division, Chief Administrator's Office, Toronto: Ontario.
- City of Toronto Act* (2006). Province of Ontario Regulation. S.O. 2006, Chapter 11. Schedule A. Service Ontario e-laws.
- City of Vancouver (1997). Transportation and Transit Committee Agenda, Support item no. 3, policy report for traffic and transit, July 4, 1997, file no. 4101, cc file 5500. URL: [vancouver.ca/ctyclerk/cclerk/970729/tt3.htm](http://vancouver.ca/ctyclerk/cclerk/970729/tt3.htm) [June 6, 2011].
- Clean Train Coalition (2011). URL: [www.cleantrain.ca/](http://www.cleantrain.ca/) [July 10, 2011].
- Coleman, W.D. & Skogstad, G. (Eds.) (1990). *Policy Communities and Public Policy in Canada*. Toronto: Copp Clark Pitman.

- Coulter, K. (2009). Deep neoliberal integration: The production of 'Third Way' politics in Ontario. *Studies in Political Economy* 83(Spring), 191-208.
- Courchene, T. J. (2008). *Climate Change, Competitiveness and Environmental Federalism: The Case for a Carbon Tax*, background paper for Canada 2020 address.
- Courchene, T. J. & Telmer, C. R. (1998). *From Heartland to North American Region State: The Social, Fiscal and Federal Evolution of Ontario*. Toronto: Faculty of Management, University of Toronto.
- CUTA, Canadian Urban Transit Association (2010). *Transit Vision 2040*. Toronto: CUTA.
- Dahl, R. A. (2005). *Who Governs? Democracy and Power in an American City* (2nd ed.). New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Danielson, M.N. (1976). *The Politics of Exclusion*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Davies, J. S. (2002). Urban regime theory: A normative-empirical critique. *Journal of Urban Affairs* 24(1), 1-17.
- De Salvo, J. S. (1973). *Perspectives on Regional Transportation Planning*. Lexington, Mass., Heath.
- DeLeon, R. W. (1992). *Left Coast City: Progressive Politics in San Francisco, 1975-1991*. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas.
- DiGaetano, A. & Klemanski, J. S. (1999). *Power and City Governance: Comparative Perspectives on Urban Development*. University of Minnesota Press.
- DiNovo, C. (2009). Hansard, Legislative Assembly of Ontario. May 7, 2009, 39(1).

- Docherty, I. (2000). Rail transport policy-making in UK Passenger Transport Authority areas. *Journal of Transport Geography* 8, 157-170.
- Donald, B. (2002). The permeable city: Toronto's spatial shift at the turn of the millennium. *The Professional Geographer* 54(2), 190-217.
- Donald, B. (2002). The permeable city: Toronto's spatial shift at the end of the millennium. *The Professional Geographer* 54(2), 190-203.
- Downward, P. (ed.)(2003). *Applied Economics and the Critical Realist Critique*. London: Routledge.
- Dudley, G. F., & Richardson, J. J. (2000). *Why Does Policy Change? Lessons from British Transport Policy, 1945-1999*. London; New York: Routledge.
- Dupré, S. (1968). *Intergovernmental Finance in Ontario: A Provincial-local Perspective*. (A Study prepared for the Ontario Committee on Taxation) Toronto: Queen's Printer.
- Elkin, S. L. (1987). *City and Regime in the American Republic*. Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press.
- Erkkila, T. (2007). Governance and accountability – A shift in conceptualization. *Public Administration Quarterly* 31(1), 1-38.
- European Metropolitan Transport Authorities (2010). *EMTA New*. Spring 2010, 40, 1-6.
- Fainstein S. (1999). Can we make the cities we want? In R.A. Beauregard & S. Body-Gendrot (eds.), *The Urban Moment: Cosmopolitan Essays on the Late-20th-Century City*. Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Sage Publications.
- Fainstein, S. S. (2000). New directions in planning theory. *Urban Affairs Review* 35(4), 451-478.

- Falcon, K (2007). Legislative Session: Third Session, 38th Parliament  
Hansard. *Official Report of debates of the Legislative Assembly*, Wednesday,  
October 24, 2007, Afternoon Sitting, Queen's Printer, Victoria, British Columbia,  
Canada, 23: 3.
- FCM (2007). National Transit Strategy. Federation of Canadian Municipalities, Big City  
Mayors' Caucus, Ottawa.
- Fershau, J. E. (2004). *Stuck in gridlock: Agenda-setting and agenda management. A case  
study of TransLink, the Greater Vancouver transportation authority*. M.A. thesis,  
Simon Fraser University, Canada, unpublished.
- Filion, P., and McSpurren, K. (2007). Smart growth and development reality: The  
difficult co-ordination of land use and transport objectives. *Urban Studies* 44(3),  
501-523.
- Fiorina, M. (1995). Rational Choice and the New (?) Institutionalism. *Polity* 38(1), 107-  
115.
- Fleming, R. (2007). Legislative Session: Third Session, 38th Parliament  
Hansard, Official Report of debates of the Legislative Assembly, Thursday  
November 8, 2007, afternoon sitting, Queen's Printer, Victoria, British Columbia,  
Canada, 24:7.
- Flyvbjerg, B., Bruzelius, N., & Rothengatter, W. (2003). *Megaprojects and Risk*.  
Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press.
- Flyvbjerg, Bent. 2009. Survival of the 'unfittest': Why the worst infrastructure gets built  
and what we can do about it. *Oxford Review of Economic Policy*, 25(3), 344-367.

- Foran, T. (2009). Metrolinx prepares for next step without politicians on board.  
*Metroland West Media Group*, April 10 2009.
- Foster, K. (2000). *Smart Governance, Smart Growth*. Cambridge, MA: Lincoln Institute of Land Policy, Conference Paper.
- Foster, K. A. (1999). *The Political Economy of Special-purpose Government*. Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press.
- Foster, K. A. (2001). *Regionalism on Purpose*. Cambridge, MA: Lincoln Institute of Land Policy, Monograph.
- Fox, W. T. R., & Fox, A. B. (1940). Municipal government and special-purpose authorities. *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 207(1), 176-184.
- Frederickson, G. H. (2008). Whatever happened to public administration? Governance, governance everywhere. In B. Chakrabarty & M. Bhattacharya (eds.), *The Governance Discourse: A Reader*. Oxford University Press, 132-159.
- Freedom to Move - Report of the Greater Vancouver Transportation Task Force (1989). Volumes 1-5. Province of British Columbia, Ministry of Regional Development and the Greater Vancouver Regional District.
- Friskin, F. (2007). *The Public Metropolis: The Political Dynamics of Urban Expansion in the Toronto Region 1924-2003*. Toronto: Canadian Scholars Press Inc.
- Friskin, F. Bourne, L.S., Gad, G., & Murdie, R.A. (2004). Governance and social sustainability: The Toronto experience. In M. Polese & R. Stren *The Sustainability of Cities*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 68-97.

- Garber, J. A. & Imbroscio, D. L. (1006). The myth of the North American city reconsidered: Local constitutional regimes in Canada and the United States. *Urban Affairs Review*, 31: 596.
- Garcea, J., & LeSage, E. C. (2005). *Municipal Reform in Canada: Reconfiguration, Re-empowerment and Rebalancing*. Don Mills, Ont.: Oxford University Press.
- Gaudreault, C. & Lemire, P. (2006). The age of public infrastructure in Canada. Statistics Canada, Government of Canada: Ottawa.
- Geva-May, I. (2005). *Thinking Like a Policy Analyst: Policy Analysis as a Clinical Profession*. New York, N.Y.: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Gissendanner, S. (2003). Methodology problems in urban governance studies. *Environment and Planning C: Government and Policy* 21, 663-685.
- Glaister, S., Burnham, J., Stevens, H., & Travers, T. (2006). *Transport Policy in Britain*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Gleeson, Brendan (2003). The difference planning makes. *Environment and Planning A* 35(5), 765-70.
- Goetz, A. R., Dempsey, P. S., & Larson, C. (2002). Metropolitan planning organizations: Findings and recommendations for improving transportation planning. *Publius* 32(1)(Federalism and Surface Transportation), 87-105.
- Goldberg, M. A., & Mercer, J. (1986). *The Myth of the North American City: Continentalism Challenged*. Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press.
- Golden, A. & Brender, N. (2007). Sustainable urban transportation: A winning strategy for Canada. *Conference Board of Canada*, Ottawa, ON.

- Goldman, T., & Deakin, E. (2000). Regionalism through partnerships? Metropolitan planning since ISTEA. *Berkeley Planning Journal* 14, 46-75.
- Goldsmith, M. (2001). Urban governance. In R. Paddison (ed.), *Handbook of Urban Studies*. London: Sage Publications, 323-335.
- Goldsmith, M. (2005). A new intergovernmentalism? In B. Denter and L. E. Rose (eds.), *Comparing Local Governance*. Palgrave Macmillan.
- Gómez-Ibáñez, J., A., & Meyer, J. R. (1993). *Going Private: The International Experience with Transport Privatization*. Washington D.C.: Brookings Institute.
- Gonzalez, S., & Healey, P. (2005). A Sociological institutionalist approach to the study of innovation in governance capacity. *Urban Studies* 42(11), 2055-2069.
- Gordon, T. (2004). The return of vagrancy law and the politics of poverty in Canada. *Canadian Review of Social Policy* 54, 37-57.
- Government of British Columbia (2011). Gateway Program. URL: [www.th.gov.bc.ca/gateway/](http://www.th.gov.bc.ca/gateway/) [Nov. 28, 2011].
- Government of Canada (2009). National Policy Framework for Strategic Gateways and Trade Corridors. Ottawa, ON.
- Government of Canada (2011). Canada's Gateways. URL: [www.canadagateways.gc.ca/foreign-trade-zones.html](http://www.canadagateways.gc.ca/foreign-trade-zones.html) [Dec. 5 2011].
- Graham, K. A., Phillips, S. D., & Maslove, A. M. (1998). *Urban Governance in Canada: Representation, Resources, and Restructuring*. Toronto; Fort Worth: Harcourt Brace Canada.
- Grant, K. (2011). Metrolinx defends decision to buy diesel trains for rail link to Pearson. *The Globe and Mail*, Jan. 19, 2011. URL:

- [www.theglobeandmail.com/news/national/toronto/rail-link-to-pearson-wont-be-electric-by-pan-am-games/article1801419/](http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/national/toronto/rail-link-to-pearson-wont-be-electric-by-pan-am-games/article1801419/) [July 18, 2011].
- Greater London Authority Act*. 1999. Statutory Office: London.
- Greater London Transport Act*. 1999. Statutory Office: London.
- Greater Toronto Area Task Force Report [GTA Task Force] (1996). Toronto, ON: Queen's Printer for Ontario.
- Greater Toronto Services Board Act* (1998). S.O. 1998, Chapter 23. Ontario Regulation 136/99.
- Greater Toronto Transportation Authority Act* [GTTA Act] (2006). Province of Ontario regulation.
- Greater Vancouver Regional Transportation Authority Act* [GVTA Act] (1998). Province of British Columbia Regulation, Victoria BC, Queen's Printer.
- Greenbelt Act* (2005). Province of Ontario Regulation. Service Ontario e-laws.
- Greif, A. & Laitlin D. (2004). A theory of endogenous institutional change. *American Political Science Review*, 98:4.
- Hackworth, J. (2007). *The Neoliberal City: Governance, Ideology and Development in American Urbanism*. New York: Cornell University Press.
- Hall P. (2002). *Urban and Regional Planning*. Fourth edition, London: Routledge.
- Hall, P. (1998). *Cities in Civilization*. New York; Random House.
- Hall, P. (2002). *Cities of Tomorrow: An Intellectual History of Urban Planning and Design in the Twentieth Century*. 3rd edition. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Hall, P. & Taylor, R. C. R. (1996). Political Science and the three New Institutionalisms. *Political Studies* XLIV, 936-957.

- Hanna, K. S. & Walton-Roberts, M. (2004). Quality of place and the rescaling of urban governance: The case of Toronto. *Journal of Canadian Studies* 38(3), 37-67.
- Harding, A. (2007). Taking city regions seriously? Response to debate on city regions? New geographies of governance, democracy and social reproduction. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 31(2), 443-458.
- Harris, N. (1994). The emerging global city: Transport. *Cities* 11(5), 332-336.
- Harrison, J. (2007). From competitive regions to competitive city-regions: A new orthodoxy, but some old mistakes. *Journal of Economic Geography* 7, 311-332.
- Hay, C. (2008). Constructivist institutionalism. In R.A.W. Rhodes, S.A. Binder & B.A. Rockman (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Political Institutions*. Oxford University Press.
- Heinelt and D. Kubler (Eds.) (2005). *Metropolitan Governance: Capacity, Democracy and the Dynamics of Place*. Milton Park: Routledge.
- Henstra, D. (2010). Explaining local policy choices: A multiple streams analysis of municipal emergency management. *Canadian Public Administration* 53(2), 241-258.
- Herrschel, T., & Newman, P. (2002). *Governance of Europe's City Regions: Planning, Policy and Politics*. London; New York: Routledge.
- Hesse, J. J. & Sharpe, L. J. (1991). Local government in international perspective: Some comparative observations. In J.J. Hesse (ed.), *Local Government and Urban Affairs in International Perspective*. Baden-Baden: Nomos Verlagsgesellschaft.
- Higgins, D.J. (1986). *Local and Urban Politics in Canada*. Gage Educational Publications.

- Hjartarson, J., Hinton, K. & Szala, M. (2011). Putting Canada on track: A blueprint for a national transit framework. *Mowat Center for Policy Innovation, School of Public Policy and Governance, University of Toronto.*
- Hooghe, L. & Marks, G. (2003). Unraveling the central state, but how? Types of multi-level governance. *American Political Science Review* 92(2), 233-243.
- Horan, C. (2009). The politics of competitive regionalism in Greater Boston. *Journal of Urban Affairs* 31(3), 349-369.
- Horwath, A. (2006). Hansard, Legislative Assembly of Ontario. May 4, 2006, 38:2.
- Howlett, M., & Brownsey, K. (1996) From timber to tourism: The political economy of British Columbia. In R.K. Carty (ed.), *Politics, Policy and Government in British Columbia*, 18-31.
- Hull, A. (2005). Integrated transport planning in the UK: From concept to reality. *Journal of Transport Geography* 13(4), 318-328
- Hunter, F. (1953). *Community Power Structure: A Study of Decision Makers*. Chapel Hill: Univ. of North Carolina Press.
- Hutchinson, B. G. (1991). Metropolitan transportation: patterns and planning. In T.E. Bunting & P. Fillion (eds.), *Canadian Cities in Transition*. Toronto: Oxford University Press, 263-285.
- Iacono, M., Levinson, D., & El-Geneidy, A. (2008). Models of transportation and land use change: A guide to the territory. *Journal of Planning Literature* 22(4), 323-340.
- Imbroscio, D. L. (1998). Reformulating urban regime theory: The division of labor between state and market reconsidered. *Journal of Urban Affairs* 20(3), 233-248.

- Imbroscio, D. L. (2010). *Urban America Reconsidered: Alternatives for Governance and Policy*, Cornell University Press.
- Ingraham, P. W., Moynihan, D. P., Andrews, M. (2008). Formal and informal institutions in public administration. In J. Pierre, B. G. Peters & G. Stoker (eds.), *Debating Institutionalism*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.
- International Association of Public Transport (2010). *Regional Transport*. URL: [www.uitp.org/Public-Transport/regional-transport/](http://www.uitp.org/Public-Transport/regional-transport/) [Dec. 6, 2010].
- Irazabal, C. (2005). *City Making and Urban Governance in the Americas: Curitiba and Portland*. Ashgate, Aldershot, England; Burlington, VT.
- Isin, E. F. (1996). Metropolis unbound: Legislators and interpreters of urban form. In J. Caufield and L. Peake (Eds.), *City Lives and City Forms: Critical Urban Research and Canadian Urbanism*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 98-127.
- Isin, E. F. (1998). Governing Toronto without government: Liberalism and neoliberalism. *Studies in Political Economy* 56, 169-191.
- ITSC, Intelligent Transportation Systems of Canada (2011). Canada's Pacific Gateway: Greater Vancouver. *ITSC Brief*. URL: [www.itscanada.ca/english/documents/GreaterVanTransport.pdf](http://www.itscanada.ca/english/documents/GreaterVanTransport.pdf) [July 11, 2011].
- Jessop, B. (1993) Towards a Schumpeterian workfare state? Preliminary remarks on Post-Fordist political economy. *Studies in Political Economy* (40), 7-40.
- Jonas, A. E. G., and Ward, K. G. (2002). A world of regionalisms? Towards a US-UK urban and regional policy framework comparison. *Journal of Urban Affairs* 24(4), 377-401.

Jonas, A. E. G., and Ward, K. G. (2007a). Introduction to a debate on city-regions: New geographies of governance, democracy and social reproduction. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 31(1), 169-178.

Jonas, A. E. G., and Ward, K. G. (2007b). There's more than one way to be 'serious' about city-regions. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 31(3), 647-656.

Jones, V. (1960). *Metropolitan government*. Ann Arbor, University Microfilms.

Kadota, P. (2010). Evolution of regional governance in British Columbia: With special focus on the Metro Vancouver area. *The Local Government Institute*. April 22, 2010, University of Victoria, BC.

Kalionwsky, T. & Rider, D. (2010). 'War on the car is over' Ford moves transit underground. *The Star*, Dec. 2, 2010.

Kantor, P., Savitch, H. V., & Vicari Haddock, S. (1997). The political economy of urban regimes: A comparative perspective. *Urban Affairs Review* 32, 348-377.

Kar, D. A. (2001). *Metropolitan Transportation Agencies: Three Case Studies of Multi-jurisdictional Transportation Planning in Canada*. Unpublished manuscript.

Karigianis, M. (2007). Legislative Session: Third Session, 38th Parliament Hansard, *Official Report of debates of the Legislative Assembly*, Thursday October 25<sup>th</sup>, morning sitting, Queen's Printer, Victoria, British Columbia, Canada, 23(4), 1040.

Katz, B., ed. (2000). *Reflections on Regionalism*. Washington: Brookings Press.

- Keating, M. (1995). Size, efficiency and democracy: Consolidation, fragmentation and public choice. In H. Wolman, D. Judge & G. Stoker (Eds.), *Theories of Urban Politics*. London; Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Sage Publications.
- Keating, M. (1997). The invention of regions: Political restructuring and territorial government in Western Europe. *Environment and Planning C: Government and Policy* 15, 383-98.
- Keeling, D., J. (2009). Transportation geography: Local challenges, global contexts. *Progress in Human Geography* 33(4), 516-526.
- Keep Translink Public (2011). URL: [www.keeptranslinkpublic.ca](http://www.keeptranslinkpublic.ca) [July 2, 2011].
- Keil R. (1998). Globalization makes states: Perspectives of local governance in the age of the world city. *Review of International Political Economy* 5(4), 616-646.
- Keil, R. (2002). "Common Sense" neoliberalism: Progressive conservative urbanism in Toronto, Canada. *Antipode* 34(3), 578-601.
- Keil, R. (2003). Globalization makes states: Perspectives on local governance in the age of the World City. In N. Brenner, B. Jessop, M. Jones and G. MacLeod (Eds.), *State/space: A Reader*. Malden, MA: Blackwell, 278-295.
- Keil, R. (2009). The urban politics of roll-with-it neoliberalization. *City* 13(2-3), 231-245.
- Keil, R., & Lehrer, U. (2006). From possible urban worlds to the contested metropolis: Research and action in the age of neoliberalism. In: H. Leitner, J. Peck & Eric Sheppard (eds.) *Contesting Neoliberalism*. Guilford Press.
- Keil, R., & Young, D. (2008). Transportation: The bottleneck of regional competitiveness in Toronto. *Environment and Planning C: Government and Policy* 26, 728-751.

- Keil, R., and Boudreau, J.-A. (2005). Is there regionalism after amalgamation in Toronto? *City* 9(1), 9-22.
- Keil, R., and Young, D. (2008). Transportation: The bottleneck of regional competitiveness in Toronto. *Environment and Planning C: Government and Policy* 26(4), 728-751.
- Kemp, R. L. (Ed.). (2003). *Regional Government Innovations: A Handbook for Citizens and Public Officials*. Jefferson, North Carolina: McFarland and Company Inc. Publishers.
- Kennedy, C. (2002). A comparison of the sustainability of public and private transportation systems: Study of the Greater Toronto Area. *Transportation* 29(5), 459-493.
- Kilburn, H. W. (2004). Explaining U.S. urban regimes: A qualitative comparative analysis. *Urban Affairs Review* 39(5), 633-651.
- Kipfer, S., and Keil, R. (2002). Toronto Inc? Planning the competitive city in the New Toronto. *Antipode* 34(2), 227-264.
- Krajczar, K. (1998). Evolution of the Greater Vancouver transportation model. Paper presented at the 13th Annual International EMME/2 User's Conference Houston, Texas, October 28-30, 1998, Greater Vancouver Regional District, Burnaby, B.C.
- Krawchenko, T. (2009). The OECD and urban governance reform. *Canadian Journal of Urban Research* 18(1), 27-46.
- Langford, J. W. (1982). Public corporations in the 1980s: Moving from rhetoric to analysis. *Canadian Public Administration* 25(4), 619-637.

- Lauk, G. V. (1978). Legislative Session: Third Session, 31<sup>st</sup> Parliament  
Hansard, Official Report of debates of the Legislative Assembly. Tuesday, June  
20<sup>th</sup> 1978, afternoon sitting, Queen's Printer, Victoria, British Columbia.
- Lawrence, S. (2007). *Toronto Sprawls*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
- Laxer, J. (1995). Rise of capitalism doomed Rae government. *Toronto Star*, 11 June.
- Le Blanc, M. (2006). Two tales of municipal reorganization: Toronto's and Montréal's  
diverging paths toward regional governance and social sustainability. *Canadian  
Journal of Political Science* 39(3), 571-590.
- Leach, S. (1998). *Local Government Reorganization*. Routledge.
- Lefebvre, C. (1998). Metropolitan government and governance in western countries: A  
critical review. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 22(1), 9-  
25.
- Lehrer, U., and Laidley, J. (2008). Old mega-projects newly packaged? Waterfront  
redevelopment in Toronto. *International Journal of Urban and Regional  
Research* 32(4), 786-803.
- Lejano, Raul P. (2006). *Frameworks for Policy Analysis: Merging Text and Context*.  
Routledge.
- Lightbody, J. ed. (1995). *Canadian Metropolitics: Governing Our Cities*. Toronto: Copp  
Clark, 161-191.
- Local Government Act* (1996). Province of British Columbia Regulation [RSBC 1996]  
Chapter 323, Victoria BC, Queen's Printer.

- Lowndes, V., & Skelcher, C. (1998). The dynamics of multi-organizational partnerships: An analysis of changing modes of governance. *Public Administration* 76, 313-333.
- Loreto, R. A., & Price, T. (1990). *Urban Policy Issues: Canadian Perspectives*. Toronto: McClelland & Stewart.
- Lorinc, J. (2006). *The New City: How the Crisis in Canada's Urban Centres is Reshaping the Nation*. Toronto: Penguin Canada.
- Lorinc, J. (2008). *Cities*. Toronto: Greenwood Press.
- Loukaitou-Sidersis, A. & Banerjee, T. (1998). *Urban Design Downtown: Poetics and the Politics of Form*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Lowndes, V. (2008). Urban politics: Institutional differentiation and entanglement. In J. Pierre, B. G. Peters & G. Stoker (eds.), *Debating Institutionalism*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.
- Luba, F. (2010). Translink transparency sought: Group frustrated by upcoming fare hike. *The Province*, March 28, 2010. URL: [www.theprovince.com/news/TransLink+transparency+sought/2736240/story.html](http://www.theprovince.com/news/TransLink+transparency+sought/2736240/story.html) [April 26, 2010].
- MacLeod, G. (2001). New regionalism reconsidered: Globalization and the remaking of political economic space. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 25(4), 804-829.
- MacLeod, G. (2002). From urban entrepreneurialism to a "revanchist city"? On the spatial injustices of Glasgow's renaissance. *Antipode* 34(3), 602-624.

- MacLeod, G., and Goodwin, M. (1999). Space, scale and state strategy: Rethinking urban and regional governance. *Progress in Human Geography* 23(4), 503-527.
- Magnussen, W. (2010). Local government. *The Canadian Encyclopedia*. URL: [www.thecanadianencyclopedia.com/index.cfm?PgNm=TCE&Params=A1ARTA0004737](http://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.com/index.cfm?PgNm=TCE&Params=A1ARTA0004737) [January 29, 2010].
- Magnusson, W. (2009). Scaling government to politics. In R. Mahon and R. Keil (Eds.), *Leviathan undone? Towards a Political Economy of Scale*. Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 105-120.
- Mahoney, J., & Thelen, K., eds. (2010). *Explaining Institutional Change: Ambiguity, Agency and Power*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- March J. G. & Olsen, J. P. (1989). *Rediscovering Institutions*. New York: Free Press.
- March J. G. & Olsen, J. P. (1995). *Democratic Governance*. New York: Free Press.
- March J. G. & Olsen, J. P. (2006), Elaborating the 'new institutionalism.' In R. A. W. Rhodes, S. A. Binder & B.A. Rockman (eds), *The Oxford Handbook of Political Institutions*. Oxford University Press, 3-20.
- Markusen, A. (2003). Fuzzy concepts, scanty evidence, policy distance: The case for rigor and policy relevance in critical regional studies. *Regional Studies* 37(6), 701-717.
- Martin, D. (2004). Reconstructing urban politics. *Urban Affairs Review* 39(5), 589-612.
- Matkin, D. S., & Frederickson, H. G. (2009). Metropolitan governance: Institutional roles and interjurisdictional cooperation. *Journal of Urban Affairs* 31(1), 45-66.
- McAllister, M. L. (2005). *Governing Ourselves: The Politics of Canadian Communities*. Vancouver: UBC Press.

- McCann, E. J. (2003). Framing space and time in the city: Urban policy and the politics of spatial and temporal scale. *Journal of Urban Affairs* 25(2), 159-178.
- McGuirk, P. M. & MacLaren, A. (2001). Changing approaches to urban planning in an 'entrepreneurial city': The case of Dublin. *European Planning Studies* 9(4), 437-57.
- Mees, P. (2010). *Transport for Suburbia: Beyond the Automobile Age*. London: Earthscan press.
- Meligrana, J. F. (1999). Toward regional transportation governance: A case study of greater Vancouver. *Transportation* 26, 359-380.
- Metro Vancouver (2008). Facts. URL: [www.metrovancouver.org/about/Pages/faqs.aspx/](http://www.metrovancouver.org/about/Pages/faqs.aspx/) [December 31, 2008].
- Metro Vancouver (2011). Regional Development. URL: [www.metrovancouver.org/planning/development/Pages/default.aspx](http://www.metrovancouver.org/planning/development/Pages/default.aspx) [June 7, 2011].
- Metrolinx (2008a). Backgrounder: Stakeholder Comments. URL: [metrolinx.com/Docs/News/Backgrounder%20-%20Stakeholder%20Comments.pdf](http://metrolinx.com/Docs/News/Backgrounder%20-%20Stakeholder%20Comments.pdf) [Dec. 19, 2008].
- Metrolinx (2008b). *Metrolinx 2008 Annual Report*. Toronto, Ontario.
- Metrolinx (2008c). *The Big Move: Transforming Transportation in the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area*. Greater Toronto Transportation Authority.
- Metrolinx (2008d). Draft investment strategy: A plan for implementation and action. Toronto: Ont.
- Metrolinx (2008e). Investment strategy overview. Sept. 2008, Toronto Ont.

- Metrolinx (2011). *Metrolinx five year strategy: 2011-2016*. Toronto Ont., June.
- Metrolinx Act* (2006). Province of Ontario regulation. Service Ontario e-laws.
- Miller, D. Y. (2008). Exploring the structure of regional governance in the United States. In D. K. Hamilton, & P. S. Atkins (Eds.), *Urban and Regional Policies for Metropolitan Livability*. London, England: M.E. Sharpe publishers.
- Miller, D., and Tremblay, G. (2007). *The Big City Mayor's Caucus' (BCMC) proposal for a National Transit Strategy*. Victoria, BC.
- Miller, E. & Soberman, R. (2003). Smart growth issue paper: Travel demand and urban form. Toronto: The Neptis Foundation.
- Milroy, B. M. (2009). *Thinking Planning and Urbanism*. Vancouver: UBC Press.
- Moody's (2006). Analysis of Transport for London. Moody's Investor Service: Global Credit Research, March 2006.
- Moore, S. (2007). *Alternative Routes to the Sustainable City: Austin Curibita and Frankfurt*. Plymouth: Lexington Books.
- Moos, M. & Skaburkis, A. (2010). The globalization of urban housing markets: Immigration and changing housing demand in Vancouver. *Urban Geography* 31(6), 724-749.
- Mossenberg, K. & Stoker, G. (2001). The evolution of regime theory: The challenge of conceptualization. *Urban Affairs Review* 36(6), 810-835.
- Municipal Corporations Act* [the Baldwin Act] (1849). Province of Ontario regulation.
- Municipal Research Services Center [MRSC](2003). *Special purpose districts in Washington State*. MRSC Washington, Seattle: No. 58.

- Newman, P., & Kenworthy, J. R. (1999). *Sustainability and Cities: Overcoming Automobile Dependence*. Washington, D.C.: Island Press.
- Newman, P., and Thornley, A. (2004). *Planning World Cities: Globalization, Urban Governance and Policy Dilemmas*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Newton, K., & vanDeth, J. W. (2005). *Foundations of Comparative Politics: Democracies of the Modern World*. Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Norman, A. (2010). The heat is on Metrolinx. *Weston web*. URL: [www.westonweb.ca/?p=kvbzmscalpkeimw&paged=58&wpmp\\_switcher=desktop](http://www.westonweb.ca/?p=kvbzmscalpkeimw&paged=58&wpmp_switcher=desktop) [July 10, 2011].
- Norris, D. F. (2001a). Whither metropolitan governance? *Urban Affairs Review* 36(4), 532–550.
- Norris, D. F. (2001b). Prospects for regional governance under the new regionalism: Economic imperatives versus political impediments. *Journal of Urban Affairs* 23(5), 557-571.
- O’Toole, J. (2006). Hansard, Legislative Assembly of Ontario. March 27, 2006, 38:2.
- OECD (2004). *OECD Territorial Reviews*, Montreal, Canada. Paris, France: OECD.
- OECD (2006). *Territorial reviews: Competitive cities in the global economy*. *SourceOECD Governance* 2006(18), 1-450.
- OECD (2007). *Territorial reviews competitive cities: A new entrepreneurial paradigm in spatial development*. *SourceOECD Urban, Rural and Regional Development* 2007(5), 1-137.

OECD (2010b). *Dedicated Public Private Partnership Units: A Survey of Institutional and Governance Structures*. OECD Publishing, Paris.

OECD. (2010a). *Territorial Reviews: Toronto, Canada*. Geneva: Organization for Economic Development and Co-operation.

Ontario Legislative Assembly (1999). *Fewer Municipal Politicians Act*, Bill 25.

Ontario Legislative Assembly (2006) *Greater Toronto Transportation Authority Act*. S.O. 2006 c. 16.

Ontario Legislative Assembly (2009). *Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area Transit Implementation Act*, 2009. Government of Ontario new release. URL: [www.news.ontario.ca/mto/en/2009/03/greater-toronto-and-hamilton-area-transit-implementation-act-2009.html](http://www.news.ontario.ca/mto/en/2009/03/greater-toronto-and-hamilton-area-transit-implementation-act-2009.html) [March 30, 2009].

Ontario Ministry of Infrastructure (2011a). Places to Grow Act: Resources. URL: [www.placestogrow.ca/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=20&Itemid=27](http://www.placestogrow.ca/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=20&Itemid=27) [July 18 2011].

Ontario Ministry of Infrastructure (2011b). Places to Grow initiative. URL: [www.placestogrow.ca/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=1&Itemid=5](http://www.placestogrow.ca/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=1&Itemid=5) [July 18 2011].

Ontario Ministry of Infrastructure (2011c). Places to Grow: Related provincial initiatives. URL: [www.placestogrow.ca/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=52&Itemid=64](http://www.placestogrow.ca/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=52&Itemid=64) [July 18 2011].

Orfield, M. (1997). *Metropolitics: A Regional Agenda for Community and Stability*. Washington, DC: The Brookings Institution and the Lincoln Land Institute.

- Ostrom, V., & Bish, R. (1988). *Local Government in the United States*. Kampmann Press.
- Owen, W. (1976). *Transportation for Cities: The Role of Federal Policy*. Washington: Brookings Institution.
- Pal, L. (2006). Case study method and policy analysis. In I. Geva-May (ed). *A Clinical Approach to Policy Analysis*, Kluwer Publications.
- Parks, R. B., & Oakerson, R. J. (1989). Metropolitan organization and governance: A local public economy approach. *Urban Affairs Quarterly* 25(1), 18-29.
- Parr, J. B. (2005). Perspectives on city-regions. *Regional Studies* 39(5), 555-566.
- Pastor, M. (2001). Looking for regionalism in all of the wrong places: Demography, geography and community in Los Angeles County. *Urban Affairs Review* 36(6), 747-782, Sage Publications.
- Pastor, M., Lester, T. W., & Scoggins, J. (2009). Why regions? Why now? Who cares? *Journal of Urban Affairs* 31(3), 269-296.
- Peck, J. (2003). Fuzzy old world: A response to Markusen. *Regional Studies* 37(6-7), 729-740.
- Peck, J. (2004). Geography and public policy: Constructions of neoliberalism. *Progress in Human Geography* 28(3), 392-405.
- Peck, J., and Tickell, A. (2002). Neoliberalizing space. *Antipode* 34(3), 380-404.
- Peirce, N. R., Johnson, C., W., & Hall, J. S. (1993). *Citistates: How urban America can prosper in a competitive world*. Seven Locks Press: California.
- Pembina Institute (2011). *Making Tracks to Torontonians*. Toronto: Ontario, Jan. 5 2011.

- Peters, G. (1999). *Institutional Theory in Political Science: The 'New Institutionalism.'*  
London: Continuum.
- Phares, D. (2004). *Metropolitan Governance Without Metropolitan Government?*  
Aldershot, Hants, England; Burlington, VT: Ashgate.
- Places to Grow Act* (2005). Province of Ontario regulation, S.O. 2005 Chapter 13,  
Service Ontario e-laws.
- Portland Metro (2011) Finances and Funding. URL:  
[www.oregonmetro.gov/index.cfm/go/by.web/id=24271](http://www.oregonmetro.gov/index.cfm/go/by.web/id=24271) [Dec. 3, 2010].
- Powell, W. W., & Di Maggio, P. J. (1991). *The New Institutionalism in Organizational  
Analysis*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- Pratchett, L., & Wilson, D. (1996). Local government under siege. In L. Pratchett &  
D. Wilson (eds) *Local Democracy and Local Government*. London: Macmillan  
Press Ltd.
- Province of British Columbia (1995). *Regional Growth Strategies: An Explanatory  
Guide*. British Columbia, Ministry of Community Services, revised February  
2006.
- Pucher, J., Kurth, S. (1996). Verkehrsverbund: The success of regional public transport in  
Germany, Austria and Switzerland. *Transport Policy* 2(4), 279-291.
- Punter, J. (2003). *The Vancouver Achievement: Urban Planning and Design*. UBC Press,  
Vancouver.
- Purcell, M. (2007). City-regions, neoliberal globalization and democracy: A research  
agenda. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 31(1), 197-206.

- Razin, E., & Smith, P. J. (2006). *Metropolitan Governing: Canadian Cases, Comparative Lessons*. Jerusalem: [Edmonton, Alta.]: Hebrew University Magnes Press; Distributed in North America by the University of Alberta Press.
- Reid, B. (1991). Primer on the corporate city. In K. Gerecke (ed). *The Canadian City*, Montreal: Black Rose Books, 63-77.
- Rhodes, R. A. W., Binder, S. A., & Rockman, B. A. (Eds.) (2006). *The Oxford Handbook of Political Institutions*. Oxford University Press.
- Roberts Bank Rail Corridor Program (2011). URL:  
[www.robertsbankrailcorridor.ca/partners](http://www.robertsbankrailcorridor.ca/partners) [Nov. 28, 2011].
- Robertson, D. B. (1993). The return to history and the New Institutionalism in American Political Science. *Social Science History* 17(1), 1-36.
- Robertson, G. (2007). Legislative Session: Third Session, 38th Parliament  
Hansard, *Official Report of debates of the Legislative Assembly*, Thursday October 25<sup>th</sup>, afternoon sitting, Queen's Printer, Victoria, British Columbia, Canada, 23:4.
- Robson, W. A. (1974). The reform of local government in England and Wales. *National Civic Review* 63(10), 517-520.
- Ross, C. L. (1983). Measuring transportation system effectiveness. *Journal of Urban Affairs* 5(4), 299-314.
- Rothblatt, D. N. (1994). North American metropolitan planning: Canadian and U.S. perspectives. *Journal of the American Planning Association* 60, 501-520.
- Rothblatt, D. N. (1999). North American metropolitan planning reexamined: Working paper. *Institute of Governmental Studies*, Berkeley:California, 99-2.

- Rusk, D. (1995). *Cities Without Suburbs*. Washington, DC: The Woodrow Wilson Center Press.
- Sabatier, P.A. & Jenkins-Smith, H. (Eds.) (1993). *Policy Change and Learning: An Advocacy Coalition Approach*. Boulder: Westview.
- Sagan, I., Halkier, H. (eds.) (2005). *Regionalism Contested: Institution, Society and Governance*. Urban and regional planning and development series, Hants: Ashgate publishing.
- Sancton, A. (1994). *Governing Canada's City-regions: Adapting Form to Function*. Montreal: Institute for Research on Public Policy.
- Sancton, A. (2000). *Merger Mania: The Assault on Local Government*. Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press.
- Sancton, A. (2001). Canadian cities and the new regionalism. *Journal of Urban Affairs* 23(5), 543-555.
- Sancton, A. (2008). *The Limits of Boundaries: Why City Regions Cannot be Self-governing*, Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press.
- Sancton, A., James, R., & Ramsay, R. (2000). *Amalgamation vs. Inter-municipal Cooperation: Financing Local and Infrastructure Services* (1st ed.). Toronto: ICURR Press.
- Sandercock, L. (1975). *Cities for Sale: Property, Politics, and Urban Planning in Australia*. Carlton, Vic.: Melbourne University Press.
- Sandler, T. (1992). *Collective Action*. Ann Arbor, MI: The University of Michigan Press.

- Sartori, G. (1991). Comparing and miscomparing. *Journal of Theoretical Politics* 3(3), 243-57.
- Sassen, S. (2002). *Global Networks, Linked Cities*. New York: Routledge.
- Sassen, S. (2006). *Cities in a World Economy* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Pine Forge Press.
- Savitch, H. V., & Vogel, R. K. (2006). Local and regional governance: Rescaling the city. In E. Razin, & P. J. Smith (Eds.), *Metropolitan Governing: Canadian Cases, Comparative Lessons*. Jerusalem: [Edmonton, Alta.]: Hebrew University Magnes Press; Distributed in North America by the University of Alberta Press.
- Scharpf, F. W. (2000). Institutions in comparative policy research. *Comparative Political Studies* 33(6/7), 762-790.
- Schechter, B. (1996). Metropolitan governance: A bibliographic essay. *National Civic Review* 85(2), 337-41.
- Scott, A. J. (Ed.). (2001). *Global city-regions: Trends, theory, policy*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Scott, A. J., and Storper, M. (2003). Regions, globalization, development. *Regional Studies* 37(6 & 7), 579-593.
- Scott, W. R. (1995). *Institutions and Organizations*. London UK, Sage Publications.
- Self, P. (1977). *Administrative Theories and Politics*. London: Allyn & Unwin.
- Sewell, J. (2009). *The Shape of the Suburbs: Understanding Toronto's Sprawl*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

- Shalaby, L. L., & Alshalalfah, B. (2011). Case study: relationship between immigrant settlement patterns and transit use in the Greater Toronto Area. *Journal of Urban Planning and Development* March 2011.
- Shepsle, K. A. (2008). Rational choice institutionalism. In R.A.W. Rhodes, S.A. Binder & B.A. Rockman (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Political Institutions*. New York, Oxford University Press, 23-38.
- Shepsle, K. A. & Bonchek, M. (1997). *Analyzing Politics: Rationality, Behaviour and Institutions*. Norton Press.
- Siemiatycki, M. (2006). Implications of public-private partnerships on the development of urban public transit infrastructure: The case of Vancouver, Canada. *Journal of Planning Education and Research* 26, 137-151
- Skaburkis, A. (2004). Goals for municipal restructuring. In J. Meligrana (Ed.), *Redrawing Local Government Boundaries: An International Study of Politics, Procedures and Decisions*. Vancouver: UBC Press, 38-55.
- Slack, E. (2000). A preliminary assessment of the new City of Toronto. *Canadian Journal of Regional Science* 23(1): 13-29.
- Slack, E., Bourne L., & Priston H. (2006). *Large Cities Under Stress: Challenges and Opportunities*. Report prepared for the External Advisory Committee on Cities and Communities, March 3, 2006.
- Slack, E. (2009). *Guide to Municipal Finance*. United Nations Human Settlement Program, UN-HABITAT: Nairobi, Kenya.
- Slack, E. (2010). Financing Large Cities and Metropolitan Areas. *6th Symposium on Fiscal Federalism on Financing Local Governments*, June 2010.

- Smith P. J. (2008). British Columbia changes Metro Vancouver's transportation governance—A re-examination of Peter Self's "Dilemma Thesis": Efficiency vs. accountability? *Local Matters*, Institute of Local Policy, New Zealand.
- Smith, P. J. (1995). Governing metropolitan change: Public policy and governance in Canada's city regions. In J. Lightbody (ed.), *Canadian Metropolitics: Governing Our Cities*. Toronto: Copp Clark, 161-191.
- Smith, P. J. (2009). Even Greater Vancouver: Metropolitan morphing in Canada's third largest city region. In D. Phares (ed.), *Governing Metropolitan Regions in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, M.E. Sharpe, Inc., Armonk, New York, 237-263.
- Smith, R. G. (1987). Reorganization of regional transportation authorities to maintain urban/suburban constituency balance. *Public Administration Review* 47(2), 171-179.
- Soberman, R. M., Crowley, D., Dalkie, H., Peter, D., Karakatsanis, S., Levy, E., et al. (2006). *Transportation Challenges in the Greater Toronto Area*. Toronto: Residential and Civil Construction Alliance of Ontario.
- Soja, E. W. (2000). *Post-metropolis*. Cambridge, MA: Blackwell.
- Solof, M (2010). The history of Metropolitan Planning Organizations 1996-1998. New Jersey Transportation Planning Agency. URL: [www.njtpa.org/Pub/report/hist\\_mpo/default.aspx](http://www.njtpa.org/Pub/report/hist_mpo/default.aspx) [Aug. 10, 2010]
- Soloman, L. (2007). *Toronto Sprawls: A History*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
- South Coast British Columbia Transportation Authority Act* [SCBCTA Act, Translink Act] (2007). Province of British Columbia Regulation, Chapter 30, Victoria BC, Queen's Printer.

- South Coast Transportation Plan (1994). Province of British Columbia, Ministry of Regional Development and the Greater Vancouver Regional District.
- Standing Committee on General Government (1998). *Greater Toronto Services Board Act, 1998, Bill 56, Mr. Leach / Loi de 1998*. Government of Ontario, December 8, 1998.
- Statistics Canada (2007). 2006 Community Profiles, 2006 Census. *Statistics Canada*, Catalogue no. 92-591-XWE. Ottawa (released March 13, 2007). URL: [www12.statcan.ca/census-recensement/2006/dp-pd/prof/92-591/index.cfm?Lang=E](http://www12.statcan.ca/census-recensement/2006/dp-pd/prof/92-591/index.cfm?Lang=E) [June 8, 2011].
- Stein, R. M. (1989). Market maximization of individual preferences and metropolitan municipal service responsibility. *Urban Affairs Quarterly*, 25(1), 86-116.
- Steinmo, S. (2001). The New Institutionalism. In B. Clack & J. Foweraker (eds.), *The Encyclopedia of Democratic Thought*. London: Routledge.
- Steinmo, S. (2008). Historical institutionalism. In M. Keating and d. Della Porta (eds.), *Approaches and Methodologies in the Social Sciences: A Pluralist Perspective*, Cambridge University Press, 118-138.
- Steinmo, S., K. Thelen, et al., Eds. (1992). *Structuring Politics: Historical Institutionalism in Comparative Analysis*. New York, Cambridge University Press.
- Stephens, G. R., & Wikstrom, N. (2000). *Metropolitan Government and Governance: Theoretical Perspectives, Empirical Analysis, and the Future*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Sterling, N. J. (2006). Hansard, Legislative Assembly of Ontario. May 1, 2006, 38: 2.

- Stoker, G. (1995). Regime theory and urban politics. In: Judge, D., Stoker, G., Wolman, H. (Eds.), *Theories of Urban Politics*. Sage: London, 54-71.
- Stoker, G. (2006). Comparative local governance. In R.A.W. Rhodes, S.A. Binder & B.A. Rockman (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Political Institutions*. New York, Oxford University Press, 23-38.
- Stone, C. N. (1989). *Regime Politics: Governing Atlanta, 1946-1988*. Lawrence, Kan.: University Press of Kansas.
- Stone, C. N. (1993). Urban regimes and the capacity to govern: A political economy approach. *Journal of Urban Affairs* 15(1), 1-28.
- Stone, C.N. (2001). The Atlanta experience re-examined: The link between Agenda and regime change. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, 25(1), 20-34.
- Stone, C. N. (2005). Looking back to look forward: Reflections on urban regime analysis. *Urban Affairs Review* 40(3), 309-341.
- Streeck, W., & Thelen, K. (2005a). *Beyond Continuity, Institutional Change in Advanced Political Economies*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Streeck, W., & Thelen, K. (2005b). Institutional Changes in Advanced Political Economies. In W. Streeck & K. Thelen (eds.), *Beyond Continuity: Institutional Change in Advanced Political Economies*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Swyngedouw, E. (1997). Neither global nor local: 'Glocalization' and the politics of scale. In K. R. Cox (ed.), *Spaces of Globalisation*. New York: Guildford.
- Tabuns, P. (2009). Hansard, Legislative Assembly of Ontario. May 6, 2009, 39(1).
- Takhar, H. S. (2006). Hansard, Legislative Assembly of Ontario. May 1, 2006, 38: 2.

- Tennant, P. & Zirnhelt, D. (1973). Metropolitan Government in Vancouver: The Strategy of Gentle Imposition. *Canadian Public Administration* 16(1): 124-138.
- Thelen, K. (2000). Timing and temporality in the analysis of institutional evolution and change. *Studies in American Political Development* 14 (Spring): 101-8.
- Thelen, K. (2002). The explanatory power of historical institutionalism. In R. Mayntz (ed.), *Akteure-Mechanismen – Modelle: Zur Theoriefähigkeit makro-sozialer Analysen*. Frankfurt: Max-Planck-Instituts für Gesellschaftsforschung.
- Thelen, K. (2003). How institutions evolve: Insights from comparative-historical analysis. In J. Mahoney & D. Rueschemeyer (eds.), *Comparative Historical Analysis in the Social Sciences*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Thelen, K. (2004). *How Institutions Evolve: The Political Economy of Skills in Germany, Britain, the United States and Japan*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Thelen, K. (2009). Institutional change in advanced political economies. *British Journal of Industrial Relations* 47 (3), 471-98.
- Thelen, K. (1999) Historical institutionalism in comparative politics. *Annual Review of political science* 2:369-414.
- Thomas, T. L. (1997). *The Politics of the City: A Canadian Perspective*. Toronto: ITP Nelson.
- Tiebout, C. M. (1956.). *A Pure Theory of Local Expenditures*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Tindal, C. R., & Tindal, S. N. (2004). *Local Government in Canada* (6th ed.). Toronto: Nelson.

- Tomalty, R. (2002). *Growth Management in the Vancouver Region*. Assessment and Planning project BC case report no. 4, Department of Environment and Resource Studies, University of Waterloo, Ontario.
- Translink (2001). Greater Vancouver Transportation Authority 2001 Annual Report. Burnaby, BC.
- Translink (2002). Greater Vancouver Transportation Authority 2002 Annual Report. Burnaby, BC.
- Translink (2003). Greater Vancouver Transportation Authority 2003 Annual Report. Burnaby, BC.
- Translink (2004). Greater Vancouver Transportation Authority 2004 Annual Report. Burnaby, BC.
- Translink (2005). Greater Vancouver Transportation Authority 2005 Annual Report. Burnaby, BC.
- Translink (2006). Greater Vancouver Transportation Authority 2006 Annual Report. Burnaby, BC.
- Translink (2007). Greater Vancouver Transportation Authority 2007 Annual Report. Burnaby, BC.
- Translink (2008a). South Coast British Columbia Transportation Authority 2008 Annual Report. Burnaby, BC.
- Translink (2008b). 2009–2018 Base plan report to the Regional Transportation Commissioner. Burnaby, BC.
- Translink (2008c). Transport 2040: A transportation strategy for Metro Vancouver, now and in the future. Burnaby, BC.

Translink (2009). South Coast British Columbia Transportation Authority 2009 Annual Report. Burnaby, BC.

Translink (2010). South Coast British Columbia Transportation Authority 2010 Annual Report. Burnaby, BC.

Translink (2011a). TransLink to "Move Forward" with improvements: TransLink to roll-out updated transportation expansion plan, Translink press release, July 6, 2011. Burnaby, BC.

Translink (2011b). Moving forward: Improving Metro Vancouver's transportation network. 2012 Supplemental Plan and Outlook: Transportation and Financial Supplemental Plan for 2012 to 2014 and Outlook for 2015 to 2021. Burnaby, BC.

Translink (2011c). Be part of the plan. URL: [www.translink.ca/en/Be-Part-of-the-Plan.aspx](http://www.translink.ca/en/Be-Part-of-the-Plan.aspx) [July 16, 2011].

Translink Governance Review Panel (2007). Translink governance review: An independent review of the Greater Vancouver Transportation Authority. Vancouver, BC.

Transport 2021 (1993). A Long-Range Transportation Plan for Greater Vancouver. Greater Vancouver Regional District and the Province of British Columbia.

TTC. (2003). Ridership growth strategy. Toronto, ON.

TTC. (2008a). Toronto Transit City webpage. URL: [www.transitcity.ca/](http://www.transitcity.ca/) [February 12 2008].

TTC. (2008b). Annual Report 2008. Toronto, ON.

TTC. (2009). Transit City bus plan. Toronto, ON.

- UNCHS-HABITAT (2004). *Globalization and urban culture, the state of the world's cities*. Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press.
- United Way. (2004). *Poverty by postal code: The geography of neighbourhood poverty, 1981-2001*. Toronto: United Way of Greater Toronto and Canadian Council on Social Development.
- Urban Transit Authority Act [UTA Act]* (1978). British Columbia Regulation, Victoria, BC: Queens Printer.
- US Census Bureau (2002a). *Census of Governments, 1(1)*, Government Organization, December.
- US Census Bureau (2002b). *Census of Governments, 1(2)*, Government Organization, December.
- Van der Heijden, J. (2010). A short history of studying incremental institutional change: Does explaining institutional change provide any new explanations? *Regulation and Governance* 4, 230–243.
- Van der Velde, D. M. (1999). Organizational forms and entrepreneurship in public transport Part 1: Classifying organizational forms. *Transport Policy* 6, 147 – 157.
- Van der Velde, D. M. (2001). The evolution of organizational forms in European public transport. 7th Conference on Competition and Ownership in Land Passenger Transport Molde (Norway), 25-28 June 2001.
- Van Kersbergen, K, Van Waarden, F. (2004). ‘Governance’ as a bridge between disciplines: Cross-disciplinary inspiration regarding shifts in governance and problems of governability, accountability and legitimacy. *European Journal of Political Research* 43, 143-171.

- Verma, N. (eds). (2007). *Institutions and Planning: Current Research in Urban and Regional Studies*. London: Elsevier.
- Vogel, R. K. (1997). *Handbook of Research on Urban Politics and Policy in the United States*. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press.
- Vogel, R. K., & Nezelkewicz, N. (2002). Metropolitan planning organizations and the new regionalism: The case of Louisville. *Publius* 32(1), Federalism and Surface Transportation, 107-129.
- Vuchic, V. R. (2005). *Urban Transit: Operations, Planning, and Economics*. Hoboken, N.J.: John Wiley & Sons.
- Wales, T. (2008). The road less travelled: Translink's improbable journey from 1999 to 2008. Translink, Burnaby, BC.
- Walks, R. A. (2001). The social ecology of the post-Fordist/global city? Economic restructuring and socio-spatial polarisation in the Toronto urban region. *Urban Studies* 38(3), 407-447.
- Walks, R. A. (2009). The urban in fragile, uncertain, neoliberal times: Towards new geographies of social justice? *Canadian Geographer* 53(3), 345-356.
- Wallis, A. (2002). *The new regionalism*. The Elected Officials Symposium, University of Alberta.
- Wannop, U. (1995). *The Regional Imperative: Regional Planning and Governance in Britain, Europe, and the United States*. London; Bristol, Pa.: London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers; Regional Studies Association.
- Webb, S. (1922). *English Local Government: Statutory Authorities for Special Purposes*. London: UK.

- Weir, M., Rongerude, J., & Ansell, C. K. (2008). Collaboration is not enough: Virtuous cycles of reform in transportation policy. *Urban Affairs Review* 44(4), 455-489.
- Wettenhall, R. (2003). Exploring types of public sector organizations: Past experiences and current issues. *Public Organization Review: a global journal* 3, 219-245.
- Wheeler, S. M. (2002). The new regionalism: Key characteristics of an emerging movement. *Journal of the American Planning Association* 68(3), 267-278.
- Wolman, H., Judge, D., & Stoker, G. (1995). *Theories of Urban Politics*. London; Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Sage Publications.
- Woolley, F. (1998). The feminist challenge to neoclassical economics. In D. Prychitko (ed.), *Why Economists Disagree: An Introduction to Alternative Schools of Thought*. State University of New York Press, Albany.
- Young, D. & Kiel, R. (2010). Reconnecting the disconnected: The politics of infrastructure in the in-between city. *Cities* 27, 87–95.
- Young, S. C., (1999). Participation strategies and environmental politics: Local agenda 21. In Stoker, G. eds., *The new politics of British local governance*. Basingstoke, England: Macmillan Press.
- Zafirovski, M. (2000). Economic and sociological approaches to institutions: economy, society and law. *European Journal of Law and Economics* 10(1), 7-31.