

CAN INSTITUTIONAL REFORMS PROMOTE SUSTAINABLE PLANNING?
INTEGRATING REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION & LAND USE
IN TORONTO & CHICAGO (2001-2014)

A Dissertation
Submitted to
the Temple University Graduate Board

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

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December 2015

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ABSTRACT

Although governments have implemented several reforms to better integrate or coordinate regional transportation and land use decisions, little is known about the effects of new institutional designs on planning and development outcomes. This study compares the effects of two different types of institutional reforms on the planning process, transportation investments and land use decisions, while assessing their characteristics in terms of accountability, democracy, and effectiveness. Using semi-structured interviews, planning documents, as well as transportation spending and land use decisions, this longitudinal, comparative case study assesses the effects of the centralized, regulatory framework implemented in Toronto in 2005-2006, to the collaborative governance framework adopted in Chicago in 2005. Although each institutional design features different sets of constraints and opportunities, both reforms improved the planning process by establishing a renewed commitment to the exercise of regional planning. However, their impact on transportation investments was limited because the allocation of transportation funds is still primarily controlled by the province and the state governments who continue to control the purse strings and allocate money to advance their own political agendas. Both cases also show how difficult it is to increase densities and curb urban sprawl because local land uses, zoning and development approvals remain the prerogative of local governments and a function of locational preferences of individuals and corporations, which are contingent upon the market and shaped by global economic forces. Besides stronger regional institutions, the evidence presented in this study calls for new political strategies that address the fiscalization of land use and that offer financial incentives for the adoption of smart growth policies.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I am indebted to everyone who has contributed directly and indirectly to this research project. I think especially of Dr. Carolyn Adams who admitted me into the Urban Studies doctoral program at Temple University and who assigned me to my advisor, Dr. Christina Rosan. To Dr. Adams, thank you for your guidance and helpful comments on earlier drafts of this dissertation. You are a true inspiration and a model of collegial academic generosity. I hope we can continue our fascinating discussions on urban politics. To Dr. Christina Rosan, thank you for your continuous support, trust, professional advice and availability. You made this process as enjoyable and seamless as it can possibly be. I also thank Dr. Bradley Flamm and Dr. Jacob Shell for generously sharing their expertise, thoughtful comments, and for having clear expectations and high standards. I am immensely grateful for being able to rely on an interdisciplinary committee that has collegially and constructively helped me addressing such a complex object of inquiry.

Also, the completion of this project would not have been possible without the generous participation of key informants in the Toronto and Chicago region whose experience, expertise and hindsight have immensely contributed to the quality of the outcome.

I salute my research colleagues Dr. Jean Mercier and Dr. Mario Carrier from *Université Laval*, and Dr. Fabio Duarte from the *Instituto de Pesquisa Planejamento Urbano de Curitiba*, who gave me an opportunity to work in the field of sustainable transportation research and to carry out a preliminary study of the Toronto and Chicago cases. Thank you for your continuous trust and support. In the same vein, I am also grateful

for the qualitative methods training and advice of Dr. Louis Bélanger and Dr. Mathieu Ouimet from the Department of Political Science at *Université Laval*

Anyone who has written a dissertation knows the importance of family, friends and loved ones in providing the necessary support through the better and worst times. I am immensely grateful for the unconditional love, support and friendship of my mother, Alice, my father Pierre and his partner, Gisèle, whose advice and expertise keep me inspired, grounded and motivated. To my father, you are a model of perseverance, and the proof that good things come when hard work is geared towards pursuing our dreams and intellectual convictions. I also thank my overachiever sisters Maryse and Laurence for paving the way. I hope that Louis, Elizabeth and Chloé will share the same complicity as us three and that someday, I will be as good as a mother as you are.

My cheering committee also include my closest friends and colleagues from Québec and Philadelphia who are very generous of their person, time, and knowledge. Thank you to Paméla B., Dr. Maude B., Djim B. Dr. Jérôme C., Sally F., Maggie G., Dr. Séverine G., Claudia L., M.D. Natalia L., Yannick N., Kelly S., Dr. Michael S., and Heythem T. I feel very blessed to have the support of such a talented group of friends.

Lastly, this work has benefited from the generous financial support of Temple University and from a doctoral research grant of the Québec Research Fund on Society and Culture (FRQSC), which allowed me to spend some time on the field and focus on writing this dissertation full-time.

It is only the beginning!

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CHAPTER 1

SUMMARY INTRODUCTION

Context & Research Problem

Metropolitan regions across North America are facing increasingly complex issues related to transportation and land use: congestion, infrastructure costs, air pollution, greenhouse gas emissions, as well as resource impacts and personal costs resulting from sprawling development (Margerum *et al.*, 2011). Institutional fragmentation and the diffuse nature of authority, which is spread across jurisdictions and levels of government in federal systems, add to the complex nature of the problems (Brown, 2012). Academic and governmental responses to the problems of metropolitan regions have produced mixed results. Various academic research and advocacy trends are addressing transportation and land use concerns under different labels, such as “new urbanism”, “smart growth”, “sustainable development”, and “transit-oriented development”. However, approaches based on urban form or physical means alone fail to address the structural nature of the problem rooted in institutional and political dynamics, which ultimately impede their implementation and practical effect (Swanstrom, 2011; Neuman, 2005; Wheeler, 2002). Although governments have implemented several structural and procedural reforms to better integrate or coordinate regional transportation and land use decisions, little is known about the effects of new institutional structures and planning mechanisms on development outcomes (Margerum *et al.*, 2011).

This study attempts to fill this gap by comparing the effects of two different types of institutional reforms on the planning process, transportation investments and land use decisions, while assessing their characteristics or tradeoffs in terms of accountability,

democracy, and effectiveness. Knowing how institutional designs foster or impede regional transportation and land use planning will inform federal, state and provincial governments that are trying to improve regional governance, and contribute to the academic literature on planning institutions, urban politics, and sustainability.

Rationale for Study

This study assesses the impacts of two new institutional reforms on the planning process, transportation investments and land use change, in order to evaluate the effectiveness of different institutional designs in integrating transportation and land use planning at the regional level. The research compares the regulatory framework implemented in Toronto with the creation of Metrolinx in 2006, a case of centralization of the regional transportation and land use planning processes at the provincial level, to the collaborative, consensus governance framework adopted in Chicago with the creation of Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) in 2005, a case of integration of the transportation and land use planning functions at the regional level. A secondary goal is to understand the tradeoffs between accountability (responsibility and public scrutiny through transparency), democracy (representativeness, public participation and deliberation), and effectiveness (local and regional changes in planning and decisions) that these two types of institutional structures involve. By comparing a case of regulatory framework to a case of collaborative governance framework, a special attention will also be given to changes in the relative weight of central cities, and its impact on sustainability.

This longitudinal, comparative case study of regional institutional change is needed for a number of reasons. First, the environmental problems related to transportation and urban

sprawl are increasing, and sustainability initiatives are difficult to implement at a regional scale because metropolitan areas are politically fragmented. The inadequacy of governmental institutions in responding to regional problems is identified in both academic literature and study reports, but there are important disagreements and gaps in terms of how to solve the problem. On the policy side, the idea that collaborative governance can bring regional sustainability planning without strong vertical mandates is challenged by empirical evidence (Weir *et al.*, 2011; Alexander, 2011; Weir, 2000; Barbour & Deakin, 2012). This study compares two cases where a new institution was created with the objective of achieving sustainability in regional planning, but each case represents a different ideal-type: Chicago is a case of integration of regional transportation and land use planning functions at the regional level and consensus-based governance, and Toronto is a case of centralization with a regulatory mandate. On the institutional side, many authors studying the question of collaborative governance and sustainability planning point to the importance of institutional designs, but few studies of regional governance unpack the concept of institutional design and approach it as a subject of inquiry (Ozmy & Rey, 2013; Barbour & Deakin, 2012; Pierre & Peters, 2012; Innes *et al.*, 2011; Ansell & Gash, 2007). This research contributes to this literature by exploring how changes of the institutional structures and mechanisms aimed at integrating transportation and land use planning influence or impede decision outcomes on transportation investments and land use change.

This study is particularly useful because it compares the impacts of a regulatory framework to those of a collaborative governance framework for integrating transportation and land use planning at the regional level. In addition, a qualitative approach allows to characterize relationships among actors, their respective interests, and how changes in the

representational structures can impact decision outcomes. This study thus contributes to the scholarship on the politics of regional planning and the new institutional structures at the regional level by exploring how the potential success of collaborative efforts is related to who is involved in the planning and decision-making processes and how cost and benefits are distributed among stakeholders.

Research Questions

The central research question this study aims to answer is:

- *How do new institutional structures aimed at integrating regional transportation and land use planning impact the planning process, transportation investments and land use decisions?*

In addition, it addresses the following sub-questions:

- *Does the representational structure of these new institutions matter?*
- *Does the change in institutional design impact the relative political weight of the central city compared to the suburbs and higher orders of government? Does the new institution reinforce or weaken the role of the central city in the planning decision-making process? If so, what are the implications of this change in the power dynamics for regional sustainability?*
- *What are the tradeoffs between accountability (responsibility and public scrutiny through transparency), democracy (representativeness, public debate and deliberation), and effectiveness (cost-effectiveness, local and regional changes)?*

Rationale for Qualitative Methods

In order to assess how institutional settings influence transportation and land use planning processes and outcomes, a longitudinal comparative case study relying on qualitative data (interviews, policy documents, and planning and spending decisions) is carried out. The choice of a comparative case-study is justified by the research questions, which focus on the ways new institutions and representational structures influence the planning process, transportation investments, and land use decisions. Generally speaking, case studies are better suited to examine the role of causal mechanisms and address complex causal patterns than statistical methods (George & Bennett, 2005; Ragin, 2004; Yin, 2003; King *et al.* 1994). In addition, because I am interested in the impacts of new institutions aimed at integrating transportation and land use planning at a regional scale, I will analyze change over time, i.e., the planning process and decision outcomes before and after the creation of new regional planning institutions. The type of quantitative work related to sustainable planning analyzes specific policies, such as growth management or smart growth policies, by measuring their impact on commuter transit use, open space, compact development, etc. (Deal *et al.*, 2009; Ingram *et al.*, 2009). However, understanding the role of the causal mechanism linking institutional designs to decision outcomes requires qualitative studies looking at how policies and structures influence the integration and consistency of regional- and local-level transportation and land use decisions.

Summary of Findings

Answers to Research Questions

How do new institutional structures aimed at integrating regional transportation and land use planning impact the planning process, transportation investments and land use decisions?

Both institutional reforms improved the regional planning process by establishing a renewed commitment to the exercise of regional planning. Institutional reforms have improved the “planning practice” dimension of sustainable planning by:

- 1) Renewing the commitment of stakeholders (local, regional, and state/provincial governments) to regional planning;
- 2) Initiating an inclusive regional planning effort for the development of a regional vision;
- 3) Increasing information and promoting evidenced-based planning and decision-making;
- 4) Fostering a sense of mutual understanding, collaboration and trust among local and regional representatives, thus contributing to reduce inter-local competition;
- 5) Increasing local awareness to sustainability issues and local comprehensive planning activities.

The reforms would have had a greater impact on the planning process if:

- 1) Transit agencies were also an active part of the regional planning process by being represented on the board of regional planning agencies;
- 2) Regional planning agencies were the approval authority of transit agencies’ plans and budgets, as to give the regional planning agencies some leverage over the coordination of transit services and ultimately streamline the travelers’ experience.

Both reforms had only a limited impact on transportation investments because the decision-making function in terms of transportation funding allocation is still controlled by the

province of Ontario and the state of Illinois who are following their own set of interests and political agendas. More precisely, the institutional reforms improved the “transportation investments” dimension of sustainable planning by:

- 1) Building a momentum around regional transportation, which led to increased investments in roads and transit (more the case in Toronto than in Chicago);
- 2) Creating an agency accountable to the Province, which led to an increase in provincial investments in transit capital projects (in Toronto);
- 3) Improving the quality of transportation proposals by increasing the level of scrutiny around funding allocation (in Chicago).

The reforms would have had a greater impact on transportation investments if:

- 1) Regional plans were compulsory, rather than advisory;
- 2) Regional agencies had access to an independent revenue source for implementing projects identified in their regional plans;
- 3) Local and regional stakeholders were responsible for both regional transportation *planning* and *decision-making* in terms of funding allocation;
- 4) Regional planning agencies were the approval authority of transit operators’ plans and budgets, as to give the regional planning agencies the capacity to effectively coordinate transit services and ultimately streamline the travelers’ experience.

Both cases show how difficult it is to increase densities and curb urban sprawl. **In fact, both reforms had only a limited impact on land use decisions** because the decision-making function in terms of local land uses, zoning and local development approvals are the prerogative of local governments and a function of locational preferences of individuals and

corporations, which are contingent upon global economic forces. Institutional reforms have improved the “land use decisions” dimension of sustainable planning by:

- 1) Providing a legal and/or policy framework that enables local governments to amend their planning ordinances in a way that would increase density and reduce sprawl;
- 2) Raising local awareness on the impacts of local land uses and zoning decisions on local and regional sustainability.

The reform would have had a greater impact on land use decisions if:

- 1) A system of incentives and disincentives was in place for rewarding or punishing local governments for making certain types of land use or zoning decisions;
- 2) Municipal revenue structure was reformed as to remove the local governments’ incentives to increase their tax base by allowing greenfield development.

Despite the dominant role of other orders of government on the regional planning environment, the regional institutional design still plays a fundamental part in the system.

Does the representational structure of these new institutions matter?

Overall, the regional institutional design as a whole, comprised of the mandate (transportation planning, funding and operations, and land use planning), the resources (human, technical, financial, jurisdictional) and the representational structures (group structure, appointment rules, composition and voting rules) explains largely why both Metrolinx and CMAP have only had a limited impact on transportation investments and land use decisions since their creation. In this context where the scope of the mandate and resources limit the agencies’ capacity to influence the decision-making process related to transportation investments and land use decisions (which are still largely controlled by the Province and the

local governments, respectively), what is the impact of the representational structure of the new institutional design on the regional political arena?

Although in both Toronto and Chicago, the state or provincial government still controls transportation investments, the representational structure of the regional agency determines whether or not there is regional/local resistance to the provincial or state initiatives that are going against the regional plan. Overall, the evidence presented in this study shows that local elected representatives are an essential component of a regional planning agency's board of directors, because they are the watchdogs of local and regional interests and also act as champions of the regional plan. In the same vein, this study also shows that board members who are appointed by the State or the Province (both current Metrolinx Board members and CMAP's Metropolitan Planning Organization [MPO] Policy Committee members) and financially dependent on the state (MPO Policy Committee members) are often times not going to go against the state's or the province's initiatives by either abstaining from voicing their professional opinion in the media (in the case of Metrolinx) or voting against undesirable provincial initiatives (in the case of the MPO Policy Committee). In addition, local representatives are connected to local administrations, transit operators and local constituents, which offer a certain guarantee that projects do translate in geography at the local and community levels. In this regard, the presence of local elected officials on the regional planning agencies' board of directors can make up for the fact that the agency has no authority over transit operators, who are under the responsibility of local governments.

In terms of the impact of the representational structure on the land use dimension of planning, the evidence is even less clear and more complicated than it is for the transportation dimension. In Toronto, there is no regional (Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area [GTHA]

level) agency responsible for land use planning. The provincial government carried out the function of developing a regional *Growth Plan*, which has to be implemented by (sub-) regions and municipal governments in a cascading system. Provincial decisions related to the approval of local amendments to official plans can then be appealed to the Ontario Municipal Board ([OMB] - an administrative tribunal comprised of professionals with no planning expertise), a procedure that is unanimously criticized because respondents and experts think that it is the provincial government that should be the final authority over farmland conversion, not a tribunal of lay people. Although the already dense parts of the GTHA will continue to densify, the political negotiations between the provincial government and the regional and local municipalities will likely lead to more areas approved for development, and there is no evidence that the *Growth Plan* implementation will result in less sprawling development (especially since the areas north of the Greenbelt are becoming the “wild west” of development). In addition, the dependence of suburban municipalities to local property taxes will only exacerbate the need for new urban developments.

In Chicago, both the representational structure of CMAP Board and the region’s slow population growth rates prevent the agency from adopting density targets and promoting policies that would restrict urban development. CMAP’s actions are thus non-coercive and voluntary. The agency encourages a future pattern of more compact, mixed-use development that focuses urban growth where infrastructure already exists by providing technical assistance to municipalities and by promoting local capacity building. Although CMAP’s voluntary, consensus-based approach fosters education, cooperation, and local planning activities, it prevents the agency from adopting a plan with big winners and losers and from taking action on the *Regional Tax Policy Task Force Report to the CMAP Board*. The avenues of reform

identified by the Task Force, which were not even consensual among the Task Force members themselves, were presented to CMAP Board in 2012. Given the Board's composition and voting rules that require a regional consensus on the issue, the CMAP has not been successful in addressing and implementing the recommendations suggested by the Task Force. The impact of the representational structure on the distribution of resources and infrastructures in certain parts of the region is directly addressed is the subject of the next question.

Does the change in institutional design impact the relative political weight of the central city compared to the suburbs and higher orders of government? Does the new institution reinforce or weaken the role of the central city in the planning decision-making process? If so, what are the implications of this change in the power dynamics for regional sustainability?

This politically-charged question was perhaps the most difficult for respondents to answer because it is fairly abstract and hard to assess plus, for some people and organizations, the reality is a hard truth. Objectively, besides from the respondents' perceptions, in both Toronto and Chicago, the central city does not hold the majority of the seats on the regional agency's board of directors. In Toronto, respondents observed that the creation of Metrolinx has translated into a relative decline in the central city's importance within the region and a centralization of the decision-making at the provincial level. Although the impact of this shift of balance on sustainability is difficult to determine, the evidence presented in this study shows the consequences of having a board of directors not accountable to the local level. In Chicago, the creation of CMAP has not fundamentally changed the balance of power within the region, nor has it changed the decision-making process surrounding funding allocation and land use decision in a way that would directly improve regional sustainability. Overall, the reforms have

not changed the balance of powers within the region as to make better investment choices and ultimately, to a certain extent, this is harming the regional agencies' effectiveness.

What are the tradeoffs between accountability (responsibility and public scrutiny through transparency), democracy (representativeness, public debate and deliberation), and effectiveness (cost-effectiveness, local and regional changes) that different types of institutional structures involve?

What can we conclude from the Toronto-Chicago reforms comparison in terms of “accountability”, “democracy”, and “efficiency/effectiveness”? First of all, the principle of “accountability”, particularly in its “responsibility” dimension, and the principle of “democracy”, in its “representativeness” dimension, are both guarded by the representative structure of the regional agency. In both Toronto and Chicago, the presence of local elected officials and local appointees on Metrolinx’s and CMAP’s board ensured that the local interests were represented at the regional level. In addition, the local representatives acted as the champions of the regional plans, the *Big Move* and *GO to 2040*. In fact, the “political hijacking” of Metrolinx’s planning and transportation decisions in Ontario were attributed to the replacement of elected local appointees with non-elected provincial appointees on the agency’s board of directors. In Chicago, CMAP’s board stood up for the regional vision expressed in *GO to 2040* when its members recommended against including an “unsustainable project” (the Illiana Expressway – more on this in Chapter 7) into the fiscally constrained list of capital projects on the basis that the project was going against the principles included in *GO to 2040*. Certain dimensions of the principles of accountability and democracy are thus safeguarded when local elected officials are represented on the agency’s board of directors.

Secondly, there is a tension between dimensions of democracy (representativeness, public debate and deliberation) and effectiveness. In Toronto, the political flip-flopping, the disrespect of regional consensus and democratic principles, and the lack of transparency (a dimension of accountability) were associated with transportation investment decisions not representing the best value for money. In Chicago, the representativeness and voting rules of CMAP's Board can be associated with less effectiveness, in the sense that the agency has to "please" everyone and not "displease" everyone, as to achieve consensus and the buy-in of the Collar Counties in the regional planning process. Conversely, it is the undemocratic nature of the MPO Policy Committee that has led to the inclusion of the Illiana Expressway into *GO to 2040 update*. If CMAP Board had been the MPO, the project would not have been included to the fiscally constrained list of projects. In addition, although some respondents pointed out that transportation engineers dislike the public scrutiny and the consultation that comes with the regional planning processes, and that time-consuming planning activities are not efficient, other respondents pointed out that consultation and outreach is an intrinsic part of the planning role of a regional agency, and that it also helps educating the public and achieving local buy-in for developing and implementing projects that the communities want. Some of the capital investment decisions presented in this study shows how the disrespect of accountability and democratic principles can be associated with transportation investment decisions that do not represent the best value for money (in terms of ridership potential) or that are questionable in terms of environmental sustainability.

Finally, the regional agencies' ability to implement the policies and the projects identified in their regional plan was limited by their lack of independent revenue sources, which ties the principle of "effectiveness" with "resources". In fact, both Metrolinx and CMAP

respondents identified possible independent revenue sources that would enable the agencies to effectively carry out their mandate without always needing provincial or state approval. However, the Province and the State reluctances to give the agencies more independence has historically been at the heart of regional planning politics, because giving them more power and resources would imply a change in the balance of powers between the province or the state, the regional and the municipal governments.

Other Factors

The category of factors that were present at the time the reforms were adopted (and continue to influence planning decisions) includes the pre-existing historical and geographical conditions, the built environment/land use patterns, and the state of good repair of transportation infrastructures. In Toronto, the most important pre-existing factors are: 1) the history of amalgamation that has led to a small number of municipalities in the region; 2) the Toronto/905 divide that has led to the failure of the Greater Toronto Services Board (GTSB); 3) the provincial fear of a too-powerful Toronto city-region; and 4) the under-funding of the Toronto Transit Commission (TTC) that induced a poor state of good repair. In Chicago, some of the most important antecedent conditions include: 1) the historical Democratic/Republican divide between Chicago and the Collar Counties; 2) the sheer number of municipal governments; 3) the upstate/downstate divide in Illinois; 4) the under-funding of the Chicago Transit Authority (CTA) that has led to a poor state of good repair; and 5) the federal involvement in urban affairs that has allowed CMAP to launch its local technical assistance program.

The factors that came into effect after the reform consist mainly in current demographical, financial and electoral trends. In Toronto, the two most important intervening factors are: 1) the current and anticipated growth rates (high); 2) the changes of leadership at the mayoral level (David Miller, Rob Ford, John Tory). In Chicago, they include: 1) the current and anticipated growth rates (low); 2) the change at the mayoral level (Richard M. Daley – Rahm Emanuel); and 3) the financial crisis at the state level.

Although the purpose of this study does not allow me to assess the individual role that each of variables is playing, they collectively are part of the larger narrative of each region and will continue to influence the different dimensions of regional sustainability. Regional governance is a complicated process, and looking at the ways through which regional institutional structures influence the decision-making process allow to shed the light on the relationships between actors of planning, politics, funding and market forces.

Pros and Cons of Each Institutional Design

Mandate

Overall, Metrolinx's mandate advantage over CMAP resides in the management and construction of transportation infrastructure and its operating divisions. In addition, Metrolinx has the mandate of implementing a transit fare integration of the TTC, GO Transit, and the other 8 suburban transit operators fare systems, which CMAP (and the Regional Transit Authority [RTA]) does not have. However, Metrolinx has the same problem with the TTC than the RTA has with the CTA, Metra and Pace, in the sense that transit authorities are fully autonomous and are not required nor incentivized to coordinate their fares and operations.

On the flipside, CMAP's advantage over Metrolinx resides in its scope and the fact that it combines both land use and transportation planning, in addition to other regional equity issues, including local quality of life, employment, food access, and tax policy. CMAP's inherent role is to foster research, local negotiation and collaboration on critical issues for which there is still no consensus. As a result, Metrolinx has increased dialogue, planning activities and education on a number of important regional and local issues. However, both Metrolinx and CMAP are limited by the advisory nature of their mandate and their lack of autonomous revenue sources.

Resources

In both Toronto and Chicago, the regional planning agency's capacity to carry out its mandate is constrained by the resources it controls or has access to. Metrolinx's advantage over CMAP resides in its operation divisions and the fact that it is responsible to manage the Province's investments in transportation infrastructure. However, despite the development of two investment strategies (one by Metrolinx itself and the other by the Province's Transit Advisory Panel), Metrolinx has still no independent revenue source that would allow the construction of another round of transit projects identified in the *Big Move*. In addition, the agency's limited institutional memory might impede its efficiency when carrying out construction projects.

By contrast, CMAP's advantage in terms of resources partly resides in its experienced staff, which is considered as a real asset when going research, developing local planning activities and mediating the different positions in CMAP committees. In addition, CMAP has access to various federal planning grants, notably the Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Grant Program of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development that is

behind CMAP's local technical assistance (LTA) program. However, just like Metrolinx, CMAP has no autonomous revenue source that would allow the agency to implement the transportation projects identified in *GO to 2040*, or to at least act as a financial partner, which would serve as a catalyst for funding transit projects. Similarly, it has no autonomous revenue source to carry out planning activities that are outside of the transportation realm, which makes the agency particularly dependent upon the State's willingness to cooperate.

Representation structure

The crafting of regional planning agencies' representation structure attempted to reach a delicate balance between local and provincial/state actors and interests. In both Toronto and Chicago, each combination of group structure, board composition, appointment, and voting rules presents some advantages and disadvantages, showing how difficult it is to reconcile every actor's interests and achieve a balance of powers that fosters the adoption of sustainable planning and investment decisions.

The fact that Metrolinx Board is solely accountable to the Province has allowed the Province to massively re-invest in Toronto transit infrastructures. However, the exclusion of local elected officials from the Board and their replacement with provincial appointees was detrimental to the regional planning process because: 1) Metrolinx has lost its local representation and accountability, which impedes its effectiveness in implementing policy initiatives at the local level; and 2) the planning process has been highjacked by the provincial political process, which has contributed to discredit Metrolinx and the regional transportation planning process as a whole. Metrolinx's own investment strategy recommended re-introducing local representatives on its board of directors.

As for CMAP's representation structure, its bicameral group structure has resulted in one board being controlled by local representatives (CMAP Board), and the other controlled by the State (MPO Policy Committee). Whereas CMAP Board members have generally been successful in promoting sustainable regional policies, while remaining accountable to their constituents, the board's super-majority voting requirements has favored the adoption of the lowest-common-denominator type of policies, while impeding the adoption of more contentious initiatives, such as a the regional tax policy reform. As for the MPO Policy Committee, responsible for allocating federal transportation funds, its composition and appointment rules have resulted in the Illiana Expressway being forced into *GO to 2040*'s constrained list of transportation projects, which illustrates CMAP's deficiency in improving the decision-making function with regards to transportation investments.

Outline of Dissertation

The dissertation is divided into eight chapters. The **first chapter** that you are reading introduces the study and provides a summary of the findings. The **second chapter** consists of a comprehensive literature review covering the topics of transportation and land use planning, a brief history of regionalism, the debate on political fragmentation, the issue of representation on regional planning boards, the state of Canadian urban policy and regional planning literature, and institutionalism as an analytical approach. The **third chapter** presents the theoretical framework, the research methods, the justification for case selection, the data collection procedure and instruments, the validation strategies and techniques used in the analysis. **Chapters 4 and 5** are dedicated to the Toronto case. Chapter 4 presents the history of regional governance and the 2005-2006 reform, and Chapter 5 assesses the impacts of the

reform on the planning process, transportation investments, and land use decisions. Similarly, **Chapters 6 and 7** are dedicated to the Chicago case, providing the background analysis and the impacts of the reform, respectively. Finally, **Chapter 8** consists of a thematic comparison of both regions in light of the aggregated coding results, discusses the study findings, and assesses the theoretical implications and the larger significance of this research project.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This preliminary literature review is divided into eight sections. The first and second sections introduce the regional planning issues by describing the costs of sprawling urban development and transportation, and by presenting the challenges of sustainability advocacy, respectively. The third section covers the topic of the integration of transportation and land use planning, and highlights the importance of coordinating transportation and land use planning for regional sustainability, the policies that attempt to achieve this objective, as well as the organizational hurdles that are coming in the way of their implementation. The fourth section provides a brief history of regionalism, situating “new regionalism” in its historical context. The fifth section covers the debate on political fragmentation, describing how the structural problems faced by sustainability planning initiatives are deeply rooted in institutional systems, and what can be done to overcome the structural challenge. The sixth section further develops this theme by introducing the literature on regional governance, institutional reforms, and the politics of regional planning. The seventh section summarizes the current state of the Canadian local government and regional planning literature as to situate this study in a true North American context. Finally, the eighth section presents institutionalism as an analytical approach, providing some background for understanding the theoretical framework and research methods presented in Chapter 3.

Costs of Sprawling Development and Transportation

The efforts to promote sustainability in metropolitan regions are responses to growing traffic congestion, air pollution and greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, and the negative impacts

of sprawling development. Sprawling development is defined as low-density, leapfrog development characterized by unlimited urban expansion, in other words, significant residential and nonresidential development in rural and undeveloped areas (TCRP, 2002). Urban sprawl, or uncontrolled growth, has significant impacts in terms of resources and personal costs. The resource impacts of sprawl include land conversion and consequent loss of forest, agricultural land, habitat and open space (TCRP, 2002). North American studies have also concluded that urban sprawl is more costly than compact development for both operating and capital costs, especially for water, sewer, and road infrastructure, but also for local public services (Burchell *et al.*, 2002; TCRP, 2002). In terms of the personal costs of sprawl, these include an increase in miles traveled in privately operated vehicles and the associated travel costs. Suburban sprawl is also associated with urban decline and disinvestment in central cities (TCRP, 2002; Dutton, 2000).

In Canada's nine largest urban areas, the economic costs of congestion, due to time lost in traffic, wasted fuel, and additional greenhouse gas emissions, are estimated between \$2.3 billion and \$3.7 billion per year in 2002 dollar values (Transport Canada, 2006). Another report, published in 2006, estimates the costs of road congestion in the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area associated with travel delays, additional vehicle operating costs, accidents and additional vehicle emissions, at \$3.3 billion annually for the region alone (Greater Toronto Transportation Authority, 2008). In the United States, the latest *Urban Mobility Report*, published by the Texas A&M Transportation Institute (2012), estimated the total financial cost of congestion due to travel delays and excess fuel consumption to be \$121 billion in 2011. In Chicago, the same report estimated the total costs of congestion to be \$5.7 billion a year, the third highest in the nation after New York and Los Angeles.

In addition to the economic costs of traffic congestion, the burning of fossil fuels by engines emits air pollutants that have negative health impacts, such as premature mortality, respiratory symptoms, and various types of cancer (McCubbin & Delucchi, 2003). It also emits carbon dioxide (CO₂), an important GHG responsible for the global warming of climate and its associated impacts (Black, 2010). In Canada, the transportation sector is the most important source of CO₂ emissions, representing 35% of total emissions, of which 75% comes from road transportation (IEA, 2013). In the United States, transportation accounts for 31% of total CO₂ emissions, 86% from road transportation, the second most important source after energy production (IEA, 2013). Although GHG emissions from road transportation represent a national (and global) issue, they are generated locally and regionally, involving complex questions related to land use patterns, energy consumption, and urban transportation systems (Brown, 2012; Transportation Research Board, 2009).

Sustainability Advocacy

Sustainability planning advocates have put forward a variety of strategies aimed at solving regional transportation and land use problems and improving long-term environmental, social and economic conditions. The basic assumption supporting these solutions is that increasing residential densities and employment concentrations, mixed uses, and accessibility to jobs and services through transit improvements will decrease vehicle miles traveled and make communities more sustainable (Ewing, 2008; Transportation Research Board, 2009) (more on this in the next sub-section). However, sustainability planning advocacy does not directly address the institutional and political nature of the transportation and land use problem, which ultimately explains why strategies for integrating transportation and land use and for

improving urban sustainability are not being adopted and implemented to an extent that would significantly alter location choices, travel patterns and overall sustainability at a larger scale.

New urbanism, an intellectual movement in architecture and urban planning also called “Traditional Neighborhood Development” (TND) at the local level, has been at the forefront of the sustainability planning agenda (Bressi, 2002; Steuteville & Langdon, 2003). The Congress for the New Urbanism (CNU), its leading non-profit advocacy organization, developed a set of detailed principles to guide public policy, development practice, urban planning and design. These planning guidelines include: livable streets arranged in compact, walkable blocks; a range of housing choices to serve people of diverse ages and income levels; schools, stores and other nearby destinations reachable by walking, bicycling or transit service; and a human-scaled public realm where appropriately designed buildings define streets and other public spaces (Congress for the New Urbanism, 1996). In practice, New Urbanism has led to the creation of new towns, neighborhoods, and transit-oriented developments of which Seaside (Florida), the Disney town of Celebration in Orlando (Florida), Kentlands (Maryland), and Laguna West (California) are the best known (Fainstein, 2010; Le Gates and Stout, 2007; Quinn, 2006).

A similar planning agenda is pursued by advocates of smart growth practices: increasing transportation options, creating compact, walkable neighborhoods, mixed land uses, transit-oriented development, etc. (Smart Growth Network, 2014). The major difference with New Urbanism is the regional focus of smart growth, which seeks to strengthen and direct residential and employment growth towards specific zones and preserve open space (rather than creating new towns and neighborhoods at the outskirts of metropolitan areas, the unintentional result of individual “New Urbanism” development projects). Smart growth

programs and policies can be enacted by state or provincial governments, and in the strongest programs, municipalities are required to act in conformity with growth policies through their comprehensive planning document. In 2000, eight U.S. states had proactive growth management policies: Florida, Maine, Maryland, New Jersey, Oregon, Rhode Island, Vermont and Washington (Deal *et al.*, 2009). Empirical studies have shown that smart growth programs are associated with increased work-trip transit ridership and decreased traffic delays (Ingram *et al.*, 2009), and that growth management strategies can contribute to increasing transit use by limiting the abandonment of central neighborhoods (Deal *et al.*, 2009). Smart growth objectives can also be achieved if local efforts are coordinated at the regional level, as is the case in Colorado (Ingram *et al.*, 2009).

However, sustainability solutions based on urban form or physical design alone, such as increasing population density and building transit-oriented developments, do not reflect the idea that the city is a coevolutionary process of urbanization. The form is both the product and the determinant of the urban development process, and so if the goal is to improve long-term conditions in the region, the question is whether the *processes* of building cities are sustainable (Neuman, 2005). In addition, as explained in the next sub-section, the inter relationship between transportation and land use, as well as the effect of policies on travel and location choices of businesses and individuals, are difficult to measure (Cervero & Duncan, 2006 ; Forsyth *et al.*, 2007 ; Giuliano, 1995 ; Handy *et al.*, 2005 ; Neuman, 2005 ; Transportation Research Board, 2009; Ingram *et al.*, 2009). Mobility and land use patterns depend on a complex set of issues. Other factors, in addition to the built environment, which must be taken into account include: ecological, social, economic, political, fiscal, infrastructural, as well as cultural and attitudinal factors (Neuman, 2005; Quinn, 2006; Crane & Schweitzer, 2003).

Deterministic physical design does not address the fact that transportation and land use decisions are made within an institutional context and market structure that impedes the implementation of policies and development projects that would radically change urban landscapes and mobility patterns at a larger scale. This is perhaps the reason why fewer than a dozen states have enacted growth management strategies, why the efforts towards “new urbanism” have had difficulties scaling up to the regional level, and why TODs have had limited success (Swanstrom, 2011; Quinn, 2006).

Integrating Transportation & Land Use Planning

As stated previously, the basic assumption supporting sustainable planning through the integration of transportation and land use is the idea that increasing residential densities and employment concentrations, mixed uses, and accessibility to jobs and services through transit improvements will decrease vehicle miles traveled (VMT) and make communities more sustainable (Ewing, 2008; Transportation Research Board, 2009). In fact, the inter relationship between transportation and land use, as well as the effect of policies on travel and location choices of businesses and individuals, are difficult to measure and was subject of debate (Cervero & Duncan, 2006 ; Forsyth *et al.*, 2007 ; Giuliano, 1995 ; Handy *et al.*, 2005 ; Neuman, 2005 ; Transportation Research Board, 2009). There is a consensus among scholars about the historic contribution of highway construction to suburban growth, in the sense that freeway construction has allowed suburban growth. In that sense, transportation policy is blamed for “driving” unsustainable practices. There is also a consensus on the fact that sprawl is associated with automobile dependence, however high levels of auto use can also prevail in dense areas (Handy, 2002). The current and future strength of the transportation-land use connection was

subject of debate in the mid-1990s, when scientific uncertainty triggered an argument between Giuliano (1995) and Cervero and Landis (1995) about the relevance of coordinating land use and transportation policies. The impact of new transportation investments on land use patterns and the impact of new developments on travel patterns are, in fact, difficult to predict (Handy, 2002), but recent empirical research is providing increasing evidence supporting the adoption of land use policies to change travel behaviors.

Handy's 2002 review of empirical evidence on the transportation-land use connection has found that: new highway capacity influences where growth occurs and might increase travel a little; light-rail transit encourages higher densities only under certain conditions; and new urbanism strategies make it easier for those who want to drive less to do so (attitude is a more significant predictor of travel behavior than the built environment). However, in a more recent quasi-longitudinal analysis of changes in travel behavior and changes in the built environment that is accounting for attitudes, Handy *et al.* (2005) have found that an increase in accessibility does lead to less driving, providing support for the adoption of land use policies. Policies that could increase accessibility in *new areas* include mixed-use zoning and street connectivity ordinances, whereas infill development and redevelopment could increase accessibility in *existing areas* (Handy *et al.*, 2005). Other studies have also provided evidence in favor of the adoption of land use policies to impact travel patterns¹ (Transportation Research Board, 2009; Frank *et al.*, 2007; Holtzclaw *et al.*, 2002).

In fact, if the goal is solely to reduce GHG emissions from transportation, technological improvements (vehicle fuel economy and lower carbon fuels) have the greatest potential for

¹ For a comprehensive review of empirical research on transportation-land use connection and the associated environmental impacts, see Ewing *et al.* (2008).

reducing GHG emissions (U.S. DOT, 2010). However, the benefits of technological strategies are likely to be offset by the robust growth in VMT and vehicle use observable since the 1980s, which are influenced by urban design and transportation infrastructure, justifying the strategy of integrating transportation and land use development (Ewing *et al.*, 2008; Holtzclaw *et al.*, 2002; Barbour & Deakin, 2012; Transportation Research Board, 2009). In other words, reducing the demand for driving goes hand in hand with technological solutions. Furthermore, slowing the growth of land consumption would potentially preserve the amount of forest land available to absorb CO₂ (Ewing *et al.*, 2008). The benefits associated with integrating transportation and land use planning are thus multiple and interrelated: reducing VMT and GHG emissions, preservation of farmland and open space, protection of water quality and quantity, health improvements associated with active modes of transportation, and reduction of infrastructure costs (Ewing *et al.*, 2008). The goal is to fundamentally alter the way cities develop and function to improve long-term conditions.

Despite the difficulties in measuring all the impacts of land use policies (Wee, 2002; Transportation Research Board; 2009), the general idea of coordinating transportation and land use planning is becoming more accepted, and is changing the way planning is conceived. Todd Litman (2013) argues that we are witnessing a paradigm shift in transportation planning that changes the problem definition and its solutions, putting transportation demand-management strategies and multi-modal planning at the forefront. This paradigm shift is due to the fact that motor vehicle travel has started to peak in most developed countries, notably because of aging populations, rising fuel prices, increasing urbanization, growing health and environmental concerns, and changing consumer preferences (Litman, 2013: 20-21). Whereas the old mobility paradigm evaluated the efficiency of transportation systems based upon the speed,

cost, and convenience of motorized travel, which favors solutions oriented towards automobile travel and roadway expansion; the new paradigm, oriented towards access to services and activities, considers a wider range of modes, objectives, impacts and improvement possibilities (Litman, 2013 ; Johnston, 2004). The paradigm shift from a mobility standpoint to an accessibility objective calls for new strategies, such as reducing sprawling development, improving air quality, increasing population density, allowing for a mix of land uses and functions, improving transit services, and directing population growth towards built up areas where transit service is already provided, all of which requires to think about transportation and land use as being part of the same system (Black, 2010; Johnston, 2004). The recognition of the need for integrating transportation with land use has entered the policy arena in a number of jurisdictions at the federal, state/provincial, regional and local levels. However, the existing institutional structures are not adapted to respond to an integrated “sustainability” planning agenda, and so there is a gap between planning theory and practice (Kennedy, 2005; Berke & Conroy, 2000).

In the United-States, the adoption of federal surface transportation authorization bills (the *Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act* [ISTEA] in 1991, the *Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century* [TEA-21] in 1998, the *Safe, Accountable, Efficient, Transportation Equity Act : A Legacy for Users* [SAFETEA-LU] in 2005, and the *Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century* [MAP-21] in 2012) have contributed to redefine the transportation paradigm at the federal level by broadening the scope of funding programs to include transit, alternative modes of transport, land use, and other regional goals that go beyond increasing mobility, such as social, economic and environmental responsibility (Weir *et al.*, 2009 ; Hamilton *et al.*, 2008 ; Wheeler, 2002; Lewis & Sprague, 1997). ISTEA, TEA-21 and

SAFETEA-LU attempted to coordinate regional planning by giving Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPO)² greater authority and responsibility for making transportation decisions, and providing them with flexibility in funding transit-supportive urban design and land use planning, instead of being exclusively focused on highway construction (Wheeler, 2002). Federal policies in regional transportation brought important changes: the powers and representativeness of MPOs significantly increased, and a portion of federal highway funds were transferred to public transit use (Hamilton *et al.*, 2008).

A recent federal initiative in urban planning and transportation is the Partnership for Sustainable Communities between HUD, the U.S. Department of Transportation, and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, and its competitive Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Grant Program. The Program fosters interagency coordination and cooperation at the regional level around interdependent challenges by allocating one hundred million dollars to projects integrating housing, land use, economic and work- force development, transportation, and infrastructure investments (Alexander, 2011; Mallet, 2010). Although it is too early to measure its full impacts, Sustainable Communities initiative already funded the development of sustainability plans by MPOs, as well as the implementation of existing comprehensive plans through local technical assistance (HUD, 2011; CMAP, 2014m).

However, the ability for the federal government to impact local decision-making is limited. Although the federal requirements brought positive changes in the regional transportation decision-making process by making it more open and decentralized, the structure of authority and the old politics remain more or less the same. State and local

² Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPO) are required in regions over 50,000 residents since the adoption of the Federal Aid Highway Act in 1973.

governments have been resisting the transfer of powers to the metropolitan level, and MPOs are still controlling a small proportion of total transportation funds and still have limited implementation capabilities despite federal efforts to increase their influence (Hamilton *et al.*, 2008; Weir, 2009; Transportation Research Board 2009; Barbour & Deakin, 2012). In her comparative study of the impact of vertical power relations on transportation decisions in Los Angeles and Chicago (prior to the creation of Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning in 2005), Margaret Weir (2009) noted that City Hall is still making decisions relative to Chicago and the federal and state governments still make decisions on spending priorities. MPOs' power remains indeed limited: they are not operational organizations, they have limited funding capacity, they do not have control over land use, they are struggling between parochial and regional interests, and the governor and state DOTs still have veto authority over MPO-selected projects. Sustainable Communities-type of grant programs may help MPOs implement their comprehensive plans, but the grants are relatively small (CMAP received \$4.25 million for its local technical assistance program – more on this in Chapters 6 and 7). That type of large, top-down grant programs also have pitfalls in terms of demographic representation, representative opportunism, and representative acquiescence resulting from: 1) the program's failure to mandate the participation of certain constituents in the consortium; 2) its encouragement of public/private partnerships and the leveraging of funds; and 3) its requirement that consortium participants have extensive experience and capacity (Alexander, 2011).

At the state level, growth management policies can be adopted, but the implementation of this type of strategy also meets institutional hurdles. As mentioned in earlier, empirical studies show that smart growth programs are associated with increased work-trip transit

ridership and decreased traffic delays (Ingram *et al.*, 2009), and that growth management strategies can contribute to increasing transit use by limiting the abandonment of central neighborhoods (Deal *et al.*, 2009). In the line of growth management policies, California adopted in 2008 the Senate Bill 375, aimed at reducing GHG emissions by promoting more efficient development (Barbour & Deakin, 2012). However, the implementation of California's strategy is compromised because of the mismatch between responsibility and authority, as well as the traditional regional-local divide. California's 18 MPOs are responsible for defining and assigning GHG reduction targets through the development and implementation of a Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS) as part of their periodic Regional Transportation Plan, but land use authority is under the purview of local governments, whose local land use policies and regulations are not required to be consistent with the SCS (Barbour & Deakin, 2012). The absence of implementation programs and consistency requirements between local and regional plans impedes the ability of MPOs to fulfill their mandate.

In the same vein, a recent study on regional transportation and land use decision making compares four metropolitan regions in the U.S. undertaking innovative efforts to coordinate land use and transportation: Seattle, Portland, Denver and San Diego (Margerum *et al.*, 2011). The study assesses the integration of transportation and land use by evaluating the perception of key informants about eight aspects of investment decisions. The respondents were asked to rate their level of agreement or disagreement with the following statements:

1. Regional transportation decisions are consistent with local land use decisions;
2. Local land use decisions are consistent with regional transportation decisions;
3. Transit investment supports regional growth centers;

4. Roadway investment supports regional growth centers;
5. Bicycle and pedestrian investment supports regional growth centers;
6. The region is making more efficient use of land as a result of regional efforts;
7. The region is increasing transportation options as a result of regional efforts;
8. There is an increasing trend of development within the region's growth centers.

(Margerum *et al.*, 2011: 10)

This study provides an interim assessment of policies adopted in the four regions selected using the opinion of regional stakeholders. Although the recent nature of the policies prevented the research team from using outcome data, the findings provide valuable insights on some of the impediments, opportunities and dilemmas met by regional actors trying to coordinate land use and transportation decisions. Because this study is one of the most recent accounts of regional efforts for integrating transportation and land use decisions, the key findings relevant to the present research are summarized in Box 1.

These findings highlight the critical role of transportation funding and land use authority, and how the distribution of resources and power facilitates or impedes coordination. The respondents also highlighted the need for more research focused on governance and coordination, policy tools and their effectiveness. The authors also identify the need for “before and after” studies of local government plans to determine how regional plans, strategies and processes have influenced local level planning (Margerum *et al.*, 2011).

Box 1: A study of recent efforts to coordinate transportation & land use decisions (selected findings)

Governance

- Land use authority is a key tool for metropolitan authorities with regional land use powers, while regional sales tax authority is a key tool for authorities without regional land use powers;
- Elected official leadership is important to the success of regional governance;
- Coordinating with state transportation agencies can be challenging.

Transportation-land use coordination

- Transportation and transit funding are critical tools in coordinating with land use decision making;
- The relative influence of plans varies: regional land use plans are more influential in the cases with regional land use powers, while transportation plans and funding are more influential in the cases without regional land use powers.

Growth center policies and grant programs

- Grants need to compliment other policies that support growth centers;
- All regions debate about giving fewer centers more funding or spreading funding out to maintain broad support for the program;
- Growth centers grand have limited impact on private investment due to high costs, market concerns, and local opposition to density;

Transportation improvement program initiatives

- TIP funding criteria (by itself) has a limited influence on land use decisions;
- TIP funding has less influence when the MPO provides a small share of regional funding;
- Strengthening of performance measurements could encourage MPOs to invest more into smart growth efforts;
- Direct federal funding to the regional level could improve coordination or regional policies and bring into balance statewide mobility with regional livability.

Source: Margerum *et al.* (2011: i-iii).

As the empirical research shows, the integration of regional transportation and land use planning has the potential to improve long-term conditions of urban regions. However, planning for sustainability requires designing policies and institutions that will better align responsibilities and authorities between levels of government and agencies. The next sections address this problem of regional planning by tracing the history of regionalism and introducing the debate surrounding the political fragmentation in metropolitan areas.

A Brief History of Regionalism

Early ecological regionalisms emerged at the beginning of the 20th century as a response to the problems of the overcrowded industrial cities such as London and New York. Although the solutions put forward by “regionalists” and “metropolitanists” differed, proponents of both schools seek to balance the city and the countryside by proposing relatively holistic, normative, and place-oriented approaches to the problems of the metropolis (Wheeler, 2002). Whereas “regionalists” sought to dilute the power of the central city by establishing dispersed new towns linked by highways and technology, “metropolitanists” were committed to centrality dominance (Katz, 2000). Ultimately, the implementation of both doctrines failed to achieve their objectives, which led to a revitalization of the American planning in the late 1940s and 1960s with the rise of regional science and economic geography, before “new regionalism” came about in the mid 1990’s (Wheeler, 2002).

Regionalism

The roots of planning for metropolitan regions can be traced back to the ideas of Ebenezer Howard and the garden city/new town movement (1898), and those of Patrick Geddes (1915) and his idea of “survey before plan”. The works of Howard and Geddes inspired the British Housing and Town Planning Act of 1909 and introduced the system of town planning in Great Britain. In the U.S., designers and social critics Lewis Mumford (1938) and Benton MacKaye (1928) adapted the doctrines of their English counterparts to American conditions.

The Regional Planning Association of America (RPAA), founded in 1923 by Clarence Stein with Benton MacKaye, Lewis Mumford and Henry Wright, actively promoted the idea of regional planning throughout the 1920s. This early regionalism had two distinguishing

features: first, it rejected the large metropolis; and second, it was deeply connected to the notion of the ecological region. In that sense, it was a forerunner of the environmental planning movement (Talen, 2005). Regionalists' ideas took shape in the U.S. when decentralization and the establishment of a regional network of planned new towns became part of President Roosevelt's New Deal, which included provisions for greenbelt towns and the electrification of rural areas (Howard, 2003; Fishman, 2000). A decade later came the federal government's provision of the interstate highway system in 1956. Ultimately, the combination of federal policies contributed to dismantling old urban factory zones, and a regional shift of industrial production from the cities to the suburbs and the Sunbelt in the 1960s.

Metropolitanism

Simultaneously, the Regional Plan Association (RPA) in New York metropolitan region shaped the dominant establishment view of the metropolis. Early metropolitanism identified the main challenges of planning as follow: 1) Creating a monumental downtown; 2) Constructing a massive network of rail public transit to connect the residents to the downtown; 3) Making the factory zones around the downtown not only efficient but also decent places to live; 4) Maintaining the outer zone as a source of fresh air, fresh water, and open space for the metropolis; and 5) Establishing parks and recreational facilities in the outer zone (Fishman, 2000). The metropolitanist vision of the RPA was embodied in two great monuments of American planning: Daniel Burnham and Edward Bennett's Plan of Chicago (1909) and The Regional Plan of New York and Its Environs (1929). The modernization of the metropolitanist vision from the 1920s until the 1960s promoted the use of the automobile, expressways, as well as "tower-in-the-park"/Le Corbusier types of superblocs, which were constructed in New York by architect Robert Moses.

Both forms of early regionalism failed to achieve their objectives. While the regionalist efforts to promote urban decentralization created unforeseen problems with suburban sprawl, metropolitanist's planning agenda supported "disastrous" urban renewal and public housing programs (Wheeler, 2002). From those failures came a revitalization of the American planning and a new kind of regional coalition inspired by the work of Jane Jacobs (1961), who stressed the importance of "urbanity", and the work of Ian McHarg (1969), who stressed the importance of open space and respect for the environment (Fishman, 2000) . By the late 1960s and early 1970s, the old disagreement between the RPAA and the RPA was overcome, with the RPA's adoption of a more holistic view of planning, understanding that both urbanity and open space were a necessity (Yaro, 2000). The two terms "regionalist" and "metropolitanist" are now used interchangeably, and 21st century planning, embodied in "new regionalism", is organized around attempts to solve problems created by 20th century planning: sprawl, traffic, environmental damage, inequities, and placelessness (Wheeler, 2002).

New Regionalism

New regionalism is a collection of viewpoints emphasizing the need for integrating physical planning, urban design, and equity planning to solve problems of sprawling development, inequity, congestion and environmental degradation (Wheeler, 2002). Movements promoting "new urbanism", smart growth, livable communities and sustainable development suggest changing the urban form, as opposed to the structure of government in metropolitan regions, putting forward regional collaboration as a vector of change (Wheeler, 2002; Calthorpe & Fulton, 2001). In other words, these approaches to urban planning call for the integration of transportation and land use, but do not suggest a *modus operandi* at the political and institutional levels, besides a better collaboration between public authorities and

stakeholders. Another approach to new regionalism pleads for greater intra-regional equity and for institutional reforms, such as the regional tax-sharing systems implemented in Minneapolis-St Paul in 1975 (Rusk, 1995; Downs, 1994; Orfield, 1997). Also under the umbrella of new regionalism are second- and third-generation growth management strategies, originally developed in the 1970's in Oregon and adapted in Florida, Maine, Maryland, New Jersey, Rhode Island, Vermont, and in Washington State (Porter, 1992; Deal *et al.*, 2009).

Debate on Institutional Fragmentation

In parallel to the regional planning research agenda surrounding urban form, there has been an ongoing debate among planners and political scientists on institutional arrangements for metropolitan governance. The origins of this debate can be traced back to the 1950's, when the post-WWII economic boom and the construction of highways across North America led to rapid suburban growth. The academic debate of that era opposed proponents of metropolitan reform, or consolidationists, to the regional school of public choice.

Metropolitan Reform School

The metropolitan reform school identifies institutional fragmentation as the root of many problems, and suggests the creation of one local government corresponding to the geographical boundaries of the metropolitan region by merging or consolidating contiguous municipalities. The negative consequences of jurisdictional fragmentation were exposed in *1400 Governments*, in which Robert Wood explained how the multiplicity of municipalities and the system of quasi-governmental agencies in New York metropolitan area were leading to governmental inefficiency in service delivery, fiscal inequity among municipalities of the same region, and special inadequacy between public resources and social needs (Wood, 1961).

In the same vein, Arthur Maass (1959) identified the absence of a metropolitan government as the missing link of the American territorial division of powers. Recognizing the resistance of State governments to a potential devolution of powers to the metropolitan level, Maass suggested the possibility of an incremental and functional approach to governmental reform focusing on transportation, a regional issue in nature (Maass, 1959: 69). Inefficiency and inequity resulting from jurisdictional fragmentation were thus the leitmotiv of the metropolitan reform school, which saw consolidation as an optimal solution. Although consolidation faces important political barriers, the idea still have some appeal today (Savitch & Vogel, 2000).

Regional School of Public Choice

On the other side, the regional school of public choice, particularly popular in the 1980's, justifies jurisdictional fragmentation (or "differentiation") at the metropolitan level by trying to demonstrate the advantages of a competitive local government system for economic development and regional prosperity. This school, based on the works of Charles Tiebout (1956), conceives the fragmented system of local government as a public market where each municipality offers a different package of goods and services. In this context, the customers/residents "vote with their feet" by moving into a municipality corresponding to their preferences in terms of services and taxation, providing a solution to the free rider problem at the regional level. Proponents of the regional school of public choice are thus in favor of a competitive, fragmented system of government at the regional level, assuming that residents have access to all the information they need about the combinations of tax and services to make a rational choice, and that they have the capacity to move in the location corresponding to their preferences.

Many types of reforms are put into action in order to tackle the issue of jurisdictional fragmentation at the metropolitan level, such as municipal consolidation and the creation of local governments corresponding to the geographic boundaries of the region. Another avenue is to create regional special purpose bodies of various forms: governmental or quasi-governmental, voluntary or statutory, with an appointed or an elected board, with a more general or specific mandate, with a shared administration or having its own, etc. (Norton, 1994). In the United States, most States and regions opted for the creation of special purpose authorities and rely on voluntary collaboration (Norton, 1994). Although their establishment is a response to complexity, the multiplication of special purpose bodies in the United States exacerbates institutional fragmentation to the point where the entanglement of jurisdictional boundaries is described as an “organized chaos” (Krawchenko, 2011; Norton, 1994).

In this increasingly complex context, the academic literature on local governments has evolved from the debate on institutional fragmentation and the focus on *who* governs (Dahl, 1961) to include the understanding of *how* the effectiveness of local governments depends on the cooperation of nongovernmental actors and the combination of state capacity and private resources (Stone, 1993), and *how* multiple local jurisdictions collaborate at the regional level (Hamilton, 2002; Bae & Feiock, 2012). In urban policy/local administration, this is where the “new regionalisms” fall, with solutions ranging on a government-governance continuum (consolidation, multitiered, linked functions, complex networks, and public choice) (Savitch & Vogel, 2000). In political science/comparative politics, a growing body of work focuses on multilevel governance and the vertical and horizontal relationships between levels of government, quasi-governmental authorities, market forces and the civil society (Alexander,

2011 ; Brenner, 2002 ; Horak & Young, 2012; Nelles, 2012 ; Weir *et al.*, 2009 ; Wheeler, 2002).

Regional Governance & Politics of Regional Planning

New urbanism, smart growth and sustainability planning fall under the umbrella of “new regionalism”, a burgeoning literature that emphasizes the need for integrating physical planning, urban design, and equity planning to solve problems of sprawling development, inequity, congestion and environmental degradation (Wheeler, 2002). Within the “new regionalism” research agenda is also an ongoing discussion addressing the structural and political nature of regional transportation and land use planning. This body of work identifies jurisdictional fragmentation as the core issue, or the fact that power and authority are distributed to hundreds of governments and agencies from various levels that are making independent and conflicting decisions, with no entity focusing on the region’s welfare (Innes *et al.*, 2011). The debate is about the effectiveness of collaborative governance to achieve regional transportation and land use planning, and identifies the governance structure or institutional design as a critical variable in pursuing sustainable planning at the regional level.

Because merging municipalities from the same region to create a general-purpose metropolitan government is not seen as being feasible in the North American political context, proponents of new regionalism put forward solutions based on incremental development of social capital, on *ad hoc* collaboration among sectors, and on frameworks of incentives between different levels of government (Wheeler, 2002; Brenner, 2002). In the field of environmental management, an increasingly popular governing approach is collaborative governance, a voluntary, consensus-oriented decision making process that brings public and private actors together in formal, collective forums with public agencies to establish laws and

rules for the provision of public goods (Koontz, 2006; Ansell & Gash, 2007). Sometimes called participatory management, interactive policy making, stakeholder governance or collaborative management, collaborative governance has emerged to replace adversarial and managerial types of decision-making, as well as a way to fill the gap in regions or policy arenas where governments fail to operate (Ansell & Gash, 2007; Innes *et al.*, 2011). The advantages of collaborative decision-making include trust building among stakeholders, creating social and political capital, improving collective learning and problem solving strategies, and avoiding the high political costs of adversarial policy making (Ansell & Gash, 2007; Innes *et al.*, 2011).

However, some authors point to the limits of collaborative governance and voluntarist decision-making process, and the necessity of vertical power and state-level mandates to achieve regional transportation and land use planning goals (Weir *et al.*, 2009; Alexander, 2011; Weir, 2000; Barbour & Deakin, 2012). Empirical studies have found that regional entities have often little autonomous political power, which make their ideas and decisions vulnerable to challenges, either from below or above (Weir *et al.*, 2009; Koontz, 2006). Moreover, without state-level requirements, growth management strategies, and strong implementation policies or programs, municipalities may resist participating in regional land-use reform or may participate in a manner that is not in line with collective regional long-term interests (Alexander, 2011; Barbour & Deakin, 2012). In fact, upper-level governmental actors and institutions influence the regional group structure and decision-making process, which in turn determine chances of successful collaboration, and ultimately impact environmental and social outcomes (Koontz, 2006). These empirical observations point to what Elinor Ostrom (2005) calls the “action arena”, the place where participants in the decision-making process chose between policy options. The Institutional Analysis and Development (IAD) Framework

developed by Ostrom focuses on the interactions between institutions and individual actors, and how they interact with exogenous variables such as the rules, the physical world, and the community culture³.

Scholars from different fields of study point to the question of institutional design when addressing the topics of collaborative governance and regional transportation and land use planning. However, because sustainable planning is such an emerging issue, there are few studies focusing on new institutional designs at the regional level. The topic is often treated as a potential research avenue rather than being the focus of inquiry. Scholars studying the general theme of governance often identify institutional design as a critical variable. The urban governance approach stresses the importance of new institutional structures linking the government, the business community and the civil society. Pierre and Peters (2012) argue that these new types of institutions, although more difficult to manage than conventional governmental agency, play a crucial role in navigating complex urban political environments. The same conclusion is reached by a study on collaborative strategies for megaregion governance, which concludes that the biggest challenge is to design institutional settings for collaborative planning (Innes *et al.*, 2011). This study suggests that planning research should focus on emerging institutional arrangements that allow collaboration in regional planning and governance, and that theory development should go hand in hand with empirical research, especially theory about the effectiveness of institutional arrangements. Ansell & Gash (2007) argues that access to the collaborative process and inclusion of all important stakeholders is the most fundamental design issue. Other important design characteristics also include the

³ “Institutionalism” as an analytical approach is explored in more detail in the last section of this chapter.

exclusiveness of the collaborative forum, clear rules, and process transparency (Ansell & Gash, 2007).

The question of how institutional design impacts environmental performance has been a subject of research in the field of comparative politics, but similar studies have yet to be conducted at a regional level. Previous research has shown that institutional design at the national level influences the policy formulation, selection, and implementation processes, all of which determine policy outcomes. Institutional design impacts performance depending on how it assigns costs and benefits among stakeholders and manages veto players (Walti, 2004; Crepaz, 2002; Lipjart, 1984). A recent study comparing environmental performance of 21 OECD countries on a variety of environmental issues has found that centralization best improves air pollution performance, whereas decentralization improves performance on biodiversity metrics (Ozmy & Rey, 2013). Air emissions are best managed through centralization because national governments can manage costs and spillover effects, while containing regulatory competition, whereas biodiversity conservation benefits from federalism and decentralization because the costs and benefits of conservation are contained locally or regionally, national spillover effects and regulatory competition are reduced, and politicians are encouraged to deliver district-specific goods. This framework of analysis can inform research on new institutional designs at the regional level and how they can help managing transportation and land use planning at a metropolitan scale.

Underlying the question of institutional design and group structure is the fact that regional transportation and land use planning is a contentious political issue because important financial resources and development opportunities are at stake. In funding terms, sustainability planning means that highway dollars and bridge investments, which have been traditionally

easy to distribute widely across local government jurisdictions in a sprawled pattern, have to compete with transit, which require greater concentration of investments in particular parts of the metropolitan region (Lewis & Sprague, 1997; Adams, 2014). It also means that residential, commercial, and employment development will be concentrated in certain parts of a region, and restricted in others. The choice between modes of transportation and development locations at a regional scale is particularly delicate when local elected officials are at the center stage of the decision-making process (Kennedy *et al.*, 2005). The following quote from Johnston (2004) describes well the game of actors and interests at play in the United States, where metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs) select transportation projects that will receive federal funding:

Each MPO board member is an elected local government official and so he or she wants to bring the dollars into his or her jurisdiction. In some states, such as California, transportation funds are legally allocated by population, and so outlying counties get their “share” of funds. These funding rules make transportation planning more a process of spreading projects around than of seeking to meet regional objectives for economic efficiency, equity, or even congestion reduction. This is a good example of how “planning is politics”. (Johnston, 2004: 123).

The same political dynamic can be found in other regions. A recent study on regional transportation and land use decision making compared four metropolitan regions in the U.S. undertaking innovative efforts to coordinate land use and transportation, and reported that all regions debated about giving fewer centers more funding or spreading funding out to maintain broad support for the program. However, there is no mention of the actual outcomes of these debates (Margerum *et al.*, 2011). Governmental fragmentation at the regional level creates this dynamic where planners and politicians are torn between local, short-term interests and long-range interests of the metropolitan area, which are often times conflicting (Kennedy *et al.*, 2005; Mallet, 2010; Haugwout & Inman, 2009).

The consensus-based decision-making structure of MPOs has inhibited the adoption of policies creating new winners and losers (Barbour & Deakin, 2012). Because sustainable planning requires making difficult investment choices between modes of transportation and locations, the representational structure of the organization or the group in charge of making policy and investment choices at the regional level is likely to be a critical factor in the success of planning outcomes in achieving sustainability objectives. In addition to issues surrounding efficiency, the institutional design of new governance models also involves tradeoffs in terms of representation, accountability and democracy (Erkkila, 2007; Kennedy, 2006; Mallet, 2010).

Canadian Local Government & Regional Planning Literature

This section on the current state of the Canadian local government and regional planning literature is divided in two parts. Whereas the first part briefly summarizes the Canadian local government structure and literature, the second part is dedicated to Canadian regional planning more specifically. Together, both sub-sections help situating this comparative analysis within the Canadian context, which resembles the American urban context in terms of regional issues and the challenge of regional institutional arrangements, but differs when it comes to the place held by municipalities in the federal system.

Canadian Local Government

Basic Facts

Similar to the United States where local governments are the jurisdictional responsibility of the states, the Canadian Constitution Act assigns responsibility for municipalities to the provinces. However, the Canadian federal system differs from the one prevailing in the United States, where the intergovernmental system is conceptualized as a

partnership between the federal government, on the one hand, and state and local governments on the other. According to Andrew Sancton (2012: 304-305), two interconnected reasons explain why Canadian municipalities are more subordinated to the provinces than their American counterparts and are not treated as an equal partner on the federal stage. First, Canadian provinces do not have their own Constitution, and so Canadian municipalities have no established form of constitutional protection such as the “home rule”. Second, the Canadian federation is based on the notion that collectively, provincial governments have at least an equal status with the federal government, and that is closely related to the recognition that the Quebec National Assembly has a special responsibility to advance and protect Quebec’s distinct society. Consequently, municipal councils in Canada are hardly ever considered on an equal foot as provincial legislatures (Sancton, 2012: 305; Graham *et al.*, 1998: 8). Another distinctive element is that Canadian municipalities’ capacity to raise revenues is generally restricted to property taxes and user charges, as they do not have access to sales or income taxes revenues (more details on the municipal funding structure as well as the federal involvement in urban affairs are provided in the first Toronto chapter) (Sancton, 2012: 311; Graham *et al.*, 1998: 224). Besides these differences, Canadian municipal governments are largely similar to local governments in the United States with respect to the functions that they carry out (zoning, local roads, water and sewer, fire protection, parks, garbage collection, etc.).

Scholarship

Because of the place held by local governments in the Canadian federation, there has been a tendency in Canadian political science and policy analysis to consider municipalities as simple purveyors of services rather than serious governing institutions. This lack of consideration has resulted in a meager Canadian scholarship on urban governance, as well as

a poor understanding of the nature of politics and policy making at the local level. Although some Canadian urban scholars are fully engaged in theoretical debates (notably C. Andrew, P. Filion, F. Frisken and W. Magnusson), there are no home-grown theories of local government in Canada (Graham *et al.*, 1998: 1-19). In fact, theories of community power, particularly the idea of pluralism and the urban regime theory, have not proven to be useful in explaining local political dynamics in Canada, where local business elites tend to be less involved in local politics than in the United States (Sancton, 2011: 233). According to Cobban (2003), local business elites are less involved in Canadian civic affairs because: 1) Canadian municipalities are less reliant on borrowing from local financial institutions than their American counterparts; 2) Canadian municipalities are generally prohibited from offering tax concessions to attract business interests; and 3) most central cities in Canada have few competing suburban municipalities, if any (Canadian regions being less fragmented).

In terms of the main debates about urban governance in Canada, they are essentially the same as in the United States, aside from the debate on the role of local governments in the Canadian federation, which is related to Canadian municipalities' constitutional status. The prominent debates include: 1) the link between local governments, international forces and the global economic restructuring; 2) the democratic nature of local governments; 3) the question surrounding who do local governments really serve; and 4) the efficiency of different structures and management processes (Graham *et al.*, 1998: 34). As for the issues faced by Canadian local governments, they are also very similar to those of their American counterparts: regional fragmentation & sprawl, crumbling infrastructures, fiscal imbalance, downloading of responsibilities from provincial and federal levels (unfunded mandates), etc. (Sancton, 2012; Graham *et al.*, 1998; Cullingworth, 1987). Since the publication of Andrew Sancton's *The*

Limits of Boundaries: Why City-regions Cannot be Self-governing (2008), there seems to be a consensus surrounding the idea that contemporary urban issues and local government needs can be met without restructuring the Canadian federal system (which would involve re-opening the constitutional debate). The question now is how the federal and provincial governments can respond to the growing needs of Canadian municipalities and address regional issues in a way that is financially sustainable, and within their respective jurisdictional responsibilities (again, more on this in the first Toronto chapter).

Canadian Regional Planning

Based on the scholarship of French, British and American philosophers of the late 19th and early 20th century, the history of Canadian urban and regional planning has the same intellectual roots as American regional planning (Hodge & Robinson, 2001: 30). Although the beginnings of formalized regional planning can be traced back to the 1940's, the Canadian regional planning experience had never been collated nor evaluated before the publication of *Planning Canadian Regions* by Gerald Hodge and Ira M. Robinson in 2001 (Hodge & Robinson, 2001 xi). Although the authors do not provide any explanation as to why is it the case, it might be related to the fact that municipalities have historically been considered only as a creature of the provinces, as explained in the last sub-section.

The formal bases of Canadian and American planning are similar in terms of mandate and resources, with the exception that regional planning is the sole responsibility of the provinces in Canada and that the Canadian federal government has historically taken a lower profile than the federal government in the United States (Cullingworth, 1987: 463). If the federal government want to pursue regional planning within a province's territory, it cannot act unilaterally and must negotiate with the province or the provinces in question (Hodge &

Robinson, 2001: 132; Cullingworth, 1987: 466). The regional planning experience in Canada also faces similar challenges, most importantly: 1) the inherent jurisdictional tensions between municipalities of a same region and between levels of government; 2) a lack of coordination among substantive areas of regional planning (land use, the environment, and the economy); and 3) regional planning agencies being dependent upon municipalities and other bodies to implement their plans (Hodge & Robinson, 2001: 22). Finally, the representational structures of regional planning agencies also raise some questions in terms of accountability, because the regional perspective is more often found to be represented more forcibly and consistently by the regional agency's staff and the local media than by the municipal councillors (Smith & Bayne, 1994; Hodge & Robinson, 2001: 408).

Overall then, the question of *Which institutional arrangements for regional planning and governance can best govern regions?* is as acute and relevant in Canada than it is in the United States. The array of solutions that are being discussed in the literature, from dissociated to integrated planning, “government” to “governance”, and centralization to decentralization, only to name a few, are also the same in the United States and Canada, with the exception that the Canadian and American intergovernmental contexts are slightly different. As a result, policy solutions arising from this study must be considered within their respective jurisdictional context and adapted to fit the reality of each country and region.

Institutionalism as an Analytical Approach

Institutions are rules that structure social interaction: some are formal or legal (such as constitutional rules) some are informal (such as cultural norms). Examples of institutions include laws, organizations, churches, languages, and conventions (Hodgson, 2006). Social

structures such as history and demographics are not institutions because they do not affect the behavior of actors/players or agents through the operation of rules. “Institutionalism” is the study of the ways in which institutions structure social and political behaviors (North, 1990). The core assumption of institutionalism is that institutions are not neutral to policy outcomes. As Peter Hall (1986) suggested, the organization of policy-making affects the degree of power that any one set of actors have over policy outcomes, and the organizational position also influences an actor’s definition of his/her own interests. In this way, institutional factors affect both the degree of pressure an actor can bring to bear on policy and the direction of that pressure. Generally speaking, institutionalism posits that political outcomes are shaped and structured by specific actors and their position in the decision-making process (Steinmo, 2001).

Specifically, institutionalism may refer to at least three different intellectual approaches, each coming from a different academic discipline: sociological institutionalism, rational choice institutionalism, and historical institutionalism. The next paragraphs briefly present these three main approaches to institutionalism, their respective perspective on the “actor” and the main critiques of institutionalism as a theoretical framework.

Sociological Institutionalism grows out of sociology and the study of organizations. Rooted in the works of John E. Meyer and his collaborators in the 1970’s about organizations, the world system, and individuals (Meyer, 1977; Meyer & Rowan, 1977; Meyer, 1980), scholars of sociological institutionalism are interested in understanding education, beliefs, values, culture and norms as institutions, and showing the relationship between formal institutions (conceived as cognitive frameworks) and the patterns of behavior and beliefs. Sociological institutionalism posits that institutions are central to understanding the non-rational aspects of human behavior, and defocalizes the “actors” on purpose by seeing them as

derivative from institutions and culture (institutions defining the actors' perceptions and preferences) (Scharpf, 2000; Jepperson, 2001). Contemporary applications of sociological institutionalism include research programs on globalization and international non-governmental institutions (Boli & Thomas, 1997), as well as collective identity, sexuality and law.

Rational Choice Institutionalism or New Institutional Economics takes its lead from economics. Rational choice scholars attempt to apply the formal logic and methods (game theory) to the study of politics and history in order to uncover basic laws of political behavior and action. Understanding or explaining outcomes are not at the center of their research agendas - deductive models are employed to develop, test and refine theories. In rational choice institutionalism, institutions are understood as external constraints and incentives structuring/determining the choices of self-interested, rational actors (Tsebelis, 1999; North, 1990; Scheple, 1989). The Institutional Analysis and Development (IAD) Framework developed by Elinor Ostrom (2005) falls under this category. Derived from rational choice institutionalism (and, to a lesser extent, sociological institutionalism), *actor-centered institutionalism* posits that actors and their interacting choices (not institutions), are the most proximate causes of policy responses, whereas institutional conditions, to the extent that they can influence actor choices, are conceptualized as remote causes (Scharpf, 1997). Actor-centered institutionalism features a constellation of actors whose capabilities, perceptions, preferences and interactions vary depending on the institutional framework. These theories of new institutional economics are most frequently used to develop and test hypotheses about the impacts of institutional incentives on the organizational self-interest of collective and corporate actors in national and supra-national arenas of political economy such as monetary policy,

industrial relations and European regulation (Scharpf, 2000) and, more generally, used in governance studies at the national level (Mayntz, 2003).

Historical Institutionalism originates from a more traditional political science. Scholars using historical institutionalism are interested in understanding and explaining real world events, with the assumption that political institutions structure the political process leading those outcomes. Historical institutionalism does not posit that institutions are the only important variables for understanding political outcomes. Instead, institutions are conceptualized as intervening or structuring variables through which battles over interest, ideas, and power are fought. As explained by Kathleen Thelen and Sven Steinmo:

(...) institutions constrain and refract politics but they are never the sole “cause” of outcomes. Institutional analyses do not deny the broad political forces that animate various theories of politics: class structure in Marxism, group dynamics in pluralism. Instead, they point to the ways that institutions structure these battles and in doing so, influence their outcomes (1992: 3).

Institutions are thus the points of critical juncture in an historical path analysis, because political battles are fought inside institutions and over the design of future institutions (Steinmo, 2001). As rational choice scholars, historical institutionalists posit that institutions provide the context in which actors define their strategies and pursue their interests, but they give an even greater role to institutions in shaping politics and political history than the rational choice institutionalists. Historical institutionalists find strict rationality assumptions overly confining (actors preferences are not always rational because they also follow societally defined rules) and problematize the actors’ preferences, strategies and goals by emphasizing that they are also shaped by the institutional context (and not only a function of individual choice) (Thelen & Steinmo, 1992; DiMaggio & Powell, 1991). Rather than deducting hypotheses on the basis of global assumptions, historical institutionalists generally develop

their hypotheses inductively in the course of interpreting empirical data (Thelen & Steinmo, 1992). Historical institutionalism has developed more of a national policy focus applied to understand the political economy of capitalism, types of welfare state, social movements and their popular bases, and the evolution of authoritarianism and democracy (Katznelson & Weingast, 2005).

A growing body of literature is focusing on explaining institutional change. Kathleen Thelen and her co-authors have distinguished at least four modes of institutional change: layering, conversion, drift, and displacement (Mahoney & Thelen 2010: 15-16). According to Mahoney and Thelen (2010), three factors determine the type of institutional change: the characteristics of the political context, the characteristics of the institution, and the type of dominant change agents. However, three issues have been repeatedly raised by authors who applied Thelen's theoretical framework between 2005 and 2010: 1) the boundaries of the different modes introduced are not sufficiently defined; 2) the usefulness of the theory and typology in explaining the factors and direction of institutional change is unclear; and 3) there is a lack of attention paid to the patterns or sequences of the modes of gradual change to analyze and explain institutional change (Van Der Heijden, 2010). In addition, there are some limits to understanding policy or institutional change. The researcher's perspective (sociological, rational choice, historical institutionalism, or sociological institutionalism) and focus (structure or agency, endogenous or exogenous variables, output or process, etc.) determines the findings and understanding of what is going on (Capano & Howlett, 2009). The importance of understanding institutional change is not so much to show what has changed, but how, when, and why this change occurred, and what it really means (Capano, 2009). In order to better

understand the underlying mechanisms of change, researchers need to focus on the causal chains of explanatory variables (Van Der Heijden, 2010).

Generally speaking, institutionalism has been criticized for lacking explanatory power, for its structural determinism, for its narrow and simplistic perspective on politics, and for harboring a certain level of theoretical and conceptual confusion (Lecours, 2005). Aside from academic debates emanating from sociology, economics and political science about the weaknesses of each variants of institutionalism and the various ways by which institutional analyses should be carried out, the shortcomings of institutional economics in addressing the processes of regional development were pointed out by economic geographers (Cumbers *et al.*, 2003). According to Andrew Cumbers and his co-researchers, analyses of regional economies using the institutional economics framework fail to link social relations to the realities of uneven development and the effects of broader processes of advanced global capitalism. Although it is not my goal here to assess this specific critique, the acknowledgement of the role played by global economic forces in intra-regional dynamics ties back to the literature on governance and the policy failure/obsolescence of traditional formal and hierarchical means of coping with spacial interdependence and complexity, which point to the role that new types of institutions can play in navigating complex urban political environments (Rhodes, 1997; Moran, 2010; Pierre & Peters, 2012).

Drawing mainly from historical institutionalism but also borrowing some elements of the IAD framework developed by Ostrom (2005) and focusing on the power and interests of actors, the analytical framework and qualitative research design developed for this study (presented in the next chapter) was developed specifically to assess the impact of institutional change on the planning process and decision outcomes. This design allows me to determine

the extent to which these new institutions are better suited for addressing the complex issue of regional sustainability and specifically the integration or coordination of regional transportation and land use..

In summary, the scholarship on the coordination of regional transportation and land use planning shows that achieving integration will require overcoming important structural challenges embedded in political and economic institutions , especially the misalignment of responsibilities and authorities between levels of government and agencies. The fields of planning, political science and public administration provide insights in terms of the range of institutional possibilities, but only a few empirical studies are evaluating those options for the purpose of integrating regional transportation and land use planning. The institutional analytical framework developed for this study builds a bridge between the literature on sustainability, which focuses on the output, and the scholarship on governance, which focus on the structure and the process. In addition, looking at regional sustainability from an institutional standpoint is particularly useful in exploring and understanding the complex causal chains linking powers, resources, actors, interests, processes and outcomes. Whereas the theoretical framework (presented next) structures and simplifies the analysis of the issue of sustainable urban development, the qualitative research design reveals the complex nature of ideas, actors, interests and their relationships.

CHAPTER 3

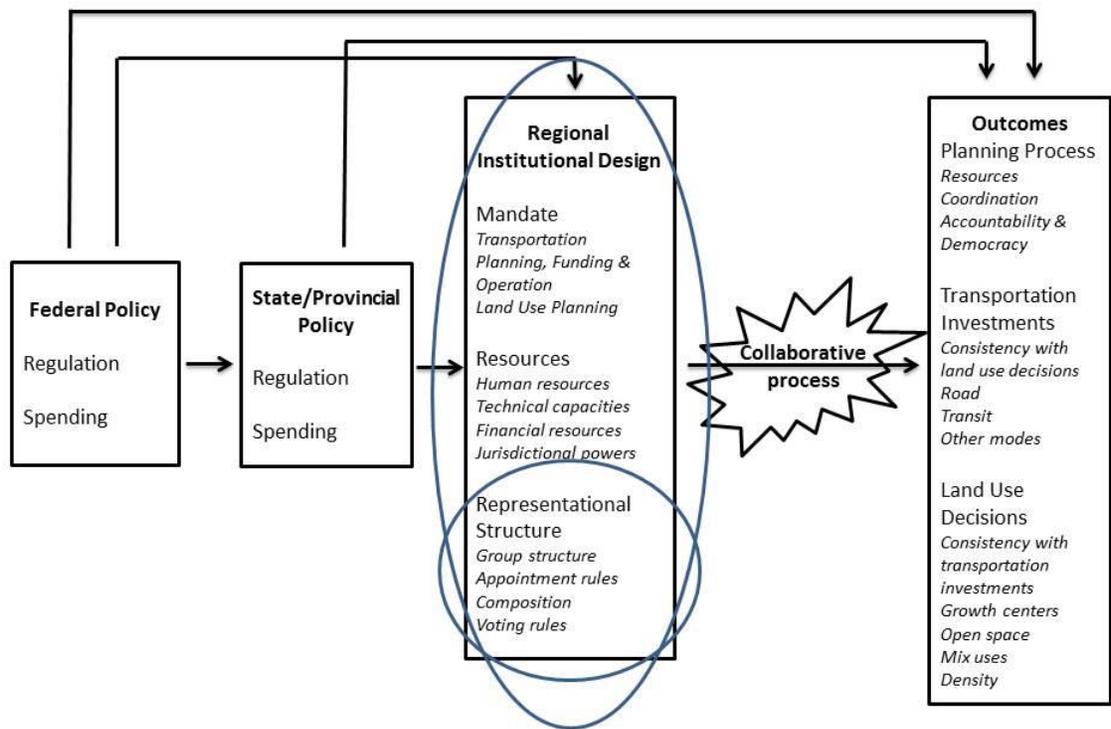
THEORY & METHODS

In order to understand how new institutional structures aimed at integrating regional transportation and land use planning impact the planning process, transportation investments, and land use decisions, a longitudinal comparative case study of two new institutional frameworks representing opposite and extreme cases was conducted. This research compares the case of Toronto, an instance of centralization, and the case of Chicago, an instance of governance and integration of regional transportation and planning functions at the regional level. The following sections address the theoretical framework developed for this study, the research methods, the justification for case selection, the data collection procedure and instruments, as well as the validation strategies and techniques used in the analysis.

Theoretical Framework & Definitions

The theoretical framework developed for this study helps to analyze the chain of institutional factors influencing planning outcomes. This new framework is an adaptation of two models addressing the issue of collaborative governance: the model of collaborative governance developed by Ansell & Gash (2007), and the framework for analyzing governmental impacts on collaborative-environmental management developed by Koontz *et al.* (2004), which itself draws on the Institutional Analysis and Development (IAD) framework developed by Ostrom (2005) and other prior research. This model illustrated in Figure 1 shows the chains of influence among federal and state/provincial policies, the regional institutional design, and planning outcomes. An explanation of each factor and their relationship follows.

Figure 1
 Framework for analyzing institutional impacts on planning outcomes



Explaining Institutional Determinants of Sustainable Planning

Federal policies provide constraints and opportunities for sustainable planning through regulation and spending. Because it is the highest order of government, the federal level can influence state or provincial regulation and spending, the regional institutional design, and planning outcomes. For example, the American transportation authorization bills set the parameters for state regulation on Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs), which determines their mandate, resources and representational structure. The same authorization bill also set the parameters and criteria for the allocation of federal transportation funds to projects selected by state governments and MPOs. Federal governments can also impact planning outcomes directly by funding specific transportation infrastructure projects.

State or provincial policies also provide constraints and opportunities through regulation and spending, which determines the regional institutional design and influences planning outcomes. The government of Ontario, for example, has passed Bill 104 creating the Greater Toronto Transportation Authority (Metrolinx), as well as the *Places to Grow Act* and the *Greenbelt Act* regulating local governments' land use planning in the region. Provincial and state governments, just like their federal counterpart, can also influence planning outcomes directly by funding transportation projects.

The institutional design of regional planning organizations includes three dimensions: the mandate, the resources, and the representational structure. The mandate refers to the role, the mission, or the purpose of the regional organization as defined by its bylaw. The mandate for the regional institution can be more or less broad, encompassing land use planning, transportation planning, financing, and operations, as well as other tasks such as watershed management and workforce development. The resources are the means by which the organization can fulfill its mandate, or its overall capacity. They include human resources, technical capacities, financial resources, and jurisdictional powers. The representational structure is essentially the membership or the people making the decisions within the organization and the decision-making process, or the means of aggregating individual preferences into decisions. It includes group structure (division of work among committees), appointment rules (selected by the State, elected or coopted), composition (elected or non-elected professionals), and voting rules (majority or consensus). I argue that the regional institutional design (i.e., what the organization is supposed to do, what it *can* do, how, and who decides what is done, when and how) is a critical factor in explaining the outcome of the collaborative decision-making process. In the model represented in Figure 1, the regional

institutional design and the representational structure are circled because they represent my focus of inquiry. The collaborative process is surrounded by an “explosion” shape because it is not an institution *per se*, but a phase through which decisions are reached and options are chosen among a set of possible alternatives.

Defining the Outcome: Sustainable Planning

Sustainable planning outcomes are difficult to define and evaluate. The concept of sustainable development was originally coined in 1987 by the United Nations World Commission on Environment and Development, which defined it as a pattern of development that meets the need of the present generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs (WCED, 1987). Since this definition was offered, academicians and practitioners have refined the notion of sustainability in ways that make the concept applicable to a variety of policy areas. These more applicable ways of defining the concept of sustainability recognize the need of balancing competing interests, by introducing the triple-bottom line issues of environmental stewardship, economic profitability, and social equity. These conceptualizations require an analysis of the three objectives, and also the intersection of these issues, i.e., environment-social (bearable), social-economic (equitable), and economic-environment (viable) (Tumlin, 2012; Campbell, 1996). From a practitioner’s perspective, definitions based on the 3Es have the advantage of providing objectives from which measures can be derived. The objectives are broad, but they remain more practical than the notions of durability and future generations. However, despite the fact that definitions based on the 3Es recognize that sustainability is a balancing act between competing interests, it does not provide ways to navigate conflict and complementarity at the intersections of the environmental and social needs, the social and economic interests, and the economic and

environmental interests (Campbell, 1996). Furthermore, they are still too broad, too elusive, too idealistic, and too difficult to achieve (Black, 2010; Campbell, 1996).

Given the need for clear targets and progress measurement, as well as the importance of considering sustainability as a process in order to achieve its objectives, I suggest the following definition:

Sustainable planning strives for equitable, compact, transit-oriented development, balanced employment and housing opportunities, affordable housing, and a balanced travel mode split. It provides a variety of safe transportation choices while minimizing emissions, and preserve open space, farmland, and critical environmental areas. Sustainable planning relies on a robust and coherent funding scheme, and is based on a representative and inclusive planning process.

This definition of sustainable planning encompasses the definition of a “sustainable transport system” provided by Black (2010), the “four pillars of sustainable urban transportation” developed by Kennedy *et al.* (2005), and the definition of “responsible land use decision-making” provided by Binger and co-authors (2008).

However, this study focuses more specifically on the planning process and resources, and on the coordination or integration of land use decisions and transportation investments. Therefore, the focus falls within the framework of sustainable planning, but is not as comprehensive. For instance, it does not include transportation policies and programs that do not have a land use component, such as carpooling, high occupancy vehicle lanes, vehicle efficiency standards. It also excludes land use policies that do not have a transportation objective, such as programs that increase housing affordability or food access. The success of institutional reforms will be assessed upon the dimensions presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Observable implications of successful reforms of regional planning institutions

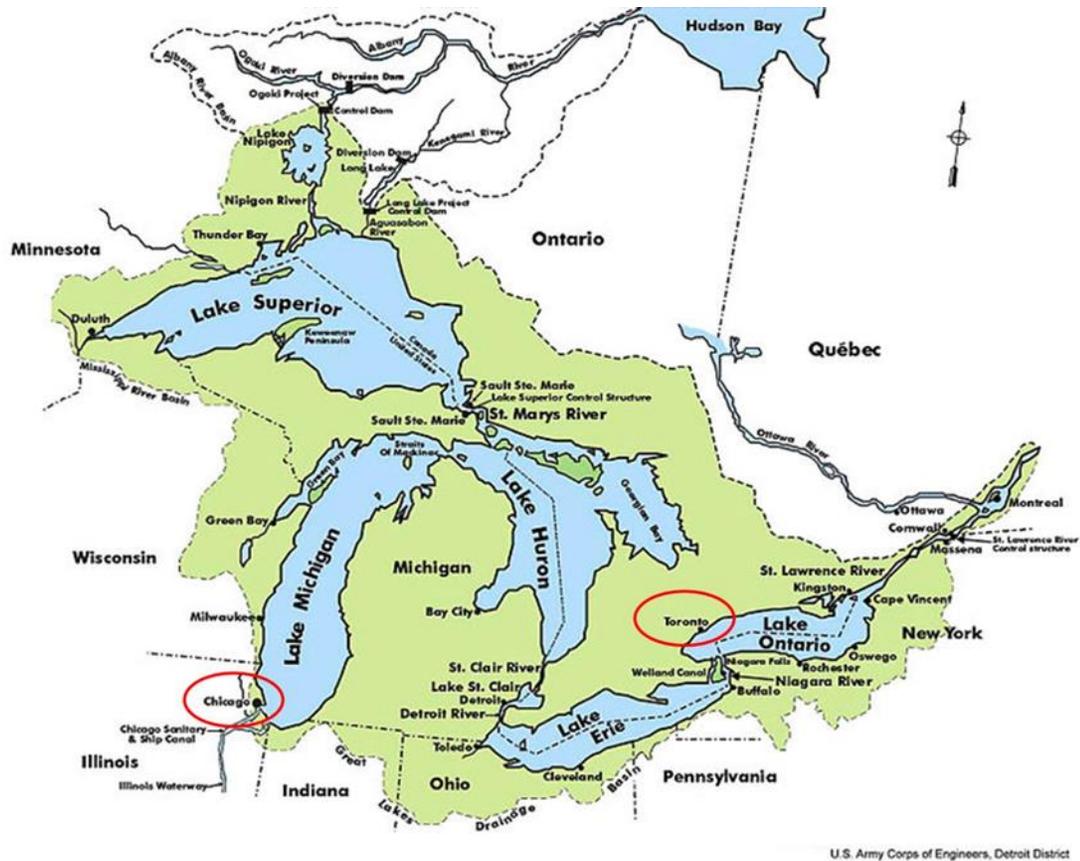
Planning & Outcomes	Observable implications
Planning process	A reform is deemed successful if it increases planning capacities (human, technical, financial, and jurisdictional), improves horizontal and vertical coordination among governments, agencies and the private sector, and increases accountability (responsibility and transparency through public scrutiny) and democracy (representativeness, public debate and deliberation).
Transportation investments	A reform is considered successful if transportation investment choices are consistent with land use decisions. For instance, road and transit spending is directed towards designated growth areas. Transportation investment choices (road and bridges versus transit, expansions versus maintenance, infrastructure for cycling and walking) are made as to minimize vehicle use and reduce vehicle miles traveled.
Land use decisions	A reform is considered successful if land use planning and decision-making are more consistent with transportation investments and existing transportation infrastructure. Development is strengthened and directed toward existing communities and areas where transit is already provided. For example, growth centers or transit hubs are designated, and the number of transit oriented developments is increasing. Land use policies that reduce vehicle use and increase accessibility, such as mixed land uses and increased density, are adopted.

Research Methods – Longitudinal Comparative Case Study

This research is based on a longitudinal comparative case study of two metropolitan regions of North America: Toronto, located in the southern part of the province of Ontario (Canada), and Chicago, located in the northern part of the State of Illinois (United-States). As shown on the map of the Great Lakes basin region of North America (Figure 2), both cities, circled in

red, are located on a lakeshore: Toronto on the side of Lake Ontario, and Chicago on the side of Lake Michigan.

Map 1: Great Lakes Basin (U.S. & Canada)



Source: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Detroit District

Because my focus of interest is the impact of institutional change on transportation and land use decision processes and outcomes, this pair of cases is selected based upon their variation on the independent variable, i.e., new institutional designs, allowing for a maximum of variation across both cases, while keeping other factors stable such as size, geography, proximity, and population (Flyvbjerg, 2006). Even though both regions do share important similarities, in 2005-2006 their provincial/state government has taken opposite paths when

redesigning their institutional framework of metropolitan governance for tackling the challenge of integrating transportation and land use development. The provincial government of Ontario chose centralization with the creation of Metrolinx and the adoption of a growth management strategy, whereas the state government of Illinois proceeded with the integration of regional transportation and land use planning functions with the creation of Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP).

In order to assess the impacts of new institutions and planning organizations aimed at integrating transportation and land use planning at a regional scale, I am analyzing the changes in the planning process and decision outcomes over time. A longitudinal research design, or the “before-after” research design, is particularly useful in policy evaluation research (George & Bennet, 2005). A “before-after” design, or pathway analysis, can be used to identify “critical junctures”, or periods of significant change. Brady & Collier define critical junctures as specific historical periods in which particular political choices strongly dispose a given case to follow one path of change, and not others. Critical juncture can alternatively be viewed as involving a high degree of agency, or strong structural determinism (Brady & Collier, 2010). Process-tracing is also useful in theory development, as it helps identify the interactions among the variables (George & Bennett, 2005). In order to determine if institutional changes represent, in fact, critical junctures, I need to focus on the chain of causation and the evolution of decisions before and after the reforms.

Although data availability and previous knowledge played a role in case selection, the fact that an institutional reform of opposite nature was implemented in both metropolitan areas, in a one-year interval (Chicago in 2005 and Toronto in 2006), and for the same purpose, was the main driver for the selection of Toronto and Chicago. The regional institutional design, the

study variable, is extremely high in terms of centralization in the case of Toronto, and extremely low in the case of Chicago (Van Evra, 1997).

The study of two opposite cases in two different countries, one in Canada, one in the United States, also contributes to the comparative literature on regional policymaking in Canada and the U.S., and important dyad in comparative federalism due to their economic integration and because their similar social, demographic, and urban structures (Brown, 2012). In *Metropolitan Governance Revisited: American/Canadian Intergovernmental Perspectives*, Rothbaltt & Sancton (1998) notes that Canada's regional governance system is more centralized and controlled by the provinces (as in the case of Toronto), and that the American regional system is more decentralized and locally controlled (as in the case of Chicago). They conclude that despite these differences, Canadian and American metropolitan regions converge in a number of ways: market orientation, diversity, intergovernmental relations, and intermunicipal competition. This pattern of similarity despite differences in regional governance leads to thinking that metropolitan governance structure does not matter for regional development, because metropolitan systems are too weak to shape urban outcomes (Foster, 2000). This statement contrasts with more recent literature on collaboration and regional governance, which point directly to regional institutional design as a critical variable (Pierre & Peters, 2012; Innes *et al.*, 2011). Studying the impact of two recent structural reforms will add to this conversation on the similarities and differences between Canadian and American intergovernmental systems and the importance of governing institutions for regional sustainability.

Presentation of the Cases

Toronto and Chicago: Two New Institutions, Opposite & Extreme Cases

The data presented in Table 2 expresses the extent of sprawl and institutional fragmentation in both regions, showing that both cities have similar population sizes, territory, and population density, although Chicago is a little bit bigger, denser and more populous. The most important difference is the extent to which the cities are institutionally fragmented, or, simply put, the number of municipalities in metropolitan regions. In fact, there are 26 municipalities and four regional municipalities in the GTHA, compared to 284 municipalities and seven counties in the region under the jurisdiction of CMAP. Moreover, the population of Toronto living in the city itself represents 40% of the total population, whereas Chicagoans living within the city boundaries represent 31% of the total regional population.

The satellite views presented in Figures 3 and 4 illustrate this extension of both urban perimeters that go well beyond the municipal boundaries of Toronto and Chicago, making regional transportation and land use planning all more important. A brief history of institutional reforms follows – a more thorough institutional history of each region is presented in Chapters 4 and 6.

Table 2: Toronto and Chicago in numbers

	Toronto		Chicago	
	Toronto - City	Toronto – GTHA	Chicago - City	Chicago - Metro
Land Area ⁴	630 km ²	8 262 km ²	606 km ²	10 544 km ²
Population ⁵	2 615 060	6 574 140	2 714 856	8 638 474
Population density ⁶	4 149/km ²	796/km ²	4 480/km ²	819/km ²
Pop. City/Pop. Metro	40%		31%	
Number of municipalities ⁷	26		284	
Number of regional municipalities (Ont.) or counties (Ill.) ⁸	4		7	
Note: Data for metropolitan regions pertain to the territory covered by regional planning agencies of both regions, i.e., Metrolinx for the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area and CMAP for metropolitan Chicago.				

⁴ Toronto: Statistics Canada. 2012. Toronto, Ontario (Code 3520) and Ontario (Code 35) (table). Census Profile. 2011 Census. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 98-316-XWE. Ottawa. Released October 24, 2012.

<http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2011/dp-pd/prof/index.cfm?Lang=E>. Chicago – Metro: CMAP. 2005. *Land Use Inventory*. [On line] <http://www.cmap.illinois.gov/land-use-inventory>.

⁵ Toronto in 2011: Statistics Canada. 2012. Toronto, Ontario (Code 3520) and Ontario (Code 35) (table). Census Profile. 2011 Census. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 98-316-XWE. Ottawa. Released October 24, 2012. <http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2011/dp-pd/prof/index.cfm?Lang=E>. Chicago – City in 2010: "U.S. Census Bureau Delivers Illinois' 2010 Census Population Totals, Including First Look at Race and Hispanic Origin Data for Legislative Redistricting". U.S. Census Bureau. Chicago - Metro in 2010: CMAP. [On line] <http://www.cmap.illinois.gov/population-forecast>.

⁶ Toronto: Statistics Canada. 2012. Toronto, Ontario (Code 3520) and Ontario (Code 35) (table). Census Profile. 2011 Census. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 98-316-XWE. Ottawa. Released October 24, 2012.

<http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2011/dp-pd/prof/index.cfm?Lang=E>

⁷ Toronto: Metrolinx. 2008. *The Big Move*. [On line]

http://www.metrolinx.com/thebigmove/Docs/big_move/081059_MetroLinx_TheBigMoveFR_V3_SM.pdf.

⁸ Toronto: Metrolinx. 2008. *The Big Move*. [On line]

http://www.metrolinx.com/thebigmove/Docs/big_move/081059_MetroLinx_TheBigMoveFR_V3_SM.pdf.

Toronto metropolitan region, the largest and most populous urban region of Canada, runs around the western end of Lake Ontario, taking the shape of a horseshoe (hence the name Golden Horseshoe) (see Figure 3). The Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area (GTHA) comprises two single-tier municipalities, Toronto and Hamilton, as well as four regional municipalities, i.e., Durham, Halton, Peel and York, and their associated 24 lower-tier municipalities.

Map 2: Satellite view of Greater Toronto & Hamilton Area (GTHA)

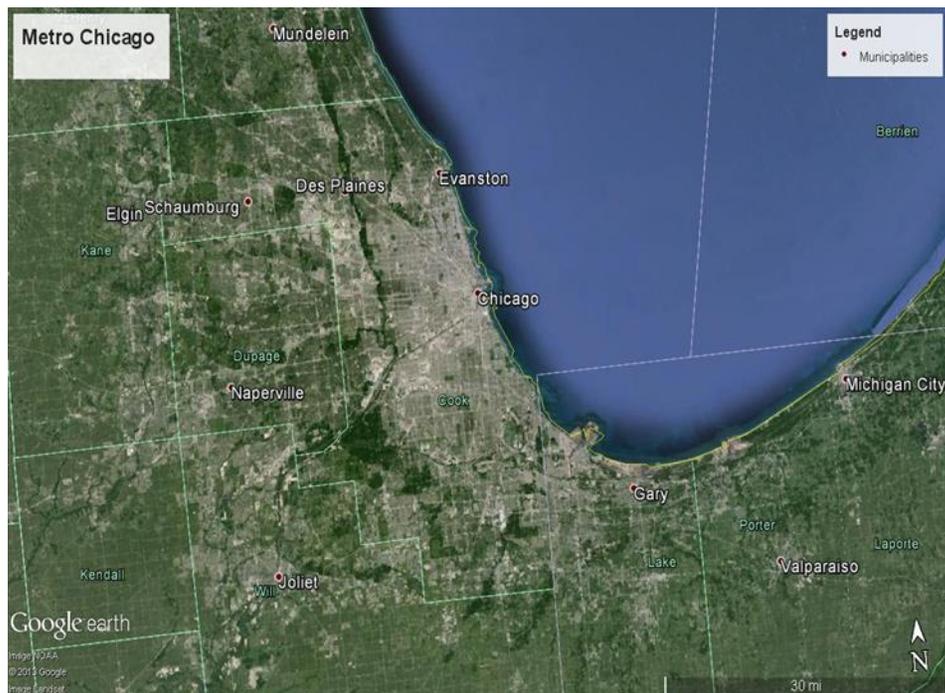


Source: Google Earth (screenshot)

Chicago metropolitan region, the third most populous in the United States, is located on the southwestern shore of Lake Michigan (see Figure 4). The region under the jurisdiction of the MPO (CMAP) includes seven counties, i.e., Cook, DuPage, Kane, Kendall, Lake, McHenry and Will, totaling 284 municipalities. However, the boundaries of Chicago

Metropolitan Statistical Area include a portion of northwest Indiana that is not under CMAP jurisdiction. This southwestern region of Chicago, which includes Gary (Indiana) and 40 other cities and towns, is governed by a different MPO, the Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission.

Map 3: Satellite view of Chicago Metropolitan Area



Source: Google Earth (screenshot)

Although Toronto and Chicago share similarities in terms of geography and population size and density, each city recently created a new regional planning agency very different from one another, reflecting the attempts of provincial and state governments to tackle the planning challenge in both regions.

In Toronto, the Greater Toronto Transportation Authority (or Metrolinx) was established in 2006 by the government of Ontario to coordinate transportation planning in the GTHA. The creation of Metrolinx was the transportation piece of a broader strategy launched

by the provincial government to manage demographic and employment growth in the region, which included the adoption of two pieces of legislation: the *Greenbelt Act* and the *Places to Grow Act* in 2005. The *Greenbelt Act* and its associated *Greenbelt Plan* provide permanent protection to approximately 1.8 million acres of agricultural and ecologically sensitive land surrounding Toronto's metropolitan area, where urbanization should not occur (Government of Ontario, 2005a). Complementing *the Greenbelt Act*, the *Place to Grow Act* allows the provincial government to identify regional growth centers that will allow for the mixing of residential and employment uses and increasing population density to a transit-supportive level, thus managing the regional growth of an estimated 100,000 to 200,000 new residents per year (Government of Ontario, 2005b). *The Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe*, the first Growth Plan of the government of Ontario (2006), relies on strict regulation to achieve its development control objectives, such as the requirement that all municipalities direct 40% of their residential growth in existing built-up area by 2015 (Filion, 2007).

Metrolinx is a crown agency under the purview of Ontario's ministry of Transportation. Its mandate consists of: 1) operating GO Transit, the commuter bus and rail system; 2) implementing the regional light rail system and the airport rail service, the Union Pearson Express; and 3) coordinating planning and fare integration for all transit services in the GTHA with the introduction of the PRESTO fare card. When it was created in 2006, its board of directors was comprised of local elected officials. Metrolinx's Board composition was changed after the adoption of the regional transportation plan (the *Big Move*), in the *Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area Transit Implementation Act* of 2009 (Government of Ontario, 2009b). Elected officials were replaced by non-elected members appointed by the Minister of Transportation, representing various sectors: banking, finance, legal, transportation and land

use planning, and grassroots organizations, while ensuring a geographic representation. According to the provincial government at the time, the purpose of this transition from an elected to a non-elected board was to separate the plan's adoption from its implementation in order to ensure that elected officials adhered to the plan, and to facilitate its implementation (more on this in Chapters 4 and 5).

In Chicago, the state government of Illinois merged operations of the former transportation planning commission (Chicago Area Transportation Study - CATS) and the land use planning commission (Northeastern Illinois Planning Commission - NIPC) in 2005, to create a single organization responsible for comprehensive regional planning, the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP), which also acts as the region's MPO. This institutional reform was the result of a two-year lobbying campaign instigated by a regional non-profit organization representing the business community, Chicago Metropolis 2020, which orchestrated a media campaign, built a coalition on both sides of Illinois' legislative assembly, found legislative sponsors, and drafted the legislation that was adopted unanimously by the Illinois General Assembly.

As defined in its statute, CMAP is a unit of government created by the state of Illinois. Its purpose is to plan for the most effective public and private investments in the region and to better integrate plans for land use and transportation. Its mandate is to provide a policy framework under which all regional plans are developed, coordinate regional transportation and land use planning, and identify and promote regional priorities (Illinois General Assembly, 2005). Because it also acts as the MPO for the region, CMAP is also responsible for programming transportation dollars through the development of federally mandated documents, such as the Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) and the Transportation

Improvement Program (TIP). CMAP does not have authority over land use and zoning, which remain under municipal jurisdiction. It also does not have control over the three transit operators whose services are theoretically coordinated by the Regional Transit Authority (RTA). CMAP is led by a 15-member board of directors: 5 members from the City of Chicago, appointed by the mayor; 5 from suburban Cook, appointed by the mayor with the County board president; and then 5 jointly in the collar counties appointed by the County board chair and the Councils of mayors. About half of members are mayors, a couple of them are former elected officials, and the rest are from the business and the civic community. Also, resolutions require 12 out of 15 votes to pass. The board composition and the voting rule were motivated by a desire to foster collaboration and consensus, which the creation of the organization originated from. CMAP's long-range comprehensive regional plan, *GO to 2040*, was adopted unanimously by its members in 2009.

The reasoning behind the reforms in Toronto and Chicago had a similar purpose: to bring rationality and coherence in the regional transportation and land use planning process. However, both regions have taken opposite paths in terms of redesigning their institutional framework of metropolitan governance for tackling the challenge of integrating transportation and land use development: the provincial government of Ontario opted for centralization with the creation of Metrolinx and the adoption of a growth management strategy, whereas the state government of Illinois proceeded to merge the regional transportation planning commission and the regional land use planning commission into a single metropolitan agency for planning. The next paragraphs compare the distribution of mandates and powers among governments and authorities before and after the reforms, summarized in Tables 3 and 4.

In Toronto, transportation infrastructure decisions, prior to Metrolinx, were made by the Toronto Transit Commission (TTC), the City of Toronto, the Ontario Ministry of Transportation, involving other actors such as Metro Toronto planning bodies, the Ontario Municipal Board and, since it began providing subway capital-cost funding in 2007, the Government of Canada. Decisions surrounding subway construction, more specifically, “have been highly contentious and influenced as much by ideology and self-interest as by rational calculation” (MacDonald *et al.*, 2013: 2), a process described as “incoherent” (Boudreau *et al.*, 2009: 177). Toronto transit decision-making was then labeled as disjointed and anarchic, piecemeal and political (Boudreau *et al.*, 2009). In terms of land use, there was no regional planning body after the amalgamation, in 1998, of the six cities part of Metro Toronto⁹. Planning decision were made by local governments and overseen by the Ontario Municipal Board (OMB), an arms-length regulatory body established by the Province. Since the adoption of the *Greenbelt Act*, the *Places to Grow Act* and Metrolinx in 2005-2006, local governments’ Transportation Master Plans and Official Plans (transportation planning and land use planning documents) have to conform to the province’s policy requirements. In short, the “rationalization” has taken the form of centralization: regional transportation planning is under the responsibility of a provincial agency, and regional land use planning is overseen by a system of conformity. In fact, both regional transportation and land use planning is organized under the provincial consistency scheme: the *Big Move*, the regional transportation plan,

⁹ Toronto underwent a series of amalgamations. In 1954, the City of Toronto was federated into a regional government called Metro Toronto, which also encompassed four towns, three villages, and five townships. In 1967, the seven smallest municipalities of Metro Toronto were merged into their larger neighbor, for a total of six. In 1998, the six municipalities were amalgamated into the new City of Toronto, and Metro Toronto was dissolved. This series of mergers explains why the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area is comprised today of only 24 municipalities and 4 regional municipalities. However, because of its large size, the City of Toronto experiences internal power fragmentation (Horak & Young, 2012).

complements the *Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe*, the regional growth management plan, and local Transportation Master Plans and Official Plans have to conform to both regional policies. In terms of leadership, it is the Province, especially the Premier, the Minister of Transportation and the Cabinet, who are the decision-makers in terms of transportation funding (through its *MoveOntario 2020*, a \$17.5 billion investment plan), with Metrolinx playing a planning and advisory role (Macdonald *et al.*, 2013). In terms of regional land use planning, the growth strategy is under the purview of Ontario's Ministry of Infrastructure, but implemented locally by municipalities through their Official Plan. The rationale was that this reform would help sustaining a robust economy, use the land and resources efficiently, and promote a healthy environment.

In Chicago, prior to the creation of CMAP, regional transportation planning was under the purview of the previous MPO, the Chicago Area Transportation Study (CATS), whereas land use planning was conducted by the Northeastern Illinois Planning Commission (NIPC). The early planning works of CATS in the mid-1950s and early 1960s were described as a model of rational, apolitical planning based on highly technical studies. However, CATS had no operating responsibility or implementing power, and so the sponsoring agencies (city, county, state and federal governments) had control over what projects were being constructed. In the first years of CATS (before the 1962 Highway Act was adopted and CATS designated as the MPO), the sponsoring agencies were represented on the Policy Committee board and approved CATS plans, but the Committee had no legal status and agencies were not committed to follow them (Black, 1990). NIPC, a state-established agency, was responsible for regional land use planning but had no authority over local governments. The City of Chicago had a prominent role in transportation planning and was able to dominate the agenda of the state

legislature until the early 1990's, when the Republicans gained control of the state legislature in the 1994 election (Hamilton, 2002). In terms of land use, it was solely the responsibility of local governments with NIPC having no powers. The need to address sprawling development and the need for a single, integrated land use and regional transportation plan with an agency having implementation authority provided the impetus for the creation of CMAP (Hamilton, 2002). Although CMAP was not granted land use powers and have limited implementation authority, its mandate is to integrate transportation and land use planning at the regional level, thus being an example of integration of regional transportation and land use planning functions at the regional level.

Both provincial and state governments attempted to rationalize the regional planning process and coordinate transportation and land use decisions using two opposite strategies. Understanding the changes in the regional institutional design, measuring their impact on planning outcomes, and assessing the relative efficiency of centralization and functional integration of structures in achieving sustainable outcomes will inform future reformers and contribute to bridging scholarships on sustainability and multi-level governance.

Table 3: Institutional structures in Toronto & Chicago (before & after reforms)

	Toronto		Chicago	
	TTC, Toronto & Ontario	Metrolinx	CTA CATS & NIPC	CMAP
History	Toronto Transit Commission (TTC), the City of Toronto, the government of Ontario, the Ontario Municipal Board (OMB), Metro Toronto	Provincial agency “Greater Toronto Transportation Authority”, or Metrolinx, created in 2006. Part of a three-part approach for growth and sustainable prosperity (alongside Greenbelt and Growth Plan)	Chicago Area Transportation Study (CATS) formed in 1955 as an ad hoc public agency for preparing the first LRTP Northeastern Illinois Planning Commission (NIPC) created in 1957, abolished in 2007	The State merged the Chicago Area Transportation Study (CATS) and the Northeastern Illinois Planning Commission (NIPC) to form the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) in 2005.
Mandate	TTC, City of Toronto, government of Ontario all made regional transit investments Metro Toronto was responsible for regional land use planning Ontario Municipal Board overseen local transportation and land use decisions	Lead the coordination, planning, financing, and development of an integrated multi-modal transportation network for the GTHA. Taking a regional approach, Metrolinx brings together the Province, municipalities and transit authorities to produce long-term economically and environmentally sustainable transportation solutions	CATS was the MPO, responsible for transportation planning NIPC was the land use planning commission	Regional transportation and land use planning. Also serve as the MPO for the region.
Authority	TTC, City of Toronto and Ontario shared transportation funding authority Land use authority is a local government’s prerogative. subject to OMB’s approval	3 operating companies GO Transit (merged in 2009) regional transit Union Pearson Express (2010) rail service to airport Presto Fare Card (2011) electronic fare card available on 8 transit agencies in GTHA No land use authority	CATS allocated its portion of federal transportation funds NIPC had no land use authority	Allocates federal transportation funding. No land use authority
Decision-making structure	Varied Political process – whomever controlled the funding and the political process controlled what projects should be built and where	Board of directors (15) Professional/managerial Appointed by the minister of transportation. Representing business, finance, architecture, economic development. Elected officials are not eligible to be a director. Executive group (14)	The City of Chicago played the leadership role	Board of directors (15) 5 members from the City of Chicago, appointed by the mayor 5 from suburban Cook, appointed by the mayor with the County board president 5 jointly in the Collar Counties by the county board share and the councils of mayors. Members are mayors, former elected officials, and business and civic community.

Table 4: Federal structures of authority for transportation & land use planning (after reforms)

	Toronto (Centralization)	Chicago (Centralization of planning functions)
Federal	Transportation & infrastructure funding, no sustainability or environmental criteria	Transportation, infrastructure & land use planning funding tied to criteria
Province/State	<i>MoveOntario 2020</i> (2006) (\$17.5 billion, 2/3 funded by the Province) <i>Green Belt Act</i> (2005) <i>Places to Grow Act</i> (2005)	Inconsistent transportation funding Ranges from 0\$ in 2005, 2007, 2008 and 2009 to 500 million \$ in 2010 No law or program regarding land use planning
Regional	Metrolinx (2006) transit only, controlled by the Province. RTP: <i>Big Move</i> (2008)	CMAP (2005) transportation and land use, controlled by the region. RTP: <i>Go to 2040</i> (2009)
Local	7 counties, 22 municipalities Land use authority, provincial requirements	6 counties, 284 municipalities Land use authority, no state requirements

Data Collection Procedure & Instruments

This study is based on semi-structured interviews, policy documents, published and unpublished literature, and spending and planning decisions. The aim of the research is to assess the impacts of the new institutions on the planning processes and decision outcomes. In the interviews, respondents were asked about their general perception of changes in the decision-making process brought by the new institution, as well as transportation spending and land use planning decisions before and after the creation of the organization. (see Appendix C: Interview Protocol).

Thirty (30) respondents were recruited: 15 from Toronto, and 15 from Chicago. Initial respondents were identified in May 2014 by doing research on organizations' websites, and further ones were identified by referral. Respondents were recruited via e-mail (see Appendix

A: Recruitment e-mail) and by phone. The respondents' institutional affiliation follows a similar (if not identical) distribution, representing each level of government and institutional actor: federal, province/state, municipal (center and suburban), metropolitan authorities, transit operators, and business & non-profit.

Respondents were either administrative personnel or executives participating in the selection of transportation investments and/or land use development and/or regional long-range, comprehensive planning. They were involved in (or knowledgeable about) regional transportation and land use planning decision-making processes both before and after the institutional reforms (before and after 2006 in Toronto and 2005 in Chicago). Individuals who did not have professional ties with Metrolinx in Toronto and CMAP in Chicago were excluded.

Respondents were interviewed only one time during the months of June and July 2014. Semi-structured interviews lasted approximately 60 minutes. It took approximately eight weeks (May to June 2014), to enroll all subjects. The interviews were recorded and transcribed in the Summer and Fall 2014.

Validation & Techniques Used in the Analysis

Each transcription was analyzed using the table of indicators presented in the Coding Report (see Appendix E) and the qualitative data analysis software QDA Miner. Policy documents (regional transportation and land use plans, plan evaluation, program evaluation, etc.), spending and planning decisions, research reports and academic literature on the specific cases were also used to fill gaps and validate information given by respondents. The analysis of the process of institutional transformation and the assessment of the impacts of institutional change on sustainability outcomes are thus based on triangulation, i.e., the respondents' perception of change, the published and unpublished literature, as well as the evolution of the

planning processes, transportation investments and land use decisions before, during, and after the implementation of the structural reform. Triangulation allows to validate the respondents' statements by observing what is happening in reality. Again, more information on the coding process is presented in the *Coding Report and Aggregated Results from Interviews* (Appendix E).

CHAPTER 4:

TORONTO PART I: HISTORY OF REGIONAL GOVERNANCE & REFORM

In 2005-2006, Ontario's government, led by Premier Dalton McGuinty, enacted perhaps the most ambitious reform of regional planning in Canada's recent urban planning history by deploying a strategy to manage growth (comprised of two pieces of legislation, the *Greenbelt Act* and the *Places to Growth Act*, and their associated plans) and by creating a regional transportation agency, Metrolinx, in the Greater Golden Horseshoe, Canada's economic powerhouse and one of the fastest-growing urban regions in North America. The overall goals of the reform were to address the congestion issue in and around Toronto, manage the anticipated population and employment growth, and reinvest in the crumbling transportation infrastructures. This chapter provides an overview of the factors leading to the adoption of the reform, as well as a detailed explanation of the three pieces of legislation included in the reform.

The chapter is divided into three sections. The first section recounts the recent history of political institutions, urban development, and regional transportation in Toronto. The second section presents the reform *per se* (including the *Greenbelt Act*, the *Growth Plan*, and *Metrolinx Act*), as well as the administration and enforcement of their dispositions. Finally, the third section presents the theoretical implications of the reform for each level of government and stakeholders, and summarizes the changes in the institutional framework.

Recent History of Political Institutions, Urban Development & Regional Transportation

This section highlights the elements of recent history that explain the adoption of the 2005-2006 institutional reform in Toronto. The three elements of the reform, namely the *Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe*, the *Greenbelt Plan* and Metrolinx, are rooted in the demographic, economic, infrastructural and political context described below. This historical narrative of the adoption of the 2005-2006 reform, based on respondents' accounts and supplemented by various reports and articles, is thus selective, rather than exhaustive, as it only touches on the contextual elements directly related to the reform.

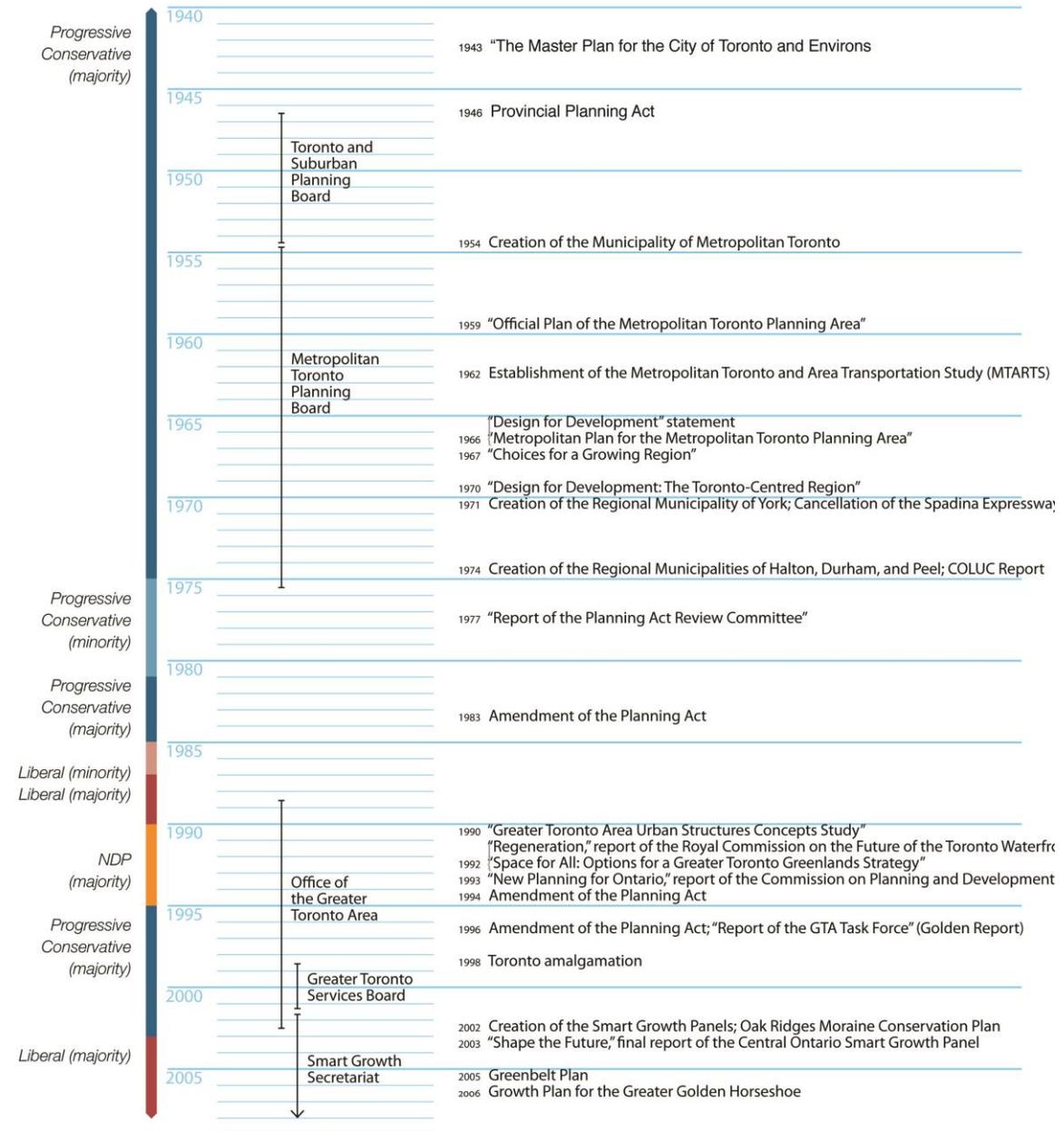
When asked about the motivations behind the 2005-2006 reform that introduced a legislative growth management strategy and a new regional transportation agency, respondents unanimously pointed to the recent demographic and economic growth, in addition to the need for a coordinated regional planning strategy and reinvestment in transportation infrastructures, especially transit. While doing so, they recounted the economic trends, the patterns of urban development, the work of various commissions, taskforces or working groups, the changes of government and policy shifts, as well as the series of governance restructuring that led to the situation we have today. They also provided a fair amount of background related to the provincial involvement in municipal affairs and transit investments. The uncontrolled growth, infrastructure needs and the political gridlock identified by the respondents as the roots of the reform are also well documented (see Addie [2010], Frisken [2001], Keil & Boudreau [2005], and Keil & Young [2008]).

In short, the adoption of the *Greenbelt Plan* and the *Growth Plan* is the culmination of various attempts by the provincial government to curb sprawling urban development and help

municipalities manage the provision of infrastructures. As for the creation of a new regional transportation agency, Metrolinx, it is responding to the need for a regional transportation planning strategy and the desire of the provincial government to regain some control or influence over regional transportation after years of disinvestment in transit. All three elements of the reform are also trying to overcome the fact that there is no regional governing body for managing cross-boundary issues related to land use, transportation and infrastructures. The following paragraphs present the factors that prompted the 2005-2006 reform: the need for a regional planning strategy and a regional governing body; growth pressures and previous attempts to manage them; and the need for a regional transportation strategy and reinvestments in transportation infrastructures. The timeline of documents and events (Table 5) helps following the historical narrative by tracking the succession of provincial governments (left of the timeline), the organizations set up by the Province to manage the Toronto region (center of the timeline), and the important documents, reports, and events (right of the timeline).

Table 5: Timeline of documents and events

TIMELINE OF DOCUMENTS AND EVENTS



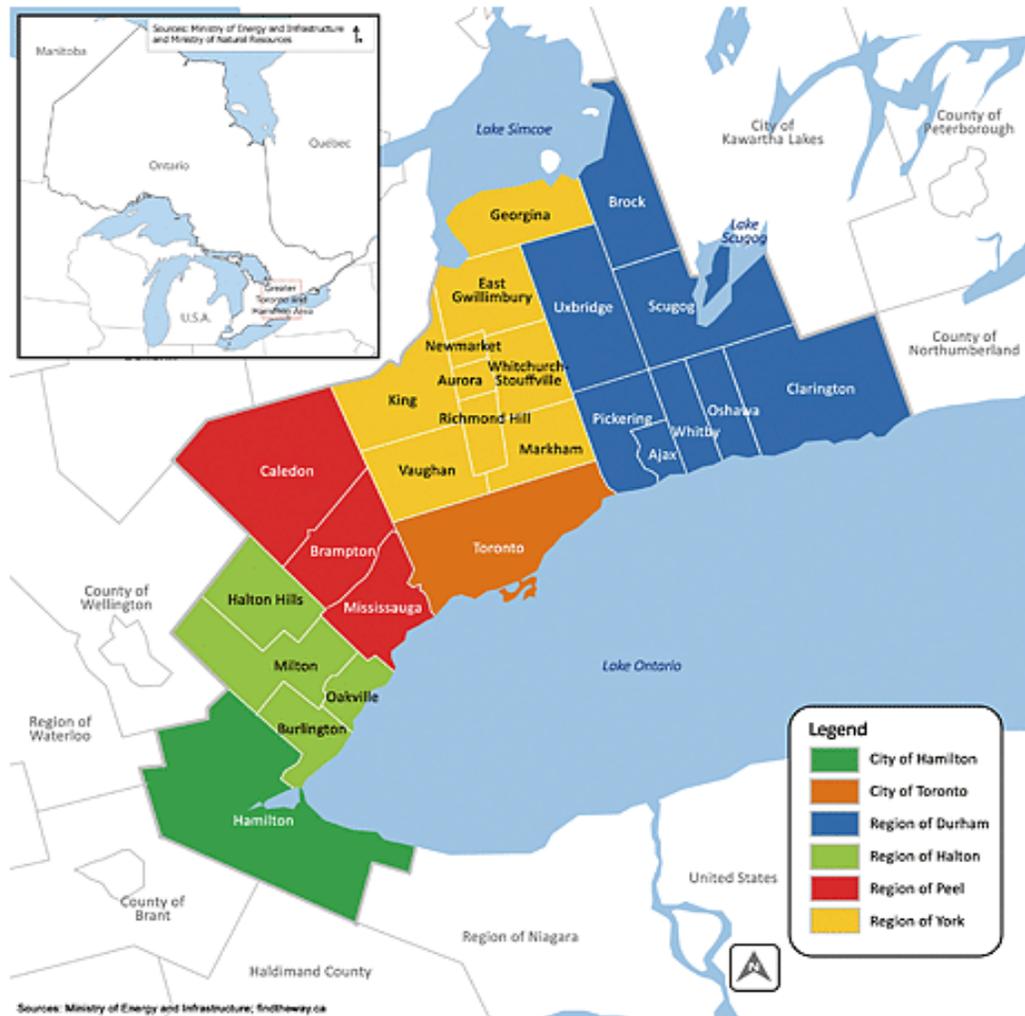
Source: Excerpted from White (2007)

*The Need for A Regional Planning Strategy &
A Regional Governing Body*

Toronto has a long history of urban reforms and city boundaries were often changed in response to the economic and demographic realities of the region. Municipal amalgamation and restructuration have always been enacted unilaterally by the provincial government that does not face any legal or constitutional impediment (such as the “home rule”) when restructuring local governments. In fact, the Toronto case has once been the proof that municipal reorganization was possible “given the right circumstances” (Frisken, 2001: 513). The modern wave of reorganization began in 1954 with the creation of what was called “Metropolitan Toronto”, a federated form of government for the City of Toronto and 12 suburban municipalities. Then other city mergers and reorganizations occurred notably in 1967, 1974 and 1983, before the last amalgamation of 1998 which replaced the two-tier governance structure of Metropolitan Toronto by a singular “Megacity”¹⁰. Toronto metropolitan area is now commonly referred to as the Greater Toronto Area (GTA), comprised of the Megacity of Toronto and four regional municipalities. Administratively, the region is also referred to as the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area (GTHA), which also include the City of Hamilton (see Map 4).

¹⁰ For a thorough history of modern regional reorganization and an assessment of its implications on policy issues, see Frisken (2001).

Map 4: Jurisdictions included in the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area



Source: Excerpted from Metrolinx (2008)

The GTHA is comprised of two single-tier municipalities (Toronto and Hamilton), and four regional municipalities (Durham, Halton, Peel and York), including their 24 lower-tier municipalities. Note that the GTHA also represents the geographical area under the jurisdiction of Metrolinx, the new provincial agency for regional transportation (more on this later).

Prior to the 2005-2006 reform, there was no GTHA-level institutional structure or mechanism in place to manage the growth and transportation in the region, and the latest attempt to achieve regional cooperation had been unsuccessful. This recent phase in history goes back to 1996, when the Report of the GTA Task Force (Golden Report), set up by the provincial government of Bob Rae in 1995 to look at the economic competitiveness of the region, recommended replacing Metropolitan Toronto and the four regional municipalities with a single Greater Toronto Council having the authority to make and implement regional policies (GTA Task Force, 1996). However, because the new super-region would become a direct competitor of the Province and because of a change in provincial leadership, the new government of Mike Harris imposed the Megacity of Toronto as we know it today, kept the four surrounding regions, and created the Greater Toronto Services Board (GTSB) in 1999, rather than implementing the Task Force proposal of creating a super-region with extensive powers over planning and the provision of regional services (Hodge & Robinson, 2001: 354-355; Interview 7).

The GTSB, comprised of all mayors and regional chairs, was set up to coordinate transportation and rural planning in the GTA. Constitutionally weak, underfunded, with no direct elections, no clear mandate, and no taxing powers, the GTSB was disbanded on the last day of 2001 (and thus only lasted for about two years) (Hodge & Robinson, 2001; Keil & Boudreau, 2005; Keil & Young, 2008; Interview 12). In addition to being powerless and “cumbersome”, the GTSB was also undermined by its regional board members, who “sabotaged” the organization with the fear it would eventually become a regional government, notably by lobbying the provincial government for its dismantlement (Interview 13). In fact, although the provincial government did not consider the GTSB as a level of government, the

Minister of Municipal Affairs did indicate, at the time of its announcement, that it could evolve into a regional government over the course of its first decade (Hodge & Robinson, 2001: 354). Although the exact reasons why the provincial government shut down the GTSB remain unclear (White, 2007: 40), the following quotations describe the lack of cooperation among board members and the complexities of inter-regional competition that contributed to GTSB's abolition:

The regional municipalities politically felt threatened that the Greater Toronto Services Board was being set up as a regional government in waiting to replace them. So, I think, politically, that made things very, very difficult to get cooperation because they felt a competition. Whereas (Metrolinx's) mandate is solely transportation, and so, you know, there's no suggestion that Metrolinx would get into any other service areas that the municipalities are involved in. (Interview 5)

There was a fight between [the mayor of Mississauga, the second largest municipality in the region, after Toronto] and the regional governments, and it was a fight for control of regional planning, and [the mayor of Mississauga] saw the regional governments as interfering too much in local matters. So what happened was Mississauga and Toronto got together, because [they] thought philosophically, that you couldn't plan transportation without planning and growth, they had to come together. So [they] asked the Province to give the Greater Toronto Services Board...so [they] got through the Greater Toronto Services Board to give it the power of regional planning for the region. The regional chairs voted against that and lobbied the Province and that caused the end of the Greater Toronto Services Board. So it was really a fight over who decides planning issues. The suburban mayors didn't want the region to...there was a pre-existing tension between regional governments and local. At the end, the Greater Toronto Services Board was on top of that, so the local mayors are actually supportive of having broader planning. I guess [the suburban mayors] saw [the GTSB] as a way to weaken the regions, because there was a historic fight between the region of Peel and Mississauga, and that kind of thing. So there's another level of...at that time, there was almost three governments locally. There was the local government, the regional government, and the Greater Toronto Services Board, even though it was only really doing transportation planning. I think the second reason probably was regarding the point where we were going to make recommendations to the Province that they needed to invest very significant money, and they didn't want to. (Interview 9)

Toronto's amalgamation, while strengthening the city, also hampered regional cooperation because its size and power added to suburban suspicions of the Megacity and its motives (Friskin, 2001: 535; Hodge & Robinson, 2001: 354). As a result, the regions and municipalities were found to be largely caught in the "local trap", incapable of cooperating under the auspices of the GTSB, although they were apparently making decisions and making

progress on some policy issues (Purcell in Keil & Young, 2008; Interview 5). Given these intra-regional tensions, the Province ultimately abandoned the idea of regional cooperation, took over the mandate of developing a regional growth management strategy, and created an arm's-length transportation agency.

With no regional governing body since the abandonment of the GTSB in 2001, the new provincial government of Dalton McGuinty, elected in 2003, re-evaluated the options for regional governance early in its mandate. But then again, if the regions and municipalities were feeling threatened by the GTSB back in 1998-2001, the provincial government was also feeling threatened by the idea of a regional government:

(...) but the growth ultimately became bigger than the regions, so the regional governments were not adequately sized to deal with growth pressures. So the Province, in thinking about what it might do, I think looked at a number of solutions, I think the obvious, the most elegant simplest solution to dealing with this would have been to set up a super region, in other words amalgamate all of the regions in the Greater Toronto Hamilton Area, and continue to have a two-tier system, we have lower-tier municipalities reporting as part of a single super region, which would be responsible for services, which had spillover effects. (...) but I think that politically, the Province looked at that and realized that in many respects, this would be a level of government almost as big as the Province. **They would have created an instant rival that would have been very difficult to contend with politically.** But I think that simple, elegant option was removed from the table, and so then the question was if we're not going to do it that way, how are we going to do it? (Interview 13)

This fear of the provincial government that the Province could be run by a too-powerful Toronto super-region is nothing new to the provincial-regional dynamic (Pearson, 1975).¹¹ Faced with the risk of seeing the Province led by a regional government and the failure of the GTSB to achieve regional cooperation, the provincial government then became the substitute for a regional governance structure (Interviews 9 & 10).

¹¹ There has even been a proposal to make the Toronto city-region a separate Province. The idea dates back to 1948 but resurfaces every decade or so (Hodge & Robinson, 2001: 355).

The provincial (liberal) government Premier Dalton McGuinty, who was also “enamored” of the liberal government in British Columbia that created Translink¹², thus opted for a legislative growth management strategy (the *Greenbelt Plan* and the *Growth Plan*) and a regional transportation agency under its purview (Metrolinx) when looking at governance options for managing the region (Interview 9). However, the underlying motives for needing an institutional framework for regional planning are rooted in the continuous growth and sprawling urban development of the region, as well as its economic competitiveness that called for reinvestments in transportation infrastructures.

Growth Pressures and Previous Attempts to Manage Them

As mentioned previously, the GTHA is the economic powerhouse of Ontario (and Canada), generating about 20% of Canada’s GDP and 45% of Ontario’s GDP, and housing 40% of Canada’s business headquarters (Addie, 2010; Greater Toronto Marketing Alliance, 2011; Kitchen, 2013; Interview 10). In terms of population, Toronto metropolitan area is also one of the fastest growing regions in North America with an annual growth rate above 9% between 1996 and 2006 (Kitchen, 2013: 78), representing more than 80% of Ontario’s growth over the next 20 years (Toronto City Council, 2001; Ontario Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, 2006; Metrolinx, 2008). Between 2011 and 2041, the population within the GTHA is expected to grow from 6.8 million up to 10.1 million people, adding more than 100,000 people per year in the area, while the number of jobs is forecasted to grow from 3.5 million up to 4.8 million (Hemson Consulting Ltd., 2012:32-33; Interview 3). The need for a growth

¹² Translink is responsible for regional transportation in Greater Vancouver. Founded in 1999, it has authority over planning and design of transportation, including roads, as well as operating and financing transit services. It is perhaps the closest to Transportation for London (TfL) model in North America (Neptis Foundation, 2014).

management strategy came especially from two primary concerns: 1) the impact of continuous growth (in terms of economic activity, urban development, and population expansion) on sprawling urban form, congestion, air pollution, etc.; and 2) the impact of growth on physical services and infrastructure cost (roads, public transit, water supply, sewers, waste disposal sites, affordable housing, etc. (Addie, 2010; Frisken, 2001; Interview 11).

Toronto's regional planning history dates back to the 1940's¹³. Although the subway system was successful in changing the urban form by steering mixed-use and high-density development along transit lines when it was built the 50's, 60's, 70's and then when it expanded in the 80's and 90's (Filion, 2007: 10; Interview 4), regional planning initiatives led by the Province have largely failed at limiting sprawling urban development outside of the inner core, in the suburbs. Provincial initiatives that were successful and worthy of mention here include the enactment of the 1946 *Planning Act*, which gave municipalities the power to create formal, legally binding official plans for their jurisdictions (White, 2007); provincial restrictions on development based on wells and septic tanks, included in the *Planning Act*, that somewhat limited suburban expansion in the 1950's and 1960's (Frisken, 2001); and the establishment of the Metropolitan Toronto and Region Transportation Study (MARTS) in 1962, which led to the creation of GO Transit in 1967, the commuter rail (and later rail and bus) system. Then, the period ranging from the mid-1970's up to the adoption of *Places to Grow* in 2005 can be characterized as an era of "non-planning", with no regional planning body or no regional plan for the GTHA (White, 2007).

¹³ For an exhaustive account of Toronto planning history, see the first part of the research report prepared by Pierre Filion (2007) and the background paper prepared by Richard White (2007), both published by the Neptis Foundation.

Seventy years of regional planning and market forces in Toronto shaped a settlement geography characterized by: 1) a well-known condominium developments in the inner core of Toronto (“probably more condominium developed than any other city in the world relative to the population” [Interview 4]); 2) a mix of residential, commercial, and retail development around the existing subway system; and 3) a set of sprawled, low-density, car-oriented suburbs (Filion, 2007: 24). In terms of demography, this pattern of settlement is associated with a divergence between the population living in the inner-city, characterized by small households, high-status occupation, and high levels of educational attainment, and the population in some suburban areas, characterized by poorer residents, larger households, lower status occupation and lower educational levels (Filion, 2007: 1). However, despite these demographic differences and areas of greater social needs (Metrolinx, 2008: 104), the Toronto region is not as socially and/or racially “segregated” as some American cities can be, and the cities/sub-regions are becoming much more integrated and dependent on each other. As Kitchen describes:

Population growth, increasing density, and a tendency for people to live in one jurisdiction and work in a neighboring jurisdiction has effectively removed inter-municipal differences attributed to local preferences and produced a levelling out of residents expectations for both the quantity and quality of public services provided across the entire area. (Kitchen, 2013: 87).

Although services are becoming more evenly distributed across jurisdictions, funding for public transit, social services and social housing are not properly shared, with the majority of the costs being assumed by the central city. These inter-regional inequities and the lack of coordination and service integration across the GTA are calling for a re-examination of the governance structure of the entire area (Kitchen, 2013: 88-89).

The 2005-2006 reform that enacted the *Growth Plan*, the *Greenbelt Plan* and Metrolinx thus came from a long-standing recognition of the need for a coordinated approach to regional transportation and land use in all the four regional municipalities and the two single-tier municipalities. Although the *Growth Plan*, the *Greenbelt Plan*, and a coordinating body for transit were part of Premier McGuinty's electoral campaign material back in 2003, part of the work had already been initiated by the previous government of Mike Harris, which faced growing popular concern about suburban sprawl and traffic congestion in the late 1990's (Filion, 2007; White, 2007; Interview 8). Indeed, part of its new vision for the Province called "Ontario Smart Growth", seen back then as an alternative to no-growth policies, the conservative government set up the Smart Growth Secretariat in 2001, housed in the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (Filion, 2007; Toronto City Council, 2001). Shortly after that in 2002, thinking about what the Province could do to manage growth in Ontario, the government created the Smart Growth Panels, a set of five multidisciplinary panels across the Province looking at issues relevant to their geographic zone (keep in mind that the GTSB was abolished the same year). The Central Ontario Smart Growth Panel, chaired by the then Mayor of Mississauga, was divided into three sub-panels that discussed different policy issues in the GTHA: waste management, transportation (or "gridlock"), and a growth management strategy. The latter was adopted by the panel, which submitted its final recommendations to the provincial government in 2003, and became part of the underpinnings of the *Places to Grow Act*, adopted by the next (liberal) government of Dalton McGuinty in 2005 (Interview 13).

The next step was to get involved in the *Greenbelt Plan*, which sought after protecting the natural heritage of the region, including the Niagara Escarpment and the Oak Ridges

Moraine (a watershed area subject of a protection act since 2001). A multi-stakeholder panel went around the region and looked at the natural heritage assets, talking about what was necessary to include in the Greenbelt (Interview 13). After the *Greenbelt Plan* and the *Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe* became legislation in 2005 and 2006 respectively, the provincial government decided to tackle the connective issues between the growth centers and transportation infrastructures. It then created a new regional agency for transportation in 2006 with the mandate of developing a regional transportation plan for the GTHA, the *Big Move* (2008). If the *Greenbelt Plan* and the *Growth Plan* aimed at tackling the issue of regional planning, especially land use, in the context of uncontrolled growth, Metrolinx was set up for coordinating transportation within the GTHA in the context of a long-running trend of declining investment in transportation infrastructures, particularly transit.

*The Need for a Regional Transportation Strategy &
Reinvestment in Transportation Infrastructures*

Transportation is perhaps “the biggest headache in the GTA” (Javed, 2009), making transit a major topic of election at both the provincial and municipal levels (Interview 1). Although the region is characterized by a modern network of transportation infrastructures (intermodal rail yards, a network of superhighways, warehouses, distribution centers, and the largest and busiest airport of the country) serving international travelers and the movement of goods, its public transit network operates past its normal life expectancy on potholed streets (Keil & Young, 2008). Congestion is also a growing concern, costing commuters about \$3.3 billion annually and a reduction in regional GDP of \$2.7 billion annually (Metrolinx, 2006: 3). A 2010 OECD review of Toronto’s regional economy identified a lack of capital investment, a poorly integrated transportation network, and limited intergovernmental collaboration as

major factors curtailing the region's prospect for future growth (OECD, 2010). As explained in the following paragraphs, Toronto's transportation infrastructure deficit is partly attributable to the Province's retreat from municipal transit in 1998 (Frisken, 2001).

Public transit in Toronto is supplied by: 1) the Toronto Transit Commission (TTC), which provides subway, streetcar, and bus services in the City of Toronto; 2) GO Transit, which provides commuter rail and bus services; and 3) 8 other suburban bus transit operators. The TTC carries about 85% of the riders, or about 1.3 million riders every work day, GO Transit, 10%, and the remaining 5% of the transit trips are serviced by the suburban transit provider (Keil & Young, 2008; Interview 1). Maps 5 and 6 show TTC's four subway lines and the GO Transit commuter bus and rail service, respectively.

Note that these maps are showing TTC's main two subway lines (the Yonge-University line¹⁴ and the Bloor-Danforth line), GO's commuter bus and rail service, but they are not showing TTC's extensive streetcar and bus services, which carry 60% of its riders (Interview 6).

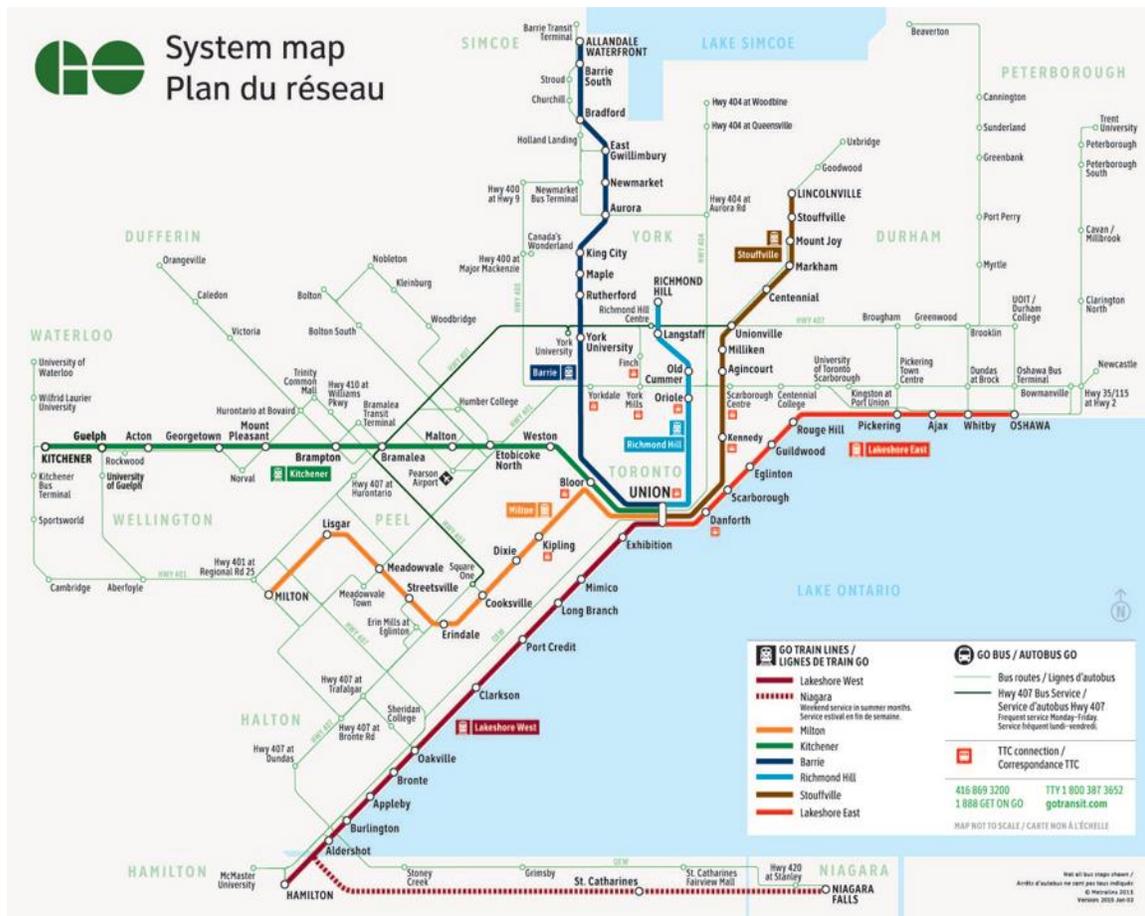
¹⁴ The Yonge-University line is the largest transit corridor in Canada, carrying 32,000 to 34,000 people per hour in the peak hour, one direction, whereas the Bloor-Danforth line holds 24,000 to 26,000 people per peak hour (Interview 1).

Map 5: TTC subway routes



Source: Excerpted from Johomaps (2006)

Map 6: GO Transit system (commuter rail and bus services)



Source: Excerpted from GO Transit (2013)¹⁵

At the time of the reform, the region had been experiencing a shortfall in capital investments from all levels of government for quite some time, which resulted in an increasingly deteriorating urban infrastructure (Addie, 2010: 7; Interview 12). Known as “the city that works” and a leader in public transit in the 1950’s and 1960’s, Toronto was lagging behind at the time of the reform, particularly in terms of transportation infrastructures (Frisken

¹⁵ An updated, interactive version on the map is available at: http://www.gotransit.com/timetables/en/schedules/transit_system_map.aspx.

and al., 1997; Keil & Young, 2008). By creating Metrolinx and giving it the mandate of planning and managing transit infrastructure investments (more on this later), the Province was trying to remove some of the political and financial gridlock that had led the region, especially the TTC, “to do nothing for 25 years” in terms of transit investment (Interviews 4 & 10).

The provincial involvement in transit began in the 1960’s, when the government agreed to contribute to the capital costs of new subway lines in 1964, and when it started to assume the full capital costs and operating deficits of GO Transit, initiated in 1967. The Province then agreed in 1972 to pay 75% of capital and 50% of operating budgets of municipal transit systems. In 1998, the Ontario government ended its capital and operating assistance, downloading all costs of municipal and regional transit services to municipalities (Frisken, 2001). Since then, this reliable funding base was never restored, making transit a major financial issue for the City of Toronto, representing about 50% of its capital budget (Interviews 1, 4 & 14).

The TTC and GO Transit operate fairly well on a business model. GO Transit is among the lowest cost operator in the world, with a fare box recovery rate of 80% (while transit authorities recover on average 38% of their cost at the fare box) (Keil & Young, 2008: 741; Schabas, 2013: 28; Golden, 2014: 4). Before it started receiving provincial subsidies in 1972, the TTC operated at a profit. The reason it stopped operating at a profit is that they were asked by the region to extend bus lines into what was called Metropolitan Toronto (Interview 1). The organisation has been struggling since the Province stopped its capital and operating assistance in 1998. In terms of capital spending, the TTC has spent the last decade focusing primarily on maintenance and keeping a status of good repair, since an accident killing three passengers in 2005 pointed at structural deficiencies (Keil & Young, 2008; Interview 1). Despite these

efforts, as a result of underfunding and its associated persistent neglect of infrastructures, there was an accumulated state of good repair backlog in Toronto's municipal infrastructures totalizing \$1.7 billion in 2012 (Canadian Federation of Municipalities, 2012).

Faced with the pace of growth in the GTHA and the transportation infrastructure deficit that needed to be addressed, the Province lacked an entity that had a regional perspective, that could set priorities and that could build consensus among municipalities and transit agencies. It could not afford to do all the unconnected, piecemeal municipal projects in a short-sighted fashion. The Ministry of Transportation actually did a regional transportation plan for the region in the early 2000's, which was later handed in to Metrolinx when it was beginning to develop the *Big Move*. Although the Province's plan was quite similar to the *Big Move*, it did not benefit from the same level of consultation that Metrolinx did both in terms of time and people involved, and the municipal buy-in that goes along with it (Interviews 3 & 6).

Perhaps another, although unsaid, motive for creating Metrolinx was the desire of the provincial government to regain some control, or at least some influence over the TTC and regional transit in general. The TTC being a giant that detains all the expertise in the Province terms of subways and streetcars, the Province, worried that the TTC would exert a disproportionate influence on public policy, has always thought of strategies to control it (Interviews 1 & 9). When the Province was funding 75% of the capital and 50% of TTC's operating budget, there was a major interaction between the Province and the transportation planning people in the TTC to make sure that the Province's overall vision of the efficiency and the sustainable metropolitan Toronto was being accomplished, because those funds had planning implications attached to them (Interview 4). After the Province stop both its capital and operating assistance, the provincial oversight of the TTC disappeared and so the Ministry

of Transportation had a “strategic imperative from their perspective to exert some control over the TTC”, which the GTSB was not really providing (Interview 9). Later calls from Metrolinx for uploading the TTC to Metrolinx (or the Province) (Addie, 2010: 11) as well as the management of certain transit infrastructure projects (more on this later) are consistent with some respondents’ perception of the Province’s struggle to control regional transit. Metrolinx was thus created in 2006 in response to both the need for regional coordination and to manage of the Province’s reinvestment in infrastructures.

Nature of the Reform

This section describes Toronto’s “new institutional design” for integrating regional transportation and land use planning in greater detail. First, the growth management strategy is explained by looking at its legal framework, which includes the *Greenbelt Act* and its associated *Greenbelt Plan*, and the *Places to Grow Act* and its associated *Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe*. Then the transportation aspect of the reform is addressed by presenting Metrolinx, the new regional transportation agency, and its regional transportation plan named the *Big Move*. Finally, elements regarding the plans’ administration and enforcement are presented, before turning to the theoretical implications of the reform for each level of government and stakeholders.

Greenbelt Act & the Greenbelt Plan

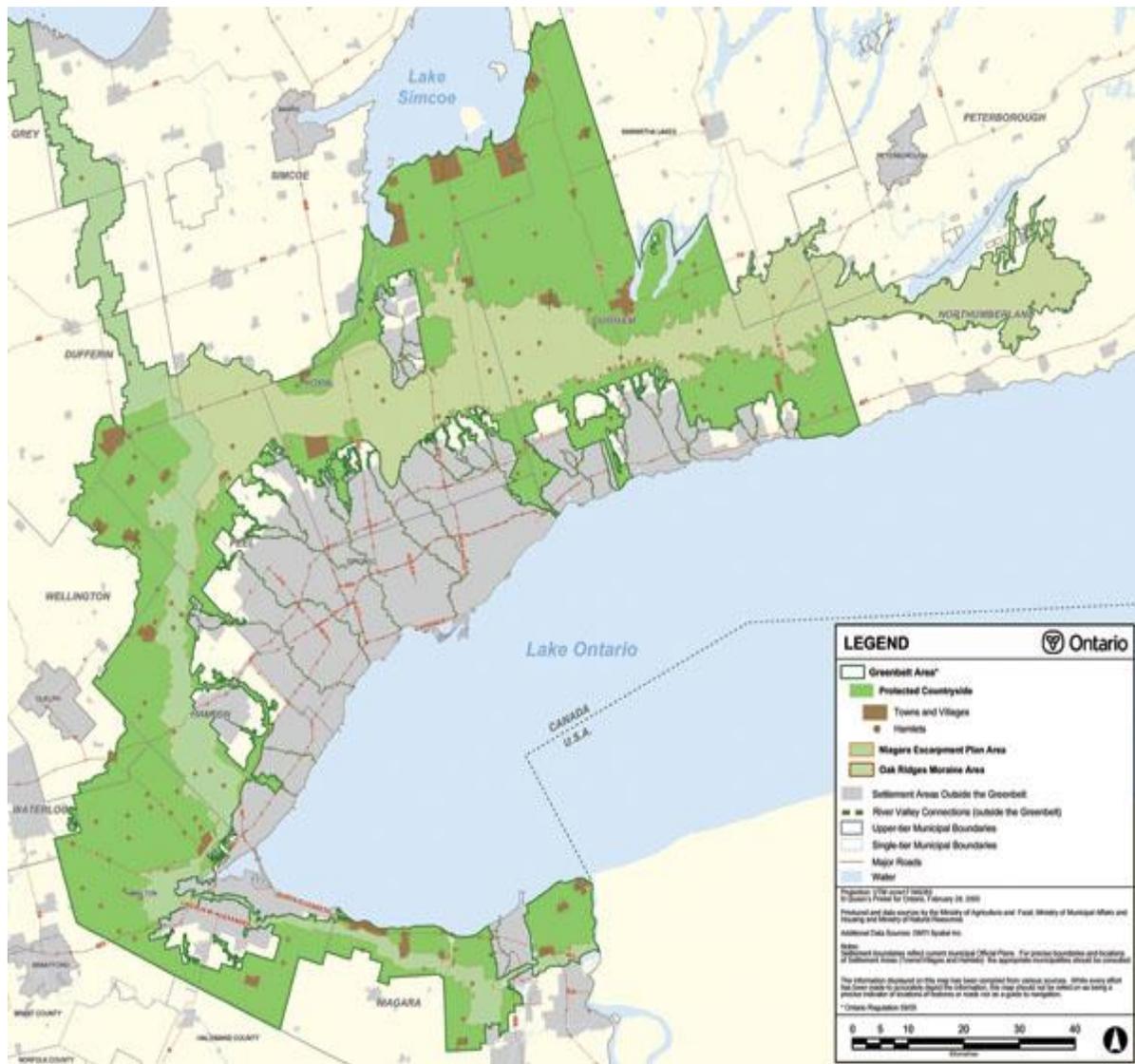
The Ontario government started by enacting the *Greenbelt Act* in 2005, which allows the Province to designate an area of land as the Greenbelt Area. The *Greenbelt Plan* was adopted in the same year, protecting about 1.8 million acres of land in southern Ontario. The Greenbelt, a broad band of countryside and open space, essentially protects the natural heritage

and water resource systems, and promote sustainable resource use in the area surrounding the GTHA. It includes the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan and the Niagara Escarpment Plan, which provide protection for these ecologically sensitive areas (Ontario Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, 2005). The Greenbelt Plan Area is shown on Map 7.

The *Greenbelt Plan* is more a rural plan than a nature preserve *per se*, in the sense that it takes into consideration natural heritage assets but also agriculture and resource use, farming, tourism, recreational and cultural assets. The land covered by the Greenbelt is a very actively used piece of land defined primarily by the fact that it does not enjoy urban services, such as water and sewer, which tend to create intensified urban development (Interview 13; Government of Ontario, 2005a).

The Greenbelt is thus made of the lands of the Oak Ridges Moraine, of the Niagara Escarpment, and of the “Protected Countryside”. The Protected Countryside is made up of an agricultural system (speciality crop areas, prime agricultural areas, and rural areas) and a natural system (natural heritage system, water resource system, and/or landform features), along with a series of settlement areas (town/villages and hamlets). Each land category is associated with specific uses, strategies and policies. Municipalities must bring their municipal official plan into conformity with the *Greenbelt Plan* by amending to their official plan and by submitting these amendments to their regional municipality for approval (more on this later). The *Greenbelt Plan* is subject to a 10-year review and its implementation is administratively under the supervision of the Greenbelt Council, which provides the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing with advice on the Greenbelt (Government of Ontario, 2005a).

Map 7: Greenbelt Plan area



Source: Excerpted from Ontario Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (2012)

The land outside the Greenbelt Area is governed by the other provincial planning regime, the *Places to Grow Act* and its associated *Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe*.

Places to Grow Act & the Growth Plan

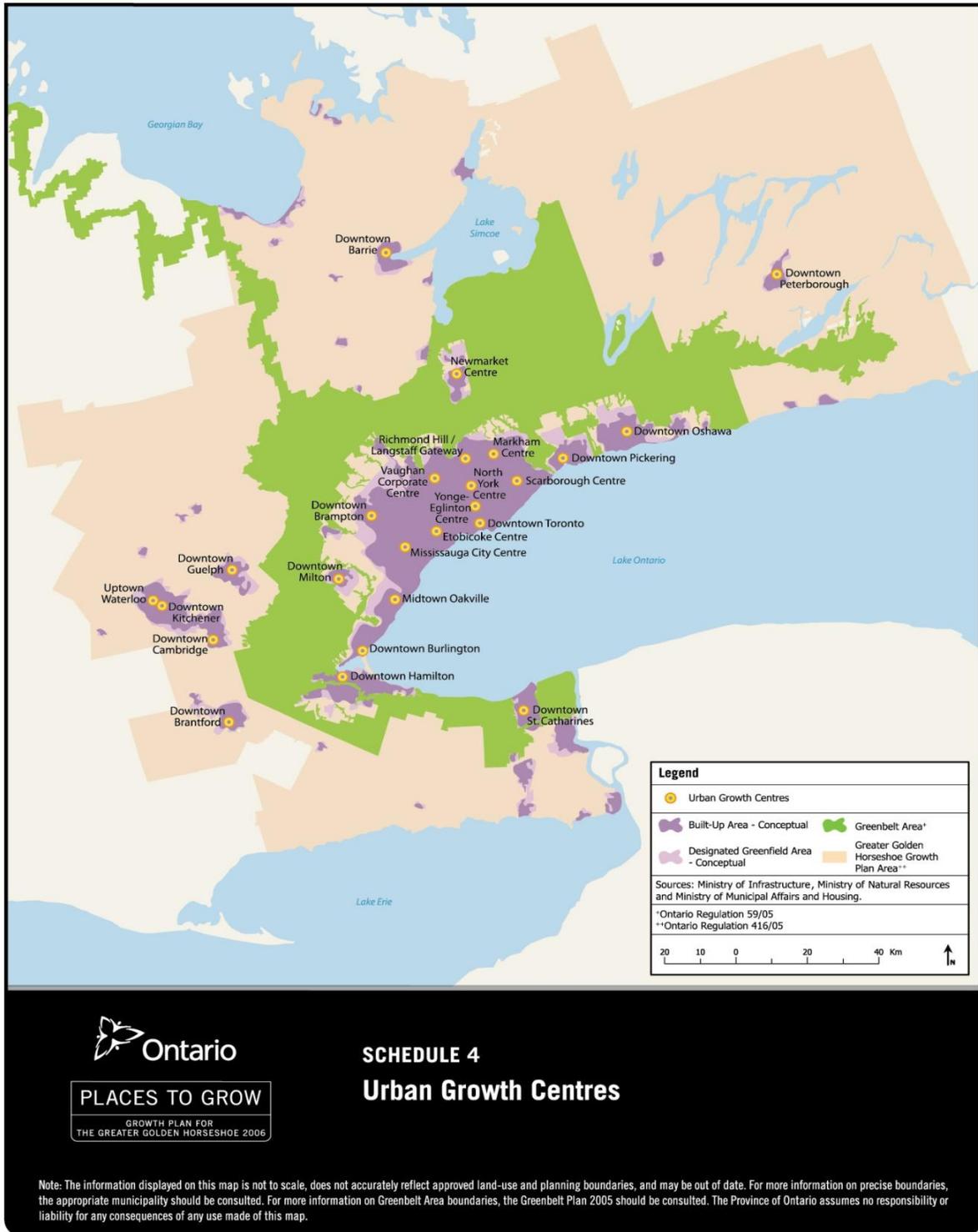
Concurrently with the *Greenbelt Act*, the Ontario government enacted the *Place to Grow Act* in 2005, which gives the Province the authority to designate any geographic region as a Growth Plan Area, and to develop growth plans in consultation with stakeholders (Ontario Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, 2013a). The Province then asked the Ministry of Infrastructure to develop the *Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe*, adopted in 2006¹⁶. The consultation process leading to the *Growth Plan* was more extensive than what the *Places to Grow Act* requires to. The Ministry started by releasing a discussion paper to be considered by the mayors and elected officials of the municipalities, the land owners, and the builders, then prepared a draft, then the official proposed growth plan, before adopting the final version of the plan (Interview 8).

The *Growth Plan* “guides decisions on how land is developed, resources are managed, and public dollars are invested” (Ontario Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, 2006). It is a 25-year plan that aims to revitalize downtowns, create complete communities, provide a large range of housing options, curb sprawl and protect farmland, and reduce congestion by improving access to a greater range of transportation options. The *Growth Plan* manages the anticipated population and employment growth by “increasing intensification of the existing built-up area, with a focus on urban growth centres, intensification corridors, major transit station areas, brownfield sites and greyfields”, connecting land use and infrastructure investment (Ontario Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, 2006).

¹⁶ The *Greater Golden Horseshoe* is a geographical area of Southern Ontario that encompasses the GTHA. Subsequently, the *Growth Plan for Northern Ontario* was developed for strengthening the economy in the north of the Province (Government of Ontario, 2011).

More specifically, the *Growth Plan* allocates population and employment growth to the 21 upper- and single- tier municipalities up until 2031. It identifies 25 Urban Growth Centers (UGC's) that should be planned for as focal areas for investment in infrastructures and to accommodate a significant share of population and employment growth. UGC's should be planned to achieve a minimum gross density target of 400 residents and jobs combined per hectare in the City of Toronto, of 200 residents and jobs combined per hectare for each of the medium-size UGC's outside of the City of Toronto, and of 150 residents and jobs combined per hectare for the smaller-size UGC's outside of the City of Toronto (Ontario Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, 2006: 16-17). In addition, each upper-tier and single-tier municipality is assigned an intensification target, meaning that 40% of all residential development that occurs annually within each municipality should be within the existing build-up area (Ontario Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, 2006: 14-15). The *Growth Plan* also requires that future greenfield area development be planned to achieve a minimum density of 50 people and jobs per hectare combined by 2031. These provisions for planning and managing growth are based on the province's population and employment forecast, which are reviewed by the Ministry every five years in consultation with municipalities. Ultimately, density and intensification targets ensure that communities can be served by transit, infrastructure can be provided efficiently, and the need for new greenfield development is limited. Map 8 is showing the location of the 25 UGC's identified in the Growth Plan Area, and Figure 2 is a diagram illustrating the *Growth Plan* and the *Greenbelt Plan* land use terminology.

Map 8: Growth Plan - Urban Growth Centers



PLACES TO GROW

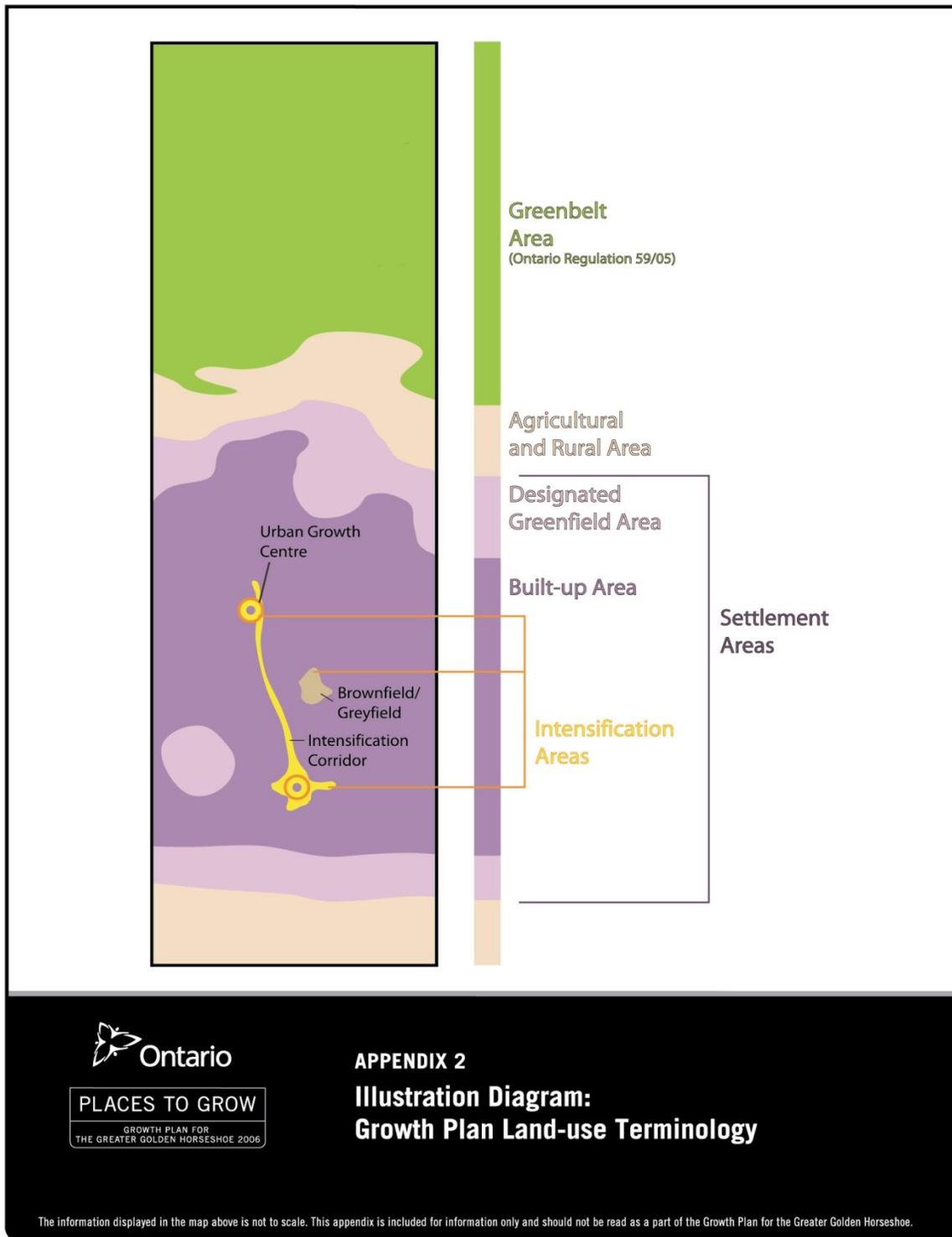
GROWTH PLAN FOR THE GREATER GOLDEN HORSESHOE 2006

**SCHEDULE 4
Urban Growth Centres**

Note: The information displayed on this map is not to scale, does not accurately reflect approved land-use and planning boundaries, and may be out of date. For more information on precise boundaries, the appropriate municipality should be consulted. For more information on Greenbelt Area boundaries, the Greenbelt Plan 2005 should be consulted. The Province of Ontario assumes no responsibility or liability for any consequences of any use made of this map.

Source: Excerpted from Ontario Ministry of Infrastructures (2006: 65)

Figure 2: Illustration diagram – Growth Plan land-use terminology



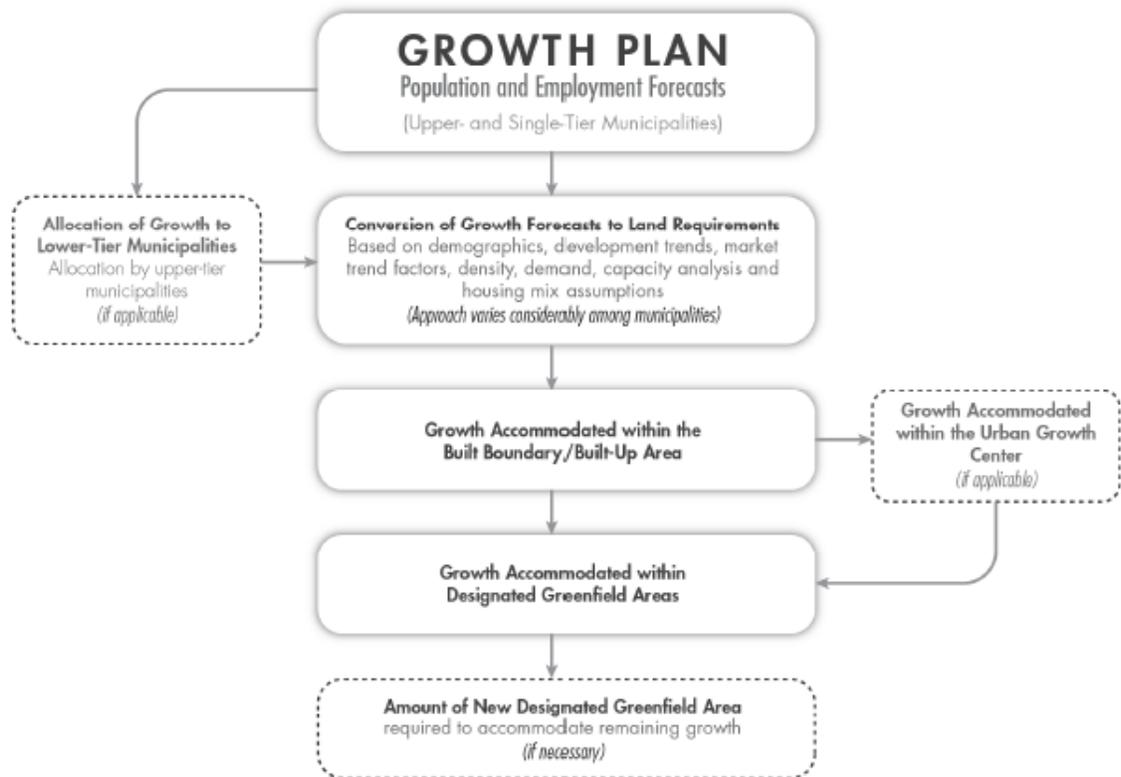
Source: Excerpted from Ontario Ministry of Infrastructures (2006: 77)

In addition to UGCs and intensification targets, the *Growth Plan* identifies major transit station areas and intensification corridors. Station areas and corridors are planned to increase density and provide a variety of land uses supportive of existing and future transit infrastructures. The *Growth Plan* also directly addresses the infrastructure needs, the connectivity issue between UGCs, and the general movement of people and goods. It sets a series of criteria that guide decisions on transit planning and investments and proposes a strategic framework for future transit investment decisions. The *Growth Plan* also makes the efficient movement of goods the first priority of highway investments, which should link strategic freight infrastructures. The *Growth Plan* also provides a conceptual transit network to move people in the Greater Golden Horseshoe, with improved higher order transit and a series of proposed new higher order transit. However, the proposed corridors and transportation infrastructures *are not associated with any funding commitment* from the part of the Province, the actual timing, phasing, and alignments being subject to further study. (Ontario Ministry of Infrastructures, 2006: 26-27) What that means, and what the evidence presented later on in this chapter actually shows, is that the proposed future rapid transit lines or transportation corridors are “merely placeholders” for future funding, and that also applies to the projects presented in the *Big Move*, Metrolinx’s regional transportation plan (RTP) (more on this later) (Munro, 2013).

Administratively, the *Places to Grow* initiatives are coordinated by the Ontario Growth Secretariat, housed in the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing. In terms of implementation, municipalities must bring their municipal official plan into conformity with the *Growth Plan* by incorporating the new policies, targets, and forecasts, which involves converting growth forecasts to land needs in a land budget. This process varies among

municipalities because there is no standardized methodology across municipalities. A generalized land budgeting process is presented in Figure 3. In addition, according to the *Planning Act*, all decisions affecting land use planning matters shall be consistent with the Provincial Policy Statement (PPS), which provides clear policy directions on land use planning.

Figure 3: Generalized land budget process



Source: Excerpted from Allen & Campsie (2013: 11)

Note that the *Greenbelt Plan* and the *Growth Plan* are award-winning plans, “the crown achievement of [Premier McGuinty’s] government”, according to one respondent (Interview 9). The *Growth Plan* is the first recipient from outside the United States of the American Planning Association's Daniel Burnham Award, the most prestigious planning award in the

United States. In addition, both plans received awards from the Canadian Institute of Planners and the Ontario Professional Planners Institute (Ontario Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, 2013b). The plans were awarded for their progress, community benefit, and contribution to the advancement of the planning profession, as well as the government's vision and leadership in their creation.

Metrolinx & the Big Move

The third and final piece to Premier McGuinty's institutional reform was the adoption of the *Greater Toronto Transportation Authority Act* in 2006 (rebranded Metrolinx in 2007) (Government of Ontario, 2006b). Metrolinx was created to: 1) provide leadership in the coordination, planning, financing and development of an integrated, multi-modal transportation network that conforms to transportation policies of the *Growth Plan*; and 2) to act as the central procurement agency for the procurement of local transit system vehicles, equipment, technologies and facilities on behalf of Ontario municipalities (Government of Ontario, 2006b). Over time, Metrolinx's mandate grew to include three operating divisions, in addition to its initial planning and coordinating responsibilities.

Metrolinx's first task was to develop a regional transportation plan, the *Big Move*, adopted in 2008, and to plan, coordinate and set priorities for its implementation. It is also responsible for managing the funds for integrated transportation across the region, including highway and transit infrastructure, while promoting and facilitating coordinated decision-making and investment among the municipalities in the region. Metrolinx's mandate grew in 2009, when it merged with GO Transit, the commuter bus and rail transit provider. Two more operating divisions were subsequently added: the Union Pearson Express in 2010 and the PRESTO electronic fare card in 2011. The Union Pearson Express is a high-quality rail service

between Union Station in downtown Toronto and Pearson International Airport. Its construction began in 2010 and is expected to be completed for the Pan/Parapan American Games in the summer of 2015. As for the PRESTO electronic fare card, it is the first step towards an integrated transit fare system across the 9 transit agencies in the GTHA and Ottawa's OC Transpo. (Metrolinx, 2015a).

Metrolinx is a crown (provincial) agency under the purview of Ontario's Ministry of Transportation. At the time of its inception, the majority of the board members were local governments' appointees, either elected officials or members of the personnel. The board composition was then modified by Premier Dalton McGuinty in 2009, after the adoption of the *Big Move*, to exclude municipal appointees and elected officials from the board (more on this later). The first board of directors was comprised of 11 members: 2 appointees from the provincial government, 4 appointees from the City of Toronto, 1 appointee from Hamilton, and 1 appointee from each of the Regional Municipalities of Durham, Halton, Peel and York (Government of Ontario, 2006b). This initial board developed the *Big Move*, the region's \$50-billion transportation capital plan.

The *Big Move* provides a vision, goals and objectives for the future of transportation in the region. The plan includes strategies, supporting policies, priority actions, and an investment strategy to finance a number of specific transit and highway projects. The final version of *Big Move* was informed by the input received on seven Green Papers published in 2007 and 2008, as well as two White Papers, a Draft Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), and a Draft Investment Strategy released in 2008 (Metrolinx, 2008). The *Big Move* also had to be consistent with the *Growth Plan*, and so Metrolinx aligned its transportation forecasts to whatever shift in population and employment forecast the Province made (Interview 12). In

terms of selecting the priority projects, the RTP was built upon work that had already been done by the various municipalities for transit and other infrastructure projects that they were interested in proceeding with in their jurisdiction (Interview 5), or the municipalities' "pet projects", as portrayed by one respondent (Interview 8). Metrolinx initial board members all had a political vested interest in making sure that the plan served their needs, but also compromised about how the plan affected everybody else (Interview 4). The *Big Move* final lists of projects was thus based on a business case evaluation establishing the merit, the need and the timing of the projects, taking into account different elements such as a cost-benefit analysis and but also a less quantifiable "strategic policy" examination, among other criteria (Interviews 5 & 14) (more on project prioritization and methodology later). The Board of directors recommended to the Province a list of 52 rapid transit and highway projects that were put in an order of priority, making a 15-year plan with a first wave of projects, a 25-year plan with a second wave of projects, and a package of "Quick Wins" to be in service within five years or less (Metrolinx, 2008). Minor changes to the lists were made in the 2013 plan update. Below are maps and a table showing: 1) the first wave of projects (Map 9); 2) the list of all 52 recommended projects (Table 6); and 3) the 2013 plan update that shows projects from the first wave of projects that were relegated to the 25-year plan, and other changes such as the Downtown Relief Line that was promoted to the 15-year plan (Map 10).

Map 9: 15-Year plan for the regional rapid transit and highway network (First wave of projects)



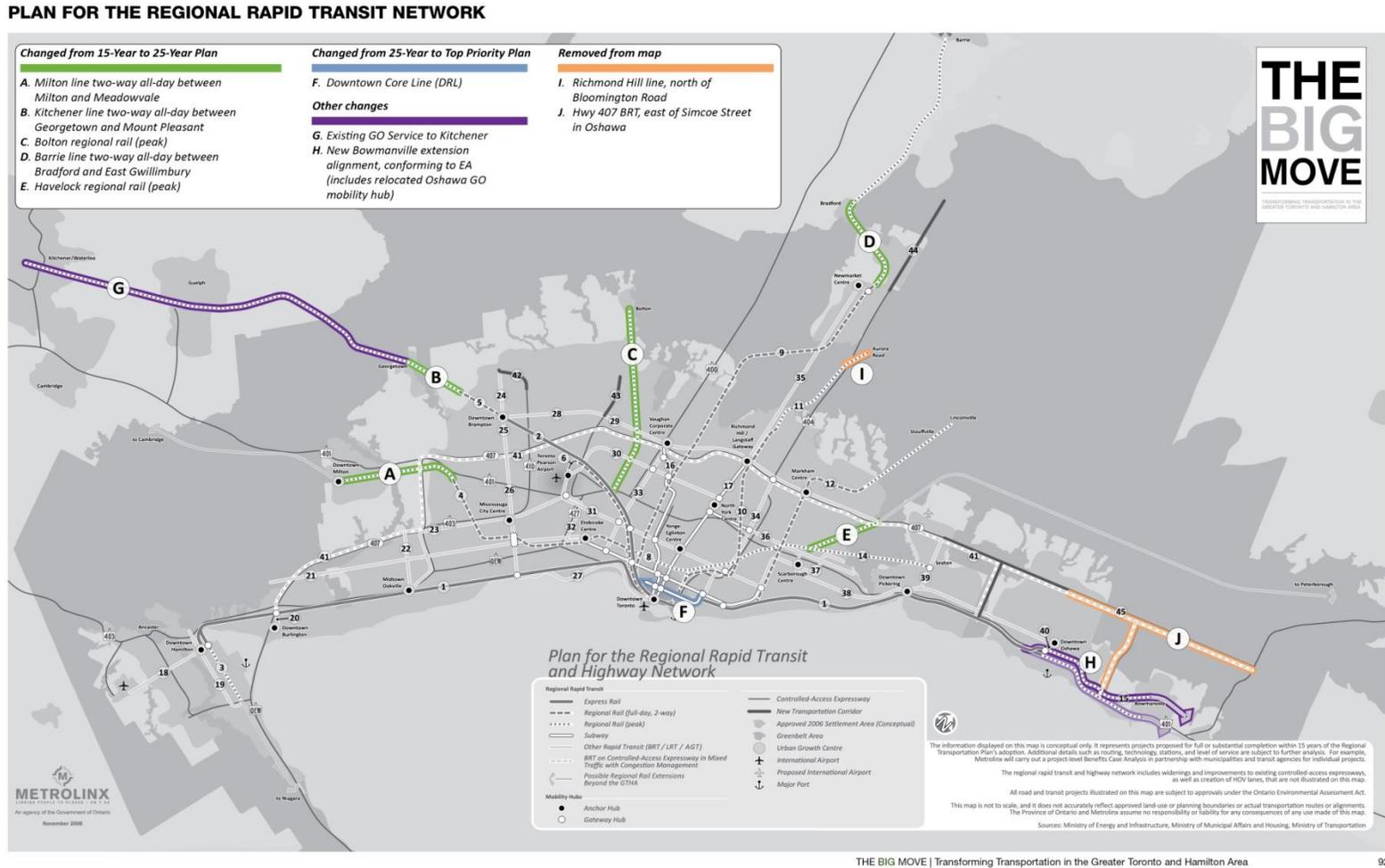
Source: Excerpted from Metrolinx (2008: 92)

Table 6: Regional rapid transit and highway network: List of projects

Regional Rapid Transit* and Highway Network	
15-Year Plan	
Express Rail	Other Rapid Transit (BRT / LRT / AGT)
Lakeshore (1): Hamilton - Oshawa GO	Hamilton James Street (18): Downtown Hamilton - Hamilton Airport
Brampton (2): Downtown Brampton - Union Station	Hamilton King/Main (19): McMaster University - Eastgate Mall
Regional Rail	Burlington Connector (20): Fairview GO - Downtown Burlington
Stoney Creek (3): James Street North Station - Stoney Creek	Dundas Street (21): Brant St - Kipling Station
Milton (4): Downtown Milton - Union Station/Summerhill	Trafalgar (22): Hwy 407 - Midtown Oakville
Georgetown (5): Georgetown - Downtown Brampton	403 Transitway (23): Midtown Oakville - Renforth / Airport
Airport (6): Pearson Airport - Union Station	Hwy 10 (24): Mayfield West - Downtown Brampton
Bolton (7): Bolton - Union Station	Main Street AcceleRide (25): Downtown Brampton - Hwy 407
Crosstown (8): Dundas West - Summerhill Station	Hurontario (26): Hwy 407 - Port Credit GO
Barrie (9): Bradford - Union Station	Waterfront West (27): Port Credit GO - Union Station
Richmond Hill (10): Richmond Hill GO - Union Station	Queen Street AcceleRide (28): Downtown Brampton - Peel-York Boundary
Richmond Hill (11): Aurora Rd. - Richmond Hill GO	VIVA Highway 7 (29): Peel-York Boundary - Locust Hill (Markham)
Stouffville (12): Mt Joy GO - Union Station	Finch West (30): Pearson Airport - Finch Station
Havelock (13): Locust Hill (Markham) - Union Station/Summerhill	Eglinton (31): Pearson Airport - Kennedy Station
Seaton (14): Seaton - Union Station/Summerhill	Hwy 427 South (32): Pearson Airport - Kipling Station
Lakeshore (15): Oshawa GO - Bowmanville†	Jane (33): Vaughan Corporate Centre - Bloor Street
Subway	Don Mills (34): Hwy 7 - Bloor Street
Spadina (16): Downsview Station - Vaughan Corporate Centre	VIVA Yonge (35): Richmond Hill/Langstaff Gateway - Newmarket Centre
Yonge (17): Finch - Richmond Hill/Langstaff Gateway	Sheppard East (36): Don Mills Station - Meadowvale Road/Scarborough Centre
New Transportation Corridors	Scarborough RT (37): Kennedy Station - Malvern
Highway 410 Extension (42)	Hwy 2 (38): Scarborough Centre - Downtown Oshawa
Highway 427 Extension (43)	Brock Road (39): Downtown Pickering - Hwy 407
Highway 404 Extension (44)	Oshawa Connector (40): Oshawa GO - Downtown Oshawa
Highway 407 East (45)	BRT on Controlled-Access Expressway in Mixed Traffic with Congestion Management
	Hwy 407 (41): Halton - Durham
25-Year Plan	
Express Rail	Other Rapid Transit (BRT / LRT / AGT)
Mississauga (46): Cooksville - Union Station	Hamilton Mohawk (49): Centre Mall - Ancaster
Richmond Hill (47): Richmond Hill/Langstaff Gateway - Union Station	Brant (50): Fairview GO - Dundas Street
Subway	Trafalgar/Main (51): Downtown Milton - Hwy 407
Downtown Core (48): Bloor West - Downtown - Danforth	Steeles AcceleRide (52): Lisgar GO - Hwy 427
Transportation Corridors Under Study	Hwy 427 North (53): Pearson Airport - Queen Street
Niagara-GTA (61)	407 Transitway (54): Hwy 427 - Markham Centre
GTA-West (62)	Steeles (55): York University - Milliken GO
	VIVA Yonge North (56): Newmarket Centre - Green Lane
	McCowan (57): Markham Centre - Scarborough Centre
	Scarborough - Malvern (58): Kennedy Station - Malvern
	Steeles/Taunton (59): Milliken GO - Downtown Oshawa
	Simcoe (60): Downtown Oshawa - Hwy 407
Notes	
* Details such as routing, technology, stations, and level of service are subject to further analysis, such as the project-level Benefits Case Analysis that Metrolinx will carry out in partnership with municipalities and transit agencies.	
† Routing on either CNR or CPR corridor to be assessed through the environmental assessment process	

Source: Excerpted from Metrolinx (2008: 96)

Map 10: *Big Move*'s 2013 update



Source: Excerpted from Metrolinx (2013a)

As soon as the *Big Move* was released in 2008, the provincial government that had already approved almost \$750 million towards the Quick Wins projects, announced that it would commit an additional \$11.5 billion to begin its implementation (Metrolinx, 2008). When the interviews were conducted in 2014, there was about \$16 billion worth of transportation projects being built in the GTHA, primarily in new LRT and subway extensions (more on this in the next chapter) (Metrolinx, 2013b: 2).

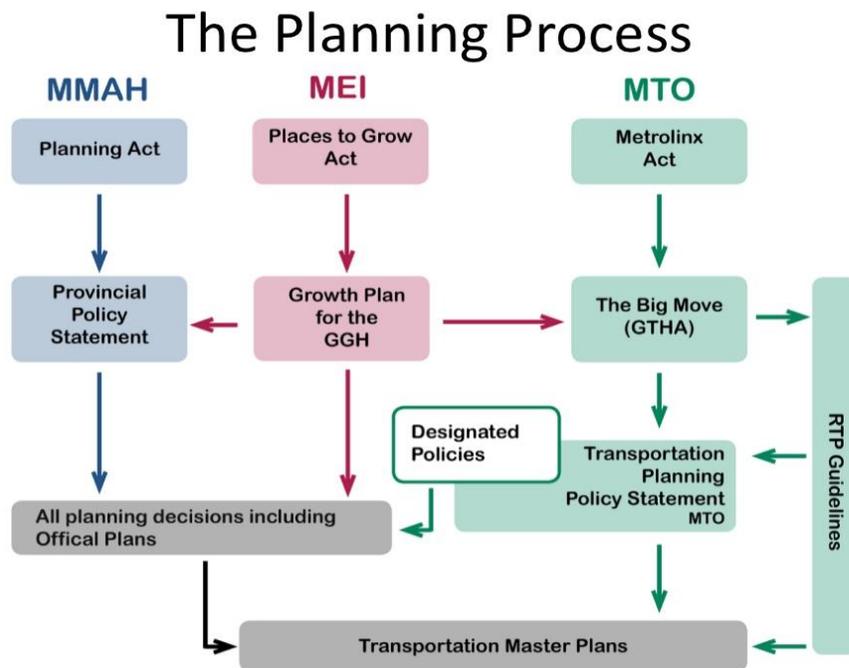
In terms of implementation, Metrolinx relies on funding and voluntary cooperation from the regions and the municipalities to implement the *Big Move*. As opposed to the *Greenbelt Plan* and the *Growth Plan* that are imbedded in the Provincial Policy Statement (PPS), the provincial government has not yet adopted a policy statement regarding transportation, as enabled by the *Metrolinx Act* (Government of Ontario, 2009a) (more on this in the next chapter). Without a Transportation Planning Policy Statement (TPPS) or a legal status, the compliance with the *Big Move* at the municipal and regional level is voluntary, with Metrolinx relying on transit investments as a principal source of leverage (Interviews 3 & 12). The Province is the main source of funding, although the municipalities are asked to contribute as well sometimes, mostly in terms of operating costs. Sometimes the federal government contributes to a third of the capital costs (Interview 10).

Administration and Enforcement

Administratively, the *Greenbelt Plan*, the *Growth Plan*, and Metrolinx are under the responsibility of different units and ministries within the provincial government. The Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing is the lead land use planning ministry at the provincial level, because it oversees the implementation of the *Planning Act* and all its associated regulations. The Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing develops a lot of the land use policies, some

of the provincial plans and policy statements, and is responsible for approving the regional official plans and making sure they conform to provincial policies (the regional municipalities are, in turn, the approval authorities for municipal plans). The Greenbelt Council and the *Greenbelt Plan* are also under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (MMAH), whereas the Growth Secretariat and the *Growth Plan* are under the responsibility of the Ministry of Infrastructure (previously named Ministry of Energy and Infrastructure [MEI in Figure 4]). However, the MMAH actually helps the Province implement the *Growth Plan* on behalf of the Growth Secretariat by approving the official plans (Interview 11). As for Metrolinx, it is under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Transportation (MTO). Figure 4 is showing the official administrative planning process from the ministries down to the municipalities.

Figure 4: Planning process in Ontario



Source: Excerpted from Metrolinx (2012)

As mentioned previously, the TPPS has not been adopted by the Ministry of Transportation, so the municipalities' Transportation Master Plans do not have to be consistent with the *Big Move*. However, the municipalities' Official Plans and Transportation Master Plans must be amended to conform with the *Growth Plan* requirements and the PPS. When asked about the motivation behind the fact that each of the plans was under the responsibility of a different agency or ministry, respondents mentioned both the expertise factor and some sort of checks-and-balances dynamic:

So I think of it is part, probably some political agendas that led to different ministries getting carriage over different plans. Part of it I think was seeing as a better fit so we have source water protection plans, we have the Lake Simcoe protection plan. And they are seen as really water base plans and so they felt the Ministry of the Environment at some level should be leading those. The *Growth Plan* was a lot about aligning growth with infrastructure and so they kind of thought the Ministry of Infrastructure might do it. I think there was a concern as well, they would create this mega super uber powerful ministry if they put them all into one and from our resource perspective, you'd have to make it a lot bigger. So those are probably some of the reasons. (Interview 10)

There was a view at the time that the Ministry of Municipal Affairs because it has the approval responsibility for municipal official plans that it is the regulator. So, there is a view that the policy and the regulation should be separate because we wanted to have a little bit of independence and autonomy in terms of saying the policy and then, you know, the folks that implement it. (Interview 11)

Some level of horizontal coordination occurs through the One Window Provincial Planning Service for land use related matters, a process institutionalized in 1998 that streamlines and coordinates input from eight ministries with a stake in land use (Ontario Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, 2014). Despite the One Window Provincial Planning Service, the division of responsibilities can be challenging in practice as it creates some tensions between ministries with different objectives (Interview 10), as well as some confusion for the stakeholders when they receive different signals from different agencies for the same transportation project (more on this later).

If a municipality fails to conform to the PPS or its Official Plan by approving a development in a protected area, for example, the decision can be appealed to the Ontario Municipal Board (OMB), the province's quasi-judicial body for municipal affairs. The OMB is an institution with few counterparts in North America (Frisken, 2001: 518). Created in 1906, it is an independent adjudicative tribunal with citizen members appointed by the Province that conducts hearings and makes decisions on matters that have been appealed to the OMB under certain provincial legislation, most frequently the *Planning Act* (Government of Ontario, 2014). The OMB thus hears the appeals of the municipal amendments that bring the municipalities' Official Plans in conformity to the *Growth Plan* and the *Greenbelt Plan*, as well as other related appeals. For example, the OMB might hear the appeal of developers who challenge a municipal zoning decision and allow them to build at a higher density. The OMB also hears developers' appeal and overrules regional decision on land conversion and the region's Official Plan, forcing the regions to convert a certain amount of farmland to urban land, for example. It also hears the appeal of municipalities challenging provincial modifications to their Official Plan.

Practical and Theoretical Implications of the Reform

Implications for Each Level of Government & Stakeholder

This section assesses the changes brought by the 2005-2006 reform on the roles and responsibilities of each governmental actor and stakeholder. It does not address the implementation of the plans and the impacts of the reform on the planning process, transportation investments and land use decisions, but rather sums up the concrete implications of the growth management strategy (the *Greenbelt Plan* and the *Growth Plan*) and the creation

of Metrolinx for various actors in terms of decision-making, financing, planning, consulting, etc., and whether the reform serves their strategic interests or not (stakeholders' reaction and attitude towards elements of the reform gives a hint to that). This section also helps to understand the political dynamic or the position of each actor in the regional system and the relationship among them. The implications for the federal, provincial, regional and municipal governments are first presented, followed by other stakeholders including developers, builders, commuters, and citizens/voters. A summary of the changes in the institutional framework brought by the 2005-2006 reform follows.

Federal (Government of Canada)

In Canada, the federal government plays a minor role in urban affairs, and the reform has no direct or observable impact on its involvement in the regional scene. The federal government currently intervenes in public transit through its infrastructure investment strategy called *New Building Canada Plan*, which dedicates a total of \$53 billion to provincial and municipal infrastructures up until 2023 (Infrastructure Canada, 2013). Although the federal has considerably increased its investments in infrastructures in the last decade (Champagne, 2013), there is no dedicated stream of funding for public transit and no urban transport policy. The direct interventions of the federal government in municipal affairs has been historically episodic because some provincial governments consider that urban affairs does not fall within the federal government's field of legislative authority (Kitchen, 2013: 81; Young, 2013: 27).

The conservative government of Prime Minister Stephen Harper, elected for the first time in 2006, then reelected in 2008 and 2011, did not directly intervene in urban affairs. Land use being a primary responsibility of the provincial level, it is not a federal jurisdiction *per se* in the constitution, and it is not something that the Harper government wanted to get involved

in in terms of policy (Interview 15). In terms of urban transport, there are general infrastructure programs, but those federal contributions are justified by matters of economic competitiveness and are not framed by any transportation plan or policy. This position is different from the previous liberal governments of Prime Ministers Jean Chrétien and Paul Martin which were more interventionist and more directly involved in urban and regional affairs. Prime Minister Paul Martin introduced the *New Deal for Cities and Communities* in 2004-2005, which dedicated half of the federal gas tax revenues to municipalities to support environmentally sustainable infrastructure projects, including public transit (Young, 2013). In order to receive their share of the gas tax fund for sustainable municipal infrastructure, each municipality was required to develop an integrated community sustainability plan that demonstrated how the investments would contribute to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and environmental sustainability in the region. Although those plans still exist, the sustainability link was reduced and the requirements were diluted to the point where those plans are, as one respondent puts it, “pretty much gathering dust on the shelf” (Interview 15). Nonetheless, the conservative government has made the federal gas tax transfer fund permanent and indexed to inflation (Infrastructure Canada, 2013; Kitchen, 2013: 84).

In Toronto, the federal government is thus considered as a funding partner in specific transit expansion and enhancement projects of GO Transit and the TTC, which are beneficiary of the *Canada Strategic Infrastructure Fund*, the federal grant program that preceded the *Building Canada Plan* (Transport Canada, 2011). In fact, when the federal government contributes to major transit capital projects, the sum usually represents a third of the cost, the other two thirds being honored by the Province and the municipalities (Interviews 8 & 10). The upcoming Scarborough subway extension, which will be discussed later, is an example of

a project that will be funded in a three-way partnership among the federal, the provincial and the local governments (Interview 14). Overall though, regional and local actors have fewer connections with the federal level of government than with any other actor, and those interactions are limited to matters related to the gas tax fund, the infrastructure fund, the federal environmental assessment approval requirements, or other federal matters such as fisheries or border crossing issues (Interviews 3, 8 & 12). Because the 2005-2006 reform was regional in nature, it seems to have had no direct or indirect impact on the federal level. Some respondents actually think that a greater federal involvement in public transit and regional transportation in general, especially in terms of funding, is the missing link in the Canadian urban system (Interviews 1, 14 & 15)

Provincial (Government of Ontario)

Because the 2005-2006 reform of regional planning institutions was enacted by the government of Ontario through three pieces of legislation, the Province carries the burden of administration, enforcement and evaluation of the growth management strategy, in addition to having a new regional transportation agency under its purview. However, although the reform has important implications for the provincial government, it has designed the new planning framework to its advantage.

As seen in the last section, the provincial land use regime is sort of a cascading system that the reform has not substantially changed. The Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing is the approval agency of regional official plans, which have to conform to provincial policies, and the regional municipalities are, in turn, the approval authority of local official plans, which have to adequately reflect the regional plans as well as provincial policies (Interviews 10 & 11). The only change is that the regional municipalities and the local governments have new

land use plans and policies to conform to, meaning that the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing has a number of official plans and amendments to plans to review, comment and approve in a relatively short span of time. But despite the fact that the *Greenbelt Plan* and the *Growth Plan* come with their bureaucratic burden, the weight of implementation is essentially carried out by the municipalities who have to bear the cost of growth (more on this below). And on the plus side, the prosperity of the region benefits to the Province, mostly through income tax and sales tax revenues (Interview 2).

On the transportation front, the Province created Metrolinx to manage its renewed commitment to transit infrastructures. The bureaucratic burden here is essentially carried by Metrolinx, which has the mandate of planning regional transportation and advising the Minister of Transportation this issue. The reform has also brought an important financial component by pressuring the provincial government to commit financially to regional transportation, which it did to the extent of \$ 13 billion for the first round of transportation infrastructure projects (Metrolinx, 2013b: 2). However, Metrolinx has allowed the Province to better control its investments, because the organization is accountable to the Province, as opposed to the TTC, which is technically a commission accountable to the City of Toronto that is more independent and that cannot be “muzzled” like Metrolinx can be (and this is even more true since Metrolinx board composition was changed to exclude local appointees [more on this later]) (Interview 1).

Regional (Durham, Halton, Peel and York Regions)

The regional municipalities (two-tiers Halton, Peel, York & Durham) and the local governments of the GTHA are the ones that are directly impacted by the reform. The regional municipalities must bring their official plan to conformity with the *Greenbelt Plan*, the *Growth*

Plan, and the PPS, and they also have to approve their municipalities' local official plan updates. In terms of transportation, the regional municipalities are impacted by the reform to the extent that the *Big Move* contains highway construction and higher-order transit projects on regional roads. Indeed, the regions are responsible for planning, designing, constructing and operating the arterial road network and thus a bulk of the freight movement, whereas local transit is either the responsibility of municipal governments, as in Halton and Peel, or the responsibility of the region, such as York Region Transit and Durham Region Transit. The regions are thus mostly concerned by the impact of the growth in transportation demand, transit development on regional roads as well as the flow of goods movement.

In terms of strategic interests, the regional municipalities are essentially pro-growth and pro sprawl, because they see it as a way to build revenues, although they also must incur some of the costs of the growth (Interview 9). The regions get their funding from development charges when new building permits are issued, and those funds are targeted for road widening, intersection improvements, etc. The regions are also getting money through taxes for state of good repair, for rebuilding and repairing existing roads. So although the regions somewhat benefit from the growth, they also bear the cost for the water and transportation infrastructure required to accommodate the growth. This cost-benefit imbalance is thus an important implication of the reform that is underlined by both regional municipalities and local governments in regional forums (Interview 2).

Regional councils being made of municipal council members weighted by population, the regional municipalities are the voice of municipal interests and the sort of the “sum of its

parts”¹⁷. However, this statement is not entirely accurate because the regions are also the theater of inter-local arbitration. This is observable when the local municipalities have to negotiate their portion of the projected population and employment growth that is allocated to the regional municipal level by the provincial government, for instance - a process that takes about a year to complete (Interview 3). In addition, regional and local mandates are sometimes not aligned and/or in conflict. For instance, water and wastewater long-range planning is done regionally, whereas the land use planning is done by the area municipalities, and often the goals are different and not aligned (Interview 2). However, as far as the growth management strategy is concerned, the interests of the regional municipalities and the local governments do seem to align in the sense that they both want from the Province a funding mechanism to offset the costs and balance the cost-benefits associated with the population and employment growth (Interview 12).

Municipal (City of Toronto, City of Hamilton, and 24 lower-tier municipalities)

Municipalities are the most impacted by the reform because they are responsible for land use planning and reviewing development applications, in addition to owning local roads and sometimes transit operators.

In terms of land use, municipalities’ strategic interest is directly related to their capacity to develop land and attract jobs and residents, with the exception of very rural localities who do not want to grow. As shown in Table 7, 38.7% of Toronto’s operating revenues comes from property taxes, a share that is even higher in suburban municipalities, where 53.6% of operating revenues comes from property taxes (whereas the provincial average is 44.5%). Overall, 75.6%

¹⁷ For a complete table of population and governance structure of each region and municipality in the GTA, see Kitchen (2013: 82).

of Toronto's revenues and 82.2% of suburban municipalities' revenues come from local sources, while grants from the provincial government represents 19.3% and 12.3% of Toronto's and suburban municipalities' revenues, respectively. Note that municipalities do not raise income tax and sales tax in Ontario.

The *Greenbelt Plan* has created some tension and conflict between the provincial government and the municipalities who had large portions of their areas included within the Greenbelt, because the municipalities essentially lost the ability to develop those lands and so their developable land mass has shrunk (Interview 3). As for the *Growth Plan*, some municipalities have expressed their discontent with the fact that they have to assume the costs of the growth, as mentioned previously. Some of the mayors were also unhappy with the fact that the Province did not designate any urban growth center within their jurisdiction (Interview 13). As for the intensification targets, the reaction varies depending on the municipality. For those who were already build up, like Mississauga and Toronto, the provincial requirements made densification more accepted, as it was going to happen anyway (Interview 3). For some other rural municipalities whose residents moved there or grew up there valuing nature, like Caledon, growth and intensification were not welcomed (Interview 9). With that said, the way municipalities are actually implementing and conforming to the *Greenbelt Plan* and the *Growth Plan* really shows how they operate and where their interest lay, because as one respondent puts it, "land use decisions are very market driven and very political" (Interview 2).

Table 7: Operating revenues in the GTA: Total, per capita, and distribution (2008)

	Central City—Toronto		Suburban Municipalities		Total for Greater Toronto Region		Provincial Total	
Total Revenue (000)	\$8,993,936		\$7,080,702		\$15,893,903		\$34,101,479	
Per Capita Level and Distribution	Per capita	% of total	Per capita	% of total	Per capita	% of total	Per capita	% of total
	\$	%	\$	%	\$	%	\$	%
Property taxes (including payments-in-lieu)	1,241	37.8	1,134	53.6	1,182	45.3	1,170	44.5
Income taxes	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Sales taxes	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Other taxes (land transfer & vehicle registration)	66	2.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	14	0.5
User fees	671	20.4	418	19.8	532	20.4	540	20.5
Licences, permits, fines, etc.	222	6.7	78	3.7	143	5.5	119	4.5
Other revenue	283	8.6	109	5.1	187	7.2	110	4.2
Total own-source revenue	2,482	75.6	1,738	82.2	2,043	78.3	1,954	74.1
Grants								
Provincial unconditional	41	1.2	17	0.8	27	1.1	77	2.9
Provincial conditional	593	18.1	239	11.3	398	15.3	437	16.6
Federal conditional	72	2.2	16	0.8	42	1.6	35	1.3
Transfers from reserves and capital funds	96	2.9	103	4.9	100	3.8	92	3.5
Total	3,284	100.0	2,114	100.0	2,611	100.0	2,637	100.0

Source: Calculated from Financial Information Returns, Ministry of Municipal and Housing, Ontario, www.cskonramp.mah.gov.on.ca/fir/ViewFIR2008.htm

Source: Excerpted from Kitchen (2014) (Emphasis added)

In terms of transportation, the establishment of Metrolinx and the development of the *Big Move* have important implications for the municipalities and Toronto in particular. Metrolinx is responsible for region-wide transportation planning and has the capacity to finance projects through the Province, but it does not own the streets and does not have a say in land use, whereas municipalities are responsible for local transportation planning, own the local roads and have the ability to control land uses, but have nowhere near the fiscal capacity of the Province. This new set up of mandate/capacity directly impacts the municipalities and their transit operators in a number of different but interrelated ways.

First, the fact that regional transit projects are a Metrolinx responsibility while local transit projects are municipal responsibility brings an issue about the integration of local transit with regional transit needs (Interview 15). Although regional projects might serve a regional purpose and be linked to a regional system, they also have to serve local needs and riders who make shorter trips (Interview 9). This tension between the regional role and the local role of transit is observable in the project design and construction phase, as in the case of the Eglinton Crosstown LRT and the Scarborough subway extension (discussed in the next chapter). In the same vein, the creation of Metrolinx also means that municipalities have to push their own transit priorities against the region's transit agenda (Interview 14). In addition, Metrolinx represents for the municipalities another actor to influence while pursuing their transportation agenda, in addition to the Province and the federal government. Although this is another level to lobby, Metrolinx's staff is more accessible than the Ontario Minister of Transportation or the Minister of Finance (Interview 3).

Second, what the creation of Metrolinx has fundamentally changed is that transit funds are not transferred to a municipality or a transit agency anymore, but rather stay under the

purview of the Province by way of Metrolinx. So again, creating Metrolinx has given the Province a direct oversight of transit money and construction projects (Interviews 1 & 14). Municipalities being the owner of the local roads, Metrolinx must obtain their permission and full collaboration before it can undertake transit development projects on local roads (Interview 1). From a local government standpoint, municipalities thus now have to collaborate and coordinate with Metrolinx for the design, the construction and the implementation of transit projects, in addition to dealing with their existing (sometimes conflictual) relationship with their own transit agency and roads department.

Third, the *Big Move*, but particularly the funding priorities within the projects of the *Big Move*, has created more tension among the provincial government, municipalities and transit authorities and a shift in the regional system, because most transit historically was in Toronto and now part of the funding is going to the regional transit systems (more on this later) (Interview 10).

Lastly, for the transit operators who are under the purview of the local council or the regional municipalities, they now have a new coordinating agency that has the mandate of providing a more seamless travel experience across transit systems (Interviews 12 & 14). Transit operators have to cooperate on working towards a universal electronic payment system (Presto fare card), as well as fare and service integration (Interviews 5 & 9). Depending on the financial cost that integration entail, transit authorities are more or less incline to cooperate (Interviews 3 & 5) (more on this is the next chapter).

In sum, the reform implies that the municipalities follow new land use requirements and imposes a new way of working regionally in terms of transit development and operations. However, despite those institutional changes, the true impacts on the reform can only be

assessed by looking at the planning processes, transportation investments and land use decision outcomes.

Other Stakeholders (Developers, builders, commuters and citizens/voters)

The “other stakeholders” category is divided into two sub-categories: 1) the developers and the builders’ community; and 2) the commuters and the “regular” citizens or voters. They are all impacted differently by various aspects of the reform. Whereas the growth management strategy impacts mostly the development community, the transportation aspects of the reform affect mostly the commuters and citizens/voters. With that said, there is also a relationship between the residents/homebuyers and the development community, and an interaction between market preferences, the growth management strategy, and the overall sustainability of the region.

Development Community

Land owners, developers and builders have a major stake in urban development because their profit (and existence) is based upon land development, construction and trade. They are the interface between the municipalities and market needs and preferences. The development industry was directly impacted by the growth management strategy and they were extensively consulted by the Province when the *Greenbelt Plan* and the *Growth Plan* were being conceived. Despite the fact that the Province is aware and responsive to their needs, some level of dissatisfaction was unavoidable as the growth management strategy forbids land conversion in the *Greenbelt Area*. Indeed, the Greenbelt has caused a number of contentious public meetings because some land owners and developers who had bought some rural properties on speculation with the hopes that they would be able to have them converted to urban, subdivided and developed were upset to see their plan aborted (Interviews 3 & 8).

However, on the flipside, the *Growth Plan* is essentially “pro-growth” and promotes some other type of development in some other areas. When the developers disagree with a municipal decision on land use, they can appeal it to the Ontario Municipal Board. As we will see in the next section, they resorted to this option more than once when municipalities brought their official plan to conformity to the new legislation (Interview 11).

It seems that the development industry is exerting a lot of influence over municipal governments, which secures its strategic interests. As one respondent describes in the following quote, the industry uses contributions to municipal election campaigns to ease development approvals:

My biggest fear, in all of this (...) is that in spite of all the good works and the plans that are prepared at the regional and municipal levels, the very fact that about 70% of all the municipal election campaign donations come from developers, to me, distorts the whole process to the point where municipal councils become indebted to the development industry and are tending to approve developments that are not consistent with the policy and with their plans because of that somewhat awkward relationship that results when you have financial contributions coming from certain industry into the political process. And nobody wants to talk about that, it's an unfortunate reality, but it definitely has impact on the way decisions are made and that whole relationship between municipal politics and urban development. It's the elephant in the room that nobody wants to talk about because they feel it's somehow taboo subject, but I think makes a huge difference to that what actually happens on the ground. (Interview 15)

Unsurprisingly, this situation of indebtedness is, in fact, only reported by one respondent. However, this does not mean that this dynamic is inaccurate because if it is a taboo, it is understandable why no one would want to talk about it, even under the seal of an anonymous interviews. Regardless of developers' contributions to local elections, the development industry has a lot of clout and do use their influence (Interview 11), because ultimately municipalities want the property assessment and the jobs, as in the case of an employment center located in a greenfield, for example (Interview 10) (more on this in the next chapter).

Commuters and Citizens/Voters

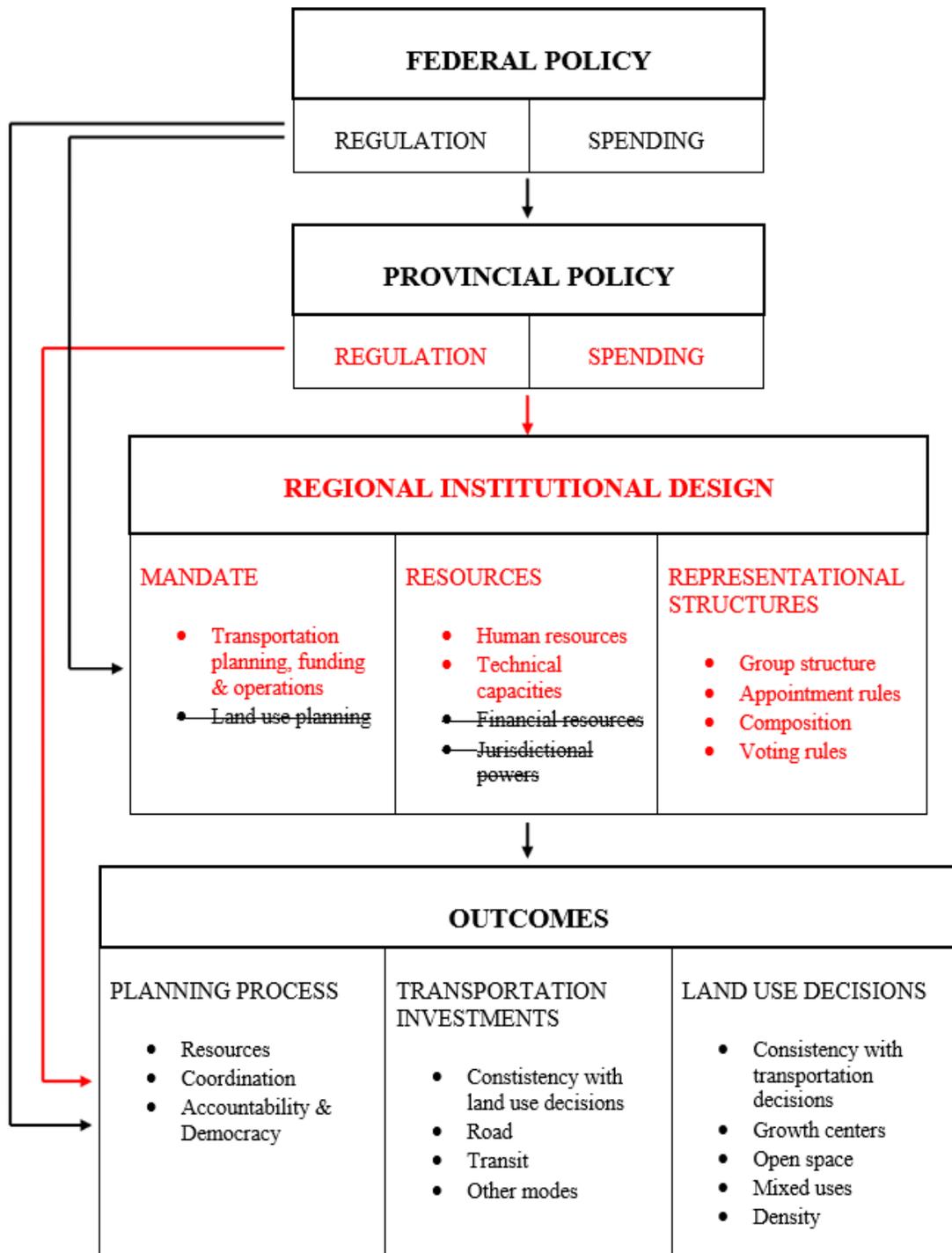
Because the reform is institutional in nature, it does not have any *direct and immediate* implications for plain Jane and the average Joe. Ultimately, better transit service could reduce the average commute length and overall travel experience, but the reform is too recent to have such impacts yet. However, aggregated preferences of individuals are reflected in market preferences, and the market has already started to organize itself in favor of land uses that are more supportive of transit. In the 1990s and 2000s, real estate agents were advertising suburban development based upon trees, green fields, and access to highways; now they are tagging how far from a GO station or a TTC station properties are. The length of the average commute and the amount of congestion have also pushed people to live closer to where they work, hence the condominium boom downtown and a general trend for transit oriented developments, which allow people to walk to work and have a less auto-dependent lifestyle (Interviews 6, 11 & 12). Suburban municipalities are also seeing a shift from conventional driving to transit, and also a sharp increase in the number of people per household, more secondary units per building, and more families under the same roof. This is explained by a combination of factors, including demographics, different cultures moving in, and also affordability (Interview 2). These shifts have an impact on transportation and other infrastructure, because they were not foreseen years ago (Interview 2). The ways people are making decisions and the resulting shift in the way the market is organizing are thus somewhat independent of the reform and along with it, contribute to the overall sustainability of the region (or lack thereof). As far as the “citizen/voter” is concerned, the accountability, democracy and efficiency of the reform are assessed at the end of this chapter, but let’s say for now that the high level of politicization of the transit issue has resulted in a “very confused electorate” (Interview 4).

Summary of Changes in the Institutional Framework

Figure 5 illustrates the changes in the institutional framework brought by the 2005-2006 reform. It is the same framework of analysis presented earlier, with the only difference being that it is displayed vertically rather than horizontally. The “collaborative process” explosion shape has also disappeared, because the decision-making process is not necessarily collaborative and does not necessarily happen between the “regional institutional design” and the “outcomes”, as explained in the next chapter. The elements presented in red are the elements of the institutional framework that have changed since the reform, and the elements that are ~~crossed out~~ are elements that are not part of the new regional institutional design.

As seen previously, the federal government has not changed its type of involvement in regional transportation; the funds dedicated to its general infrastructure grant program have increased and municipalities have now access to a portion of the gas tax, but because this was not part of the provincial institutional reform, it is not highlighted in red in the figure. At the provincial level, both regulation and spending have changed. The *Greenbelt Act* (2005), the *Places to Growth Act* (2005) were first adopted on the regulatory side, implementing new rules and standards in terms of regional and municipal land use planning and development. Then the *Metrolinx Act* was adopted in 2006, creating a new regional institutional design for transportation. On the provincial spending side, the funds dedicated to transit infrastructure also increased to finance a number of transit projects identified in the *Big Move*. The reform thus created a new regional institutional design for transportation planning, funding and operations.

Figure 5: Changes in the institutional framework in Toronto



“Regional institutional design” is highlighted in red because as seen in the previous “history” section, there was no regional planning entity before the creation of Metrolinx, whose mandate is solely tied to regional transportation (essentially planning, advisory and project management), and excludes land use. It has some human resources, technical capacities, but has no independent source of revenues and no jurisdictional powers besides the ones coming from with its transit operation division. Finally, its group structure is made up of three operating divisions (Presto fare card, UP Express and GO Transit) and six “enterprise-wide” divisions (rapid transit implementation, planning, finance, strategic communications, secretary and human resources). In terms of board composition and appointment rules, the board of directors is comprised of eleven “normal” citizens appointed by the Minister of transportation since 2009. Prior to 2009, board members were local and regional governments’ appointees, mostly local elected officials. As for the voting rules, resolutions require a simple majority to be adopted by the board of directors. Each director has one vote, including the chair of the board. In the event of a tie, the chair has a second or casting vote (Government of Ontario, 2009b). What this means is that prior to 2009, the mayors of the region were controlling the board of directors, whereas now, the board is controlled by the Minister of Transportation. The rationale for and implications of this change are discussed in the next chapter.

The impacts of these institutional changes on planning outcomes are not presented here because they are the subject of the next chapter.

CHAPTER 5

TORONTO PART II – ASSESSING THE IMPACTS OF THE REFORM

This chapter assesses, 10 years after its inception, the impact of the 2005-2006 reform of Toronto's regional transportation structures and land use planning regime on the planning process, transportation investments, and land use decisions using 15 semi-structured interviews, research reports commissioned by both the government and Neptis Foundation, as well as media reports.

The chapter is divided into two sections. The first section assesses the impacts of the reform on the planning process, transportation investments, and land use decisions, as well as its tradeoffs in terms of accountability, democracy, and effectiveness. The second section provides a summary of the Toronto case, highlights policy recommendations suggested by the respondents, provides a prospective outlook, and addresses some theoretical implications of the case of Toronto for the framework of analysis developed for this study.

Impacts of the Reform

At this point, it might be useful to restate the purpose and the research questions this study aims to answer:

- *How do new institutional structures aimed at integrating regional transportation and land use planning impact the planning process, transportation investments and land use decisions?*
- *Does the representational structure of these new institutions matter?*
- *Does the change in institutional design impact the relative political weight of the central city compared to the suburbs and higher orders of government?*

Does the new institution reinforce or weaken the role of the central city in the planning decision-making process? If so, what are the implications of this change in the power dynamics for regional sustainability?; and

- *What are the tradeoffs between accountability (responsibility & public scrutiny through transparency), democracy (representativeness, public debate and deliberation), and effectiveness (local and regional changes) that different types of institutional structures involve?*

Understanding the role of the causal mechanism linking institutional designs to decision outcomes requires qualitative studies looking at how policies and structures influence the integration and consistency of regional- and local-level transportation and land use decisions. The purpose of this study is thus double-folded: 1) to assess the impact of the reforms on the planning process, transportation investments and land use decisions; and 2) to understand the causal mechanisms of these changes, if any.

The strategy for collecting and analyzing the various sources of data was developed to reflect the reality on the ground and the types of data available. Consequently, the research plan uses two time-period (before and after the reform) and interprets patterns of data in the larger scheme of political dynamics. In addition, two independent plan evaluations were used as another source of data (one evaluating the *Big Move* and one evaluating the *Growth Plan*). Two other reports analyzing Metrolinx's finance and governance, commissioned by the provincial government, were put to use. The various impacts of the reform and causal mechanisms are thus assessed using primarily the following sources of data:

- 15 semi-structured interviews. Respondents were asked a variety of questions about the change in the institutional design and its impact on the decision-making process. They

were asked if transportation decisions were more coherent with land use decisions, and vice-versa, if there was a growth in TOD or in transit investments since the reform, and whether they think those changes could be attributable to the reform or not. Respondents were also asked to provide concrete examples (evidence) supporting their perceptions. The complete list of questions is available in Appendix C.

- Two research reports commissioned by the Neptis Foundation, an independent foundation located in Toronto that “conducts and disseminates nonpartisan research, analysis and mapping related to the design and function of Canadian urban regions.” (Neptis Foundation, 2014b). Neptis Foundation’s research projects are subject to peer-review by leading scholars or specialists, and the organization is relying on the professional opinion of a group of well-known experts in the Toronto region (see <http://www.neptis.org/researchers>).
 - The first report that is used is a *Review of Metrolinx’s Big Move*, prepared by Michael Schabas¹⁸ (2013). This report estimates the costs and benefits for each Metrolinx projects and as a package using data from Metrolinx and the TTC, and making assumptions where information is unavailable.
 - The second report that is used is *Implementing the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe. Has the Strategic Regional Vision Been Compromised?*”, prepared by Rian Allen and Philippa Campsie¹⁹ (2013). This report examines

¹⁸ Michael Schabas is a partner at FCP, a consultancy based in London, England. Borned and raised in Toronto, Schabas has been involved in planning, funding, and operating bus, LRT, ALRT, subway, and commuter rail in Canada, the USA, Australia, Germany, Nigeria, and Britain. For further details see www.fcpworld.net and www.schabas.net. (Schabas, 2013:7).

¹⁹Both are professional planners and researchers for Neptis.

how the *Growth Plan* has been implemented by municipalities since its adoption by tracking land consumption.

- To assess the effectiveness of the reform, I also rely on to two other reports addressing both Metrolinx's governance structure and transportation investments.
 - The first report is *Metrolinx Investment Strategy* (Metrolinx, 2013b), mandated by the provincial government, which includes proposals for investment tools to support the implementation of the *Big Move* as well as recommendation for proposals to integrate transportation, growth, and land use planning and for maximizing the value of investments.
 - The second one is the final report of the Transit Investment Strategy Advisory Panel, titled *Making the Move: Choices and Consequences* (2013). This panel of experts was appointed by the provincial government to review Metrolinx's *Investment Strategy*, engage with the public, and recommend how transit should be funded.

By validating or complementing the respondents' claims, these documents help assessing the impacts of the *Greenbelt*, the *Growth Plan*, Metrolinx and the *Big Move* on sustainability planning, more specifically on the planning process, transportation investments and land use decisions, as well as other elements related to the regional governance and political dynamic.

Impacts on the Planning Process

Has the reform improved or worsened the quality of the regional planning process? Has it improved the amount of human resources and/or financial resources dedicated to planning? Is there better horizontal collaboration or coordination among regional stakeholders, vertical

collaboration or coordination between levels of government, and better relationships or improved cooperation among different units of the same government? Has the reform improved accountability (responsibility and transparency) and democracy (representativeness, public debate and deliberation)?

In theory, the reform changed the planning process in the sense that the provincial government took over the mandate of regional land use planning and delegated to the municipalities the task of implementing it by giving them two years to conform to the *Growth Plan*. In terms of transportation, the reform instituted a Metrolinx, a new organization in charge of regional transportation planning. At first, the agency was controlled by the municipalities who collaborated in producing the *Big Move*. The provincial government then regained control of Metrolinx when it replaced the board of directors by its own appointees (more on this later). Overall, the reform thus created two new planning processes: one for land use planning and one for transportation planning. Although the processes are separated and operate within their own framework, they are integrated in the sense that the regional transportation plan has to be consistent with the *Growth Plan*. What are the respondents thinking about the impacts of the reform on the process of planning and its various aspects?

Perhaps the first and one of the biggest impact the reform had was to re-establish a regional planning process, which had been non-existent in recent years. As seen in the chapter introduction, there was no organization responsible for regional transportation and land use planning at the time of the reform, and there was no regional transportation plan or regional land use plan. Zoning and land use decisions were made by municipalities in accordance with their Official Plan, subject to the regional municipalities and the provincial approvals, and transportation investment decisions were made by sponsoring agencies (the province, the

municipalities and the transit agencies) with no coordination at the regional level. Now the province is in charge of regional land use planning and Metrolinx, under its purview, is responsible of regional transportation planning. The very fact that the reform established a planning process and led to the adoption of two regional plans is seen as a positive aspect by the respondents (Interviews 3, 8 & 9). The reform has contributed to a real shift in mindset, a shift in the “zeitgeist”, which makes intensification and development supportive of transit more accepted (Interviews 2 & 7). In addition, the *Growth Plan* and the *Big Move* elevated the Province’s ability to comment on municipalities’ land use decisions (Interview 10). The consequent financial engagement of the Province in transportation infrastructure also gave credibility to the planning process. As one respondent puts it:

I think, after the growth plan, there was a lot of pushback by municipalities and development industry that said, “Okay. So you've done the right planning/policy but you haven't put your dollars where your mouth is.” When the *Big Move* came out, when it was completed and when the government immediately committed to invest in it, people sat up. Because I think up until then, they were sitting back to kind of say, “Yeah, yeah, yeah, another plan.” Because it's not like this is the first plan for transportation in this region, there have been many, many plans, none have actually manifest themselves into advancing into real projects. So when the government took this and then immediately went into alteration of the governance, putting and operating into Metrolinx and committing real dollars into real projects, people began to realize that, “Oh, they're serious.” (Interview 12)

As shown in the next sections, this change in the way municipalities and developers perceive the provincial planning initiatives has had some real implications on the ground. In terms of the integration of transportation and land use planning, although there are two different plans, they are somewhat integrated, and their very existence and the fact that they are accompanied by implementation mechanisms are a sign of improvement in and of itself. The following quote describes the general consequences of this shift in the planning framework on the local planning mind frame:

I think it's an evolution in that both the growth plan and the RTP have created a higher level of integration and awareness. I would say [the coherence of transportation decisions with land use decisions] happened faster as a result of those two documents. I don't think it would have been as integrated without them. So I think those two documents definitely have moved the yardsticks a lot farther and faster than we would have seen without them. (...) because one [the *Growth Plan*] requires conformity and speaks to the integration of land use and transportation and requires development to be more compact and transit supportive. The other one [the *Big Move*] supposedly is the infrastructure plan that supports it. So I think the two of them together have demonstrated the two land use and transportation planning have to be much more integrated. So I think things are definitely better than it would have been without them. (Interview 3)

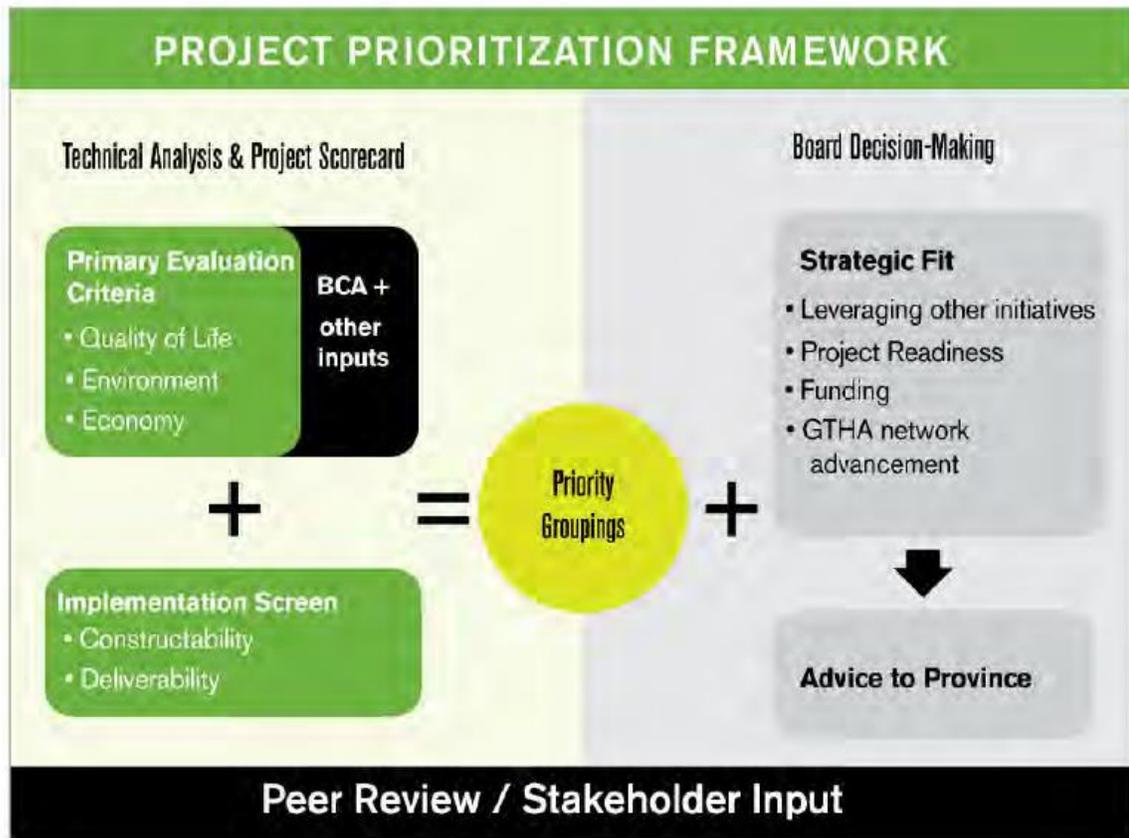
To be more specific on what exactly the reform changed in terms of planning process, the Province has taken the former land use regime, which included consultation, mechanisms for local implementation, provincial review and a system of appeal, and improved it to include a regional vision and a set of planning requirements within the *Growth Plan*, which is subject to a mandatory 10-year review.

In terms of regional transportation, the Province has created Metrolinx that instituted a brand new regional transportation planning process, which had been non-existent for the past years. As mentioned previously, the list of projects included in the *Big Move* is sort of a wish list built on several decades of planning (Interview 5). The priority projects that were recommended by the board of directors for the first wave of investments were selected based on a combination of considerations such as project readiness (completion of the environmental assessment), community support, funding availability (other than the Province) and other criteria included in the "business case analysis" (BCA) (Interviews 6 & 12). The BCA is a cost-benefit analysis that breaks down the return on investment of different technologies or options, assessing the merit, the need, and the deliverability of the projects, including how much money the project cost versus the ridership and development activity they might spur, as well as traffic and ridership patterns (Interviews 3, 10, 12 & 14). Despite these criteria, some

respondents directly involved in the development of the *Big Move* mentioned that the first rounds of projects were selected mostly on the basis of ready to go (Interview 13). The Eglinton Crosstown LRT, for example (presented in the next sub-section), had been thought about for 35 years and was a “strong wishlist” of the City of Toronto, particularly because of the way it is connected to the overall transit network (Interview 6).

Metrolinx has since attempted to refine its planning process by undertaking a BCA for any project more than \$50 million dollars and by trying to harmonize the BCA with the “Project Prioritization Framework”, which is a separate set of criteria that are more difficult to quantify and sometimes at a higher level, such as regional equity concerns, the strategic fit with policy objectives or elements like balancing the need for re-energizing the downtown core of an older, mature community versus providing a booming suburb with higher-order transit service (Interviews 4 & 5). In 2010, Metrolinx used this new “Project Prioritization Framework”, illustrated in Figure 6, to prioritize the remaining unfunded priority projects (Metrolinx, 2013b: 21).

Figure 6: Metrolinx project prioritization framework



Source: Excerpted from Metrolinx (2013b: 21)

Generally speaking, the creation of Metrolinx and its higher level of scrutiny have modernized the thinking around transportation and allowed the Province to move forward with its investment plans (Interviews 3, 5 & 8). The following quote describes this process of change:

So, certainly, we are investing in transit now. That's partly because the provincial government has made a priority of investing in transit [which has led to the creation of Metrolinx]. But, now, we have things like, you know, the prioritization process and all that to come forward with. Actually, when we say that we want to build a project, what does that mean? What does that involve? How should it be done? What should the phases be? All of that. So, we now have an organization whose job it is to do that analysis and bring that intelligence to the decision-makers to sort through. So, I think it's made a big difference. It's made it possible to take some fairly major steps forward on transit that

haven't been taken before. There's no way the City of Toronto would have been able to afford to build the Eglinton Crosstown Line. It was just too big of a project. And to suggest that the provincial and federal governments would provide the city with that much money for the city to just do as it would, I just don't see... It was just an 8-billion dollar project. It's just too big to not have accountability. So, this way, the provincial government has the funding and they are using their agency Metrolinx to build the project, and in doing so, the TTC and the City of Toronto are involved in every step of the way. (Interview 5)

However, although Metrolinx has developed a type of rational, evidence-based planning process, it only has an advisory role to the Minister of Transportation and Ontario Premier, which are the final decision-makers on transportation funding matters and follow their own decision-making and budgeting processes (Interviews 2 & 12). We thus must distinguish the transportation planning process leading to adoption of the *Big Move* and its recommendations from the decision-making process leading to the funding of projects and the implementation of the *Big Move*. As shown in the next section, the ability to plan has been improved with the creation of Metrolinx, but their ability to influence the implementation of the planning has been diminished.

In short, the reform did improve the planning process by bringing the regional land use regime to the next level and by creating a modern regional transportation planning framework that allowed the Province to move forward with a financial commitment in transportation infrastructures.

As for the cooperation/collaboration/coordination among stakeholders, it has been challenging as more occasions or need for interactions also means more opportunities for conflict and for jurisdictional rivalries to emerge.

In terms of horizontal collaboration or coordination among regional stakeholders, or intra-regional (GTHA) cooperation, the *Growth Plan* has forced the municipalities of the same regional municipality to negotiate among themselves the portion of the growth that was

allocated by the province. Besides that, the province being the entity that developed the *Growth Plan* in a quasi-unitary fashion (because remember, the previous initiative for regional cooperation, the GTSB, had failed), all the municipalities and the regional municipalities, GTHA-wide, do not have to cooperate on land use matters as they only have to implement the regional plan imposed by the province. So while the new land use planning regime increased coordination at the regional municipal level, it did not increase collaboration on a larger, GTHA-wide level. In terms of **transportation**, the regional municipalities and the mayors of Toronto and Hamilton collaborated effectively when they were part of the first iteration of Metrolinx board of directors (that was in place from 2006 to 2009). It was also an occasion for them to discuss informally about issues of regional interest. This quote describes this spirit of regional collaboration that was taking place at the time when Metrolinx's board was comprised of local appointees:

And I would say that Metrolinx worked very well at the beginning, when we had Toronto picking its own representatives, and we had the regional chairs. It was very good, I guess... we understood all this stuff. With great respect to the citizens that's been appointed, they have absolutely no knowledge whatsoever. Truly, because the regional chairs oversee their transit networks, and the Mayor of Toronto and the head of TTC oversee their transportation network. We understand it. We understand the funding commitments, we understand the funding implications, we are the experts in Canada on these issues. We had the regional chairs, the Mayor of Toronto, and the head of the planning committee, the head of the TTC, and the former chief planner of Toronto, that was a forum that was actually helpful because we could discuss these issues, and often the most important part of those meetings were at lunch, because we sit around with the regional chairs and we didn't meet regularly and we talked about... we might not even talk about transportation it might be other issues, but that made it worth while it made it work. The presence of the people who held those offices. (Interview 9)

In addition, the chair and the vice-chair of the initial board, who were the provincial appointees, helped the local appointees to find a path through their own self-interest and thus acted as a sort of mediator. Together, the initial board members were becoming such a strong voice in the region that the Province had to restructure the composition of the board (Interview 6 - more on this later). Since the local appointees were replaced by non-elected provincial

appointees, there is no forum for local political representatives to meet on regional transportation issues, which is creating all sorts of problems that has led to calls from both Metrolinx and the Transit Advisory Panel to reinstall local appointees on the board (Interview 5; Metrolinx, 2013b; Transit Investment Strategy Advisory Panel, 2013) (again, more on this later).

In terms of the vertical collaboration or coordination between levels of government, more opportunities to collaborate also mean more occasions to disagree but overall, the Province's oversight of land use and transportation planning has improved coordination among municipalities, mostly because there was very little coordination going on before the reform (Interview 15).

On the **land use side**, the adoption of the growth strategy and its implementation have caused and are still causing a lot of tension. The legislative/regulatory approach adopted by the provincial government has created conflict with municipalities and developers who disagree with the provincial requirements, their implementation, or have different interpretations of the legislation (Interview 11). As a result, a large number of municipal amendments to their official plans are appealed to the OMB (more on this in the section about the impact of the reform on land use decisions). However, the *Growth Plan* improved regional coordination because municipalities are now considering their population and employment projections with a sense of their implication at the regional level (Interview 14).

On the **transportation side**, the reform improved vertical collaboration to a certain extent. On the plus side, Metrolinx having the mandate of coordinating with all the transit agencies and stakeholders, a plethora of committees were set up, both on specific regional transit projects and issues of general concern (Interview 14). The agency holds quarterly

forums with all the planning commissioners of all the municipalities of upper and single-tier municipalities in the region, as well as a regular forum with transit operators (Interview 5). Those regular forums ensure a certain level of coordination and awareness of each stakeholder's activities and issues that are ongoing on both land use and transportation fronts (Interview 14). On a project by project basis, Metrolinx also has a comprehensive engagement strategy with municipal officials and stakeholders at the municipal level. There is a better level of regional coordination through all of the municipalities as a result of Metrolinx acting as an umbrella, the Downtown Relief Line transit project being a prime example of this improved coordination in planning (presented later in this section) (Interviews 8, 12, 14 & 15). In addition, Metrolinx gives the lower orders of government some level of certainty because the *Big Move* has some short- and medium-term planning initiatives that the regional municipalities and local governments can plan around when they do their modeling (Interview 2).

However, Metrolinx is having a hard time getting the collaboration of other transit operators in carrying out its mandate of fare and service integration and also in the planning and building phase of larger transit infrastructure projects. Any project that has financial implications for other transit authorities is obviously more contentious. On top of that, jurisdictional or inter-agency rivalries are coming in the way of regional coordination of transit planning, construction and operations. Initiatives like setting all the clocks to the exact same time, scheduling, defining a senior or a child, and ordering and purchasing are easier to agree on, but tougher issues like developing a regional transit traveler information system, and especially fare integration, which has important financial implications for transit operators, are more difficult to agree on (Interviews 5 & 12). The battle over Presto fare card, the difficulties

of integrating transit fares and the Eglinton Crosstown LRT, presented in the next section, were frequently cited as examples of challenges of vertical collaboration and coordination.

Metrolinx has increased planning resources and capacity in the region, but the fact that it is a relatively new organization means that it does not possess the expertise required to carry out the construction of transit projects on local streets. This “structural incompetence” of Metrolinx, as coined by one respondent, has led to inefficiencies in the form of project delays, and also caused a rift with the TTC who do not respect the judgement calls of Metrolinx (Interview 9). These inefficiencies are addressed in more details in the section about tradeoffs in terms of accountability, democracy, and efficiency. Generally speaking, the collaboration of Metrolinx, other transit operators, and municipalities on a project by project basis and the integration of land use concerns around mobility hubs are making the process longer and more complex, but ultimately, in theory, this should lead to better outcomes (Interviews 3 & 10).

Sub-Case 1: The Battle over PRESTO Fare Card and Fare Integration

The 6th Strategy of the *Big Move* is to implement an integrated transit fare system across the 10 transit agencies in the GTHA, and the deployment of PRESTO electronic fare card system is the first priority action towards achieving this objective (Metrolinx, 2008: 42). As of April 2015, PRESTO cards are used in Go Transit, Oakville, Mississauga, Brampton, York Region, Hamilton and Durham Region public transit systems, as well as in Ottawa’s OC Transpo and 15 select TTC subway stations (Metrolinx, 2015c; TTC, 2015).

The battle over the adoption of PRESTO electronic fare card and the issue of fare integration were mentioned by the respondents as an example of the hurdles facing Metrolinx when it tries to achieve cooperation with municipalities and other transit authorities, especially

Toronto and the TTC. It also shows the limit of collaboration, which stops at the line of financial commitment.

Toronto and the TTC were initially against the PRESTO fare card because 1) PRESTO readers would be too expensive to install on all the buses and subways and 2) they preferred to adopt an Open Standard electronic fare payment system (Interview 9; for more details, see Torstar, 2010). After an open battle in the media and also on Facebook (!), (Rider, 2010 and recounted by Steve Munro [2010a and 2010b]), the Province, Metrolinx and the TTC came to an arrangement where the subsequent releases of the PRESTO system will allow the use of additional devices, such as contactless debit and credit cards, mobile applications, etc. (Metrolinx 2015c). The TTC is currently accelerating the rollout of PRESTO (TTC, 2015).

TTC's reluctance to commit to PRESTO has led Metrolinx to pressure the provincial government to increase its authority, which resulted in the Province changing the composition of Metrolinx's board of directors. This sequence of events is recounted by Addie (2010):

Reflecting the problematic retrenchment of municipal political geographies, Metrolinx staff protested in early 2009 that the TTC was acting as a barrier to integrated regional transit development by not committing to the region-wide PRESTO transit fare-card. The Province subsequently heeded the regional body's calls for greater authority. In March 2009, Premier McGuinty restructured Metrolinx's board of directors – including the removal of Mayor Miller [the Mayor of Toronto at the time] – in an attempt to de-politicize the agency and move beyond the political impasse preventing transportation projects breaking ground. The move raised concerns in the Toronto [sic] that future transit/transportation development would threaten Torontonians' interests within the region (notably fears of subsidizing suburban transit riders) and jeopardize Transit City. (Addie, 2010: 12)

One of the respondents confirms that the PRESTO battle was an important contributing factor in the decision of removing the politicians off of the board of directors (Interview 9).

However, “fare policy is not technology” (Munro, 2010a) meaning that the question of fare integration is a much more complex and costly issue than implementing a single fare collection system across transit agencies. There are 10 different ways fares are collected in the

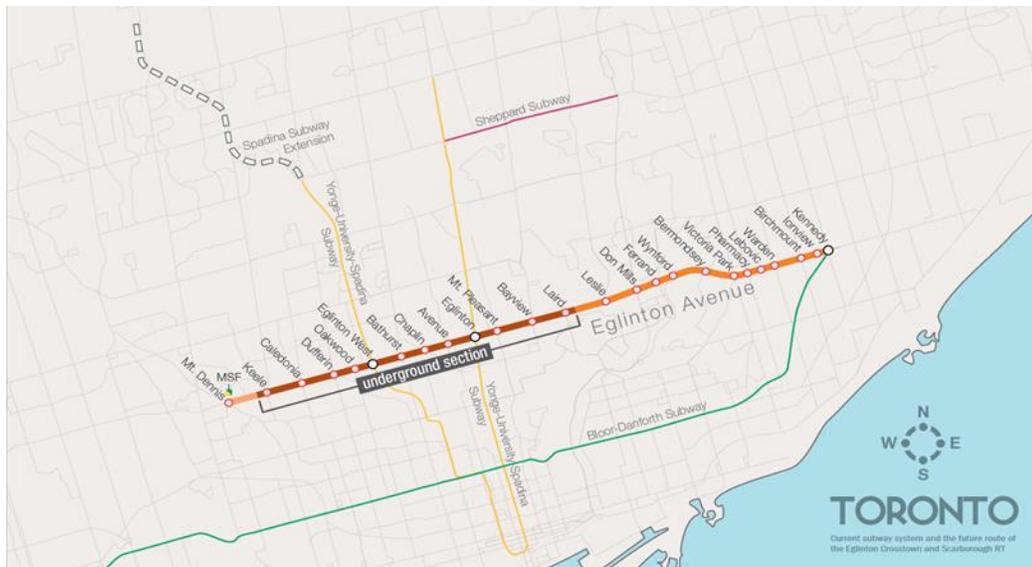
GTHA, with each municipality having the jurisdictional authority to set its own fees. There are co-fares and transfer arrangements between GO and suburban transit operators, but not with the TTC. The fare integration issue thus concerns the 905/416 cross-boundary trips more specifically, where riders commuting in and out of Toronto have to pay multiple fares for a single trip: one to the TTC and one to the other transit provider(s) (Munro, 2010a; Interviews 3 & 9).

In its latest update on fare integration, Metrolinx explains how it will assess the potential fare structures (flat fare, fare by mode, fare by distance, and fare by zone) in the GTHA context (Metrolinx, 2015d). Despite this planning and policy work, fare integration requires cooperation and coordination among transit providers and municipalities at a political level (not only at the staff level, as it is currently the case) (Metrolinx, 2015e; Interview 5). First because fare integration might have governance (legislative) implications, depending on the preferred new fare structure (Interview 5). Secondly, and most importantly, central to this issue of cooperation is who will subsidize the difference in total revenue if cross-border riders get a discount? As long as this question remains unanswered, Toronto's cooperation and fare integration is unlikely (Munro, 2010a; Interview 9).

Sub-Case 2: The Eglinton Crosstown LRT

The Eglinton Crosstown is a light rail transit (LRT) line being constructed along Eglinton Avenue in Toronto. Scheduled to be running in 2020, this 19-kilometer corridor project includes a 10-kilometer underground section (see Map 11). Representing a \$5.3 billion investment, the Crosstown is the largest transit expansion project in the history of Toronto (Metrolinx, 2015b). Technical specifications and project construction update reports are available at www.thecrosstown.ca.

Map 11: Eglinton Crosstown route



Source: Excerpted from Metrolinx (2015)

Because it is one of the first and largest projects funded and constructed by Metrolinx, the Crosstown was frequently used by the respondents to exemplify their thoughts on the changes brought by the creation of Metrolinx. More specifically, the respondents used the Crosstown as evidence of:

- Project selection based on project readiness;
- How the new chain of accountability has allowed the Province to re-invest massively in regional transit projects;
- The difficulties of compromising regional and local travel needs with the number of stops determining what types of commuters will be served;
- The inefficiencies resulting from Metrolinx’s lack of expertise;
- The struggles of interagency cooperation in construction/operation phases;

- How Metrolinx facilitate site/station planning and development;
- Regional-local-private sector coordination in station planning and development.

I am focusing on the last three bullet points here because they are mostly related to issues of coordination.

When Metrolinx started looking at the Crosstown, it did a real estate assessment of all the lands in and around the station to identify which of them had the highest potential for redevelopment, which were more difficult to redevelop and which ones were in between. Metrolinx then decided that its role would be, as a public sector agency, to serve as a catalyst force in those projects where public sector was needed to spur development (there is no intervention required for the private sector to invest in larger sites, which are naturals for redevelopment, and the smaller sites have very low potential for land value uplift). As Metrolinx goes through the procurement and developing the specifications of the Crosstown, the agency puts into the specifications the opportunity for the bidders to bring into their team's developers to redevelop lands that Metrolinx would have ownership of, or to work with adjacent land owners. In addition, Metrolinx has identified a series of other sites that it publicly owns and put a separate request for proposals (RFP) to see what interest there was by the development and community.

This has been a very complicated process because every condition along the corridor is different: very suburban, low densities, very high density, high value, and other emergent communities. The integration of development along the corridor is thus quite challenging and Metrolinx cannot wait for the developer to have a scheme to incorporate it into its projects. The challenge is trying to figure out how to future proof for development that comes at a later date without disabling Metrolinx's ability to deliver the Crosstown on time and on budget.

(Interview 12) Simultaneously, the City of Toronto is thinking about how to change the zoning and the planning to get TOD along the Eglinton corridor, particularly in and around stations. The City is trying to rezone those areas to get the kind of development which maximizes the Crosstown investment (Interview 11).

Besides the provincial level, the respondents did not comment on the coordination and cooperation among different units of the same government. For the **provincial government**, there are about eight key ministries that collaborate together on **land use-related matters**, but the lead organization responsible for land-use planning approvals is the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (Interviews 3 & 11). As mentioned previously, an operation protocol has been institutionalized, called the One Window Provincial Planning Service. The first protocol was signed by the deputy Ministers of each of those ministries in 1998, and the provincial government updated it twice, including early 2014. The One Window Provincial Planning Service has a hierarchical committee structure: the deputy Ministers' committee who are the senior executives, the assistant deputies' committee, the directors' committee and then a working-level committee. The policy direction comes from the top, the working level committee does most of the work and then everything is vetted through the directors and the assistant deputies to make sure that they are all aligned, not stepping on each other's toes and manage the tradeoffs or competing priorities. Recently, a group of deputy Ministers advocated for a more integrated decision-making model that integrates the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing's whole technology and GIS platforms which would be used collectively by all the ministries (Interview 10). By bringing executive level buy-in to that sort of collaboration, the One Window Provincial Planning Service is seen as a really shining example of horizontal

collaboration compared to other sectors, like social service or health care, which operate in a more “siloesd” fashion (Interview 10).

In terms of **transportation**, there is some evidence that the creation of Metrolinx brought more interconnections among different units of the provincial government (Interview 12). The Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing works collaboratively with Metrolinx from a land use piece, because the Ministry is always trying to drive the land use and the official plans that will support the *Big Move* in relation to transit stations and corridors in particular, and so they share all the modeling amongst each other (Interview 10). The Ministry of Transportation also works closely with Metrolinx, which is under its purview. However, as discussed later, Metrolinx was undermined or subdued by the provincial government on a number of occasions, which indicates that even though administrative units do work collaboratively at a staff level, it does not mean that the agency and ministries see eye to eye on an executive or political level. This observation is also valid when it comes to Metrolinx’s relationship with the regions, municipalities and transit authorities (Interview 2)

As for the **regional municipalities and local governments**, there is little indication that the elements of the reform have had an impact, either positive or negative, on the cooperation among units of the same local or regional government. In addition, the evidence is somewhat mixed. Generally speaking, the *Growth Plan* has facilitated cooperation among different administrative units as municipalities and regional municipalities had to make their official plan comply with the *Growth Plan* (Interview 2). However, this also brought some conflict between planners, who agree with the fundamental principles of the *Growth Plan*, and the council members and developers, who had different views and different interpretations of the legislation (Interview 11). In terms of **transportation**, there is even less evidence that the

reform improved collaboration among units of the same regional or municipal government because no TPPS was enacted by the provincial government, and so the municipalities are not subject to any legislative provision requiring them to conform to the *Big Move* (Interview 5). In the City of Toronto, for example, long-term transportation planning is undertaken by the City and Metrolinx. The TTC works closely with the City both in terms of rapid transit projects and also in terms of other operational measures. TTC has a surface transit priority network that they are developing with the city planning department for their bus system and streetcar system. Senior level staff from all agencies sit on Toronto's Executive Coordinating Committee, that is the city and TTC staff, and it includes the CEO of TTC, the city manager and deputy city manager, and chief planner from the city of Toronto (Interview 14). However, despite the Executive Coordinating Committee, intra-municipal coordination also faces some hurdles, as illustrated by this quote about the road department's historical lack of collaboration with the TTC:

Those places that have kind of strong partnership and collaboration internally between those working groups are unfortunately in the minority, and I mean...take the City of Toronto as an example, the relationship there is awful. The transit system and the municipal roads groups are constantly in conflict, and there's absolutely no working together going on there. Very bad. And part of it stems from the lack of leadership at City Hall, there is no incentive for them to work together. The Mayor [Rob Ford] isn't sending the right signals, and as a result, they have different views and...things as simple as the transit priority for buses and streetcars on the roads that's needed to make the service flow efficiently. The roads department has no interest in collaborating and cooperating with transit on this, their interest is in moving cars, not in moving buses, and if they don't have the political direction to do that, they're going to resist all the suggestions and the requests coming forward from the transit system (...). (Interview 15)

Because city operations are deeply entrenched in history and politics, it would take more than a provincial plan to change the working habits of municipal bureaucracies, which are all different and have their own histories.

Overall, the reform increased the occasions for communications and interactions between administrative staff, thus improving cooperation and coordination among stakeholders in terms of planning, especially at the regional (GTHA level). However, the reform improved the relationship among actors as far as planning and “easy wins” were concerned, financial implications and jurisdictional rivalries slowing the progress on other fronts, such as the *Growth Plan* implementation, transit project implementation, mobility hubs, and transit service and fare integration.

To summarize, the adoption of the growth management strategy and the creation of Metrolinx did improve the planning process by improving the regional land use regime and by creating a modern regional transportation planning framework which allowed the Province to move forward with a financial commitment in transportation infrastructures. In addition, the conformity requirements and the coordination mandate of Metrolinx enhanced cooperation and coordination among stakeholders in terms of planning, especially at the regional (GTHA) level. However, the reform improved the relationship among actors as far as planning and “easy wins” were concerned, because financial implications and jurisdictional rivalries slowed the progress on other fronts, such as the *Growth Plan* implementation, transit project implementation, mobility hubs, and service and fare integration. Those difficulties are addressed in the following sections, which are assessing the impact of the reform of transportation investments and land use decisions.

Impacts on Transportation Investments

As mentioned previously, the reform will be considered successful on the transportation front if spending decisions are coherent with land use decisions, that is if they are supportive of the existing built environment, denser land uses, or directed towards designated growth areas, for example. Generally speaking, transportation investment choices (road and bridges versus transit, expansion versus maintenance, infrastructure for cycling and walking) should be made as to minimize vehicle use and reduce VMT. As a reminder, Metrolinx was created to: 1) provide leadership in the coordination, planning, financing and development of an integrated, multi-modal transportation network that conforms with transportation policies of the *Growth Plan*; and 2) to act as the central procurement agency for the procurement of local transit system vehicles, equipment, technologies and facilities on behalf of Ontario municipalities (Government of Ontario, 2006b). Over time, Metrolinx's mandate grew to include three operating divisions, including GO Transit, in addition to its initial planning and coordinating responsibilities. According to the agency, the *Big Move* will double transit ridership by 2031, reduce the average commute time, and reduce highway congestion across the region (Metrolinx, 2008). The specific targets set out in the *Big Move* are listed in Table 8. In theory then, the adoption and implementation of the *Big Move*, as well as the fulfillment of Metrolinx's coordinating responsibilities, should produce more desirable, environmentally sustainable planning outcomes.

Table 8: Targets set out in the *Big Move*

	Today	By 2033	
	Our region	Current trends	With <i>The Big Move</i>
Annual transit customers	630 million	800 million	1.3 billion
Rapid transit route network	500 km	525 km	1,725 km
% of people commuting to work by transit, walking or cycling	26%	25.4%	39%
% of people who live within 2 km of rapid transit	42%	47%	81%
Annual greenhouse gas emissions from transportation, per person	2.4 tonnes	2.2 tonnes	1.7 tonnes
Average daily commute time	82 minutes	109 minutes	77 minutes

Source: Excerpted from Schabas (2013: 18)

Assessing the causal link between the creation of Metrolinx in 2006, the change in the planning process, the approval of the *Big Move* in 2008, transportation infrastructure projects selection, funding, construction and operation, and the achievement of sustainable outcomes is a difficult, if not impossible task. Metrolinx’s own *Big Move Baseline Monitoring Report*, released in 2013, indicates that there is minimal information about changes in performance indicators since the adoption of the *Big Move* in 2008 (Metrolinx, 2013c: 7) **What is more feasible, and what I intend to do here, is to explore the stakeholders’ perception of the changes brought by the reform and to assess the actual implementation of the *Big Move* along with the types of transportation projects that are funded, as to determine whether the reform helped creating a decision-making environment more susceptible of achieving sustainable outcomes.** For this, I am relying more specifically on the evidence provided by

the respondents and the independent evaluation of the projects included in the *Big Move* conducted by Michael Shabas (2013).

Respondents were asked directly if transportation investments were more coherent with land use decisions since the adoption of the reform, whether the reform changed the way transportation spending decisions were made and if so, whether it had an impact on the types of projects that were funded. The respondents answered using concrete examples of investment choices as well as examples of “non-decisions”, which are all *Big Move* projects. The respondents’ perceptions and professional judgements about the projects that are being funded (or not) are weighted against the projects’ cost-benefit evaluation conducted by Michael Schabas (2013).

Before getting into the specifics of individual projects, it is important to remember that overall, the *Big Move* and the process associated with its adoption is perceived by the respondents as a positive addition and contributed to a shift in the planning environment. The following quote represents this general feeling about the reform:

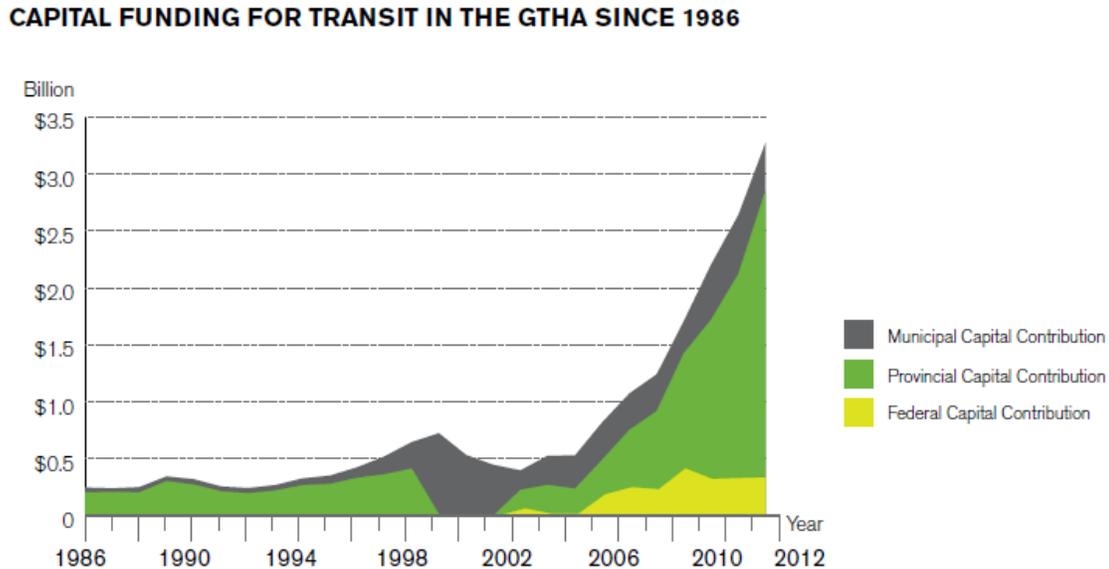
Interviewer: Do you think the creation of ML changed the way spending decisions are made? Or the types of projects that are funded (like road vs. transit, expansion vs. maintenance)?

Respondent: Yes, I think it did. I think that by creating a plan for a regional transit system that there was (*sic*) elevated expectations and understanding about how you could create a new way of getting people around. I think that that's an influential in terms of provincial policy. (Interview 13)

In addition, as seen in the last section, the creation of Metrolinx and the adoption of the *Big Move* have led to an increase in provincial spending for transportation infrastructure, particularly transit. The two charts below illustrate this increase in provincial spending. Whereas Figure 7 shows the evolution of capital funding for transit in the GTHA since 1986, marked by an increase of the federal but especially the provincial contribution since the

establishment of Metrolinx in 2006; Figure 8 illustrates the overall provincial infrastructure expenditures per sector, with an increase in transit infrastructures in the years following the construction of the *Big Move* in 2008.

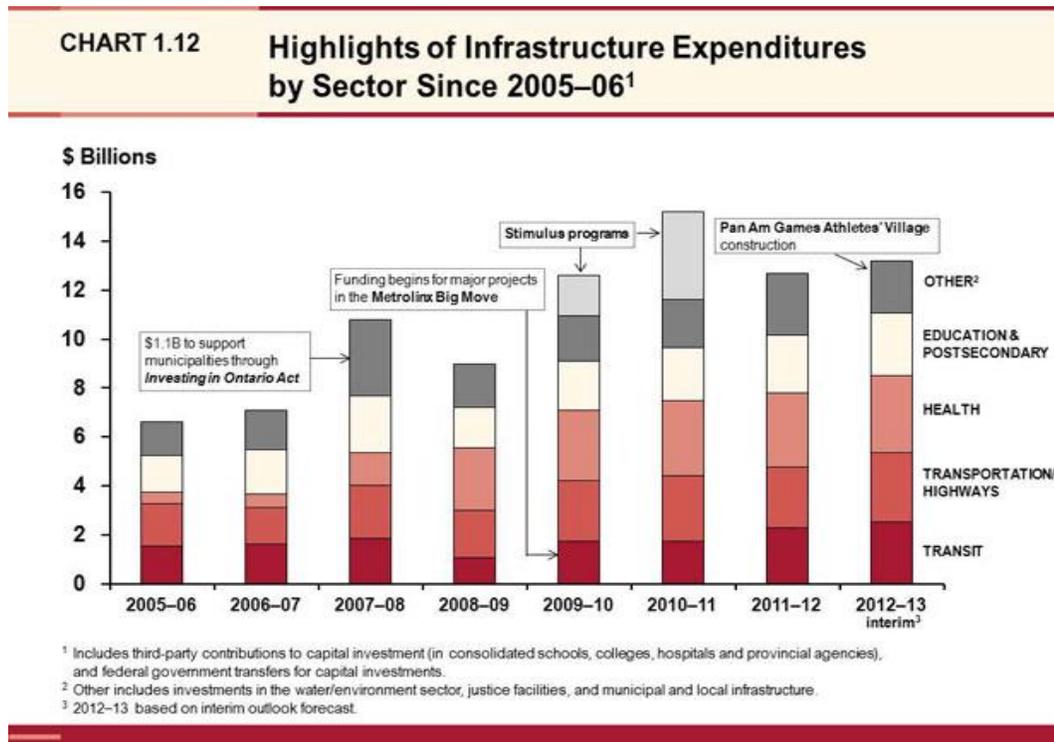
Figure 7: Capital funding for transit in the GTHA since 1986



Source: Excerpted from Metrolinx (2013b: 45)

There is currently \$16 billion worth of capital funding for transportation projects from the three levels of government, including over \$13 billion from the provincial government alone (Metrolinx, 2013b: 2). These sums are dedicated to the construction of the First Wave projects of the *Big Move* that are listed in Box 2. As for the Next Wave of projects, they would require an additional \$34 billion in funding, which Metrolinx’s Investment Strategy (2013b) and the Transit Investment Strategy Advisory Panel (2013) were attempting to find (more on this later). The First Wave and Next Wave of projects are shown on Map 12.

Figure 8: Ontario's infrastructure expenditures by sector since 2005-2006



Source: Excerpted from Ontario Ministry of Finance (2013)

Box 2 : Ongoing transit infrastructure investments in the GTHA

In June 2015, there was \$16 billion worth of capital funding for transportation projects proceeding:

- **Toronto-York Spadina Subway Extension:** An extension of Toronto's subway system from Downsview station to Vaughan Metropolitan Centre in York Region.
- **Light Rail Transit Projects:** LRT projects on Eglinton Avenue, Sheppard Avenue East and Finch Avenue West.
- **Union Pearson Express:** A rail link connecting Union Station with Pearson Airport, which will be completed in time for the 2015 Pan Am Games.
- **York Region Viva:** Bus rapid transit (BRT) service on bus only lanes along Yonge Street and Highway 7 corridors in York Region.
- **Union Station Revitalization:** The renewal and expansion of Union Station, the busiest transportation hub in Canada.
- **Mississauga Transitway:** A BRT system across Mississauga along Highway 403, Eastgate Parkway and Eglinton Avenue.
- **Brampton Züm:** BRT on Queen Street, Main Street, Steeles Avenue and Bovaird Drive in Brampton.
- **Georgetown South Project:** Infrastructure improvements along GO Transit's Kitchener rail corridor.
- **Durham Pulse:** The BRT system travelling across the Highway 2 corridor in Durham.
- **PRESTO card:** The regionally integrated fare card for the GTHA.

In addition, **GO Transit** was making significant infrastructure improvements across its extensive rail and bus network. These investments include the expansion of GO's locomotive fleet, new double-decker buses, new and expanded parking facilities across the rail network, new rail service to Kitchener-Waterloo Region and Guelph, the extension of the Bradford GO rail services to Barrie, and 30- minute service on the Lakeshore line. In addition, all day GO train service was planned to start on the Kitchener line by 2015 and is slated to be extended to the Barrie Stouffville, and Richmond Hill lines within the coming five years.

Source: Transit Investment Strategy Advisory Panel (2013: 46-47)

Map 12: Metrolinx first wave and next wave of projects



Source: Excerpted from Transit Investment Advisory Panel (2013: 55)

So among the list of 43 projects identified in the *Big Move*'s 15-year plan in 2008, at least nine of them are funded or under construction, totaling \$16 billion. In its *2013 Big Move Plan Update*, Metrolinx has removed projects from the 15-year and 25-year lists, moved projects from the 15-year plan to the 25-year plan, moved another project from the 25-year plan to the priority plan, and also added new projects to the lists. So what about these projects?

Have the rational, evidence-based recommendations of Metrolinx led to more desirable investment choices from a sustainability standpoint?

The evidence collected clearly indicates that the evidence-based planning process instituted by Metrolinx has been “hijacked by the [provincial] political process” (Interview 5). Although the viewpoints on this vary, all the respondents are pointing to political interference from every level of government at all stages of the planning process, including project selection but also fare policy, service levels, technology, routes, etc.. This observation is also noted in Schabas’ *Review of the Big Move*, which was commissioned when it seemed like “the *Big Move* was going to be derailed by political considerations” (2013: 3). This is especially true for the provincial government and former Minister of Transportation Glenn Murray, who once told the *Globe and Mail* that he was unconvinced the planning process has been rigorous enough to be final and considers the Big Move’s proposed routes as “placeholders” (Moore, 2013).

Some respondents perceive this situation as being acceptable: “because [the politicians] are the people we’ve empowered to make decisions on how we spend our tax dollars, they are supposedly representative of the people in their constituency and that’s the system we operate in” (Interview 3), “I’m not the one elected to make decisions for the Province of Ontario” (Interview 12); while a lot of them despise it: “it shouldn’t be about who’s the fastest, the biggest, or the most powerful” (Interview 13), “it’s becoming a laughing stock situation, you’re doing this study at a time of major political failure” (Interview 4). As for Metrolinx, it would like its plan to be “politician-proof”, or it would be too easy to change it again and again (Moore, 2013). Regardless of moral and normative judgements, the fact is that Metrolinx’s

professional opinion and evidenced-based recommendations were undermined on a number of occasions since the *Big Move* was adopted in 2008, two of which will be the focus on inquiry.

Before presenting two (sub) case studies that represent the transit infrastructure projects which were most frequently referred to by the respondents as evidence of political interference, let us take a look at the general conclusion of the Schabas report to see whether Metrolinx's projects have the potential to fulfill their promises and reach the *Big Move* goals, both individually and collectively. Schabas used data from Metrolinx and the TTC to estimate the total cost of each project, including capital and operating costs and benefits, the number of new riders the project would attract to transit, the percentage of the costs would be recovered through farebox revenues, the net financial effect (or the "funding gap" if negative), and the economic benefits of the project, including time savings to motorists using less congested roads. These calculations generate key indicators, such as "net costs", "net incremental revenues", "net benefits", "benefit/cost ratio", and "net cost per new transit rider". If the "benefit/cost ratio" is less than 1.0, the author recommends that the project should not go ahead without modifications. In addition, the report identifies a series of opportunities to optimize transit services and increase value for money that Metrolinx has overlooked (Schabas, 2013: 6-9). The conclusions of the report are summarized in the map and figures below, which include an explanatory text at the bottom. Although Schabas' assessment does not take into account the history of the projects or politics, it does provide an independent, quantitative evaluation of the transit projects identified in the *Big Move*.

Map 13 illustrates First Wave and Second Wave projects and shows that not all of them represent good value for money, according to Schabas evaluation. Among the nine First Wave projects that are currently funded, three of them should not proceed without modifications

(Eglinton Crosstown LRT, Sheppard East LRT, and Scarborough RT Replacement and Extension), and one of them should not proceed at all (Finch West LRT). In addition, the Downtown Relief Line should not be included in the Next Wave of Projects. Note that the GO commuter rail, BRT, and other projects located in the fast-growing, outer suburbs usually represent good value for money, partly because they represent a greater potential for attracting a large number of new transit riders onto the system.

Map 13: Schabas' review of Metrolinx's *Big Move*

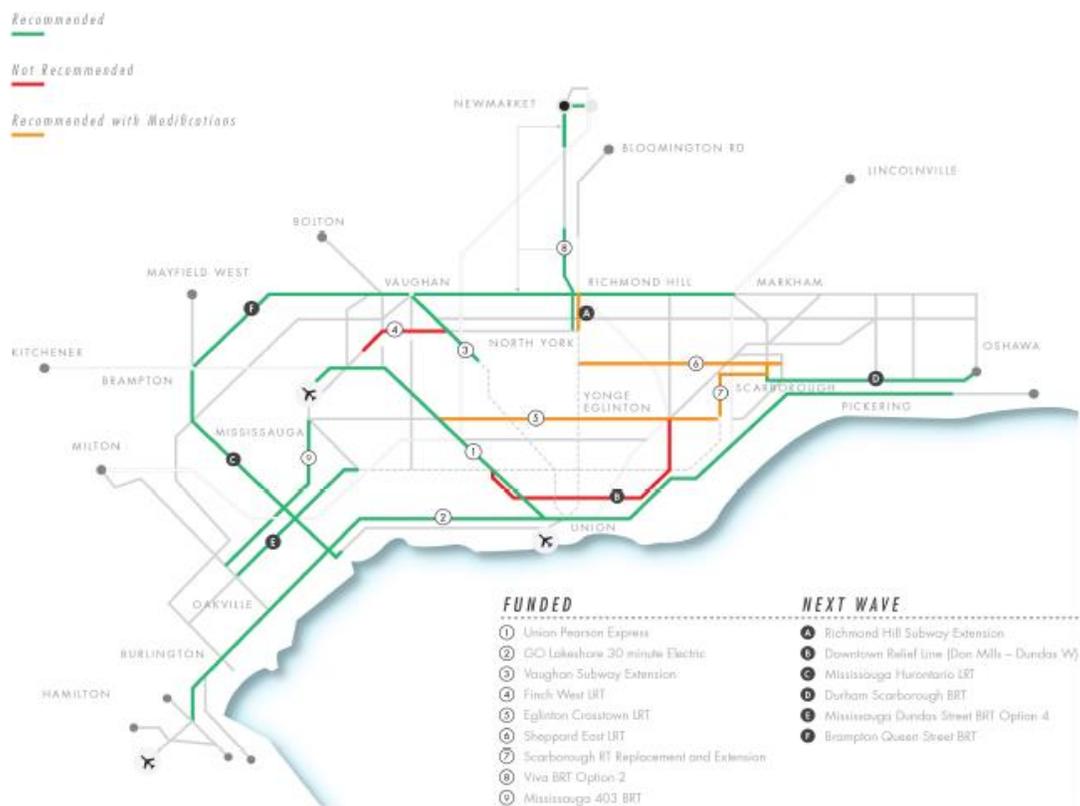


Figure E1: The map summarizes transit projects currently funded or included in Metrolinx's "Next Wave." Green shows projects that represent good value for money. Orange indicates projects that can be modified to deliver better value for money. Red shows projects that are not good value for money, and should not be implemented.

Source: Excerpted from Schabas (2013: 7)

In Figure 9, Metrolinx Proposal and Schabas Optimized Proposal are weighted against one another in terms of capital cost, net incremental revenue, and new daily riders. Note that “905 Schemes” represent BRT and LRT projects in the “905”, which are the Toronto outer suburbs; and “Transit City Schemes” represents the LRT projects within the City of Toronto (which were proposed collaboratively by Metrolinx and the City in *Transit City*, a plan that Mayor Rob Ford set aside when he was first elected in 2010). The bar chart clearly shows that: 1) capital cost can be reduced using the technical or technological options put forward by the author; 2) net incremental revenues can be increased using a “smart fare” structure and other project alternatives; and 3) new daily riders can be increased using the projects selection and modifications recommended by the author.

Figure 10 shows the costs and revenues for both Metrolinx and Schabas’ Modified Schemes by project. The most interesting part of this bar chart is the boxes below each project that shows: 1) whether Metrolinx has performed a business case analysis (BCA) for that particular project; 2) whether or not the project is funded; and 3) the benefit/cost ratio for each project.

A few observations stand out from a comparison of the presence of a BCA, the presence of funding, and the BCR. Out of the 15 Metrolinx projects that were evaluated (in green):

- Only one has a BCA, is funded, and has a BCR over 1.0. It is the Lakeshore GO service every 30 minutes with electric locomotive, a relatively small project.
- Out of the 9 projects that are funded, only 3 have a BCR over 1.0;
- Out of the 9 project that are funded, 5 do not have a BCA;
- Out of the 6 projects that represent good value for money, 3 are funded.

Figure 9: Metrolinx proposal vs. Schabas' optimized proposal

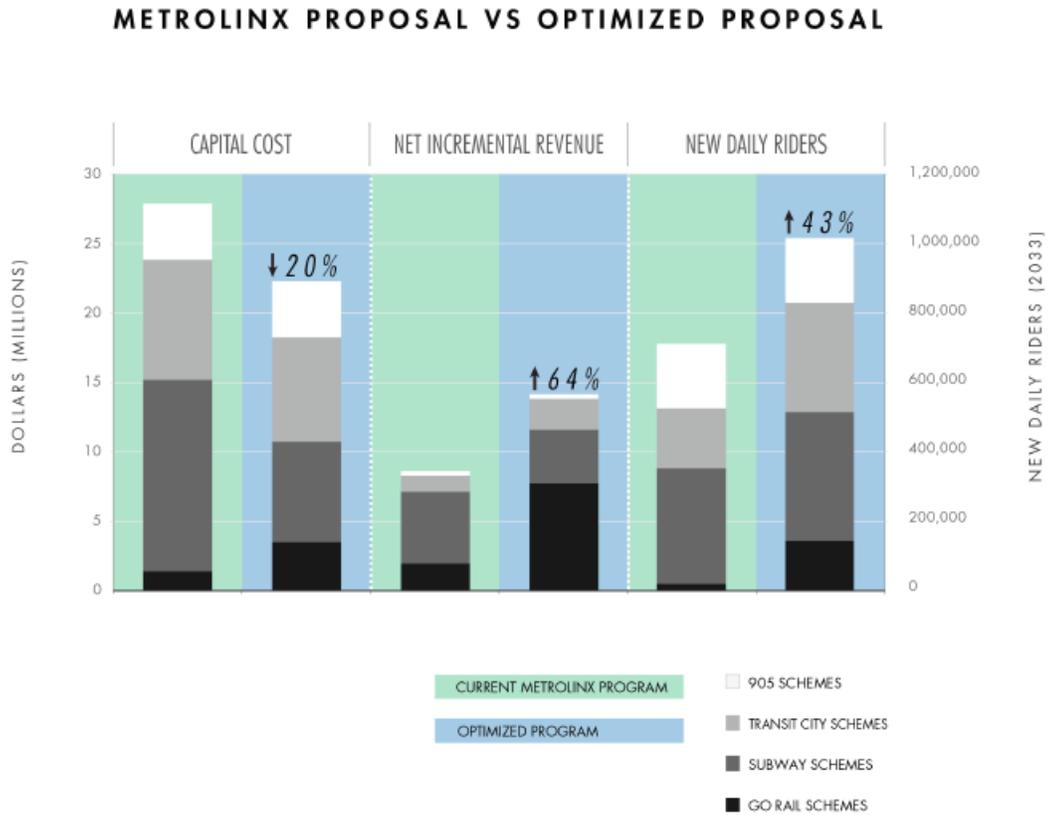


Figure E2: This bar chart shows the differences in capital cost, net incremental revenue, and new ridership for all major Metrolinx projects as currently proposed, and an “optimized” system – that is, projects that incorporate the improvements suggested in this report. The costs and contributions of GO Rail, subways, LRT, and BRT are shown within each bar, all as “Net Present Values.” Note the large incremental revenue from the GO Rail schemes in the Optimized Program, far more than the capital cost of the GO Rail schemes.

Source: Excerpted from Schabas (2013: 10)

Figure 10: Costs and revenues of Metrolinx and Schabas' modified schemes

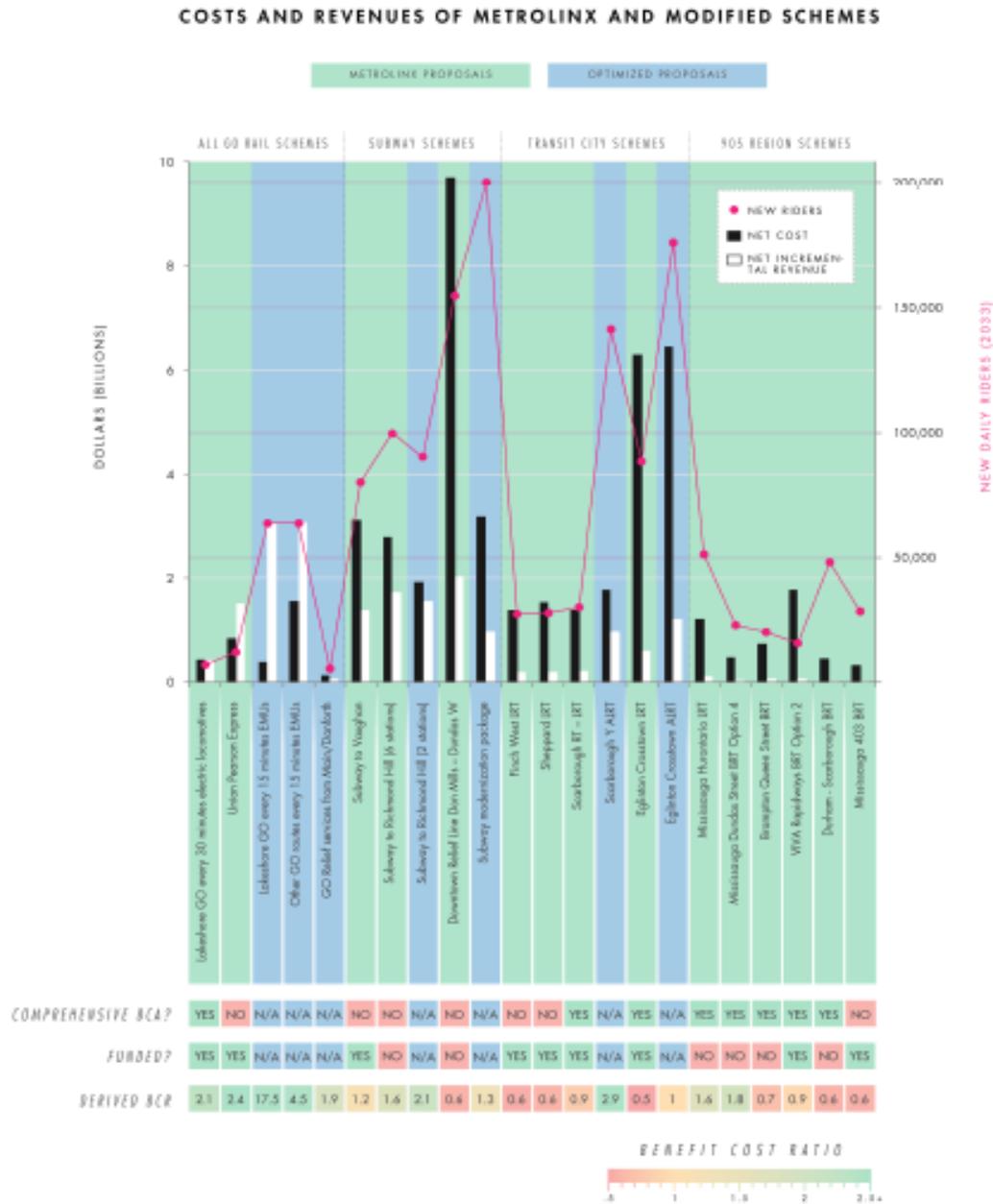


Figure E3: The summary graphic on the following page compares the schemes proposed by Metrolinx and the improvements recommended in this report. The black bars indicate net costs, taking account not only of capital and operating costs, but also savings from services that are replaced. The white bars represent net revenues, and the red line shows new riders for each scheme. Below the graph, the boxes indicate projects for which Metrolinx has issued a comprehensive Benefits Case Analysis, those for which funding has been identified as of late 2013, and the Benefit:Cost ratio for each project. A Benefit:Cost ratio of less than 1.0 indicates that a project does not represent good value for money. Note that incremental revenues exceed total costs for the UP Express and for the GO Rail upgrading schemes.

Source: Excerpted from Schabas (2013: 12)

Overall, Schabas evaluation of Metrolinx's *Big Move* demonstrate that the agency does not perform a business-case analysis for each project, and when it does, the BCA is often incomplete and not released publicly, which raise questions about transparency and efficiency (elements discussed in a subsequent section) (Schabas, 2013: 11). Most importantly, and this is related to the previous observation, the projects that are funded do not necessarily represent good value for money, and cheaper transit options that would attract more new daily riders and increase revenues are set aside. As a result, the project options selected by Metrolinx are not likely to result in an increase in ridership to the extent that collectively, they would reach the goals set out in the *Big Move*. In addition, the implementation of a "smart pricing" fare structure, and/or fare and service integration, which Metrolinx has a difficult time accomplishing, represent an important piece of the puzzle that has the potential to generate more revenues and attract more riders onto the system (Schabas, 2013: 9).

Schabas' observations corroborate with our respondents perceptions that politics trump policy and as a result, the better projects are sometimes set aside in favor of worse projects. The following respondent's observation describes this seemingly unavoidable situation and its consequences:

So that's the kind of rational evidence-based process Metrolinx follow. And then the politics layers on top of that. The politics say, "Thank you very much. That is a very comprehensive analytic thing, very good. But actually, I wanna build a subway here. So, I'm gonna go up to Queen's Park and go to Ottawa -- and lobby, my politician for what I think is right for my community based whatever my analytics are." And so what Metrolinx does as a public agency is to give its best advice to the government. But Metrolinx is not the final decision maker, obviously, the politicians are. (...) Metrolinx recommends to the Province. Then the Province through its own processes and budgeting and so on makes decisions. That's how government works. Once you accept the fact that Metrolinx is not the elected [government] to make decisions for the Province of Ontario... Its job is to give the best advice that it can with as much integrity as it can, and be part of informing the public debate. And then, you know, decisions happen the way decisions happen. I think it's important to remember it's a long game. It's a 25-year plan. And the key thing in all of this, is that we don't end up where we were before 2000 where we spend 15 or 20 years spending no money on transit. So I'm always happy that transit is still on the public radar. All I worry about is when projects are delayed or stopped. We need to keep building, we

need to keep investing and that's what's most critical. And there is no -- well, there's better projects and there's worse projects. There's no right and wrong projects. Right? Some projects where you return on your investment better, the benefits are better. But for all different reasons, you may decide, you know, that's all on good but I wanna go over here. People ask if it's frustrating -- you can't get frustrated by it because if you do, you'd give up and go home. And my commitment is about making this whole region better, my personal commitment. So you can't give up. [If you give up]...Someone else is gonna do it. And so, you have to always look for opportunity in adversity. (Interview 12)

Transit might be back on the agenda but yet, as shown in Schabas analysis, the projects selected by Metrolinx would not allow the agency to reach the goals identified in the *Big Move* and make the best use of available funds (Schabas, 2013: 6-10).

In order to demonstrate exactly how the political interests operate, I am going to rely mostly on the two stories that were most frequently cited by the respondents as evidence of the decision-making process still being determined by political considerations, over network optimization or planning recommendations. Unsurprisingly, one of those stories is funded and has a BCR under 1.0 (the Scarborough RT Replacement and Extension), and the other is yet to be funded, has a CBR under 1.0, has no BCA, but was upgraded to Metrolinx's 15-year plan in 2013 (the Downtown Relief Line). These two stories were selected because they show different dimensions of the political dynamics post-reform and their impact on transportation investments: the Scarborough RT case is a pure an example of political (electoral) interests trumping good planning principles, and the Downtown Relief Line is an example of a new type of planning coordination and how the jurisdictional complexity of regional/local transit planning in the Canadian federal system can lead to a non-decision.

Sub-Case 3: Scarborough Rapid Transit (RT) Replacement and Extension

The Scarborough RT issue involves the replacement and extension of Line 3 Scarborough, a four-mile, six-station rail service operated by the TTC that is approaching the end of its useful life (red line on Map 14 or first line to the left). The controversy is about the technology replacing the current Intermediate Capacity Transit System Mark I vehicles and the standard gauge tracks (Figure 11), as well as the extension/route of the transit line (Map 14), which have been a subject of debate for over a decade.

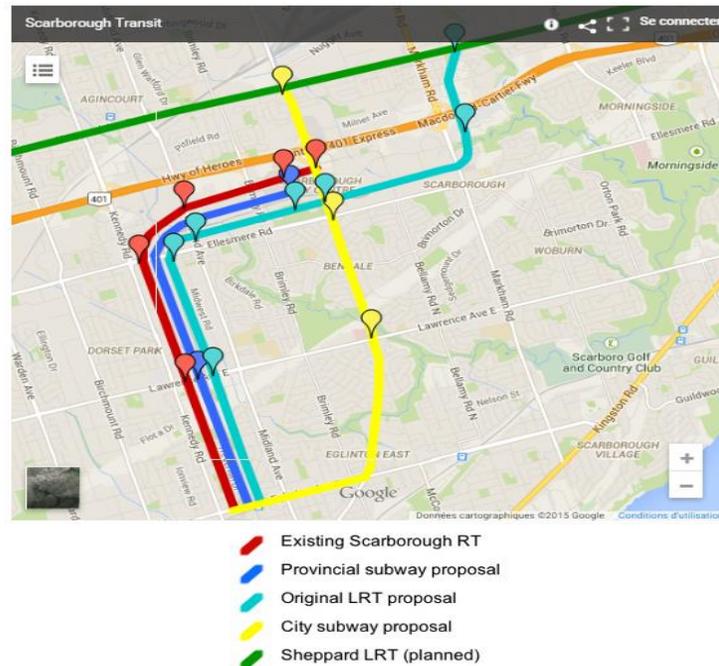
Figure 11: Scarborough Mark I Train



Source: Munro (2013)

The Scarborough RT replacement and extension is the transportation investment project most frequently cited by the respondents as evidence of political considerations trumping “good planning” principles, and of transportation investment decisions still not coherent with land uses, even after the creation of Metrolinx and the adoption of the *Growth Plan* (Interviews 4, 10, 11 & 12). It was also given as an example of the Province disregarding Metrolinx’s professional recommendation (Interview 9), and the fact that regional transit projects require both provincial funds and local approval to break the ground (Interview 1).

Map 14: Scarborough RT proposed routes



Source : Dotan (2013)

The heart of the debate has to do with the Province and Metrolinx flip-flop about the choice of technology and the route to be selected for funding. Originally, in 2010 (when Mayor David Miller was still in office), the City of Toronto, the TTC, and Metrolinx recommended replacing the Scarborough RT by a seven-stop, \$1.8 billion light rail transit (LRT) (turquoise line on Map 14 or third to the left) to be paid in full by the Province. After the Province agreed to this proposal, Metrolinx signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the City, budgeted \$1.8 billion for the Scarborough project, and issued a single request for qualifications for both the Eglinton Crosstown LRT and the Scarborough LRT lines (Infrastructure Ontario, 2013). Then, when Mayor Rob Ford took office in late 2010, the MOU between the City and Metrolinx, which was not legally binding, immediately went out of the way because Mayor Ford has always been against Mayor Miller's Transit City Plan (Lorinc, 2014). In the summer

of 2013, after years of uncertainties and pressures from Metrolinx and the Province, Toronto City Council approved a three-stop, \$2.3 billion subway plan conditional to the Province re-directing \$1.8 billion from the LRT project and the feds funding 50% of the shortfall (Yellow line on Map 14 or fourth to the left) (for the timeline of public announcements about the subway proposal, see Lorinc, 2014).

A couple months after the City committed to a subway, Metrolinx stopped the work on the Scarborough LRT and the provincial Minister of Transportation released its own subway plan for Scarborough, a two-stop, \$1.4 billion proposal endorsed by Metrolinx (Navy blue line on Map 14 or second to the left) (Munro, 2013). This seemingly improvised provincial plan spurred intense criticism from both the City Council and the media for its disconnection with existing plans (Munro, 2013; Lorinc, 2014). So overall, there were three proposals: the original LRT plan, the municipal subway proposal, and the provincial subway plan (for a table comparing the plans, see Dotan [2013]).

In the fall of 2013, the federal (conservative) government pledged \$660 million to the city's three-stop subway proposal, assuring Ford's re-election (also a conservative) in 2014 (Lorinc, 2014). Shortly after the federal announcement, the City Council confirmed the subway proposal and its financial plan, which involved the City reimbursing Metrolinx for \$85 million in sunk costs associated with the LRT (Lorinc, 2014). The City thus opted for a costly three-stop subway (\$2.3 billion) instead seven-stop LRT fully funded by the Province (\$1.8 billion) situated within walking distance of more residents in more communities (47,000 people and jobs for the LRT versus 24,000 for the subway) (Dotan, 2013; Lorinc, 2014).

Citing the numbers presented above, the respondents were unanimously referring to the Scarborough subway case as an example of a transportation investment decision not coherent

with land use, because it is not designed in a way or in a place consistent with the land use immediately adjacent to its surrounding (Interviews 4, 5, 8 & 11). In addition, the Scarborough RT replacement and extension saga clearly illustrates how the decision-making process surrounding investment decisions is still led by political considerations rather than planning principles (Interviews 12 & 15). As one respondent puts it “a three-stop subway instead of a seven-stop LRT for twice the money, it’s ridiculous...So there’s definitely politics” (Interview 10). In fact, after conducting an investigation through a series of freedom of information requests to the City of Toronto, Metrolinx and the government of Ontario about the genesis and execution of the Scarborough subway decision, John Lorinc noted that:

The documents show a government that blithely disregarded inconvenient financial and technical information to pursue a politically-motivated goal. They also reveal how a freelancing TTC chair, Karen Stintz, and a wildly vacillating city council ignored their own staff’s expert advice and committed Toronto taxpayers to a project whose true costs are still not fully understood. (Lorinc, 2014)

The political gain pursued by the provincial government when it announced its subway proposal in the summer of 2013 was the by-election in Scarborough: “The LRT, turned subway into Scarborough... that was all about a by-election. An incumbent liberal party wanting to secure the by-election said “we’re going to build a subway”.” (Interview 10) The \$660 million federal commitment to Ford’s subway proposal was also seen as a move to help him getting re-elected (both the federal government and the Mayor sharing the same political stripes) (note that Mayor Ford was not able to participate in 2014 elections due to illness) (Lorinc, 2014).

Above all, the Scarborough RT replacement and extension shows the limits of Metrolinx in its ability to influence investment choices:

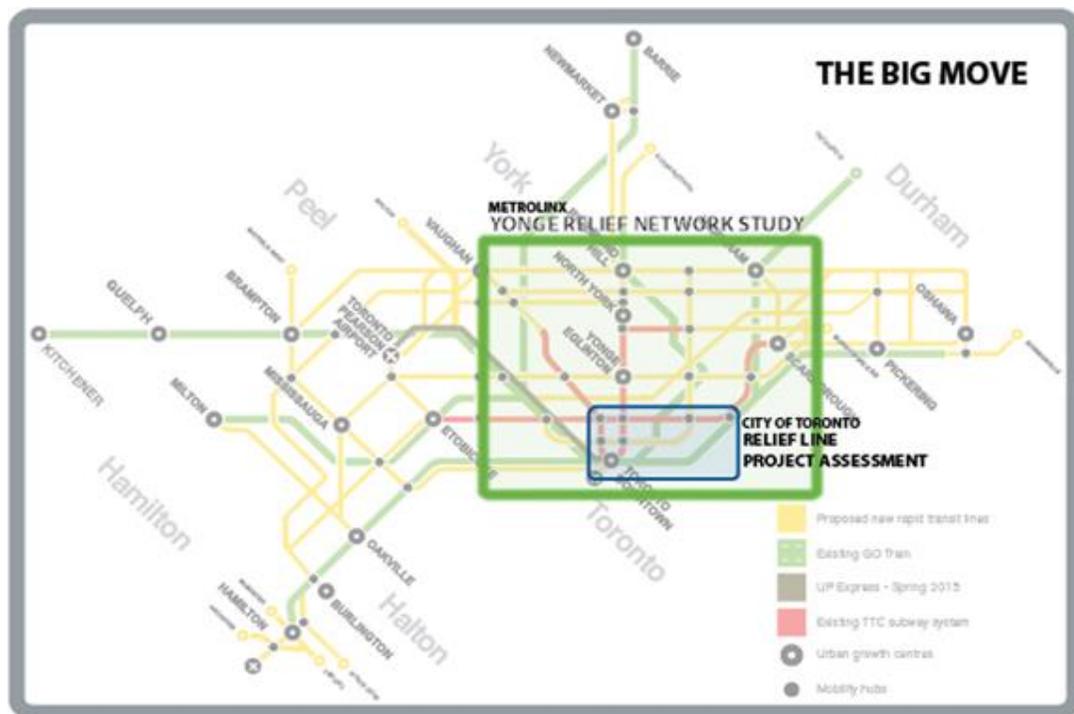
I think in an ideal world, Metrolinx needs to have more autonomy. They flip-flop to say “Okay, we’ll build the subway in Scarborough”. They should have never done that. It undermines their credibility and showed that they’re not autonomous from the elected government. (Interview 10)

As Steve Munro puts it, the improvised provincial subway proposal presented in the summer of 2013 from the roof of a Scarborough parking garage “mocks the very process Metrolinx was created to avoid” (Munro, 2013).

Sub-Case 4: Downtown Relief Line (DRL)

Because it is the only subway line coming to downtown Toronto, the Yonge Subway is over-crowded, particularly the segment south of Bloor street which is running over-capacity (Metrolinx, 2015g). Although the idea of a rapid transit line aimed at easing crowding on the Yonge Subway line and at Union Station has been around for a long time, Metrolinx, the City of Toronto and the TTC have been recently working towards solving the issue since the Downtown Relief Line (DRL) was moved from Metrolinx’s 25-year plan to the 15-year plan in 2009 (James, 2015). There are two separate studies going on (illustrated on Map 15): Metrolinx’s Yonge Relief Network Study, which takes a comprehensive and regional approach to address crowding (Metrolinx, 2015f); and the City of Toronto and TTC’s Relief Line Project Assessment, which looks at a future rapid transit line connecting downtown Toronto to the Bloor-Danforth Subway east of the Don River (City of Toronto and TTC, 2015). Both studies are independent from one another and have their own website (regionalrelief.ca and reliefline.ca), but they are somewhat coordinated or integrated in the sense that the City’s specific study will “feed into” Metrolinx’s regional study (Metrolinx, 2015f; Interview 14).

Map 15: Relief line assessment project and Yonge relief network study



Source: Excerpted from Metrolinx (2005f)

The DRL was cited by the respondents an example of improved coordination of regional and local planning processes since the creation of Metrolinx (Interview 5; Interview 12; Interview 14). However, it is also cited as a case of planning overlap leading to public confusion and frustration (Golden, 2014: 18). In addition, being an example of “non-decision”, the DRL was also provided as evidence of the difficulty of funding a project with the way the federal system is set up and the way “party politics” can be played out:

So everyone agrees to a Downtown Relief Line for the subway is a good move. Everyone agrees absolutely necessary, all modeling shows absolutely necessary, but it's expensive because it's an existing urban area you have to tunnel underneath the existing urban fabric. And nobody wants to pay for that, it requires the traditional transit funding formula in Ontario and most of Canada is municipal 1/3, provincial 1/3, and federal 1/3. So you need all three levels of government to all feel like it's important and if they have different political stripes at any point in time and they're not willing to cooperate then someone doesn't come

to the table. That is one of the issues actually is this sort of funding way which transits is funded because that's why the decision making about the project is so political. With highway projects just comes out of the provincial budget, people pay their taxes, everyone pays highways are funded by everybody. Same with hospitals and schools, but it isn't the same as transit. The question is whether after Thursday [provincial election] if they get elected, will they make it a priority? Some of the people running from Mayor of Toronto, the election is coming this fall, said it's a priority, others have said no. (Interview 8)

In the winter of 2015, the TTC, Metrolinx and the City of Toronto were “locked in a multimillion dollar study” to see if SmartTrack (the new mayor’s plan for transit) and the DRL can co-exist (James, 2015), showing once again how planning and politics interact.

In addition to the Scarborough subway, the respondents also cited the Toronto-York Spadina Subway Extension (TYSSE) up to Vaughan Corporate (renamed Metropolitan) Center as evidence of political considerations trumping practical land use considerations (Interviews 6, 10 & 15). The respondents noted that part of the extension “makes sense”, as it connects York University to the subway, a segment that had been subject of numerous studies (Interview 1). However, it is “no secret” that the extension up to Vaughan, a segment never discussed before its announcement (Interview 1), was a provincial priority (rather than a city priority) (Munro, 2007b) in the personal interest of the former finance Minister and Member of Provincial Parliament (MPP) for Vaughan at time when it was approved (Greg Sorbara) because he was from Vaughan (Interview 15), had a property up there (Interview 1), and owned a ton of land next to the station (Interview 6). Although there is a plan for a corporate center where the subway extension is supposed to end, this plan is currently not delivered and the subway is going to end in the parking lot of a Walmart (Interview 6).

This observation about the TYSSE up to Vaughan is corroborated by the *Growth Plan* evaluation conducted by Neptis, which has found that Vaughan Metropolitan Centre would be required to increase the number of people and jobs in its UGC by 900% (18,720) to achieve

the minimum density target of 200 people and jobs per hectare, the greatest increase among all 25 UGCs (Allen & Campsie, 2013: 60). The same respondent continues, saying “they spent a fortune to do a long distance subway that doesn’t have the ridership attached to it. That was in the *Big Move* plan. It was already agreed on before the *Big Move* plan was adopted. Politics.” (Interview 6). The TTC itself admitted that the northern segment of the line does not meet the subway density threshold of 100 persons and/or jobs per hectare (TTC in Munro, 2007a)²⁰. However, because it displays the same dynamic that operates in the Scarborough subway case (it does not bring anything original or new) and because it represents a relatively smaller project, I decided not to explore the case of the TYSSE up to Vaughn any further.

In conclusion, as a result of all the instances where the “politics trumped the policy” (Interview 7), the credibility of Metrolinx and the entire transportation planning process are now put into question (Interview 5). Transit advocate Steve Munro describes the shakiness of the planning and decision-making context following the improvised provincial proposal for a subway in Scarborough:

The city and region now face a period of uncertainty extending beyond coming provincial and municipal elections. Will the new administrations at either level continue to support transit, and will those put in charge consider the good of the region over their own political ambitions? Metrolinx is an agency at which the puppet-master’s hands and wires are all too obvious. Glen Murray [Minister of Transportation at the time] has wounded its credibility as an honest, unbiased provider of advice to the Province and to the public at large, and the relevance of its board is evaporating. (Munro, 2013)

This sentiment towards the relevance of Metrolinx is also shared by the respondents. The following quote describes the current situation where Metrolinx’s and TTC’s weak public

²⁰ Note that the Ontario Ministry of Transportation threshold is even higher, i.e. 200 people and jobs per hectare for subway service (Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, 2015a: 10).

voices have led to a lack of public support for- or awareness of the realities of financing and putting in place a coherent transit alternative, which, in turn, has allowed mayors and regional leaders to play the whims of the public and to try to win votes by putting forward very simple, unfunded transit proposals that are not realistic in terms of financing:

I think there's been some progress, because we have an overall plan, but the overall plan is not being bought into and is being sort of set aside, and so I think it's a sum-zero game, I think there's been some pluses but the fact that Metrolinx has not been able to, the Province has not allowed Metrolinx to gain the authority and the panache, the gravitas that's needed to make sure that the plan that they have in mind is front at the center. What happens is that that plan is almost forgotten, as opposed to a plan that people relate to, politicians relate to and say I like the plan, except I would change this and that. So I think overall, there's been some pluses but there's been a big negative here that the institutions that are supposed to be providing the technical expertise and the options have lost a lot of credibility, the TTC also. (...) They've lost credibility because their voices are not being paid attention to because they haven't had the strength of advocacy to be able to get out and tell the public what the real issues are here. I mean both the TTC and Metrolinx influence has been deliberately reduced by the politicians, both seen an opportunity here to be front at the center about the biggest issue in the whole region, with just congestion. (...) So the net result here is that the Metrolinx and TTC have not been strong advocates for their solutions, and they have not been able to educate the public in a way that let them know what the real tough choices are, there are tough choices here. You cannot succeed in this without paying a price. (...) Those agencies have not got out and done a really good job of letting people in the GTHA know what those tough choices are, so when the politicians come along and say "I have an easy answer for you, I have a solution", people say "wait a minute, that's not realistic". So they have failed to be strong advocates for their options and they have failed to educate the public in terms of the choices that are involved here. So as a result the politicians have found themselves with an issue that they can go all over in that bong without much discipline, and without much consequence, and we have as a result a very confused electorate, and we have a high politicization of this issue, probably the most politicized at any time in our history. (Interview 4)

The same respondent explains that the CEO of the TTC, as well as the Chairman and CEO of Metrolinx have decided not to take high profile positions publicly because they fear they will be replaced by somebody else who will be quiet and silent. Every time Metrolinx is “serious and goes on television”, its representatives are pushed back and pushed out of the way. In the spring of 2014, at the time of a provincial electoral campaign and before a mayoral race in the fall, the agencies’ leaders were keeping their heads down but even before that, they would do their best to put recommendations forward and then when they were undermined they would say “well, in the end, these are political decisions” (Interview 4). This hindsight on

a touchy subject, i.e. the political appointments of individuals whose fear of losing their job undermines their ability to fulfill their responsibilities and protect the public good, is also corroborated by another respondent (Interview 6). The issue of political appointments and the general implications of the institutional framework are discussed in the concluding chapter.

The fact of the matter is that Metrolinx does not have the ability to implement the *Big Move* – the Province does. Its mandate is solely advisory, there is no TPPS to force municipalities to comply with the RTP, and the agency has no independent revenue source which would allow it to fund projects directly on its own without seeking political approval. In addition, the fact that local appointees were removed from the board of directors and replaced by political, non-elected appointees has enabled the Province to easily disregard Metrolinx recommendations. Nonetheless, although they do not represent the best value for money, there is about \$ 16 billion worth of transportation capital investment projects being constructed in Toronto, mostly transit, which is an improvement from the financial situation prevailing before Metrolinx was created and a more sustainable investment choice than building suburban highways.

Impacts on Land Use Decisions

As mentioned previously, the reform will be considered successful on the land use front if land use decisions are more coherent with transportation investments and existing transportation infrastructure. Generally speaking, land use development should be strengthened and directed toward existing communities and areas where transit is already provided. For example, growth centers or transit hubs might be designated, and the number of transit oriented developments (TOD) should be increasing. Land use policies that reduce

vehicle use and increase accessibility, such as zoning for mixed land uses and increased density, could also be adopted.

As a reminder, the *Growth Plan* is a 25-year plan that aims to revitalize downtowns, create complete communities, provide a large range of housing options, curb sprawl and protect farmland, and reduce congestion by improving access to a greater range of transportation options in the Greater Golden Horseshoe (a geographical area encompassing the GTHA, the Greenbelt, and the land north of the Greenbelt). By guiding decisions on how land is developed, resources are managed, and public dollars are invested, the *Growth Plan* manages the anticipated population and employment growth by “increasing intensification of the existing built-up area, with a focus on urban growth centres, intensification corridors, major transit station areas, brownfield sites and greyfields.” (Ontario Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, 2006).

More specifically, the *Growth Plan* identifies 25 UGCs that should be planned for as focal areas for investment in infrastructures and to accommodate a significant share of population and employment growth. In addition, each upper-tier and single-tier municipality is assigned an intensification target ranging from 150 to 400 people and/or jobs per hectare, meaning that 40% of all residential development that occurs annually within each municipality should be within the existing build-up area. The *Growth Plan* also requires a minimum density target of 50 people and jobs per hectare for greenfield development (Ontario Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, 2006: 14-17). Remember that *Growth Plan* encompasses the areas protected by the *Greenbelt Plan*, which sets aside 1.8 million acres of land for agriculture and resource use and protection, farming, tourism, recreational and cultural assets. In terms of implementation, municipalities (upper tier and single tier) had until 2010 (four years) to bring

their official plan in conformity with the requirements included in the *Growth Plan* (Interview 11). In theory then, the implementation of the growth strategy by the municipalities, which includes the *Greenbelt Plan* and the *Growth Plan*, should produce more desirable, environmentally sustainable land uses and decision outcomes.

In order to assess the impact of the growth strategy on land use decisions, I am relying on both the perceptions and the evidence provided by the respondents with regards to land uses and *Growth Plan* implementation, as well as the report conducted by Neptis researchers Rian Allen and Philippa Campsie (2013), titled *Implementing the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe. Has the Strategic Regional Vision Been Compromised?* ”, which assesses the implementation of the *Growth Plan* by municipalities by tracking land consumption.

Ontario Performance Indicators

Before getting into the evidence provided by the two “independent” sources of data, i.e. the respondents’ assessment and the evaluation conducted for Neptis, it is important to mention that in the spring of 2015, the Ontario Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing released the *Performance Indicators for the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, 2006* (2015a) and the *Performance Indicators for the Greenbelt Plan* (2015b). Both performance indicator reports were prepared together as part of a co-ordinated approach to reviewing the *Growth Plan* along with the *Greenbelt Plan*, the *Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan*, and the *Niagara Escarpment Plan*. Remember that a 10-year legislative

review is required for the *Growth Plan* (in 2016), the *Greenbelt Plan* (in 2015), and also the *Big Move* (in 2016²¹) (more on this later).

The performance indicators reports for the *Growth Plan* and the *Greenbelt Plan* present two types of indicators: 1) baseline indicators, where data is too limited and does not yet allow for comparison over time or across geographies; and 2) trend indicators, where data is available to allow for comparison across time or geographies (Ontario Municipal Affairs and Housing, 2015b: 4). The majority of the data comes from Statistics Canada (for 2006 and 2011), the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation (MPAC) (for 2007 and 2010), Land Information Ontario, the Transportation Tomorrow Survey (for 2006 and 2011), and mapping of *Growth Plan* geographies from municipal official plans in 2012 (Ontario Municipal Affairs and Housing, 2015a: 4). Note that the geography included in the Greater Golden Horseshoe encompasses 21 upper- and single-tier municipalities and 89 lower-tier municipalities, for a total of 110 separate municipal jurisdictions, which represents a challenge in terms of collecting information and explains why so many indicators are baseline (Interview 11). Performance indicators for the *Greenbelt Plan* and the *Growth Plan* are presented in Boxes 3 and 4, respectively (Ontario Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, 2015b; Ontario Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, 2015a)

Note that I do not indicate the performance results in the textboxes because the vast majority of them are baseline and the goal here is not to evaluate plans' implementation using the indicators developed by the Province, but to show how the Province is gearing up for its

²¹ According to the *Metrolinx Act* (Government of Ontario, 2009a), the regional transportation plan (RTP) must be reviewed at least every 10 years after the *Metrolinx Act* came into force (and not 10 years after the RTP was adopted, which would set the *Big Move* review for 2018).

own plans evaluation and review scheduled for 2015 and 2016. In addition, both reports underline the challenges and limitations of performance monitoring, challenges that I highlighted myself earlier in this chapter for the present study.

Box 3: Performance indicators for the *Greenbelt Plan* (OMMAH, 2015b)

Prime Agricultural Land and Fragmentation

- Lot Creation in Greenbelt Specialty Crop Areas

Directing Urban Growth

- Lot Creation Outside Settlement Areas
- Annual Rate of Lot Creation Outside Settlement Areas
- Distribution of Lot Creation Outside Settlement Areas
- Dwelling Unit Growth Outside Settlement Areas
- Percentage of New Dwelling Units Created in Settlement Areas
- Distribution of Dwelling Unit Growth Outside Settlement Areas

Natural Heritage and Connectivity

- Percentage of Woodland Cover (2000-2002)
- Percentage of Mapped Wetland Cover (2000-2002)

Water

- Percentage of Watershed Plan Coverage in the Greenbelt

Box 4: Performance indicators for the *Growth Plan* (OMMAH, 2015a)

Building compact and efficient communities

- **Achieving intensification**
 - The percentage of new residential units constructed in the built-up area of the upper- and single-tier municipalities in the region
- **Urban Growth Center Density**
 - The number of people and jobs per hectare in the UGCs identified in the Growth Plan
 - The ratio of people to jobs in each UGC
- **Major Transit Station Area Density**
 - The number of people and jobs per hectare within major transit station areas (MTSAs)
- **Designated Greenfield Area Density**
 - Planned densities for designated greenfield areas (DGA)
 - Characteristics of the developing DGA based on lot sizes, mix of housing and estimated densities

Creating vibrant and complete communities

- **Mix of Housing Types**
 - The range and mix of housing types that have been completed each year in upper- and single-tier municipalities across the Greater Golden Horseshoe, and the mix of the existing housing stock
- **Diversity of Land Uses**
 - The relative diversity of land uses found within UGCs and the developing DGA
- **Community Amenities**
 - The percentage of the dwelling units in selected areas that are within walking distance of a community centre, park, school and shopping opportunities
- **Street Connectivity**
 - Street connectivity, measured by the number of intersections per hectare and the ratio of connections to intersections (link-node ratio)

Planning and managing growth to support a strong and competitive economy

- **Transportation Modal Split**
 - The percentage of all trips, and the percentage of morning commute trips, made by car, transit, bicycle or walking for inner- and outer-ring municipalities in the Greater Golden Horseshoe in 2006 and 2011, based on the Transportation Tomorrow Survey
- **Trip Distance by Mode**
 - Median distance of all trips and median distance of morning commute trips for inner- and outer-ring municipalities, based on the TTS
- **Location of Major Office Space**
 - The percentage of major office space that has been developed inside urban growth centres and major transit station areas since 2006

Protecting, conserving, enhancing, and wisely using natural resources

- **Land Consumption**
 - Ratio of percentage change in size of settlement area to percentage change in planned population and employment
- **Watershed Conditions**
 - The percentage of hardened/impervious surfaces, natural cover, wetland features, and woodland features in watersheds in the Greater Golden Horseshoe
- **Transportation Greenhouse Gas Emissions**
 - Total and per capita GHG emissions estimated for the transportation sector by census division

The following quotes with regards to measurement challenges are extracted from the indicators report for the *Greenbelt Plan* and the *Growth Plan*, respectively:

The complexity of the variables that can affect the landscape can make it hard to establish any firm conclusions about whether the outcomes being measured are the result of the land use plan policies being implemented. Some policy outcomes may take many years before any measurable changes can be seen. Data can often be unavailable due to cost, legal restrictions and gaps in geographic and temporal coverage. Finally, the policies being measured may have multiple or overlapping objectives. (Ontario Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, 2015b: 7).

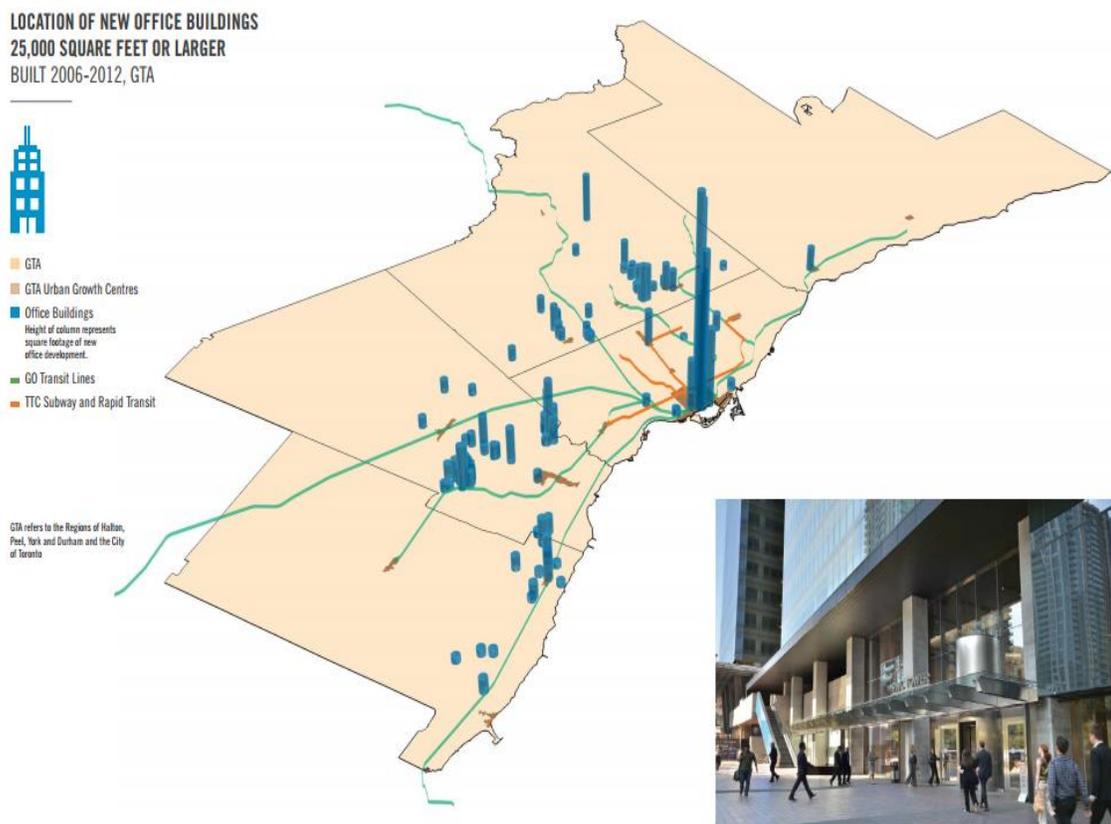
The ministry proposes to report on the results of the data analysis for these performance indicators every five years, following the release of Census/National Household Survey data. Many of the indicators in this document are based on this data, and it is collected every five years (e.g., 2006, 2011, 2016). In addition, it takes time for land use planning policies and decisions to result in actual change or development “on the ground”, so it is important to allow for a reasonable interval between reporting periods on indicator results. (Ontario Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, 2015a: 5).

Adding to these challenges and limitations is the fact that, as of Spring 2015, only the official plans for the Region of Peel, the cities of Peterborough, Orillia, Guelph, Brantford, and the counties of Peterborough, Wellington, and Haldimand were both adopted by their respective council and approved by the Province. Official plans for the Regions of Durham, York, Halton, Waterloo and Niagara, the cities of Toronto, Hamilton, Kawartha Lakes and Barrie, and the counties of Northumberland, Simcoe, Dufferin and Brant were not yet in effect, either because they had not yet been approved or because they had been appealed in whole or in part to the Ontario Municipal Board (OMB) (Ontario Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, 2015a: 37). **Since most of the official plans are not even conforming to the *Growth Plan* requirements yet, it is too early for assessing any correlation or causal relationship between the growth strategy and the land use patterns.**

However, despite the fact that it is too early to assess the *Growth Plan* implementation for the reasons stated above, there is one performance indicator that caught my attention and

that is worth mentioning here, and it is the location of new office building 25,000 square feet or larger built between 2006 and 2012 in the GTA. Looking at Map 16, you can see that a lot of new office buildings are located outside of the City of Toronto, away from rapid transit lines (orange lines closer to the City of Toronto for the TTC subway and green lines for GO Transit lines).

Map 16: New office buildings 25,000 ft² or larger (2006-2012)



Source: Excerpted from Ontario Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (2015a: 35)

In fact, 47% of the new office space built between 2006 and 2012 is located in UGCs and major transit station areas in the City of Toronto (Ontario Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, 2015a: 34). This means that the remaining 53% is located outside of the City of

Toronto, away from rapid transit lines and often outside of designated UGCs. Although baseline data, his indicator is useful to assess whether “land use decisions are more coherent with transportation decisions”, because employment location drive transportation choices and options. If land use decisions were to be more coherent with transportation decisions, we would expect that new major employment centers be located along rapid transit corridors, which is not entirely the case according to these numbers and figures. This is perhaps the most obvious indicator of the coherence of land use decisions with transportation (or lack thereof), because as explained in the next paragraphs, the respondents and Neptis researchers provided little evidence about location choices and the integration of land use and transportation decisions.

Respondents’ Perceptions of Land Use Decisions

Respondents were asked the following two questions about land use decisions:

- Has there been an increase in density, TODs, mixed-uses, growth centers, etc., since the adoption of the provincial legislation? Can you give me examples? Do you think that this is attributable to changes in policy or institutional structure?
- Would you say that land use decisions are coherent with transportation decisions? Do you think it has anything to do with the adoption of the provincial legislation? Can you give me examples?

Generally speaking, the respondents said that there seems to be an increase in density, mixed uses and growth centers since the 2005-2006 reform. However, they noted that it was hard to attribute those changes to the adoption of the *Growth Plan* or the *Greenbelt Plan*, because: 1) land use decisions are driven by developers and enabled by municipalities (Interviews 2, 7, 10, 12 & 14); and 2) it will take some time (like 10 to 20 years) to see the impacts of the growth management strategy on the ground (Interviews

1, 8, 11 & 15). **In addition, many respondents pointed out that the *Growth Plan* implementation is being undermined by all the appeals to the OMB** (Interviews 3, 7, 8, 10 & 11). **Finally, when asked if land use decisions were more coherent with transportation decisions since the adoption of the *Growth Plan* and the *Greenbelt Plan*, respondents usually said that although there has been a shift in the planning mindset and that the necessity for integrating land use and transportation got more attention, there is no evidence that this has translated into municipal land use decisions** (Interviews 2, 6, 7, 11 & 15).

In addition to the fact that it naturally takes some time for reforms to be implemented and to result in concrete impacts on the ground, such as increased density and modal shifts, the *Growth Plan* implementation is also being hampered by all the appeals to the OMB. The following quote describes all the steps involved in the implementation process and why, according to this respondent, it is too early for plan evaluation such as the one conducted by Neptis (which is presented in the next section):

Even though the *Growth Plan* was brought in in 2006, the government required upper tier municipalities and single-tier to bring their official plans into conformity by 2010. So, all of them did. They submitted the Province for approval. The approval process took a long time because it all came in at once and the Province had to sort of work through all this stuff. And in Ontario we have the OMB and the OMB is setup to allow people who are unhappy with decisions to appeal. So, almost every decision by the Province for those regional and upper tiers, official plans were appealed to the OMB. So we don't have all the official plans approved in place yet because they're all caught up in litigation. In effect it's only in the last year or so that official plans are starting to get adopted and are in place. It's too early to judge because the official plans are the way which you implement the *Growth Plan*. It's way too early to sort of point to anything says, "Okay. Yes, here some outcomes." No, it's a long term plan; it goes 2041. You have to think about the *Growth Plan* in a long term spectrum and for anybody to sort of really say you know, it's achieved x, y or z. It's just too early. I mean what's happened is we seen some attitudinal shifts in terms of how the building community is starting to anticipate the changes. So, they're getting ahead. So, the marketplace to a certain extent is starting already to shift and adapt to what the growth plan is trying to do. But the regulatory framework is only now just hitting the ground. (Interview 11)

The *Growth Plan* implementation is indeed a long process. Figure 12 shows the sequence of actions for a municipality to come to conformity with the *Growth Plan* requirements. Although this graph is extracted from the evaluation report conducted by Neptis (presented in the next section) it is useful to insert it here in order to provide some perspective on the respondents' observations.

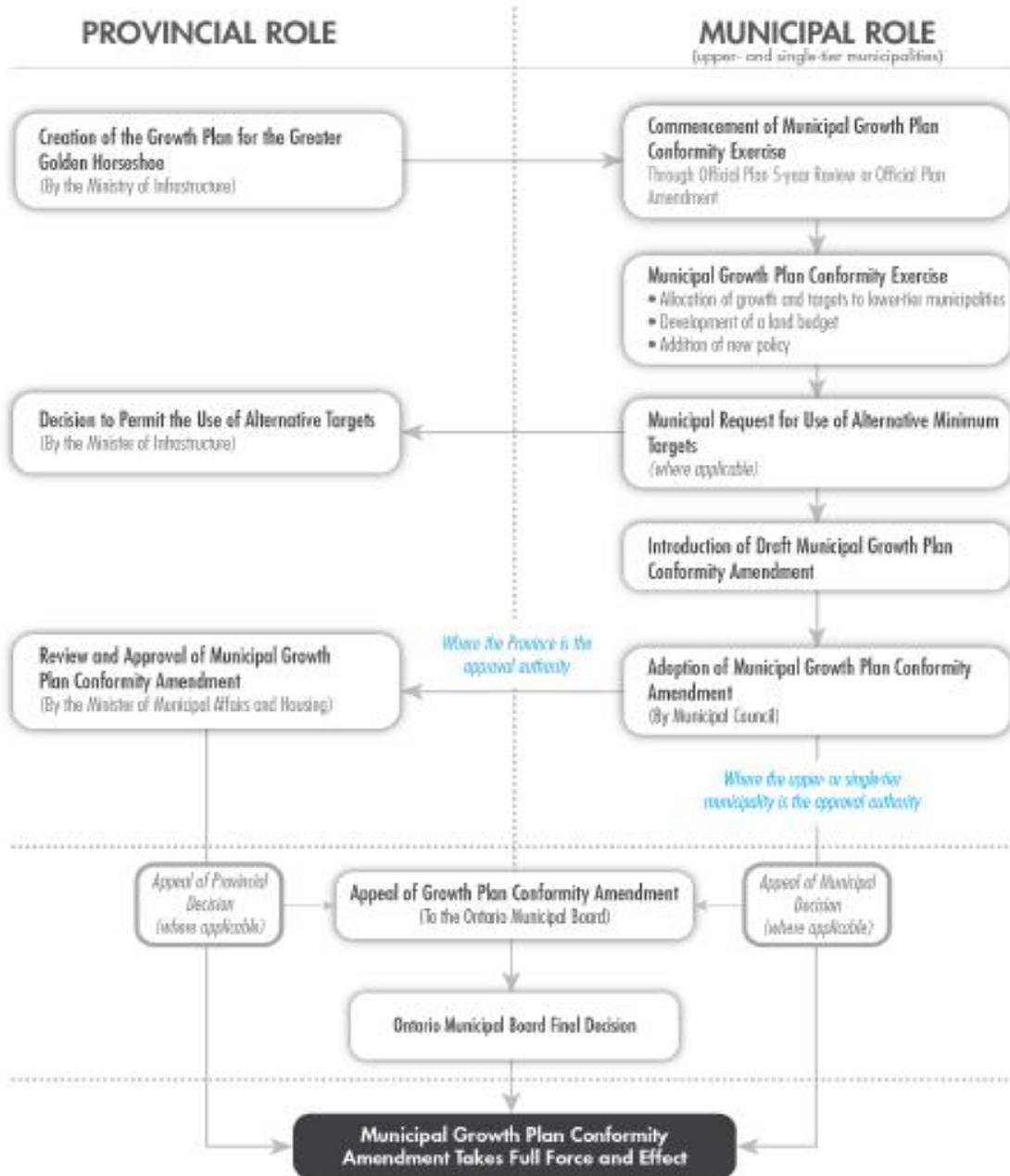
A few other respondents pointed out that the *Growth Plan* implementation is being undermined by all the appeals to the OMB (Interviews 3, 7, 8 & 10). As explained in the following quote, the appeals are either coming from municipalities that are against intensification or from land speculators and developers whose lands are located outside the designated urban boundary:

The *Growth Plan*, there was some pushback especially from some of these outer guys, Simcoe and Brantford, they felt that the density requirements were too high, which they're not but in any event. The big slow down was, this plan allocates population and employment to these municipalities, and then it says "figure out how much land you need to accommodate that, based on 40% of it occurring by intensification and your greenfields at a minimum of 50 people and jobs per hectare". So they do all these what we call "land budgets". And many of the greenfield developers, if they didn't get within the identified allocation of the land, they would challenge these plans. And we have a planning tribunal called the Ontario Municipal Board, which these plans can be appealed to and they end up in this multiyear hearings that cost a fortune. They want into the urban boundary because soon as their lands were brought in, the value goes through the roof, up 20, 30 times, right? (Interview 10)

Note that the province has chosen to grant developers and municipalities the right to appeal to the decisions pertaining to the *Growth Plan*; it was not unavoidable or mandatory. In the previous case of the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan, which forbids development on the Oak Ridges Moraine aquifer, the Province of the day decided that the legislation and its provisions were unappealable (Interview 11).

Figure 12 : Municipal Growth Plan conformity planning process

FIGURE 1.3: MUNICIPAL GROWTH PLAN CONFORMITY PLANNING PROCESS



Source: Excerpted from Allen & Campsie (2013: 24)

Despite the fact that the *Growth Plan* implementation is being slowed down by appeals to the OMB and that it is too early to observe land use changes on a regional scale, a few respondents mentioned that the 2005-2006 contributed to a shift in the mindset in terms of planning, from greenfield development to intensification (Interview 2, 6, 7, 11 & 15). The following two quotes describe the relative impact of the reform on land use decisions. Whereas the first one explains the synergy between the *Greenbelt Plan*, the *Growth Plan*, and the *Big Move*, which results in a greater acceptance for intensification, especially in the areas closer to Toronto, the second one points to the fact that the observable densification is less due to the policy shift than a shift in the mindset.

Most municipalities are voluntarily starting to tone down the greenfield suburban sprawl and really try to refocus reurbanization and intensification around transit stations, their urban growth centers within the *Growth Plan* that identifies the major mobility hubs, and along the corridors. And so you can see this in the last generation of plans which are currently being worked on to reflect the *Growth Plan* and the *Big Move*. (...) The closer the yard to Toronto and the subways and LRTs, the more inclined are the regions to embrace the plan and they recognize they need the density to drive the ridership to make the investment justifiable and physically sustainable over time. In the outer regions, not so much out here other than Waterloo (...). (Interview 10)

Question: Has there been an increase in density, TODs, mixed-uses, growth centers, etc?

Respondent: Yes it has. I can't talk about it but you can go to somebody, but clearly we're seeing an improved densification in the suburbs, there's been improved densification.

Question: Do you think it's due to the *Growth Plan*?

Respondent: No. It's due to the changing zeitgeist, change in understanding that you can't continue to go with sprawl. (Interview 7)

Note that according to the Province's *Performance Indicators for the Growth Plan*, there has been an increase in the annual intensification rates of municipalities between 2007 and 2010, and the UGCs were "on their way" to reach their 2031 population and employment density targets (Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, 2015a: 7-9). In terms of "micro" evidence, the respondents hardly provided examples that supported their arguments, relying mostly on "anecdotal observation". In a way, this can be explained by the fact that land use decisions are not as large scale and mainstream as multi-million transportation investment

decisions, and so it was sometimes difficult for the respondents to point out to specific land use decisions, especially for key informants more familiar with transportation issues than land use issues. The most concrete examples provided by the respondents in supporting some of the observations presented above are listed in Box 5.

As pointed out by one respondent, another reason why the *Growth Plan* has not had any big impact on local land use decisions yet is because it has not changed the municipal taxation structure, which subsidizes low-density greenfield development:

And then I think additionally, the way we do development charges and property taxes and some of our other pricing mechanisms, they're not fully aligned with our policy outcomes. They continue to subsidize low density greenfield sprawl at the expense of more compact urbanization or reorganization in nodes and corridors. Because the development charges are generally, just done on an area-wide basis or municipal-wide basis. Some [other municipalities] charge premiums for certain areas, greenfield areas that they're gonna cost more. So the small footprint urban stuff with their existing infrastructures is actually paying development charges to pay for extension of roads, sewer or water into the greenfields. It's really backwards. Our property taxes, you could have a 20-foot lot or a 60-foot lot, they both pay the same development charge even though this one uses a third of the linear infrastructure. That means to be operated and maintained and replaced over the fullness of time. And so we've got a major infrastructure deficit because low density development whether it'd housing, big box, retail or warehousing does not pay for itself over the fullness of time. So we've actually developed a little model where municipalities can evaluate different scenarios of growth and compare the cost and they can look at the different revenues that will be brought in by these different types of forms of development. So the whole pricing piece is the really important lever to direct land use. (Interview 10)

In addition, as mentioned earlier, municipalities are somewhat indebted or dependent on the development industry (developers, building services and contractors) for bringing in employment, increasing the tax base, as well as contributing to electoral races²², which makes the land use decisions very market-driven and political (Interviews 2 & 15).

²² A study of suburban cities in Toronto found that more than two-thirds of all corporate contributions to campaign funding come from the development industry (MacDermid, 2006: 13).

Box 5: Evidence provided by the respondents about the impact of the reform on land use

- Places that are designated as mobility hubs and as UGCs in Peel region, like Port Credit, Cooksville, and Mississauga City Center, are treated differently in the sense that the region and the municipalities have aspirations for those areas that they did not have 5 or 10 years ago, which shows the real impact the *Growth Plan* and the *Big Move* have on land use planning (Interviews 3 & 6).
- The case of Waterloo was cited as an example where the OMB ruled in favor of a developer challenging the Region's official plan. In Waterloo, where the Province is funding an \$800 million LRT, the municipality wanted to drive growth along the transit corridor and so it was proposing hardly any new land to accommodate the growth forecasted. The developers appealed to the OMB and the OMB overruled the region and said that the region had to approve another 2500 acres of land for essentially low density subdivision. Now this is all tied up in the courts because the region and the Province had approved the official plan before the developers appealed to the OMB. (Interviews 10 & 11)
- The case of Durham was cited as an example of provincial-municipal negotiation where the region was simply against the principles included in the *Growth Plan* and submitted an official plan that was not meeting *Growth Plan* requirements because it was designating way more land for development than the region could justify. Because the Province took a while too long to make a full decision (because the Province knew the region could justify some new urban land, it just had to figure out how much and exactly where), the developers and some of the local municipalities inside Durham Region appealed to the OMB. After a year-long period of behind the scene negotiations between the Region and the Province, both parties agreed to a settlement and a plan that "sort of" conforms to the *Growth Plan* (Interviews 6, 8 & 11).
- Similar to the case of Durham Region where the local municipalities were against the principles of the *Growth Plan*, the council members of Simcoe County, a more rural region, were not able to cooperate among themselves on how to come in to conformity. In this case, the Province amended the *Growth Plan* in 2012 to include a new chapter on Simcoe Sub-Area, assigning main urban areas for growth to the Region. A respondent explains that Province had to "do the job" for the county because were not doing it themselves and there were so many each of these separate little municipality inside Simcoe and there were so many developer interest, lot of complicated issues that a settlement at the OMB was not going to be likely. (Interview 8)
- The locations of the future hospital and the new city hall in Vaughan are cited by one respondent as an example of location decisions not respecting the principles included in the *Growth Plan*, because both projects are going to be located in car-dependent areas, whereas the municipality should have located it where the subway extension is going to end (remember the TYSSE up to Vaughan Corporate Center). The new hospital in Oakville is also going to be built in a car-dependent location, on a land that was originally owned by Province (Interview 6).
- The case of Metrolinx's building a six-story (free) parking garage at the Oakville GO train station to accommodate thousands of cars is cited as a transportation/land use decision not coherent with sustainable planning principles that continues to support suburban sprawl instead of mixed-use TOD around the stations (Interviews 6 & 15).
- The land north of the Oak Ridges Moraine was cited by one respondent as the "wild west" of development, as evidenced by the Big Bay Point Development on the shore of Lake Simcoe that was allowed to go through because of politics, despite the fact that it violated the *Growth Plan*:
I think those two plans [the Greenbelt Plan and the Growth Plan] are award-winning, they both won awards, however, in both cases, they are not being honored fully by the Province (...) Developers are out there trying to buy the land and develop outside of the growth centers and the local councils do not support the Growth Plan, neither the County Councils, so a lot of this is going to the Province for adjudication. And it's always tense when the Province has to overturn local decisions. So although the plans are good, the implementation is not really perfect. (Interview 7)

As another respondent puts it: “Municipalities would do anything for an office building. They’re not gonna tell a big company that they have to go all over to a transit area because they want the assessment and they’ll take the jobs. So the political thinking isn’t there (...)” (Interview 10). Although the *Growth Plan* does have a legal value through the *Planning Act* and the *Provincial Policy Statement*, it does not address those elements of municipal revenue structure and politics that influence land use decisions.

Another aspect of the 2005-2006 reform is working in the favour of an increase in the number of TODs, and it is the creation of Metrolinx through its mobility hub studies and station planning activities, which looks at real estate development and connectivity in the vicinity of new transit stations (Interview 12). After the adoption of the *Big Move*, Metrolinx developed its *Mobility Hub Guidelines* to provide guidance on developing mobility hub plans (Metrolinx, 2011). Since the *Mobility Hub Guidelines* were released, the agency has been actively involved in encouraging TOD around GO transit stations and the Crosstown transit stations, and the concepts of TOD and mobility hubs are generating interest from the development industry. However, Metrolinx involvement in mobility hub and station planning was only mentioned by two respondents (Interviews 12 & 15), and this is still an ongoing effort that has yet to produce any concrete evidence.

To short, the respondents’ view is that the apparent increase in densities currently observable in the GTHA is more due to a shift in the market rather than the *Greenbelt*, the *Growth Plan* and the *Big Move* (Metrolinx). Despite their limited impact on land use decisions (so far), those three elements of the reform provide good auspices for directing future growth in mobility hubs, UGCs, and along transit corridors, as well as limiting

greenfield development. Interviews were also helpful in pointing out to some elements that are undermining the implementation of the reform, notably:

- The unwillingness of the more rural municipalities to conform to the principles and requirements included in the *Growth Plan*;
- The ability for developers and municipalities to appeal provincial decisions to the OMB;
- The Province's own laxity in terms of respecting the principles included in the *Growth Plan*;
- Some elements of municipal revenue structure and politics driving land use decisions that are unaddressed in the *Growth Plan*.

As we shall see in the next paragraphs, the respondents' points of view are corroborated by Neptis researchers' study findings.

Neptis Assessment of the Growth Plan Implementation

In their report titled *Implementing the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe: Has the Strategic Regional Vision Been Compromised?*, Ryan Allen and Philippa Campsie (2013) assess the *Growth Plan* implementation by municipalities using land consumption. By looking at upper -, single -, and lower-tier official plans as well as background studies, the authors found that nearly 107,100 hectares would be urbanized over the course of the *Growth Plan* (up until 2031²³), representing about 1.5 times the area of the City of Toronto. This is about the same amount of land that was predicted to be urbanized in Neptis' 2002 business-as-

²³ The *Growth Plan* was amended in 2013 to update and extend population and employment projections up until 2041. The original version of the *Growth Plan* was based on growth forecasts to 2031.

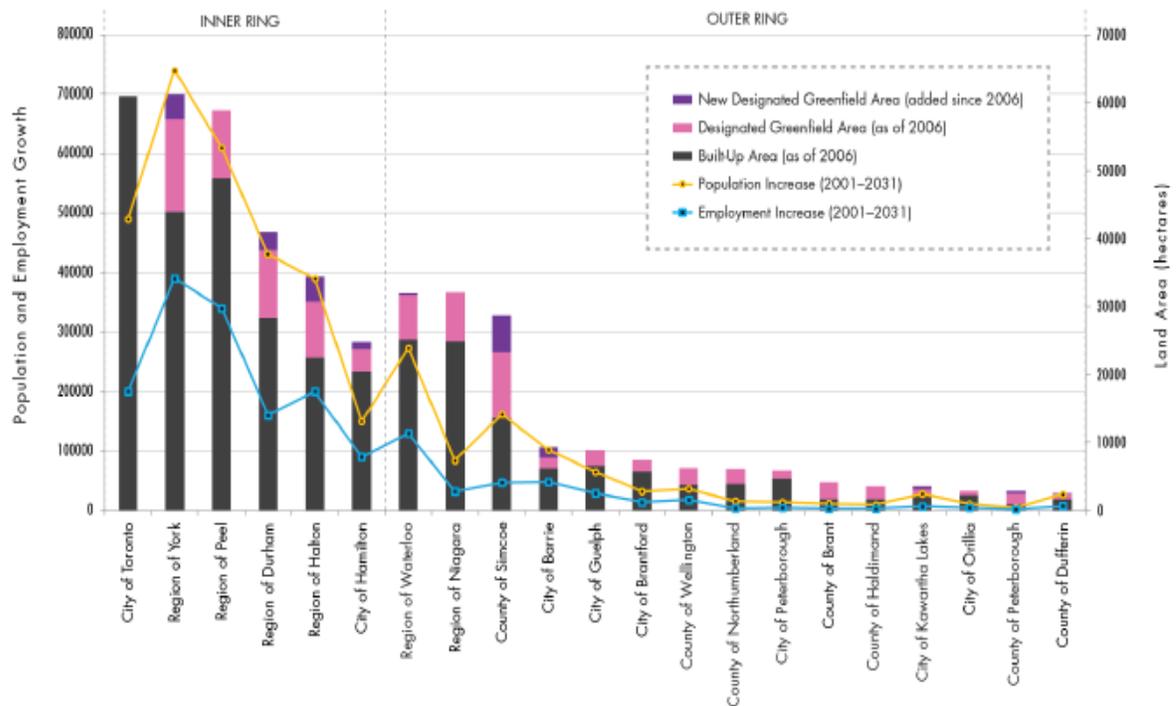
usual development scenario (Allen and Campsie, 2013: 9). In addition, according to their assessment, the authors evaluate that the gross densities for the Greater Golden Horseshoe will be similar in 2031 than they were in 2006, and even smaller in the municipalities of the outer ring suburbs (Allen & Campsie, 2013: 78). The authors also found some issues and inconsistencies in the way municipalities were approaching conformity and show that the *Growth Plan* implementation is under pressure and behind schedule, which impede the possibility to change the dominant patterns of dispersed, low-density suburban development. Despite the challenging outlook presented in the report, the findings point to some initiatives that can be undertaken by the Province to reverse the course of actions with regards to local land use decision-making.

One of the most salient study findings is the many exceptions made to the provisions of the plan and the fact that municipalities *and the Province* are treating the “minimum” density requirements as “maximal” requirements. In fact, although most municipalities have adopted the “minimum” intensity targets of 40% and the greenfield area density target of 50 people and jobs combined per hectare, only two municipalities plan to exceed those minimum targets and many have been permitted to use even lower targets. In addition, the *Growth Plan* includes no incentives for municipalities to go beyond the minimum targets and no penalties for those that fall short (Allen & Campsie, 2013: 13-14).

The authors also noted a lack of consistent methods in municipal land budgeting and uncoordinated implementation, because the *Growth Plan* delegates key implementation decisions to upper-tier municipalities. Upper-tier municipalities can decide to direct growth equally to all lower-tier municipalities or disproportionately to some municipalities, allowing for intraregional and intermunicipal disparities in growth allocation (Allan & Campsie, 2013:

24). The lack of clear guidelines on how municipalities should implement the *Growth Plan* and the battles over the interpretation of the plan at the OMB have resulted in a patchwork of different approaches to growth management across the region, and the variation in approaches are not related to local diversity or local needs. For example, some larger, more urbanized communities were assigned a lower intensification rate than some smaller, more rural communities (Allen & Campsie, 2013: 13). The inconsistencies in the way growth is allocated and translated in land budgets are illustrated in Figure 13, which shows the amount of land designated for development by single- and upper-tier municipalities.

Figure 13: Amount of land designated for development, by single- and upper-tier municipality



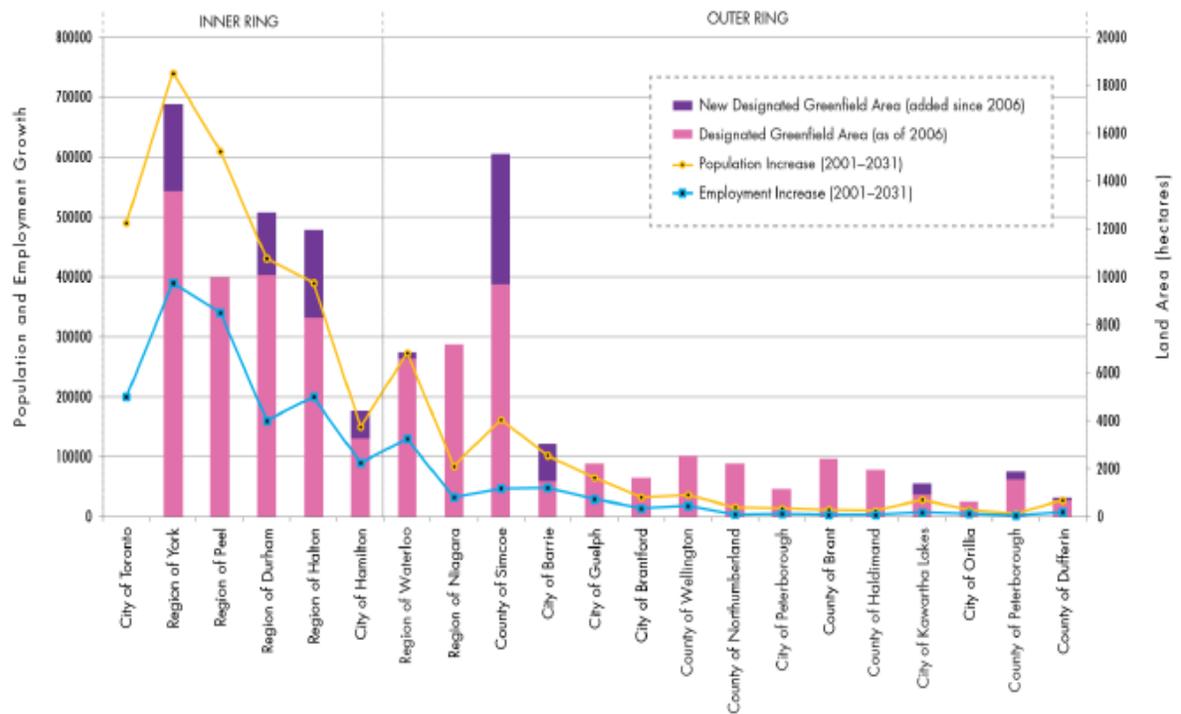
Source: Excerpted from Allen & Campsie (2013: 66)

In Figure 13 you can see that there is no consistency in terms of the relationship between the anticipated population and employment increases (yellow and blue lines, respectively) and the designated greenfield area (pink and purple sections of the bars). This is particularly visible when comparing the Region of Waterloo and the Region of Niagara. Although the former is expected to receive more than twice the population and job increases, the land required to accommodate this growth is roughly the same in both regions (Allen & Campsie, 2013: 66). In addition to inconsistencies in terms of the way municipalities plan for accommodating growth, although a municipality can plan for achieving 50 people and jobs combined per hectare overall, there is no requirement that every new development meet this standard: some can be planned at higher density, some can be planned lower. Note that the greenfield density target is a *planning* requirement only - the municipalities are not required to demonstrate that the density requirement has actually been achieved. Also, the *Growth Plan* does not require mixing people and jobs in any development, which can result in perpetuating the current segregation of uses (Allen & Campsie, 2013: 29).

The more troubling finding, according to Allen and Campsie, is related to the way growth is distributed between municipalities of the GTHA (the inner ring), and the municipalities outside and beyond the Greenbelt (the outer ring). Due to the exemptions allowed in the *Growth Plan* for many outer ring municipalities, the data shows that *half* of the land designated for urbanization is located in the outer ring municipalities, despite the fact that they are expected to receive only a *third* as many new residents and a *quarter* as many jobs compared to municipalities of the inner ring (Allen & Campsie, 2013: 79-80). Considering the fact that the municipalities in the outer ring are essentially rural and do not possess transit services and well-developed water and sewer infrastructures, this means that the

implementation of the plan allows for growth to continue outwards, at low densities, in a car-oriented pattern of development (Allen & Campsie, 2013: 13). In addition, the authors found that the forecast for the inner ring reduce the proportion of the population for the City of Toronto in favor of surrounding municipalities that have a supply of designated greenfield area land (particularly in York Region) (Allen & Campsie, 2013: 20). Figure 14 shows the supply of land for urban growth, by upper- and single-tier municipality, for 2001-2031. By omitting the existing build up areas, it allows a comparison of the designated greenfield areas to be urbanized.

Figure 14: Municipal land supply for urban growth 2001-2031



Source: Excerpted from Allen & Campsie (2013: 67)

In Figure 14, Simcoe County stands out for the amount of land to be urbanized compared to the forecast population and job increase. The City of Barrie also stands out, as its new greenfield area is similar in size to the existing greenfield area. As for the City of Toronto, its population and employment growth is being accommodated entirely within the built-up area without any additional greenfield areas (Allen & Campsie, 2013: 66)

The Neptis report concludes by stating that although it is too early to speculate on its effect on development patterns, the *Growth Plan* has been undermined before it had a chance to make an impact, precisely because the plan is not being fully implemented by municipalities that are not planning to reach and surpass their intensification and density targets (Allen & Campsie, 2013: 14). In addition, through the process of bringing their official plan to conformity with the *Growth Plan*, municipalities have designated about the same amount of land for urbanization as they might have without the *Growth Plan* (Allen & Campsie, 2013: 78). As the authors put it: “The outcome that the Province had hoped to avoid – the over designation of land for development at low average densities and in areas not well served by infrastructure – has in fact occurred, not in spite of the Growth Plan, but because of it.” (Allen & Campsie, 2013: 81).

Despite this pessimistic outlook on the *Growth Plan* implementation, the authors recommend a series of actions that could be undertaken by the Province to ensure that the vision and the objectives of the plan are not compromised. Besides recommendations related to standardized methodology for land budgeting, plan performance and monitoring, which are notably absent from the plan (Allen & Campsie, 2013: 31), it is suggested that the Province disallows the appeals of municipal land budgets to the OMB, and considers allowing the lower-tier municipalities to exceed the minimum densities and intensification rate targets set by

upper-tier municipalities. Other measures supporting intensification are also mentioned, such as removing barriers to planning compact and complete communities and establishing incentives for brownfield redevelopment and reuse of buildings. Most importantly, the final recommendation is related to municipal taxation structure, an element acknowledged by our respondents. Citing Pamela Blais in her book, *Perverse Cities*, the authors note that regulation can only do so much to change development patterns (Allan & Campsie, 2013: 83):

It is very difficult, if not impossible to achieve higher densities through regulation alone, particularly in the absence of accurate, transparent pricing. Minimum density regulations are exceedingly difficult to implement: unless the development economics support efficient densities, more compact development cannot simply be regulated into existence. (Blais in Allan & Campsie, 2013: 84)

Given the fact that fiscal measures to support growth management are presented in a 2004 discussion paper, the Province is well aware that true-cost pricing for infrastructure, development charges that reflect the different costs of development in different locations, land transfer taxes, and property tax reform are necessary to avoid sprawling development in the region (Government of Ontario, 2004: 49-50).

To Sum Up

What can we conclude about the impacts of the reform on land use decisions based on the respondents perceptions and observations and the assessment of the *Growth Plan* conducted by Neptis? Looking back at the respondents perceptions, we can see that the Neptis report essentially confirms their observations that:

- **The principles and requirements included in the *Growth Plan* are not likely to be implemented in the more rural municipalities (especially in the outer ring), either because the Province allow them to be exempt from the provisions included by the**

- Growth Plan*, or because the planning requirements do not mean that the developments will actually meet density targets;
- The ability for developers and municipalities to appeal provincial decisions to the OMB is hampering the *Growth Plan* implementation, which is why “a lot of people” (Interview 6, supported by Interviews 10, 11 & 15) and Neptis researchers are calling for the abolishment of this right to appeal provincial decisions related to the conversion of farmland to urban.
 - The Province’s own laxity in terms of respecting the principles included in the *Growth Plan* will most likely result in the same patterns of sprawling development being built across the region; and
 - Some elements of municipal revenue structure and politics driving land use decisions are unaddressed in the *Growth Plan*, and tackling these issues is essential to induce a change in land use development patterns.

In addition, based on the facts that 1) new major employment centers are often located in areas where rapid transit services are not provided; 2) respondents often pointed to example of office, employment, and service location choices not coherent with the principles in the *Growth Plan*, and that, in general, they said that land use decisions were not coherent with transportation decisions; and 3) Neptis density projections indicate that the future development patterns will not be more supportive of transit services than they are now; we can safely say that there is little evidence that land use decisions are coherent with transportation decisions.

Nonetheless, we must remember that the market and consumer preferences are changing in favor of more compact forms of development. In addition, the *Growth Plan* is helping municipalities that are on board with the intensification agenda to justify and legitimize densification.

Tradeoffs Between Accountability, Democracy, and Effectiveness

One of the last questions this study addresses is whether the new institutional framework, i.e. the *Greenbelt Plan*, the *Growth Plan*, and Metrolinx, involves any tradeoffs between the principles of accountability (responsibility and public scrutiny through transparency), democracy (public debate and deliberation, but also representativeness), and effectiveness (cost-effectiveness and/or local and regional changes promoting sustainability)²⁴. To answer this question, I am relying again mainly on the respondents' perceptions and observations, as well as evidence provided by Anne Golden in her latest research report on governance of regional transit systems (Golden, 2014), and by Toronto transit expert Steve Munro and journalist John Lorinc in various media outlets. What I have found is first, the two dimensions of the reform do present some implications or characteristics in terms of accountability, democracy, and effectiveness (more than tradeoffs *per se*); second, and this was unexpected and interesting from a conceptual point of view, is that certain dimensions of the regional institutional design seem to act as “guardians” of certain principles (I will come back to this in the last chapter). The implications in terms of accountability, democracy, and effectiveness associated with the growth strategy are presented first, because the Ontario land use planning regime has not fundamentally been altered by the reform and therefore the

²⁴ The other sub-questions about the representational structure and the impact of regional change in power dynamics on sustainability, more theoretical in nature, are addressed in the “comparison” chapter.

characteristics are clearer and more straightforward. As for the tradeoffs involved in the new institutional framework for regional transportation, they are more complex because a new organization was created (Metrolinx) and the composition and appointment rules of its board of directors were modified three years after its creation, adding a layer of complexity in the mix. As the next paragraphs show, the respondents do not really commented on the tradeoffs involved in the adoption and implementation of the *Growth Plan* and the *Greenbelt Plan*, but they are quite vocal about the new regional transportation regime.

Tradeoffs Involved in the Land Use Planning Regime

The *Greenbelt Plan* and the *Growth Plan*, although they require municipalities to update their official plan, do not fundamentally depart from the existing planning regime, which is framed by the *Planning Act* and its associated *Provincial Policy Statement*. Therefore, the two elements of the Province's growth management strategy do not change the lines of accountability. Indeed, the case of the *Growth Plan* and the *Greenbelt Plan*, the accountability is shared in the sense that the province is responsible to its constituents for adopting and enforcing the provincial legislations, and the municipalities are responsible to their city council for implementing the reform by conforming (or not) to the requirements included in the plans (Interview 11). In terms of democracy, the *Growth Plan* and the *Greenbelt Plan* were developed in collaboration with the municipal sector, the developers and the environmental community, and the extensive consultation efforts were important in generating some buy in and legitimacy to the process. In addition, the fact that the plans are implemented by the regions and municipalities ensures that the reform is being executed by representative, democratically elected local governments who have jurisdictional authority over land use permitting and zoning (but not land use conversion, which is a provincial jurisdiction) (Interview 11).

However, the fact that provincial and municipal decisions can be appealed to the OMB raises some questions in terms of democracy and representation. Indeed, although the OMB is a legal arbitration process between provincial, local, and private interests, the fact that its board is comprised of unelected laypeople appointed by the Lieutenant Governor in Council under the recommendation of Ontario government harms its legitimacy (Interview 10; Government of Ontario, 2015). In other words, the OMB decisions are being reached by people who are not professional planners, not elected, and therefore not accountable to the population. In terms of effectiveness, the conclusions of the last section shows that a few elements are coming in the way of the plans achieving their objectives of changing land use development patterns, notably the appeals to the OMB and the fact that the reform does not address municipal revenue structure and politics.

Tradeoffs Involved in the New Regional Transportation Regime

The creation of Metrolinx has fundamentally changed the regional transportation regime in the sense that prior to the adoption of the *Metrolinx Act* in 2006, there was no organization responsible for regional transportation (Government of Ontario, 2006b). However, the reform is not being fully implemented in the sense that the Province has yet to adopt a TPPS, as enabled by the legislation, which would compel municipalities to bring their transportation master plans in conformity with the *Big Move*. In the absence of this legislative requirement, the tradeoffs in terms of accountability, democracy, and efficiency associated with the new transportation planning regime are associated with Metrolinx's mandate, resources and representational structure. The latter was unilaterally changed by the provincial government in 2009, three years after the creation of the organization, after the *Big Move* was adopted. As previously mentioned, the first board of directors was comprised of 11 members:

2 appointees from the provincial government, 4 appointees from the City of Toronto, 1 appointee from Hamilton, and 1 appointee from each of the Regional Municipalities of Durham, Halton, Peel and York (Government of Ontario, 2006b). The board composition and appointment rules were then amended in 2009 to exclude elected members and local appointees from the board, and replaced by 11 non-elected members appointed by the Minister of Transportation (note that according to the *Metrolinx Act*, the board can be composed of a maximum of 15 directors [Government of Ontario, 2009a]). Whereas the first board was controlled by local elected official of region, the second one is controlled by the Minister of Transportation. The next paragraphs discuss the implications of this change in the representational structure and the creation of Metrolinx is general for the principles of accountability, democracy and efficiency.

The change in Metrolinx's board of directors was justified by the province as necessary because the delivery of the *Big Move* required that the people involved in the prioritization process not be in conflict between their local and regional interests (Interviews 5, 12 & 13). However, as discussed previously, some respondents mentioned that the "true" motive of the Province for changing the board composition and appointment rules was to regain some control over regional transit and Metrolinx in general (Interviews 1, 9 & 13). Regardless of the Province's motive, the fact that local elected representatives are now entirely excluded from Metrolinx decision-making structure is condemned by many respondents (Interviews 1, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 12, 13 & 15), experts (Golden, 2014; Munro, 2013; Transit Investment Strategy Advisory Panel, 2013), and Metrolinx itself (Metrolinx, 2013b). By excluding local elected members from the board, the Province went from one extreme (all elected), to another (all non-elected). For some respondents, what is more problematic than the fact that it changed the

board composition is the fact that it changed the *appointment rules*, replacing local appointees with provincial appointees. This has important implications in terms of accountability and democracy, because there is no more link between Metrolinx and the community it serves, and no engagement of the locally elected representatives in the development and approval of Metrolinx policies and strategies (Interview 15; Golden, 2014: 15).

Before getting into these consequences more specifically, it is important to mention that the board composition and appointment rules are not trivial, random decisions. On the opposite, they are quite fundamental and represent an object of political negotiations leading to the creation (and sometimes abolishment) of regional organizations. The following quote describes the negotiation leading to the political agreement between the former Mayor of Toronto, David Miller, and the former Provincial Premier, Dalton McGuinty, which had the board composition and appointment rules at its center:

Interviewer: Do you think that at the creation of Metrolinx, the Province knew that once the plan was adopted, they would change the board composition?

Respondent: I would hate to think that because a lot of people in Toronto were opposed to this [the creation of Metrolinx], it was not in [Toronto's] strategic interest, and the Premier looked at [the Toronto Mayor] in the eyes and shook [hands] over the way it would work. If [the Premier] had intended always to do this, than that was a devious thing to shake somebody's hand and say "right we've agreed with [the Mayor of Toronto] that's fantastic", but it is possible, and in hindsight it sure looks like it, and it does fit with my theory that they wanted control, right? When Metrolinx was set up originally, the ghost of the Greater Toronto Services Board was there in one perspective, which is, how many votes does Toronto get, and the regional chairs were very up and arm about this. [The Mayor of Toronto] agreed that [Toronto] would have less than a majority, four of nine, plus the chair and the vice-chair appointed by the Province. Four of nine. And [the Mayor of Toronto] agreed although that sold out [Toronto's] strategic interest a tiny bit, because in exchange for that, [Toronto] got the right to appoint [their] people, not to say that the Province says who it would recommend, but to appoint them [themselves] essentially. And that was important for [Toronto] to do for other reasons that I won't get into here, but [Toronto was] trying to create more independence for the city to act on its own. So this treated [Toronto] as a mature partner, not some sort of junior subordinate, and it was reasonable to give up a vote to do that, and [Toronto] never lost any votes by that one vote anyway. And I thought the balance was good. The Province had the chair and the vice chair, that's who they give their instructions to, we have five people from the regions, they were good, they brought their perspective, and then [Toronto] have a strong voice with four, and because they were appointed by the municipalities for the reason I said before, there was a very effective,

knowledgeable, and detailed discussion about what was good from a transportation perspective. We've reached a good plan pretty quickly. (Interview 9)

According to this respondent, whereas the first iteration of Metrolinx improved regional transportation planning, the second iteration of the board is impeding it (Interview 9).

As mentioned previously, the fact that the board is now composed of unelected provincial appointees renders the agency and its regional plan vulnerable to political interference, which not only harms its accountability, but makes the agency less able to fulfill its non-partisan, non-political mandate of making evidence-based planning recommendations and investment decisions (Golden, 2014: 16). The following quotes describe the political dynamic of Metrolinx's non-elected board. This first quote is a respondent's general account of the consequence of moving from an all-elected to an all non-elected board, whereas the second quote is Steve Munro's recount of the provincially-appointed board *modus operandi*, based specifically on the Scarborough subway decision, but more broadly on his observations since he has attended the public part of the board meetings from the agency's inception in 2006-2007:

Interviewer: Do you think Metrolinx is independent?

Respondent: Not really. It is on paper, but its sole shareholder is the Province. And my personal opinion is that Metrolinx wouldn't do anything unless the Province agrees. They would never go against a Minister or a position in the Province. I did as a member. I said no, that doesn't make any sense, that's stupid we shouldn't do that. I was the only one voting that. It's politics. Here's the irony. When the premier created the board of just all citizens, the rationale was that then it would be independent and removed from politics. It was worse than ever. Because that removed the accountability of the elected members that used to be on the board that pushed back. Whereas all those people on the citizen board didn't and so the Province really control Metrolinx, that's my personal opinion. (Interview 6)

Metrolinx board meetings are inevitably sleepy events, with lots of good news and almost no controversy. Directors ask soft questions, almost embarrassed that they might put management to some trouble. Almost always, the answers confirm that life is good, the passengers are happy, and everyone can be confident that the GTA's transit matters are in expert, dependable hands. The board meeting held Tuesday was a bit different: it was filled with throngs of reporters, there seeking Metrolinx's response to transportation minister Glen Murray's two-stop Scarborough subway announcement. (...) Was this on Metrolinx's agenda? No. Metrolinx doesn't do controversy, especially when the minister's involved.

(...) The city and region now face a period of uncertainty extending beyond coming provincial and municipal elections. Will the new administrations at either level continue to support transit, and will those put in charge consider the good of the region over their own political ambitions? Metrolinx is an agency at which the puppet-master's hands and wires are all too obvious. Glen Murray has wounded its credibility as an honest, unbiased provider of advice to the province and to the public at large, and the relevance of its board is evaporating. (Munro, 2013)

Because they were part of the initial consensus leading to its adoption, elected official members were also acting as “champions of the *Big Move* plan” (Interview 12), a level of responsibility that disappeared once they were replaced by provincially-appointed members. As another respondent puts it, local representation on Metrolinx's board of directors “makes it more difficult for transportation ministers and premiers to change their minds every six months about what is politically better rather than what is transportation better” (Interview 4).

In addition to this shortfall in terms of responsibility to the local community, the new board *appointment rules* impact the transparency of the planning and the decision-making process in the sense that it enables the province to interfere politically. Indeed, because the Province's transportation investment decisions are made disregarding and muzzling the agency's professional recommendations, and according to whichever (political) criteria, the public is “very confused” about regional transit projects (Interview 4). Proof of this lack of transparency are the refusals of the provincial government to release information about three major transit infrastructure projects, i.e. the Scarborough subway, the Eglinton Crosstown, and the Pearson Express Air Rail Link. As mentioned by John Lorinc in his “Spacing Investigation” about the Scarborough subway:

[Metrolinx's document about the true costs of the Scarborough subway decision] are not the only documents about the Liberals' transit plans that remain under lock and key, and therefore beyond the reach of public scrutiny. The Liberal government, which previously sought to block the release of documents relating to the gas plant cancellations, filibustered three requests for information moved by NDP transportation critic Rosario Marchese last December. They include:

- a request for all documents generated from July 15, 2013, to September 10, 2013 that pertain to the plan to use subway “technology” in the Scarborough RT corridor;
- “all documents between August 1, 2012, and November 30, 2012, related to the operation of the Eglinton Crosstown”
- “any market studies conducted between January 1, 2010, and December 3, 2013, related to ridership projections for the air-rail link.” (Lorinc, 2014)

The political nature of the board (both in terms of its composition and appointment rules) is not the only dimension of the regional institutional design that contributes to its lack of transparency. The fact that part of the board meetings occur privately, *in camera*, was also mentioned by the respondents as a lack of transparency (Interviews 5 & 6). As for the public part of the board meeting, one respondent mentioned that the elements discussed in those were “meaningless stuff” (Interview 6). Despite this call for transparency through the public and media access to the board meetings, another respondent believes that the danger of having public board meetings is sensationalism, adding:

I’m in favor of real accountability, documentation about how the money is spent, the process about how decisions were taken, open and honest communication. To me open and honest communication is not the same as letting a camera in. Sometimes it works the opposite. People don’t say what they really mean, and as candidly because all the cameras are there you’re not going to say what you really mean. So it’s actually worse. To me, transparency and public visibility and intrusion are not the same. (Interview 7).

Self-censorship argument aside, the evidence showed in this study points to the fact that the access to documentation about how the money is spent is not granted and the process about how and why investment decisions were made is unclear. In addition, the *board composition* has another type of impact on Metrolinx’s transparency (or lack thereof), in the sense that local elected officials, and elected representatives in general, are used to being in the public eye and to doing public debates in a public session (Interviews 1, 12 & 13). As a contrast, private sector members are not used to have extreme, highly spirited debates in public (Interview 12).

Besides these implications in terms of accountability, one respondent pointed out a dimension of tradeoff between transparency and efficiency, in the sense that if Metrolinx is transparent about planning a route or identifying a proposed new facility, the speculators will start buying properties around it and if Metrolinx need to secure them for the route or the station, it will end up paying more for the project (Interview 10)²⁵. Another type of tradeoff between transparency, democracy, and efficiency is related to the need to be accountable and transparent to the public and doing all the necessary background studies (BCAs), versus the need to advance infrastructure projects within a certain timeframe and certain budget. Transportation agencies and governments have to find the right balance to move a project forward quickly, but with the level of coordination and public involvement that is necessary to achieve buy-in (Interviews 2, 4 & 14). As one respondent puts it: “Nobody ever said that democracy is efficient” (Interview 15).

Speaking of democracy, the absence of local elected officials and/or local appointees on Metrolinx board of directors is undermining its representativeness. However, the flipside of this argument is that investment decisions are made by the Provincial government, which is comprised of elected officials and therefore representative of the population (Interviews 3 & 11). The response to this argument is that, although they might have some say about it because some of the money is provincial, the people representing other areas of the province should not decide which project should or should not be constructed in Toronto (Interview 9). In the end, as we have seen with the case of the Scarborough RT Replacement and Extension, the

²⁵ A land value capture strategy could help solving this issue (as suggested by Metrolinx and the Transit Investment Strategy Advisory Panel), but the City of Toronto does not support land value capture as a revenue tool for transit projects (Metrolinx, 2014b: 4).

TYSSE up to Vaughan Corporate Center and with Schabas' evaluation of the *Big Move* (as well as the UPX – see epilogue), the projects that are being constructed do not represent the best use of public money. In addition, another dimension of democracy, which is “public debate and deliberation”, is not all well served by the agency. Although Metrolinx has been carrying out extensive public outreach with stakeholders and staff from different levels of government since its inception (Interviews 3, 5, 8 & 15), “public debate and deliberation” remains a challenge in the transportation industry that has traditionally operated behind closed doors (Interviews 8 & 12). As for the quality of Metrolinx's public outreach and consultation processes, its evaluation is beyond the scope of this study.

In terms of the implications of Metrolinx for the principle of effectiveness, keep in mind that government agencies do not have the same goals as the private sector might have, in the sense that the former has the mission of protecting the public good and providing public services, rather than operating at a profit (which is more associated to the notion of efficiency). Metrolinx's effectiveness is thus less considered by the respondents in terms of cost-efficiency, but more in terms of its ability to accomplish its mandate, as well as the regional/integration/coordination nature of its activities which might bring some efficiencies (Interview 12). About this latter dimension of effectiveness, it is part of Metrolinx's mandate to create a RTP integrating different modes of transportation and infrastructure and to manage procurement initiatives with smaller transit operators (Golden, 2014: 19). Regarding regional efficiencies, respondent noted that indeed, instead of each municipality doing their own transit planning, proposals and justifications, with no accountability to the region and bloated budgets because the province would pay anyway, now there is a regional process looking at the associated costs and benefits of each project (Interview 5). However, Metrolinx has more clout

in the regional planning and operational processes than it has in the provincial decision-making process (Interview 3), which has resulted in the fact that the transit projects that are moving forward are not the most cost-effective ones (in terms of money per new rider). In addition, because municipalities are not compelled to conform to the *Big Move* (remember, the Province has yet to adopt a TPPS), Metrolinx relies essentially on this infrastructure funding to implement the RTP, which hinders its implementation potential.

The absence of local representation on Metrolinx decision-making committee not only undermines its democratic character, it also contributes to an already tense relationship with the TTC, which has resulted unproductive delays in the implementation of the Presto fare card and the construction of Eglinton LRT (Golden, 2014: 16). The following quote describe this complex dynamic between the human resources and technical capacities of Metrolinx, the competition between Metrolinx and the TTC, and the local representation on the board of directors:

Respondent: [The fact that you had the regional chairs and the Mayor of Toronto on the board of directors] overcame another weakness of Metrolinx in particular, not necessarily the regional structure, which is the staff are...tell you the truth they're incompetent. They're not knowledgeable enough and they couldn't be because the only organization in this Province that has the technical expertise necessary is the TTC. And it's not about having one or two people from the TTC, they took one guy (...) it's about the institutional competence and knowledge. So the TTC for example that plans an LRT line, is relying on its own history of how it analyses its ridership and ridership projections and how you nail that into the official plan of Toronto that is protecting development ahead of time, and it knows how it relies on his data, it knows where the stop needs to be in terms of distance and all of that. Metrolinx essentially had to hire people who are really planning consultants or engineering consultants. That's all it was available for them. They get bright young people, but there's no institutional history or depth, and there can't be. So while you had the regional chairs and the Mayor of Toronto on [the board], you got a whole work against that institutional structural lack of knowledge which I call incompetence. Once [they were] gone and you had citizens who didn't have that knowledge, and staff or essentially consultants, you did create a problem leading to some paralysis and lots of mistakes. There's just isn't the depth of history and expertise. And that can be developed over time, but one of the lessons I take from this that you wanna do things quickly, create a new structure like this, you gotta be exceptionally careful about. Because, maybe 15 years from now they'll have all of the institutional expertise, but they sure didn't have it the first five years, it's not possible, it's not that they're bad people, it's just not possible.

Interviewer: And when you say it caused some kind of paralysis and bad choices, can you give me examples?

Respondent: Sure. The planning of the Eglinton LRT in particular, and the Finch LRT as well were delayed, probably a year, and it was because everytime [the TTC] made a decision, the TTC about where, how difficult problems should be resolved, like an intersection or complicated or where a shop should be, Metrolinx would say "no, that's wrong", and then [the TTC] would have to fight [Metrolinx] on it, and brief them, and eventually, they would come to say you know what, we've thought about it, you're right, but it would take 2-3 months, and this happened again, and again, and again, and again, and again. Because of what I call this structural incompetence. And it's one of the reasons [we] saw the TTC walked away that [said] "we're not gonna be juniors, you guys drive this project". It was for that reason, the TTC didn't respect judgement calls of Metrolinx." (Interview 9)

Another respondent does mention that Metrolinx, especially without the municipalities, is not competent or capable of effectively renewing the *Big Move* (Interview 13). To the extent that the initial board was compensating for the agency's lack of expertise in transit planning, operation and construction, the lack of local representation on the current board is undermining its effectiveness in carrying out its mandate.

Finally, another element besides its "advisory only" mandate and its lack of local representation is hampering Metrolinx' effectiveness: its lack of funding autonomy and sufficiency (Interview 7; Golden, 2014: 16). The funding autonomy is closely tied to the agency's independence and accountability, in the sense that Metrolinx would be less prone to political influence in choosing and prioritizing the projects that represent the best value for money if it has its own independent revenue source (Interview 10). This absence of funding autonomy and authority to raise revenues through taxation are acknowledged and documented in *Metrolinx Investment Strategy* (2013b), as well as in the final report of the *Transit Investment Strategy Advisory Panel* (2013). The specific recommendations of these reports are addressed in the "recommendations" section of the conclusion.

Because of its multidimensional aspects, it is difficult to summarize this section of the implications of the reform for the principles of accountability, democracy, and

effectiveness. However, one thing to remember about my analysis is that the change in Metrolinx’s board composition and appointment rules that replaced local elected members with provincially-appointed, non-elected members has allowed the province to bypass Metrolinx recommendations when funding transit infrastructure projects. As a result of this change in its representation structure, the transportation agency is not accountable to, nor representative of local communities anymore, and the high politization of the transit infrastructure funding issue it has led to investment choices that are questionable in terms of efficiency, notably because the Province’s lack of transparency makes independent assessments more difficult. Finally, the fact that Metrolinx has no independent revenue sources harms its ability to implement the *Big Move* by prioritizing projects that reach a regional consensus and represent the best value for money.

Summary of the Toronto Case

What can we conclude from Toronto’s 2005-2006 reform? Has the *Greenbelt Plan*, the *Growth Plan*, and Metrolinx improved the planning process and the overall sustainability of the region by leading to better decisions in terms of transportation infrastructure funding choices and land uses? What are the implications of the reform for the principles of accountability, democracy, and effectiveness? This section attempts to summarize the study findings by providing some highlights, offers some policy recommendations in light of the current and future outlook of the regional planning and political environments, and discusses some of the findings’ theoretical implications.

Highlights

This sub-section summarizes the impacts of the reform on the planning process, transportation investments, land use decisions, and its implications in terms of accountability, democracy, and efficiency, by essentially restating the findings presented in **bold** across the chapter.

Impacts on the Planning Process

The 2005-2006 reform that enacted the *Greenbelt*, the *Growth Plan*, and Metrolinx did improve the planning process by improving the regional land use regime to the next level and by creating a modern regional transportation planning framework which enabled the Province to move forward with a financial commitment in transportation infrastructures. Overall, the reform increased the occasions for communications and interactions between administrative staff, thus improving cooperation and coordination among stakeholders in terms of planning, especially at the regional (GTHA level). However, the reform improved the relationship among actors as far as planning and “easy wins” were concerned, financial implications and jurisdictional rivalries slowing the progress on other fronts, such as the *Growth Plan* implementation, transit project implementation, mobility hubs, and transit service and fare integration.

Impacts on Transportation Investments

In order to determine whether the reform helped creating a decision-making environment more susceptible of achieving sustainable outcomes, I explored the stakeholders’ perception of the changes brought by the reform and assessed the actual implementation of the *Big Move* along with the types of transportation projects that are funded.

Although is currently \$16 billion worth of transportation capital funding, mostly for rapid transit projects, from the three levels of government, including over \$13 billion from the provincial government alone, the evidence collected clearly indicates that the evidence-based planning process instituted by Metrolinx has been “hijacked by the political process”. Resulting from the fact that “politics trump policy”, the better transit investment projects are sometimes set aside in favor of worse projects. Transit might be back on the agenda but collectively, the projects planned by Metrolinx would not allow the agency to reach the goals identified in the *Big Move* and make the best use of available funds. Nonetheless, although the projects selected do not represent the best value for money, the reinvestment in transit infrastructure is an improvement from the financial situation prevailing before Metrolinx was created and a more sustainable investment choice than building suburban highways.

The fact of the matter is that Metrolinx does not have the ability to implement the *Big Move* – the Province does. Its mandate is solely advisory, there is no TPPS to force municipalities to comply with the RTP, and the agency has no independent revenue source which would allow it to fund projects directly on its own without seeking political approval. In addition, the fact that local appointees were removed from the board of directors and replaced by political, non-elected appointees has enabled the Province to easily disregard Metrolinx recommendations. As a result, the credibility of Metrolinx and the entire transportation planning process are now put into question.

Impacts on Land Use Decisions

Since most of the official plans are not even conforming to the *Growth Plan* requirements yet, it is too early for assessing any correlation or causal relationship between the growth strategy and the land use patterns. Despite this disclosure, what can we conclude about

the impacts of the reform on land use decisions? Looking back at the respondents perceptions, we can see that the Neptis report essentially confirms their observations, and that:

- The principles and requirements included in the *Growth Plan* are not likely to be implemented in the more rural municipalities (especially in the outer ring), either because the Province allow them to be exempt from the provisions included by the *Growth Plan*, or because the planning requirements do not mean that the developments will actually meet density targets;
- The ability for developers and municipalities to appeal provincial decisions to the OMB is hindering the *Growth Plan* implementation, which is why a lot of people, including Neptis researchers, are calling for the abolishment of this right to appeal provincial decisions related to the conversion of farmland to urban.
- The Province's own laxity in terms of respecting the principles included in the *Growth Plan* will most likely result in the same patterns of sprawling development being built across the region; and
- Some elements of municipal revenue structure and politics driving land use decisions are unaddressed in the *Growth Plan*, and tackling these issues is essential to induce a change in land use development patterns.

In addition, based on the facts that 1) new major employment centers are often located in areas where rapid transit services are not provided; 2) respondents often pointed to example of office, employment, and service location choices not coherent with the principles in the *Growth Plan*, and that, in general, they said that land use decisions were not coherent with transportation decisions; and 3) Neptis density projections indicate that the future development

patterns will not be more supportive of transit services than they are now; we can safely say that there is little evidence that land use decisions are coherent with transportation decisions.

Nonetheless, we must remember that the market and consumer preferences are changing in favor of more compact forms of development. In addition, the *Growth Plan* is helping municipalities that are on board with the intensification agenda to justify and legitimize densification.

Tradeoffs Between Accountability, Democracy, and Effectiveness

The change in Metrolinx's board composition and appointment rules that replaced local elected members with provincially-appointed, non-elected members has allowed the province to bypass Metrolinx recommendations when funding transit infrastructure projects. As a result of this change in its representation structure, the transportation agency is not accountable to, nor representative of local communities anymore. In addition, the high politicization of the transit infrastructure funding issue has led to investment choices that are questionable in terms of efficiency, notably because the Province's lack of transparency makes independent assessments more difficult. Finally, the fact that Metrolinx has no independent revenue sources harms its ability to implement the *Big Move* by prioritizing projects that reach a regional consensus and represent the best value for money.

Policy recommendations & Prospective outlook

The findings presented earlier in this chapter are pointing out to some "obvious" policy recommendations. In addition, respondents were asked for recommendations of their own and while doing so, they often mentioned some policy options that were already out in the media or in the literature. The current political environment is also seeing some interesting developments that were unforeseen when the interviews were conducted in the spring of 2014.

For the sake of clarity, the policy recommendations and prospective outlook are classified under the “land use” and “transportation” categories.

Before treating them separately, let's mention that many respondents called for coordinating the reviews of the *Big Move*, the *Greenbelt Plan* and the *Growth Plan*, which are all due in 2015-2016, and that all the plans pertaining to the Greater Golden Horseshoe should be within one ministry (Interviews 6, 10 & 11). In this regard, the Transit Investment Advisory Panel recommended that the review of *The Big Move* be brought forward to begin in 2014, and that the review of the *Growth Plan* also be advanced to 2014 so that the two reviews can be coordinated (2013: 35). A coordinated review of the plans and their assignment to one ministry would facilitate the integration of transportation and land use planning, which are currently treated in silos by different ministries. As mentioned previously, the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing is undertaking a coordinated review of the *Greenbelt Plan* and the *Growth Plan*, and started by releasing (mostly baseline) performance indicators reports for each of those plans (Ontario Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, 2015a & 2015b). As for Metrolinx, it is currently working with the Province to align the review of the *Big Move* with the review of the growth management strategy by sharing information on the development of performance measures, identifying policy areas where coordination is needed, and coordinating timing for analysis to promote mutually supportive work plans (Metrolinx, 2014b). The reviews are thus not quite entirely aligned, but there is some level of cooperation and coordination actually going on.

There are three main recommendations suggested by the respondents that pertain to land use: 1) provincial decisions on municipal official plan updates should not be appealable to the OMB; 2) a structure of incentives and disincentives should be developed in order for

municipalities to at least comply with the requirements of the *Growth Plan* (by making provincial funding conditional to conformity, for example); and 3) the questions of municipal revenue structure and the development industry's contributions to municipal election campaigns should be addressed. Because these recommendations are somewhat covered at some point or another within the text and investigating them further would require an analysis that goes beyond the scope of this study, I do not expand further here on exactly how they should be tackled. In addition, there is no indication in the literature, nor in the media, that the Provincial government will act on this matter any time soon.

Recommendations in terms of transportation. There are three main recommendations that would improve the current regional transportation framework: 1) the Province should enact a TPPS compelling municipalities to conform to the *Big Move*; 2) Metrolinx should have access to an autonomous revenue stream that would allow the agency to fund projects on its own; 3) local representation should be brought back into Metrolinx's decision-making structure. I am providing some comments or details about these recommendations either because they are directly addressed by the respondents or because they are currently (as of spring 2015) talked about in the media.

As mentioned earlier in this chapter, the enactment of a **TPPS** that could compel municipalities to conform to the *Big Move* is particularly important for Metrolinx, because it would make the plan more "politician-proof". In addition, the TPPS would help integrating land use and transportation planning by encouraging municipalities to support intensification along transit corridors. The development of a TPPS by the Province, as enabled by the *Metrolinx Act* (2006), was recommended in *Metrolinx Investment Strategy* (Metrolinx, 2013b: 48) and endorsed by the Transit Investment Strategy Advisory Panel (2013). There is no word

exactly on why the Province has yet to enact a TPPS, but one respondent mentions that if the Province does so, the TPPS would give legislative responsibility for the province (in addition to the municipalities) to be bound by the *Big Move*, which is constitutionally questionable (the fact of having an agency dictate the Province where to invest) (Interview 5). From this standpoint, the Province inaction is understandable. Given that the enactment of a TPPS requiring municipalities to comply with the *Big Move* is desirable but unlikely, giving Metrolinx some control over land use and/or an autonomous revenue stream is even more important for seeing projects included in the RTP be constructed.

I will not go into the details of what **kind of revenues or revenue tools should Metrolinx be given access to**, but let me point out to a few elements that are worth mentioning here. When the *Metrolinx Act* was amended in 2009 to absorb GO Transit into its structure, Metrolinx was required by the Province to develop an investment strategy that included proposals for revenue generation tools to support the implementation of the Big Move. *Metrolinx Investment Strategy* was then released in 2013, laying out not only a series of funding measures that could be adopted, but also proposals for optimizing the transit and transportation system and improving the agency's governance structure, accountability and transparency (Metrolinx, 2013b). Instead of acting on the recommendations of Metrolinx's Investment Strategy, the Provincial government commissioned its own Transit Investment Strategy Advisory Panel to review and advise the government on *Metrolinx Investment Strategy*. After the Transit Panel released its final report titled *Making the Move: Choices and Consequences* (2013), endorsing a lot of Metrolinx's recommendations, the Province decided to not take immediate action and the Transit Panel report was shelved. This quote gives a sense of the frustration stemming from the Province's inaction:

You got to have an investment strategy. So I pushed from 2008, right through...this one the liberals had a majority government, they could have got it. For political reasons they said no no, we need to study this. It has to be done thoroughly. I said OK, fine. So Metrolinx did their report, the Board of Trade did a report, an investment strategy, the Transit Advisory Panel, last fall, did one. No shortage of advice. And then they lost the majority in the 2011 election, they got the minority, they got even more scared and they didn't do [expletive]. So now, here we are. So from 2008 to 2014, for six years, that's very frustrating because we lost that opportunity. We had the majority government we could've done it. (Interview 6)

The final report of the Transit Strategy Investment Advisory Panel was removed from the Ministry of Transportation's website – when you click on the link, it leads to a webpage that no longer exists. When I called Service Ontario and the Ministry of Transportation to get an electronic copy of the report, they said that there was no electronic version available and suggested I would go and try to find the publication in a public library (in Ontario). When a report is no longer available electronically, you know it has literally been shelved. Nonetheless, I was able to find the report on the City of Toronto's website. The point I want to make here, and it goes back to the respondent's comment, is that the question of new revenue tools to fund the second wave of *Big Move* projects has been thoroughly analyzed. The Appendix A of *Metrolinx Investment Strategy Update* (Metrolinx, 2014b) compares the recommendations made by Metrolinx, the Transit Panel, as well as the positions of Toronto City Council on transportation growth funding. It is thus up to the Province to act upon this issue.

In the spring of 2015, the newly elected (provincial) liberal government announced it would sell off 60% of Hydro One, the Province's \$16-billion electric power transmission system. All proceeds of this partial privatization would go toward a 10-year, \$29-billion infrastructure plan that includes \$15 billion to build public transit in the GTHA (Benzie, 2015). There is a lot to be said about the partial privatization of this public utility system (Ferguson, 2015; Laxer 2015), but what is important for the present study is that this recommendation does not come from any of the investment strategies presented above, but from a provincially-

appointed privatization panel headed by a former TD Bank head in its interim report (Benzie, 2014; Walkom, 2014). The \$2 billion to \$4 billion (depending on the source) that the partial privatization would immediately free up for public transit infrastructures could be raised by implementing the recommendations made by the transit investment experts (*Metrolinx Investment Strategy* plans for \$2 billion annually, which would allow for funding the next wave of projects). In other words, in addition to bypassing Metrolinx professional advice on which transit projects should be funded, the Province also ignores the advice provided both by Metrolinx and the Province's own panel of experts set up to review Metrolinx's investment strategy on how transit infrastructure should be funded.

As for the recommendation of re-installing local representation in Metrolinx decision-making structure, a few options are suggested by the respondents and by Metrolinx itself. Metrolinx's suggestion (which is also supported by the Transit Panel [2013]), is that the board of directors be brought to 18 members, allowing municipalities to collaboratively nominate up to 6 citizen (non-elected) members that would be subsequently appointed by the province (Metrolinx, 2013b: 41). However, this structure does not address the fact that the board is easily being dismissed by the Province, which has led to bad funding choices. Another suggestion is to separate the planning and executing functions by giving the planning function to municipalities in a separate organization and giving the execution to Metrolinx (Interview 13). But this proposal does not guarantee that the RTP agreed to by the municipalities be executed by the transit agency controlled by the province, and the region would be in the same position it is now (just even more fragmented). Another option is to have the TTC merged with the other transit authorities under Metrolinx so that you could have one regional planning, financing, and operating authority in the region (Interview 4), but that is not under the current

political radar and does not address the question of local representation on the board of directors.

In fact, the agency board composition and appointment rules are inextricably linked its funding structure; if the money is raised provincially, it is legitimate that the Provincial appointees represent the majority of the board members or that the Province has some sort of veto or final decision-making role. But if some of the money is raised regionally or locally, then one would expect that a section of the board members be representative and responsible to the local constituents. Note that an investment tool can be raised on a province-wide basis, but the revenues raised in a region could be only available for the region where it was collected in. This question of governance is a balancing act, but I think what the case of Toronto teaches us is that having a majority of provincially-appointed citizen members on the board can lead to political interference and bad investment choices. What the Toronto case also teaches us is that there is room for more money to be raised regionally, which would call for the empowerment of local representatives by way of re-installment on the board. Having a meaningful (i.e. elected officials) and *balanced* regional and local representation, as in the first iteration of Metrolinx's board of directors, does promote the principles of accountability, democracy and effectiveness. I will come back to this question of regional institutional design in the last chapter, because the case of Chicago provides some interesting lessons as well.

By way of conclusion, emerging from the abysses of political nonsense are the hopes given by the study and work plan commissioned by Toronto Executive Council for *SmartTrack*, the new Toronto Mayor John Tory's transit plan. In early 2015, Toronto City Planning department and the University of Toronto, in consultation with Metrolinx and the TTC, were undertaking a study of *SmartTrack* proposals that is dovetailing with Metrolinx's

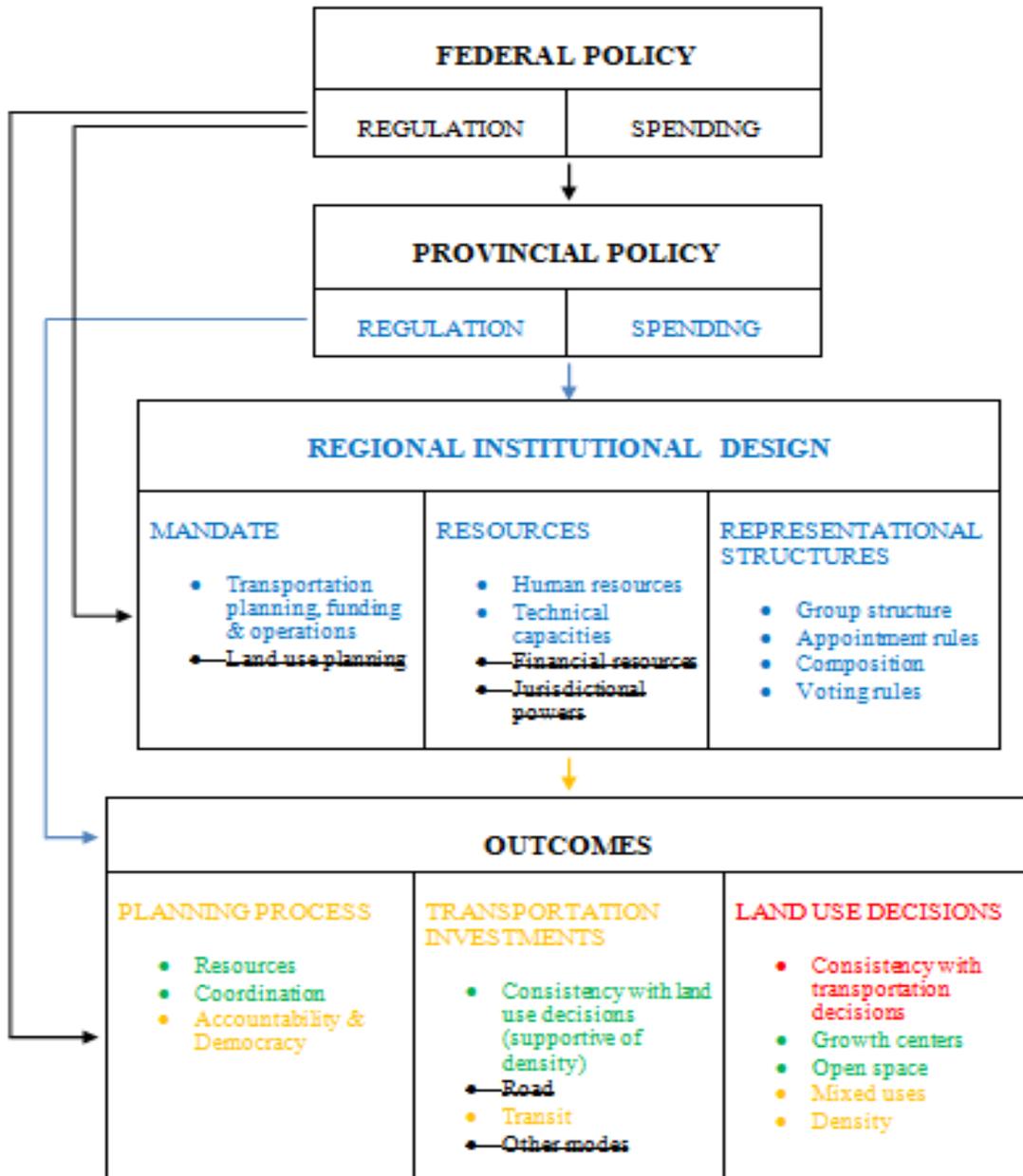
regional rail network, the downtown relief line studies, and the Scarborough subway extension. By considering different land use schemes, fare structures and service levels, this study represents an opportunity for reviewing transit options as a network basis rather than one line at a time, which would allow the identification of an optimal investment scenario to be considered by the Executive Council and the City Council (Munro, 2015). Having a regional perspective on the impacts of different transit scheme rather than a collection of municipal pet projects will bring the decision-making process for the selection of the next round of investments to the next level.

Theoretical Implications

Again, what are the impacts of the reform on the planning process, transportation investments, and land use decisions? What can be said of the relationship between the regional institutional design and planning outcomes? What is the chain of causation? More specifically, what can be said of the impact of the different dimensions of the representational structure on decision outcomes? Using the model developed for this study, I am attempting to answer these questions for the case of Toronto only.

Figure 15 illustrates the impacts of the reform on various dimensions of the planning process, transportation investments, and land use decisions. The colour blue represents elements of the institutional framework that were altered by the reform. The colour green is used for dimensions that have improved since the adoption of the reform. The colour orange is used for dimensions for which the evidence is mixed. The colour red represents dimensions that have shown little improvement since the adoption of the reform. And finally, elements that are crossed-out are either not part of or not affected by the new regional institutional design.

Figure 15: Impact of the Changes in the Institutional Framework in Toronto



Some elements of planning process have improved because there is now an organization whose sole mandate is to plan for regional transportation planning (and thus dedicating a lot of resources to the planning process and coordination efforts). However, the

accountability and democratic character of the planning process are now questionable due to changes in the representational structures of the organizations (board composition and appointment rules) that allow for political interference.

Some elements of transportation investments have also improved due to the reform, because once again, the creation of Metrolinx has served as a catalyzer for provincial investments in transit infrastructure. Those investments might not be the more optimal transit schemes (therefore the use of orange), but because they are mostly located in parts of the region that are already built-up (i.e. the City of Toronto), I consider them as supportive of higher densities (explaining the use of green). The fact that Metrolinx acts as a catalyzer of Provincial investments is directly related to its representational structure, which gives the Ministry of Transportation and Premier total control on how the resources are spent (and this is also related to the fact that Metrolinx was not granted any autonomous sources of funding and jurisdictional power).

As for land use decisions, they are not integrated with transportation investments because the Metrolinx has no jurisdictional powers over land use and the regional land use planning activities are undertaken by the Provincial government, who does not control local land use decisions in a direct fashion. Improvements to the existing land use planning regime is facilitating the densification of growth centers and protects sensitive ecological areas, but because the reform is not entirely being implemented and/or enforced (for the reasons explained earlier in this chapter) and did not go as far as changing some elements of municipal revenue structure and politics, the chances are slim that we see the shifts in densities and mixed uses that would allow for transit service and consequent modal shift in the ever-growing outer ring suburbs of the region.

CHAPTER 6

CHICAGO PART I – HISTORY OF REGIONAL GOVERNANCE & REFORM

In 2005, the Illinois General Assembly unanimously adopted the *Regional Planning Act* creating Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP), a consolidated regional agency for transportation and land use planning that is also designated as the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the region. This chapter presents this 2005 reform of regional planning institutions as to better understand the structural and procedural changes brought by the creation of CMAP, whose purpose is to effectively address the development and transportation challenges in the northeastern Illinois region. The chapter is divided into three parts. First, the recent history of political institutions, urban development and regional transportation is presented, highlighting the need for a comprehensive regional planning agency, providing a jurisdictional, demographic and economic outlook, and addressing the governance of transit services and the question of regional transportation funding. Second, the nature of the reform is explained, presenting CMAP and its comprehensive regional plan called *GO to 2040*, as well as its administration and enforcement (or implementation) mechanisms. Finally, the practical and theoretical implications of the reform are addressed, discussing the implications of the reform for each level of government and stakeholder and providing a summary of the changes in the institutional framework. This chapter provides the background information necessary to understand the next chapter, which assesses the impact of the creation of CMAP on the planning process, transportation investments and land use decisions.

Recent History of Political Institutions, Urban Development & Regional Transportation

This section explains the motivation behind the decision of changing the regional institutional framework, which consisted in the merger of the transportation planning organization and the land use planning commission into a single, comprehensive regional planning agency called the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP). A brief jurisdictional, demographic and economic outlook of the region is then presented, as to give some perspective to the transportation planning and urban development context. Finally, the organization of transit services and the regional transportation funding system are explained because although it is the creation of CMAP that is the subject of the present inquiry, one cannot understand the impact of the new planning agency on the planning process, transportation investments and land use decisions without a grasp of the transportation funding and governance environment in which CMAP evolves. Because the goal here is to provide the basic factual elements for understanding the 2005 reform, this history section is purposefully selective, rather than exhaustive.

The Need for a Comprehensive Regional Planning Agency

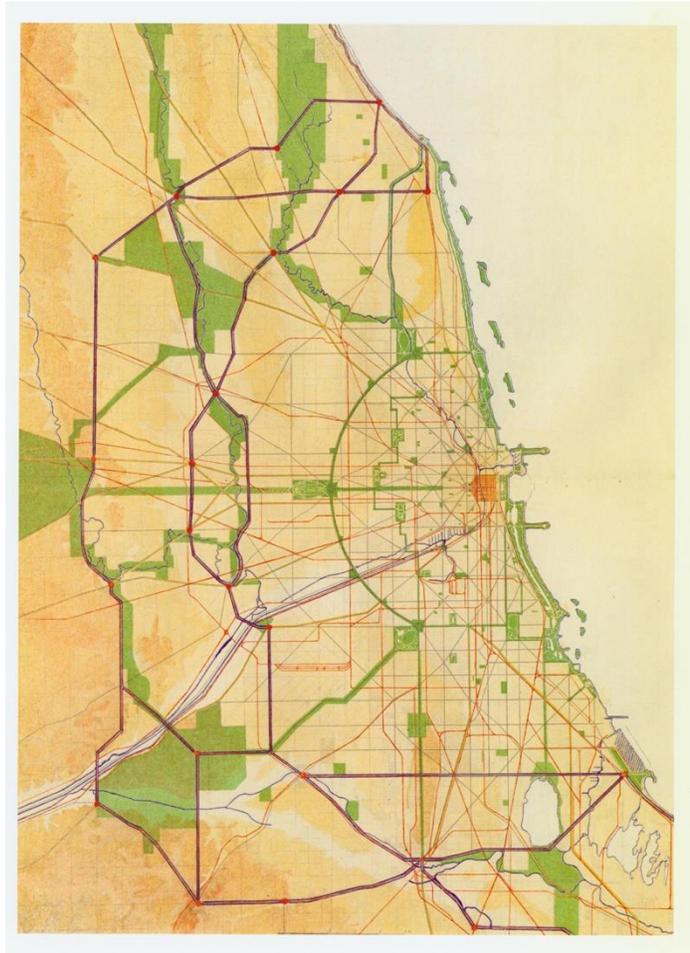
Before the government of Illinois enacted their merger in 2005, there were two regional planning organizations in Chicago: 1) the Northeastern Illinois Planning Commission (NIPC), which was the land use planning organization; and 2) the Chicago Area Transportation Study (CATS), which was the federally designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) responsible for regional transportation planning and programming. The following paragraphs present the historical context surrounding the creation of the two planning agencies in the mid

1950's and their consolidation in 2005, highlighting the role played by the Commercial Club of Chicago in civic affairs.

The roots of comprehensive regional planning in Chicago can be traced back to the publication of Daniel H. Burnham's and Edward H. Bennett's *Plan of Chicago*, commissioned by the Commercial Club (Commercial Club of Chicago, 1909). The plan, standard bearer of the City Beautiful movement, was published in 1909, about two-thirds of the way through a sixty-year period when Chicago was the fastest growing city in the world (Notre Dame School of Architecture, 2015 – more on this later). Encompassing a region extending from Kenosha, Wisconsin to Michigan City, Indiana, the *Plan of Chicago* put forward a series of recommendations for advancing the city of Chicago, regional commerce, and improving the quality of life of its residents. Many of these recommendations have become reality, including a series of lakefront parks that occupies 25 miles of the city's shoreline, forest preserves in suburban Cook County, as well as the city's system of parkways and arterial streets (Northeastern Illinois Regional Planning Commission, 1975). Although Burnham's *Plan of Chicago* has become one of the benchmark of American urban planning, it was also subject to fervent criticism, notably in Jane Jacob's classic *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* (1961) (Merk, 2014: 5). Map 17 is the plate 44 from the *Plan of Chicago*, showing the proposed system of boulevards, parks and forest preserves²⁶.

²⁶ An exhaustive selection of plates with summary captions from the *Plan of Chicago* is available at <http://afterburnham.com/daniel-burnham/> (Notre Dame School of Architecture, 2015). A thorough history of the plan is available at <http://www.artic.edu/aic/libraries/research/specialcollections/planofchicago/introduction.html> (Art Institute of Chicago, 2009).

Map 17: Plate 44 from the *Plan of Chicago*



Source: 1909 *Plan of Chicago* excerpted from Notre Dame School of Architecture (2015)

Following the publication of Burnham's *Plan of Chicago*, the commercial-civic elite mounted a campaign to implement the recommendations of the plan that resulted in the creation of the Chicago Plan Commission, a miniature city parliament of 328 businessmen, politicians, and civic leaders (Abbott, 2005). Established by the City of Chicago in 1909, the Commission successfully advocated and monitored the implementation of the *Plan of Chicago*. The Chicago Plan Commission was later reorganized in 1939, when it became part of city government. At the regional scale, business and civic leaders established in 1925 the private

non-profit corporation called Chicago Regional Planning Association, sponsored by the City Club of Chicago (Northeastern Illinois Regional Planning Commission, 1975). The Chicago Regional Planning Association, which involved counties and municipalities from Illinois, but also Wisconsin and Indiana, was a voluntary forum for local governments to coordinate their plans outside the direct control of Chicago. For more than 30 years, the Association assisted counties and municipalities with problems of street design, zoning, storm drainage, and subdivisions, and successfully coordinated park expansion and highways (Northeastern Illinois Regional Planning Commission, 1975; Abbott, 2005).

As the region's suburban population doubled in the decade following World War II, the Illinois General Assembly appointed the Northeastern Illinois Metropolitan Area Local Governmental Services Commission in 1955 to study the problems arising from this growth. Later renamed the Northeastern Illinois Planning Commission (NIPC), the Commission began planning works in the six-county Chicago metropolitan region in 1958, fostering local government cooperation and developing regional plans for open space, water, recreational, and land development (Northeastern Illinois Regional Planning Commission, 1975). Simultaneously, the Chicago Area Transportation Study (CATS) was formed in 1955 as an *ad hoc* public agency with the purpose of preparing a long-range transportation plan for the Chicago metropolitan area, the second study of its kind in the history of the United States (the first one being the Detroit Metropolitan Area Traffic Study) (Black, 1990). Funded jointly by the City of Chicago, Cook County, Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) and the U.S. Bureau of Public Roads, the staff at CATS pioneered transportation modeling and published their results in a three-volume *final report* (in 1959, 1960 and 1962) that became a national model for transportation demand forecasting (Black, 1990; Abbott, 2005).

After the federal government adopted the *Federal Aid Highway Act* in 1973, requiring the existence of a MPO in regions over 50,000 residents (more on the federal role later), the Policy Committee of CATS was named MPO on an interim basis, a designation that was then confirmed by the Governor of Illinois in 1981 (Thompson, 1981). At that time, Governor Thompson had a choice between designating the land use agency, NIPC, or the transportation planning agency, CATS, as the MPO. According to the respondents, the Governor designated CATS as the MPO because: 1) CATS was largely owned and controlled by IDOT (CATS staff members were technically IDOT employees) (Interviews G, M & N; Lindstrom, 2010: 53); and 2) NIPC's reputation was "sort of like a bunch of fuzzy-headed people who didn't know what they were doing – they weren't doing a very good job" (Interview C). In fact, although NIPC's plans and data were technically the basis for the Regional Transportation Plans developed by CATS (NIPC, 2005: i), the land use commission had no implementation power and authority (Merk, 2014: 8). This situation created some tension between the two organizations: "I don't know in terms of actually implementing what was developed...whether anybody paid attention or not, and I think there was obviously a fair degree of frustration there from the land use side in that lack of implementation" (Interview M). This frustration at NIPC perhaps also originated from the fact that NIPC was initially envisioned as being stronger, but its founders had to compromise and to give away some implementation powers to get something started, which they always regretted (Interview F). CATS thus went from being a research agency with a planning function, to the MPO for metropolitan Chicago with a decision-making function over transportation investments.

The push for the creation of a single, comprehensive regional planning agency in early 2000's came from the Chicago business and civic community that aimed for a coordinated and

integrated regional planning process. Given that Chicago was one of the only region in the United States with two distinct regional planning entities for transportation and land use, part of the motivation behind the push for the merger of the two agencies was simply so that the region “didn’t look stupid” (Interview A). But most importantly, the need for an agency with the mandate of integrating both transportation and land use planning (as well as housing, economic development, water, etc. – more on this later) emanated from the fact that CATS and NIPC were not coordinating their planning activities, in other words, they were “not necessarily talking to one another” (Interview B). Indeed, the tension between the two agencies and the planning culture at CATS (which was based on quantitative research) resulted in the fact that although CATS used NIPC’s land use assumptions in the development of its long-range plans and although they were sitting on each other’s committees, the agencies never thought about transportation and land use together (Interviews C & M; Black 1990).

CATS was being criticized by planners and observers for 1) forecasting future land use instead of making a land use plan and 2) being biased for highway development over transit. One common observation at the time was that CATS was proposing to extend historical land use and transportation trends that were already recognized as having disastrous effects (Black, 1990: 35). One respondent described CATS modeling methodology as “garbage in, garbage out...this is what we want to have, now make the model say what we want to have – we need 10,000 roadways, whether we need them or not” (Interview G). The same respondent explains that CATS was busy building Burnham’s concentric roadways without looking at whether he was right or not. Ultimately, the separation of land use and transportation planning functions between two organizations and the inherent lack of long-term, comprehensive planning strategy hampered the region’s ability to effectively address the growing issue of congestion

that threatened the economic growth and quality of life of residents (Chicago Metropolis 2020, 2005).

The business and civic community eventually came to realization that this “silly historical arrangement” of having two agencies for planning was ineffective: “it’s like one-handed clapping – you can’t do it” (Interview C; also Interviews D, N & O). The genesis of the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) came after the Commercial Club of Chicago asked Elmer Johnson²⁷, in 1996, to lead a research project looking at Burnham’s *Plan of Chicago* for the centennial of its publication (Interview G). Part of that initiative was the creation, by the Commercial Club, of Chicago Metropolis 2020 in 1999 (renamed Metropolis Strategies in 2011), a non-profit organization to advocate for better regional planning and investments (La Belle et al., 2012; Metropolis Strategies, 2012). As a result, the advocacy group/research project led by Johnson published *Chicago Metropolis 2020: The Chicago Plan for the Twenty First Century* (Johnson, 2001), a plan that not only looked at urban form, but also public education, governance, taxation, and other equity issues. Johnson’s idea of having one single agency for regional transportation and land use planning thus became part of the advocacy of *Chicago Metropolis 2020*, sponsored by the Commercial Club of Chicago, the same organization that had commissioned Burnham’s *Plan of Chicago* a century earlier (Interview G).

After the plan was published in 2001, Chicago Metropolis 2020 orchestrated a lobbying campaign to have the legislative assembly of Illinois abolish CATS and NIPC and

²⁷ Elmer Johnson was a Chicago lawyer, civic leader, former vice president at General Motors and also part of the Aspen Institute (for more information, see http://articles.chicagotribune.com/2008-02-22/news/0802211409_1_commercial-club-chicago-plan-mr-johnson).

create CMAP, rallying other important non-profit organizations in the region to their cause, including the Chicagoland Chamber of Commerce (CCC), the Metropolitan Planning Council (MPC), the Center for Neighborhood Technology (CNT), and the Metropolitan Mayors Caucus (MMC) (Interviews B & D; Merk, 2014). Chicago Metropolis 2020 fought with local government agencies who opposed it, fought with CATS and NIPC (because as one could expect, they opposed it), built a coalition on both sides of the legislative assembly, found legislative sponsors, and drafted the *Regional Planning Act* that was adopted unanimously by the Illinois' General Assembly in 2005 (Interviews C & D). So this is how the state government came to the decision of merging the operations of CATS and NIPC and creating a single organization responsible for comprehensive regional planning, CMAP, which also acts as the region's MPO. As explained later, CMAP's structure is the result of a compromise balancing local, regional and state's interests that allows the agency to plan for regional transportation and land use, but with a limited implementation capacity.

Jurisdictional, Demographic & Economic Outlook

Every planning initiative and advocacy undertaken by the business-civic community and different levels of government over time were all aiming at improving conditions of the region's residents and businesses by addressing contemporary issues. At the time of the 2005 reform, the planning context in Chicagoland was characterized by heavy congestion, crumbling transportation infrastructures, an endemic population growth favouring the outer-ring suburbs, a chess-patterned system of racially segregated neighborhoods²⁸, a fragile economy and an infamous jurisdictional fragmentation. These trends and their consequences

²⁸ The issues of race and class are beyond the scope of this study and therefore are not addressed here. For a brief analysis of Chicago's planning history through the lens of equity and efficiency, see Abbott (2005).

were only exacerbated by the recession following the 2008 subprime mortgage crisis. The following paragraphs are addressing the planning issues that are key to understanding how CMAP's regional plan (*GO to 2040* – presented later) is being implemented at the local level.

Jurisdictional Fragmentation

Map 18 shows the seven counties that are within CMAP's jurisdiction: Cook (which includes the City of Chicago), DuPage, Kane, Kendall, Lake, McHenry and Will, for a total of 284 municipalities²⁹. With 8.3 million residents and an economy representing \$500 billion in 2010, the Chicago metropolitan area is the third largest in the United States, both in terms of population and economy (CMAP, 2014b; Merk, 2014). The region also hosts 70% of the population and 80% of the GDP of the state of Illinois (Metropolitan Planning Council, 2008b).

Map 18: CMAP seven-county Region

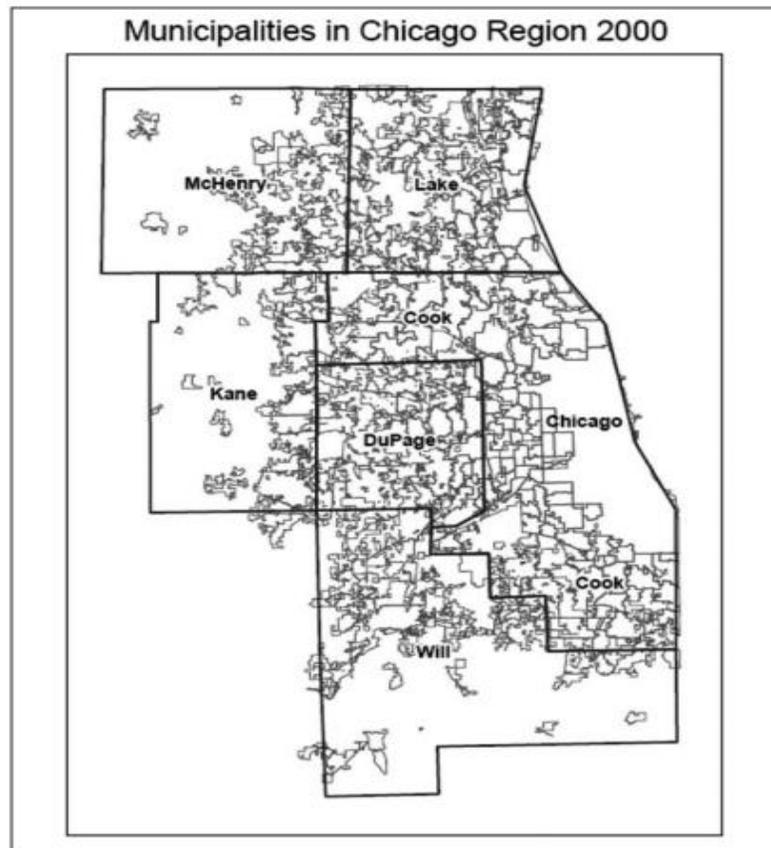


Source: Excerpted from Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (2012)

²⁹ The boundaries of Chicago Metropolitan Statistical Area include a portion of northwest Indiana that is not under CMAP jurisdiction. This southwestern region of Chicago, which includes Gary (Indiana) and 40 other cities and towns, is governed another MPO, the Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission.

The region is commonly divided into three blocks: the City of Chicago, “suburban Cook”, and the “Collar Counties”. The City of Chicago is by far the largest and densest municipality of the region, with about 2.7 million people (the next largest cities are within the 200 000 range, and 80% of the region’s municipalities have less than 25,000 residents) (Merk, 2014: 6). “Suburban Cook” regroups the older communities, immediate suburbs of Chicago. As for the “Collar Counties”, they represent the outer-ring suburbs surrounding Cook County. The geographical distribution of municipalities by county is illustrated on Map 19, which shows the extent of municipal fragmentation in the region.

Map 19: Municipalities in the Chicago region (2000)



Source: Excerpted from Lindstrom (2010: 38)

With over 1,200 units of local government, including 284 municipalities, county and township governments, special purpose districts and joint action water agencies, the Chicago region is considered to be one of the most politically fragmented areas in the United States (Merk, 2014: 6). Two factors explain this fragmentation: 1) by limiting municipal indebtedness and revenues, the Illinois laws encourages the creation of special districts with their own bonding power and taxing authority; and 2) the historical city-Democratic and suburban-Republican hostility and competition for the control of the Illinois General Assembly, which intensified in the 1980's and 1990's (Lindstrom, 2010: 40-41). Voluntary cooperation through 9 suburban Council of Governments (COGs), 12 Council of Mayors (COMs), and through the Metropolitan Mayors Caucus (MMC), has allowed local actors to work on issues of common interests while keeping contentious issues off the table (Lindstrom, 2010: 43-44 – more on COGs and COMs later).

Table 9 shows the outcomes of business/civic and governmental coalitions by policy area. It is particularly useful because it helps putting this study in perspective by showing that the creation of CMAP, an initiative of Chicago Metropolis 2020, is one of the many attempts of the business-civic community to overcome political fragmentation in Chicago metropolitan area. It also mentions three other initiatives related to regional transportation: 1) the Chicago Region Environmental and Transportation Efficiency Project (CREATE), a public-private partnership to resolve the freight gridlock in the region; 2) the restructure and refinance of the Regional Transportation Authority (RTA), which is presented in the next section; and 3) the O'Hare airport modernization program.

Table 9: Coalitions and outcomes by policy area

Policy area	Coalitions	Outcomes
Housing	Mayors Caucus MPC Metropolis 2020	Housing Action Agenda Welcome Home: Housing Our Community Homes for a Changing Region 2001–
Economic development	Chicago Civic Committee Chamber Mayors Caucus ^a	World Business Chicago 1998–
Surface transportation	Chicago IDOT, Railroads Metropolis 2020 ^a Mayors Caucus ^a	CREATE 2005–
Planning agencies	Metropolis 2020 MPC Mayors Caucus Metropolis 2020	Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning BPI, CNT 2003–2005
Regional transportation authority	Metropolis 2020 Chamber, MPC BPI, CNT Mayors Caucus	Restructure and refinance RTA 2003–2008
Expand airport capacity	Civic Committee Chamber Mayors Caucus ^b	O'Hare Modernization Program 1998–2003

Note: MPC = Metropolitan Planning Council; CREATE = Chicago Region Environmental and Transportation Efficiency Project; IDOT = Illinois Department of Transportation; BPI = Business and Professional People for the Public Interest; CNT = Center for Neighborhood Technology; RTA = Regional Transportation Authority.

a. Supported initiative but was not a major coalition partner.

b. Mayors Caucus took no position.

Source: Excerpted from Lindstrom (2010: 50)

Demographic & Economic Outlook

Over time, the City of Chicago has lost population in favor of the Collar Counties, but this trend was drastically reversed from 2010 to 2013. The City of Chicago had been losing population since 1950 – the only year that this trend was reversed was between 1990 and 2000, during the fast growth of the 90's, when the city grew by 4% a year (Interview F). As shown in Table 10, the City has lost about 200,000 residents between 2000 and 2010. So while there was a net population gain in the region, the growth was further out in the Collar

Counties (CMAP, 2014a). In addition, most of the growth occurred away from transit, and even when looking at where new growth was happening in infill areas, it was often close to highways and not close to transit.

Table 10: Population change in Northeastern Illinois (2000-2010)

Population change in northeastern Illinois, 2000-2010				
REGION	2000 POPULATION	2010 POPULATION	PERCENT CHANGE	PROPORTION OF THE CMAP REGION IN 2010
CITY OF CHICAGO	2,896,016	2,695,598	-6.9%	31.9%
COOK COUNTY	5,376,741	5,194,675	-3.4%	61.5%
DUPAGE COUNTY	904,161	916,924	+1.4%	10.9%
KANE COUNTY	404,119	515,269	+27.5%	6.1%
KENDALL COUNTY	54,544	114,736	+110.4%	1.4%
LAKE COUNTY	644,356	703,462	+9.2%	8.3%
MCHENRY COUNTY	260,077	308,760	+18.7%	3.7%
WILL COUNTY	502,266	677,560	+34.9%	8.0%
CMAP REGION*	8,150,789	8,444,447	+3.6%	100.0%

Sources: 2010 and 2000 U.S. Census
 *Includes Aux Sable Township in Grundy County

Source: Excerpted from CMAP (2014a)

However, the latest census data revealed that these trends reversed between 2010 and 2013, when Cook County gained almost 50,000 people, while the six Illinois suburban counties increased population by only 20,000 collectively, and that the two nearby Indiana counties lost more than 1,500 people during this period (Freemark, 2014). Although this trend was observable in all the largest U.S. MSAs, and that Chicago’s rate of population increase was the second lowest in the nation, it is still an improvement from the situation prevailing since the 1950s (Freemark, 2014 – the most recent trends are presented in further detail the next Chapter).

The endemic population growth has important social and economic impacts. For one, the regions' 314,000 vacant properties and foreclosed homes contribute to a decrease in neighboring properties values and to an increase in violent crimes (Interview I; Rand, 2012). In addition, a slow population growth generates limited consumer spending and tax revenues for state and local governments, which, in turn, impacts transportation infrastructure funding and government services (Mancini Nichols, 2015). It also impacts transit service by forcing the operators to adjust their levels of service and “chase the population” that is moving to certain parts of the region, and reduce service in the southern and western sections of the city that are emptying out (Interview I – more on this in the next chapter). Generally speaking, the stable economic growth is challenging for planners and governments that have traditionally assumed a continuous trajectory of growth and the revenues that are associated with it (Interview C).

As explained in the next paragraphs, jurisdictional fragmentation and the challenging demographic and economic outlook have important consequences for regional transportation funding and transit operations, which rely partly on sales tax and fuel tax revenues.

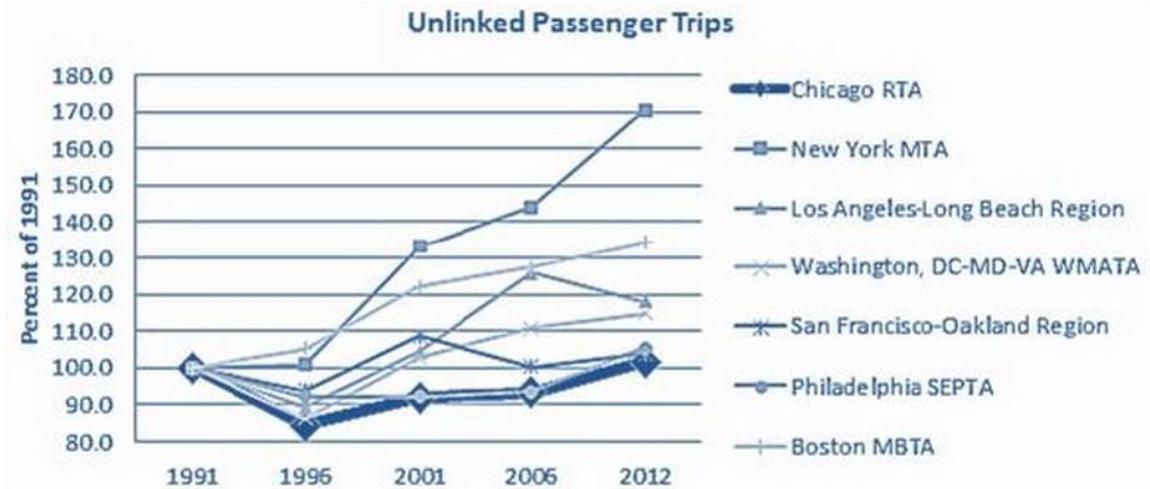
Governance of Transit Services & Regional Transportation Funding

As mentioned earlier, the Chicago metropolitan area is facing important issues related to transportation, including heavy congestion, crumbling transportation infrastructures, but also challenges in terms of transit services and ridership. The total financial cost of congestion due to travel delays and excess fuel consumption is estimated at \$7.3 billion a year, adding 22% to peak period travel times (Metropolitan Planning Council, 2008a). As for transit infrastructures, it would take an additional \$3.1 billion in capital each year just to achieve a state of good repair, as well as an additional \$2 billion a year over the next 30 years for transit

expansion and improvement projects (Metropolitan Planning Council, 2013: 9; Chicago Metropolis 2020, 2010: 18). The actual transit system is underfunded both in terms of operational and capital funds, and transit authorities are struggling just to maintain the existing infrastructures and service levels, let alone making new investments. Combined with transit governance issues (explained in this section), funding problems have had an impact on transit service and operations which, in turn, have had an impact on ridership.

In fact, rapid transit services do not reach as much people and jobs as they did in the past, as they failed to respond to the population and employment growth outside of City of Chicago and changes in commuting patterns. As an example, the number of jobs within a 10-minute walk of rail stations has dropped between 2002 and 2008: although the seven-county region added 110,314 jobs in this time period, the number of net jobs within one-half mile of transit declined by 5,555 (CNT, 2012: 3). As a result of the growth away from transit lines and the failure or inability of transit operators to adjust their service (more on this in the next chapter), the overall annual transit ridership has declined by almost 20% between 1980 and 2012, with now only 10% of the residents using transit to get to work in the region (Metropolitan Planning Council, 2013: 12). As illustrated in Figure 16, the Chicago metropolitan region lags its peers in transit system ridership.

Figure 16: Evolution of transit ridership in legacy systems since 1996



Source: Excerpted from Northeastern Illinois Public Transit Task Force (2014: 23)

As ridership surged everywhere since 1996, Metropolitan Chicago has the slowest rebound of any legacy system (where the transit system was developed before the automobile became dominant) (Northeastern Illinois Public Transit Task Force, 2014: 23). The following paragraphs explain the governance and funding structure issues that impede transit services and, ultimately, ridership.

Although CMAP is granted with the mandate to plan for regional transportation and land use and programming regional transportation funds (more on this in the next section), it is another agency, the Regional Transportation Authority (RTA), that has the mandate of coordinating transit operations and distributing dedicated transit dollars. Table 11 provides an overview of government actors involved in regional transportation and planning in Chicago as well as their function, showing the extent of jurisdictional fragmentation in the transportation sector, even after the consolidation of CATS and NIPC. As for Figure 17, it situates these actors in the hierarchy of federal funding authority over surface transportation. After a brief explanation of the federal funding system, the remaining of this section is dedicated to the

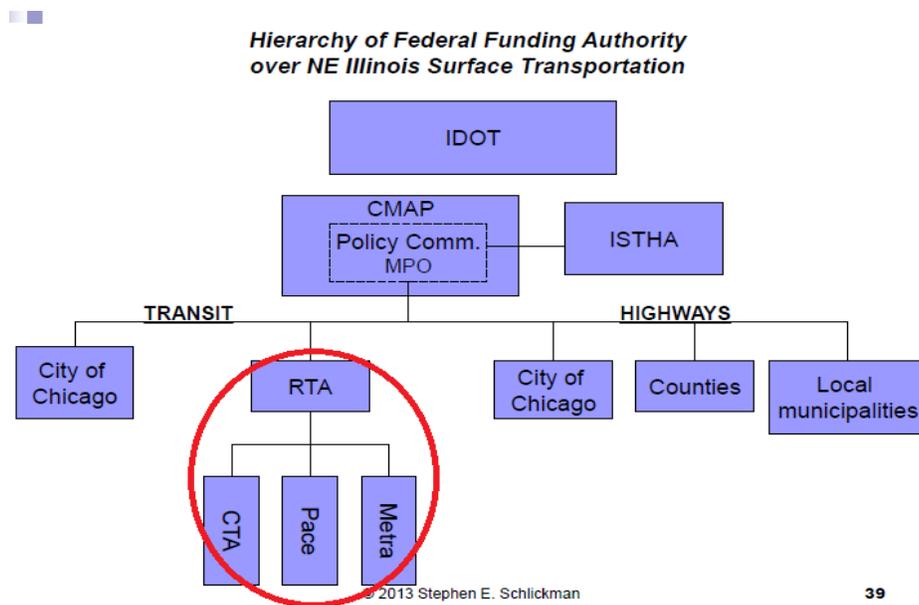
organizations circled in red in Figure 17 namely the RTA and the three transit operators in Chicago region: the Chicago Transit Authority (CTA), Metra and Pace.

Table 11: Overview of main government actors in regional transportation and planning in Chicago

Name	Function
State of Illinois (Transportation Dept., Toll way)	Construction, maintenance of roads and toll roads
Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning	Strategic regional planning for metropolitan Chicago
Regional Transportation Authority (RTA)	Regional transit planning and budget oversight over the three operators
Chicago Transit Authority	Transit operator for Chicago and adjacent suburbs(rail and buses)
Metra	Suburban commuter rail operator
Pace	Suburban bus operator
Counties	Construction, maintenance secondary roads and bridges
Municipalities	Local streets, traffic control, local planning and zoning

Source: Excerpted from Merk (2014: 10)

Figure 17: Hierarchy of federal funding authority over Northeastern Illinois surface transportation



Source: Adapted from Schlickman (2013)

Federal funds for transportation come from the Motor Fuel Excise Tax revenues, which are placed by the U.S. Treasury in the Federal Highway Trust Fund. The Congress then appropriates the Highway Trust Fund proceeds to the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) under a federal transportation authorization bill, which is currently the *Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century* (MAP-21), adopted in 2012 (U.S. Department of Transportation, 2015). The FHWA and the FTA then distribute part of the funds to States by formula, which sub-allocate highway and transit funds to urbanized areas (Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission, 2014). CMAP's Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Policy Committee then distribute funds to individual projects, as explained in the next section. States, transit agencies and local governments can also apply independently to various federal competitive grant programs for funding specific capital projects.

Table 12 provides a list of selected federal grant programs administered by the U.S. DOT, which is useful to get a sense of how funds are distributed to states, local governments and transit agencies. Some of these programs are mentioned in the next chapter, when addressing the question of CMAP's transportation investment decisions.

Table 12: Federal transportation funding

Federal Transportation Funding	
Annual Federal-Aid Apportionments (selected)	
Program	Eligible Projects
<i>Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)</i>	
Surface Transportation Program (STP)	General purpose construction funds for highways, bridges, bike/ped facilities, transit capital, etc.
Congestion Mitigation/Air Quality Program (CMAQ)	Transportation projects that reduce emissions
Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP)	Construction funds for improved highway safety
Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP)	Construction funds for bicycle/pedestrian & environmental mitigation projects
<i>Federal Transit Administration (FTA)</i>	
Public Transit Formula Grants	Transit capital and operating assistance
Bus Capital	Transit capital assistance for bus services
State of Good Repair (Commuter rail)	Capital assistance for commuter rail
Discretionary & Competitive Federal Programs (selected)	
<i>Federal Transit Administration (FTA)</i>	
Capital Investment Program: New Starts, Small Starts and Core Capacity Improvements	Funds light rail, heavy rail, commuter rail, streetcar, and bus rapid transit projects
<i>U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT)</i>	
Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER 2010-2015)	Capital investments in surface transportation infrastructure
Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (TIFIA)	Credit assistance for qualified transportation infrastructure projects of regional or national significance

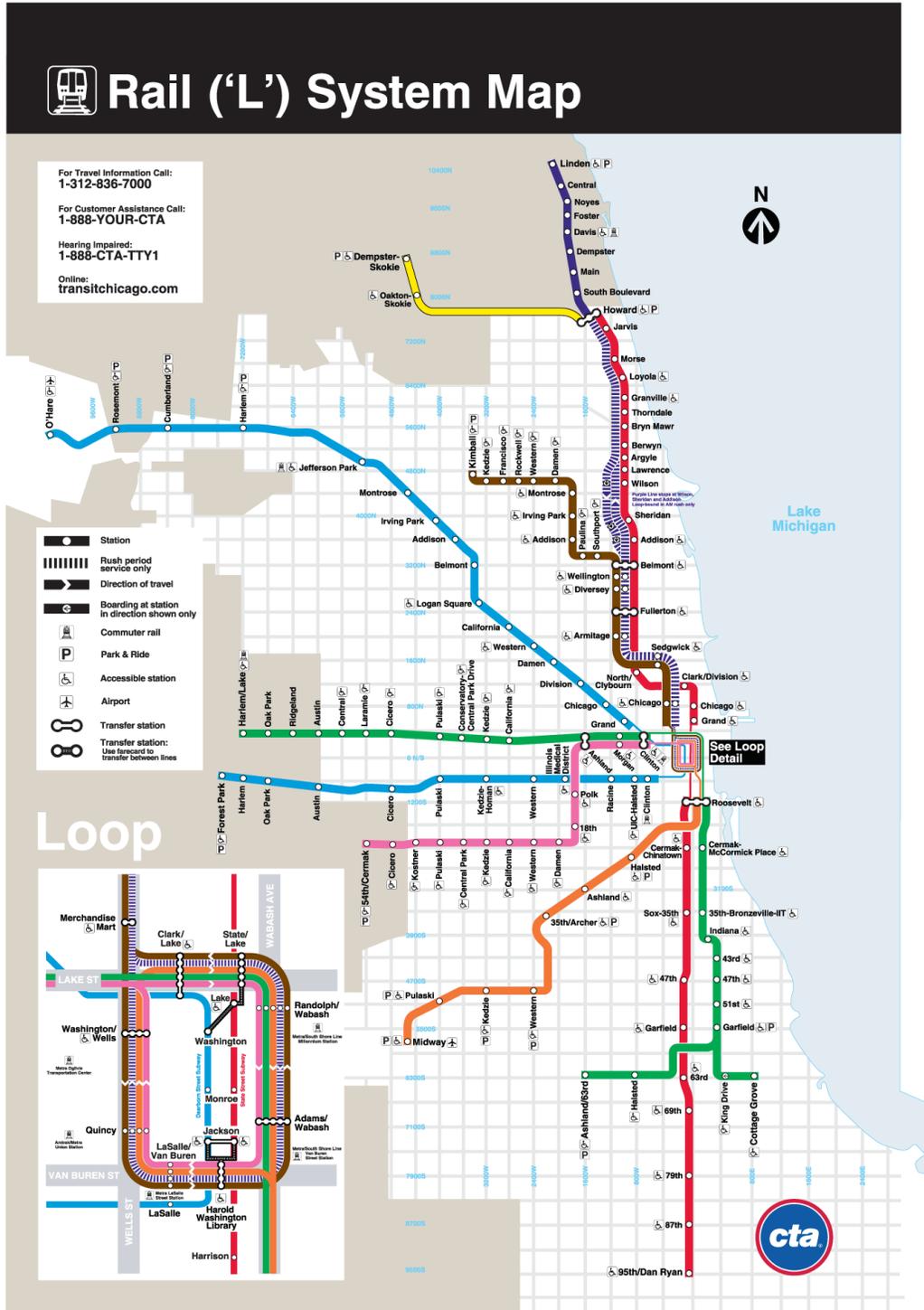
Source: Adapted from Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission (2014) & U.S. Department of Transportation (2015)

Before getting into the role and responsibilities of the RTA, let's present the three transit service agencies of the region: CTA, Metra and Pace. The CTA provides bus and rail service in Chicago and about 40 surrounding suburbs (carrying 81% of the 651 annual transit rides in the region); Metra is the commuter rail service operator (carrying 13% of the riders); and Pace is the suburban bus and regional para-transit service provider (carrying 6% of the

riders) (RTA, 2014; Chicago Metropolis 2020, 2010: 56). Together, CTA, Metra and Pace form the second largest transit system in the United States, with 390 stations across six counties and 18 transit corridors (CNT, 2012: 11). Each transit service board has the authority to establish fares and service levels, and each of them is controlled by a different faction of the region, with the City of Chicago controlling the CTA and the suburbs controlling Metra and Pace (Lindstrom, 2010: 54). Map 20 and 21 show the region's hub-and-spoke rail transit system. Map 20 presents the CTA rail service network, commonly referred to as the "L" (the short for "elevated"). As for Map 21, it shows Metra commuter rail services from Chicago out to the collar counties. Note that CTA's and PACE's extensive bus services are not shown here.

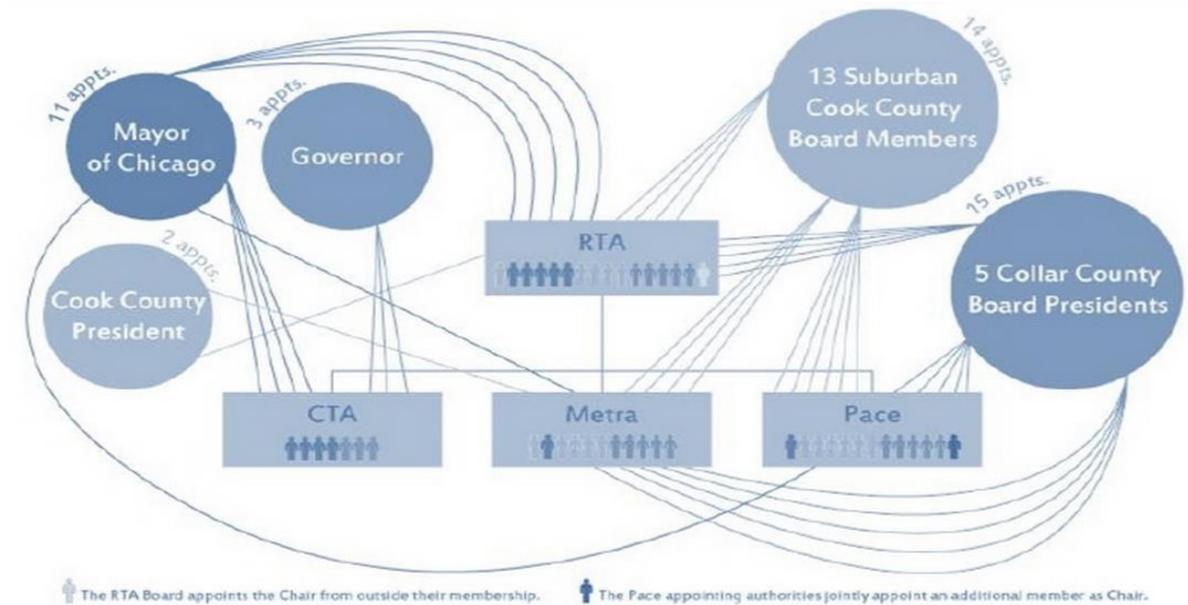
The RTA is responsible for fiscal oversight, strategic planning, and distributing operating and capital dollars to the three transit operators (as explained below). However, it has limited legal and political authority to coordinate transit operations among agencies, which contributes to the fragmentation and the patchwork of transit service (Interviews B, F & H; Chicago Metropolis 2020, 2010: 18; Lindstrom, 2010: 54). The only tool the RTA has to influence operators is the "nuclear option" of not approving the entire operator's budget, which would result in service shutdown. In addition to the extreme nature of the instrument, the RTA's board structure (according to which the 16 seats are evenly distributed among the Collar Counties, Cook County, and Chicago) and the super majority voting requirements (that enable a small fraction [$\frac{1}{3}$] of the board to veto decisions), inhibit the RTA from adopting any regional or coercive proposition (Interviews D & J; Chicago Metropolis 2020, 2010: 57; Merk, 2014: 13-16). As illustrated in Figure 18, the Chicago transit system is governed by 4 independent boards, with 47 board members appointed by 21 elected officials.

Map 20: Rail (“L”) system



Source: Excerpted from Chicago Transit Authority (2015a)

Figure 18: Governance of Chicago’s transit systems

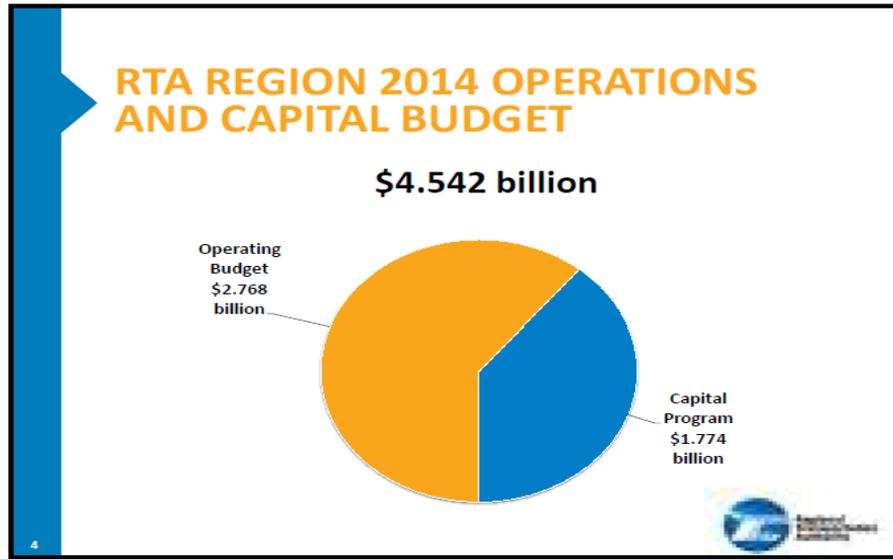


Source: Excerpted from Northeastern Illinois Public Transit Task Force (2014: 45)

As a result of this fragmented governance, transit service in the region is characterized by little or no interconnectivity in terms of fares and services, which contributes to a decline of transit ridership outside of Chicago’s central neighborhoods (Merk, 2014: 10-11; Metropolitan Planning Council, 2013). Adding to this issue of governance is the distribution of transit funding by the RTA to CTA, Metra and Pace by formula, which offers no incentive to coordinate and integrate services and fares, and reinforces the balkanization of transit planning and service. RTA’s budget and transit funding schemes are explained below.

Figure 19 presents RTA’s 2014 \$4.5-billion operations and capital budget to be distributed to the three services board according to the formulas explained in the next paragraphs. As for Figure 20, it shows the sources of RTA’s 2014 \$2.8-billion revenue budget for operations only. Lastly, Table 13 presents RTA’s 2013 capital asset condition assessment for the three services board, which adds up to a total of \$33.4 billion in needs.

Figure 19: RTA region 2014 operations and capital budget



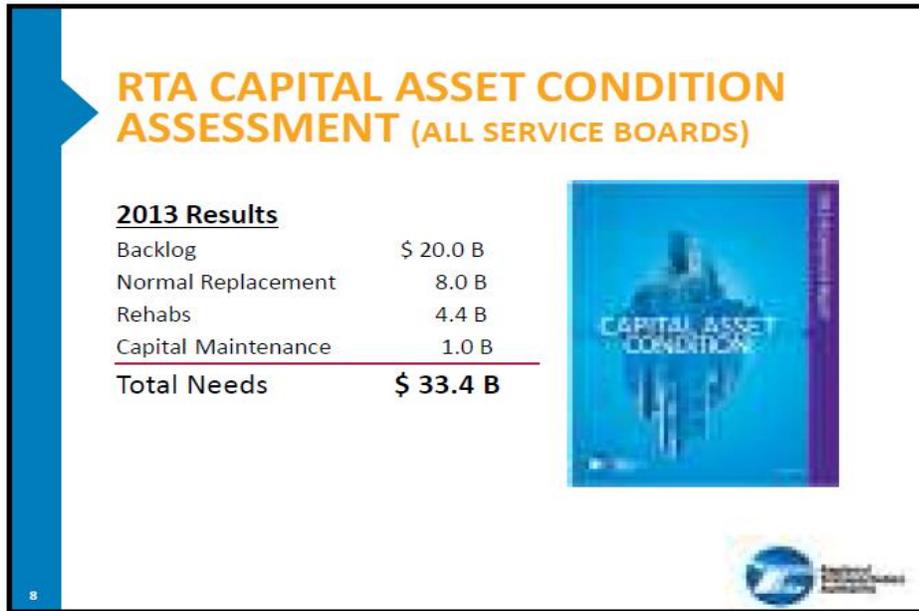
Source: Excerpted from RTA (2014: 4)

Figure 20: 2014 RTA revenue for operations



Source: Excerpted from RTA (2014: 3)

Table 13: RTA capital asset condition assessment



Source: Excerpted from RTA (2014: 8)

Transit operations are funded according to State law, which requires a fare box recovery rate of 50% (although in practice, the services boards are recovering 40% of their operations budget through fare box revenues) (RTA, 2014). The remaining 50% is funded by operating subsidies coming from the regional sales tax³⁰, a real estate transfer tax in Chicago, as well as a matching contribution from State general revenue funds (TPF, ASA and AFA in the pie chart of Figure 19) (RTA, 2014; Merk, 2014: 9). Ninety-five percent of operating subsidies are allocated by a formula³¹, and the remaining 5% of discretionary funding is, as a matter of necessity and custom, going to the CTA. This discretionary spending, which

³⁰ 1.25% in Cook County, representing 31% of the \$1.1 billion collected in 2013, and 0.5% in the five surrounding counties, representing 69% of the \$1.1 billion (RTA, 2014; Merk, 2014: 9).

³¹ “The formulas are not statutory but rather understood to be unchangeable political arrangements” (Merk, 2014: 12).

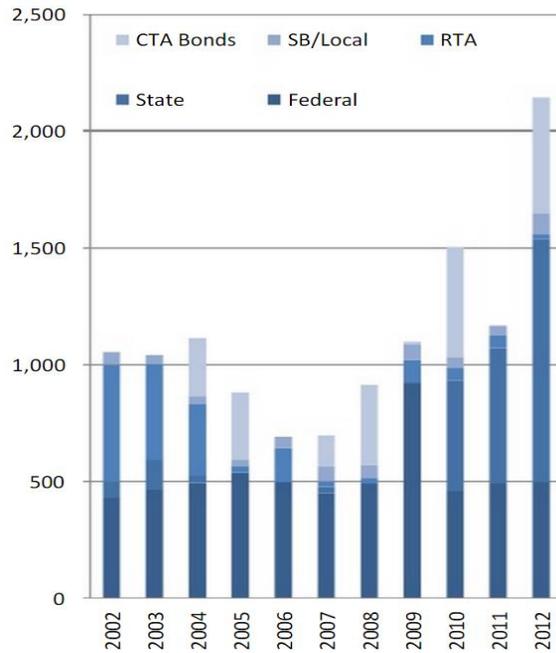
represents less than 1% of RTA’s overall budget, is the main focus of budgetary debates during the RTA board meetings (Merk, 2014: 12; Interviews I & J). The 2008-2009 recession “drastically reduced” the revenues generated by the RTA sales tax and the Chicago real estate transfer tax, causing operating budget deficits and resulting in service cuts (Interview B; Chicago Metropolis 2020, 2010: 57-58 – more on this in the next chapter).

As for capital dollars for transit, they are also allocated to the three transit operators according to similar decades-old formulas.³² Capital funding is thus not based on a plan or a set of criteria, despite the State’s 2008 legislative amendments that directed the RTA to do so (Chicago Metropolis 2020, 2010: 57 – more on this in the next chapter). The evolution of RTA’s capital revenue sources are illustrated in Figure 21. Historically, the federal government has been the largest and most reliable source of capital funds. As for the state capital funding for transit, it has traditionally been inconsistent, ranging from \$0 to \$500 million per year, as shown in Figure 22.

As highlighted in the Northeastern Illinois Public Transit Task Force report, the current mechanism for allocating transportation funds is flawed (arbitrary) and complicated (2014: 36). RTA’s budget and transit funding schemes are presented in Figure 23, which summarizes the sources of funding and formulas explained in Figures 21 and 22.

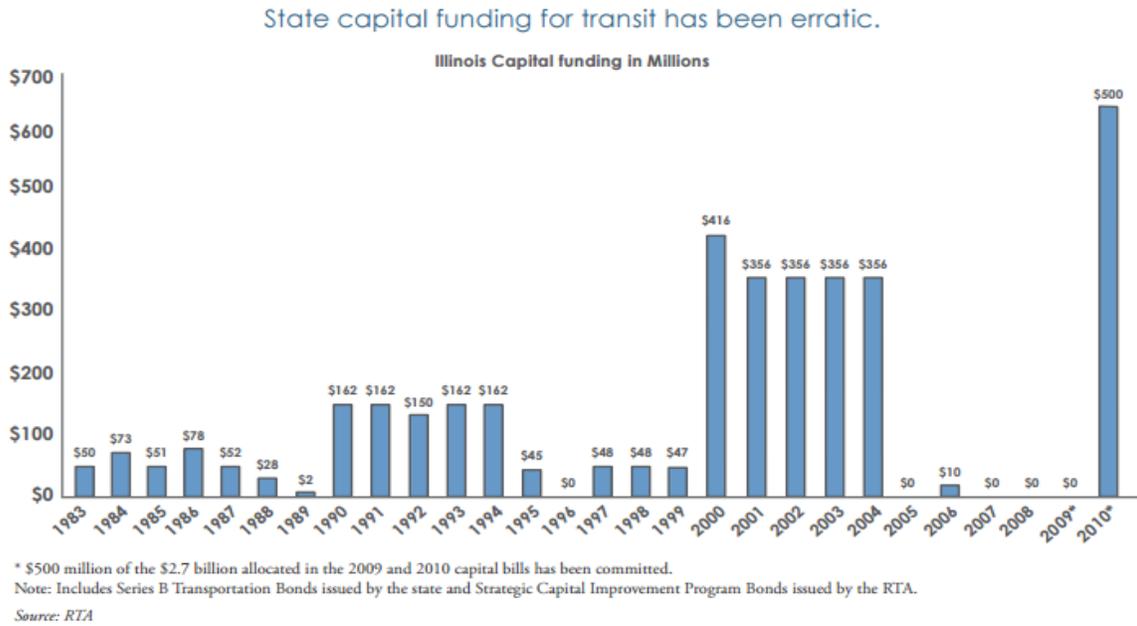
³² Distribution formula for allocation of federal funds (Public Transit Formula Grants [capital and operating], Bus Capital, and State of Good Repair for commuter rail administered by the FTA): 58% CTA, 34% Metra, 8% Pace. Distribution formula for allocation of state funds: 50% CTA, 45% Metra, 5% Pace. (Merk, 2014:12).

Figure 21: RTA capital funding sources (\$ Millions) (2002-2012)



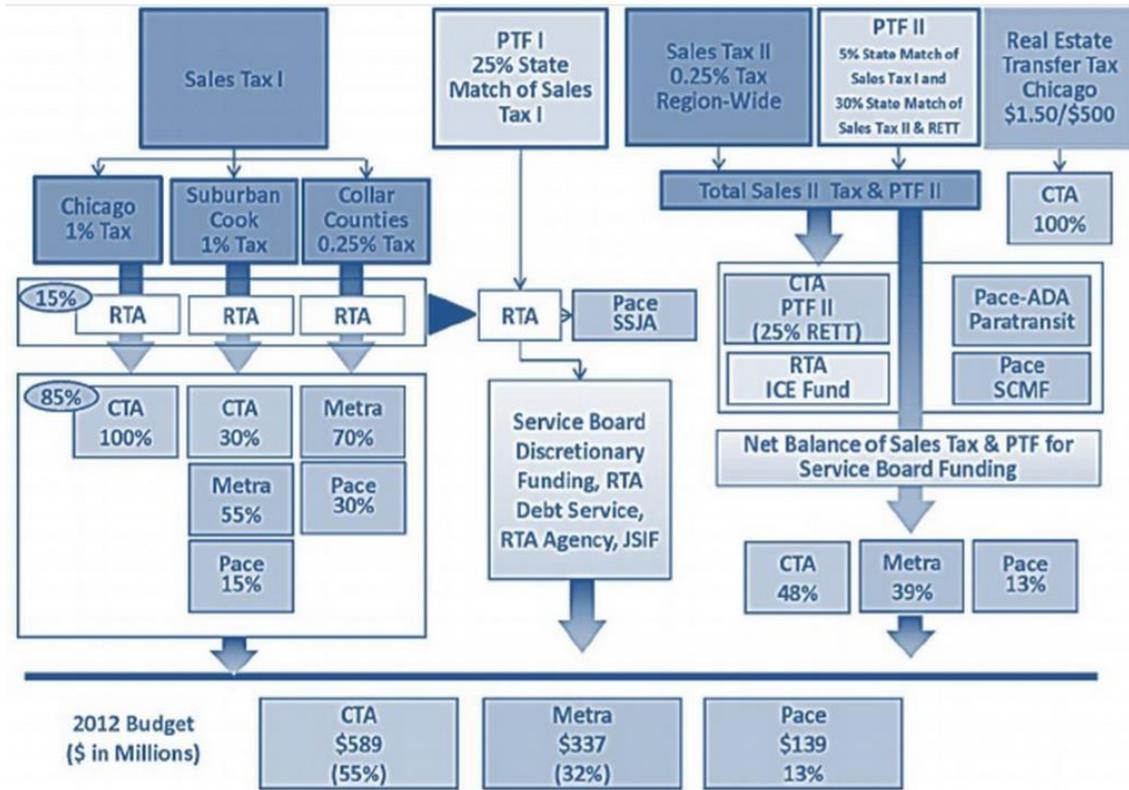
Source: Northeastern Illinois Public Transit Task Force (2014: 35)

Figure 22: Illinois transit capital funding (\$ Millions) (1983-2010)



Source: Excerpted from Chicago Metropolis 2020 (2010: 59)

Figure 23: Current allocation of public transportation funding by the RTA



Source: Excerpted from Northeastern Illinois Public Transit Task Force (2014: 37)

As for road and highway resources (which are not distributed by the RTA, but by the State and the MPO), the state of Illinois has historically distributed funds according to the “45-55” formula, with 45% of the funds going to Chicago metropolitan area and 55% to downstate Illinois. This “45-55” formula is criticized for being unfair to the Chicago region, which hosts 70% of the state’s population and generates 80% of the GDP (Interviews B, F & N – more on this in the next chapter).

According to a recent study on metropolitan governance of transportation and land use in the Chicago metropolitan area, the institutional fragmentation described earlier has resulted in a lack of: interconnectivity, coherence across transit modes, regional freight planning, accountability, and implementation power (Merk, 2014: 10). What is more, this study was

conducted after the 2005 reform that created a single agency for transportation and land use planning. Keeping that in mind, the present study assesses the impacts of the creation of CMAP on the planning process, transportation investments and land use decisions, and addresses the question of tradeoffs between accountability, democracy, and effectiveness that the new planning structure involves. The next section describes the exact nature of the reform and the changes in the regional institutional design, which unveil the position of actors and their interests in the planning and decision-making process, a key to understand the impacts of the reform.

Nature of the Reform

This section presents the 2005 reform, which consisted in the consolidation of CATS and NIPC and the creation of CMAP. The section is divided into two parts. First, the general mandate and structure of CMAP and its regional comprehensive plan *GO to 2040* are presented, and then the reform's administration and implementation mechanisms are explained.

Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning & GO to 2040

As mentioned previously, CMAP was created to integrate transportation and land use planning and improve transportation investment decisions in Chicago region. As explained in the following quote, the ultimate goal of the reform was to improve planning outcomes:

I think that the reason that CMAP was created, the reason for the merger is that we were looking for efficiency but I think more importantly we were looking for better outcomes for planning purposes. I would just say that CMAP was created to make better investments decisions. That's why we were created, to help people make better investment decisions than we were making in the past. The structures were 50 years old, and honestly just didn't make any sense. I think at the end of the day, the business community led this charge to create us. And they looked at two separate agencies doing regional planning in the same boundaries and said: "Wow. Why we're doing this? This doesn't make any sense." That was really the overriding rationale to make something that made more sense and to provide for better outcomes and to better tie transportation decisions to land use decisions. (Interview N)

This purpose is confirmed in the *Regional Planning Act*, which introduces the organization as followed:

The General Assembly declares and determines that a streamlined, consolidated regional planning agency is necessary in order to plan for the most effective public and private investments in the northeastern Illinois region and to better integrate plans for land use and transportation. The purpose of this Act is to define and describe the powers and responsibilities of the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning, a unit of government whose purpose it is to effectively address the development and transportation challenges in the northeastern Illinois region. (Illinois General Assembly, 2015)

CMAP's structure and mandate are the result of a compromise between the State, local mayors and the business/civic community (Interviews D & F). The initial 1998 proposal crafted by Metropolis 2020 was to create a Regional Growth and Transportation Commission by consolidating CATS and NIPC, but also the RTA and the Illinois State Toll Highway Authority. In addition, Metropolis 2020 recommended that the MPO would be reorganized to exclude the state's Secretary of Transportation from membership on the MPO. This idea of a decentralized superagency was dismissed by the Metropolitan Mayors Caucus (MMC) in 1998 and by the State's Northeastern Illinois Transportation Task Force in 2004, both of them being unwilling to change the balance of powers between Chicago, the suburbs and the State (Lindstrom, 2010: 54-55, Interview C). After a period of negotiations among the mayors at the MMC and at the state level³³, a consensus was reached on the agency's mandate and its committee structure presented in Figure 45. **The big compromise is that CMAP, the federally designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Chicago region, is being governed by two distinct boards, each having its own composition, appointment rules, voting rules, and also responsibilities: the "CMAP Board" (controlled by local**

³³ For a detailed recount of negotiations, see Lindstrom (2010: 54-55).

actors) and the “MPO Policy Committee” (controlled by the State). The following quotes present the interests at play in the creation of CMAP. The first quote relates the State’s control of the MPO, whereas the second quote explains the debate among mayors which led to CMAP’s committee structure:

We’re only one of two MPOs in the nation where the state Secretary of Transportation is the chairman of the MPO, of Chicago’s MPO. We have eleven of them in the State, and she doesn’t chair any, she doesn’t even sit on any of those, but she chairs the Chicago MPO. And that’s how the Illiana was approved by the MPO. And the intent of the federal government setting up the MPO was to have an independent body. (...) We recommended that we exclude the state Secretary of Transportation from membership on the MPO because the very intent of the MPO was to decentralize decision-making and taking it away from the states which historically have a rural bias in their investment policy and not an urban sensitivity, but we weren’t able to convince people to do that (Interview undisclosed to preserve confidentiality).

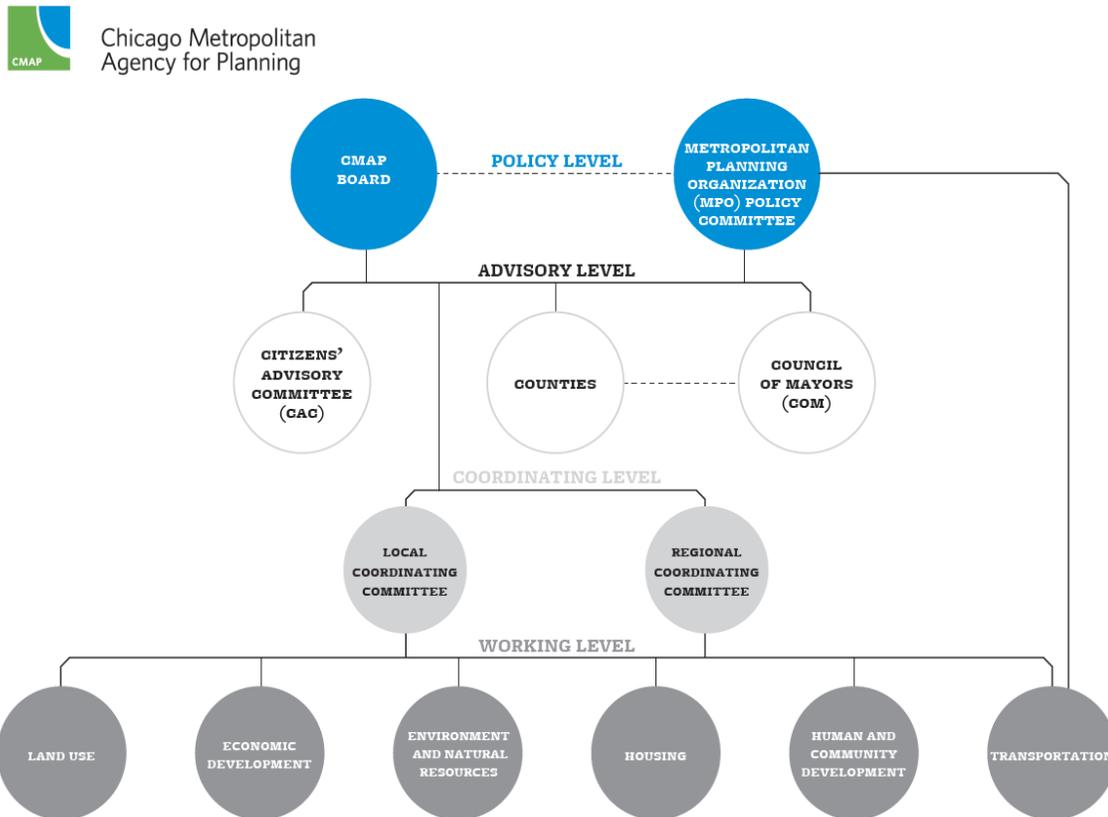
And so at the time of the debate about CMAP was created, the sentiments, we were motivated to really push as far as we could, and the push back really came from the mayors who were fearful of a too strong...you know...they like their development approvals, and so they didn’t want to have someone to tell them what to do. So it didn’t go as far, that MPO oddball structure is a result of that, the fact that the appointment power comes all from local government and is an outcome of that. (Interview F)

The mayors and the State thus settled on the structure presented in Figure 24. The mayors maintain control over land use and zoning, as well as local surface transportation allocation projects through the Council of Mayors process, whereas the State controls the MPO Policy Committee (more on the mayors’ interests in the next section, and more on the consequences of the State’s control of the MPO in the next chapter).

CMAP’s planning and decision-making process include every stakeholder in the region. As illustrated in the organization chart presented in Figure 24, CMAP’s planning and decision-making activities start at the level of six “working-level committees” (land use, economic development, environment and natural resources, housing, human and community development, and transportation). The chairs of those six committees then get together with CMAP Board members in the local and regional coordinating committees. Recommendations

are also vetted through three “advisory committees” (the citizens’ advisory committee, the county board chairs and the mayors), before getting to the CMAP Board and/or the MPO Policy Committee, depending on the issue (CMAP, 2015, Interview N).

Figure 24: CMAP committee structure



Source: CMAP (2011a)

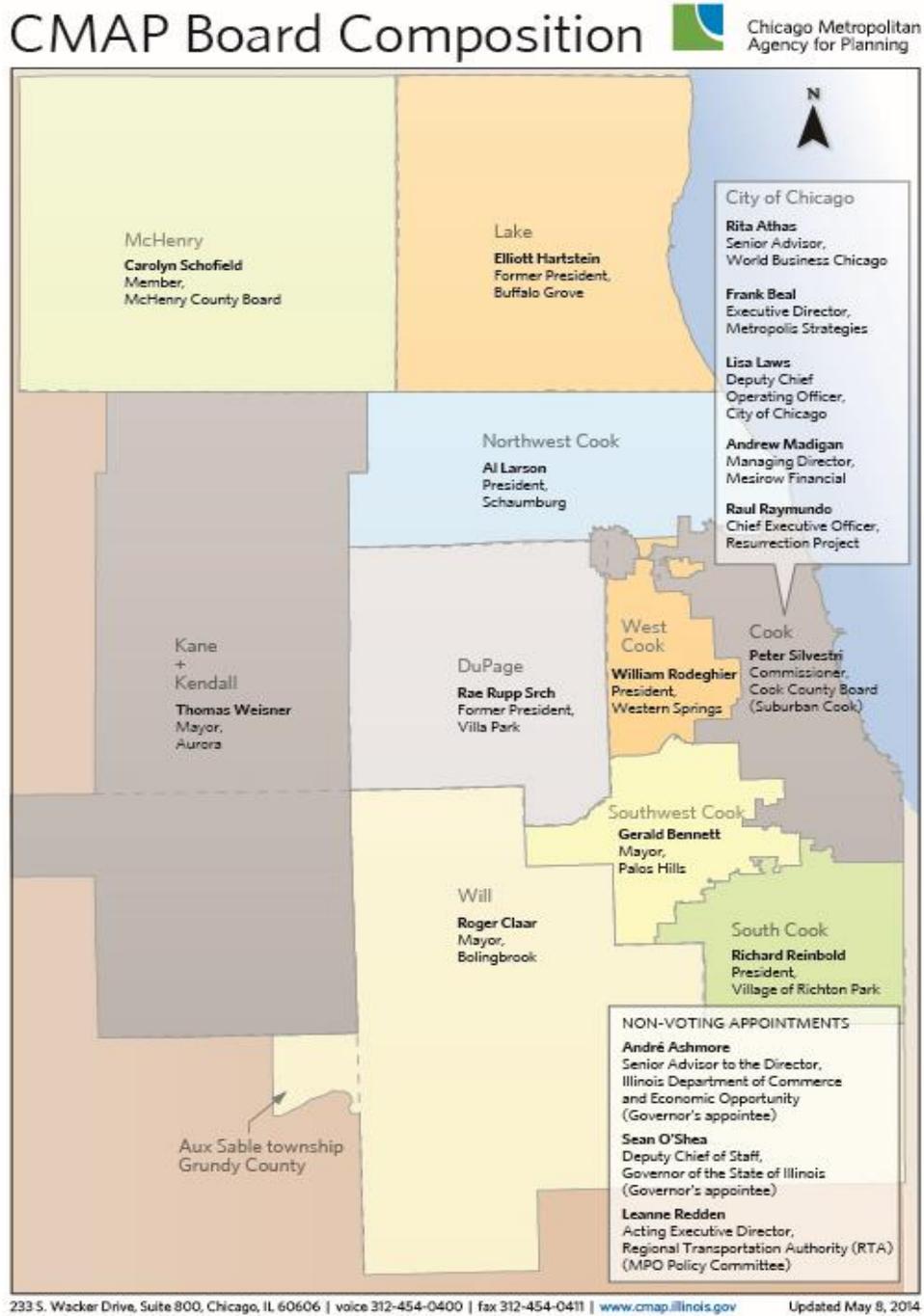
The “CMAP Board” is responsible for developing a funding and implementation strategy for an integrated land use and transportation planning process, the first one being *GO to 2040*, adopted unanimously by the two boards in 2010 (presented next). In addition to coordinating regional transportation and land use planning, CMAP also has the mandate of identifying and promoting regional transportation priorities (Illinois General Assembly, 2005). The CMAP Board, illustrated in Map 22, is comprised of 15 members appointed by their

respective local or county government: 5 from the City of Chicago; 5 from suburban Cook, and 5 members representing the Collar Counties. This distribution of seats represents roughly the population in the region. About half of the appointees are mayors, a couple of them are former elected officials, and the rest is from the business and the civic community, bringing different point of views. Also, resolutions require the affirmative votes of at least 4/5 of the voting board members in office for the Board to take any action (or 12/15) (CMAP, 2006). The board composition and the voting rule is the result of a conscious effort to prevent any faction (City of Chicago, Cook County, and Collar Counties) from controlling the region (Interviews G & M).

As for the “MPO Policy Committee”, it is responsible for regional transportation planning and programming, including the Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), and the Unified Work Program (UWP). Routine decisions, such as minor changes to the TIP, are delegated by the MPO Policy Committee to the transportation committee, which has the same representation structure (MPO Policy Committee, 2008; Interview I).

The MPO Policy Committee is operating under federal legislation, which requires the board to be representative of local and regional actors, government agencies, and transit operators. In addition, resolutions require 13 of the 19 possible casted votes to be adopted (MPO Policy Committee, 2008). Because an important number of agencies and operators represented on the MPO Policy Committee depend on the state government for part or most of their funding, the latter practically controls the Committee (as exemplified in the case of the Illiana Expressway presented in the next chapter). The agencies represented are listed in Table 14.

Map 22: CMAP board composition



Source: Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (2014c)

Table 14: Agencies and Departments Represented on the MPO Policy Committee

Municipal Government
Chicago Department of Transportation (CDOT)
Council of Mayors
Counties
Cook
DuPage
Kane
Kendall
Lake **
McHenry
Will
Federal Agencies
Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) – non-voting
Federal Transit Administration (FTA) – non-voting
Regional Agencies
Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) – 2 voting members
Regional Transportation Authority (RTA)
Operating Agencies
Chicago Transit Authority (CTA)
Class I Railroads
Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) *
Illinois State Toll Highway Authority (ISTHA)
METRA
PACE
Private Providers (Continental Airport Express)
* Chairman
** Vice Chairman

Source: Adapted from CMAP (2014d)

There are thus two sets of planning responsibilities: the comprehensive planning activities under the purview of CMAP Board and the LRTP and TIP planning processes of the MPO Policy Committee. The relationship between CMAP Board and the MPO Policy Committee is laid out in a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) reviewed annually, which clarifies working relationship between the two boards and reiterate their commitment to integrate the region's planning for land use and transportation in an open and collaborative

process. The latest version of the MOU between CMAP Board and the MPO Policy Committee, revised and affirmed in March 2015, clearly indicates that the MPO Policy Committee (not CMAP Board), is the final approval instance for transportation matters:

Federal regulations require the MPO to approve various plans, programs and related documents. Such plans, programs and related documents will be developed by CMAP staff utilizing the committee structure established by the CMAP Board and the Policy Committee. Recommendations made by the Transportation Committee will be forwarded to the Policy Committee and either the Local or Regional Coordinating Committee as appropriate. Recommendations from these committees will be forwarded to the CMAP Board which will also receive input from the Citizens' Advisory Committee, a county officials committee and the Council of Mayors. The CMAP Board will then forward its recommendation with comments to the Policy Committee, which will act upon that recommendation. The Policy Committee will take final action as required by federal law. (CMAP, 2015a)

As for the regional comprehensive plan developed cooperatively by CMAP Board with the involvement of stakeholders, it presents the goals, policies, guidelines, and recommendations to guide the physical development of the region, including:

- Growth forecasts and alternatives for public and private investments in housing, economic development, preservation of natural resources, transportation, water supply, flood control, sewers, and other physical infrastructure;
- Land use and transportation policies that reflect the relationship of transportation to land use, economic development, the environment, air quality, and energy consumption; foster the efficient movement of people and goods; coordinate modes of transportation; coordinate planning among federal agencies, state agencies, transportation agencies, and local governments; and address the safety and equity of transportation services across the region;
- A plan for a coordinated and integrated transportation system for the region consisting of a multimodal network of facilities and services to be developed over a 20-year period to support efficient movement of people and goods, and including statements of minimum levels of service in order to meet the goals and policies of the Plan (the MPO's long-range transportation plan [LRTP])
- A listing of proposed public investment priorities in transportation and other public facilities and utilities of regional significance (the MPO's LRTP)
- The criteria and procedures proposed for evaluating and ranking projects in the Plan and for the allocation of transportation funds (the MPO's LRTP)
- Measures to best coordinate programs of local governments, transportation agencies, and State agencies to promote the goals and policies of the Regional Comprehensive Plan, proposals for model ordinances and agreements that may be enacted by local governments; and recommendations for legislation as may be necessary to fully implement the Regional Comprehensive Plan
- Developing components for regional functional issues including: a regional housing component, a regional freight component, a component for protecting and enhancing the environment and the region's natural resources, and optionally, other regional components for water, sewer, transportation, solid waste, historic preservation, and flood control. (Illinois General Assembly, 2005).

Because CMAP's regional comprehensive plan must also meet the MPO requirements for the LRTP, it includes a transportation financial plan and a list of fiscally constrained projects.

After three years of extensive public consultation that involved about 35,000 people, CMAP's first regional comprehensive plan, *GO to 2040*, was adopted unanimously by CMAP's Board and the MPO Policy Committee in 2010 (Lyons *et al.*, 2014; Interview N). CMAP's recommended actions are regrouped under the themes and sections listed below, some of which are going to be addressed in the next chapter on the planning process, transportation investments and land use decisions. Note that the items that are most relevant to this study are identified in **bold**.

1) Livable communities

- **Achieve greater livability through land use and housing**
- Manage and conserve water and energy resources
- Expand and improve parks and open space
- Promote sustainable local food

2) Human Capital

- Improve education and workforce development
- Support economic innovation

3) Efficient Governance

- **Reform state and local tax policy**
- **Improve access to information**
- **Pursue coordinated investments**

4) Regional Mobility

- **Invest strategically in transportation**
- **Increase commitment to public transit**
- **Create a more efficient freight network**

Given the plan's long time horizon and the "positive impacts" of its implementation, *GO to 2040's* 2014 plan update, which was required by federal law, kept the same themes and recommendations as its 2010 version (CMAP, 2014e). The plan update also includes an updated list of financially constrained projects, notably five new transportation projects and

transit extensions. The list of fiscally constrained projects is presented in Table 15, whereas the list of other projects (fiscally unconstrained, reclassified, and not included) are presented in Table 16.

Table 15: *GO to 2040* update: List of fiscally constrained projects

Expressway Additions: Express Toll Lanes
I-55 Stevenson Express Toll Lanes
I-290 Eisenhower Express Toll Lane
Expressway Additions: Interchanges and Improvements
Circle Interchange
I-294/I-57 Interchange
I-190 Access and Capacity Improvements
Jane Addams Tollway (I-90)
Transit Improvements
CTA North Red/Purple Line Modernization
West Loop Transportation Center Phase I Improvements
Metra Rock Island Improvements
Metra SouthWest Service Improvements
Metra UP North Improvements
Metra UP West Improvements
New Projects and Extensions
CTA Red Line South Extension
Elgin O'Hare Western Access
IL 53/120 Tollway
Illiana Expressway
Metra UP Northwest Improvements and Extension

Source: Adapted from CMAP (2014f)

Table 16: *GO to 2040* update: Projects not included in fiscally constrained list

Fiscally Unconstrained Projects
Blue Line West Extension
BNSF Extension & BNSF Improvements
Brown Line Extension
Central Area Transitway
Circle Line (Phase II, South & Phase III, North)
Elgin-O'Hare Far West Extension & Elgin-O'Hare West Extension
Express Airport Train Service
Heritage Corridor
I-294 Central Tri-State Mobility Improvements
I-55 Add Lanes and Reconstruction I-80 to Coal City Road
I-80 Add / Managed Lanes - Ridge Road to US 30
I-80 Managed Lanes – US 30 to I-294
I-80 to I-55 Connector
IL 394
Metra Electric District (MED) Improvements
Metra Electric Extension
Mid-City Transitway
Milwaukee District North & West Extensions, West Improvements
North Central Service Improvements
Orange Line Extension
Rock Island District Extension
SouthEast Service & SouthWest Service Extension
STAR Line Corridor
West Loop Transportation Center: Phase 2, West Loop Subway Component
Yellow Line Enhancements and Extension
Projects Reclassified or Not Evaluated
DuPage "J" Line
Prairie Parkway
McHenry-Lake Corridor
Inner Circumferential Rail Service
O'Hare to Schaumburg Transit Service
Milwaukee District North Improvement
South Lakefront Corridor
Projects Not Included in Universe
CrossRail Chicago
South Suburban Airport Access
West Lake Corridor

Source: Adapted from CMAP (2014f)

Although CMAP encompasses the MPO, which has the mandate of planning and programming transportation dollars, the actual decisions and prioritization of local roads, bike trails, and pedestrian facilities projects to be funded by road and bridges dollars (mostly federal surface transportation dollars discussed earlier, sub-allocated from the federal to the state, then down to the local level by formula) are done by the region's 11 Council of Mayors (COM). Those COM, which are staffed by the local Councils of Governments, are responsible for transportation planning in their particular sub-areas, each having their own methodology as to how projects are prioritized (Interviews B, C & G). As for local transit projects, those are primarily determined by the individual transit boards, CTA, Metra and Pace. The decisions made by the COM and by the transit board can be seen as recommendations to the transportation committee and the MPO Policy Committee who, for the most part, go along with the decisions made at the local level and by the operators (Interviews B & N). The following two quotes explain this process:

In fact, CMAP is the MPO though which all of these Council of Mayors' decisions bubble up and they kind of coordinate it all, but the actual decisions and prioritizing projects, which ones get funding when, that's all done by these Councils of Mayors. (Interview B).

For the most part, the projects that come to the [transportation] committee are approved by the committee. There is very little sorting out at the committee level...what happens is the agencies themselves submit their programs of projects, and then the transportation committee doesn't make a lot of determinations. Usually by the time they get to the transportation committee, they've been vetted through a public process of public hearings and public meetings. Each agency on its own, CTA, proposes a capital program, holds public hearings and public meetings to solicit public comment, make adjustments to that program, and then the agency's board adopts a preferred program. That is what goes to the transportation committee. So very very little change is made at the level of the transportation committee. Essentially the transportation committee accepts what the agencies have vetted through their public participation process. It is then adopted as a proposed program at the region-wide level, and there are additional public hearings, but there are very few changes made at that point. (Interview I)

The same process applies to the RTA, who can only approve the transit board's individual budget (Interview D – more on the project selection process in the next chapter).

However, surface transportation projects of regional significance must be included in the LRTP's fiscally constrained list of projects, which is "brokered" by the MPO. As for the TIP, it is updated and voted by the transportation committee and the MPO Policy Committee every 5 years, but it is merely a bookkeeping exercise maintained by CMAP staff and a list of projects that all the agencies in the region do, as opposed to a prioritization or project selection tool (Interviews D & K). Although estimated air quality benefits is the primary baseline criteria from which projects are divvied up based on agency priority, geographic balance, modal balance, project readiness and the like, there are still a lot of politics around project selection (Interviews G, H & J). Finally, the UWP lists the transportation planning activities to be undertaken annually by CMAP and other agencies, in conformity with federal planning regulation (Interview M). CMAP's decision-making processes are detailed and commented more extensively in the next chapter about *GO to 2040* plan implementation, land use objectives and transportation investment decisions.

Administration & Enforcement

CMAP was created in 2005 by the state of Illinois and is under the responsibility of IDOT, whose secretary chairs the MPO Policy Committee. As for the chairman of CMAP Board, he or she is selected by CMAP Board members and therefore represents a regional consensus (CMAP, 2006). As for the CMAP staff and agency operations, they are under the leadership of an Executive director who is also appointed by CMAP Board. CMAP hired its first Executive director, Randall Blankenhorn, in 2006, but he was replaced in 2015 when he went back to working at IDOT, but this time as its Secretary.

CMAP is a planning agency with little or no implementation powers and no authority. CMAP's plan *GO to 2040* is thus only advisory, as municipalities and operating agencies do not have to comply with the plan (Interviews E, H & J). Land use decisions are the prerogative of local governments, and transportation investments are made by local, county, and state governments, as well as transit operators who all actively build transportation infrastructures (Interviews B, C & N). In fact, although the RTA and theoretically CMAP have the authority to allocate money and can use that leverage to get people to follow their plans, "the politics of the agencies do not allow for that in reality" (Interview D). CMAP thus rely on persuasion, performance, and the local technical assistance (LTA) program to encourage local governments to make decisions and take initiatives that are consistent with the regional plan (more on the politics of the organizations and the LTA program later) (Interviews N & C).

Practical and Theoretical Implications of the Reform

Implications for Each Level of Government & Stakeholder

This section explains the various ways in which the creation of CMAP impacts the roles and responsibilities of each governmental actor and stakeholder involved in transportation and land use in the region. It does not address the implementation of the plans and the impacts of the reform on the planning process, transportation investments and land use decisions, but rather sums up the concrete implications of the creation of CMAP for various actors in terms of decision-making, financing, planning, consulting, etc., and whether the reform serves their strategic interests or not (stakeholders' reaction and attitude towards CMAP gives a hint to that). This section also helps to understand the political dynamic or the position of each actor in the urban system or policy network and the relationship among them. The implications for

the federal, state, regional and municipal governments are first presented, followed by other stakeholders including developers, builders, commuters, citizens/voters and non-profit organizations. A summary of the changes in the institutional framework brought by the creation of CMAP follows.

Federal (Government of the United States)

As mentioned earlier, the federal department of transportation (USDOT) is a major financial partner of transportation projects approved by MPOs. In fact, it is the USDOT that requires the existence of a MPO in regions over 50,000 residents since the adoption of the *Federal-Aid Highway Act* in 1973. More specifically, MPOs must develop a LRTP and a TIP subject to a variety of criteria determined by USDOT in order to qualify for federal transportation grant programs.

Three elements of the federal transportation programs and policies are particularly relevant to the present study. Firstly, the RTP and the TIP must be “fiscally constrained” since 1991³⁴, meaning that revenues in transportation planning and programming are identified and “are reasonably expected to be available” to implement the RTP and the TIP, while providing for the operation and maintenance of the existing highway and transit systems (Federal Highway Administration, 2013). Secondly, Highway Trust Fund proceeds can be attributed to transit projects since 1973³⁵, but CMAP cannot use its planning and transportation allocations for funding other elements of *GO to 2040*, such as food access and water studies. Lastly, the gas tax has not been raised since 1993, the Highway Trust Fund is running out of money, and

³⁴ The fiscal constraint provision was first enacted by Congress in 1991 in the *Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act* (ISTEA).

³⁵ This provision was part of the *Federal-Aid Highway Act* of 1973.

the Congress cannot agree on how federal transportation dollars should be provided in the future, which make the future of the nation's transportation funding programs uncertain and means that transportation infrastructure is becoming increasingly the responsibility of the state and local governments (Interviews B, D, G & M). In addition, note that federal grant programs require 20% matching funds from the State or local partners, who often do not have the financial capacity or willingness to contribute.

In theory, because the federal government is at the top of the hierarchy, the creation of CMAP does not change anything for the federal administration, which now has to deal with CMAP, rather than CATS, as the MPO. In the few instances where the respondents mentioned the federal administration, it was mostly for expressing their concerns over the Highway Trust Fund, and also for providing their assessment as to how CMAP was following federal requirements, which will be addressed in the next chapter.

State (Government of Illinois)

Although the federal administration is at the top of the government hierarchy, the state government is at the center of the transportation policy network. Indeed, the State is the recipient of most federal transportation funds, administers transportation funds dedicated to MPOs, and collects sales tax revenues that are allocated to the RTA. As explained earlier, the formulas by which funds are distributed or sub-allocated to regions and transit agencies are also set by the State. In addition, the State is responsible for local governments, including the legislation creating regional governments such as CMAP and other MPOs throughout the state.

The creation of CMAP had a few implications for the state government. Most importantly, by abolishing CATS and creating CMAP, the State gave the responsibility for administrating and staffing the MPO to CMAP Board, which is controlled by the region

(remember that CATS staff were IDOT employees). However, the MPO board composition has not fundamentally changed, with the IDOT Secretary still chairing the board and effectively controlling the board (Interview C - more on this in the next chapter). As a result, by controlling how state and federal funds are allocated to regions, projects and operating agencies and by controlling the MPO Policy Committee, the State still has a tremendous ability to spend its money without much direction from localities (Interviews D, G & N).

Regional (Cook, DuPage, King, Kendall, Lake, McHenry & Will Counties) &

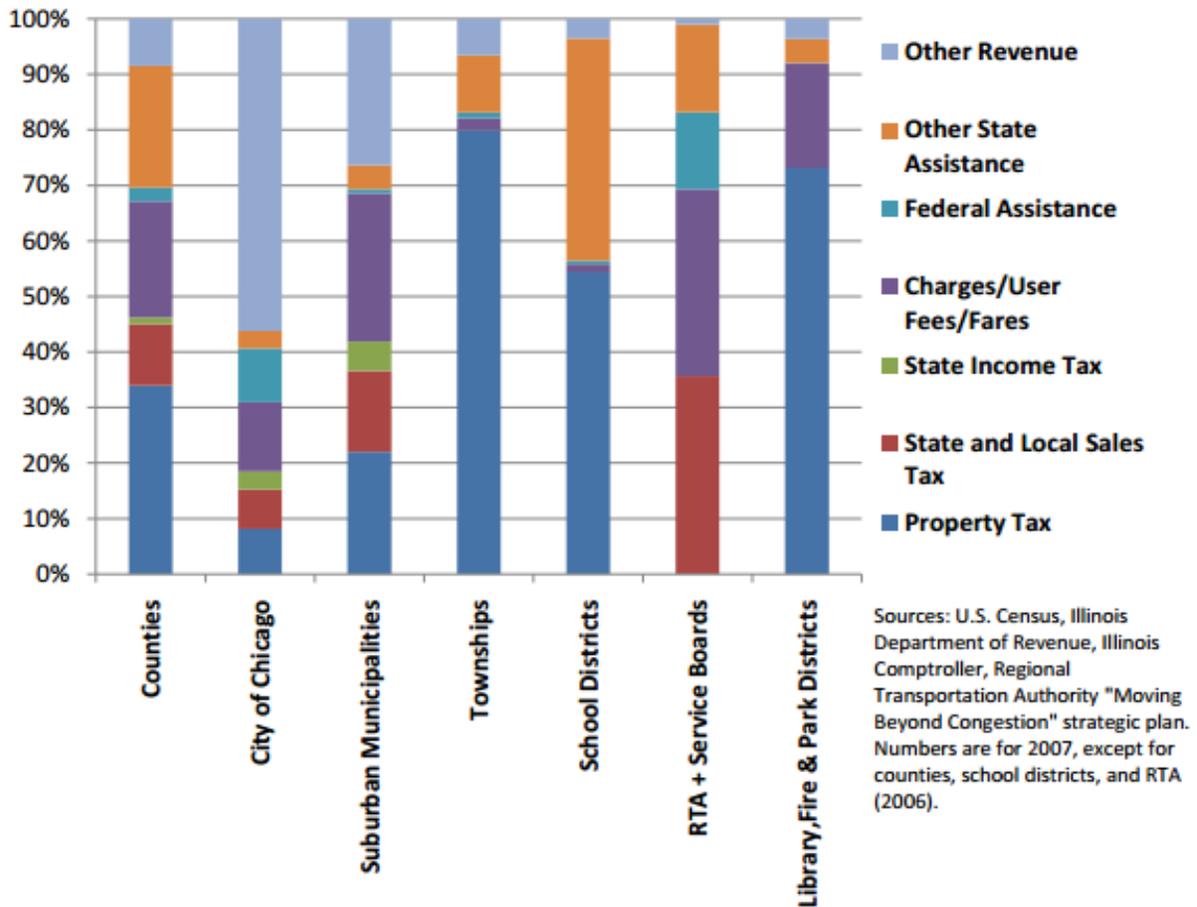
Municipal (City of Chicago and 283 lower-tier municipalities)

County and local governments are presented together here because they share similar responsibilities and interests, with counties representing more or less the aggregated interests of their constituting municipalities. Counties are responsible for the construction and maintenance of secondary roads and bridges, in addition to planning and zoning of unincorporated areas and sometimes small incorporated villages. In other words, counties are responsible for rural roads, as well as ordinances regulating land development, a responsibility that includes issuing building permits in their jurisdiction. As for municipalities, they are responsible for the construction and maintenance of local streets, traffic control, as well as local planning and zoning (Merk, 2014: 10).

Counties' and municipalities' interests lay in their economic prosperity, which relies on increasing the tax base by developing land, increasing land values, and attracting more people, businesses, and economic activity in their area (Interview D). Although there is no equivalent to Table 7 presented in Chapter 3 for the Chicago region, Table 17 provides comparable data for different units of government in the Chicago Metropolitan Area (CMAP, 2009b: 3). Table 17 shows that counties and suburban municipalities relies more on the

property tax and state and local sales taxes than the City of Chicago, which relies on a very diverse stream of revenues. CMAP's Regional Tax Policy Task Force reported that overall, property tax revenues is the largest source of local government funding, accounting for about half of all local government revenues (2012: 31). As for state sources (state income tax, sales tax, motor fuel tax, etc.), they represent on average 12.0% of local governments' revenues in Illinois, except in the City of Chicago where the state is only supplying 5,8% of the municipality's revenues (Illinois State Comptroller, 2012: 21).

Table 17: Revenue by unit of government, Chicago Metropolitan Area



Source: Excerpted from CMAP (2009b: 3).

Together, state and local sales taxes are a major revenue source for suburban municipalities, representing about 20.0% of their revenues. Although on average, CMAP’s Tax Policy Task Force reported that state sales tax revenues alone represent about 14 % of total revenues for a municipality, the reliance on this revenue source varies widely throughout the region, from 0.4% to 58.1% of municipal revenues. As shown in the *Task Force Report*, the reliance on sales tax revenues is higher in suburban municipalities outside of Cook County (2012: 32). Because the net fiscal impact of a retail power center is almost twice the estimated fiscal impact of an office or an industrial development, as presented in Table 18, the sales tax is incentivizing local governments to emphasize retail land use rather than other uses, such as offices and industrial use (Regional Tax Policy Task Force, 2012: 8).

Table 18: Estimated fiscal impacts on a prototypical municipality in the CMAP region for a 30-acre development

REVENUES*	RETAIL POWER CENTER		AUTO DEALERSHIP		OFFICE		INDUSTRIAL	
	Low	High	Low	High	Low	High	Low	High
Sales taxes	\$1,713,000	\$1,936,000	\$1,535,000	\$1,535,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Property taxes	\$132,000	\$606,000	\$88,000	\$297,000	\$601,000	\$1,917,000	\$120,000	\$182,000
Telecom taxes	\$2,000	\$3,000	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$42,000	\$60,000	\$3,000	\$5,000
Electricity taxes	\$15,000	\$18,000	\$6,000	\$7,000	\$52,000	\$61,000	\$9,000	\$10,000
Natural gas taxes	\$4,000	\$5,000	\$1,000	\$2,000	\$11,000	\$15,000	\$3,000	\$5,000
Total revenues	\$1,866,000	\$2,568,000	\$1,631,000	\$1,842,000	\$706,000	\$2,053,000	\$135,000	\$202,000
EXPENSES**								
General administration	\$86,000		\$34,000		\$190,000		\$37,000	
Fire	\$70,000		\$27,000		\$218,000		\$28,000	
Police	\$141,000		\$55,000		\$267,000		\$41,000	
Total Expenses	\$297,000		\$116,000		\$675,000		\$106,000	
Net fiscal impact	\$1,569,000	\$2,271,000	\$1,515,000	\$1,726,000	\$31,000	\$1,378,000	\$29,000	\$96,000

Notes: Assumes average property taxes ranging from a low benchmark of 1.31% in DuPage County to a high benchmark of 2.00% in Cook County, sales tax revenues include share of state sales tax, regional average ranges of: 0.75% to 1.25% local option sales tax, 3.97% to 6.00% telecommunications tax, 3.80% to 4.83% electricity tax, and 3.52% to 4.97% natural gas tax. Assumes expenses per resident and worker of: Retail: General - \$140; Fire - \$113; and Police - \$228. Office: General - \$90; Fire - \$103; Police - \$127. Industrial: General - \$113; Fire - \$84; Police - \$127.

* The "Low" and "High" tax revenues are generated from a single retail/auto sales, property value, or utility usage estimate that is then multiplied by the regional minimum average tax rates by county, as detailed in the note below. Since only the state base sales tax sharing rate of 1% applies to auto sales, there is no sales tax range for this land use.

** Expenses were generated utilizing averages of expenses by type from communities with a high proportion of each land use. The expenses reflect an average cost approach for the most commonly provided services, and do not include one-time capital costs (or revenues) generated by a potential development.

Sources: Analysis of data from Illinois Department of Revenue, Cook County Assessor, DuPage County Assessor, Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity, Illinois Comptroller, and SB Friedman Development Advisors.

Source: Excerpted from Regional Tax Policy Task Force (2012: 40)

The reliance on sales tax revenues, which are less stable than property tax revenues, may increase the chance that a municipality has to reduce service levels or increase tax rates in any given year. In addition, the prioritization of retail land uses over others may lead to an excess of retail capacity (CMAP, 2015b). The intraregional competition for businesses that the distribution of the state sales tax creates is discussed further in the discussion chapter.

The mayors are satisfied with the creation of CMAP because they decided how CMAP Board would be constituted, and because they maintained their authority over land use and zoning. In fact, the original version of the *Regional Planning Act* creating CMAP excluded local elected officials from the CMAP Board, but because mayors opposed the legislation, the State gave the mayors the opportunity to design how CMAP Board would be constituted (Interview C). As a result, CMAP Board is dominated by suburban appointees (Collar Counties and suburban Cook), who make up 10 board members out of 15. The creation of CMAP also meant that for the first time, the Chicago metropolitan area had a planning agency whose decision-making board is appointed by elected officials in the region, giving the regional stakeholders the final say in regional planning decisions (Lindstrom, 2010: 56). The following quote describe how CMAP improved the linkage between local and regional planning:

And in fact, the makeup of CMAP, the CMAP Board is also in state statues. And the board members are primarily mayors or former mayors at CMAP. And that's another reason why I think the mayors appreciates CMAP more so than they probably did NIPC and CATS as separate entities because now they're kind of part of the regional process. And there's this connection now with local processes too which didn't exist before. You kind of had NIPC, being the umbrella planning agency for the region but not really connected to the region in any real way. The mayors now as board members of CMAP kind of provide that connection so that there's more coordination if you will between a regional planning effort and what's going on locally. (Interview B)

The local and county government not only control CMAP Board, but they also still control how their portion of surface transportation allocation funds is programmed through the 11 COM presented earlier. In addition to regional planning and surface transportation

allocations, local governments also maintain their authority over land use and zoning decisions, which brings up the issue of fragmentation, the importance of “home rule” in Illinois, and the Chicago/Cook County vs. Collar Counties divide. Having discussed the infamous fragmentation of the region before, let me just present the following two quotes that describe the political dynamic in the region. The first one presents the local interests in keeping land use and zoning as a local prerogative, whereas the second presents the opposition of the Republican Collar Counties to any fundamental changes to the regional status quo.

If you look back again the history of the region, these municipalities and local governments existed long before CMAP did or NIPC or CATS for that matter. And so they are used to local control and local decision making and to the extent that they can participate in the regional processes and a vision for the region, I think they're fine. And I think they would much rather voluntarily kind of shape their communities and make decisions of -- I think they would rather take the carrot approach than the stick approach. (Interview B)

The conflict surrounding the recommendations of the Northeastern Illinois Transportation Task Force to merge NIPC and CATS and restructure and refinance the RTA highlights the historical support in the region for the benefits of fragmented government. The statements made by Republican mayors, who did not represent the Mayors Caucus, against consolidating the planning agencies, centralized transportation planning, and making the governor more responsible for the agencies reflect a long-standing opposition to the establishment of a regional government. The opposition to any restructuring of the transportation system also represented the opposition of those mayors on the task force from the Collar Counties to any reduction in their de facto control of Metra, Pace, and the RTA. (Lindstrom, 2010: 61)

The long-standing distrust between the City of Chicago and the suburbs, and the unwillingness of the rural, fast-growing Collar Counties to cooperate under the auspices of CMAP are still very much alive (Interview F). The Collar Counties are suspicious of CMAP (and CMAP staff) and their livability agenda that encourages development in existing communities, which is the reason why some individuals out in the Collar Counties consider CMAP as the enemy (Interviews F & L). The interests of the region and the interests of the Collar Counties crystallized and collided during the debate surrounding the Illiniana Expressway, which is presented in the next chapter.

Other Stakeholders (Developers, builders, commuters, citizens/voters and non-profit organizations)

Because the reform consisted in the merger of CATS and NIPC by creating CMAP, and because CMAP was not granted with any authority over land use and zoning decisions (and has no independent revenue sources either, for that matter), the reform has no *direct, immediate* impact on the development community, commuters and citizens/voters. However, the creation of CMAP does impact the work of other non-profit organizations engaged in regional planning issues.

Development community (developers and builders)

Because the creation of CMAP does not imply any density requirement for municipalities or any growth management strategy to comply to, developers are theoretically not impacted by the reform. When the respondents were referring to the developers, it was mostly for stating the steering role of municipal governments in land development, for reassessing the impacts of the recession on construction, and for commenting on market preferences of residents and companies. The next paragraphs provide a brief overview of these elements that help understand the market environment in which land use and zoning policies and decisions evolve.

The political culture in Illinois and the mid-west is very strong on “home rule” and privatism, and consequently, public policies and regulations enacted by the State and municipal governments are seen as steering development (Interview E). For example, the City of Chicago adopted in 2013 a TOD Ordinance, removing barriers to denser residential and commercial development close to “L” stations (City of Chicago, 2013 – presented in the next chapter). The prevailing political culture in Illinois is one where the municipal government provide the public

infrastructure (like transit, land suitable for development, water and sewer) and development happens. As one respondent puts it, it is a relatively clear market-driven thing and “you want the market to ultimately take over” (Interview A).

The respondents also mentioned the development community when they were commenting on the negative impacts of the recession on construction. They also noted that the development community was responding to market preferences of individuals that increasingly prefer shorter commutes, and corporations who need access to a good pool of workers and support staff (Interviews H & I). Construction trends and market preferences are going to be addressed in more detail in the next chapter about the impacts of the reform on the planning process, transportation investments and land use decisions.

Commuters & citizens/voters

Theoretically, commuters and citizens/voters will be impacted by the reform when experiencing the improvements “on the ground” spawned by the new planning organization. These improvements can be less congestion, shorter commute times, improved air quality, better transit infrastructures, redevelopment along transit corridors, improved access to jobs, retail, services and green spaces, streamlined transit connections, etc. Better planning, transportation investment choices and land use decisions also mean an increase in government efficiency, which works in favor of taxpayer’s interests. As explained in the next chapter, the creation of CMAP improved the public participation process, which can also indicate that the LRTP better reflects the people’s interests, or that the residents that participated in the process are now more aware of regional issues and the impacts of policy choices on their quality of life.

Non-profit organizations

Because there are a few non-profit organizations involved in regional planning in Chicago, the creation of CMAP and the comprehensive nature of its mandate impacted their activities. The four organizations that were most prominent in the field of regional planning at the time of CATS and NIPC's merger were the Metropolitan Planning Council (MPC), the Metropolitan Mayors Caucus (MMC), the Center for Neighborhood Technology (CNT), and Metropolis Strategies³⁶. Although it is important to mention the impact of the creation of CMAP on other non-profits, the scope of this study does not allow for a thorough analysis.

In short, the MPC now aligns its work plan with CMAP's regional indicators and does not produce a regional plan anymore as to not confuse people – it rather aligns its agenda with *GO to 2040*. The MMC, housed in CMAP's offices, now acts as the political arm of CMAP, which is technically apolitical and in a “tenuous spot” in order to lobby for transportation dollars. The MMC thus provides CMAP with the political muscle that is sometimes needed to get things accomplished, particularly as it relates to the transportation funds that the regions receives from the federal and state levels. As for the CNT, it is unclear as to how exactly the organization is impacted by the creation of CMAP. But my personal sense is that similar to the MMC, the CNT lobbies at the federal and state levels and additionally, it also undertakes studies and activities that might be too political for CMAP to undertake. CNT's reports are also in alignment with CMAP's *GO to 2040* objectives. MPC, MMC and CNT thus all act in partnership and/or as a complement to CMAP. As for Metropolis Strategies, because it was originally funded as a research project, it ceased to exist in 2014, 5 years after the

³⁶ Representatives from these organizations were interviewed, but I am not indicating the respondents in this sub-section as to preserve their anonymity.

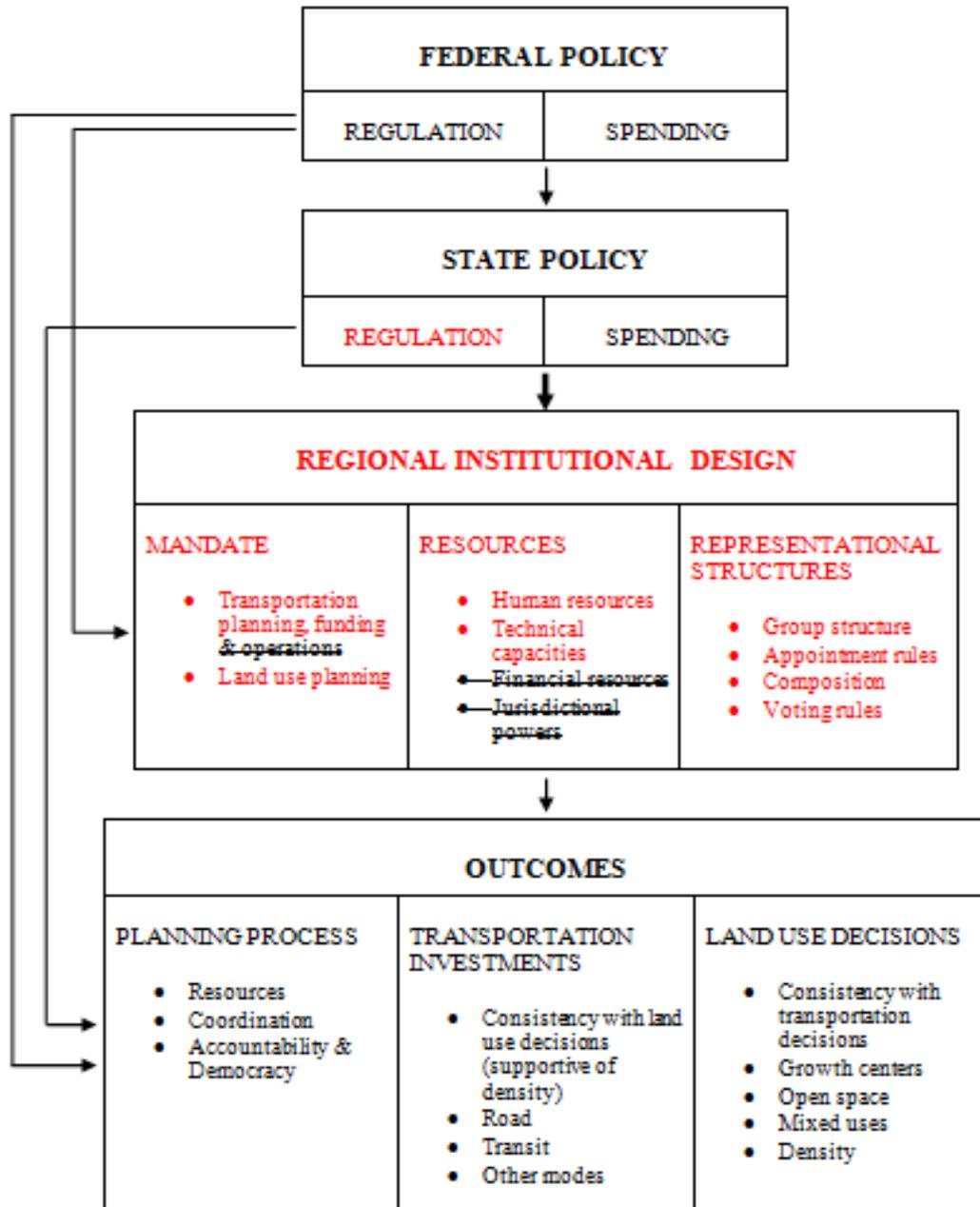
accomplishment of its original goal at the time of its inception, which was the creation of CMAP. Recent non-profit initiatives are addressed in the next chapter.

Summary of Changes in the Institutional Framework

Figure 25 illustrates the changes in the institutional framework brought by the creation of CMAP. The elements presented in red are the elements of the institutional framework that have changed since the reform, and the elements that are ~~crossed-out~~ are elements that are not part of the new regional institutional design.

As mentioned earlier, the federal government has not reformed its regulatory framework or funding structure as it relates to regional transportation. At the state level, only the regulation dimension has changed, with the adoption of the *Regional Planning Act* in 2005 that created CMAP in 2006. The state reform has thus enacted a new regional institutional design for transportation and land use planning. The regional institutional design is highlighted in red because prior to CMAP, the tasks of transportation planning and land use planning were under the responsibility of two distinct organizations, CATS and NIPC respectively. CMAP's mandate thus include transportation and land use planning, as well as the programming of transportation funds, but it excludes transit operations, a mandate that is undertaken by CTA, Metra, Pace, and overseen by the RTA. CMAP is run by highly skilled staff personnel, whose senior members were previously working at CATS or NIPC. However, the organization has no independent revenue source and no jurisdictional powers. Finally, its group structure is made up of two boards with distinct appointment rules, composition, and voting rules, with CMAP Board controlled by the region and working consensually, and the MPO Policy Committee controlled by the State. The impacts of these institutional changes on planning outcomes are presented in the next chapter.

Figure 25: Changes in the institutional framework in Chicago



CHAPTER 7

CHICAGO PART II – ASSESSING THE IMPACTS OF CMAP’S CREATION

This chapter assesses impact of the creation of CMAP on the planning process, transportation investments, and land use decisions using 15 semi-structured interviews, research reports published by non-profit organizations, and media reports. The chapter is divided into two sections. The first section assesses the impacts of the reform on the planning process, transportation investments, and land use decisions, as well as its tradeoffs in terms of accountability, democracy, and effectiveness. The second section provides a summary of the Chicago case, suggests policy recommendations, provides a prospective outlook, and addresses some theoretical implications of the case of Chicago for the framework of analysis developed for this study.

Impacts of the Reform

As presented in the last chapter, the 2005 reform of Chicago regional planning institutions, which consisted in the merger of CATS and NIPC and the creation of CMAP, was aiming at integrating transportation and land use planning and, ultimately, making better investment decisions in order to effectively address the development and transportation challenges in the region. Keeping that in mind, the purpose and the research questions this study aims to answer are:

- *How do new institutional structures aimed at integrating regional transportation and land use planning impact the planning process, transportation investments and land use decisions?*

- *Does the representational structure of these new institutions matter?*
- *Does the change in institutional design impact the relative political weight of the central city compared to the suburbs and higher orders of government? Does the new institution reinforce or weaken the role of the central city in the planning decision-making process? If so, what are the implications of this change in the power dynamics for regional sustainability?; and*
- *What are the tradeoffs between accountability (responsibility & public scrutiny through transparency), democracy (representativeness, public debate and deliberation), and effectiveness (local and regional changes) that different types of institutional structures involve?*

The purpose of this research is thus double-folded: 1) to assess the impact of the reforms on the planning process, transportation investments and land use decisions; and 2) to understand the causal mechanisms of these changes, if any. The various impacts of the reform are assessed using the following sources of data:

- 15 semi-structured interviews. Respondents were asked a variety of questions about the change in the institutional design and its impact on the decision-making process. They were asked if transportation decisions were more coherent with land use decisions, and vice-versa, if there was a growth in TOD or in transit investments since the reform, and whether they thought those changes could be attributable to the reform or not. Respondents were also asked to provide concrete observations supporting their perceptions. The complete list of questions is available in Appendix C.

- CMAP's *GO to 2040* implementation report. Published every year since the adoption of *GO to 2040* in 2010, CMAP's implementation reports track a series of indicators measuring the achievement of the plan's recommendations (CMAP, 2014h).
- Independent assessments. Because there are no independent research on *GO to 2040* implementation specifically, the present study refers to other independent accounts of various CMAP actions and activities published in academic journals, newspapers, blogs, and non-profit organizations' websites.

By disconfirming, validating or complementing the respondents' observations, these documents help assessing the impacts of the creation of CMAP on the planning process, transportation investments and land use decisions, as well as other elements related to the regional governance and political dynamic.

Impacts on the Planning Process

Has the reform improved or worsened the quality of the regional planning process? Has it increased the amount of human resources and/or financial resources dedicated to planning? Are there better horizontal collaboration or coordination among regional stakeholders, vertical collaboration or coordination between levels of government, and better relationships or improved cooperation among different units of the same government? Has the reform improved accountability and the respect of other democratic principles?

By consolidating CATS and NIPC into CMAP, the reform created a single process for both transportation and land use planning, as well as other issues related to regional sustainability. Before getting into the respondents' perception of the impacts of the reform, let's present the planning process for the development of CMAP's first comprehensive regional plan, *GO to 2040*, as well as the planning process for specific projects, both introduced in the

last chapter. A detailed description of CMAP's planning process and supporting documents are available on CMAP's website (CMAP, 2014i).

After its creation in 2006, the first task accomplished by CMAP and its stakeholders was to draft a Regional Vision for 2040 describing the region's aspirations in terms of future environment, economy, social systems, and governance structures. From Fall 2007 through Spring 2008, the region's residents helped refining the *Regional Vision* through broader public feedback via surveys and "community conversation meetings". After the *GO to 2040 Regional Vision* was adopted by CMAP Board in June 2008, CMAP staff produced a series of Regional Snapshot reports on planning issues including: state and local taxation, air quality, jobs-housing balance, industry clusters, Latinos, infill and redevelopment, and sustainability. These reports assessed the region's current statuses on those issues and included recommendations about how they might be addressed in *GO to 2040*. The next step after developing the Regional Snapshots was to evaluate potential planning strategies for implementing the regional vision. As a result, CMAP and other regional stakeholders collaborated on more than 50 strategy papers that helped to identify which planning strategies were more effective at meeting regional goals. In 2009, CMAP staff developed several alternative development scenarios, each combining a set of planning strategies and their implications for the quality of life. These development scenarios were then submitted for public input through an extensive consultation phase called Invent the Future. Using the digital public engagement tool MetroQuest, the consultation process involved about 35,000 residents in 57 workshops across the region, on CMAP's website, and via multimedia kiosks at community fairs and festivals.

At the end of this process, CMAP staff identified a preferred scenario, GO to 2040 Regional Scenario, which was endorsed by CMAP Board in early 2010. Simultaneously,

major capital projects, including large transportation projects, were evaluated and selected by CMAP Board and the MPO Policy Committee based on a list of evaluation criteria measuring how well they implemented the regional vision (more on transportation investment decisions in the next section). Finally, CMAP's *GO to 2040 Draft Plan* was issued for public comment in spring 2010, and the final version of *GO to 2040* was approved by both committees on October 2010. *GO to 2040* plan was then updated in 2015, as required by the federal legislation (more on this later) (CMAP, 2014i).

It is important to mention that besides major capital projects that are part of *GO to 2040* fiscally constrained list, the regional plan, which is also the MPO's long range transportation plan (LRTP), is a policy document that does not identify the smaller transportation projects and local developments. As explained by one respondent:

GO to 2040 it's a policy-based plan. I mean, it's not a specific land use plan. It doesn't have a parcel map that shows what goes where, but it gives regional principles and policies that should be followed when doing planning locally. So, on the transportation side, it gets a bit more specific because [CMAP has] some responsibilities as the MPO to have the constrained list of major capital projects, but that is just the really, really big stuff, and then, most projects, 97% of the investment goes into smaller things that we don't specifically name but we give general policies and principles about how these things should be done. Then, in terms of land use, we do a lot of work through our local technical assistance program. (Interview K)

As explained further in the next section, the planning for individual transportation projects is undertaken by each individual agency (local governments, transit operators, state government) and then submitted/vetted through the relevant committee for funding (Council of Mayors for surface transportation dollars, Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program project selection committee and sectorial sub-committees, transportation committee, and the MPO Policy Committee). CMAP is thus responsible only for regional planning - does not plan for individual transportation projects. As for land use/development projects, CMAP assists municipalities in many ways through its local

technical assistance (LTA) program, but the agency has no land use authority (more on the LTA program in the section about land use decisions). CMAP also “programs” transportation dollars, in the sense that projects must be in the TIP and the LRTP to be funded. However, because so much (97%) of the investments are going for basic maintenance and modernization of the roads and transit system, the individual decisions and needs assessment are made by individual agencies and vetted through various committees, and so most of the “programming” exercise is essentially a “bookkeeping” exercise (Interview N - more on this in the transportation investments section).

From the outset, respondents unanimously said that the consolidation of CATS and NIPC and the creation of CMAP, generally speaking, was an improvement because it established a single process for both regional transportation and land use planning. In the same vein, *GO to 2040* was praised by the respondents for its comprehensive nature, as well as for the public involvement process leading to its adoption. The three following quotes best summarize the respondents’ overall positive opinion about the creation of CMAP and *GO to 2040*.

[The creation of CMAP] been for the good because first of all it combines the traditional land planning with the MPO process, the old CATS, and then the NIPC, and so when those two entities existed, it was very very difficult to understand what the regional planning process was. Because it was bifurcated, and just because you talked to NIPC, the planning group doesn't mean that it was properly influencing the MPO decisions in terms of the consistency...comprehensive planning of both land use decisions and transportation assets. So I think the combination of both in theory and in a large degree in practice, it has been good. (Interview L)

Well, yeah I mean you finally had the *GO to 2040* plan was the first time we've really ever had a comprehensive multi-dimensional, multi-disciplinary plan that wasn't just a land use plan or wasn't just a transportation plan, it was both those and more. I mean it has water, housing, education, safety, security... it has all of that in there. So, that was great. (Interview D)

The development of 2040, they [CMAP] were very good...they have community organizations that they brought in and involved and they went out to these community

meetings and talked about the 2040 plan, so really it was an aggressive outreach. With 2040, it was impossible not to know what's going on. (Interview G)

The success of CMAP at carrying out planning activities is also recognized by professional planners and planning experts. On the regional planning front, a recent study concluded that the use of MetroQuest for the development of *GO to 2040* has allowed for broad participation and introduced elements of deliberation and social learning on complex public policy issues at the regional scale³⁷ (Lyons *et al.*, 2014). The planning work of the agency, mostly through the development of *GO to 2040* and its main implementation mechanism, the LTA program (presented later in this chapter), was also recognized by the American Planning Association, which presented CMAP with the National Planning Excellence Award for a Planning Agency in 2013 (Davidson, 2013). More recently, the work of CMAP planners was noticed by a non-profit organization called *Next City*, who qualified the Interactive Mobility Visualizations, a web platform that illustrates regional statistics into a series of interactive maps³⁸, as showing “crumbling infrastructure into exquisite detail” (Dovey, 2015). The quality of the planning work at CMAP can be explained by the quality and competency of the staff, especially all the veterans who worked previously at CATS or NIPC, described as “really talented people” and “real assets” for the agency by one respondent (Interview H). As explained later in this chapter, CMAP staff also plays the role of mediator between the different interests represented on the boards.

³⁷ MetroQuest is an interactive, technically sophisticated but user-friendly digital public deliberation tool that displays the impacts of policy choices on quality of life. An evaluation of digital public deliberation tools is provided by Lyons *et al.* (2014: 32).

³⁸ See <http://www.cmap.illinois.gov/mobility/explore#/> (CMAP, 2014g).

The creation of CMAP and the development of *GO to 2040* also changed the way people think about the region and think about investments in the region (Interviews C, F & N). However, although the regional planning process has improved as a result of CMAP, which successfully integrated the transportation and land use planning processes and put sustainability on the regional planning agenda, the agency's lack of authority and financial resources is limiting its ability to carry out its mandate. As explained this respondent:

I think [CMAP] has expanded the capacity of more communities to ask those questions themselves, I would say sustainability was not in front of mind for many communities a decade ago, and that has changed, and I give CMAP at least partial credit, I think the conversation has changed as well. But there's additional awareness, additional capacity, but we as a region, are tired of talking about doing these things. We need to have consistent tools to execute in concert with that plan. And that's been lacking. And so CMAP is not able to perform its full potential. (Interview F)

The consequences of the agency's limited implementation capacities are presented further in the next sections.

In terms of horizontal collaboration or coordination among regional stakeholders, the creation of CMAP has created a forum of discussion around regional issues that has the *potential* to improve collaboration and coordination among counties and municipalities. However, although those relationships have *somewhat* improved and that the intra-regional competition for businesses has decreased, as municipalities began to recognize that they were all dependent on the welfare of the region as a whole, the long-standing city-suburbs divide and the usual conflicts surrounding funding allocation are still present. In parallel and at another level, the creation of CMAP seemed to have increased and improved regional cooperation among non-profit organizations, which are now working in symbiosis with CMAP on many issues, notably funding. As explained in

further detail in the next paragraphs, these general statements about the impacts of CMAP on horizontal collaboration are shared by many respondents, as there appear to be a consensus on this subject matter.

Generally, CMAP has created a forum for discussion that helps improving coordination and collaboration between municipalities, especially at the staff level through various CMAP committees (Interviews D, E, N & O). As explained in the following quotes, the collaboration is occurring more at the staff level than at the political/elected level:

There is no question that the creation of CMAP has helped local governments think more regionally, it's helped connect them to CMAP in ways that it never has before, I think that's been a really good experience. 10 years ago, before CMAP existed, if you would've asked other sister agencies, most of our elected officials would've looked at them didn't know what they were. Now most of our elected officials get some experience with CMAP, and they have a good idea of where they fit and we've developed those kinds of relationships. (Interview N)

I think it's created a forum for discussion on a level playing field between the city and the suburbs. I think it's a good forum in which to air issues of how the city and the suburbs interact for the betterment of the whole region. However, I've gotten a sense that regardless of CMAP function, this Mayor Emanuel takes less seriously the Metropolitan Mayors Caucus that Rich Daly started and that in itself indicates that he has moved back to being city centric as opposed to someone who's willing to cooperate regionally. But I think CMAP is a good place in which to try and address some of those issues formally as opposed to - I mean the Metropolitan Mayors Caucus is a private organization, it's not a formal council of government. So, I don't think it's had a major impact but it certainly offers the forum in which to resolve and discuss issues that overlap between the city and the suburbs. (Interview D)

I believe [CMAP] provides a forum for interaction between local governments, probably more at the staff level than at the elected level that wouldn't otherwise occur through participating in this very elaborate committee structure and so on. You just meet and talk with people that you probably ordinarily in the course of business wouldn't have talked with have not been for the need to show up at various CMAP-sponsored meetings. But I should say I think it happens more often amongst appointed staff than amongst elected officials. (Interview O)

In addition to CMAP committees that foster coordination among municipal staff members, the agency is also instrumental in promoting sub-regional collaboration by having the COM look at both transportation and land use within their sub-region (Interview H). Counties and sub-regional associations of mayors, such as the South Suburban Collaborative

that is affiliated with the South Suburban Mayors and Managers, have also increased their respective planning activities since the creation of CMAP (but not necessarily because of it - more on this in the land use section) (Interviews F & L).

However, although CMAP has provided a forum for inter-municipal collaboration that is contributing to an increased sense of regionalism, the long-standing city-suburb divide is still very strong. The first quote evokes the balkanization of the region explained in the previous chapter, whereas the last two quotes describes the improvement (although modest) of the relationship between the City of Chicago and the suburbs.

The Chicago Metro area, as much as I would like to think we can start doing some real good things, on a regional basis, the Chicago area is highly balkanized politically, highly balkanized, and I think it's more so here than in other parts of the country, but I spend a lot of time out west, so...it tends to be a little more wide open out there, because everybody is from someplace else, and here's just a lot of parochialism, a lot of balkanization, so it's a tough sell. Randy Blankenhorn [former CMAP Executive Director] he's got the toughest job in the region. I wouldn't wanna do it. (Interview L)

It's hard to know if it's correlation or causation there's been a little bit less of this true... I think as the economic boom kind of subsided, there's been less of this major in-fighting between you know, trying to draw this development to the ...draw Sears out of the Sears tower out to Hoffman Estates and back and forth. I haven't seen as much of this intra-regional... it's more inter-regional kind of fighting for a location of things. So it doesn't seem as bad, but I have a hard time really finding a specific strong example for you on that one. (Interview H)

Chicago is the 300 pound gorilla, and the organizational change, I don't think made a big difference in that respect. It's still the 300 pound gorilla in the room. I think the difference is that CMAP has gotten the city and suburban communities working closer together. So it's a recognition that as one goes, so does the region. And that Chicago is important for all the municipalities in the region. And so if Chicago fails, although there's still competition - take Du Page county, Du Page county would like to be the 300 pound gorilla, but still it's Chicago. It's the center of the economy, of the region, and the state. So I think there is more cooperation and collaboration, but Chicago is still the center. (Interview G)

Political allegiances aside, the main tangible source of conflict in the region surrounds the allocation of funding between Chicago and the older suburbs on one side (Cook County), and the developing suburbs on the other (Collar Counties) (Interviews A, B, C, F, G & L – more on this in the next section about transportation investments). However, here again,

CMAP has the *potential* to band the region together to get their fair share of state funding and change the 45-55 allocation formula. The following quote describes the regional dynamic:

CMAP has the potential to deal with long-standing distrust between city and suburbs. I would say it has not had a big impact there. CMAP has not taken on that hat on. Maybe it cannot take that hat on. But those suspicions are deep. And in some ways, those battles are refought every day. So when Mayor Manuel...he participates in...he has appointees on CMAP, he has appointees to the Regional Transportation Authority, he's part of the Metropolitan Mayors Caucus, so he's at the table, but every time that he has gotten a company to relocate an operation from the suburbs to downtown, he's been bragging about it, it's salt in the wound. And now those are global trends, those are knowledge workers. Mayor Manuel is very aggressive as a recruiter, but those tech workers, from Motorola mobility or for Walgreens e-commerce, they needed to be downtown, because they would not travel out to the suburbs and do that commute. Those workers will not do that. It's their values, it's sustainability. So that's not Mayor Manuel stealing someone. It's Mayor Manuel taking care of a global trend. But it hurts. And so that underscores this "I gotta fight for what I have" this region has always...To the extent that we've had some success, it's because we've realized we have 78% of the population and the GDP of the state, and when our city and suburbs do band together, we succeed. We don't do that often enough, so for example the historic distribution of roads, roadway sources, is 45% to this region, but we have 78% of the population. (Interview F)

The issue of regional funding is also addressed by all the non-profit agencies in the region, which are rallying around this issue (more on this in the prospective outlook).

I think in terms of the region, all the agencies in the region have been kind of pushing for a change in the state funding formula that you'll hear about more from CMAP, this whole 55-45 thing. Even though the Chicago metro area is two thirds the state's population, we get less than half of the fuel tax funding. So in that regard, there's cooperation within what's there. While there's competition, there's also cooperation. Everyone wants to kind of make the pie bigger so we don't have to fight over the size of the pieces as much. (Interview H)

Regional funding is thus a source of both intra-regional and inter-agency competition as well as a source of collaboration among non-profit organizations and among local leaders (mayors and county board presidents) who are trying to “increase the size of the pie” by increasing the overall amount of federal and state funding that goes to the region in multiple and complementary ways.

In terms of the vertical collaboration or coordination between levels of government, the creation of CMAP has impacted the relationship between the State and the regional

planning agency, because the former was controlling CATS but still controls the MPO Policy Committee. As for the relationship between CMAP and the municipalities, the “direction” of the vertical relationship is more about the counties and municipalities controlling CMAP Board than CMAP controlling municipalities, because the new agency has no coercive powers and no authority over land use. The creation of CMAP has impacted the vertical relationships between the State and the municipalities with their regional planning agency, but the reform had not impacted the relationship between the State and the municipal governments.

By creating CMAP, the State gave up its authority over the regional planning agency, because as explained previously, the CMAP Board is controlled by the counties and local governments. However, the State still effectively controls the MPO Policy Committee and still holds the purse strings (funds for transportation projects and CMAP’s monthly invoice off of the federal funding for carrying out its planning work), which is a source of tension between CMAP and the State (Interviews C, D, F, G, I, M, N & O). The following three quotes describe the uneasiness of the relationship between CMAP and the State. The controversy about the Illiana Expressway is presented later in this chapter.

Despite [the fight between CMAP and IDOT on the Illiana Expressway], I think IDOT is more deferential to CMAP. With CATS and NIPC, the CATS they owned and controlled; NIPC they didn’t give a crap about, so they could roll over. I think IDOT now, on many cases, use them as a valuable partner, on some cases, as an enemy. There’s a sense that they know what they’re talking about. They do homework, they do good work, they do good research, they’re engaged with the transportation and land use issues in the region, so IDOT respects them. (Interview C)

[The State] would like to have control [of CATS and CMAP]. [The people at CATS] didn't listen to [the State] any better than they do now. There have been growing pains. I can put it that way. I think [the State] has a good relationship [with CMAP]. I think as CMAP develops its identity and finds its identity, there will be conflict as well as cooperation. I think [the State and CMAP] have a good relationship. I think as any political body which CMAP is a political body as well, anytime you have interaction there's an opportunity for conflict and I will say that we've had a few of those. I think [the State has] worked well with them. [The State] continues to try and work together to provide information on the long-range plan. [The State] has some difference of opinion on...there's a major project in the region that [the State is] pursuing it's a private partnership and it's the first new, really big project we've had in the

region in a long time and there were some differences of opinions as to locations and fiscal responsibility. The project's called the Illiana. It's a joint project between Indiana and Illinois. Again, but we've worked through that. It is included in the updated long-range plan. It is fiscally constrained and so it's in there and again, I think everybody ultimately ended up working well together and we've come to agreement on it and so forth. But again, you have CMAP staff and you have CMAP membership, which are two different things and sometimes there is conflict even between the membership and the staff, and so forth. When you get more than three human beings in a room are going to have that. (Interview M)

I think it's been generally not necessarily conflict, it's been accommodation. [The State and CMAP] accommodate each other needs, it's not as cooperative as I would like it but [they]'ve been able to come to agreements. There was a project last fall that was conflict [the Illiana Expressway]. The State wanted to put a project in the plan, [CMAP] staff recommended against it, it became very political. It did get put in. That's really the only time that there's been conflict. And the conflict was simply...it was a "is this the right place for it, where is the money going to come from", not that [the State] was doing something wrong. It was a priority issue. But in general, while it's not cooperative, it's not conflictual relationships, it's much more of...I use the word accommodate. (Interview N)

As evoked in these quotes, this tension between CMAP and the State over funding culminated during the debate surrounding the Illiana Expressway, which is presented in the next section. In sum, the reform did not quite improve the relationship between the State and the regional planning agency - it has been more about “accommodation” and “growing pains” than about “cooperation”. However, as explained in the last section of this chapter, the change of leadership at the state level and the nomination of Randy Blankenhorn, the former Executive Director of CMAP, as the state Secretary of Transportation might change the relationship between CMAP and the State, as well as the involvement of the state of Illinois in regional transportation, more generally. As for the local leaders, they are quite happy with the creation of CMAP because they designed CMAP Board and kept their land use prerogatives, as explained on previously.

In terms of coordination and cooperation among different units of the same government, there is no mention in the interviews of CMAP changing anything in that regard – the departments of City of Chicago and the CTA are still working very closely with one another, as it was the case before the reform. Similarly, there is no indication that the creation

of CMAP improved coordination and cooperation among state departments. As for the accountability of the planning process and the respect of democratic principles, the reform does involve some tradeoffs which are subject of a separate section toward the end of this chapter.

Impacts on Transportation Investments

As mentioned earlier, the reform will be considered successful on the transportation front if spending decisions are coherent with land use decisions, that is if they are supportive of the existing built environment, denser land uses, or directed towards designated growth areas, for example. Generally speaking, transportation investment choices (road and bridges versus transit, expansion versus maintenance, infrastructure for cycling and walking) should be made as to minimize vehicle use and reduce VMT. As a reminder, CMAP was created to: 1) plan for the most effective public and private investments in the northeastern Illinois; 2) better integrate plans for land use and transportation; and 3) effectively address the development and transportation challenges in the region (Illinois General Assembly, 2015).

This section analyzes the impact of the creation of CMAP on transportation investment decisions. However, assessing the causal link between the creation of CMAP in 2005, the change in the regional planning process, the approval of the *GO to 2040* in 2010, transportation infrastructure projects selection, funding, construction and operation, and the achievement of sustainable outcomes is a difficult, if not impossible task. **What is more feasible, and what I intend to do here, is to explore the stakeholders' perception of the changes brought by the reform and to assess the actual implementation of *GO to 2040* along with the types of transportation projects that are funded, as to determine whether the reform helped creating a decision-making environment more susceptible of achieving sustainable outcomes.** For this, I am relying more specifically on the semi-structured interviews and the

evidence provided by the respondents, as no evaluation of *GO to 2040* implementation was carried out by an agency other than CMAP. I also sometimes refer to the Center for Neighborhood Technologies' report titled *Prospering in Place: Linking Jobs, Development and Transit to Spur Chicago's Economy*, which translates *GO to 2040*'s goals into a place-based blueprint focused guided by location efficiency principles (CNT, 2012).

CMAP's GO to 2040

Before getting into the respondents' perceptions of transportation investment decisions since CMAP was created, it is important to present what CMAP was intending to accomplish with the *GO to 2040* plan. As mentioned in the last chapter, *GO to 2040* is a long-range, comprehensive plan that addresses not only transportation and land use, but also issues related to water, energy, food, workforce, economic development and access to information. It is also fulfilling the federal requirements of an LRTP for the MPO, including a fiscally constrained list of capital projects, a timespan of at least 20 years and environmental mitigation measures for highway projects.

As part of its mandatory, 5-year plan update, CMAP has undertaken a review of the plan's performance measures, which was published as an appendix to *GO to 2040* plan update (CMAP, 2014j). As part of the review, CMAP staff revised the performance measures included in *GO to 2040* to better match the agency's needs and the type of data available. In light of the results of the indicators assessment, CMAP staff proposed a list of 28 indicators for the plan update, which can be divided into three groups: 1) 8 original, unchanged indicators from the original *GO to 2040*; 2) 10 original indicators that were modified from their *GO to 2040* version; 3) 10 new indicators that address recommendation areas that did not identify specific indicators (CMAP, 2014j: 2). The list of 28 performance measures is presented in Box 6.

Although the results associated with these indicators and the specific targets are not presented here (because a lot of them are baseline and most of them have not experienced major change since 2010), Box 6 show the large scope of the plan's objectives and their associated performance measures.

In terms of public transit, *GO to 2040* has set the goal of increasing the number of transit trips from 2,1 million passenger transit trips per day in 2009, to 2.3 million in 2015, 2,6 million in 2020, and up to 4 million weekday transit trips in 2040 (CMAP, 2014j: 55). The other quantified goal related to transit is to increase the percentage of people and jobs with at least “moderate access” to transit in the region: 73% of population and 78% of jobs with at least moderate access to transit by 2020, and 78% of population and 81% of jobs with at least moderate access to transit by 2040 (from the baseline of 71.5% of people and 76.8% of jobs with at least moderate access to transit in 2010)³⁹ (CMAP, 2014j: 56). According to CMAP, increasing the accessibility of transit and increasing the number of transit trips are a central strategy for reducing congestion, enhancing livability, and improving air quality (CMAP, 2013a: 33). In theory then, the adoption and implementation of *GO to 2040*, along with the pursuit of transportation and land use goals and planning activities conducted by CMAP, should produce more desirable, environmentally sustainable planning outcomes.

³⁹ The access to transit is measured by an “Access to Transit Index” calculated from four components: weekly frequency of transit service, activities that can be reached via a single direct transit route, proximity to a transit stop, and pedestrian friendliness of the surrounding area. For more information on indicators and their methodology, see CMAP (2014j).

Box 6: Performance measures for the *GO to 2040* plan update

Achieve Greater Livability through Land Use and Housing

- Share of New Development Occurring within the Existing Municipal Envelope
- Percentage of Income Spent on Housing and Transportation by Moderate- & Low-Income Res.

Manage and Conserve Water and Energy Resources

- Public Supply Water Demand; Acres of Impervious Area; Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Expand and Improve Parks and Open Space

- Acres of Conservation Open Space; Regional Access to Parks per Person in Acres
- Trail Greenway Mileage

Promote Sustainable Local Food

- Acres of Land Harvesting Food for Human Consumption
- Value of Agricultural Products Sold Directly to Individuals for Human Consumption
- Percentage of Population Living in Food Deserts

Improve Education and Workforce Development

- Population Age 25 and Over with an Associate's Degree or Higher; Workforce Participation

Support Economic Innovation

- Private Sector Employment in Research and Development; Venture Capital Funding
- Number of Patents Issued Annually

Reform State and Local Tax Policy

- Sales Tax Efficiency Index; Tax System Transparency Score
- Percentage of Municipalities with a Per Capita Sales and Property
- Tax Base of More than 25 Percent Below the Median

Improve Access to Information

- Regional Government Transparency Index

Pursue Coordinated Investments

- No specific indicators or targets. Success will be measured by tracking the plan recommendations.

Invest Strategically in Transportation

- Percentage of National Highway System with Acceptable Ride Quality
- Percentage of Bridges in "Structurally Deficient" Condition
- Percentage of Transit Assets in a State of Good Repair
- Average Congested Hours of Weekday Travel for Limited Access Highways

Increase Commitment to Public Transit

- Average Weekday Unlinked Transit Trips
- Population and Jobs with at Least Moderate Access to Transit

Create a More Efficient Freight Network

- CREATE Project Completion; At-Grade Highway-Rail Crossing Delay

Source: CMAP (2014j)

Although *GO to 2040* is a comprehensive plan that has set ambitious goals for the region, it is important to remember that CMAP is “only” a planning agency and thus often not the “implementer” of the policies identified in *GO to 2040*. As part of *GO to 2040 plan update*, CMAP staff prepared a document titled *Implement Action Areas*, which identifies updated “actions”, “lead implementers” and “specifics” for each implementation action area of the plan (CMAP, 2014k). As an example, Table 19 shows the actions, lead implementers, and specifics associated to “finding cost and investment efficiencies”, which is the first implementation area related to the recommendation of investing strategically in transportation.

Table 19 is particularly interesting because it illustrates the complexity and the ambitious character of CMAP’s recommendations included in *GO to 2040 plan update*, particularly the ones that require the federal and state governments to change their transportation funding allocation requirements, mechanisms and formulas in ways that facilitate performance-driven decision making and equity among modes, which are particularly key for responding to the needs of transit agencies. Despite that the agency is often not the lead implementer of the policies and recommendations it promotes, what changes CMAP was able to make since its creation in 2005?

Table 19: Actions, lead implementers, and specifics for finding cost and investment efficiencies

Implementation action area #1: Find cost and investment efficiencies		
ACTION	LEAD IMPLEMENTERS	SPECIFICS
Prioritize maintenance and modernization projects when making investment decisions	State (IDOT, Tollway), RTA, CTA, Metra, Pace, counties, municipalities	Investments that maintain and modernize the transportation system should be prioritized over major expansion projects. This focus should serve as a policy backdrop for transportation investment decisions on both the highway and transit side. Furthermore, research and planning staffs from implementing agencies should conduct more in-depth studies on the impacts of cost-effective maintenance and modernization strategies, including the procurement of more state-of-the-art buses and trains. In addition to more proactive maintenance practices, other modernization strategies include traveler information systems, bicycling and pedestrian improvements, better pavement materials, signal timing, and other intelligent transportation system (ITS) improvements. Projects of all types should take a multimodal approach, seeking to improve conditions for all travelers, including bicyclists and pedestrians.
Develop and utilize transparent evaluation criteria for the selection of projects, particularly ones adding capacity	State (IDOT, Tollway), CMAP, RTA, Metra, Pace, CTA, counties, municipalities	Well-defined criteria are needed for the selection of projects, particularly for new facilities or projects that add capacity to existing facilities. Performance-based funding will help make the process of allocating state and federal funds more transparent for the general public and allow for the most crucial improvements and projects to be completed first with the finite resources available. CMAP should work with implementing agencies to develop and implement these performance measures.
Ensure that the region's transportation projects are based on the above performance measures and align with the priorities of GO TO 2040	CMAP	CMAP has an important role to play in terms of whether or not finances should be allocated to transportation projects based on the above performance criteria, and whether the projects satisfy the direction of the long range plan, GO TO 2040. Changes and amendments to the TIP are the process by which such decisions can be made. CMAP staff should use criteria to measure the performance of projects, particularly larger, capacity-adding projects, in the TIP and make recommendations on action to the CMAP Board and MPO Policy Committee, who hold final say on whether or not projects should be included.
Improve decision making models used for evaluating transportation projects	CMAP	CMAP should continue to lead in developing analytical tools and techniques for project evaluation. As the agency coordinates comprehensive regional planning, the quantitative models employed to make these evaluations should be upgraded toward integrated models with transportation, land use, and economic components.
Identify methods and technologies to improve operational efficiency of the transit agencies	RTA, CTA, Pace, Metra	The RTA and service boards should focus their efforts on addressing the system's fiscal health, particularly pursuing strategies for improving operating efficiencies and ending the continual cost increases that have compromised the integrity of the system.
Revise federal requirements for funding the engineering of major transit capital projects	Federal (U.S. DOT)	FTA regulations concerning use of funds for engineering of transit projects are stricter than those governing highway projects, and should be changed to create a "level playing field."
Develop regional infrastructure funding programs for plan implementation	State (IDOT, IHDA), RTA CMAP, counties, COGs, nonprofits	Create a pilot program meant to focus infrastructure funds to implement local comprehensive plans, modeled on programs in Atlanta and San Francisco. Investigate transportation funds currently programmed by the state (STP) and by CMAP (CMAQ, TAP) for this purpose, as well as non-transportation sources. Retain the current programming of local STP funds, but encourage programmers to consider livability in their funding decisions.
End the "55/45" split for Illinois transportation dollars and make investment decisions based on metrics of need	IDOT	Northeastern Illinois continues to be plagued by a non-statutory funding split which allocates 55 percent of road funding to downstate districts and 45 percent to northeastern Illinois. Transparent, performance-driven criteria should be used to drive investments rather than an arbitrary split.
Revise the process of state capital program funding in Illinois	State (General Assembly)	Adequate funding for transportation capital improvements should be included as part of the annual budgetary process. The current reliance on infrequent "state capital program" bills creates inconsistent funding levels that complicate long-term planning for transportation. Furthermore, project selection should be based upon performance criteria rather than on earmarks.

Source: CMAP (2014k: 26)

Perceptions and Evidence Provided by the Respondents

Respondents were asked directly if transportation investments were more coherent with land use decisions since the adoption of the reform, whether the reform changed the way transportation spending decisions were made and if so, whether it had an impact on the types of projects that were funded. The respondents answered using concrete examples of investment choices as well as examples of “non-decisions”, which are all *GO to 2040* projects. The respondents’ perceptions and professional judgements about transportation investment decisions are weighted against independent reports and accounts, when possible (when they do exist).

In short, the creation of CMAP has not changed the decision-making process for major capital projects (both highway and transit) as well as local roads and transit, as CMAP holds only limited control over investment decisions. In fact, transportation investment decisions are still made by the same committees and by the same agencies, and based upon politics as much as they are based on needs assessment and performance measures. In addition, the creation of the CMAP did not come with any new funding commitment from the State or any new independent funding source, which restricts CMAP’s ability to directly implement *GO to 2040*. Despite these limitations and the relatively short period of time since the adoption of *GO to 2040*, CMAP is incrementally changing the decision-making *practices* two ways: 1) by tightening the criteria for eligible projects submitted by local and state agencies to various CMAP/MPO sub-committees; and 2) by respecting the federal requirement of “fiscal constraint”. Nonetheless, the way the State was able to “force” the Illiana Expressway into the *GO to 2040* updated list of major capital project, despite the CMAP Board recommendation against the project,

shows the limits of the agency in terms of authority and capacity, as well as the consequences of its “bicameral” board structure.

Same decision-making process. **First of all, when the respondents were asked whether the creation of CMAP changed the transportation decision-making process and whether transportation investment decisions were more coherent with land use decisions since the adoption of the reform, the most common response was some variation of “no, but things are getting better”. The reason for this perception, besides the short period of time since the creation of the agency (in 2006) and the adoption of *GO to 2040* (in 2010), is that CMAP has not *fundamentally* changed the committees *where* decisions were made, their composition (*who*), and their mode of operation (*how*). Indeed, transportation investment decisions are still taken by the Councils of Mayors (COM) and MPO Policy Committee, controlled by mayors and the State, respectively, who largely allocate the funds based on some combination of politics, local and regional needs, and the programming of transit agencies, municipalities and the State. The following quote explains why the decision-making process has technically remained the same since the creation of CMAP:**

No. I don't think it has [changed]. And again, I think, part of that, is kind of I believe, people were kind of satisfied with the way funding decisions were made. I mean, maybe they're not satisfied with the amount of money they have to spend but I think in terms of the decision-making process, I think people will tell you that that wasn't broken before. And I think what CMAP does now though is probably better supports that process than what NIPC or CATS have done in the past. (Interview B)

In this last quote, the “people” the respondent is referring to are the mayors and the State, who still control their share of the transportation funds and their respective agencies (transit and tollways). The quote below explains how the COM are allocating their share of surface transportation funds:

Because the funds flow through the MPO, [CMAP] is able to in some way control where the funds go, but there's still a lot of autonomy at the local level, so for example, surface transportation funds come to the MPO, the MPO in this region has distribution methods through the Council of Mayors, and so each COM gets a chunk of funding, and then within the council, all the different municipalities get their funding. One of the things that we've been doing here at [anonymous] is looking at how the different COM make decisions on how that money should be distributed. There's only one COM that actually has performance standards, criteria, that they use to distribute the funds. Others...it really varies...others are first come first serve, others are...it's your turn now, they have a variety of different ways that those funds are distributed, but the funds do go for transportation projects. The question is: are the funds going for the best projects given the infrastructure needs we have in the region? That's the issue. (Interview G)

Another respondent also describes in the same way these uneven, sometimes subjective prioritization methodologies across the COM, and the fact that the MPO goes along with the decisions made at the local level (Interview B).

CMAP has thus limited control over how funds are allocated at the local level. As explained in the quote below, CMAP has also limited control over the State, which uses its spending power and political influence in the MPO Policy Committee (more on the State's political influence at the end of the section).

The projects go to the transportation committee, they vet them, but there's still a lot of politics around project selection. One of the things that didn't change with CMAP is the relationship between CMAP to IDOT. CATS, the MPO, was chaired by the Secretary of Transportation. The MPO is still chaired by the Secretary of Transportation. And so they are maybe the 600 pound gorilla in the room because a lot of federal fund come...The federal funds come in two ways: from the feds to the State, and then from the feds to the MPO. And so the MPO, although it has money for the region, we still need state money for projects, and so the State being on the MPO and other transportation committee, has too much political weight. The way the federal transportation was designed is that the regions should have responsibility for land use and transportation planning for the region. And that all of the regional plans aggregate up to the State. Instead, the State still think they are in charge, and they should make all the decisions rather than letting the decisions be made by the regions. So the process is better, but it's still a political process. (Interview G)

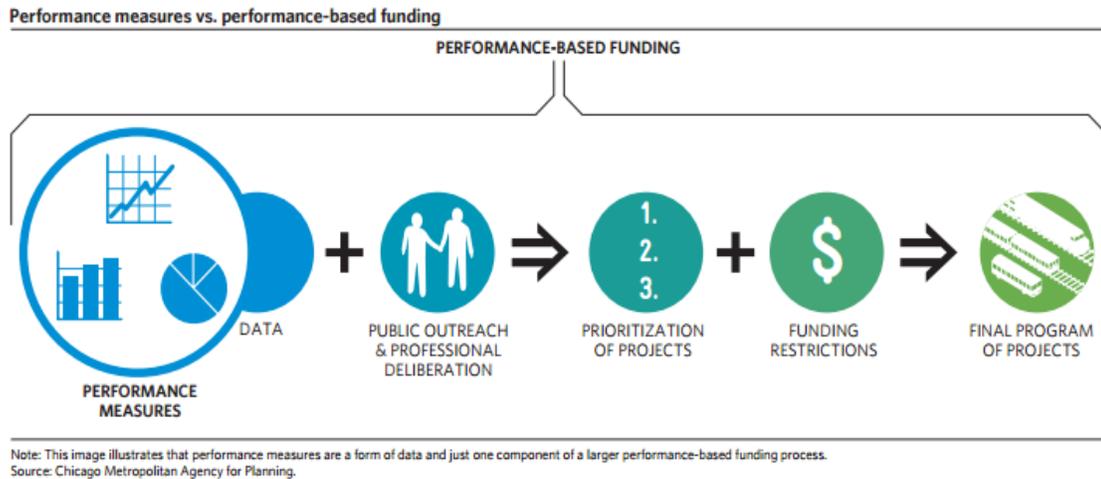
This perception that little has changed in terms of decision-making process surrounding project selection is also shared by other respondents (Interviews C, D, E, H, K, M & O). As explained in the quote below, if CMAP accepts the local allocation of funds by the COM for smaller projects and the transit authorities' capital programs, it considers that major capital

projects, highway projects in particular, should be prioritized by the region (rather than the State).

So much of our program is maintenance. And whether we resurface road A or road B should be an engineering decision. It should be what is the need based on our criteria and use all the relevant...numbers of trucks and...all the things that engineers do. I don't care who makes those decisions, because they're all pretty straight forward. It's the modernization and new capacity decisions where I care, and we do have a much more influence in that then we have in the past. But ultimately, it starts at the State and comes to us, rather than us doing it together at the state level and then coming to us. And that's really where we want to go. I think the State is willing to talk about how we do that, but we haven't done it yet, and that's really where...I honestly don't want to get involved because we have so many roads, or so many buses get replaced, those are pretty straight forward decisions that are made from a good policy perspective. (CMAP perspective - Interview undisclosed to preserve confidentiality)

CMAP's limited control over transit investments was also highlighted in the CNT report titled *Prospering in Place: Linking Jobs, Development and Transit to Spur Chicago's Economy*. The report note that CMAP does not control investment decisions made by municipalities and the State, whose agencies control significant public resources that could be better aligned with CMAP goals (CNT, 2012: 37). CMAP itself recognizes that the final program of transportation projects included in *GO to 2040* is a result of a series of factors, among which are performance measures. Figure 26 illustrates the "performance-based" funding process followed by the MPO Policy Committee, which takes into account performance measures, but also "public outreach and professional deliberation" and funding restrictions. The respondent's perception that the decision-making process has not changed since the creation of CMAP, as presented earlier, was based on the fact that investment decisions, i.e. "programming", are still made by the same agencies in the same committees, following the same general procedure illustrated in Figure 26.

Figure 26: Use of performance measures in programming



Source: Excerpted from CMAP (2013, 29)

The negotiation process within CMAP and at the committee level (the step called “professional deliberation” in Figure 26) is discussed in more detail later in this chapter, when addressing the Illiana Expressway controversy, the Red Line Extension, the CTA project prioritization and when discussing CMAP’s respect of democratic principles. Although the “professional deliberation” (read: CMAP staff dealing with the politics of CMAP committees, or the planning politics) and the funding restrictions have remained the same, respondents noted that the use of performance measures, or their weight/importance, has increased, and that a greater effort of prioritization was made since the creation of CMAP.

Change of decision-making practices: Better use of performance measures. According to the respondents, despite the limitations described above, the actual practice of decision-making for highway and road investments is getting better because CMAP is putting pressure on the state and local governments to improve the quality of their proposals to be evaluated in CMAP committees. However, this improvement seems to apply more to roadway proposals than transit investments, which are largely controlled by the transit

agencies and theoretically overseen by the RTA. This limited improvement in the practice of decision-making is expressed by the respondents in the following quotes.

The quality of decision-making about what to invest in has been fairly poor in transit – in fact, it’s awful in transit. Just miserable. In roads, highways – it’s improving because of CMAP. It’s putting a lot of pressure on the state and on local governments to make smarter decisions about where we invest our road dollars. (Interview B)

And that's another example where CMAP was... when it was CATS and NIPC...the mayors get x percent as a total pot of money, most of it federal. And you just get it. I mean nobody cared. CMAP's year in and year out, each year they tighten down the criteria for what's an acceptable project. They're more demanding in terms of how the pre-engineering work that goes into it, the pre-design work. They kept tightening and tightening that down. It's the same system where these COGs meet and divvy up the pot. But CMAP's insisted, well, let's think about what we're doing, and it's having effect. Again, I can't cite a specific example, but I know that they'll be more responsible about it...but they're putting out standards, processes, methodologies for saying “before we make an investment, let’s think through if this is the best investment or not”. And so, there’s a certain self-regulatory effect that goes on where somebody was going to do something and says “Geez, CMAP’s out there evaluating them, maybe it doesn’t qualify or something”. It doesn’t rise to the level of headline, but I think it has a long-term positive effect. It’s not like they’re in control of it, but I think it’s had a positive effect. (Interview C)

Although the respondents did not provide concrete evidence for the improvement of the quality of the proposed projects, this sentiment was shared by all respondents who were involved in one of CMAP committees, including the state government that has changed some of the design work of its proposals and that is now looking at multi-modal access and implementation of highway projects (Interviews E, H, I & M).

In terms of transit, although *GO to 2040* has identified a list of capital projects to be funded within the next 25-30 years, there is little evidence that CMAP has improved the decision-making practices related to transit investments. Remember that the three transit agencies are still largely underfunded, and that the RTA (controlled by the transit agencies), who is mandated to oversee the agencies’ budget, has no real authority to coerce the

agencies in coordinating their services or improving their budgets, largely speaking⁴⁰. The CTA project prioritization method and outcomes, which has not changed since the creation of CMAP, is presented in Box 52. The following quote discusses the role of the RTA in the prioritization of transit projects and provides the RTA's perspective of CMAP position *vis-à-vis* the proposals it receives from transit agencies.

CMAP, by having *GO TO 2040*, having everything in place, it makes things a lot more simple for us [the RTA]. I mean, with us, on our thinking, it's "Is it in 2040?" It makes things very easy here. I mean, it clarifies a lot. It clarifies spending priorities. I mean, it shouldn't even go on the [fiscally constrained] list if it's not in 2040, except if it's Illiana [Expressway]. So, first it's got to be on the [fiscally constrained] list, then it's left... CMAP will give you an idea of how things will be prioritized, but then, it's left to the service boards to prioritize themselves. We do not help them prioritize any spending for any projects. It is all on them. Again, we just look at the bigger picture. That's not our mission. Some, they feel it is, but that's not our mission. I mean, because we wouldn't want to get in the middle of it of... Let's say you have two projects in the same corridor. Should CTA be funded on this or should Metra be funded on this? We'll have an opinion but we won't say. CMAP is kind of like that too. CMAP will just give an overall assessment and they will not make a decision. They'll let the numbers tell themselves, because, again, politics weights a lot here. (RTA perspective - Interview undisclosed to preserve confidentiality)

The interim report of the Northeastern Illinois Public Transit Task Force, published in 2013, supports the respondents' perceptions that CMAP did not improve transit planning and decision-making. In fact, the interim report, which only focused on the work of transit agencies (the RTA, CTA, Metra and Pace) concluded that:

1. Portions of the transit system have been plagued by scandal and corruption, to the detriment of the system as a whole;
2. The structure of the current transit system has led to duplication, competition, uncoordinated service, and a lack of accountability;

⁴⁰ Note that the RTA governance and overseeing issues are well documented, and that there has been talks of reforming the RTA (which is largely inefficient) to merge it with CMAP. More on this in the "policy recommendations and prospective outlook" at the end of this chapter.

3. The region does not have a widely accepted plan to increase transit ridership;
4. Northeastern Illinois transit system is not adequately supporting the economy;
5. The funding formulas that distribute money to the transit agencies are due for re-examination;
6. Illinois is grossly underinvesting in its transit system.

(Northeastern Illinois Public Transit Task Force, 2014: 9)

The creation of CMAP has not changed the way the CTA plans and operates its network, as described later in this chapter.

As explained in the next paragraphs, although a project is on the fiscally constrained list of projects, it does not mean it will get funded and built. Conversely, if it not on the constrained list, it can be added to the list by the MPO Policy Committee (as it happened with the Illiana Expressway). Nonetheless, having a realistic, fiscally constrained list of projects is still an improvement compared to the situation prevailing when CATS existed.

Change of decision-making practices: Greater effort of fiscal constraint. **Besides pressuring local and state governments to improve the quality of their project proposals by tightening the requirements for acceptable projects, CMAP has also improved the planning practice by providing the USDOT with a “realistic” fiscally constrained list of major capital projects (Interviews D, F, I & N). Before CMAP, when CATS was the MPO, every project proposal was included in the constrained list – CATS was not, in practice, meeting federal requirements (although they were never sanctioned for not doing so). With *GO to 2040*, a prioritization of projects was made, and some projects were**

selected for being part of the constrained list, while other projects were put on the unconstrained list, others reclassified or not evaluated, and others excluded from the universe of projects.

In terms of the actual decision-making practice that led to the selection of projects that are part of *GO to 2040* fiscally constrained list, CMAP staff facilitated the brokering exercise or the “professional deliberation” at the MPO level by providing the transportation committee and the MPO Policy Committee with additional performance metrics that were not provided when CATS was the MPO (Interview D). For example, for roadway projects, indicators for their impact on water quality, water runoff, climate, equity, access to jobs for lower income populations, and investment in disadvantages communities were provided (Interview F). Projects were scored individually, but CMAP staff did not weight them with a total score for each project – they looked at what project scored the best most frequently, and that guided their selection. CMAP staff thus picked the projects (which were near the top of the list) and recommended their selection to the MPO Policy Committee (Interview K) Although the decision-making practice and data have improved, project selection remains a political process led by the State, as illustrated by the case of the Illiana (presented in the next section).

Although being part of the constrained list of projects does not guarantee funding and construction, it helps proposals moving forward because in order to be funded, they have to be on the constrained list. For a transit project like Red Line Extension, presented in Boxes 49-51, being in the constrained part of the plan helped the CTA moving forward with the Alternative Analysis and the Draft Environmental Impact Assessment (Interview D). The following two quotes compare the “constrained list” decision-making *practice* before and after the creation of CMAP.

Respondent: Again, I think that the idea is that we have to be recognizing that the fiscal constraint is what it is, and the within that fiscal constraint, we have to try to push forward the best projects that have the most impact on the region, and I think that's one of the changes that has happened here, and it's a governance change, or a change to the institution of CMAP. CATS used to be much more loose with its definition of available funding, or constrained funding. They would take a program of projects and say these are all good projects, and so let's just pretend that we're going to have enough funding to do all the projects, and they would put them in the program. That doesn't happen anymore. The change that happened to CMAP led to a much more, much smaller group of constrained projects, so everyone had to be very careful as to what they were going to try to advance from the unconstrained, larger pool, into the constrained pool. And that has led to some serious decision making by all of the agencies, not just CTA, but also METRA and PACE as well, and even the cities and the counties that participate in the process with their highway programs, and their bike programs as well. Everyone has had to take a much more tighter look at what's doable, and what's fundable given the available funding. And I think that's probably the biggest change that has happened institutionally with the change to our CMAP.

Interviewer: But it's not because CATS and NIPC were merged, it's because of the federal requirements to have a constrained plan.

Respondent: Yes, when CATS and NIPC were merged, the discussions about constrained versus unconstrained became much more focused. They used to be a lot just sort of "oh yea, that's ok, that's ok, we'll just ignore that. We weren't meeting the federal requirements. I guess that would be the best way to say it, is that the local group, when it was less structured, was playing fast and loose with what was allowed to be done. And so a much larger pool of projects was being advanced every year, and people would just say "that's ok, don't worry about it, we'll count on a certain amount of money", "well where that's going to come from?", "well, we'll up it by 10% and then we'll say this we'll be up by 10%, and then we have enough money to do everything, and they were allowing more projects to move forward that we really had money to fund. And the change to the structure didn't mandate that. It was mandated all along, by the federal requirements, but we weren't necessarily narrowly following the federal requirements. Under the new structure, that narrower definition is much more important and has come to be the real decider for these agencies in terms of putting things forward. So all of us, CTA, METRA, PACE, IDOT itself, the state highway guys, they've all had to step back from their programs a little bit and say huh, I really need to prioritize this much more sharply, and knowing that I'm only going to have a certain amount in. And now has changed the way that projects are advanced, I mean it really has. (Interview I)

Our history as a region was everyone's project go on the list. And no hard decisions were made about prioritization. There were priorities, but no one was ever told "your project ain't never gonna happen". It was just, you know, "well, we might get to you someday". I'll support your project, you'll support my project, all that kind of thing. (...) And so when five [transit] projects of regional significance on the constrained list were approved, and a whole bunch of projects that people cared about were not included in the *GO to 2040*, that was bold. And the MPO [Policy] Committee and CMAP Board, both approved that. So it was like a surprise there. And it suggested that they could do that again, but in the Illiana case they weren't able to do that. (Interview F)

The exercise of narrowing down a fiscally constrained list is also associated with more projects being constructed:

The previous plan had 30 new projects, none of them ever got built. We have 5, and 5 are getting built. So we wanted to put a focus on “let’s not talk about a whole bunch of projects, let’s talk about most important ones, then go to the next list, and get them done”, rather than everybody gets to say they had something in the plan, and nothing gets built. Until we did this [2009 version of *GO to 2040*], the last major construction project was 30 years ago. Now we got 5 under construction. We think that’s been really successful that way we’ve done it (Interview N).

The five projects under construction in September 2014 were: 1) the I-294/I-57 Interchange; 2) the I-90 Jane Addams Tollway; 3) the Circle (Bryne) Interchange; 4) the Elgin O’Hare Western Access; and 5) the CTA Red and Purple Line Modernization (CMAP, 2014n). This brings us to specific projects, notably the case of the Illiana Expressway, which is mentioned in many quotes presented throughout the chapter.

Sub-Cases: Illiana Expressway, Red Line Extension & CTA Project Prioritization. In the case of Chicago, there is no independent evaluation of *GO to 2040* as a whole and of the major capital projects included in the fiscally constrained list. In addition, besides the cases presented below, the legitimacy of the projects that were part of the constrained list and the quality of the projects, generally speaking, was not a topic that was brought up by the respondents. I do not know the reason why the project selection process leading to the constrained list of *GO to 2040* was not part of the general narrative, but perhaps it is some combination of the following factors: 1) having a “realistic” fiscally constrained list is still an improvement from the selection process prevailing when CATS was the MPO; 2) all of the projects part of the constrained list, as well as the ones that were excluded from the list, are all very much needed, discussed for a long time, and therefore considered as legitimate; 3) the needs are so important that just being on the fiscally constrained list is good enough; 4) the sponsoring agencies are prioritizing themselves; and 5) CMAP staff did a good job at enabling the MPO Policy Committee to reach a compromise on a list of projects. Because there are no

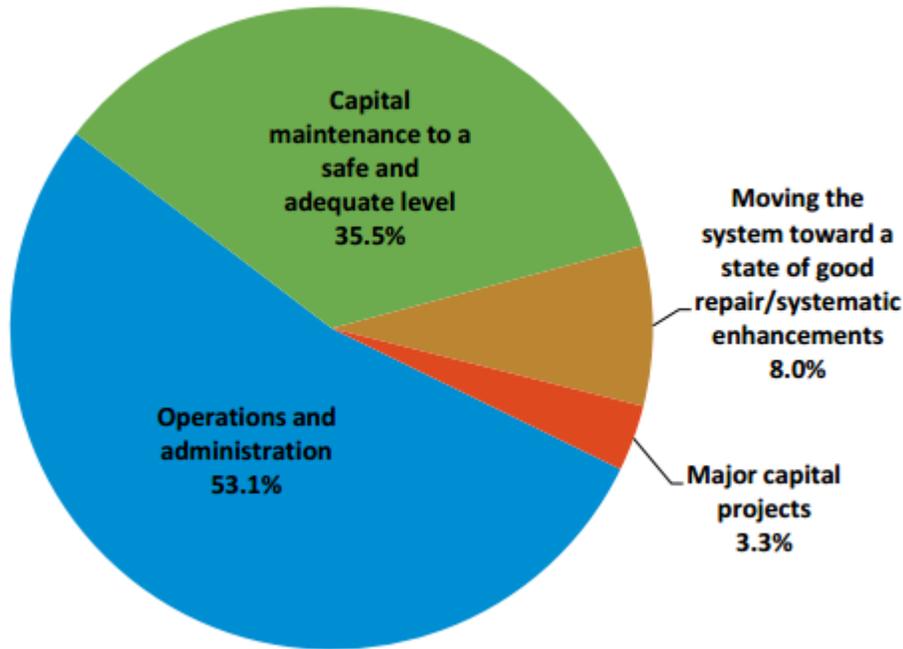
independent evaluation of *GO to 2040* and of the constrained list of projects as a whole, and because it is not really a topic of discussion among the respondents, I do not (and cannot) evaluate transportation projects as a whole. **However, what I am able to do here is to present three cases that were frequently mentioned by the respondents and that best illustrate the impacts of CMAP on the transportation investment decisions, as well as some dimensions of the transportation planning and decision-making process and practices that are prevailing under CMAP. In addition, those cases provide some concrete evidence and substance to the analysis.**

Besides the Illiana Expressway, which was controversial beyond measure, and the Red Line Extension in the South side of Chicago, the only CTA transit extension project included in *GO to 2040*'s fiscally constrained list of major capital projects (both presented next), the respondents were not referring to many of the same transportation projects when asked for evidence supporting their perceptions. That may be because the region is focusing more on repair and maintenance and less on expansion, and therefore the transportation projects that are ongoing are less "high profile". The funding allocation principle of focusing more on maintenance and modernization than on expansion is explained in the following quote:

[CMAP's] plan calls for almost 97.5% of the funds for transportation are to maintain and modernize the system. Less than 3% of funds are for new capacity. So almost nothing new. It breaks down to about 89% maintenance, 12% modernize, and less than 3% for newer capacity. One of the things that we say here is we have a system here we need to bring to the 21st century. We're not gonna build a lot of new stuff, we don't have a lot of room, and so how to make better use of the system that we have, how do we bring it up to a standard. How do we use information to better utilise the system that we already have. (Interview N)

To be exact, *GO to 2040 update* funding allocation is divided into the four categories illustrated in Figure 27.

Figure 27: *GO to 2040 Update* funding allocation



Source: Excerpted from CMAP (2014): 17)

Because so much of the resources are allocated to maintenance and modernization, it is understandable why it is up to the municipalities and the transit agencies to prioritize themselves according to their needs.

To illustrate and provide evidence for some elements that were addressed throughout this chapter, I selected three “sub-cases” that I think, altogether, cover a good part of the horizon pertaining to transportation decision-making process and practice since CMAP was created. The case of the Illiana Expressway is presented because it is unavoidable, being the only project that was cited as an example by all 15 respondents. The controversy surrounding the Illiana demonstrate how the State ultimately still controls the MPO Policy Committee as well as CMAP as an institution (but not CMAP Board). The case of the Red Line Extension is presented because it is the only CTA extension project selected to be part of *GO to 2040* constrained list, and because it addresses issues of project

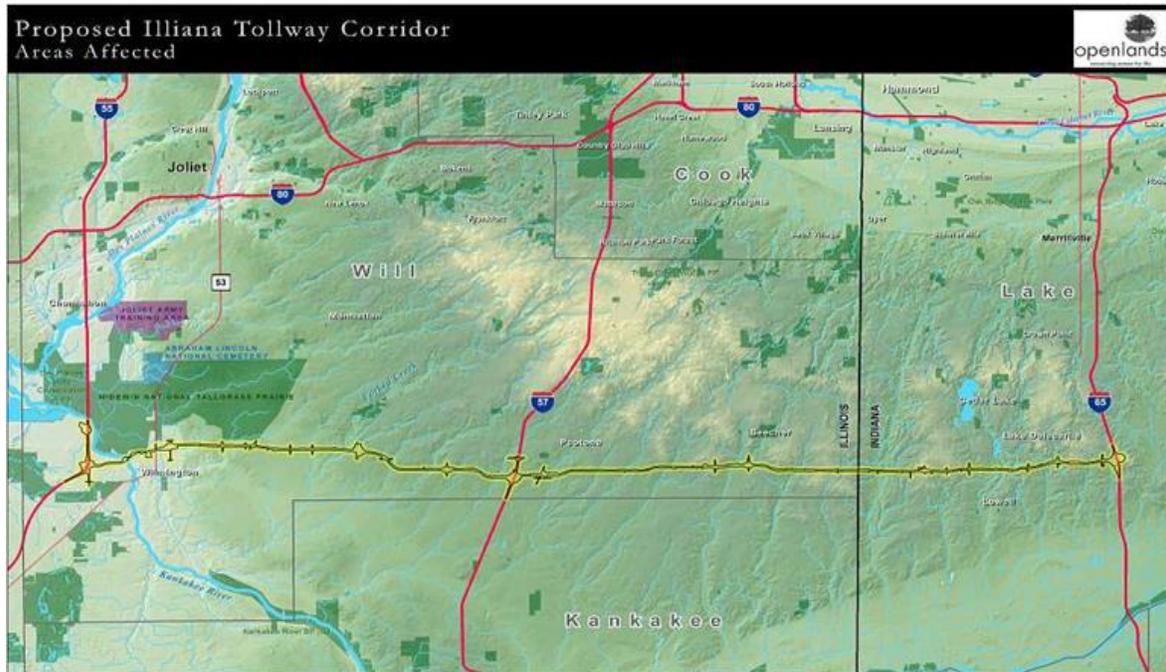
prioritization in light of race and equity issues, which are still important in Chicago. Finally, the CTA project prioritization outcomes and MPO Programming are presented because they provide an illustration of the decision-making context within Chicago's main transit agency, and an opportunity to illustrate how human geography can impact transit planning and modernization priorities in Chicago. It is also an occasion to reassess the question of transit programming at the agency level, and how it is interfacing with the MPO programming.

Sub-Case 1: The Illiana Expressway

The proposed Illiana Expressway (sometimes called the Illiana Tollway), is a 50-mile tollway project linking Interstate 65 in Indiana to Interstates 57 and 55 in Illinois (see Map 23). The Illiana Expressway was included in *GO to 2040*'s financially constrained list of major capital projects by the MPO Policy Committee in October 2013, despite CMAP Board and staff recommendation of not amending *GO to 2040* to include the proposal (CMAP, 2013b). The debate surrounding the Illiana has caused a heated debate in the region, both because the project was controversial in and of itself and also because of the way the State was able to move its proposal forward. The Illiana Expressway was used by the respondents as evidence for:

- An investment decision motivated by politics (state elections);
- A transportation investment decision not coherent with existing land uses and “good planning” principles;
- The fact that IDOT controls the MPO Policy Committee;
- The fact that IDOT controls CMAP (but not CMAP Board).

Map 23: Proposed Illiana Tollway Corridor



Source: Excerpted from Openlands (2014)

The proposed Illiana Tollway aimed at relieving congestion on Interstate 80 that increased because of the Center Point Properties, a huge intermodal facility recently built in the greenfield of Will County (south of Chicago) (Interview G). It is thus essentially a freight corridor that would be built in an unincorporated, non-urban area, mostly farmland, as shown in Figure 50. The Illiana would be funded through a public-private partnership (3P) using the mechanism of availability payments, meaning that if the tolls fail to make the financial goal to pay for the road, the State would be responsible for making up the difference (Interview G).

In the original *GO to 2040*, the Illiana was included in the unconstrained list of projects because the funds to build it were not available and the preliminary engineering and environmental assessment showed that it was not a suitable project for the area (Interview G).

However in 2013, Governor Quinn decided to make Illiana its first priority and IDOT made a request to CMAP and the MPO Policy Committee for amending *GO to 2040* to include the proposed Illiana Corridor as a fiscally constrained major capital project, as its inclusion was necessary for getting a record of decision on the tier-two environmental study (CMAP, 2013b; Interview L).

The reason why Governor Quinn decided to make the Illiana a priority was because he was up for re-election in 2014 and wanted a project to show the people of Will County and the southern suburbs that he was supporting something that would “benefit” their area (Interviews A, B, D, G & J). CMAP staff has recommended against amending *GO to 2040* to include the proposal into the list of fiscally constrained projects for three reasons: 1) location – it would be going through a significantly rural, agricultural non-urban area identified as such in *GO to 2040*; 2) priority – other projects were providing a higher gross regional product impact and overall, the project’s economic development potential was “unsubstantiated” 3) cost – the revenue projections were very low and so it would cost the State at least \$1 billion on a 35-year, 3P scenario (CMAP 2013b, Interviews C, D, F, I, N & O).

Despite CMAP staff recommendation and despite CMAP Board acceptance of the staff recommendation of not including the Illiana into the constrained list of major capital projects, the State was able to “shove” the Illiana into the list by having the MPO Policy Committee reject the staff proposal. It was the only instance where the MPO Policy Committee has voted against CMAP Board in CMAP’s history. The respondents provided lengthy details on how the Secretary of Transportation, who chairs the MPO Policy Committee, and his staff were able to lobby enough committee members into voting for the Illiana. In short, the State threatened other agencies sitting on the committee to withhold grants from them if they did not

support the State's request: "you want grant money from us, you vote with us" (Interview I, but also Interviews B, D, F, G, K & O – more on this in the next sub-section). In addition to the pressure exerted by IDOT on MPO Policy Committee members, the monthly invoice that is routinely executed from IDOT to CMAP off of the federal funding for CMAP planning activities was not executed for two months during the Illiana debate, which has had a big impact on CMAP's payroll. Although the State says that it was not tied, CMAP was under the impression that it was being hammered for its position on the Illiana (Interviews F & N). This situation has pressed CMAP to look at options not to be dependent on the state of Illinois for its funding.

Some respondents believed that even though the project was included in the constrained list, it would never be built because it was not a viable project from a financial standpoint (Interviews B & C). In the end, Governor Quinn has lost the election to Bruce Rauner, who took office in January 2015. In order to reduce the state's budget deficit, Governor Rauner announced in the Spring of 2015 that the Illiana would be removed from IDOT's multi-year plan, and all existing projects contracts and procurement will be suspended (Office of the Governor, 2015). The Governor has since taken contradictory actions on this file, which suggests he might be still interested in the project (Vance, 2015a).

Sub-Case 2: The Red Line Extension

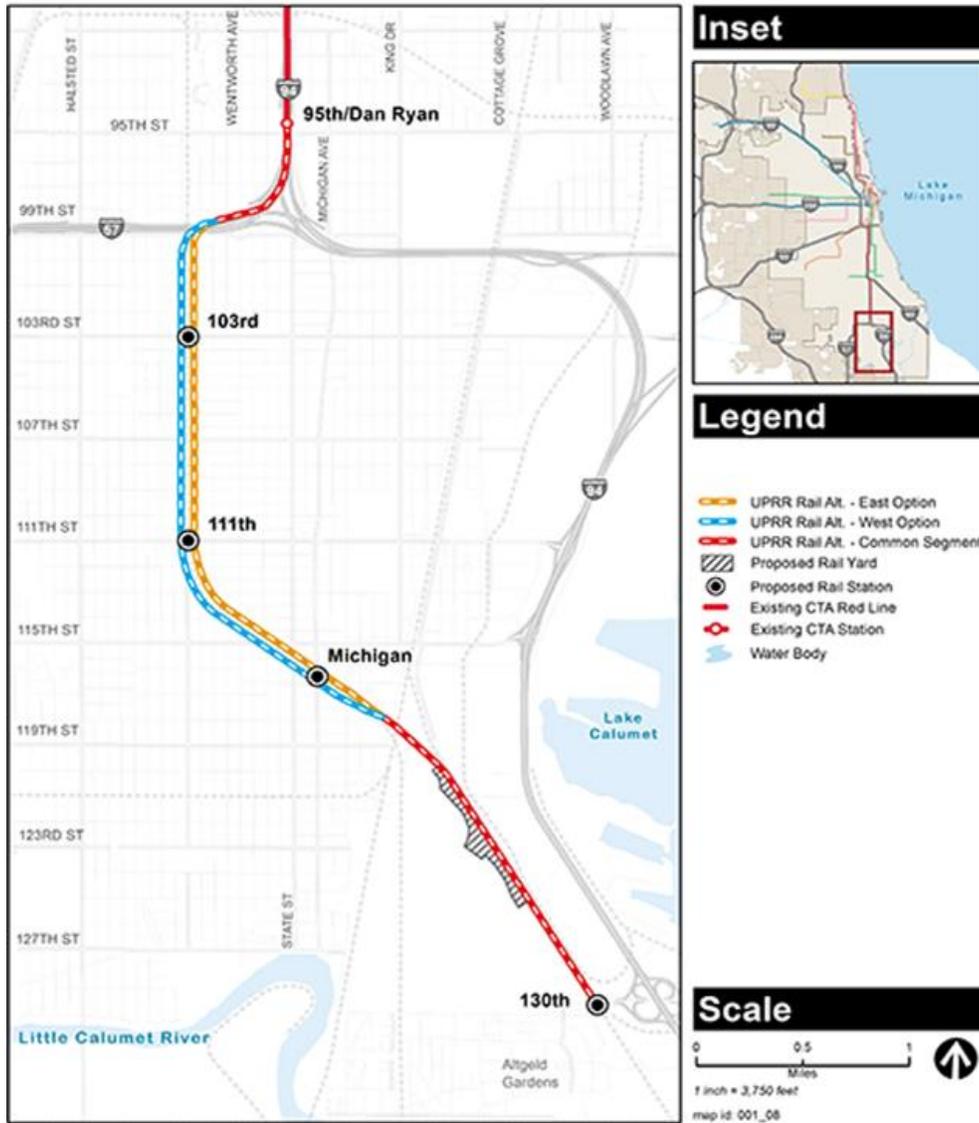
The Red Line Extension in the South side of Chicago, a \$2.3 billion, 5.3-mile, 4-station project from the 95th Street Terminal to 130th Street (see Map 24), is the only CTA transit extension project to be included in *GO to 2040*'s fiscally constrained list of major capital

projects (CTA, 2014; CMAP, 2014f). The Red Line Extension project was cited by the respondents as an example of:

- The City of Chicago holding on to its political promises;
- The efficiency versus equity dilemma when it comes to project selection;
- The project prioritization and funding issues, or the difference between being on the constrained list of projects and being funded.

The Red Line Extension was promised to the South Side of Chicago, an African-American, low income community, back in the 1960's, before all the disinvestments in the manufacturing sector, which translated into operations moving offshore, contributed to the economic and demographic decline of the area. Part of the decision is thus based on a “promises made, promises kept kind of thing” (Interview G). In addition to this political factor of CMAP/MPO/CTA (White establishment) supporting a project that is beneficial to the poorest community of Chicago (and a Black population), the project is also a matter of responding to the needs of a transit-dependent population and an area that needs reinvestment.

Map 24: Red Line Extension rail alternative options



Source: Excerpted from CTA (2015b)

In fact, equity factors have weighted a lot in the decision of including the Red Line Extension in *GO to 2040* fiscally constrained list of major capital projects (Interviews A, G, I & K). The respondents have mentioned a variety of equity arguments justifying the project, which are summarized by the CTA:

The RLE Project is needed to respond to the following problems:

- Transit trips to jobs are longer for Far South Side residents than they are for passengers in the Chicago seven-county region as a whole.
- Transit-dependent populations in the project area have limited direct access to rapid transit rail service.
- The project area is geographically isolated from major activity centers and provides residents limited viable transportation options, which limit access between affordable housing and employment centers outside of the project area.
- Existing transit markets are underserved and transit connectivity is challenging in the project area.
- Disinvestment and limited economic development in the project area have negatively impacted Far South Side communities (CTA, 2014).

As eluted to in the last bullet point, the Red Line Extension project would foster economic development around the stations, which are ready to be redeveloped. In addition, it would also provide rapid transit access to the projected Obama Library, and facilitate investments such as the development of the Lakeside community, a mixed-income, mixed-use project on a big open site on the lakefront, both of which are going to be viable if there is adequate public transportation (Interviews G & I). However, in terms of efficiency, the extension project does not perform as well as other projects on certain metrics, notably because the area has low densities. From an efficiency standpoint, one respondent noted that it might be cheaper subsidizing residents getting a Metra pass, or having a Metra service increase

(which rides through the South Side), rather than building a whole new system (Interview A). Nonetheless, these options do not hold the redevelopment potential the Red Line Extension might have, and the 95th Street Station, the southern terminus, is the highest boarding station outside of the loop, showing that there is the ridership and the market for it (Interview K).

Despite its inclusion in the constrained list of major capital projects, which allows the extension project to proceed with the Alternative Analysis and the Draft Environmental Impact Assessment, it does not mean the project will actually be constructed, because it is still unfunded and there has not been the sense of urgency to push that project through (Interviews I & K). Indeed, although the Red Line Extension project is in planning phases (while 3 other similar CTA expansion projects are currently stalled), the CTA's priority is to fix the system first by bringing it to a state of good repair (Interview E). Eventually, the CTA will submit an application to the New Starts federal program, which would cover 50% of the costs. The City and the CTA would then have to make up the other 50% (Interview K). However, because the area is not rich in development environment, it does not have the potential for applying a value capture strategy (like the tax increment financing program in Chicago) that would help raising sufficient funding (from the City side) (Interview D). Nonetheless, the Red Line Extension project is still on the rails (CTA, 2014).

Sub-Case 3: CTA Project Prioritization Method, Outcomes and MPO Programming

As explained earlier, the investment priority in the region is to bring the transportation system to a state of good repair. The operations and maintenance deficits are particularly acute for transit authorities (especially the CTA that runs the oldest system), which the 2008-2009 crisis only exacerbated (remember that transit operations and maintenance are funded through

the sales tax, and these revenues declined sharply when the economy slowed down). In 2009, as a result of the 2008 budget crisis, the CTA cut 30% of its transit service. After a 9-month analysis, cuts were made to “non-productive” service in the off peak, overnight service, late night service (while keeping a bare bone service for overnight), and lightly used routes in low-ridership areas. Despite these service cuts, the CTA increased its ridership by 3% that year (Interview I).

Given their backlog of capital needs, the transit agencies are all focusing on maintenance and improvements, with no expansion planned besides the Red Line Extension and Metra Union Pacific Northwest Line Extension (at a certain time, Metra had a period where it was extending all its lines out, but that has stopped - Interview K). The CTA is thus following the “fix it first” approach, because the system is not running as well as it can be, and everytime the agency is upgrading the system, it impacts the ridership immediately because people are coming back to the system (Interview I). Projects are selected based on a user-to-cost benefit analysis, so the priority is given to lines, segments and stations that impact the most riders for the lower cost (Interview E). As a result, on the capital side, the most productive, or the most customer-impact, high ridership areas are identified, and so for example, new stairs, new lighting and power upgrades are going to the high volume stations only (Interview I). The same idea goes for transit lines when it comes to replacing the tracks or increasing the service. Improvements are made in areas that have been growing demographically, such as building infill stations on the rail network where industrial or unused areas gave way to residential or employment centers (Morgan Station and Cermak/McCormick Place).

Similarly, the Central Loop BRT downtown Chicago was inaugurated in 2015 as to address the fact that buses represent 4% of the vehicles using the street, but 47% of the people.

The CTA is also responding to demographic trends by preparing for future renaissance of some of the neighborhoods by decongesting the railroad and building infill stations, and by converting the rail network into bike trails in some other corridors that do not really have the demand (Bloomingdale Trail and Major Taylor) (Interview H).

The transit agencies' programming process and its relationship with the MPO programming is explained later in this chapter. Essentially, the transit agencies' preferred capital programs go to the MPO transportation committee, which essentially accepts what the agencies have vetted through their public participation process. The transit agencies preferred programs are then becoming part of the region-wide program (*GO to 2040*). Additional public hearings are conducted by CMAP, but very few changes are made at that point. CMAP's programming for transit projects is thus done primarily by transit agencies themselves. CTA's prioritization method, based on a user-to-cost benefit analysis, was the same before the creation of CMAP, and has not changed since. Similarly, the connection between the transit agencies' capital programming and the MPO programming has remained the same.

About IDOT's Control of the MPO Policy Committee and CMAP. Although it is mentioned in the original CMAP provision that the MPO could not act until CMAP act on a particular issue (Interview C), the MOU between CMAP and the MPO Policy Committee clearly indicates that the MPO is the final/highest authority on transportation-related matters, which confirms the prevalence of federal legislation over the state legislation (CMAP, 2015). Unlike the CMAP Board, which is comprised of local and regional actors, the MPO composition is dominated by the State, as the Illiana case clearly demonstrate. Although the state of Illinois does not hold the majority of the seats on the MPO Policy Committee, it is

controlling it *de facto* because most of the agencies sitting on the committee depend on IDOT for at least part of their funding. Table 20 shows the agencies sitting on the MPO Policy Committee and their vote for or against the motion to amend *GO to 2040* to include the Illiana Expressway into the fiscally constrained list of major capital projects. Eleven votes were casted for the motion and eight votes were casted against, and so the motion was carried (CMAP, 2013c: 9).

Table 20: MPO Policy Committee – Vote cast on the Illiana Expressway

Agencies	Vote
Chicago Department of Transportation (CDOT)	Against
Council of Mayors	For
Cook	Against
DuPage	For
Kane	For
Kendall	For
Lake	Against
McHenry	Against
Will	For
Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) – non-voting	N.V
Federal Transit Administration (FTA) – non-voting	N.V.
Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) – 2 voting members	Against
Regional Transportation Authority (RTA)	Against
Chicago Transit Authority (CTA)	Against
Class I Railroads	For
Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT)	For
Illinois State Toll Highway Authority (ISTHA)	For
METRA	For
PACE	For
Private Providers (Continental Airport Express)	For

Sources: CMAP (2014d; 2013c), Wronski & Walberg (2014) & Interviews

It is not clear exactly how IDOT representatives coerced the agencies into voting for the Illiana, but some respondents provided some indications that it occurred through phone conversations on the days before the MPO Policy Committee meeting. Some respondents

recounted the more or less subtle ways the State exerted its pressure or influence on voting members:

- The governor lobbied enough people on the MPO to get the Illiana through.
- IDOT and the Governor's Office were able to convince enough members of the MPO Policy Committee to vote for it that it got through.
- IDOT stacked the MPO vote.
- I talked to the secretary's office the day before, they told me: "Vote the way you believe you should vote, don't worry about it". I walked into the meeting and I talked to the guy that controls our funding and when I told them that I was going to abstain, he got pissed at me. I'm like "Holy crap, I don't need this guy pissed at me". When I was able to see where all the votes were going to land, I realized they didn't need my vote.
- There's all sorts of people in the MPO committee who are beholden to having a positive relationship with the state government, and so even if they had to kind of hold their nose and vote for it, some of them told us that privately, they felt that they needed to.
- The structure of the MPO itself and of the transportation committee leans a little too heavily towards agencies who are part of the political process and less representation from citizens groups of folks who are concerned about land use. And so there was some political chips going back and forth here, the three public transportation agencies, CTA, Metra and Pace, were split, in that CTA voted against Illiana, and Metra and Pace voted for the Illiana. Now why? IDOT, who supplies a lot of money to all three of us was threatening to withhold grants in the background and say "you want grant money from us, you vote with us".
- Well a lot of those transit boards are dependent on a lot of their funding flow from the State, and sometimes through IDOT. So the position of the state Secretary of Transportation would have a lot of influence on them. And then the other members of the MPO that were from the counties on the exterior realized: "Well today, this is a Will County concern, but tomorrow, it might be a concern of one of them". And that they realized that if we don't hang together on these sorts of things, we're going to get steam rolled by Chicago and Cook County.
- Think about it: the Secretary of Transportation is chairing this committee and on the committee are counties, transit agencies, local governments are represented, all of whom are dependent on state dollars, and the flow of state dollars. So, they're sitting there and the chairman is saying: "Let's vote Yes on Illiana". We're looking around and thinking, well, nothing has to be said, but she's the one who doles out the money. So, it's oddly enough it's fairly close vote.
(Interviews B, C, D, F, G, I, K & O)

In addition to controlling the MPO Policy Committee, IDOT also has the final authority over CMAP as a whole, because CMAP is a creation of the State and IDOT is responsible for transferring the federal monthly invoice for CMAP planning activities. Nonetheless, the local mayors control CMAP Board, which they designed at the time of CMAP's creation in 2005. In the end, CMAP has to try to keep a diplomatic relationship with IDOT (Interview F).

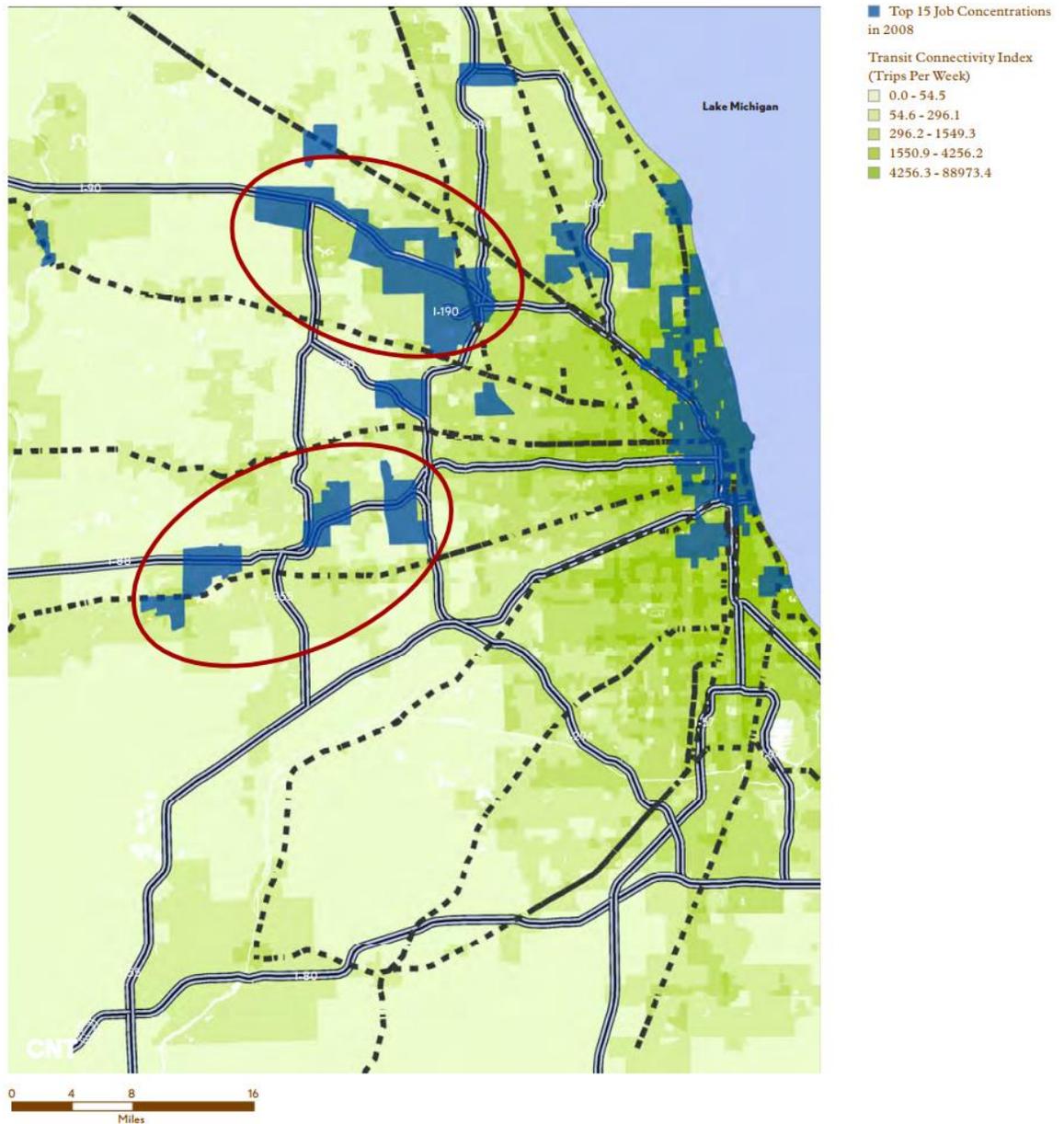
Are transportation decisions more coherent with land uses? Besides the general perception of the respondents that transportation decisions are not more coherent with land use decisions after the creation of CMAP, but that the transportation-land use connection is incrementally improving because of the changes in the decision-making practices in various CMAP committees, it is difficult to assess whether transportation investment decisions are, as a whole, more supportive of the existing built environment, denser land uses, and designated towards designated growth areas. However, the fact that municipalities and transit agencies are focusing on maintaining and upgrading the current road and transit systems, rather than expending it, might indicate that these decisions will encourage a modal shift towards transit while not encouraging sprawling development. However, as explained in the next section, land uses and residential location choices are mostly market-driven decisions and the most recent land use trends are somewhat confusing. In addition, there is a limit to what CMAP can do to improve the transportation-land use connection on the ground, beyond regional planning, as it is not the implementer of the policies it promotes.

In terms of transit service and transit investment decisions, the CNT report *Prospering in Place* underlines the fact that four of the top five employment centers in the region (the four located outside of the City of Chicago) are poorly served by transit, constraining suburban job workers to car commutes (CNT, 2012: 29). Although the commute to work represents only one in five trips made by Chicago area, it represents 60% of all transit trips and an essential part of the formula for improving the region's competitive edge (CNT, 2012: 30). Map 25 displays the top 15 job concentrations in relationship with CNT's transit connectivity index, which measures total transit trips per week for all three services providers by location.

The northwest corridor circled on Map 25, comprised of the I-90 corridor (120,000 jobs), Lombard (32,000 jobs), Naperville (35,000 jobs) and Oak Brook (33,000 jobs) together accounted for almost 272,000 jobs, all ill-served by public transportation (associated with the lowest numbers of transit trips per week). The CNT report also highlights the fact that many employment centers are also located far from neighborhoods with a high concentration of poverty, meaning that those who cannot afford a car or live nearby face reduced job prospects (CNT, 2012: 33). From a business standpoint, providing transit access to major employment centers increases the pool of workers the companies and organizations can hire.

As for transit service in these two jobs clusters circled on Map 25, the cluster of the I-90 corridor (to the north-west) that includes O'Hare airport is better served by CTA and Metra than the western cluster, and a dedicated right-of-way for transit service is projected as part of the I-90 reconstruction. Metra is projecting an improvement and an extension of the Union Pacific Northwest Line, but it does not directly serve the corridor (CNT, 2012: 30). Nonetheless, Metra's UP Northwest Line improvement and extension is motivated by the growing employment and population forecast in the area (Metra, 2015). In this case, the "last mile" connectivity (CNT, 2012: 9) between Metra's transit stations and employment locations will need to be improved to truly connect workers and jobs.

Map 25: Transit connectivity and 15 largest job centers



Source: Excerpted from CNT (2012: 31)

As for the other transit extension that is part of the fiscally constrained list of projects, the Red Line Extension, it aims at improving the mobility of lower income residents in order for them to access these jobs. Although one respondent mentioned that the closer to the ground

you are, the more local decisions are, the more the transportation and land use are interrelated (because it is almost impossible to pull apart transportation from land use at the community level - Interview K), they are connected at the regional scale as far as these to extension projects are concerned. The land use side of the transportation-land use connection is directly addressed in the following section.

Impacts on Land Use Decisions

As mentioned previously, the reform will be considered successful on the land use front if land use decisions are more coherent with transportation investments and existing transportation infrastructure. Generally speaking, land use development should be strengthened and directed toward existing communities and areas where transit is already provided. For example, growth centers or transit hubs might be designated, and the number of transit oriented developments (TOD) should be increasing. Land use policies that reduce vehicle use and increase accessibility, such as zoning for mixed land uses and increased density, could also be adopted.

As a reminder, CMAP was created to better integrate regional transportation and land use planning, but the new organization was not granted any authority over zoning and land uses, which remain prerogatives of local governments. In addition, *GO to 2040* does not include any parcel map or density targets for municipalities to adopt, but rather promotes broad development and planning principles (as described below). Despite these limitations, the implementation of the comprehensive plan *GO to 2040* by the municipalities should produce, in theory, more desirable, environmentally sustainable land uses and decision outcomes. In order to assess the impact of the creation of CMAP on land use decisions, I am relying mostly

on the perceptions and the evidence provided by the respondents, as well as CNT's report *Prospering in Place* (2012), presented earlier.

This section on CMAP's impact on land use decisions is divided in four sections. First, *GO to 2040*'s land use objectives and indicators are described, as to understand CMAP's intent and scope of action. Second, CMAP's Local Technical Assistance (LTA) Program is presented because it is the primary instrument used by CMAP to induce land use changes at the local level, along with the coordinated efforts with the RTA on the local planning front. Third, general land use trends and evidence provided by the respondents are analyzed, as to assess CMAP's impact on the land use decisions and decision-making process as perceived by the respondents. Finally, the City of Chicago's TOD Ordinance and the use of tax increment financing funds for transit are presented because although these initiatives were adopted unilaterally and independently by the City, free of CMAP's influence, these tools represent policy innovations worth of mention.

GO to 2040's Land Use Objectives and Indicators

The 2009 version of CMAP's *GO to 2040* presents the agency's land use objectives in the chapter/recommendation titled "Achieve Greater Livability Through Land Use and Housing" (CMAP, 2009a: 60). *GO to 2040* is based on an approach to land use and housing that aims to "support the efforts of local governments to improve livability within their communities and to encourage a future pattern of more compact, mixed-use development that focuses growth where infrastructure already exists", and that "seek an adequate and regionally balanced supply of affordable housing" (CMAP, 2009a: 70).

Just like the chapter on mobility, the chapter on land use and housing includes a series of recommendations associated with implementation action areas and implementers.

Recommendations for specific actions are regrouped under four implementation areas: 1) provide funding and financial incentives; 2) provide technical assistance and build local capacity; 3) support intergovernmental collaboration; and 4) link transit, land use, and housing (CMAP, 2009a: 76-79). The implementation action area that was undertaken directly by CMAP is the second one, which is to provide technical assistance and build local capacity. As explained in the next sub-section, this was done primarily through its LTA program.

To illustrate, here again, the large spectrum of CMAP's recommendations, the actions, lead implementers, and specifics associated with the fourth implementation action area of *GO to 2040* "link transit, land use and housing", is presented in Table 21. As it is the case with the implementation action area of "Finding Cost and Investment Efficiencies in Transportation Investments" (presented in the last section), CMAP is often times not the lead implementer of the actions it recommends, as they are beyond the scope of its mandate, authority or resources under its control.

Table 21: Actions, lead implementers, and specifics for linking transit, land use and housing

Implementation Action Area #4: Link Transit, Land Use, and Housing	
<p>Identify and exploit additional opportunities for transit oriented development</p> <p>LEAD IMPLEMENTERS: CMAP, RTA, CTA, Metra, Pace, counties, municipalities, nonprofits</p>	<p>Many communities have embraced TOD as a strategy to revitalize their downtowns, and plans for many of the most obvious locations for TOD have already been prepared. CMAP and other regional organizations should identify other potential opportunities for application of TOD strategies and initiate pilot TOD projects in areas where TOD is more difficult (i.e., locations with difficult land assembly, bus-based TOD, etc.).</p>
<p>Use livability principles to plan for land use in development near transit</p> <p>LEAD IMPLEMENTERS: Counties, municipalities</p>	<p>Counties and municipalities should pursue opportunities for more dense development which mixes uses and housing types within “location efficient” areas near transit services. Counties and municipalities can increase density by providing density bonuses (in exchange for affordable units), creating transit overlay districts, or using form-based codes to address community fit. This can occur both for existing transit services and areas where transit expansion is planned, and applies to both rail and bus service.</p>
<p>Promote housing affordability near transit</p> <p>LEAD IMPLEMENTERS: Counties, municipalities</p>	<p>Proximity to transit services often increases land value, making it more difficult to provide a range of housing. Counties and municipalities should analyze housing needs near transit services, and can provide a variety of incentives to developers to bring down development costs in exchange for affordable units. These tools include land donations, density bonuses, permit fee waivers, land trusts and expedited permitting processes. These should be explored, considered, and adapted to specific local situations.</p>
<p>Target housing programs to rehabilitation in areas with transit access</p> <p>LEAD IMPLEMENTERS: Federal (HUD), state (IHDA), counties, municipalities</p>	<p>Affordable housing grant programs should give high priority to preserving the existing affordable housing stock, particularly in TODs.</p>
<p>Require supportive land use planning before new transit investment is made</p> <p>LEAD IMPLEMENTERS: RTA, CTA, Metra, Pace</p>	<p>Consider supportive land use when making investment and programming decisions. The service boards should prioritize investments (new service in particular) in areas that have or are planning for land use and local infrastructure that supports transit.</p>
<p>Update guidelines for transit-supportive land use</p> <p>LEAD IMPLEMENTERS: RTA, CTA, Metra, Pace</p>	<p>Update materials produced by the transit service boards concerning land use planning and small-scale infrastructure investments that support transit. These materials should include additional topics such as housing affordability that go beyond the density and design issues which are currently included.</p>

Source: CMAP (2009a: 79)

In terms of indicators for tracking the region’s progress towards the goal of achieving greater livability through land use and housing, the two indicators developed originally in 2009

were revised in the 2014 update of the plan (although the objectives and implementation areas have not substantially changed). The first updated indicator is the “share of new development occurring within the existing municipal envelope”, and the second one is the “percentage of income spent on housing and transportation by moderate- and low-income residents” (rather than the “number of acres of land within existing municipal boundaries that are available for redevelopment”, and the “share of household income spent on housing and transportation costs” using CNT’s Housing + Transportation Affordability Index⁴¹) (CMAP, 2014j: 9-10). These indicators, along with their 2020 and 2040 targets, are presented in the Figures 28 & 29. Note that CMAP do not have density goals *per se*, but rather has chosen the term “compact development” and the goal of directing new development within the existing municipal envelope. The following quote explains this approach:

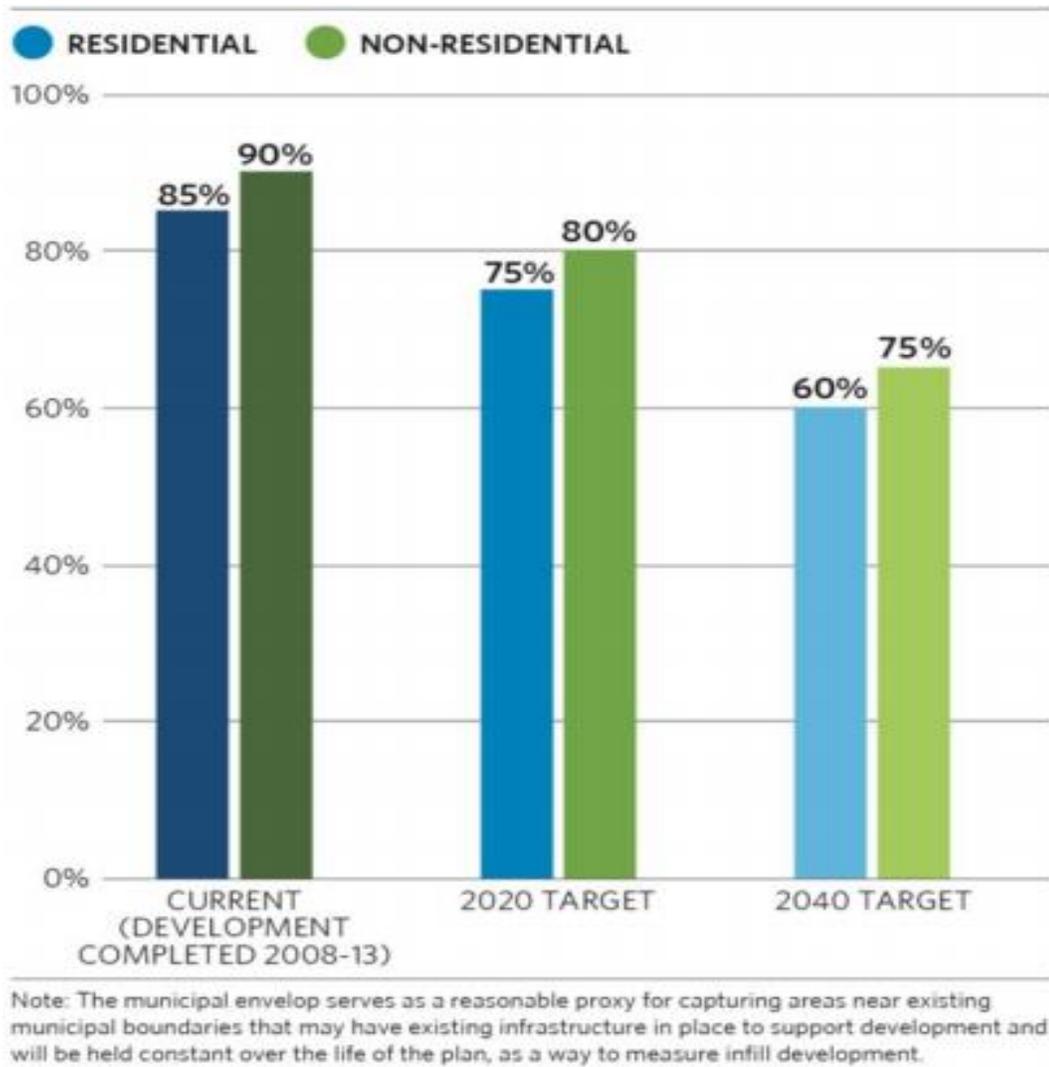
We don't have density goals, in fact we never use the word density, we look at more compact development, that's the work that we've chosen, because density is such a scary word for some people, and we did say that the goal is that in general, half of the new growth will be in existing communities. So that's the overall goal. We're going to grow by 2.8 million people over the next 25 years. You can't accommodate all that within our existing structure so our goal is that half of that will be in existing communities through more compact development. (CMAP perspective - Interview undisclosed to preserve confidentiality)

This non-coercive approach can be explained by the fact that CMAP has no land use authority, and therefore it would be presumptuous to impose density targets that would be fraught with suspicion and antagonism by the Collar County representatives, whose economic development is perceived as relying upon greenfield development (more on this in the next sub-section). The geographic non-specificity of *GO to 2040* was underlined by one respondent and also noted in the CNT report, which aims to translate the goals of *GO to 2040* into a place-

⁴¹ Indicators’ methodology and rationale for change are described in CMAP’S *Indicators Methodology Appendix (2014j)*.

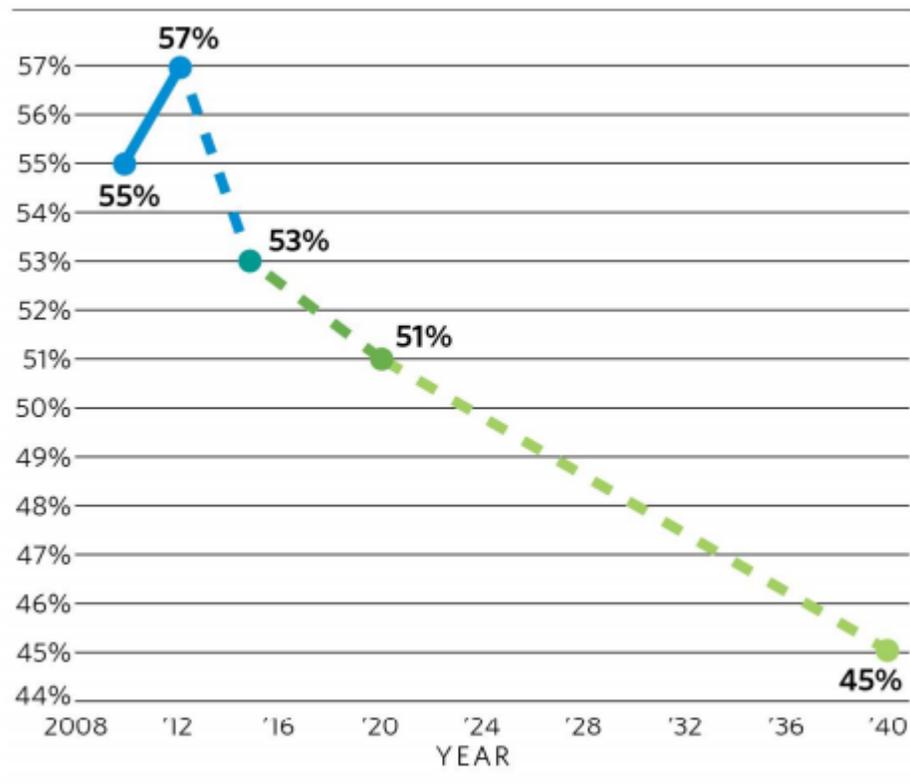
based blueprint and identifies a list of priority areas and TOD plans to be implemented across the region (elements that are absent from *GO to 2040*) (Interview A; CNT, 2012: 12-13).

Figure 28: Indicator 1 – Share of new residential and non-residential units within the existing municipal envelope, with targets (2008-2040)



Source: Excerpted from CMAP (2040j: 7)

Figure 29: Indicator 2 – Percentage of income spent on housing and transportation by moderate- and low-income residents, with targets (2010-2040)



Source: Excerpted from CMAP (2040j): 10)

Just like the indicators for measuring the success of transportation actions, it is yet too early to really observe any perceptible change at the local level that could be attributable to the actions identified in *GO to 2040*. As explained in the next sub-sections, what can be directly attributed to CMAP activities are the local governments' comprehensive planning efforts that resulted from CMAP's LTA program. Because many local comprehensive plans were adopted since 2004, they are yet to be fully implemented, and so their impact cannot be measured on a regional scale.

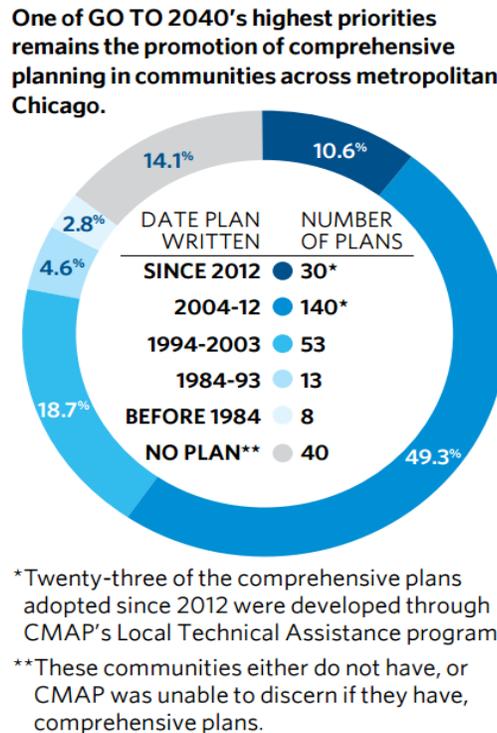
CMAP's Local Technical Assistance Program and Coordinated Efforts with the RTA

In 2010, the day after *GO to 2040* was adopted, CMAP learned it was the recipient of a 3-year, \$4.25 million grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Program (CMAP, 2014m, Interview N). This grant was allocated to fund CMAP's Local Technical Assistance (LTA) program and has given the MPO 10 new staff members, with the purpose of providing planning assistance to communities across the region to undertake planning projects that advance the principles of *GO to 2040* (CMAP, 2014m; CNT, 2012: 10). **The LTA program was frequently mentioned by the respondents because it is the main way through which *GO to 2040* is implemented at the local level. In addition, the LTA program ensures a direct working relationship between CMAP and individual units of local governments, and has also allowed CMAP to build a sense of trust with local government** (Interviews B, C, E, F, G, H, I, J, K, L & N).

Since its creation in 2010, the LTA program has funded 164 projects. As of July 2015, 108 of these projects were completed, 51 were fully under way, and 5 were to be fully under way in the near future (CMAP, 2014m). These projects were undertaken with local governments, non-profits and intergovernmental organizations, usually in local communities that do not have the staff capacity or financial resources to carry out their own planning studies and land use activities (Interviews A, E & L). Communities or organizations willing to undertake a project must submit a competitive application for CMAP planning resources. Generally speaking, the spirit of the LTA program is to work with local government to update their plans and regulations to match or be supportive of *GO to 2040* (Interview K). The LTA program has funded zoning and subdivision revisions, corridor plans, bike-pedestrian plans, bikeway feasibility studies, capital improvement plans, parking studies, complete street plans,

and the like, as well as a number of local comprehensive plans (CMAP, 2014m). As shown in Figure 30, the adoption of a comprehensive plan at the local level is a key priority for CMAP, and the LTA program has funded 23 comprehensive plans since 2012.

Figure 30: Local comprehensive plans in Chicago region



Source: Excerpted from CMAP (2014e: 26)

The LTA program is thus not restricted to issues related to transportation, but also encompasses land use and housing issues, including the natural environment (water runoff), economic growth, tax policy, and community (workforce) development (CMAP, 2014m).

Although each individual project is small in the grand scheme of the region, this incremental, one-community-at-a-time approach has led to a series of small individual

victories. For example, one county government submitted a project to the LTA program that aimed at developing a plan for a small, unincorporated area between two cities that was lower income, historically primarily African-American, and a low-value housing area. As a result of the plan that was completed with the help of the LTA program, the county obtained a grant to build their first ever sidewalk that connects the residential area to their school, to put bus shelters, and to replace some pipes that were causing flooding problems for some of the communities. It was the first major public investment that had happened in the memories of the people who had lived there, and nothing would have happened if it was not for the LTA program (Interview K). As for local governments with updated comprehensive plans, they now have a better sense of where growth should occur within their municipality and what are the transportation consequences of development location choices. Although these examples are anecdotal, CMAP hopes that all those individual victories will ultimately lead to something that is measurable regionally.

Because it represents the main way through which *GO to 2040* is implemented and because of the direct relationship with the communities it allows, the LTA program is key for CMAP relevance and its ability to move forward in terms of building its identity and value in the region (Interview F). In addition to its importance for CMAP, it is also responding to tangible local needs and desires: although the program is entirely voluntary, it generates a lot of demand from the region's 284 municipalities, most of which do not have the planning staff or the resources to hire consultants (Interview K). Because of its importance for CMAP and because it has been well received by local governments, CMAP was able to secure other funding sources once the federal grant expired in 2015, allowing the program to continue (Interviews F & N). In the future, the LTA program

will focus on continuing the provision of technical assistance, doing fewer plans, and working more on implementation of past plans that the agency has already completed (CMAP, 2014k: 5; Interview N).

In addition, CMAP and the RTA are coordinating their local planning efforts, because the RTA also receives a community planning grant from IDOT that is redistributed to municipalities to do land use planning for TOD, often next to Metra rail stations (Interviews D & H). Over the last 15 years, the RTA has funded more than 73 TOD plans in communities across the metropolitan area (CNT, 2012: 12). Before CMAP's HUD grant expired in 2015, when the RTA was working with communities on a specific site, the RTA was working on the transit dimension of the plan, while CMAP was working on the land use side of the plan (Interview J). CMAP and the RTA have since pooled their planning resources and proceeded with a single call for projects for 2016, called *2016 Community Planning Program and Local Technical Assistance Program* (CMAP, 2014m). As expressed in the following quote, this CMAP-RTA collaboration is an improvement that emerged from the CATS-NIPC merger:

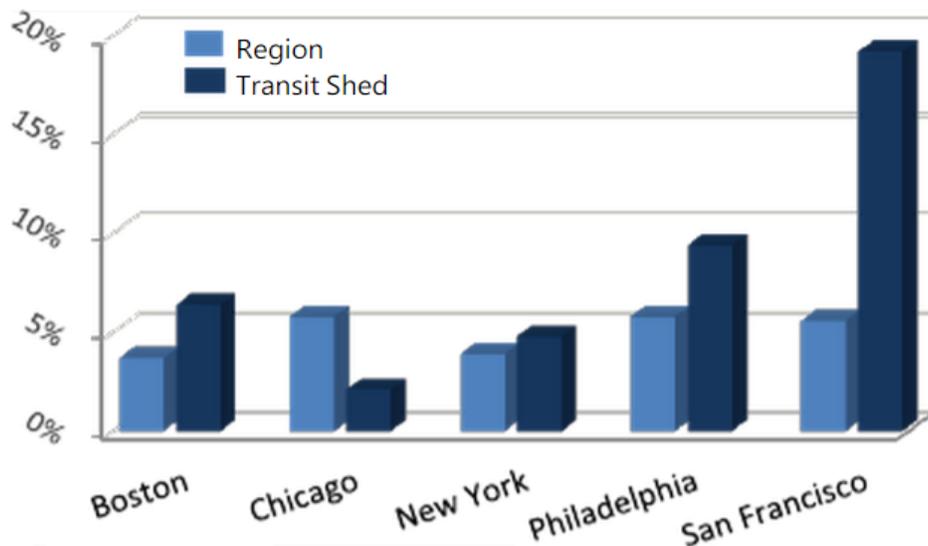
One positive thing that has come out of that is that [creation of CMAP]... RTA really is deferring to CMAP to say "you're better at this, you got more knowledgeable staff, you guys take the lead, and we'll coordinate it if there are some dollars that flow to the RTA we'll pass those to you". And so there is a coordinated technical assistance program so that's one small new source of funding for CMAP. (Interview F)

Overall, the LTA program, which is a voluntary grant program, was seen by the respondents as a positive contribution of CMAP to local communities. However, as explained in the next sub-section, beyond the incremental improvements that the LTA program made possible, local land use decisions are still largely responding to macro-economic forces and market preferences, which sometimes are supportive of transit and non-motorized modes of transportation, and sometimes are not.

Land Use Trends

As discussed in the previous chapter, 2013 census numbers have shown that the regional trend in terms of distribution of population growth was reversed in 2010-2013 period. Between 2000 and 2010, the region as a whole has added almost 300,000 residents to its population (or +3.6%), while the City of Chicago has lost 200,000 residents (or -6.9%) in the same period (CMAP, 2014a). Between 2000 and 2010, the number of households in the region grew by 6%, whereas the number of households around transit grew by only 2% (Northeastern Illinois Public Transit Task Force, 2014: 24). This statistic is illustrated in Figure 31, which shows that the Chicago region is also lagging behind other legacy systems in that regard.

Figure 31: Percent of change in total households in the Chicago region and transit shed (2000-2010)



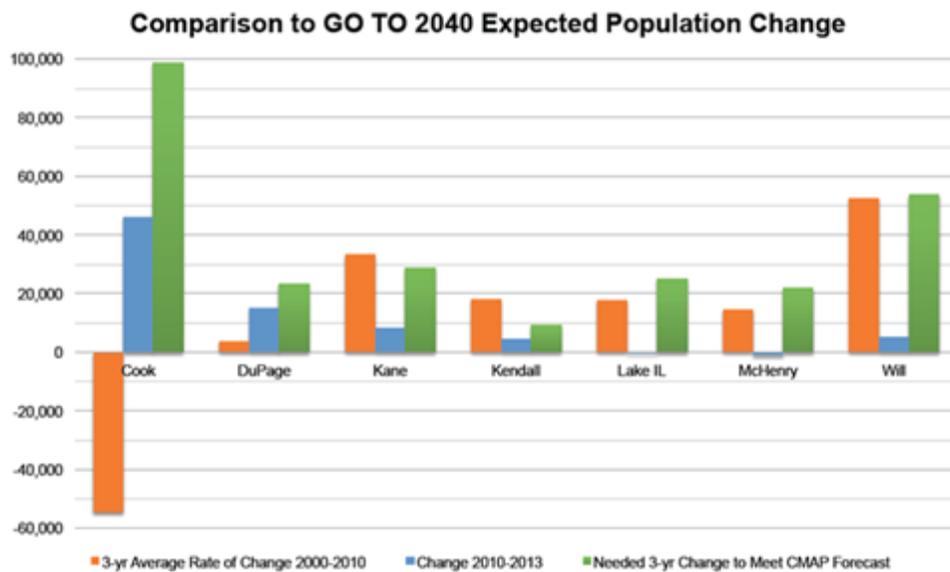
Source: Excerpted from Northeastern Illinois Public Transit Task Force (2014: 24)

This population loss was not even within the City of Chicago, where 60 out of 77 community areas lost population between 2000 and 2010. The central area (Loop, West Loop,

South Loop, Near North Side) had gained population, while population losses were concentrated in the south and west sides of the City (Novara, 2015). Some of the population growth could be explained by an increase in the Latino population, which resulted in the doubling and sometimes the tripling up of the number of people per household (the average number of new units across growing neighborhoods was just 245) (Novara, 2015).

However, the 2000-2010 trends were reversed between 2010-2013, when Cook County (Chicago) gained almost 50,000 residents, while the six Illinois suburban counties increased in population just by 20,000, and the nearby Indiana counties lost more than 1,500 people (Freemark, 2014). As shown in Figure 32, although the recent numbers are auspicious for the City of Chicago, and Cook County it is far to be a good news for the Collar Counties.

Figure 32: Change in Population Compared to *GO to 2040* Expectations (2000-2013)



Source: Freemark (2014)

Although the recent growth in Chicago and Cook County is most likely the result of macro-economic and market trends, the recent policies enacted by the City of Chicago are certainly contributing to this positive indicator for the inner core of the region.

Two respondents also cited a study conducted by Christopher Leinberger (2014) on the amount of commercial development in Walkable Urban Places⁴² (WalkUPs) to support the observation that although the City of Chicago has the benefit of already having already a lot of TODs (the expression used by the respondents), the amount of new growth in the region in the form of TOD is less than in other metropolitan areas (Interviews F & K). In fact, the built infrastructure and the urban development of the City of Chicago is already “transit-oriented”, in the sense that “95% of the residential property” in the city is located within half a mile from a train station and a quarter mile from a bus station. The City is already well zoned for density because the major corridors were streetcar lines, which later became bus lines, and this network of arterials and diagonal streets carry the density, the retail, and the mixed uses, while the minor streets carry the residential, the churches, and other kinds of institutions (Interview A).

In Leinberger’s study, the Chicago metropolitan area was ranked 5th out of 30 largest U.S. metropolitans in terms of current walkable urbanism, with 29% of total office and retail space located within 38 WalkUPs (94% of these WalkUPs are located in center city) (2014: 10-11). However, Leinberger’s future ranking, based on new office location inventory from 2010 through 2014, sees Chicago slipping from the 5th place to the 15th place, because

⁴² Using the Brookings methodology and Walk Score index, regionally significant WalkUPs are defined as having an office space above 1.4 million square feet and/or a retail space of above 340,000 square feet, as well as a Walk Score above 70 at the 100% location of the WalkUP. WalkUPs are also compared based on economic performance and social equity performance. More on WalkUps methodology in Leinberger (2014: 9).

WalkUPs are losing market shares over drivable suburban locations. Leinberger explains that this is due to the fact that 94% of WalkUPs in the region are located in downtown:

While highly ranked for its current walkable urban development, nearly all of it is located in its central city. Development confined to the city of Chicago limits the market for walkable urbanism, since many households and businesses would not consider a location in the city. Chicago's greatest opportunity to add walkable urbanism – and by extension, enhanced economic viability – is to urbanize its suburbs. The 388 local jurisdictions in the Chicago metro that control land use have stifled urbanization of the suburbs; this opposition hinders a significant portion of market demand to be satisfied. (Leinberger, 2014: 16)

Although the WalkUPs study portrays a regional situation that is most likely accurate and supports our respondents' observations, other observations at the local level (presented below) point to a current and future densification (or repopulation) of Chicago and the older suburbs.

Evidence Provided by the Respondents

Respondents provided mixed answers and mixed evidence when asked whether land use decisions were more coherent with transportation decisions since the creation of CMAP, and whether they thought it was because CMAP was created. The land use observations noted by the respondents that were more conducive of transit travel or non-motorized modes of transportation (i.e. TOD, higher densities, less sprawl) were most often attributed to market shifts and changing preferences instead of CMAP planning work. In fact, respondents noted that the current trends were happening prior to CMAP being created (Interviews A, B, M & N)

Respondents pointed to a market trend of moving back to the city. This shift in market preferences consist partly in the generation of “20 and 30 somethings” who are moving to certain neighborhoods of Chicago, wanting to drive less and enjoying the city's mixed use environment (Interviews A, C & E). An indicator of this trend is the rise in the share of car-

free households, which went from 14% in 2000, 26% in 2007, up to 28% in 2012 (Moser, 2015; Schmitt, 2014). Because the rise of car-free households pre-dates the 2008 economic crisis, it is associated with cultural influences, such as the rise in telecommuting, urbanization, and changing preferences of young people (Schmitt, 2014). Simultaneously, there are a certain number of companies that set up their headquarters in the West Loop or south of the river (Sears, MB Financial Bank, Orbitz, Boeing), sometimes back from the suburban office parks where they moved in the 50's and 60's. These companies moved to the central city because they needed to retain good workers and the support staff who were available in the city and reluctant to drive two hours to a suburban location (Interview H).

In addition, respondents noticed a wave back towards refilling, rebuilding, restoring, upgrading and densifying the mid-tier, established suburbs (like the outer parts of Cook County and inner parts of Du Page County) around rail lines, rather than continuing to convert agricultural land to urban (Interviews A & H). Respondents also noted a stop to new residential subdivisions, which was associated to a combination of societal trends and the unfavourable (almost no growth) economic environment since 2008 (Interviews A, H & K). Anecdotally, one respondent mentioned that a county planning department in the region had not processed a subdivision proposal since 2009 (Interview O). The same respondent noted that the same county was *encouraging* developers proposing new subdivisions to annex into existing municipalities that provide water and sewer, which promotes denser and more economical growth while discouraging leapfrog development into unincorporated areas.

In terms of the local decision-making related to land use, some respondents noted that it has not fundamentally changed since the creation of CMAP because despite

CMAP planning efforts, local governments are still making their land use decisions regardless of their transportation implications (Interviews C, D, G, H, I, J, K, L). The three following quotes summarize what is happening out of Chicago and Cook County, in the Collar Counties, where “one man’s sprawl is another man’s economic development” (Interview O):

Here’s what they [local governments] will do. They will say “Oh, let’s put a megamall over here in this part of town”. And then as soon as they build it they’ll say: “Well, Jeez, there’s not transportation to support it. You guys gotta build transportation to support it. (Interview C)

The problem is that zoning, which is so important to good land use, is controlled by local governments and as you know we have over 280 municipalities, each with their own zoning authority and they guard that authority greatly. They will acknowledge the regional plan, but will they really follow it in their actual planning? Is there the sufficient inducement to get them to follow it? I would say, no. I think most municipalities will not follow the regional plan first, but they will follow their own economic self-interest and what will produce enough revenue to run their municipality. If that means acquiring more jurisdiction and encouraging more development that may not be as sustainable as the plan would call for, as long as it's producing money to sustain them financially, that's their first mission. Secondly, they might say “Yeah, okay, I’ll take an RTA planning grant or I’ll take a CMAP planning grant, I’ll try to revitalize my downtown and attract people to live down there but at the same time I’m going to expand out on the farmlands to bring in more property taxes”. So, I really think our planning process is weak from a regional perspective. (Interview D)

Unfortunately no [land use decisions are not coherent with transportation decisions], and to be honest with you, I think our land use decisions are still very made poorly in many instances, and I talked a little bit before about the huge housing developments on the fringe of the urbanized area...those land use decisions are being made by counties out of nowhere and they’re saying: “Yes, we’ll just rezone all of this, and then people will come and live out here”. I think folks are starting to realize that when you do that, people won't come necessarily and live out there, because the cost of commuting, the cost of transportation, is very high, even if you're in your private automobile, if you own an automobile, the cost of owning an automobile, the price of gasoline here has gone up tremendously, and then that has helped people to say: “hum, maybe I should locate in the older, closer in suburbs where land values are higher, property values are higher, my house price is going to be higher, but my commuting costs are much lower”. People are making that decision, but I don't think that came about through land use planning, it came about more through market place driven transportation costs, so that as transportation costs have gone up, that has driven...the land use planning is still being done poorly, particularly out on the fringes, and I live in the city and I work here locally in the inner city, but to me, we should be spending more of our efforts on redeveloping the empty areas that exists within the current footprint of our existing service rather than extending service out into the new areas. (Interview I)

In the same vein, respondents mentioned that there is a tension between transportation planning, which is inherently regional, and land use decisions, which are ultimately local

(Interviews C, G & H). **Although *regional land use planning* has improved because of CMAP, local governments do not want to relinquish control over land uses and zoning decisions, and the local taxation system, which relies heavily on real estate taxes, results in local governments approving any development project that would increase their tax base** (Interviews C, D & H). Consequently, part of CMAP and other non-profit work it to educate and make the mayors, alderman, and village trustees aware of the fact that a development in the downtown center generates more sales tax and more economic development than sprawl, malls or golf courses and other greenfield developments (Interviews G & J).

This observation that local governments are making land use decision without considering their transportation implications is resulting from the fact that most of the time, municipalities' role is to accommodate development and work with developers who want to build a residential or a commercial development on a specific site, even if supporting that expansion involves transportation spending (Interviews D & E). Nonetheless, the City of Chicago has recently adopted two policies that help improving the integration or coherence of land use and transportation decisions: 1) the TOD ordinance, adopted in 2013, which intends to facilitate denser development on the first block next to "L" stations; and 2) the tax increment financing funds, an existing value-capture mechanism that Mayor Emanuel, elected in 2011, has allowed to be spent on transit projects. Although adopted unilaterally by the City of Chicago, free of CMAP influence, these policy innovations are presented below because they were mentioned by the respondents as a sign of improvement from a local policy perspective.

Chicago's TOD Ordinance and Tax Increment Financing Funds for Transit

In September 2013, the City of Chicago adopted a TOD Ordinance that removed barriers to denser residential and commercial development within 600 feet of rapid transit stations (or 1,200 feet if the project is located along a pedestrian street) by: 1) reducing parking requirements in transit-served locations (from 1:1 ratio of car parking spaces to housing units for new buildings to 1:2 ratio) ; 2) increasing the floor area ratio (FAR) from 3 to 3.5 for transit-served locations; 3) increasing the building height for transit-served locations; and 4) reducing the minimum lot area for transit served-locations (City of Chicago, 2013). The vision is that if you build the large apartment building next to transit, the type of residents will self-select in the sense that regular transit riders will tolerate the noise and the inconvenience of driving in a dense area with less parking spaces to take advantage of the convenience of living next to a transit station. The ordinance does not provide any financial subsidy - where the market is strong, it works well, however where the market is weak, it has no impact (Interview A).

Since the TOD ordinance was adopted, there are at least 12 sites (between 74 and 360 apartment units) where developers took advantage of the proximity to train stations by building dense housing with fewer parking spaces (Vance, 2015b). In July 2015, a new, improved TOD ordinance was introduced by Mayor Manuel. The new ordinance doubles the distance from rail stations, gets rid of the parking requirement if the development has bike parking, on-site bike share, or on-site car share, and allows an increase to the FAR up to 4 if 10% of the building contains affordable housing (Moser, 2015). According to CNT, permitting more density and less parking will facilitate the construction of projects at lower rent levels (Moser, 2015)

Another sign of encouragement is that Mayor Emanuel (unlike its predecessor, Mayor Daley), has proactively allowed the use of tax increment financing (TIF) funds for transit (City of Chicago, 2015) Tax increment financing (TIF) is a type of land value capture mechanism

allowed by the state of Illinois to promote public and private investment in TIF districts (blighted areas to be redeveloped). TIF funds must be used locally to build and repair infrastructure, clean polluted land and put vacant properties back to productive use⁴³. The use of TIF funds for transit projects in Chicago has allowed the construction of the Morgan and Cermak CTA stations, the renovation of many CTA stations across the city, as well as the Bloomingdale bike trail (Interviews D, H & I; City of Chicago, 2015). The improvement of existing transit stations and the construction of infill stations can help revitalize (and repopulate) blighted city neighborhoods. Although it is more complex because TIF funds must be spent locally at the district level and in blighted areas (thus excluding long corridors and downtown), transit agencies and non-profits are considering the use of TIF funds for transit corridors projects (Interviews D, F, I & N).

Again, these policies were adopted independently by the City of Chicago, but the creation of CMAP might have helped in the sense that it promoted denser development and an increase in transit funding. This respondent has explained how CMAP influence might have played out in the case of the TOD ordinance:

Interviewer: The TOD ordinance is not attributable to CMAP, it's attributable to...

Respondent: Well, I would say, CMAP has brought a lot of attention to those type of issues, right? And every local technical assistance project they do in the city, it has exposed alderman to different ways of thinking. And you need the alderman to support a new ordinance like that. And it passed and so, I would say yes. But is it a direct causation of CMAP? No. But there is some corollary effect where it did help, so. (Interview E)

As another respondent puts it, CMAP, by its advising role to agencies and municipalities, is enabling TOD at the local level, rather than causing (Interview H).

⁴³ For more information of Chicago's TIF program, see City of Chicago (2015b).

Although the impacts of CMAP on local land use decisions are mostly indirect and yet to be measurable, the efforts of the LTA program across the region and the policy initiatives of the City of Chicago represent signs of improvement which, combined to a shift in market preferences and location choices of individuals and corporations, perhaps contributed to the recent growth in Chicago and Cook County.

Tradeoffs Between Accountability, Democracy, and Effectiveness

One of the last comparative element this study addresses is the tradeoffs between the principles of accountability (responsibility and public scrutiny through transparency), democracy (public debate and deliberation, but also representativeness), and effectiveness (cost-effectiveness and/or local and regional changes) that the creation CMAP involved⁴⁴. To answer this question, I am relying solely on the respondents' perceptions and observations. What I have found is first, the reform does present some implications or characteristics in terms of accountability, democracy, and effectiveness, more than tradeoffs *per se*. In other words, the improvement in terms of transparency does not automatically mean that the agency is less democratic or less effective. Second, and this was unexpected and interesting from a conceptual point of view, is that certain dimensions of the regional institutional design seem to act as “guardians” of certain principles (I will come back to this in the “comparison” chapter). As explained in the next paragraphs, although CMAP faces some challenges in terms of public debate and deliberation and although the agency's effectiveness could be improved if it had more authority and financial resources, the creation of CMAP improved the respect of

⁴⁴ The other sub-questions about the representational structure and the impact of regional change in power dynamics on sustainability, more theoretical in nature, are addressed in the “comparison” chapter.

all three principles. In fact, aside from a few criticism (remember that my respondents were representative of the various points of view in the region), a number of respondents said that the reform did not involve any tradeoff and that the creation of CMAP represents an improvement on all fronts (Interview B, D, F, G & N).

Accountability (responsibility and transparency)

In terms of the lines of accountability or responsibility, CMAP Board members are appointed by local and county representatives and thus all accountable to these representatives to some degree. A third of them are local elected officials (who respond to both their own electorate as well as the county representative), a third of them are former elected officials (who are only responsive to county boards), and the other third is comprised of non-profit representatives appointed by the City of Chicago (who respond to their own non-profit in addition to the City). As for the MPO Policy Committee members, they are appointed by the state of Illinois (and thus respond to both their respective agency and the State). The fact that CMAP Board members are sometimes elected officials accountable to their constituents increases the stakes of negotiations, as no elected official would risk voting for a policy that would not be politically acceptable or justifiable at the local level. In addition, the equal distribution of seats among the City, Cook County and the Collar Counties (proportional to the population) as well as the super majority voting requirement “really forces consensus” (Interview D), which might lead to the adoption of policies that promote the lowest common denominator among board members. This consensus approach might explain the fact that *GO to 2040* is non-coercive and non-specific in terms of density targets and geography. It can also lead to spreading the resources across the region to ensure some buy-in into the planning process:

Well, obviously, I think there are -- because we are such a large region and we have the needs of a central city and older suburbs and then developing suburbs, there are always some sort of, I think, there are some conflicts that occur as a result, you know, where do you prioritize your funding and efforts. But I think that when it boils down to it though, I think everybody realizes that we're kind of all in this together and we need to be fair and equitable about the way funds are distributed. So Chicago gets its fair share and the older suburbs get theirs and the growing suburbs get theirs too, so. (Interview B)

This region has always worked pretty much on consensus and building consensus. You can't have big winners and big losers that over time we have internal strike inside the region. (Interview N)

Despite this evening out that the consensual structure entails, CMAP staff was able to push the sustainability agenda as far as it could (more on this below).

In terms public scrutiny through transparency, CMAP has generally increased transparency just by clarifying the transportation and land use planning process (Interview B). In addition, CMAP respects the *Freedom of Information Act*, and so although CMAP Board and the MPO Policy Committee meetings are *in camera*, all the meeting minutes are accessible on the agency's website (Interviews C, E & G). However, the negotiation process is not all that transparent to the public because it is done in house, before the board meetings, and so everything is already decided at the board meeting and consequently the minutes are not quite telling (Interview G). The same respondent describes this negotiation process orchestrated by CMAP staff, before committee meetings:

Respondent: So, now what happens instead is the staff calls each of the members, the committees and says what's really important, where are your priorities, what's important to you. We're going to give you a staff proposal review as a committee, what you think of this one, before we kind of bring it to everyone, what's your individual opinion, and they consult, and so it's less of this more political, politicized like hammer and thongs negotiation and much more of kind of a professional judgment and kind of consulting with each of the players to see... (Interview H)

Because the negotiations take the form of a mediation rather than a confrontation, out of the public eye, some people might qualify it as being less transparent, but the same respondent pointed out that not everything is happening in front of the public eye – it never

will and it was not before. Despite this professional negotiation process that is done in house, the respondent's sentiment was that CMAP has increased transparency (Interviews B, C, D, E, F, J, N & O).

Democracy (public debate, deliberation, and representativeness)

According to the respondents, CMAP has improved the respect of democratic principles, particularly with regards to the public consultation and outreach. However, despite the agency's efforts, the lack of public involvement and interest in the non-controversial planning issues raises some questions of representativeness. In terms of the democratic dimension of CMAP Board, its composition and voting rules makes it very consensual and democratic.

CMAP has increased public participation, public debate and deliberation surrounding the planning process, especially with regards to the development of *GO to 2040*, which was preceded by an extensive public consultation campaign facilitated by the CNT (Interviews D, F, G & M). In terms of the day to day, regular planning activities, public input is received indirectly via the involvement of non-profit agencies and advocacy groups in CMAP advisory sub-committees, such as the bicycle/pedestrian task force. Overall, tangible public participation occurs more at the advisory committee level, through the representation of advocacy groups, rather than by the general public directly at the community meeting level. As explained by this respondent, this is a new style of public engagement:

There's a bicycle pedestrian task force, *ad hoc* committees on the CMAQ for transit and for direct emissions focus group, so we've had specific task based ones there. I've been on the bicycle pedestrian task force for a long time too but that one is a pretty good model for that one, but at least – there is a pretty good mix at this early level consultative but it's not this traditional direct democracy, have a public meeting, it's much more kind of this new... like the new style public meetings. There is an open house and information and you get the input early on. So, if you're having a big confrontation at the public meeting that means you didn't really do the work beforehand to work things out. (Interview H)

CMAP's participatory values, outreach, facilitation and training are attributed to the skills of its qualified and experienced staff (Interview F) This respondent explains how the planning process was less transparent when CATS was the MPO:

Interviewee: I'd say that the one specific example I can give you and it took a little bit of time to happen after that one but that was during the CATS era, the CATS committee basically they... it was the some of the decision making was like sort of "okay let's know how many people can we bring in those room at this time and not violate the Open Meetings Act" and kind of have like a variation of the smoke filled room... They would kind of arrange it... who was in or out so they would be okay with the Open Meetings Act kind of rules. Interviewer: Because if you were above a certain threshold it has to be public. Interviewee: Right. (Interview H)

However, CMAP finds it more difficult to get public input on less controversial issues, such as TOD plans, local comprehensive plans developed with the LTA program, and transportation issues in general (Interviews A & M). This is partly because they are long term, abstract plans, and also because the municipalities and the region do not have a history of that kind of public participation. In addition, the local aldermen tend to want the process to end when there is any kind of sourness in the community, because he or she does not think that will serve any benefit to them. As a result, the ideas presented in the plans that are pursued by CMAP (or by a partner such as CNT or MPC) without significant public participation are not representative of the larger community (Interview A). In addition, one respondent pointed out that there was no deliberation surrounding the Illiana Expressway, a very controversial project, outside of CMAP and planning/policy circles and media (Interview E). Another respondent also highlighted the lack of public outreach and input surrounding the *GO to 2040* update, which is limited to CMAP's website (Interview G). The two following quotes are the most critical comments about CMAP public outreach activities and implementation, which is treated in the next sub-section:

They're doing everything they're supposed to do by statute, but I think they need to be a little bit more collaborative in selling the regional planning ideas as opposed to sort of just coming out with plans that are developed pretty much internally, they hold their public hearings, they rubber stamp this stuff. I've been a planner, I know the importance of getting "public involvement", but for the most part, once the plan is adopted, that's when the work starts. Developing the plan is nothing but activities, implementation is the action. I think that's where a lot of regional planning just falls flat on his face. (Interview L)

Well, let me put it this way. My general impression of the decision making processes of CMAP have been that they are equitable and fair and open and transparent, but, you know, I know that they believe that they really have extensive outreach to the public, broadly defined, during the period of time when *GO to 2040* was being formulated, and I know they tried real hard, but if you go back and look at how many people were actually involved and attending those meetings, it was of course a minuscule percentage of the entire county population, and I am absolutely dead certain that you could go get some random sample of Chicagoland area residents and if there is 1 person out of 500 that could even tell you in a most minimal way what is CMAP and what his function is, they wouldn't even know what you were talking about. So it remains a pretty much a rather invisible type of group, and what its role is known to a very small percentage of people, largely people who are directly involved in local government and in particular the planning aspects of the local government. Average citizen have no idea what it is, what its role is, and if you're completely ignorant about an agency and what it's supposed to do, I think it's hard to characterize it as being completely democratic. I know, it's easy to point out the problems, I don't know what the solution is. They can't expect to have some huge public relations exposure or what have you, but I think it's just descriptive of a challenge that they face. They've got this hugely important and significant role that does impact every resident of the entire 7-county area of CMAP, but again, not because they try to hide anything, they're not trying to hide anything, but it's just that it is so somewhat abstract that the average citizen...he might be aware that he has a city council member, he might be aware that he has a state representative, but he doesn't know that CMAP even exist. And even he maybe heard of it, he has absolutely no idea what its function is. I've been in several other metropolitan areas and I can't claim it's significantly different anywhere else though I've always heard that some of the pioneers like the Minneapolis-St-Paul are, maybe Tampa, and maybe Indianapolis Unigov, and maybe a couple other examples are ...maybe Dade county, maybe Louisville and their integration with the county surrounding them, maybe they've got a little higher profile but maybe not. (Interview O)

Nonetheless, CMAP has still improved the public outreach and participation compared to the planning process prevailing under CATS and NIPC.

Finally, as explained previously, CMAP Board is comprised of local representatives, and its voting rule requires 12 out of 15 possible votes for a resolution to be adopted. This consensual design was crafted because the mayors did not want any one part of the region to be able to control CMAP decisions (Interview B & C). Consequently, the only thing that would

make CMAP Board composition, appointment rules and voting requirements more democratic would be that if Board members were directly elected.

Effectiveness (cost-effectiveness and/or local and regional changes)

Respondents were not very talkative on the topic of CMAP's effectiveness. As a reminder, they were generally satisfied with the agency's planning work, especially with regards to the development of *GO to 2040*. In addition, CMAP is doing everything it can considering its limited implementation authority and resources, and its "very bright" staff is pushing their professional agenda and the planning activities to their limit through persuasion and conviction via the LTA program, but also with their research activities and "behind the scenes work" at the CMAP Board and MPO levels (Interviews A, B, C & M). One respondent mentioned that: "despite those handcuffs [of not having zoning authority and two distinct boards], I think CMAP - thanks to a strong staff - has functioned in a more visionary way than people thought possible" (Interview F). Evidence of that is the strong stance that CMAP Board took over the Illiana Expressway. Nonetheless, because of its lack of authority and resources, "there's only so much CMAP can do", even as one agency instead of two (Interview H).

Lastly, although the public engagement process, the transparency standards, and the planning process are time-consuming and irritate transportation engineers that would prefer a more expedient process, these efforts are not considered as inefficient by CMAP because it is part of their identity (Interviews M & N). As explained by this respondent, public engagement is something that is central to CMAP planning work:

For example, on the public side, the LTA program, some projects CMAP funds consultants to do, because either they have specific expertise or... and we see very clearly the difference in the public engagement when CMAP does it and when they consultants

do it, because it's important to CMAP, it's part of the planning, it's an integral part of what CMAP does. (Interview N)

Overall, despite CMAP implementation capacity issues and its difficulty to continuously engage the public in a meaningful way (which is a problem faced by many regional planning agencies), its structure and mode of operations have improved the respect of the principles of accountability, democracy, and effectiveness.

Summary of the Chicago Case

What can we conclude from the creation of CMAP? Has the reform creating a singular planning agency for both regional transportation and land use improved the planning process and the overall sustainability of the region by leading to better decisions in terms of transportation infrastructure funding choices and land uses? What are the implications of the reform for the principles of accountability, democracy, and effectiveness? This section attempts to summarize the study findings by providing some highlights, offers some policy recommendations in light of the current and future outlook of the regional planning and political environments, and discusses some of the findings' theoretical implications.

Highlights

Impacts on the Planning Process

From the outset, respondents unanimously said that the consolidation of CATS and NIPC and the creation of CMAP, generally speaking, was an improvement because it established a single process for both regional transportation and land use planning. In the same vein, *GO to 2040* was praised by the respondents for its comprehensive nature, as well as for the public involvement process leading to its adoption. The creation of CMAP and the development of *GO to 2040* also changed the way people think about the region and think

about investments in the region. However, although the regional planning process has improved as a result of CMAP, which successfully integrated the transportation and land use planning processes and put sustainability on the regional planning agenda, the agency's lack of authority and financial resources is limiting its ability to carry out its mandate.

In terms of horizontal collaboration or coordination among regional stakeholders, the creation of CMAP has created a forum of discussion around regional issues that has the *potential* to improve collaboration and coordination among counties and municipalities. However, although those relationships have *somewhat* improved and that the intra-regional competition for businesses has decreased, as municipalities began to recognize that they were all dependent on the welfare of the region as a whole, the long-standing city-suburbs divide and the usual conflicts surrounding funding allocation are still present. In parallel and at another level, the creation of CMAP seemed to have increased and improved regional cooperation among non-profit organizations, which are now working in symbiosis with CMAP on many issues, notably funding. Regional funding is thus a source of both intra-regional and inter-agency competition as well as a source of collaboration among non-profit organizations and among local leaders (mayors and county board presidents) who are trying to "increase the size of the pie" by increasing the overall amount of federal and state funding that goes to the region in multiple and complementary ways.

By creating CMAP, the State gave up its authority over the regional planning agency, because as explained previously, CMAP Board is controlled by the counties and local governments. However, the State still effectively controls the MPO Policy Committee and still holds the purse strings (funds for transportation projects and CMAP's monthly invoice

off of the federal funding for carrying out its planning work), which is a source of tension between CMAP and the State.

Impacts on Transportation Investments

Overall, the creation of CMAP has not *fundamentally* changed the decision-making process for major capital projects (both highway and transit) and for local roads and transit, as CMAP holds only limited control over investment decisions. In fact, transportation investment decisions are still made by the same committees and by the same agencies than before the reform, and based upon politics as much as they are based on needs assessment and performance measures. In addition, the creation of the CMAP did not come with any new funding commitment from the State or any new independent funding source, which restricts CMAP's ability to directly implement *GO to 2040*. Despite these limitations and the relatively short period of time since the adoption of *GO to 2040*, CMAP is incrementally changing the decision-making *practices* two ways: 1) by tightening the criteria for eligible projects submitted by local and state agencies to various CMAP/MPO sub-committees; and 2) by respecting the federal requirement of "fiscal constraint". The exercise of narrowing down a fiscally constrained list was also associated with more projects being constructed. Nonetheless, the way the State was able to "force" the Illiana Expressway into the *GO to 2040* updated list of major capital project, despite the CMAP Board recommendation against the project, shows the limits of the agency in terms of authority and capacity, as well as the consequences of its "bicameral" board structure.

Impacts on Land Use Decisions

Although Chicago and Cook County have experienced a recent surge in population growth, it is too early for attributing regional changes to *GO to 2040*. As of July 2015, what

can be directly attributed to CMAP activities are the local governments' comprehensive planning efforts that resulted from CMAP's LTA program. Because a lot of these local comprehensive plans were adopted since 2004, they are not all implemented, and their impact cannot be measured on a regional scale yet. Because it represents the main way through which *GO to 2040* is implemented and because of the direct relationship with the communities it allows, the LTA program is key for CMAP relevance and its ability to move forward in terms of building its identity and value in the region. In addition to its importance for CMAP, it is also responding to tangible local needs and desires: although the program is entirely voluntary, it generates a lot of demand from the region's 284 municipalities, most of which do not have the planning staff or the resources to hire consultants.

Although the impacts of CMAP on local land use decisions are mostly indirect and yet to be measurable, the efforts of the LTA program across the region and the policy initiatives of the City of Chicago represent signs of improvement which, combined to a shift in market preferences and location choices of individuals and corporations, contribute to a more sustainable urban environment that might be quantifiable in the near future.

Tradeoffs Between Accountability, Democracy, and Effectiveness

The fact that a third of CMAP Board members are elected officials accountable to their constituents increases the stakes of negotiations, as no elected official would risk voting for a policy that would not be politically acceptable or justifiable at the local level. In addition, the equal distribution of seats among the City, Cook County and the Collar Counties (proportional to the population) as well as the super majority voting requirement forces consensus, might lead to the adoption of the lowest common denominator among board members. This consensus approach might explain the fact that *GO to 2040* is non-coercive and non-specific

in terms of density targets and geography. It can also lead to spreading the resources across the region to ensure some buy-in into the planning process. Despite this evening out that the consensual structure entails, CMAP staff was able to push the sustainability agenda as far as it could.

According to the respondents, CMAP has improved the respect of democratic principles, particularly with regards to the public consultation and outreach. However, despite the agency's efforts, the lack of public involvement and interest in the less non-controversial planning issues raises some questions of representativeness. In terms of the democratic dimension of CMAP Board, the only element that would make it more democratic is if its members were directly elected by the population.

Policy recommendations & Prospective outlook

Local and state governments are strong proponents of the existing *status quo* in terms of regional institutions because they are protective of their powers and resources. Despite this impediment, respondents mentioned a few “politically feasible” policy recommendations that converge around three themes: RTA/CMAP reform, new revenues for transit and CMAP planning work, and an incentive strategy for local land use decisions. The recommendations suggested by the respondents were also often CMAP *GO to 2040 update* recommendations or recommendations made by the Northeastern Illinois Public Task Force in its final report (2014), published two months before the interviews were conducted in June 2014.

Strong Support for the Status Quo

As explained throughout the Chicago chapters, the actual CMAP design is reflecting the balance of interests between the local governments on one hand (within CMAP Board) and the local governments and the State on the other hand (the bicameral committee structure). In

addition, with the creation of CMAP, all stakeholders involved in land use and transportation (local governments, transit agencies, and the State) kept their respective land use, planning, and funding authority.

At the time when the federal authorization bill for transportation was the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act, from 1991 to 1997, there was a possibility for the regional actors to change the MPO structure as to decentralize it at the regional level, but this has not happened for political reasons, as explained in this quote:

Respondent: Here's an unknown fact: in ISTEA, there was a provision that would allow the region here to change their MPO structure. Daley was mayor, and Daley was unwilling to do that. So we had the opportunity, and it's no longer in the law. As we reauthorized ISTEA to TEA-21 and MAP-21 and whatever it's called now, it didn't transfer. So now, changing the MPO really is a general assembly decision making process rather than the region. We could've done it in the region, we can't do it in the region now. And so the general assembly of course, the governor has veto. Now for me, if I could change CMAP, I would get rid of IDOT, I would make IDOT a non-voting or a one vote. Probably not [politically feasible], unless we have a governor who really believed in regional determination, then it's not going to happen. Interviewer: Why Daley didn't want to change the board composition?

Respondent: That is a very good question, I don't know why, I can only theorize why...The IDOT secretary at the time was a guy by the name Kurt Brown. And Kurt Brown was put in place by Thompson, so he was a Republican. Daley was obviously a Democrat, and I think that Daley felt that if he changed the composition, that Kurt Dillar would give money that was currently going to the region into Chicago to downstate Illinois. It was under Kurt Dillard that we had this informal division of funds this 45-55...that started under Kurt Brown...and I think that Daley was afraid to take the chance on Kurt Brown punishing the region and punishing the City of Chicago for taking away the money. That's my theory, I don't know. (Interview G)

The same political dynamic is still in the backdrop of any discussion about reforming regional institutions. The State Governor wants the regional organization totally under its control, and local governments do not want to see CMAP with any authority in terms of development approvals, even the approval of development projects of regional significance (Interviews C, L & M). Consequently, CMAP got as much power as it is politically feasible for them to have in Illinois political environment (Interview H). Because any reform or creation of new organizations will meet opposition from the state or local governments, the region has

to work with existing institutions: “[You have to] build on what’s already existing – you can take on a big battle to restructure CMAP, but you would probably work on it for a decade, and meanwhile, good projects don’t get done” (Interview F). Therefore, the policy recommendations suggested by the respondents usually tend to work with the current institutional framework.

RTA/CMAP Reform

The replication of regional transit planning functions between CMAP, responsible for regional transportation planning and programming, and the RTA, responsible for coordinating and fiscal oversight of CTA, Metra and Pace, was the issue most frequently cited by the respondent as an avenue of reform (Interviews B, C, D, K & N). The RTA reform gained political momentum at the time when the interviews were conducted in the spring of 2014, because the Northeastern Illinois Public Transit Task Force had just published its final report at the end of March 2014. The Task Force was set up by the Governor Quinn in 2013 to address: 1) the failure of the transit agencies to work collaboratively and efficiently, and more generally the history of culture and division amongst the transit agencies; 2) the absence of adequate oversight and coordination from the RTA; and 3) the public scandals of the RTA and transit boards, which included “patronage, financial impropriety, hidden conflicts of interest, and inappropriate influence over contracts” (Northeastern Illinois Public Transit Task Force, 2014: 7). The respondents supported the report’s recommendations of creating a new regional transit agency with a single board of directors, like the Metropolitan Transportation Authority approach from New York (Interviews C & D). However, because the City of Chicago does not want to lose control of the CTA, it is unlikely to happen (Interview C)

Nonetheless, CMAP is in constant talks with the RTA about CMAP absorbing their planning function, and the RTA keeping its financial oversight. CMAP would be responsible for investment priorities, whereas the RTA and transit agencies would control the day-to-day finance and operations (Interview K). In addition, the RTA should be given more teeth as to have more control over the CTA, Metra, and Pace, but considering how the RTA board is structured, the chances of that happening are slim (Interview B). Over time, transit planning and programming should be consolidated, but there are still too many agencies involved for now (Interviews K & N). The reports published by the Center for Neighborhood Technology (2012), by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (Merk, 2014), and by the Northeastern Illinois Public Transit Task Force (2014) all point out to the fact that the future prosperity and sustainability of the region depends on its ability to solve the issue of transit funding and governance, which the creation of CMAP did not address.

New Revenues for Transit and CMAP Planning Work

In an ideal world, CMAP would be an interstate regional planning agency that includes the Indiana section of the metropolitan area, especially because the agency would then be able to deploy a truly regional employment strategy that might increase the number of jobs in the south suburbs (Interview A). In addition, CMAP structure would not include a separate MPO from the CMAP Board. However this is unlikely to happen, because it requires a change in federal law (Interview C). What is more realistic would be giving CMAP an ability to raise revenues, a bonding authority, and a structure to spend that revenue (Interview N). One respondent gave the example of the Regional Development Authority in northwestern Indiana, created at the same time that CMAP was created. Although smaller in terms of population area, the Regional Development Authority has a revenue stream from the tollroads and from the

casinos, representing about \$25 million a year, along with bond authority and land assembly authority. The Regional Development Authority works closely with its regional MPO, the NIRPC. If CMAP had an independent revenue stream and bonding authority, it could provide technical assistance, grants to communities, as well as infrastructure funding to implement. If CMAP had stable dollars, it could even contract with the Illinois Finance Authority to fund infrastructure projects, and with the Public Building Commission to do project management, design, build, and operate the projects (Interview F). The creation of a dedicated revenue source of capital for transit, such as a raise in the gas tax, was also mentioned (Interview C). The Northeastern Illinois Public Transit Task Force provided a list of 12 revenue options as a reference for future deliberations. The revenue sources, along with its associated players and characteristics in terms of simplicity, equity, efficiency and yield are illustrated in Table 22.

Table 22: Transit funding options

FUNDING OPTION	PLAYERS	SIMPLICITY	EQUITY	EFFICIENCY	YIELD
Sales Tax on Motor Fuels	State and local governments	High	Moderate	High	Moderate/High
General Sales Tax on Goods	State and local governments	High	Low	Moderate	Moderate/High
Sales Tax on Services	State and local governments	Low	Low/Moderate	High	Moderate/High
Internet Sales Tax	Federal	High	Low/Moderate	Moderate	Moderate/High
Corporate Franchise Tax	State governments	Moderate	Moderate	High	Moderate/Low
Land Development Charges	State and local governments, regions	Moderate	High	Moderate	Moderate/High
State Payroll Tax	State governments	High	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate
Dedicated Income Tax	State governments	Moderate/High	Moderate	High	Moderate/High
State Payroll Tax	State governments	High	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate
Commercial Parking Tax	States and local governments	Moderate	Moderate/High	Moderate	Low/Moderate
Parking Levy	Local governments	Low	Moderate/High	Low/Moderate	High/Moderate
Vehicle Levy	States and local governments	Moderate/ Low	Moderate	High	Moderate/Low
Congestion Pricing	Local government	Low	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate

Source: Northeastern Illinois Public Transit Task Force (2014: 39)

As of July 2015, there were three independent, but complementary initiatives to increase funding for transportation and CMAP in the region:

1. *Accelerate Illinois*, a state-level coalition of private corporations and non-profits led by the Metropolitan Planning Council that aims at making transportation a priority in 2015. It identifies a series of transportation improvements throughout the state that are planned but unfunded, and suggests an increase in the state gas tax (www.accelerateillinois.com) (Metropolitan Planning Council, 2015).
2. *Transit Future*, a regional campaign led by the Center for Neighborhood Technology and the Active Transportation Alliance that calls for a new, dedicated revenue source for capital investments in transit. More specifically, it supported Cook County Board President Perkwinkle passage of proposal to fund pensions, legacy debt service, and infrastructure with an increase of the regional sales tax. (<http://transitfuture.org>)
3. *Fund 2040*, a state campaign led by CMAP that calls for a new capital program or a potential tax reform (such as an increase in the regional sales tax) that would help funding projects that contribute to the implementation of *GO to 2040*. (www.fund2040.org).

Incentive Strategy for Land Use

On the land use side, respondents suggested that the Illinois legislature set up a system of incentive or a consistency requirement between the local land uses and zoning decisions and the regional plan, as to regulate sprawl (Interviews D, E & K). Another respondent suggested that CMAP use transportation and other infrastructure funds to incentivize or to punish local governments for making good or bad land use decisions, in order to also resolve the greenfield development issue (Interview G). However, some respondents mentioned that incentive-based

programs, such as tax credits, would be more realistic than regulatory ones, given the budget situation and the political culture in Illinois, and also given the slow growth in the region.

(Interviews J & K). As explained by this respondent:

You don't want more regulations that inadvertently are keeping growth from happening or making it more complicated for businesses to come here. I mean, we've already got competition with Indiana, which is a much easier place. The taxes are lower. They have a more business-friendly climate. It really makes it hard in the southern suburbs, which are the most economically-challenged part of the region. The direct competition with Indiana is really tough, so I don't think that more regulatory requirements would help them. But, a lot of our work...I mean, what we really want to see is more economic growth in the south suburbs, the west suburbs, parts of the city of Chicago, and I think that happens by providing infrastructure to make that growth more likely or providing tax credits to people who go there rather than regulations that restrict growth. So, yes, I just think, here, that makes more sense and that's more...I think the culture of planning here as well is strongly local control. So, I think that makes sense and all of the work we do is kind of placed within that reality. So, that's why we did the LTA Program the way we did, it needs to be a voluntary program that offers assistance. It can't be a regional regulation that you can't do something that needs to be...If you want to align with *GO to 2040*, we'll do your plan for you. We'll give you infrastructure money. We'll do whatever...so... (Interview K)

Finally, one respondent mentioned that CMAP should not lose sight of the fact that it is not only a regional transportation agency, but also a housing agency, and economic development agency, etc., and should remain careful not to dedicate all its planning funds to transportation projects (Interview N). Another respondent, less sympathetic of CMAP work, suggested that the agency focus on emphasizing the consolidation of services, joint services, agreements amongst units of government and solve individual service delivery problems, rather than focusing on regional planning (Interview O). However, this sub-regional task is tackled in other forums, such as in the COMs, COGs, or county boards, or within other suburban collaborative committees. In addition, at the national level, there is an independent coalition called *Transform Illinois* whose mission is to “improve the efficiency of government service delivery in Illinois, and expand awareness of the economic impact of the current structure of government in the state” (Ellis, 2015).

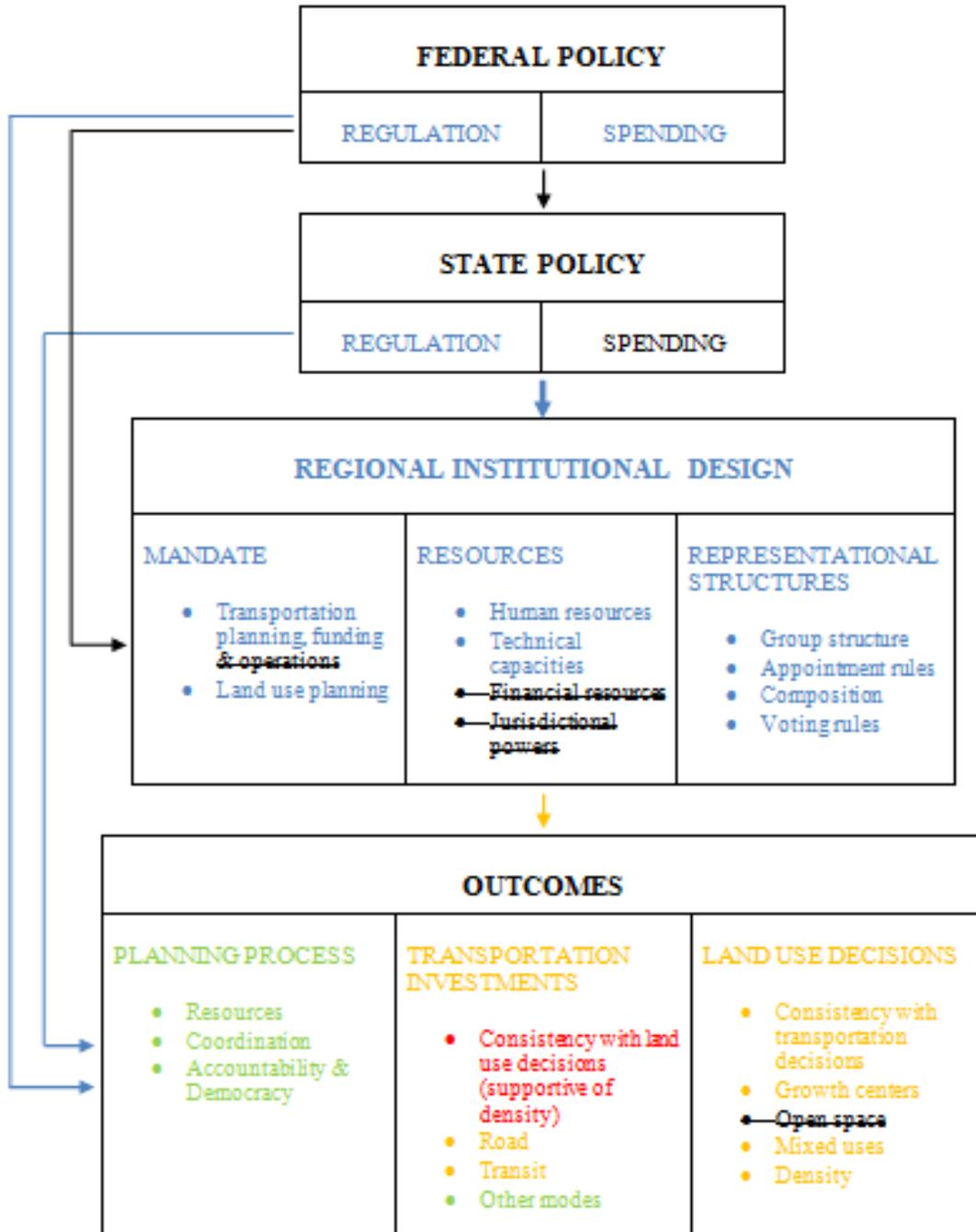
Theoretical Implications

Again, what are the impacts of the reform on the planning process, transportation investments, and land use decisions? What can be said of the relationship between the regional institutional design and planning outcomes? More specifically, what can be said of the impact of the different dimensions of the representational structure on decision outcomes? Using the model developed for this study, I am attempting to answer these questions for the case of Chicago.

Figure 33 illustrates the impacts of the reform on various dimensions of the planning process, transportation investments, and land use decisions. The color blue represents elements of the institutional framework that were altered by the reform. The color green is used for dimensions that have improved since the adoption of the reform. The color orange is used for dimensions for which the evidence is mixed. The color red represents dimensions that have shown little improvement since the adoption of the reform. And finally, elements that are crossed out are either not part of or not affected by the new regional institutional design.

Before getting to the impacts of the creation of CMAP on planning outcomes, it is important to explain why the federal regulation and spending are highlighted in blue in Figure 33. In fact, the elements of the federal regulation and spending were not changed because CMAP was created, however CMAP has changed its position or relation to federal regulation and spending. More specifically, as explained in this chapter, the MPO is now respecting the federal requirement of preparing a fiscally constrained list of major capital projects, something that CATS was not fulfilling *de facto*. In addition, the launch of CMAP's LTA program in 2010, which represents CMAP's main implementation mechanism, was launched with the help of a \$4.25 million federal grant.

Figure 33: Impact of the changes in the institutional framework in Chicago



All the dimensions of the regional planning process have improved because CMAP instituted a single planning process for both transportation and land use (as well as other

regional issues). In addition, with the help of the LTA program and its experienced, qualified staff, CMAP was able to set up an inclusive and open planning process for the development of *GO to 2040* and for local comprehensive plans. Finally, CMAP Board structure and voting rules make the agency representative of local elected officials and accountable to local populations. However, although CMAP has improved the regional planning process, mobilization and participation of local residents remain a challenge. The representation of “people’s” interests and CMAP’s democratic character are therefore more guaranteed by the presence of local elected officials on CMAP Board and by advocacy groups at the committee level, rather than direct participation and election.

CMAP has produced mixed results in terms of transportation investments. Although CMAP has improved the overall quality of transportation projects by increasing planning/conception standards, and although has increased the amount of resources dedicated to transit infrastructures by setting up a realistic, constrained list of capital projects, the reform did not go as far as changing the transit governance, planning and funding structure, which is still inefficient. Also, CMAP’s bicycle and pedestrian advisory committee has improved cooperation among advocacy groups and the selection process of bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure projects. However, despite these improvements, the agency structure does not prevent the adoption of transportation investments decisions that are inconsistent with existing land uses because the decision-making process related to transportation programming is controlled by the MPO Policy Committee (controlled by the State), and not by CMAP Board (controlled by local actors).

As for land use decisions, although they are still made independently by local governments according to their economic interests, the creation of CMAP and the LTA

program has incrementally pushed the sustainability agenda and the local comprehensive planning processes forward. In this regard, the adoption of Chicago's TOD ordinance, improvements in cycling and walking infrastructures, and TIF funding for transit projects are examples of policy improvements that are perhaps the results of the fact that CMAP has put regional sustainability on the planning agenda. Combined with the shift of market preferences and location choices of residents and businesses and the impact of global economic forces, these new policies have perhaps contributed to the recent reversal in regional population growth trends... The "open space" is crossed out in the figure because although it is included in CMAP's mandate, it was never mentioned in the interviews.

The next and final chapter compares the impacts of the Toronto and Chicago reform on planning outcomes in light of the aggregated coding results. It also highlights the respective strengths and weaknesses of each institutional design. Finally, it addresses other intervening factors and presents the theoretical implications of this study, as well as its contributions to the literature. This dissertation ends with a general conclusion and an epilogue.

CHAPTER 8

COMPARISON, DISCUSSION & GENERAL CONCLUSION

This chapter compares the Toronto and Chicago cases in light of the aggregated coding results (Appendix E) and discusses the practical and theoretical implications of this study. It is divided into four sections. The first section compares both cases using the perceptions and evidence provided by the respondents and the aggregated coding results on selected dimensions of regional planning: planning process, transportation investments, land use decisions, and tradeoffs in terms of accountability, democracy, and effectiveness. The second section provides a discussion of the results by summarizing the outcome data and answering initial research questions, presents other key factors in the regional development of Toronto and Chicago, and highlights the constraints and opportunities associated with each institutional design. The third section presents the theoretical implications of this study by reviewing the analytical framework, identifying specific contributions to the literature, and discussing the study limits. Finally, the chapter ends by providing general concluding remarks.

Comparison in Light of the Aggregated Coding Results

As a reminder, the Toronto reform of regional planning institutions consisted in the creation of Metrolinx in 2006, a regional transportation planning and operating agency that adopted a long-range transportation plan (the *Big Move*) in 2009. In addition, local governments had to bring their official plans in conformity with the new planning and zoning requirements (including density targets) as part of the Province's *Growth Plan*, adopted in 2006. The *Growth Plan* itself included the *Greenbelt Plan* requirements, which protects 2.8 million acres of land from urban development. Metrolinx, the *Greenbelt Plan* the *Growth Plan* were adopted by the Province to manage the region's population growth, to reduce sprawling

urban development, and to manage the Province's renewed financial commitment to transit infrastructures. Because Metrolinx is a crown agency accountable to the Ontario Ministry of Transportation, and because the Province has adopted a regulatory type of growth management strategy, I qualified the 2005-2006 reform of Toronto's planning institutions as "regulatory/centralization".

As for the Chicago reform, the government of Illinois merged the transportation planning organization (CATS) and the land use planning organization (NIPC) in 2005, to create a single, comprehensive regional planning agency (CMAP) in 2006, which is also designated as the region's MPO. Because of CMAP's bicameral committee structure, which gives the local and regional actors control of CMAP's Board while maintaining the State's control over the MPO Policy Committee, and because CMAP's main implementation mechanism for its comprehensive regional plan (*GO to 2040*) is a voluntary program (the LTA program), I qualified the 2005-2006 reform of Chicago's planning institutions as "governance/functional integration".

In order to assess the impacts of the reforms about ten years after their inception, I relied mostly on the perceptions and evidence provided by 15 key informants in each region. The semi-structured interviews were first transcribed then coded using the qualitative data analysis software QDA Miner. As mentioned in the coding report (Appendix E), interview segments (sentences or paragraphs) were assigned a code corresponding to the variables and dimensions of the planning and decision-making processes pertaining to this study. All the codes were then aggregated and the cases were compared and analyzed using the tools offered by the software. The specific analytical procedure and the aggregated coding results from the interviews are presented and further explained in the Appendix E.

However, the Toronto and Chicago stories presented in previous chapters are not based on the aggregated coding report, but rather based on a qualitative content analysis of interviews for each study variables, which was then supplemented and weighted against other data published by government agencies and non-profit organizations. For example, to write the section about Toronto's Scarborough Subway decision, I selected this specific code in QDA Miner and extracted all the interview segments that this code was assigned to. The sub-case analyses are thus based on selection of segments, which were then confirmed/disconfirmed and supplemented by other sources of data.

The following sub-section is comparing the Toronto and Chicago cases based on both the narratives presented in the previous chapters as well as the aggregated coding results analyzed and compared in Appendix E. It thus bridges the quantification of qualitative data with the purely qualitative analysis, adding a level of internal consistency to the study (ensuring that both analyses/measurements deliver the same stories). In addition, this section provides a direct comparison of the cases on each study variable.

Comparison of Impacts on the Planning Process

In terms of coding, there was no specific code associated to the planning process, because almost every interview segment was related the planning process. The previous chapters' section on the planning process was constructed using the codes "before the reform", "after the reform", as well as the codes related to "evolution of conditions", "actors", "relationships", and "decision-making". The planning process *per se* was thus not the object of a specific aggregated results analysis.

The interview content analyses showed that in both Toronto and Chicago, the reform improved the planning process, but in different ways. In Toronto, the creation of Metrolinx re-

established a regional transportation planning process that had disappeared with the abolition of the Greater Toronto Services Board in 2001. Under the auspices of Metrolinx Board of Directors, the local mayors collaborated in developing the region's transportation plan, the *Big Move*, which paved the way to the Province's renewed commitment to transportation infrastructures. In terms of land use planning, the local governments must bring their official plan in conformity with the *Growth Plan* requirements, which increased planning activities at the local level. However, although the 2005-2006 reform improved the relationship among actors as far as planning and "easy wins" were concerned, financial implications and jurisdictional rivalries are slowing the progress on other fronts, such as the *Growth Plan* implementation, transit project implementation, mobility hubs, and service and fare integration.

In Chicago, the reform improved the regional planning process by instituting a single, integrated process for both transportation and land use planning, which led to the adoption of *GO to 2040* in 2010, the region's long-range comprehensive plan. At the local level, more comprehensive planning activities were undertaken due to CMAP's LTA program. However, although the creation of CMAP has created a forum of discussion around regional sustainability issues that has improved collaboration between CMAP, counties and municipalities, and although the intra-regional competition for businesses has decreased, the long-standing city-suburbs divide and the usual inter-agency and inter-municipal conflicts surrounding funding allocation are still present.

When comparing the impacts of the (very different) reforms, we can observe an improvement of the planning process in both Toronto and Chicago. These improvements can be attributed to: 1) new planning organizations and rules (new institutions) that translated into

renewed efforts and commitments from local and regional actors to the development of a regional plan and vision (and also from the Province in the Toronto case, in terms of land use/growth management strategy); and 2) the continuing involvement of regional, local, and non-profit actors in the regional planning process. However in Toronto, local governments' involvement in the regional planning activities stopped when local elected officials were removed from Metrolinx Board in 2009, once the *Big Move* was adopted. Finally, in both cases, although the *planning process* was improved, the *decision-making authority* leading to transportation investments and land use decisions was not altered by the reform (both the *Big Move* and *GO to 2040* plans being advisory). Combined with the limited authority and resources granted to Metrolinx and CMAP, this disconnect between planning and decision-making functions is raising some issues in terms of plan implementation in both Toronto and Chicago. In addition, battles of jurisdictional turfs, especially as it relates to the local control of transit agencies and development approvals, are still hindering the regional planning process in terms of coordinating the planning and operations of transit services and implementing the regional land use objectives.

Comparison of Impacts on Transportation Investments

The codes assigned to transportation investments were: “transportation (decisions or investments) integrated with land uses”, “transportation (decisions or investments) NOT integrated with land uses”, “land use decisions integrated with transportation (decisions or investments)”, and “land use decisions NOT integrated with transportation (decisions or investments)”. In order to conduct the content analysis and present the evidence provided by the respondents, the codes associated with sub-specific case studies related to transportation decisions, such as “Yonge St. Relief Line” or “Illiana Expressway” were also used, as well as

“list of projects”, “evidence”, and the codes associated with “decision-making”. For the aggregated coding analysis, I assessed the co-occurrence of the codes associated with “integration – land use and transportation”, “evolution of conditions”, and “evidence”.

As shown in one of the frequency table presented in Appendix E, respondents of both regions provided more accounts of transportation decisions coherent or integrated with land uses since the reforms than accounts of non-integration. A related cluster graph presented in Appendix E shows that Toronto respondents provided more evidence of positive instances of transportation and land use integration than evidence of negative instances. Chicago respondents provided less evidence related to transportation decisions altogether, and more evidence of land use integrated with transportation, and of land use not integrated with transportation. Despite the fact that in both regions, respondents pointed to some improvement in terms of planning integration, they also pointed to negative instances. In Toronto, some respondents mentioned that transportation decisions were not coherent with land use decisions, and that remained the same since the reform. In Chicago, respondents agreed that before the reform, transportation and land use decisions were not integrated, and although it improved, it is still not clear whether they are fully integrated now. The narratives recounted by the respondents, supplemented with data from governmental and non-governmental sources, shed some light on these aggregated results.

In Toronto, the creation of Metrolinx has allowed \$16 billion worth of capital funding for rapid transit projects from the three levels of government to be raised, including over \$13 billion from the provincial government alone. However, the evidence collected indicates that regional consensus and the “evidence-based” planning process instituted by Metrolinx has been “hijacked by the (provincial) political process”. Resulting from the fact that, in the end,

“politics trump policy”, the better transit investment projects were sometimes set aside in favor of worse projects, as exemplified in the case of the Scarborough Subway. Transit might be back on the agenda but there is no evidence that collectively, the projects planned by Metrolinx will allow the agency to reach the goals identified in the *Big Move* and make the best use of available funds, as cheaper transit options would result in more potential new riders. The heart of the issue is that Metrolinx does not have the ability to implement the *Big Move* – the Province does. Its mandate is solely advisory, there is no TPPS to force municipalities to comply with the RTP (the *Big Move*), and the agency has no independent revenue source which would allow it to fund projects directly on its own, without seeking political approval. In addition, the fact that local appointees were removed from Metrolinx Board of directors and replaced by provincially-appointed, non-elected members has enabled the Province to easily disregard Metrolinx’s recommendations. As a result, the credibility of Metrolinx and the entire transportation planning process, both at the regional and at the provincial level, are now put into question.

The fact that there is more money for transit capital projects explains why the aggregated results pointed to more instances of transportation decisions integrated with land use decisions than instances of transportation decisions not integrated with land use decisions. In the same vein, the fact that the provincial government still makes transportation investment decisions in a unilateral fashion, without considering land uses or ridership potential, explains why the aggregated results and the co-occurrence analysis underline that transportation decisions are not integrated with land use decisions, and that has remained the same since the creation of Metrolinx.

In Chicago, the creation of CMAP has not *fundamentally* changed the decision-making process for major capital projects (both highway and transit) and for local roads and transit, as the agency holds only limited control over investment decisions. In fact, transportation investment decisions are still made by the same committees and by the same agencies as before the reform, and based upon politics as much as they are based on needs assessment and performance measures. In addition, the creation of CMAP did not come with any new funding commitment from the State or any new independent funding source, which restricts the agency's ability to directly implement *GO to 2040* or to become a partner in transportation projects. Despite these limitations and the relatively short period of time since the adoption of *GO to 2040*, CMAP is incrementally changing the decision-making *practices* two ways: 1) by tightening the criteria for eligible projects submitted by local and state agencies to various CMAP/MPO sub-committees; and 2) by respecting the federal requirement of "fiscal constraint". The exercise of narrowing down a fiscally constrained list was also associated with more projects being constructed. Nonetheless, the way the State was able to "force" the Illiana Expressway into the *GO to 2040* updated list of major capital project, despite CMAP Board recommendation against the project, shows the limits of the agency in terms of authority and capacity, as well as the consequences of its "bicameral" committee structure.

Because CMAP has not fundamentally changed the decision-making process for transportation projects, respondents provided less evidence related to transportation decisions altogether, as pointed out in the aggregated results. Also, although the respondents had a sense that CMAP was incrementally changing the decision-making practices and felt that there was an improvement on that front, there is no clear evidence that transportation decisions are now coherent with land uses.

Overall, both reforms introduced some improvements to the transportation investment decisions. In Toronto, the biggest improvement consists in the major reinvestments in transportation infrastructures the creation of Metrolinx has made possible. In Chicago, the improvements are related to the decision-making practices of transit agencies, local and state governments, which are now more sensitive in terms of the quality of their proposals. In addition, CMAP has instituted a greater effort of fiscal constraint, which led to greater regional focus and possibly more investments in transportation infrastructures. Finally, both agencies are limited in terms of their implementation capacity, because they do not have access to an autonomous revenue stream and they do not possess the authority to make the municipalities and agencies comply with the principles and policies identified in the *Big Move* and *GO to 2040*. In addition, they both face challenges with the planning and operating activities of independent transit agencies, which are under the purview of local governments.

Comparison of Impacts on Land Use Decisions

Similar to transportation investments, codes assigned to land use decisions were: land use decisions integrated with transportation (decisions or investments)”, “land use decisions NOT integrated with transportation (decisions or investments)”, “transportation (decisions or investments) integrated with land uses”, “transportation (decisions or investments) NOT integrated with land uses”. In order to write the content analysis and present the evidence provided by the respondents, the codes associated with sub-specific case studies related to land use decisions, such as “Growth Plan” or “LTA Program” were used, as well as the codes associated with “decision-making” and “evidence”. For the aggregated coding analysis, I assessed the co-occurrence of the codes associated with “integration – land use and transportation”, “evolution of conditions”, and “evidence”.

As shown in one of the frequency table presented in the Appendix E, although respondents of both regions provided more accounts of land use decisions coherent or integrated with transportation decisions, there are multiple instances of land use decisions not coherent with transportation decisions. A related cluster graph Appendix E shows that Toronto respondents provided more evidence of positive instances of land use and transportation integration than evidence of negative instances. Chicago respondents provided more evidence of land use integrated with transportation, and of land use not integrated with transportation, and less evidence related to transportation decisions altogether. Despite the fact that in both regions, respondents noted some improvement in terms of planning integration, they also observed negative instances. Other cluster graphs presented in the Appendix E show that in Toronto, respondents pointed out to an improvement of the integration of land use decisions with transportation decisions since the 2005-2006 reform. In Chicago, respondents observed that land use decisions were not integrated with transportation decisions before the reform, but that situation has improved after the reform, so that land use decisions are more integrated with transportation decisions now that they were before the reform.

In Toronto, because most of the official plans are not even conforming to the *Growth Plan* requirements yet, it is too early for assessing any correlation or causal relationship between the growth strategy and land use patterns. However, many observations made by the respondents regarding the *Growth Plan*'s impact on land uses were essentially confirmed by Neptis assessment of the *Growth Plan* implementation. First, the principles and requirements included in the *Growth Plan* are not likely to be implemented in the more rural municipalities (especially in the outer ring), either because the Province allow them to be exempt from the provisions included by the *Growth Plan*, or because the planning requirements do not mean

that the developments will actually meet density targets. Second, the ability for developers and municipalities to appeal provincial decisions to the OMB is hindering the *Growth Plan* implementation, which is why a lot of people, including many respondents and Neptis researchers, are calling for the abolishment of the right to appeal provincial decisions related to the conversion of farmland to urban. Third, the Province's own laxity in terms of respecting the principles included in the *Growth Plan* will most likely result in the same patterns of sprawling development being built across the region. Fourth, elements of municipal revenue structure and politics driving land use decisions are unaddressed in the *Growth Plan*, and tackling these issues is essential to induce a change in land use development patterns. In addition, based on the facts that: 1) new major employment centers are often located in areas where rapid transit services are not provided; 2) some office, employment, and service location choices are not coherent with the principles in the *Growth Plan*, and that, in general, respondents mentioned that land use decisions were not coherent with transportation decisions; and 3) Neptis density projections indicate that the future development patterns will not be more supportive of transit services than they are now; we can safely say that there is little evidence that land use decisions are coherent with transportation decisions. Nonetheless, we must remember that the market and consumer preferences are changing in favor of more compact forms of development, and that the *Growth Plan* is helping municipalities that are on board with the intensification agenda to justify and legitimize densification.

The explanation for the aggregated results that point out to a greater integration of land use and transportation decisions since the adoption of the reform lays perhaps in the fact that land use and transportation are better integrated in terms of provincial policy (in the *Growth*

Plan). However, there is no evidence that the provincial policy has translated into changes on the ground yet.

In Chicago also, it is yet too early to observe any perceptible change at the regional level that could be attributable to the actions identified in *GO to 2040*. As of July 2015, what can be directly attributed to CMAP activities are the local governments' comprehensive planning efforts that resulted from CMAP's LTA program. Because a lot of these local comprehensive plans were adopted since 2004, they are yet to be fully implemented, and so their impact cannot be measured on a regional scale. Because it represents the main way through which *GO to 2040* is implemented and because of the direct relationship with the communities it allows, the LTA program is key for CMAP relevance and its ability to move forward in terms of building its identity and value in the region. In addition to its importance for CMAP, it is also responding to tangible local needs and desires. In fact, although the program is entirely voluntary, it generates a lot of demand from the region's 284 municipalities, most of which do not have the planning staff or the resources to hire consultants. Although the impacts of CMAP on local land use decisions are mostly indirect and yet to be measurable, the efforts of the LTA program across the region and the policy initiatives of the City of Chicago represent signs of improvement which, combined to a shift in market preferences and location choices of individuals and corporations, contribute to a more sustainable urban environment that might be quantifiable in the near future. In fact, 2010-2013 census numbers point out to a reversal of historic trends, indicating a movement towards Cook County and the City of Chicago.

The aggregated results, which indicated that land use decisions were not integrated with transportation decisions before the reform, but that this situation was improving since the

creation of CMAP, can be explained by the fact that land use decisions are still made unilaterally by local governments, regardless of their impact on regional travel patterns. Nonetheless, local governments now have access to the LTA program if they wish to undertake comprehensive planning activities or planning projects that are meeting the goals identified in *GO to 2040*.

When comparing the Toronto and Chicago reforms in terms of their land use impacts, some differences and similarities emerge. The differences are mostly related to the implications of the different types of reforms. In Toronto, municipalities are required to update their official plans, but this is proving to be a challenge because of the appeals to the OMB. In addition, the official plan update does not guarantee the municipalities will respect it, because they are not penalized if they fail to do so. There is thus no promise that the *Growth Plan* will result in greater density and less sprawl. In Chicago, municipalities do not have to comply with the principles and policies included in *GO to 2040*, but if they wish to do so, they can get the help of the LTA (voluntary) program to pursue planning projects that help meeting the goals identified in *GO to 2040*. CMAP's planning activities are also raising local government's awareness of the impacts of land use decisions on travel patterns, environmental resources and the cost of infrastructure provision. **These differences in terms of impact, which can be attributed to the difference of policy tool or policy apparatus (regulatory versus voluntary/incremental), are similar in terms of the challenge they face.**

In fact, the authority over land uses and zoning is local government's prerogative, which means that the Province, the State, or the regional planning organization cannot coerce local governments to disapprove undesirable development projects and to approve more desirable ones. Development approvals are thus made at the county or at the local level,

according to whichever political or financial consideration. In both Toronto and Chicago, it was suggested to reform municipal revenue structure in order to remove the incentives for local governments to increase their tax base by allowing greenfield developments. Finally, in both regions, the same market shift can be observed in the locational preferences of businesses and individuals, who tend to increasingly prefer accessible urban locations rather than suburban or exurban locations that are only accessible by car. Both regions' development is also dependent on employment and residential growth, an important contributing factor that is partly contingent upon economic forces that are beyond the reach of regional planning agencies.

Comparison of Tradeoffs in Terms of Accountability, Democracy & Effectiveness

In terms of coding, the principles of “accountability”, “democracy” and “effectiveness” were each attributed a nominal code of their own. In order to construct the discourse analysis and present the evidence provided by the respondents, I simply retrieved all the interview segments associated with each principles and “evidence”. Because while transcribing the interviews, I noticed that the respect of principles were sometimes associated with some dimensions of the institutional design, I assessed the co-occurrence of “accountability”, “democracy”, and “effectiveness”, and the codes associated with “institutional design” (“mandate”, “resources” and “representational structures”).

The aggregated coding results presented in the Appendix E show that in Toronto, the respondents referred to the “accountability” principle more frequently, followed by “efficiency” and “democracy” almost evenly. In Chicago, the respondents mentioned the principle of “democracy” more frequently, followed by the “accountability” principle and “efficiency”, almost evenly also. In terms of the co-occurrence of the principles and elements of the institutional design, the most frequent co-occurrences in Toronto occurred between

“accountability” and “representational structures”. The principles of “democracy” and “efficiency” co-occurred frequently as well. In Chicago, the principle of “accountability” and “resources” were often assigned to the same segments, and the principle of “democracy” co-occurred frequently with the “representational structures”, “resources”, and also “accountability”.

In Toronto, the change in Metrolinx’s board composition and appointment rules that replaced local elected members with provincially-appointed, non-elected members has allowed the Province to bypass Metrolinx recommendations when funding transit infrastructure projects. As a result of this change in its structure of representation, the transportation agency is no longer accountable to, nor representative of local communities. In addition, the high politicization of the transit infrastructure funding issue has led to investment choices that are questionable in terms of efficiency, notably because the Province’s lack of transparency makes independent assessments more difficult. Finally, the fact that Metrolinx has no independent revenue sources harms its ability to implement the *Big Move* by prioritizing projects that reach a regional consensus and represent the best value for money in terms of ridership potential. The change in Metrolinx Board composition and appointment rules, which removed local responsibility (and representation) and harmed the transparency surrounding transit investments, explain the co-occurrence of “accountability” and “representational structures”.

In Chicago, the fact that a third of CMAP Board members are elected officials accountable to their constituents increases the stakes of negotiations, as no elected official would risk voting for a policy that would not be politically acceptable or justifiable in its constituency. In addition, the equal distribution of seats among the City, Cook County and the Collar Counties (proportional to the population) as well as the super majority voting

requirement forces consensus, which might lead to the adoption of policies representing the lowest common denominator among board members. This consensus approach might explain why *GO to 2040* is non-coercive and non-specific in terms of density targets and geography. It can also lead to spreading the resources across the region to ensure some buy-in into the planning process. Despite this “evening out” that the consensual structure entails, CMAP staff was able to push the sustainability agenda as far as it could. According to the respondents, CMAP has improved the respect of democratic principles, particularly with regards to the public consultation and outreach. However, despite the agency’s efforts, the lack of public involvement and interest in the less non-controversial planning issues raises some questions of representativeness. In terms of the democratic dimension of CMAP Board, the only element that would make it more democratic is if its members were directly elected by the population. The prevalence of the democratic principle in the aggregated coding results and its frequent co-occurrence with “representational structures”, “resources” and “accountability” can be explained by: 1) the democratic nature of CMAP Board; 2) the extensive public consultation and outreach conducted by the agency’s human resources; and 3) the increased transparency of the planning process, which allows for informed debates to occur.

Discussion of Results

Summary of Outcome Data

Tables 23 and 24 present a summary of observable implications and outcome data, respectively. Information about the observable implications, related to the definition of sustainable planning presented in Chapter 3, was collated using the evidence presented in the results chapters. As for the table summarizing outcome data that reflect regional transportation

and land use trends, as well as levels of resource consumption, comparable, longitudinal data is difficult to find. In Toronto, most of the *Growth Plan* indicators (intensification, densification, settlement areas, transportation GHG emissions, etc.) are baseline, and consequently they are not reported in the tables. As for Chicago, *GO to 2040* is being revised in 2015, and so the tracking of regional indicators has yet to be reported. Despite these limitations, the available data presented in Tables 23 and 24 points to the following observations:

In Toronto:

- The region as a whole is growing, but information about the intra-regional distribution of the population is yet to be released;
- The housing mix is improving across the region: the proportion of single-family homes are decreasing in favor of apartment buildings.
- There is no evidence that the pattern of auto-dependent, sprawling urban development will be reversed;
- Large suburban employment centers are not adequately served by transit;
- People living in the City of Toronto tend to use transit more and drive less;
- Transit funding is increasing, but transit investment decision-making process remain incoherent and not based on project performance.

In Chicago:

- The region is growing slowly, but there is a trend of coming back to the City of Chicago and Cook County;
- Large suburban employment centers are not adequately served by transit;

- Chicago's recent initiatives (transit-served location ordinance, bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure investments, and TIF funding for transit) are having effects on the ground and their impacts are beginning to be seen in the numbers;
- People living in the City of Chicago are increasingly using transit, walking and biking, while commuting patterns are stable in the Collar Counties;
- Although better transportation planning is being reported, there are no signs that transportation investments and infrastructures are either significantly increasing or improving.

Although local and regional changes can be attributable to a variety of factors such as market forces, individual preferences, socio-economic and demographic changes, technological changes, etc., regional planning institutions do play an important role in the sustainability of urban regions. As explained in the next section, regional planning agencies contribute to an increase in planning, research and education on local and regional sustainability issues, and they can also lead to better local policies and transit investment decisions which can, in turn, impact land use patterns, transportation systems, transportation and location choices of individuals and corporations, and ultimately their environmental consequences.

Table 23: Summary of observable implications

Region/ Observable Implications	TORONTO	CHICAGO
<p>Transportation investment choices consistent with land use decisions. Road and transit spending is directed towards designated growth areas. Transportation investment choices are made as to minimize vehicle use and reduce VMT.</p>	<p>Sharp increase in transit capital funding (mostly provincial, but also federal) since 2005 (Metrolinx 2013b: 45), but from a ridership standpoint the best projects were not funded. Transit investment decisions were not performance-based, but were made to increase the political capital of provincial and city governments (e.g. Scarborough Subway, UPX Express, TYSSE up to Vaughan, privatizing of 60% of Hydro One as an infrastructure funding strategy).</p>	<p>According to the respondents, “better” transportation projects are being submitted due to the creation of CMAP, and the respect of fiscal constraint could lead to more projects being funded in the future. However, Illinois transit capital funding has been erratic since 1983 (Chicago Metropolis 2020, 2010), the share of state budget dedicated to transportation has been declining since 1990 (MPC, 2015), and the state of Illinois was planning on cutting RTA funding by \$130 million while increasing funding to road and state construction by \$120 million (Illinois State Government, 2015).</p>
<p>Land use planning and decision-making are consistent with transportation investments and existing transportation infrastructure. Development is strengthened and directed toward existing communities and areas where transit is already provided. Growth centers or transit hubs are designated and the number of TODs is increasing. Land use policies that reduce vehicle use and increase accessibility, such as mixed land uses and increased density, are adopted.</p>	<p>Between 2006 and 2012, 53% of the new office space built was located outside of the City of Toronto, away from rapid transit lines and often located outside of the designated UGCs; As of Spring 2015, only the Official Plans for the Region of Peel, the cities of Peterborough, Orilla, Guelph, Brantford, and the counties of Peterborough, Wellington, and Haldimand were both adopted by their respective council and approved by the Province. Official plans for the Regions of Durham, York, Halton, Waterloo and Niagara, the cities of Toronto, Hamilton, and others had not yet been approved or had been appealed to the OMB (OMMAH, 2015a); Lack of consistent methods in municipal land budgeting and uncoordinated implementation of the Growth Plan. No consistency between the anticipated growth and the designated greenfield area. Half of the land designated for urbanization is located in the outer ring municipalities despite the fact that they are expected to receive a third of the new residents and a quarter of the jobs compared to the inner ring. Data indicates that the over designation of land for development has occurred not in spite of the <i>Growth Plan</i> but because of it (Allan & Campsie, 2013).</p>	<p>Regional employment clusters not properly served by transit (NEILPTTF, 2014);</p> <p>Between 2000 and 2010, the number of households in the region grew by 6%, while the number of households around by transit grew by only 2% (while in Boston, New York, Philadelphia and San Francisco, the growth rate around the transit system was higher than away from it) (NEILPTTF, 2014);</p> <p>Between 2008 and 2014, share of new residential and non-residential units within the existing municipal envelope in the region grew from 85% to 90% (CMAP, 2014j);</p> <p>Chicago has adopted a transit-served location ordinance (City of Chicago, 2013). At least 12 sites (between 74 and 360 units each) were built close to train stations and with fewer parking spaces (Vance, 2015b);</p> <p>Chicago has allowed the use of tax increment financing funds for transit (City of Chicago, 2015).</p>

Table 24: Summary of outcome data

City-Region/ Outcome Data	TORONTO		CHICAGO	
	City of Toronto	Toronto Region	City of Chicago	Chicago Region
Transportation & Land Use	Between 2006 and 2011, reduced share of commuters driving to work alone (-2%), increased share of transit (+2%); Walking and biking are stable at 4% and 1% respectively. (OMMAH, 2015a)	Between 2006 and 2011, reduced share of commuters driving to work alone (-1%), increased share of transit (+1%); Walking and biking are stable at 4% and 1% respectively (modal share in the outer ring has not changed between 2006 and 2011). (OMMAH, 2015a)	Between 2006 and 2014, reduced share of commuters driving to work alone (-6%), increased share of transit (+3%), walking (+1%) and biking (+1%), according to latest U.S. Census data (Freemark, 2015) Rise in the share of car-free households from 14% in 2000 to 28% in 2012 (Moser, 2015)	Chicago MSA: Share of transit has been stable between 2006 and 2014 (+/-11%) (MPC, 2013; Metra (commuter rail): Decrease in ridership between 2006 and 2014 (-5.0%) (Metra, 2014)
	2014 census data shows that population in the Greater Toronto Area (excludes Hamilton) grew by 8.4% between 2011 and 2014, from 5.6 million to 6.1 million people (an increase of approximately 500 000 people). However, data for intra-regional distribution is available (Statistics Canada, 2015).		Reversal of population growth trends: Cook County (Chicago) grew by 50,000 people between 2010 and 2013 while the Collar Counties grew by 20,000 and the two other Indiana counties lost 1,500 people (Freemark, 2014).	
Resource consumption	Lot sizes have been declining since 1986; Share of apartment buildings raised from 81% to 87% from 2006 to 2013 (OMMAH, 2015a)	Lot sizes have been declining since 1986 (OMMAH, 2015a); Share of apartment building and row houses raised from 36% to 43% from 2006 to 2013 (OMMAH, 2015a)	A study published in 2014 tracking emissions and concentrations of air pollutants (nitrogen oxides NO _x , ground-level ozone O ₃ , and volatile organic compounds VOCs) found that between 2005 and 2013: 1) emissions of NO _x declined due to a combination of reductions in point- and mobile-source emissions; 2) concentrations of O ₃ still exceed air quality standards and 53% of the variance can be explained by metrological conditions; and 3) concentrations of VOCs have more than doubled since 2009 calling for an improvement of the quantification of VOCs sources (Ping, 2014).	
	Other indicators (ex. settlement area, watershed conditions, transportation GHG emissions) are only baseline (OMMAH, 2015a)			

Answers to Research Questions & Assessment of Relationships

This section responds to the initial research questions using the evidence collected and analyzed in this study. It also discusses my theoretical assumption that the regional institutional design (i.e., what the organization is supposed to do – the mandate, what it *can* do – the resources, and who decides what is done, when and how – the representational structure) determines the outcome of the regional planning process. It summarizes what this study does say about the impact of institutional reforms on regional planning process, and what it does not say.

How do new institutional structures aimed at integrating regional transportation and land use planning impact the planning process, transportation investments and land use decisions?

Both institutional reforms improved the regional planning process by establishing a renewed commitment to the exercise of regional planning. In Toronto, the creation of Metrolinx has re-established a regional transportation planning process that was non-existent before the reform. For the development of *GO to 2040*, Metrolinx initial Board of directors, comprised of the region's mayors, collaborated effectively in creating a regional vision and identifying a list of priority transportation projects (although not fiscally constrained). In terms of land use, the province of Ontario took charge of regional planning by adopting the *Greenbelt* and the *Growth Plan*, to which municipalities had to conform to by amending their Official Plan. Overall, the reform increased the occasions for communications and interactions between administrative staff, thus improving cooperation and coordination among stakeholders in terms of planning, especially at the regional (GTHA) level.

In Chicago, the creation of CMAP has brought the local and regional actors together in developing a consensual, comprehensive long-range plan that forces to think about land use and transportation together. By establishing a single regional planning process for both transportation and land use, but also for other issues of regional concern, the creation of CMAP has certainly improved the regional planning process by breaking down silos and by focusing on regional sustainability issues. In addition, the comprehensive mandate of CMAP allows the organization to create task forces and develop recommendations on important issues such as tax policy, local food access, economic development and affordable housing. Through its LTA program, the agency is also incrementally promoting local comprehensive planning activities and bringing sustainability issues on local agendas. The consensus-based approach adopted by the organization has also fostered regional dialogue and a sense of mutual understanding and collaboration among CMAP board members (local and regional representatives), which can contribute reduce inter-local competition.

In sum, institutional reforms have improved the “planning practice” dimension of sustainable planning by:

- 1) Renewing the commitment of stakeholders (local, regional, and state/provincial governments) to regional planning;
- 2) Initiating an inclusive regional planning effort for the development of a regional vision;
- 3) Increasing information and promoting evidenced-based planning and decision-making;
- 4) Fostering a sense of mutual understanding, collaboration and trust among local and regional representatives, which can contribute to reduce inter-local competition;
- 5) Increasing local awareness to sustainability issues and local comprehensive planning activities.

The reforms would have had a greater impact on the process of planning if:

- 1) Transit agencies were also an active part of the regional planning process by being represented on the board of regional planning agencies.
- 2) Regional planning agencies were the approval authority of transit agencies' plans and budgets, as to give the regional planning agencies some leverage over the coordination of transit services and ultimately streamline the travelers' experience.

Both reforms had only a limited impact on transportation investments because the decision-making function in terms of allocating transportation funds is still controlled by the province of Ontario and the state of Illinois, who follow their own interests and political agenda. In Toronto, the fact that Metrolinx is under the responsibility of Ontario Ministry of Transportation has allowed the provincial government to move forward with a financial commitment in transit infrastructures. Although this is good news for transit, the regional consensus and planning process instituted by Metrolinx has been taken over by the provincial political process, which resulted in the better transit investment projects being set aside in favor of worse projects in terms of cost/ridership potential. Transit might be back on the agenda but collectively, the projects planned by Metrolinx would not allow the agency to reach the ridership goals identified in the *Big Move* and make the best use of available funds. Ultimately, the Province's control of Metrolinx is harming the transparency of the planning and the decision-making processes surrounding transit projects, because Metrolinx representatives must accept, justify and manage the Province's transit investment decisions.

In Chicago, because of the bicameral group structure of CMAP (one planning group controlled by local and regional actors, CMAP Board, and one transportation funding board, controlled by the State, the MPO Policy Committee), the reform has had only a limited impact

on how funding decisions were made in the region. Although CMAP has increased its level of scrutiny when allocating federal dollars, transportation spending decisions and transit planning are still controlled by the state of Illinois (regionally significant projects), local governments (local roads and bridges) and transit agencies (transit projects), respectively. The tension between the State and CMAP has culminated in 2013-2014 over the funding of the Illiana Expressway, when the MPO Policy Committee voted against the CMAP Board recommendation of not including the Illiana in the fiscally constrained list of capital projects. CMAP's monthly transfer was even cut by the State for two months in time of crisis, which testifies of CMAP's dependence on state funding for its daily operations.

Overall, the institutional reforms have improved the “transportation investments” dimension of sustainable planning by:

- 1) Building a momentum around regional transportation, which led to increased investments in roads and transit (more the case in Toronto than in Chicago);
- 2) Creating an agency accountable to the Province, which led to an increase in provincial investments in transit capital projects (in Toronto);
- 3) Improving the quality of transportation proposals by increasing the level of scrutiny around funding allocation (in Chicago).

The reforms would have had a greater impact on transportation investments if:

- 1) Regional plans were compulsory, rather than advisory;
- 2) Regional agencies had access to an independent revenue source for implementing projects identified in their regional plans;

- 3) Local and regional stakeholders were responsible for both regional transportation *planning* and *decision-making* in terms of funding allocation;
- 4) Regional planning agencies were the approval authority of transit operators' plans and budgets, as to give the regional planning agencies the capacity to effectively coordinate transit services and ultimately streamline the travelers' experience.

Both cases show how difficult it is to increase densities and curb urban sprawl. In fact, both reforms had only a limited impact on land use decisions because the decision-making function in terms of local land uses, zoning and local development approvals are the prerogative of local governments and a function of locational preferences of individuals and corporations, which are contingent upon global economic forces. In Toronto, the Province's *Growth Plan* implementation at the local level is hindered by a variety of factors, including provincial exemptions and laxity in enforcing the plan, appeals to the OMB, and the absence of sanction for municipalities who are not *de facto* respecting their Official Plan. In addition, some elements of municipal revenue structure and politics driving land use decisions (such as municipalities' indebtedness or dependence on the development industry for bringing in employment, increasing the tax base, as well as contributing to electoral races) are unaddressed in the *Growth Plan*, and tackling these issues is essential to induce a change in land use development patterns. Overall, even though the market and consumer preferences are changing in favor of more compact forms of development, and although the *Growth Plan* is helping municipalities that are on board with the intensification agenda to justify and legitimize densification, there is no evidence yet that the reform will result in more densification and less urban sprawl.

In Chicago, although CMAP does not have authority over land use and zoning, which remains under municipal jurisdiction, the implementation of *GO to 2040* at the local level is facilitated by the LTA program, launched with the help of a HUD's Sustainable Communities Regional Planning grant. The LTA program has become central to CMAP implementation activities and proven a useful tool for smaller municipalities wishing to actively engage in local comprehensive planning. CMAP is incrementally bringing sustainability issues into the local agendas, which partly contributes to emergence of local policy initiatives such as Chicago's TOD ordinance. Overall, although the impacts of CMAP on local land use decisions are mostly indirect and yet to be measurable, and despite census numbers that indicate a movement to the suburbs and a decline in the City of Chicago, the efforts of the LTA program across the region and the policy initiatives of the City of Chicago represent signs of improvement which, combined to a shift in market preferences and location choices of individuals and corporations, contribute to a more sustainable urban environment that might be quantifiable in the near future.

In short, institutional reforms have improved the “land use decisions” dimension of sustainable planning by:

- 1) Providing a legal and/or policy framework that enables local governments to amend their planning ordinances in a way that would increase density and reduce sprawl;
- 2) Raising local awareness on the impacts of local land uses and zoning decisions on local and regional sustainability.

The reform would have had a greater impact on land use decisions if:

- 1) A system of incentives and disincentives was in place for rewarding or punishing local governments for making certain types of land use or zoning decisions;

- 2) Municipal revenue structures were reformed as to remove the local governments' incentives to increase their tax base by allowing greenfield development.

Does the representational structure of these new institutions matter?

Overall, the regional institutional design as a whole, comprised of the mandate (transportation planning, funding and operations, and land use planning), the resources (human, technical, financial, jurisdictional) and the representational structures (group structure, appointment rules, composition and voting rules) explains largely why both Metrolinx and CMAP have only had a limited impact on transportation investments and land use decisions since their creation. In this context where the scope of the mandate and resources limit the agencies' capacity to influence the decision-making process related to transportation investments and land use decisions (which are still largely controlled by the Province/the State and the local governments, respectively), what is the impact of the representational structure of the new institutional design on the regional political arena?

Although in both Toronto and Chicago, the state or provincial government still controls transportation investments, the representational structure of the regional agency determines whether or not there is regional/local resistance to the provincial or state initiatives that are going against the regional plan. Overall, the evidence presented in previous chapters shows that local elected representatives are an essential component of a regional planning agency's board of directors, because they are the watchdogs of local and regional interests and also act as champions of the regional plan. In fact, in Toronto, Metrolinx has failed to be a strong voice for the implementation of the *Big Move* since the local representatives were removed from its board of directors. On the contrary, in Chicago, CMAP Board members, comprised of local

appointees, were able to fight against the State about the Illiana Expressway on the basis that the project was going against the principles included in *Go to 2040*.

In the same vein, this study also shows that board members who are appointed by the State or the Province (both current Metrolinx Board members and CMAP's MPO Policy Committee members) and financially dependent on the State (MPO Policy Committee members) are not going to go against the State's or the Province's initiatives by either refraining from voicing their opinion in the media (in the case of Metrolinx) or voting against undesirable provincial initiatives (in the case of the MPO Policy Committee). In addition, local representatives are connected to local administrations, transit operators and local constituents, which guarantee that projects do translate in geography at the local and community levels. In this regard, the presence of local elected officials on the regional planning agencies' board of directors can make up for the fact that the agency has no authority over transit operators, who are under the responsibility of local governments.

In terms of the impact of the representational structure on the land use dimension of planning, the evidence is even less clear and more complicated than it is for the transportation dimension. In Toronto, there is no regional (GTHA level) agency responsible for land use planning. The provincial government carried out the function of developing a regional *Growth Plan*, which has to be implemented by (sub-) regions and municipal governments in a cascading system. Provincial decisions related to the approval of local amendments to official plans can then be appealed to the OMB (an administrative tribunal comprised of professionals with no planning expertise), a procedure that is unanimously criticized because respondents and experts think that it is the provincial government that should be the final authority over farmland conversion, not a tribunal of "laypeople". Although the already dense parts of the

GTHA will continue to densify, the political negotiations between the provincial government and the regional and local municipalities will likely lead to more areas approved for development, and there is no evidence that the *Growth Plan* implementation will result in less sprawling development (especially since the areas north of the Greenbelt are becoming the “wild west” of development). In addition, the dependence of suburban municipalities to local property taxes will only exacerbate the need for new urban developments.

In Chicago, both the representational structure of CMAP board and the region’s slow population growth rates prevent the agency from adopting density targets and promoting policies that would restrict urban development. CMAP’s actions are thus non-coercive and voluntary. The agency encourages a future pattern of more compact, mixed-use development that focuses urban growth where infrastructure already exists by providing technical assistance to municipalities and by promoting local capacity building. Although CMAP’s voluntary, consensus-based approach fosters education, cooperation, and local planning activities, it prevents the agency from adopting a plan with big winners and losers. Because the region is in direct competition with Milwaukee to the north and other regions in Indiana to the south-east, which have more competitive tax rates, any policy that would restrict growth is unwelcomed. This explains why some respondents mentioned that one solution or one way to reduce sprawl is to convince local elected officials that, on the long run, it is more cost-beneficial to develop their city center than to allow the construction of retail power centers (sales tax revenues are greater and the cost of infrastructure provision is lesser). However, the result of CMAP’s quantitative analysis concluded that the increased revenues associated with an average retail development (sales, property, telecommunications, electricity and gas tax

revenues) are typically greater than the expenditures necessary to service that development (CMAP, 2011b: 2).

Because the region's actual taxation structure is encouraging sprawling development and intraregional competition, CMAP's *Regional Tax Policy Task Force Report to the CMAP Board* (2012) formulated a number of recommendations to reform local revenue structure as to avoid the "fiscalization of land use". Generally speaking, the Task Force recommended broadening the tax base and lowering the tax rates. It recommended that CMAP pursue a source of regional funding to help finance regional infrastructure investments, either by creating a new revenue source or by repurposing increased revenue streams. The avenues of reform identified by the Task Force, which were not even consensual among the Task Force members themselves, were presented to CMAP Board in 2012. However, given the Board's composition and voting rules that require a regional consensus on the issue, the CMAP has not been successful in implementing any of the recommendations suggested by the Task Force. The impact of the representational structure on the distribution of resources and infrastructures in certain parts of the region is directly addressed is the subject of the next question.

Does the change in institutional design impact the relative political weight of the central city compared to the suburbs and higher orders of government? Does the new institution reinforce or weaken the role of the central city in the planning decision-making process? If so, what are the implications of this change in the power dynamics for regional sustainability?

This politically-charged question was perhaps the most difficult for respondents to answer because it is fairly abstract and hard to assess plus, for some people and organizations, the reality is a hard truth. Objectively, besides from the respondents' perceptions, in both

Toronto and Chicago, the central city does not hold the majority of the seats on the regional agency's board of directors. In Toronto, respondents observed that the creation of Metrolinx has translated into a relative decline in the central city's importance within the region and a centralization of the decision-making at the provincial level. Although the impact of this shift of balance on sustainability is difficult to determine, the evidence presented in this study shows the negative consequences of a regional planning agency having no local representation and no local accountability mechanism. In Chicago, the creation of CMAP has not fundamentally changed the balance of power within the region, nor has it changed the decision-making process surrounding funding allocation and land use decision in a way that would directly improve regional sustainability. Overall, the reforms have not changed the balance of powers within the region as to make better investment choices and ultimately, to a certain extent, this is harming the regional agencies' effectiveness (more on the tradeoffs issue in the next subsection).

On the first iteration of Metrolinx's board, the City of Toronto had compromised by agreeing to get fewer seats and the minority on the board (4 appointees out of 11) for the possibility of nominating its own appointees. Since the board was reformed in 2009, local government appointees have no seat on the board at all, which is now comprised of unelected, provincial appointees. There is no forum of discussion for regional elected officials, just like in the 2001-2006 period between the abolition of the GTSB and the creation of Metrolinx. Technically then, the creation of Metrolinx has weakened the role of the City of Toronto by centralizing the regional transportation planning and decision-making at the provincial level. In addition, there is an argument to be made that the first iteration of Metrolinx Board, which allocated seats based on population (more or less), was also weakening the central city by

putting all the regional municipalities at the same level. In theory, this would lead to resources being distributed equally among parties, which would go against the sustainability principle that requires allocating resources in the denser parts of the region. In practice, respondents' perception and actual investments are mostly supporting that theory.

Some respondents pointed out that the overall provincial strategy and the unstated objective of Metrolinx are to intensify development in the 905 to achieve a critical mass and to create a better balance between the role of public transit in Toronto and the rest of the GTHA. Although this broader strategy is laudable from a sustainability standpoint, the creation of Metrolinx, the amalgamation of the regional transit system and the city system and the centralization of decision-making at the provincial level have created more tension between provincial, regional and local interests. Whereas the outlying municipalities of the GTHA (in the 905) would say that Metrolinx gives more political weight to the central city because the most expensive transit projects of Metrolinx's first wave of projects are being built inside of the City of Toronto, some respondents share a sense that the new agency dilutes the power of the city of Toronto's influence in a number of critical ways. In fact, while respondents acknowledge that the political clout of Toronto will remain, they also note that giving a regional agency the mandate of looking at transportation from a regional perspective means that the 905 will now have a bigger share of transit funding compared to their ridership (current and potential), as exemplified by the funding higher order transit initiatives outside of the City of Toronto, notably the Viva BRT in York Region, the Zoom BRT in Brampton, and the LRT between Mississauga and Brampton. In addition, because of the growth in the 905, Toronto's population share will decline in relative terms, and that will potentially translate into the political dynamic. In this regard, one respondent mentioned that this will depend on who is in

power at the provincial level (a conservative versus a liberal). Whereas some respondents perceive this increase in regional awareness as a positive thing, others see it as a threat to democracy, because it means that people in Toronto will lose a share of their control over their transit system and transit planning. Pragmatically, this respondent exemplified this situation as such:

I really don't think somebody in North Bay should be voting about Toronto's transit, which is what happens. "I am going to cancel all of the projects that we started [cf. Toronto's Transit City Plan] and build subways" - what it actually means is that : "I am going to cancel all the projects and do nothing" - because there's no money for subways. Why should somebody in North Bay have the right to say over that? Maybe a tiny little bit of stake, because some of their money is in it, but really the majority of say should be here [in Toronto], so in a sense this is undemocratic. But certainly yes is the answer to that, and it's about provincial control not regional control in the way it's been done. (Interview 9)

Given the limited amount of resources for transit projects, the creation of Metrolinx and the centralization of decision-making at the provincial level involve some tradeoffs in terms of how projects are prioritized and how funds are allocated between Toronto and the 905.

In addition to democracy and local accountability issues, the Toronto structure and 905/TTC divide raises some questions in terms of efficiency as well, notably because of the transit projects the Province has decided to fund are questionable in terms of their relative capacity to attract new riders, and because the investments in the 905 provide a lesser financial return than transit projects built in the City of Toronto. Although the deployment of the Province's overall strategy might improve regional sustainability, there is little indication that it will reach its objectives, given the fact that the actual transit investments and land use decisions are made by the Province and the municipalities based on political considerations, and disregarding Metrolinx's evidence-based recommendations.

In Chicago, the City appoints 5 out the 15 CMAP Board members. As for the State, it effectively controls the MPO Policy Committee. Before the creation of CMAP, the State controlled CATS, while NIPC was governed by a board of 32 commissioners, 23 of which were local elected appointees. In addition to CMAP Board, local mayors also cooperate under the auspices of the Metropolitan Mayors Caucus, as well as under the Council of Mayors and other sub-regional Councils of Governments. County board presidents are also collaborating on specific regional issues under the initiative of Cook County Board President Preckwinkle. In theory then, the creation of CMAP has not fundamentally changed the regional power dynamics (remember that local mayors were adamant of protecting the status quo when designing CMAP's board). The State still controls the MPO, and the local mayors still control their share of transportation funds that are most often allocated by old formulas. Also, the creation of CMAP has not changed the 45-55 distribution of state funds between the Chicago region and the rest of Illinois, an allocation that is biased towards the rural parts of the state (remember that the Chicago region represents 70% of the population and 80% of the state's GDP). Overall, CMAP has not changed the status quo within the region, among municipalities, nor it has changed the status quo within the state, between regions and between the Chicago region and the State. In theory then, from a sustainability point of view, nothing seems to have changed the power dynamics and its impact on the distribution of resources. In practice also, the evidence shows that, despite some improvements in CMAP sub-committees, funding allocation still supports sprawling development and uncoordinated planning.

The respondents' perceptions corroborate the assumption that CMAP has not fundamentally changed the balance of power between the State, the regional agency and local governments because as explained previously, there was a very conscious effort at the time of

CMAP's creation to design the agency in a way that balances the city's and the suburbs' interests. The City of Chicago (5 seats) is still the "300-pound gorilla" on CMAP Board, and together with Cook County (5 seats), Chicago and Cook form one block (2/3 of the seats) against the Collar Counties (the remaining 1/3). However, 10/15 of the votes is not enough to control the board, because of the 12/15 super majority requirement. Consequently, CMAP has gotten the suburbs and the city working closer together, and making Chicago recognize that all the money, the influence, and the decision-making cannot be just in Chicago – it has to be shared with the region (Interviews G & O).

Nonetheless, at the same time that CMAP gave a voice and some recognition to the growing parts of the region in the Collar Counties, the politics of CMAP (the Chicago/Cook County coalition) often times skews planning decisions (not to mistake with funding decisions) towards a more urbanized form of development (Interviews L & O). Generally speaking, the respondents noted that CMAP board structure and voting requirements do imply that divisive issues are generally left off the table. In fact, CMAP staff tries to get a broad level of agreement and puts forward proposals that everyone can accept (Interview H). Proposals must be tolerable enough for everyone: "This region has always worked pretty much on consensus and building consensus – you cannot have big winners and big losers that over time we have internal strike inside the region" (Interview N). Consequently, "there is a lot of log rolling back and forth – the whole Illiana thing being the perfect example" (Interview O). From a broader perspective, CMAP has not fundamentally changed the funding allocation mechanisms, which are more often allocated by population. The funding allocation processes and their impacts were underlined by the Regional Tax Policy Task Force:

The Task Force examined the disbursement criteria for the state motor fuel tax. Some Task Force members stated that the system did not always account for actual infrastructure needs. For example, disbursing funds to municipalities based on population does not account for transportation needs due to commercial or industrial activity. Task Force members were also concerned with whether the current system promotes coordination and planning, and the interconnectedness of the region's transportation network. One separate process overseen by the Council of Mayors and CMAP to allocate federal surface transportation funds was brought up as a positive example of current regional coordination; however state MFT funds are not allocated via this process. The degree to which the MFT supports smaller township road districts was also discussed. The Task Force agreed that local governments should consider shared services and consolidation, which may enhance coordination and planning for the region's transportation needs. (Regional Tax Policy Task Force, 2012: 10)

Although there is some improvement in terms of the way CMAQ funds are distributed, the creation of CMAP did not fundamentally changed the allocation mechanisms for other state and federal funds. In addition, CMAP board structure and voting mechanisms prevents the regional inequity issues raised by the Task Force to be effectively addressed.

In Chicago also, one respondent mentioned that the political weight of the central city compared to the suburbs is a broader question than what happens at CMAP and depends on how the legislature is mapped, who the governor is, and his position. The same respondent noted that ironically, it seems like the city actually does better under Republican Governors than Democratic Governors because the latter are worried more about getting support from the outer suburbs and downstate, whereas Republican Governors have been more neutral (Interview H). In the same vein, other respondents highlighted that notwithstanding CMAP's design, the City of Chicago's engagement into the regional planning process was contingent upon leadership at the city level. Whereas Mayor Richard M. Daley (Mayor of Chicago from 1989 to 2011) was really engaged in regional cooperation (who created the Metropolitan Mayors Caucus) Mayor Rahm Emanuel, elected in 2011, takes the MMC less seriously and has been more city centric (Interviews C & D). Another respondent mentioned that because

Chicago does not fully control CMAP, and because CMAP does not have enough power and relevance, the City is not inclined to compromise and be fully engaged (Interview F).

Overall, the regional institutional designs brought up by the Toronto and Chicago reforms have not entirely achieved their common goal of effectively addressing the regional sustainability/smart growth challenge, which requires that transportation investments and urban development be concentrated in certain parts of the region and restricted in others. The politics of regional planning, exemplified in Toronto with the implementation challenge of the *Growth Plan* and the investment choices made by the Province, and in Chicago with the representational structure of CMAP, the divisive issues it avoids, and the investment choices made by the State, call for new political strategies that would: 1) compensate losers who would not be designated as urban development centers and targeted by transportation investments; 2) incentivize local governments to make smart development choices; and 3) make better transportation investment choices.

What are the tradeoffs between accountability (responsibility & public scrutiny through transparency), democracy (representativeness, public debate and deliberation), and effectiveness (local and regional changes) that different types of institutional structures involve?

What can we conclude from the Toronto-Chicago reforms comparison in terms of “accountability”, “democracy”, and “efficiency/effectiveness”? First of all, the principle of “accountability”, particularly in its “responsibility” dimension, and the principle of “democracy”, in its “representativeness” dimension, are both guarded by the representative structure of the regional agency. In both Toronto and Chicago, the presence of local elected

officials and local appointees on Metrolinx's and CMAP's board ensured that the local interests were represented at the regional level. In addition, the local representatives acted as the champions of the regional plans, the *Big Move* and *GO to 2040*. In fact, the "political hijacking" of Metrolinx's planning and transportation decisions in Ontario were attributed to the replacement of elected local appointees with non-elected provincial appointees on the agency's board of directors. In Chicago, CMAP Board stood up for the regional vision expressed in *GO to 2040* when its members recommended against including the Illiana Expressway into the fiscally constrained list of capital projects. **Certain dimensions of the principles of accountability and democracy are thus safeguarded when local elected officials are represented on the agency's board of directors.**

Secondly, there is some between dimensions of democracy (representativeness, public debate, deliberation) and efficiency/effectiveness. In Toronto, the political flip-flopping, the disrespect of regional consensus and democratic principles, and the lack of transparency (a dimension of accountability) were associated with transportation investment decisions not representing the best value for money in terms of ridership potential. In Chicago, the representativeness quality of CMAP's board can be associated with less effectiveness, in the sense that the agency has to "please" everyone and not "displease" everyone, as to achieve consensus and the buy-in of the Collar Counties in the regional planning process. Conversely, it is the undemocratic nature of the MPO Policy Committee that has led to the inclusion of the Illiana Expressway into *GO to 2040 update*. If CMAP Board had been the MPO, the project would not have been included to the fiscally constrained list of projects. In addition, although some respondents pointed out that transportation engineers dislike the public scrutiny and the consultation that comes with the regional planning processes, and that time-consuming

planning activities are not efficient, other respondents pointed out that consultation and outreach is an intrinsic part of the planning role of a regional agency, and that it also helps educating the public, elected officials, and achieving local buy-in for developing and implementing projects that communities want. **In both Toronto and Chicago, the disrespect of democratic principles are associated with transportation investment choices that were not the most desirable from a sustainability standpoint.**

Finally, the regional agencies' ability to implement the policies and the projects identified in their regional plan was limited by their lack of independent revenue sources, which ties the principle of "effectiveness" with "resources". In fact, both Metrolinx and CMAP respondents identified possible independent revenue sources that would enable the agencies to effectively carry out their mandate without always needing provincial or state approval. However, the Province and the State reluctance to give the agencies more independence has historically been at the heart of regional planning politics. Table 23 presents a summary of the tradeoffs in terms of accountability, democracy, and effectiveness of each regional institutional design, their link with the mandate, the resources, and the representation structure of the agency, and their impact on the planning and decision-making processes.

Table 25: Tradeoffs in terms of accountability, democracy, and effectiveness

Region/Principle	Accountability	Democracy	Effectiveness
Toronto	Metrolinx accountable to the Province. No local accountability. Transparency challenge. <i>Impact:</i> Metrolinx advice easily dismissed by the Province.	No local representation. <i>Impact:</i> Public debates and regional consensus ignored by the Province. Not the best use of transit funds.	Metrolinx’s mandate has a transportation management component. Land use strategy is regulatory. <i>Impact:</i> Reinvestment in infrastructures, but not the best projects are selected. No indication that sprawl will slow down.
Chicago	CMAP Board members accountable to their local constituents & MPO Policy Committee accountable to the Province. Increased transparency. <i>Impact:</i> Informed debates. Status quo on many issues. Lowest common denominator & State control of investment priorities.	Highly democratic Board structure. Extensive public consultation and outreach. <i>Impact:</i> Status quo on many issues. Lowest common denominator. More education at the local/community and regional levels.	CMAP’s mandate is to integrate transportation and land use planning. Funding allocation mechanisms and land use decision-making has not changed. Transit agencies prioritize themselves. <i>Impact:</i> Reinvestment in infrastructures. Better planning at the regional and local levels. Regional inequities remain.

Other Factors

The evidence presented in this study shows the extent to which institutional reforms can change the patterns of regional development. Although new regional organizations can improve the planning processes, they can only go as far as their mandate, resources, and

representational structure allow them to. In the case of Toronto and Chicago, transportation investments and land use decisions are still controlled by the Province/State and the local governments respectively, which limit the regional agencies' capacity to implement the regional plans. Aside and beyond the effects of the regional institutional design, both regions' land use patterns and transportation systems are also impacted by other factors that were pointed out by the respondents. Although they were not the focus of the study, these antecedent or intervening variables, which came before the reform or "in between" the reform and the final outcomes, respectively, are also playing a very important part on the regional scene.

The category of factors that were present long before the reforms were adopted (and continue to influence planning decisions) includes the pre-existing historical and geographical conditions, the built environment/land use patterns, and the state of good repair of transportation infrastructures. In Toronto, the most important pre-existing factors are: 1) the history of amalgamation that has led to a small number of municipalities in the region; 2) the Toronto/905 divide that has led to the failure of the GTSB; 3) the provincial fear of a too-powerful Toronto city-region; and 4) the under-funding of the TTC that induced a poor state of good repair. In Chicago, some of the most important antecedent conditions include: 1) the historical Democratic/Republican divide between Chicago and the Collar Counties; 2) the sheer number of municipal governments; 3) the upstate/downstate divide in Illinois; 4) the under-funding of the CTA that has led to a poor state of good repair; and 5) the federal involvement in urban affairs that has allowed CMAP to launch its local technical assistance program.

As for the factors that came to effect shortly before or after the reform, they consist mainly of current demographical, financial and electoral trends, which themselves are related

to global economic factors and State or national policies and politics. In Toronto, the two most important intervening factors are: 1) the current and anticipated growth rates (high); and 2) the changes of leadership at the mayoral level (David Miller, Rob Ford, John Tory). In Chicago, they include: 1) the current and anticipated growth rates (low); 2) the change at the mayoral level (Richard M. Daley, Rahm Emanuel); and 3) the financial crisis at the State level.

Although the purpose of this study does not allow me to assess the individual role that each of these antecedent and intervening factors is playing, they collectively are part of the larger narrative of each region and will continue to influence different dimensions of regional sustainability and the actors' preferences and strategies.

Pros and Cons of Each Institutional Design

Based on the evidence presented in previous sections, the following paragraphs discuss the constraints and opportunities featured by each institutional design for every dimension of the regional planning agency, i.e. the mandate, the resources, and the representation structure. The pros and cons of each institutional design are summarized in Table 24.

Mandate

Overall, Metrolinx's mandate advantage over CMAP resides in the management and construction of transportation infrastructure and its operating divisions. In addition, Metrolinx has the mandate of implementing a transit fare integration of the TTC, GO Transit, and the other 8 suburban transit operators fare systems, which CMAP (and the RTA) does not have. However, Metrolinx has the same problem with the TTC than the RTA has with the CTA, Metra and Pace, in the sense that transit authorities are fully autonomous and are not required nor incentivize to coordinate their fares and operations.

On the flipside, CMAP's advantage over Metrolinx resides in its scope and the fact that it combines both land use and transportation planning, in addition to other regional equity issues, including local quality of life, employment, food access, and tax policy. CMAP's inherent role is to foster research, local negotiation and collaboration on critical issues for which there are still no consensus⁴⁵. As a result, Metrolinx has increased dialogue, planning activities and education on a number of important regional issues, which encourage incremental changes at the local level. However, both Metrolinx and CMAP are limited by the advisory nature of their mandate and their lack of autonomous revenue sources.

Resources

In both Toronto and Chicago, the regional planning agency's capacity to carry out its mandate is constrained by the resources it controls or has access to. Metrolinx's advantage over CMAP resides in its operation divisions and the fact that it is responsible to manage the Province's investments in transportation infrastructure. However, despite the development of two investment strategies (one by Metrolinx itself and the other by the Province's Transit Advisory Panel), Metrolinx has still no independent revenue source that would allow the construction of the transit projects identified in the *Big Move*. In addition, the agency's limited institutional memory might impede its effectiveness when carrying out construction projects.

By contrast, CMAP's advantage in terms of resources partly resides in its experienced staff, which is considered as a real asset when doing research, developing local planning

⁴⁵ The prime example of this is CMAP's *Tax Policy Task Force Report*, which tracks the discussion about the different positions of CMAP Board and Task Force members and the different point of views surrounding the distribution of the regional tax base. See CMAP Board member's comments on the *Drafts of the Task Force Report* at <http://www.cmap.illinois.gov/about/involvement/committees/other-groups/regional-tax-policy-task-force>.

activities and mediating the different positions in CMAP committees. In addition, CMAP has access to various federal planning grants, notably the Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Grants that is behind CMAP's LTA program. However, just like Metrolinx, CMAP has no autonomous revenue source that would allow the agency to implement the transportation projects identified in *GO to 2040*, or to at least act as a financial partner, which would help as a catalyst for funding transit projects. Similarly, it has no autonomous revenue source to carry out planning activities that are outside of the transportation realm, which makes the agency particularly dependent upon the State's willingness to cooperate.

Representation structure

The crafting of regional planning agencies' representation structure attempted to reach a delicate balance between local and provincial/state actors and interests. In both Toronto and Chicago, each combination of group structure, board composition, appointment, and voting rules presents some advantages and disadvantages, showing how difficult it is to reconcile every actor's interests and achieve a balance of powers that promotes smart growth.

As discussed earlier, the fact that Metrolinx Board is solely accountable to the Province has allowed the Province to massively re-invest in transit infrastructures. However, the exclusion of local elected officials from the board and their replacement with provincial appointees is detrimental to the regional planning process because: 1) Metrolinx has lost its local representation and accountability, which impedes its effectiveness in implementing policy initiatives at the local level; and 2) the planning process has been hijacked by the provincial political process, which has contributed to discredit Metrolinx and the regional transportation planning process as a whole. Metrolinx's very own investment strategy recommended re-introducing local representatives on its board of directors.

As for CMAP’s representation structure, its bicameral group structure has resulted in one board being controlled by local representatives (CMAP Board), and the other controlled by the State (MPO Policy Committee). Whereas CMAP Board members have generally been successful in promoting sustainable regional policies while remaining accountable to their constituents, the board’s super-majority voting requirements has favored the adoption of the lowest-common-denominator type of policies, while impeding the adoption of more contentious initiatives, such as the regional tax policy reform. As for the MPO Policy Committee, responsible for allocating federal transportation funds, its composition and appointment rules have resulted in the Illiana Expressway being forced into *GO to 2040*’s constrained list of transportation projects, which illustrates CMAP’s deficiency in improving the decision-making function with regards to transportation investments. A summary of the pros and cons of each design is presented in Table 26.

Table 26: Pros and cons of each regional institution

Region/ Dimension	Mandate		Resources		Representational structure	
	Pros	Cons	Pros	Cons	Pros	Cons
Toronto	Transit operations & project management	Only transit planning – excludes land use planning	Operation divisions	No institutional memory, no autonomous revenue source	Provincial accountability	Lack of local accountability & representation
Chicago	Transportation & land use planning, plus other regional issues	Excludes transit operations	Experienced staff, LTA program	No autonomous revenue source	Local representation and accountability	Bicameral board structure, consensus requirement leading to status quo

Theoretical Implications

Review of Analytical Framework

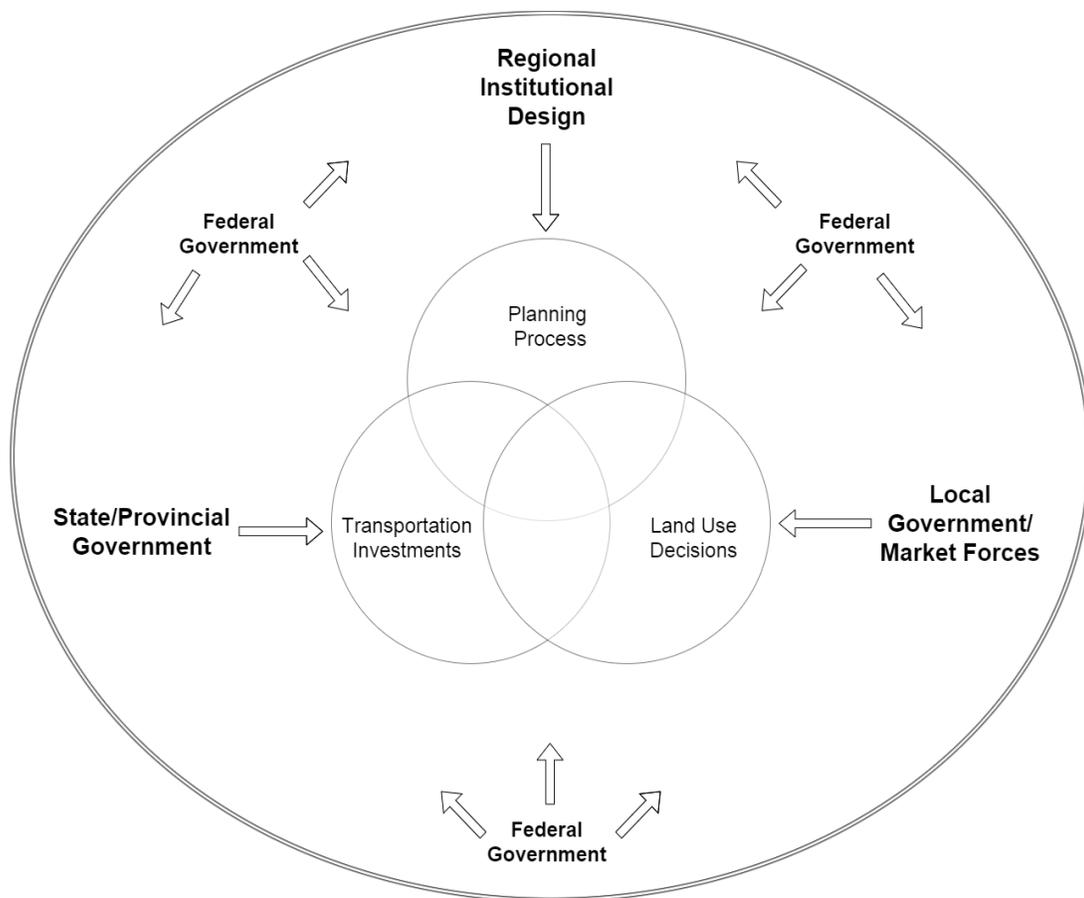
Overall, in light of the empirical results, the current regional planning and decision-making realm looks perhaps more like the diagram presented in Figure 34, which shows the political environment of sustainable regional planning in a federal system such as Canada and the United States. This diagram illustrates the following relationships between institutions and planning outcomes:

- 1) The federal government can impact all three dimensions of planning and all three levels of government analyzed in this study by using its spending power;
- 2) The regional planning agency has the biggest impact on the regional planning process, but it has only a marginal impact on transportation investments and land use decisions because of its limited resources and mandate;
- 3) The Province/the State has the biggest impact on transportation investment decisions, and consequently impacts the regional planning process. The province or the state government also influences local land use decisions by using its spending and legislative powers ; and
- 4) The local governments, under markets forces, have more of an impact on the local land use decisions. They also partake in (and sometimes control) the regional planning process, as well as transportation investment decisions under their responsibility.

At this point in time, this new diagram refines the analytical framework used in this study by illustrating the relationship between institutions and planning outcomes. Particularly, it shows the respective control of each institution on certain dimensions of regional sustainability, and better reflects the fact that institution competes/collaborate with other

institutions on regional planning and decision-making. The heart of the Venn diagram (the intersections between planning process, transportation investments and land use decisions) is left blank because it will be the subject of another, more typological type of study. This diagram is also macro-scale, as it does not present each dimension of the regional institutional design and the sub-dimensions of each planning outcomes.

Figure 34: Macro-scale political environment of regional planning in a federal system



Despite the dominant role of other orders of government on the regional planning environment, the evidence presented in this study shows how the regional institutional design does play a fundamental part of planning in a federal system, and how its different dimensions

determine the overall accountability, efficiency, and democratic character of the regional planning system. A rightfully crafted regional planning institution, combined with new implementation strategies addressing the issues related to the “losers of smart growth”, the fiscalization of land use, and the sub-optimization of transportation funding decisions from a ridership standpoint, might respond to some of the challenges related to sustainable regional planning.

Contributions to the Literature

This study contributes in many ways to the various fields and sub-fields of literature presented in the review. Selected contributions and commentaries are presented and classified under their respective sub-section, with a particular emphasis on regional governance and the politics of regional planning.

Sustainability Advocacy

The study of Toronto’s *Growth Plan* and *Greenbelt Plan* adds to the scholarship on smart growth policies and growth management strategies (Barbour & Deakin, 2012; Ingram *et al.*, 2009; Deal *et al.*, 2009) by offering a warning against the unintended consequences of the conformity process and by identifying the challenges faced by the provincial government when enforcing plan requirements. In addition, the Toronto case sheds light on the fact that Ontario municipalities’ revenue structure does not allow them to bear the costs associated with the infrastructures required to accommodate the anticipated growth. Combined with the observation of the fiscalization of land use phenomena in the Chicago region, caused by the reliance of municipalities on sales tax revenues, this study points to municipal taxation structure as an important deterrent to sustainable land use decisions, and warns Canadian

provinces that might be tempted to give municipalities a share of the sales tax revenues generated in their jurisdiction.

In addition, by highlighting the benefits of a renewed commitment to local and regional planning processes and by identifying some issues related to the decision-making processes at the local and provincial/state levels, the evidence presented in this study supports Neuman's argument that sustainability of the *processes* of city building should be at the forefront of the planning agenda (Neuman, 2005). In the same vein, the value of local comprehensive planning activities funded by CMAP's local technical assistance program should not be overlooked because local plans hold the potential to incrementally change the local landscape as they are being implemented.

Integrating Transportation & Land Use Planning

The adoption of a growth management strategy in Toronto and the creation of CMAP and the development of *GO to 2040* in Chicago illustrate the paradigm shift in transportation planning that Todd Litman observed (Litman, 2013). Although both cases present innovative *policy* options, they also show the inadequacy of traditional institutional structures in responding to the integrated "sustainability"/smart growth planning agenda. We might be witnessing a closing gap between planning theory and policy, but the empirical evidence presented in this study shows how institutional structures and new political strategies could *eventually* become the bridge linking planning theory, policy and practice (Kennedy, 2005; Berke & Conroy, 2000).

More specifically, the Toronto case points to specific implementation hurdles that need to be overcome to truly see a change in regional development patterns. Also, the relationships between Metrolinx and the Province (in Toronto) and CMAP and the State (in Chicago)

highlight the critical importance of connecting accountability with the revenue source. In addition, regional reforms need to take into account the important interests that are pursued by the Province/the State when funding transit projects.

In addition, the Chicago case supports previous research efforts that highlight the limited role of MPOs, the critical role of transportation funding and land use authority, and how the distribution of resources and power can facilitate or impede coordination (Margerum *et al.*, 2011; Weir, 2011). Considering the fact that at the time of the creation of CMAP the bicameral board structure and the structure of representation within the two boards were the only way to see the merger of CATS and NIPC happen, new policy solutions and avenues of reform (other than institutional structures) should be identified to improve local decisions, transportation investments and regional governance.

Regional Governance & Politics of Regional Planning

By focusing on the impacts of two new institutional designs on integrated regional planning, this research contributes directly to the scholarship on urban governance and supports the assertion that regional institutional design is a critical factor in the sustainable planning of urban regions (Pierre and Peters, 2012; Innes *et al.*, 2011). The unpacking of the institutional design into three dimensions (mandate, resources, and representational structures) also provides insights on important design characteristics (Ansell & Gash, 2007), and shows some constraints and opportunities in terms of accountability, democracy and efficiency associated with certain dimension of institutional designs (Erkkila, 2007; Kennedy *et al.*, 2005; Mallet, 2010). In the same vein, this study highlights the dynamics of planning politics and the consequences of the regional institutional design on transportation funding allocation and regional land use planning (Lewis & Sprague, 1997; Adams, 2014; Kennedy *et al.*, 2005;

Johnston, 2004; Margerum *et al.*, 2011; Haughwout & Inman, 2009; Mallet, 2010; Barbour & Deakin, 2012).

While the example of CMAP provides empirical evidence for supporting collaborative decision-making at the regional level (Ansell & Gash, 2007; Innes *et al.*, 2011), it also confirms the limits of collaborative governance and a voluntarist decision-making process. It highlights the necessity of including vertical power and state-level mandates to achieve regional transportation and land use planning goals (Weir *et al.*, 2009; Alexander, 2011; Weir, 2000; Barbour & Deakin, 2012; Koontz, 2006). However, on the other hand, the hurdles of the *Growth Plan* implementation in Toronto highlights the limits of traditional, hierarchical strategies (Moran, 2010), which directly points to new policy solutions that target the preferences and strategies of local governments. In this sense, this study calls for a focus on implementation and the local actors, which are at the heart of policy implementation research (and the source of actor-centered institutionalism):

Implementation research called attention to the fact of widespread policy failure, and proved that such failure was the consequence not only of cognitive mistakes in planning or of shortcomings on the part of implementation agencies, but of having neglected the recalcitrance of the target groups of public policy and their ability to resist or subvert the achievement of policy goals. (Mayntz, 2003: 29)

Both regions provide different implementation lessons, although both have local government interests at their center. The Chicago case displays the advantages of an implementation program like the local technical assistance program and the role that incremental changes a governance structure can foster, while unveiling the issues related to the municipal revenue structure and the fiscalization of land use it engenders. As for the Toronto case, implementation issues can serve as a warning against the unintended consequences of a growth management strategy, and also shed light on the municipalities' dependence on development.

As for the parallels that can be drawn between this study and the scholarship on how institutional design impacts environmental performance in the field of comparative politics, a couple of observations are worth mentioning here. Remember that previous research has shown that institutional design at the national level influences the policy formulation, selection, and implementation processes, all of which determine policy outcomes. Institutional design impacts performance depending on how it assigns costs and benefits among stakeholders and manages veto players (Walti, 2004; Crepaz, 2002; Lipjart, 1984). This study of Toronto and Chicago essentially shows how the same dynamics can be observed at the regional level among local stakeholders.

More specifically, it is worth recalling the study comparing environmental performance of 21 OECD countries on a variety of environmental issues, which found that centralization best improves air pollution performance, whereas decentralization improves performance on biodiversity metrics (Ozymy & Rey, 2013). The Ozymy & Rey study found that air emissions were best managed through centralization because national governments can manage costs and spillover effects, while containing regulatory competition, whereas biodiversity conservation benefited from federalism and decentralization because the costs and benefits of conservation are contained locally or regionally, national spillover effects and regulatory competition are reduced, and politicians are encouraged to deliver district-specific goods. Parallels can be drawn between air emissions and supra-regional land use planning, on the one hand, and biodiversity and transportation planning, on the other. Similar to air emissions, regional land use planning is best managed through centralization because provincial/state governments can manage costs and spillover effects while containing regulatory competition between supra-regions, just like each region can best manage the implementation of the growth strategies at

the local level (like in Ontario). As for transportation planning, it would be best managed at the regional level because the costs and benefits of transportation are contained locally or regionally, and regional spillover effects and regulatory competition are reduced, similar to biodiversity. However, the extent to which these parallels are accurate should be the topic of another research inquiry.

Institutionalism as an Analytical Approach

Generally speaking, this study confirms the relevance and benefits of using institutionalism as an analytical framework because it allows us to systematically analyze the game of actors and interests and their respective impact on decision outcomes, and unveil the complex causal chains linking powers, resources, actors, interests, processes and outcomes. Also, the evidence from the Toronto and Chicago cases supports the assumption that policy outcomes are shaped and structured by the specific actors and their position in the decision-making process, and shows the extent to which the regional institutional design does influence planning outcomes (Hall, 1986; Steinmo, 2001; Ostrom, 2005). It also shows how political battles are fought inside institutions, and also over the design of current and future institutions (Steinmo, 2001). In fact, the regional institutional design is perhaps the missing link between urban governance and sustainable planning theory, policy, and practice. As explained in the previous section on the contribution to the literature on urban governance and the politics of regional planning, whose authors most often adopt an institutionalist framework, the study results call for an even greater focus on the actors and their interests, with the Province/the State and the municipalities each following their own logic and calling for different policy strategies. In that sense, future comparative studies of regional governance could benefit from a type of institutional analysis that is perhaps even more centered on the actors.

Study limits

Collectively, the research design, methods and analytical framework developed for this study have proven to be highly valuable because they allowed me to answer the research questions while being flexible enough to meet data availability challenges and remaining open to realities on the field, notably by making the identification of some antecedent and intervening factors possible. Furthermore, the use of QDA Miner and the aggregated coding results, in conjunction with my content analysis of interviews and other studies, adds a level of internal validity to the study by showing how both analyses come to the same conclusions. In terms of external validity, the fact that opposite reforms gave essentially the same lessons in terms of policy and governance makes the general observations possibly transferable to other American and Canadian municipalities, and perhaps even to other metropolitan regions under federal regimes.

With that being said, this research is not flawless. Apart from the measurement issue and the other factors intervening in the decision-making processes surrounding regional planning, transportation investments and land use developments, which were identified in a previous sub-sections, this research had perhaps too many research questions and too many variables for a single research project. In addition, although the project is aimed to be structured and focused, the complex urban dynamics and political environment make it difficult not to be scattered in thought, which might sometimes translate in the text. This is particularly visible in the literature review and in the contributions to the literature, which are addressing multiple field or sub-fields of study. But again, complexity is the proper of regional dynamics, and contributing to a variety of sub-fields can be seen as a strength rather than a weakness. Finally, this research project in and of itself is the reflection of my own bias, which puts heavier

emphasis on structural variables and their impact on the environment. As explained in the epilogue, it is the evolution of this same bias that will perhaps lead me to evaluate transportation investment projects based on the type of commuters they serve.

General Conclusion & Epilogue

General Conclusion

Although governments have implemented several structural and procedural reforms to better integrate or coordinate regional transportation and land use decisions, little is known about the effects of new institutional structures and planning mechanisms on development outcomes. Using semi-structured interviews, planning documents, as well as transportation spending and land use decisions, this longitudinal, comparative case study assesses the effects of the regulatory framework implemented in Toronto with the creation of Metrolinx in 2006, a case of centralization of the regional transportation and land use planning processes at the provincial level, to the collaborative, consensus governance framework adopted in Chicago with the creation of Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) in 2005, a case of integration of the transportation and land use planning functions at the regional level. More specifically it aims at answering the following questions:

- *How do new institutional structures aimed at integrating regional transportation and land use planning impact the planning process, transportation investments and land use decisions?*
- *Does the representational structure of these new institutions matter?*
- *Does the change in institutional design impact the relative political weight of the central city compared to the suburbs and higher orders of government?*

Does the new institution reinforce or weaken the role of the central city in the planning decision-making process? If so, what are the implications of this change in the power dynamics for regional sustainability?; and

- *What are the tradeoffs between accountability (responsibility & public scrutiny through transparency), democracy (representativeness, public debate and deliberation), and effectiveness (local and regional changes) that different types of institutional structures involve?*

Despite their differences, both institutional reforms improved the regional planning process by establishing a renewed commitment to the exercise of regional planning. However, they only had a limited impact on transportation investments because the decision-making function in terms of allocating transportation funds is still controlled by the province of Ontario and the state of Illinois, who follow their own political and economic interests. Both cases also show how difficult it is to increase densities and curb urban sprawl. In fact, both reforms have yet to strongly impact land use decisions because local land uses, zoning and local development approvals are the prerogative of local governments and a function of locational preferences of individuals and corporations, which are largely contingent upon markets dictated by global market forces.

Overall, the regional institutional design as a whole, comprised of the mandate (transportation planning, funding and operations, and land use planning), the resources (human, technical, financial, jurisdictional) and the representational structures (group structure, appointment rules, composition and voting rules) explains largely why both Metrolinx and CMAP have only had a limited impact on transportation investments and land use decisions since their creation. Despite these limitations, the regional institutional design

does matter, as the mandate, the resources and representational structure influence the development of the regional plan and its implementation. Although in both Toronto and Chicago, the state or provincial government still controls transportation investments, the representational structure of the regional agency determines whether or not there is regional/local resistance to the provincial or state initiatives that are going against the regional plan. In fact, certain dimensions of the principles of accountability and democracy are safeguarded when local elected officials are represented on the agency's board of directors. In addition, local representation on regional boards can also make up for the fact that local transit agencies are not directly represented on the boards. The evidence presented in this study also shows how ignoring democratic principles and regional consensus can be associated with transportation investment decisions that are less sustainable.

There are many ways by which regional planning institutions contribute to local and regional sustainability. Although regional institutions can appear rather weak and useless because their control over transportation investments and land use decisions is limited compared to other levels of government and market forces, their impact is real, although sometimes indirect, incremental, and difficult to measure. CMAP, for instance, is improving local planning through its LTA program, and perhaps contributed to the City of Chicago adoption of recent initiatives (BRT, TOD ordinance, TIF revenues for transit, and infrastructure for walking and cycling) by putting regional sustainability issues on the regional and local agendas. CMAP staff is also doing important research, education and planning activities around critical regional issues that go beyond land use and transportation. By brokering the various interests and by pushing the regional sustainability agenda as far as possible through information, negotiation and persuasion, the staff also helps local, county,

and state representatives reach better decisions in terms of regional planning and transportation programming. The Chicago case clearly demonstrates the benefits, but also the limits of the collaborative governance approach to regional planning. In such a situation where the regional planning agency forces consensus and log-rolling, new ways to compensate the municipalities for not being identified as urban growth centers and for not receiving transportation investments should be found if regional planning for smart growth is to be accepted by local representatives. If sustainability planning means that there will be winners and losers, mechanisms need to be built into the planning institutions to acknowledge the reasons that communities may choose less sustainable options and address them.

As for Metrolinx, the fact that it has essentially become instrumentalized by the Province since losing its local ties hinders its potential to become relevant for the region – it essentially became a provincial department of transit planning in Toronto. In addition, the fact the Province manages the construction of the Eglinton Crosstown LRT in a public-private-partnerships through Infrastructure Ontario, with Metrolinx trying to coordinate the construction with the City of Toronto and the TTC (who will operate the train), really complexifies the situation.

As for Ontario's growth management strategy, the implementation challenges raised earlier do not mean that governments should move away from this type of top-down legislation altogether. Aside from the implementation lessons the Toronto experience provide, the *Growth Plan* and the *Greenbelt Plan* developed and improved the administrative and development work carried out in different provincial ministries and divisions in charge of approvals and monitoring of the plans. There is better reporting, tracking and monitoring of local decisions

and regional sustainability indicators, and the province is increasing its expertise and capacity to manage regional development and protect natural resources.

This research project raises a number of issues that request further attention. First, both cases point to municipal revenue structure as a key factor in local government decision-making. In the event that regulatory or structural reforms are not seen as politically feasible regionally or provincially/at the state level, reforming the municipal revenue structure as to remove the incentive of municipalities to increase property or sales tax revenues by allowing greenfield developments should be considered as a policy alternative. In addition, a government whose regional land use reform or policy is overlooking its financial impact for municipalities and other elements of municipal revenue structure is setting itself up for failure. Secondly, recent observations in transit funding decisions in Toronto (UPX, Scarborough Subway) and Chicago (Illiana Expressway), but also in Rio de Janeiro (subway extension in Zona Sul), raise the questions of *Who are we building transit for?* and/or *Who are we giving access to what parts of the city?*, and the impact of representational structures in increasing access to job opportunities, services and open space for transit dependent populations. Lastly, I believe that the question of transit funding should go hand in hand with the reform of regional planning structures, as to give the regional agency the authority and capacity to implement the plans and projects that are agreed upon by the regional actors, or at least the ability to act as financial partner and serve as a leverage in different projects. Given that government agencies are always looking for new and more effective ways of funding transportation infrastructures, research efforts should also focus on transportation funding mechanisms that are more equitable and for which there is a better alignment between accountability and responsibility.

Epilogue

As of October 2015, new elements of information about our cases are worth mentioning here.

Eglinton update: Metrolinx has announced that the Eglinton Crosstown LRT was now set to open in 2021, a year later than expected. Although according to *the Star*, the reasons for the delay are not clear, Metrolinx reports that its contractor in the public-private partnership project, a consortium led by SNC Lavalin, needed more time to address community needs during the construction (Kalinowski, 2015). The contract is being managed by the Ontario's PPP agency, Infrastructure Ontario, who has yet to reveal the cost of the 30-year maintenance agreement with the contractor. Although construction delays are not uncommon for very large infrastructure projects, this new element of information is in line with the observations made in this study about inefficiencies and lack of transparency. This also leads into thinking the mode of project finance, construction, maintenance and operations (PPP or else) might also contribute to its overall accountability and efficiency.

UPX update: In another article published in *the Star* (Keenan, 2015), it is reported that the UPX ridership has dipped since its opening in June, with the train now operating at 1/10 of its capacity. The staggering numbers have the media and TTC riders screaming for access, because with fare at \$22,80 one-way and \$30,40 roundtrip, the UPX is catering to business travelers with an expense account. The authors even provides options by which the project could be re-conceived and integrated into the TTC network, or at least available for TTC riders for a small premium (Keenan, 2015). This UPX update could not be more in line with the argument made in this dissertation.

As for Chicago, the only new "news" that I noticed is the recent increase in the bike commute modal share observed in the new census data. The Active Transportation Alliance notes that while a rapid growth in biking downtown is undeniable, there is still not enough data to generate a good estimate. However, according to the NGO, existing data and observations

backs up the general increase in bicycle use in downtown Chicago (Vance, 2015c). This might be an indication of Mayor Manuel's commitment to bicycle lanes and TOD ordinance showing results.

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APPENDIX A
RECRUITMENT E-MAIL

Dear (Insert Name),

Our research project on regional transportation and land use aims to assess the impacts of new institutions on the planning process, transportation investments and land use change. The study compares the governance framework implemented in Toronto with the creation of Metrolinx in 2006 to the one adopted in Chicago with the creation of the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning in 2005.

We plan to interview about 15 people per city and it would be appreciated if you agreed to an interview with us, in your quality of (Insert title/function). The interview consists of responding to open-ended questions. It should last about one hour and might take place in a location and at a convenient time for you. All interviews are confidential and your comments will not be ascribed specifically to you or your organization.

More details will be provided on the project and the interview process in our “Consent Form” presented at that time (or beforehand if you prefer). This project has been approved by Temple University’s Institutional Review Board (Protocol #22108).

I will personally be in (Chicago or Toronto) to conduct interviews from:
(Insert Dates Here).

We would very much appreciate your participation to our research study. We look forward to hearing from you regarding your availability. Any comment or suggestion from your part would be, of course, most welcomed.

Best regards,

Fanny R. Tremblay-Racicot
M.A., B.A., Political Science (Laval University), Ph.D. Student in Urban Studies
Department of Geography and Urban Studies
Temple University, Philadelphia
Cellphones: (418) 262-8050 (Canada) or (267) 243-6192 (U.S.A.)
E-mail: ffracicot@hotmail.com or tuc71825@temple.edu

APPENDIX B
CONSENT FORM

TITLE OF THE RESEARCH STUDY:

*SUSTAINABILITY PLANNING & INTEGRATING REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION &
LAND USE IN CANADA & THE U.S.: A STUDY OF INSTITUTIONAL REFORMS IN
TORONTO & CHICAGO 2001-2013*

NAME AND DEPARTMENT OF INVESTIGATOR:

CHRISTINA D. ROSAN, DEPARTMENT OF GEOGRAPHY AND URBAN STUDIES

This study involves research. The purpose of the research is to assess the impacts of institutional reforms and representational structures on the decision making process, transportation investments and land use change, as to evaluate the effectiveness of institutional designs in integrating transportation and land use planning at the regional level. A secondary goal is to understand the tradeoffs between accountability (public scrutiny through transparency), democracy (public debate and deliberation), and effectiveness (local and regional changes) that different types of institutional structures involve.

WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT A RESEARCH STUDY:

- Someone will explain this research study to you.
- You volunteer to be in a research study.
- Whether you take part is up to you.
- You can choose not to take part in the research study.
- You can agree to take part now and later change your mind.
- Whatever you decide, it will not be held against you.
- Feel free to ask all the questions you want before and after you decide.
- By signing this consent form, you are not waiving any of the legal rights that you otherwise would have as a participant in a research study.

The estimated duration of your study participation is 45 to 75 minutes.

The study procedures consist of answering a series of open-ended questions. All interviews are confidential and your comments will not be ascribed specifically to you or your organization.

The reasonably foreseeable risks or discomforts are nonexistent.

The benefit you will obtain from the research is knowing that you have contributed to the understanding of this topic. The alternative to participating is not to participate.

Please contact the research team with questions, concerns, or complaints about the research and any research-related injuries by calling Christina Rosan at (215) 204-9327 or e-mailing her at cdrosan@temple.edu.

This research has been reviewed and approved by the Temple University Institutional Review Board. Please contact them at (215) 707-3390 or e-mail them at: irb@temple.edu for any of the following: questions, concerns, or complaints about the research; questions about your rights; to obtain information; or to offer input.

Checkbox for Capable Adult

Checking the box below documents your permission for the interview to be tape recorded.

I give the permission to be audio recorded during the interview.

Yes

No

Confidentiality: Efforts will be made to limit the disclosure of your personal information, including research study records, to people who have a need to review this information. However, the study team cannot promise complete secrecy. For example, although the study team has put in safeguards to protect your information, there is always a potential risk of loss of confidentiality. There are several organizations that may inspect and copy your information to make sure that the study team is following the rules and regulations regarding research and the protection of human subjects. These organizations include the IRB, Temple University, its affiliates and agents, Temple University Health System, Inc., its affiliates and agents, the study sponsor and its agents, and the Office for Human Research Protections.

Signature Block for Capable Adult

Your signature documents your permission to take part in this research.

DO NOT SIGN THIS FORM

→

Signature of subject

Date

Printed name of subject

Signature of person obtaining consent

Date

Printed name of person obtaining
consent

APPENDIX C
INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

**CAN INSTITUTIONAL REFORMS
PROMOTE SUSTAINABLE PLANNING?
INTEGRATING REGIONAL
TRANSPORTATION & LAND USE
IN TORONTO AND CHICAGO (2001-2013)**

Interview Protocol

Fanny R. Tremblay-Racicot, May 2014
Department of Geography and Urban Studies
Temple University

Name of respondent:

Position:

Organization:

Date and Location:

Preliminary Remarks

Metropolitan regions across the U.S. and Canada are facing increasingly complex and growing issues related to transportation and land use: congestion, infrastructure costs, air pollution, greenhouse gas emissions, as well as resource impacts and personal costs resulting from sprawling development. Institutional fragmentation and the diffuse nature of authority, which is spread across jurisdictions and levels of government in federal systems, add to the complex nature of the problems. Although governments have implemented several structural and procedural reforms to better integrate or coordinate regional transportation and land use decisions, little is known about the effects of different institutional structures and planning mechanisms on development outcomes. This study attempts to fill this gap by assessing the effects of institutional reforms on the planning process, transportation investments and land use decisions, and understanding the tradeoffs between accountability, democracy, and effectiveness that different types of institutional structures involve.

We are particularly interested in policies and institutional reforms which aim at integrating transportation and land use planning, with the ultimate goal of improving long-term environmental conditions within your region.

Your metropolitan area has recently undergone an institutional reform, and this explains why we have asked to meet you and other officials from your metropolitan area.

All interviews are confidential and the anonymity of the respondents is guaranteed. We have received clearance from Temple University's Institutional Review Board.

Do you have any questions, at this point?

1. Opening Questions

Before we go any further, let me ask you a few preliminary questions about your work and organization.

- 1.1. First of all, could you tell me how is your agency involved in regional transportation and land use planning?

- 1.2. Can you tell me about your direct interactions or relationships with other planning organizations and levels of governments?

2. General Characteristics of Planning Environment

Before we get into questions of transportation investments and land use decisions, I would like to look at general characteristics of the planning environment in the region.

- 2.1. Can you tell me about the state of transportation infrastructures (quality, quantity, or state of repair) and the built environment and how these factors impact local and regional planning?

- 2.2. Is the city growing demographically? How does it impact planning?

- 2.3. What are the major trends in terms of funding for transportation projects and infrastructure in the region? Has it changed? Has it been growing or declining? Is it a source of conflict or cooperation among public agencies or governments?

3. Planning Process

Now let us turn to the planning process, transportation spending, and land use decisions.

- 3.1. Can you tell me a little bit about the regional planning process? The people involved, their interests, and how regional plans are drafted and implemented at the local level?

- 3.2. Can you tell me the motivations behind the change in the institutional structure?
- 3.3. Did the creation of Metrolinx/CMAP change the planning process at the regional and local levels, from the development of a regional plan to its implementation? (Can you give me examples?)
- 3.4. Did the creation of Metrolinx/CMAP facilitate or impede the planning process? Has it increased planning resources and capacity? (Can you give me examples?)
- 3.5. Do you think the reform improved intergovernmental or interagency cooperation or coordination? Or the relationship between the mayors of the region, or with upper-level governments? (Can you give me examples?)
- 3.6. Would you say that the authority, responsibility (the mandate) and the resources are more aligned now?
- 3.7. Does the change in institutional design impact the relative political weight of the central city compared to the suburbs and higher orders of government? If so, what do you think are the implications of this change in the power dynamics for regional sustainability?

4. Transportation Spending Decisions

- 4.1. How are transportation projects selected? What are the major determinants of a project's selection? (Can you give me examples?)
- 4.2. Do you think the new institutional structure changed the way spending decisions are made? Or the types of projects that are funded (like road vs. transit, expansion vs. maintenance)? (Can you give me examples?)
- 4.3. Would you say that transportation decisions are coherent with land use decisions? Do you think it has anything to do with the creation of CMAP (Chicago) or the adoption of the provincial legislation (Toronto)? (Can you give me examples?)

5. Land Use Decisions

- 5.1. Has there been an increase in density, TODs, mixed-uses, growth centers, etc., since the creation of CMAP (Chicago) or the adoption of the provincial legislation (Toronto)? (Can you give me examples?) Do you think that this is attributable to changes in policy or institutional structure?

- 5.2. Would you say that land use decisions are coherent with transportation decisions? Do you think it has anything to do with the creation of CMAP (Chicago) or the adoption of the provincial legislation (Toronto)? (Can you give me examples?)

6. Accountability and Democracy

- 6.1. How has Metrolinx/CMAP influenced transportation and land use decisions? Has it improved the integration of transportation and land use? (Give examples)

- 6.2. Do you think that the new institution improved or worsened the planning process in terms of accountability, public scrutiny, transparency, and public participation? (Can you give me examples?)

- 6.3. Do you think the new institution involves any tradeoffs between transparency, public participation and deliberation, and efficiency? (Can you give me examples?)

- 6.4. Finally, according to you, what would be the ideal institutional structure for regional planning in your area? What do you think would be politically feasible, or under what circumstances?

Final Elements

Would you like to add some additional comments on the themes we have been looking at in this interview?

Would you have any suggestions on other persons who could add to our information on the subjects we are interested in?

Thank you for your time!

APPENDIX D
IRB CLEARANCE FORM



TEMPLE
UNIVERSITY®

Office for Human Subjects Protections
Institutional Review Board
Medical Intervention Committees A1 & A2
Social and Behavioral Committee B
Unanticipated Problems Committee

Student Faculty Conference Center
3340 N Broad Street - Suite 304
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19140
Phone: (215) 707-3390
Fax: (215) 707-9100
e-mail: irb@temple.edu

Certification of Approval for a Project Involving Human Subjects

Protocol Number: 22180
PI: ROSAN, CHRISTINA
Review Type: EXEMPT
Approved On: 16-Apr-2014
Approved From: 16-Apr-2014
Approved To:
Committee: B BEHAVIORAL AND SOCIAL SCIENCES
School/College: LIBERAL ARTS (1800)
Department: CLA:GEOGRAPHY AND URBAN STUDIES (18180)
Sponsor: No External Sponsor
Project Title: Sustainability Planning & Integrating Regional Transportation & Land Use
in Canada & the U.S.: A Study of Institutional Reforms in Toronto &
Chicago 2001-2013

The IRB approved the protocol 22180.

If the study was approved under expedited or full board review, the approval period can be found above. Otherwise, the study was deemed exempt and does not have an IRB approval period.

Before an approval period ends, you must submit the Continuing Review form via the eRA module. Please note that though an item is submitted in eRA, it is not received in the IRB office until the principal investigator approves it. Consequently, please submit the Continuing Review form via the eRA module at least 60 days, and preferably 90 days, before the study's expiration date.

Note that all applicable Institutional approvals must also be secured before study implementation. These approvals include, but are not limited to, Medical Radiation Committee ("MRC"); Radiation Safety Committee ("RSC"); Institutional Biosafety Committee ("IBC"); and Temple University Survey Coordinating Committee ("TUSCC"). Please visit these Committees' websites for further information.

Finally, in conducting this research, you are obligated to submit modification requests for all changes to any study; reportable new information using the Reportable New Information form; and renewal and closure forms. For the complete list of investigator responsibilities, please see the Policies and Procedures, the Investigator Manual, and other requirements found on the Temple University IRB website: <http://www.temple.edu/research/regaffairs/irb/index.html>

Please contact the IRB at (215) 707-3390 if you have any questions

APPENDIX E CODING REPORT AND AGGREGATED RESULTS FROM INTERVIEWS

This progress report includes a description of the coding process (coding report), and aggregated results from interviews. It also provides a compilation of highlights, and a comparison of the aggregated results along with some questions that helped guiding the comparison and discussion chapter.

Coding Report

Coding took place over the course of four weeks. I ran the initial list of codes on two of my longest, most thorough interviews and slightly modified it to better reflect the content of the interviews. I then ran the final list of codes (see textbox) on all the transcripts. Note that the “sub-sub-categories” were eliminated because the program does not allow for it, and that the code “gems” was also removed from the list because the program allows you to select and store quotes directly into the “report manager”. I also added specific “case studies” along the way, as well as the code “list of projects” to include other transportation or land use projects that I might want to use as evidence or sub-case studies later on in the process. Most codes were used concurrently with one other code or more, as some interview segments about a specific event, for instance, could be assigned to multiple codes. A new transit-oriented development in Chicago, for example, can be referred to as “cooperation/land use integrated with transportation/municipal (city)/region/private/market/LTA program/evidence”. I did not encounter any major difficulty in the coding process. In fact, when I realized it took less time than expected, I thought about systematically coding my other data sources (i.e. various documents and research reports). However, because the interviews are my most important source of information, I decided to keep my focus on them by writing this report first.

List of Codes

Geography

- National
- Regional
- Sub-regional (county)
- Municipality
- Neighborhood
- Block
- Corridor
- City vs. Suburbs
- Other

Demography

- Growth
- Decline
- Even

Time

- History
- Before the reform (Chicago)
- After the reform (Chicago)
- Before the reform (Toronto)
- After the reform (Toronto)
- Future

Evolution of conditions

- Improved
- Worsened
- Same

Decision-making

- Methodology (indicators)
- Prioritization (criteria)
- Politics (influence)

Relationship

- Conflict
- Cooperation
- Coordination
- "Working relationship"
- Mediation
- Autonomy/independence
- Dependence
- Parochialism
- Lobbying
- Control

Institutions & Actors

- Federal
- State/Provincial
- Regional
- Sub-regional (county)
- Municipal (center city)
- Municipal (suburbs)
- Operators
- NGO
- Private interests/Market forces
- Municipalities (all)

Institutional Design

- Mandate
- Resources
- Representational structures

Interests

- Money
- Power
- Political agenda
- Values

Integration - Land Use &

Transportation

- Transportation integrated with land use
- Land use integrated with transportation
- Transportation NOT integrated with land use
- Land use NOT integrated with transportation

Accountability,

Democracy, Efficiency

- Accountability
- Democracy
- Efficiency

Policy Instruments

- Carrots (incentives)
- Sticks (regulation)
- Subsidies
- Funding tools (gas tax, TIFF)

Within Case (Stories)

- Illiana Expressway
- RTA reform/Metra controversy
- Transit-served location ordinance
- LTA program
- OMB
- Scarborough Subway
- Greenbelt
- Growth plan
- Yonge St. Relief line
- Sheppard subway
- Spadina extension
- Air rail link
- Services board

Other codes and themes

- Role of structure
- Role of leadership
- The "purpose" of planning
- Conflict of interest
- Policy recommendations
- Evidence (examples)
- Unspoken
- Numbers/Descriptive
- List of projects
- Challenge
- Limited
- Climate change

Aggregated Results from Interviews

After finishing the coding process I took a few days to get familiar with the analytical tools offered by the software QDA Miner. I found that the most useful features for a comparative study with two cases were comparing the coding frequency for individual codes, but most importantly, comparing the frequency of the co-occurrence of codes that can be displayed in a number of ways. I also compared the case similarity to illustrate how close were my respondent's discourse from one another. The frequencies of individual codes are displayed in basic frequency tables, whereas the co-occurrences of codes are displayed in two-dimensional cluster graphs. The frequency tables and the cluster analyses are based on the code frequencies and code occurrences (other options were number of words and percent of words). The option "code frequencies" is based on the number of times a code occurs in an interview, which is more suitable for a content analysis (as opposed to a discourse analysis). The option "code occurrence" is based on the number of interviews a code was assigned to. The "number of words" and "percent of words" are also not useful in this study because each respondent has a specific perspective stemming from his or her level of government or organization, thus spending more time talking about their field of expertise.

From the frequency tables and cluster analyses I can retrieve the interview segments by selecting the codes that were used together and access a table with the corresponding selection of paragraphs. The aggregated results' explanation will be based on those selected interview segments. Note that I am using the cluster analyses for visual representation only. I do not refer to the various statistical features offered by the program because I am interested in understanding and explaining the impacts of the institutional reforms and the complex interactions of among stakeholders on regional planning. Furthermore, we have to keep in mind that the design of this study (a longitudinal, comparative case-study based on a qualitative analysis of 30 interviews) is not framed for any meaningful statistical inference. This study is also not a discourse analysis *per se* that is observing the change of lexicon over time. The

qualitative mission of the research is the reason why I am only using the visual representations of aggregated results as a support to and a guide for the content analysis.

Analyses of Individual Codes & Co-Occurrence of Codes:

Frequency Tables & Cluster Graphs

This section presents the aggregated results in a series of frequency tables and cluster graphs associated with different codes and combination of codes by region, along with a brief description of the tables and graphs. The aggregated results are summarized in the “highlights” at the end of the section. The analyses are grouped into the categories below. Note that a greater emphasis is put on the main objects of research, i.e. the integration of transportation and land use, and the institutional design. Conversely, not all the codes are the object of a frequency or co-occurrence analysis, but will rather be used later on in the research process when building each region’s narrative, for example.

- **Case similarity (Cluster graphs)**
- **Actors & Relationships**
 - Actors (Frequency table & cluster graphs)
 - Relationships (Frequency table)
 - Actors and Relationships (Cluster graphs)
- **Integration of Transportation & Land Use**
 - Integration of transportation and land use (Frequency table)
 - Evolution of conditions (Frequency table)
 - Transportation & land use: Evolution of conditions over time (Cluster graphs)
 - Transportation & land use: Evolution of conditions (Cluster graphs)
 - Transportation & land use: Evidence (Cluster graphs)
- **Institutional Design**
 - Institutional design (Frequency table)
 - Institutional design : Conflict and cooperation (Frequency table)
 - Institutional design: Conflict and cooperation (Cluster graphs)
 - Institutional Design versus Accountability, Democracy & Efficiency (Frequency table)
 - Institutional Design versus Accountability, Democracy & Efficiency (Cluster graphs)

- Institutional Design & Decision-Making (Frequency table)
- Institutional Design & Decision-Making (Cluster graphs)
- **Interests, Policy Instruments & Other Codes**
 - Interests (Frequency table)
 - Policy instruments (Frequency table)
 - Other codes (Frequency table)

The frequency tables compare the coding frequency of each variable, or the number of times each code was assigned to a segment or a paragraph in each city (count), as well as the number of interviews the codes were assigned to (cases). The cluster graphs are based on the co-occurrence of codes in each city, or the number of times each selected code is assigned concurrently with another code within the same segment of interview. It is useful to visualize the relationship between codes or variables. The distance between the points is an approximation of all the distance between all data points. Since the distance is actually a measure that is inversely proportional to their co-occurrence, it means that the more often they appear together, the closer they will tend to be on the graphs. But these graphs cannot totally represent accurately the real distance. This is the reason why lines are displayed. The lines do represent more accurately the strength of the relationship. The thicker the line, the more often they appear together. It should also be related to the distance. Short distances should normally be associated with thicker lines, but this is not always true. Note that most of the cluster graphs have a coefficient of determination (R^2) above 0.85, which is reasonable in terms of validity for our purpose here.

CASE SIMILARITY

Case Similarity - Cluster Graphs

These cluster graphs show how similar are the Toronto and Chicago interviews respectively, based on all code frequencies. It is interesting to see how similar or homogeneous the content of the interviews was.

there is also a consistent story in Chicago, but that there are a few respondents with a more narrow perspective or a divergent storyline.

ACTORS & RELATIONSHIPS

Actors - Frequency Table

The following table compares the number of time each actor was the subject of a segment (count), and the number of interviews it was mentioned in (cases). Although this code is meaningful only in association with others code, such as “relationship”, “decision-making”, “interests”, and the like, it is interesting to observe which actors are mentioned more frequently, which ones seem to be less prominent, and which ones are mentioned more frequently together, as shown in the cluster graphs.

Coding Frequencies : Actors				
	Toronto		Chicago	
	Count	Cases	Count	Cases
Federal	14	9	20	12
State/Provincial	59	15	39	13
Region	34	11	49	14
Sub-regional	20	4	19	7
Municipal (total)	58	-	62	-
Municipal center city	(18)	6	(29)	9
Municipal suburb	(11)	6	(10)	7
Municipalities (all)	(29)	11	(23)	9
Operators	27	9	28	9
Private/Market	14	8	9	7
NGO	0	0	9	4
Total	226	-	235	-

Description Toronto

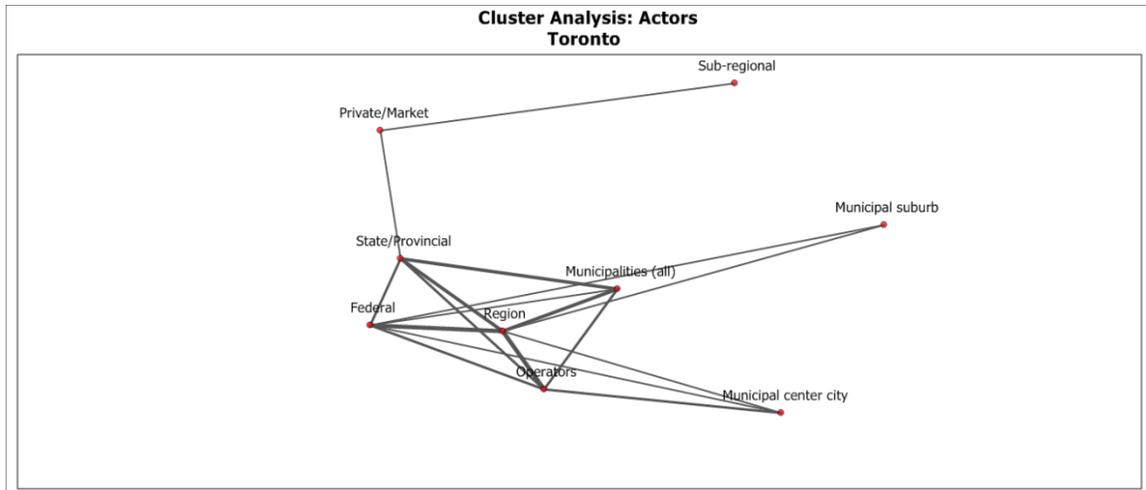
In Toronto, the provincial and municipal levels dominate largely, with 59 and 58 mentions respectively, followed by the regional level with 34 mentions. Within the municipal category, respondents were referring more frequently to the municipalities in general. The NGO sector is off the radar, with no mention at all. Note that the federal level was only mentioned in 14 instances.

Description Chicago

In Chicago, the municipal level dominates, with 62 mentions, followed by the regional and then state levels, with 49 and 39 mentions respectively. Within the municipal category, respondents were referring more frequently to the center city. The NGO and the private sectors were the least prominent actors, as each one of them was attributed to a segment 9 times.

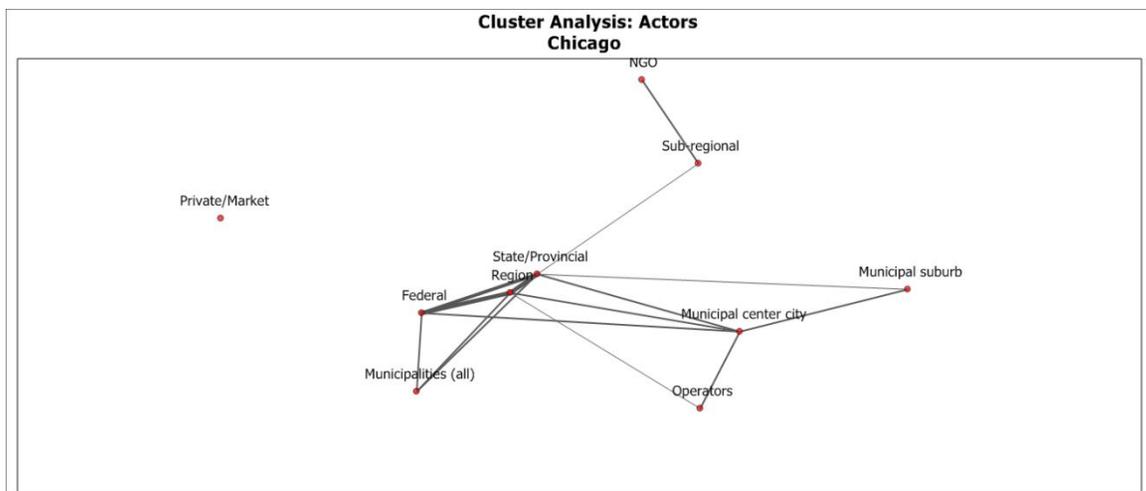
Actors - Cluster Graph

The cluster graphs below illustrate the relationship between actors in each region. They are based on the co-occurrence of actors and represent the amount of times each actor appeared in the same segment of interview as another one. Note that these graphs do not qualify the relationship among actors, but rather illustrate how frequently they are “involved” simultaneously in the same interview segment.



Description Toronto

In Toronto, there is a cluster comprised of the operators, the municipalities, the province and the federal level, with the region at its center. Not surprisingly, the actor closest to the regional actor (Metrolinx) is the “operator(s)”, because Metrolinx has an operation division and also a coordination mandate among operators. The provincial level, the actor that was most frequently coded, is closer to the region, to the municipalities, and to the federal government. It is interesting to see that the municipal (center city) is more closely linked to the operators (probably the TTC), and that the municipal suburbs are more closely linked to the regional organization than any other actor.



Description Chicago

In Chicago, besides the state-regional-federal-municipalities quasi-triangle, there does not seem to be a clear cluster of actors. The state and the regional (CMAP) are really close to one another due to the relationship between CMAP and the state of Illinois. The municipal center city is also closest to the operators (CTA).

Relationships - Frequency Table

The following frequency table compares the number of time each type of relationship was assigned to a segment (count), and the number of interviews it was coded in (cases). The relationship could be assigned to a segment about the particular relationship between two actors or more, but also about a specific decision or moment in time.

Coding Frequencies : Relationships				
	Toronto		Chicago	
	Count	Cases	Count	Cases
Conflict	17	9	21	12
Cooperation	12	7	20	10
Coordination	23	9	10	5
"Working relationship"	6	6	12	8
Mediation	4	4	3	2
Autonomy/independence	12	8	1	1
Dependence	1	1	3	3
Parochialism	0	0	8	7
Lobbying	0	0	6	5
Control	25	11	13	8
Total	100	-	97	-

Description Toronto

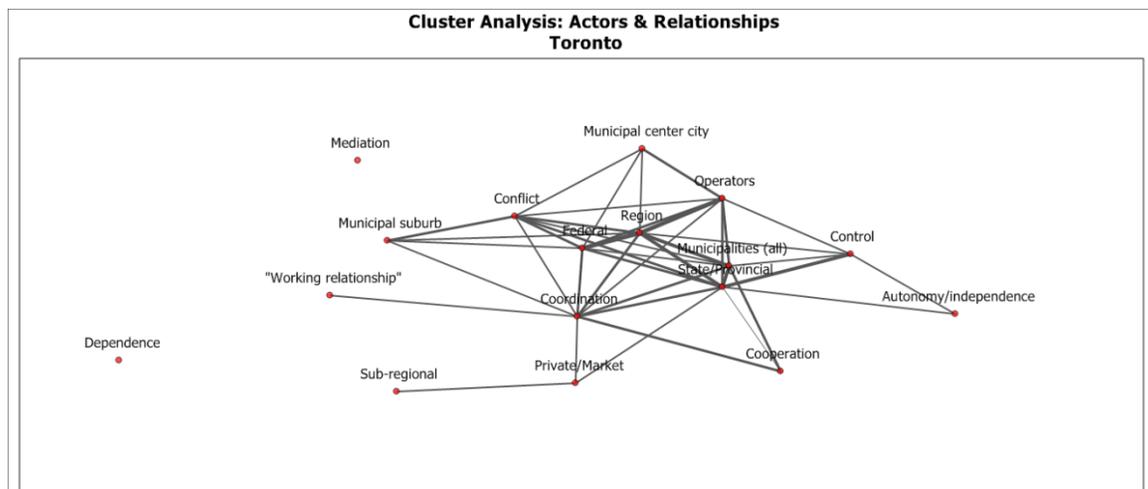
In Toronto, the relationships that were assigned most frequently to interview segments are “control” and “coordination”, which were coded 25 and 23 times respectively, followed by “conflict” with 17 occurrences. Note that “cooperation” and “autonomy/independence” were assigned to a segment 12 times each. The codes “parochialism” and “lobbying” were not assigned at all.

Description Chicago

In Chicago, the most frequent relationship codes are “conflict” and “cooperation”, which were assigned to a segment 21 and 20 times respectively. Note that the codes “control” and “working relationship” were assigned 13 and 12 times respectively. The code “autonomy/independence” was only assigned once.

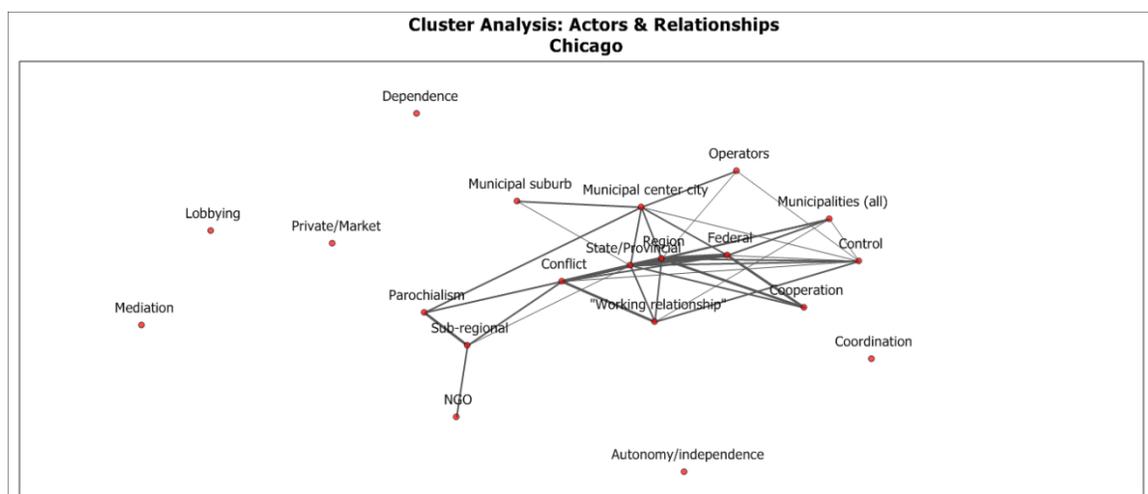
Actors & Relationships - Cluster Graphs

The following cluster graphs illustrate the co-occurrence of different actors and relationships. They show how frequently some actors and some type of relationship appear simultaneously in an interview segment.



Description Toronto

Because this cluster graph illustrates an important number of connections, I am going to focus on the relationships that were most frequently mentioned, i.e. “control” and “coordination”. The code “control” is closest to the code “municipal” and tightly connected to the province. It is also close to “operators” and connected to the region. As for the code “coordination”, it is linked to a number of actors: private/market, federal, region, municipal, and the province.



Description Chicago

Here again, I am going to focus on the relationships what were most frequently mentioned, which are “conflict” and “cooperation”. “Conflict” is closest to and strongly associated with the state and the region, and also the sub-regional level. “Cooperation” is closer to the federal, the regional, and then the state level.

INTEGRATION OF TRANSPORTATION & LAND USE

Integration of Transportation & Land Use – Frequency Table

Below is a table showing the coding frequencies of the integration of transportation and land use. Respondents were asked to characterize the integration or the coherence of transportation spending with land use decisions and vice-versa. They were also asked for specific examples. The codes were thus assigned to specific segments regarding the integration of transportation and land use in principle, and to segments about specific transportation projects or land use decisions.

Coding Frequencies : Integration of Transportation & Land Use				
	Toronto		Chicago	
	Count	Cases	Count	Cases
Transportation integrated with land use	23	10	17	10
Land use integrated with transportation	13	9	23	12
Transportation NOT integrated with land use	9	5	10	9
Land use NOT integrated with transportation	10	5	16	11
Total	55	-	66	-

Description Toronto

In Toronto, the code that was most frequently assigned to as segment related to the transportation-land use integration was “transportation integrated with land use”, which was used 23 times. The code “land use integrated with transportation” was used 13 times. The “negative” codes that noted a lack of integration were used 19 times in total, in a third of the interviews.

Description Chicago

In Chicago, “land use integrated with transportation” was coded 23 times, whereas the code “transportation integrated with land use” was coded 17 times. The “negative” codes were used 26 times in total, in two third of the interviews.

Evolution of Conditions – Frequency Table

The following table compares the evolution of conditions. Respondents were asked if the reform improved intergovernmental or interagency coordination or cooperation, whether it improved the integration of transportation and land use planning, and whether the reform improved or worsened the planning process in terms of accountability, public scrutiny, transparency, and public participation. The specific codes could also be assigned to a segment referring to another question.

Coding Frequencies : Evolution of Conditions				
	Toronto		Chicago	
	Count	Cases	Count	Cases
Improved	64	15	76	15
Worsened	5	2	3	3
Same	7	4	13	8
Total	76	-	92	-

Description Toronto

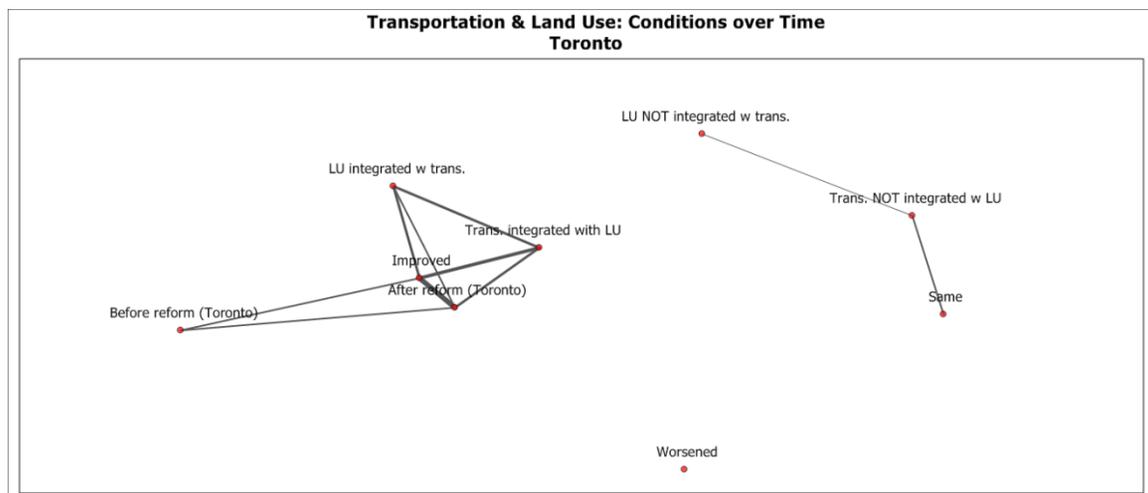
In Toronto, respondents mentioned that the conditions were improving 64 times, whereas they said that they were the same or getting worse only 7 and 5 times, respectively.

Description Chicago

In Chicago, respondents qualified the conditions to be improving 76 times. However, 8 respondents out of 15 mentioned that the conditions were the same since the reform, and 3 respondents mentioned that they were getting worse.

Transportation & Land Use: Evolution of Conditions over Time – Cluster Graphs

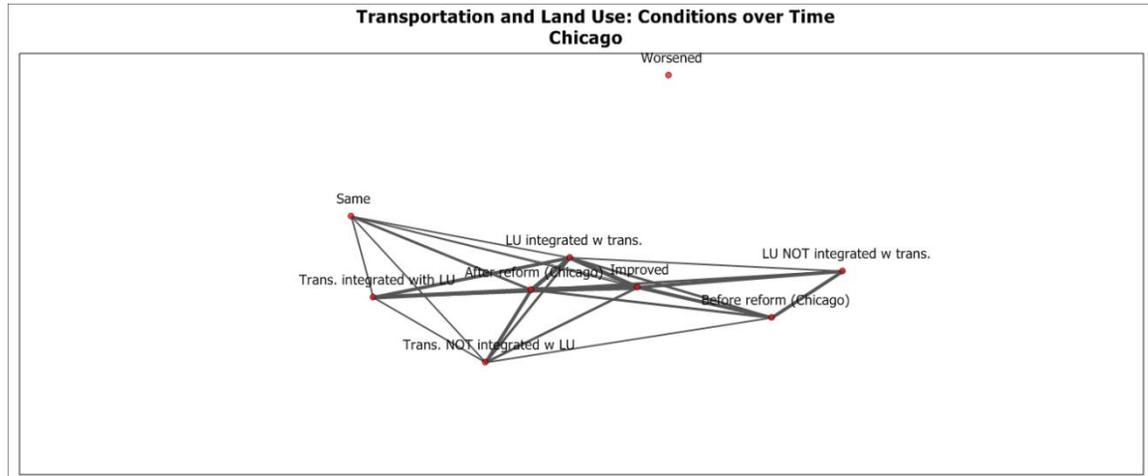
The cluster graphs below illustrate the relationship between three codes: 1) the integration of transportation and land use, as well as the integration of land use and transportation decisions (or lack thereof); 2) the “evolution”, i.e. improved, worsened, or same; and 3) the “time frame”, i.e. before or after the reform. Again, they show the co-occurrence of codes, or when two or three codes appear in the same segment.



Description Toronto

The most important connection here is the cluster “improved, after the reform, transportation integrated with land use, and land use integrated with transportation”. Respondents noted that there was an improvement in the integration of transportation and land use planning (and vice-versa) since the reform. There is also another connection on the right

side of the graph that indicates that some respondents said that the transportation decisions are not associated with land use, and that remained the same since the reform.

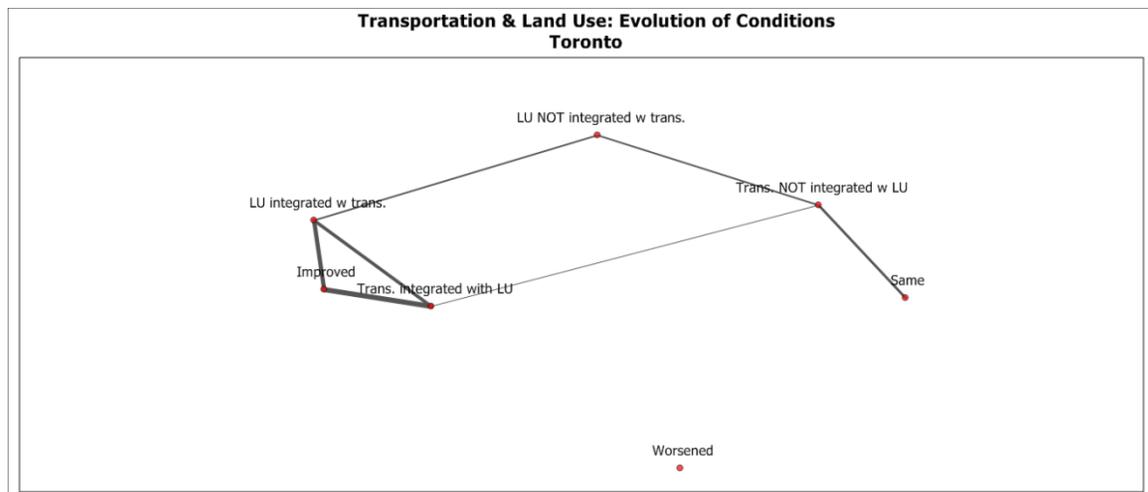


Description Chicago

In Chicago, the co-occurrences are complex. The most important cluster at the center is a triangle comprised of “land use integrated with transportation, improved, and after the reform”. “Transportation integrated with land use” is closest to “same” and “after the reform”. “Transportation not integrated with land use” is closest to “after the reform”; and “land use not integrated with transportation” is closest to “before the reform” and “improved”. From this we can conclude that the respondents observed that land use decisions were not integrated with transportation decisions before the reform, but that situation improved after the reform so that land use decisions are more integrated with transportation decisions now that they were before. As for transportation decisions, it is not clear whether they are more integrated with land use decisions than they were before the reform.

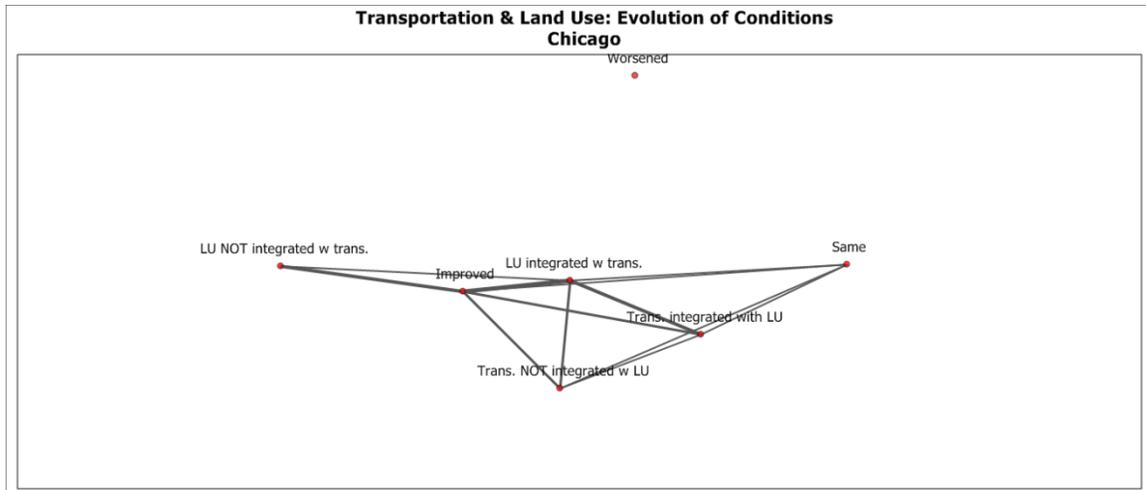
Transportation & Land Use: Evolution of Conditions – Cluster Graphs

The following cluster graph shows the relationship between the integration transportation and land use (and vice-versa), and the evolution of conditions. There is no time frame associated with the evolution in order to simplify the visual representation.



Description Toronto

The major cluster is the triad “transportation integrated with land use, land use integrated with transportation, and improved”. There thus seemed to be an improvement on both fronts. As shown in the previous cluster graph, we can also see that some respondents observed that transportation decisions are not integrated with land use decisions, and that remained the same.

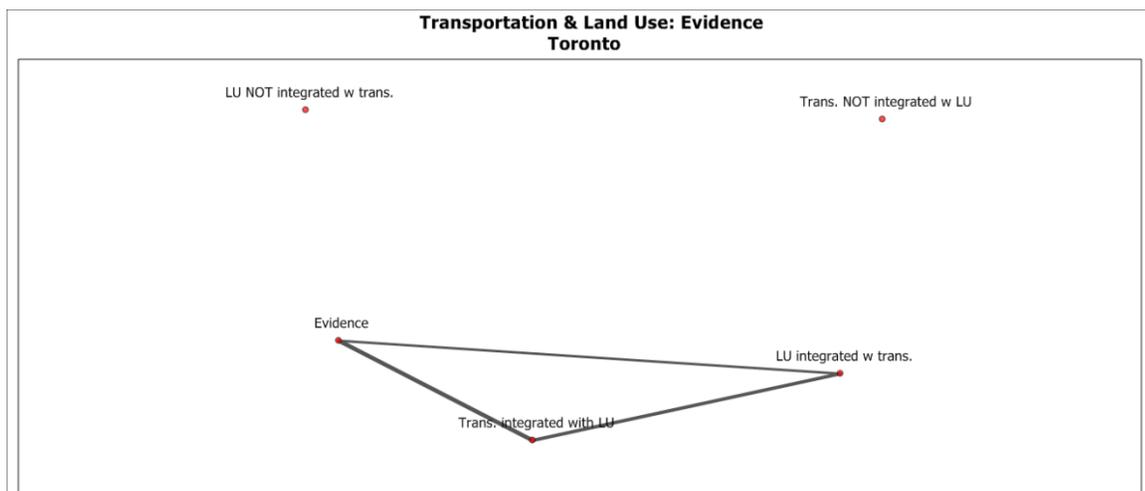


Description Chicago

In this somewhat clearer cluster graph, the relationship that is tighter and closer is the “improved – land use integrated with transportation”. It looks like land use decisions are not integrated with transportation, but that is improving. Similarly, it also seems that transportation decisions were not integrated with land use decisions, but that this situation is improving as well.

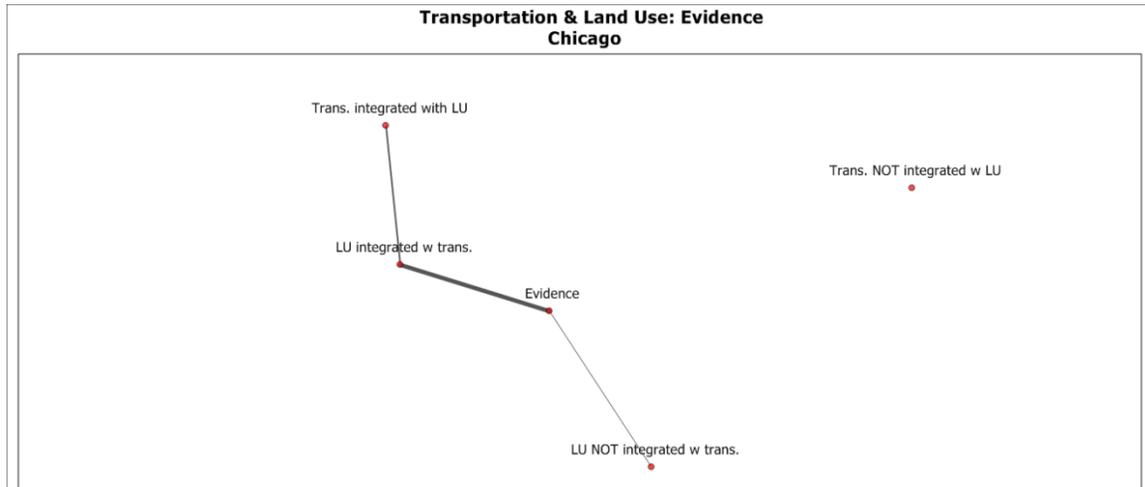
Transportation & Land Use: Evidence – Cluster Graphs

The cluster graphs below illustrate the co-occurrence of the codes related to the integration of transportation and land use and the code “evidence”, which was used when respondents provided evidence or examples supporting their argument.



Description Toronto

In Toronto, there are more evidence of “transportation integrated with land use” and of “land use integrated with transportation”.



Description Chicago

In Chicago, respondents provided more evidence of land use decisions integrated with transportation, and of land use decisions not integrated with transportation. There was little evidence provided for transportation decisions integrated with land use, or for transportation decisions not integrated with land use.

INSTITUTIONAL DESIGN

Institutional Design - Frequency Table

The table on the next page compares the number of times each aspect of “institutional design” was mentioned in the interviews. The specific codes could be assigned to a segment referring directly to the new mandate of the organization, for instance, or to a segment referring indirectly to how a specific decision was made by the new board of directors of the organization, for example.

Coding Frequencies : Institutional Design				
	Toronto		Chicago	
	Count	Cases	Count	Cases
Mandate	17	7	14	6
Resources	13	8	20	10
Representational structures	36	13	32	14
Total	66	-	66	-

Description Toronto

In Toronto, respondents referred to the representational structures of the organization 36 times, whereas they referred to its mandate 17 times and its resources, 13 times.

Description Chicago

In Chicago, respondents discussed the representational structures of the new organization 32 times, the resources, 20 times, and the mandate, 14 times.

Institutional Design: Conflict & Cooperation - Frequency Table

Coding Frequencies : Relationships				
	Toronto		Chicago	
	Count	Cases	Count	Cases
Conflict	17	9	21	12
Cooperation	12	7	20	10
Total	29	-	41	-

Description Toronto

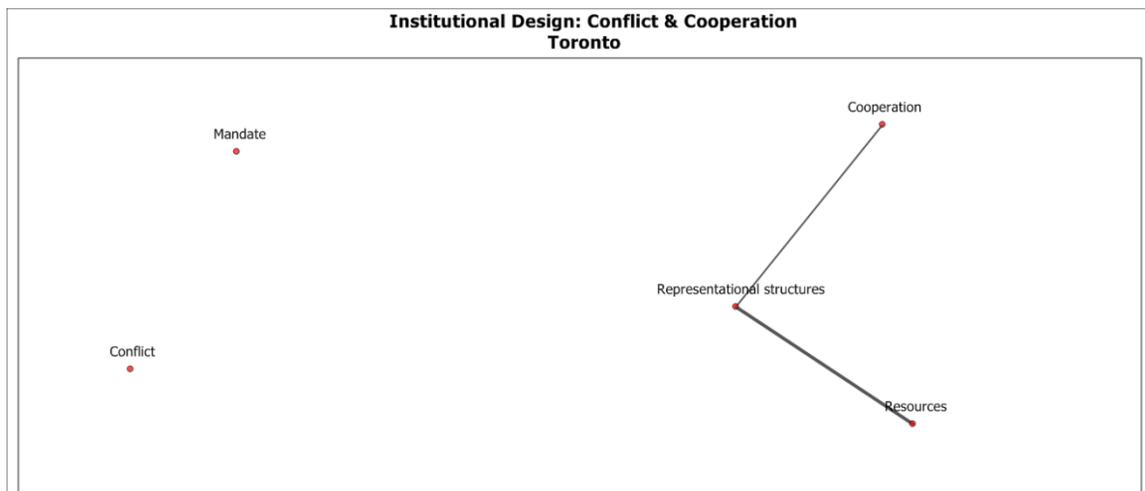
This table focuses on only two opposite relationship (which were presented earlier). In Toronto, “conflict” was the object of an interview segment more frequently than “cooperation”, with 17 mentions compared to 12.

Description Chicago

In Chicago, “conflict” and “cooperation” were mentioned almost as frequently, with 21 and 20 occurrences respectively throughout the interviews.

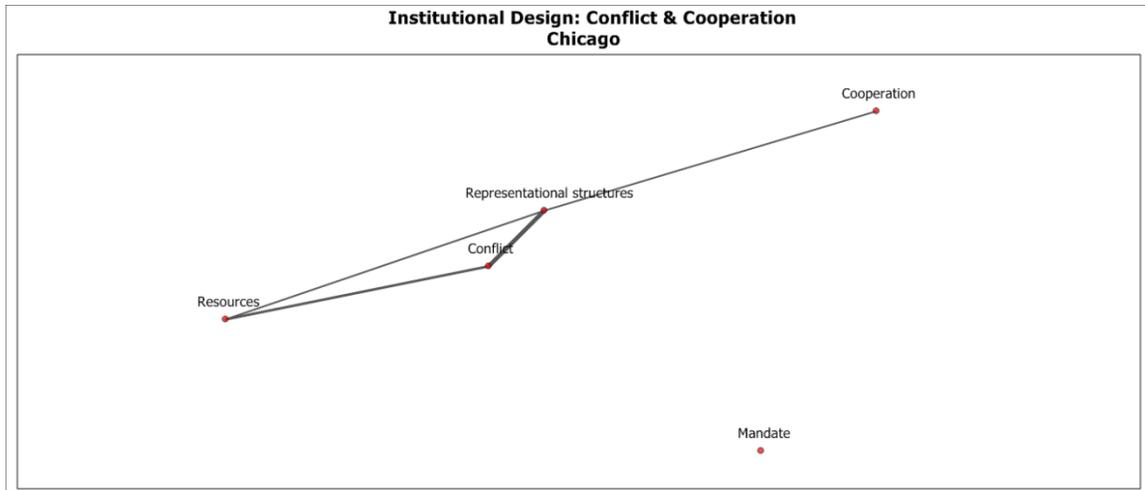
Institutional Design: Conflict & Cooperation – Cluster graphs

The next cluster graphs show the co-occurrence of the codes associated with the institutional design, i.e. the mandate, the resources, and the representational structure, as well as the codes “conflict” and “cooperation”. This co-occurrence analysis illustrates which aspects of the institutional design are more a source of conflict and/or cooperation.



Description Toronto

In Toronto, the strongest co-occurrence is between two aspects of the institutional structure, i.e. the representational structures and the resources. The other important co-occurrence is between “representational structures” and “cooperation”.



Description Chicago

In Chicago, the strongest co-occurrence is between “representational structures” and “conflict. “Resources” are also linked to “conflict” and “representational structures”. “Representational structures” also occur in conjunction with “cooperation” but to a lesser degree.

Institutional Design versus Accountability, Democracy & Efficiency- Frequency Table

The following table compares the frequencies of the codes “accountability”, “democracy” and “efficiency”. Respondents were asked directly if the new organization represented any tradeoffs among those principles, and whether the reform improved or worsened these conditions.

Coding Frequencies : Accountability, Democracy & Efficiency				
	Toronto		Chicago	
	Count	Cases	Count	Cases
Accountability	21	11	11	10
Democracy	12	9	19	13
Efficiency	13	9	10	7
Total	46	-	40	-

Description Toronto

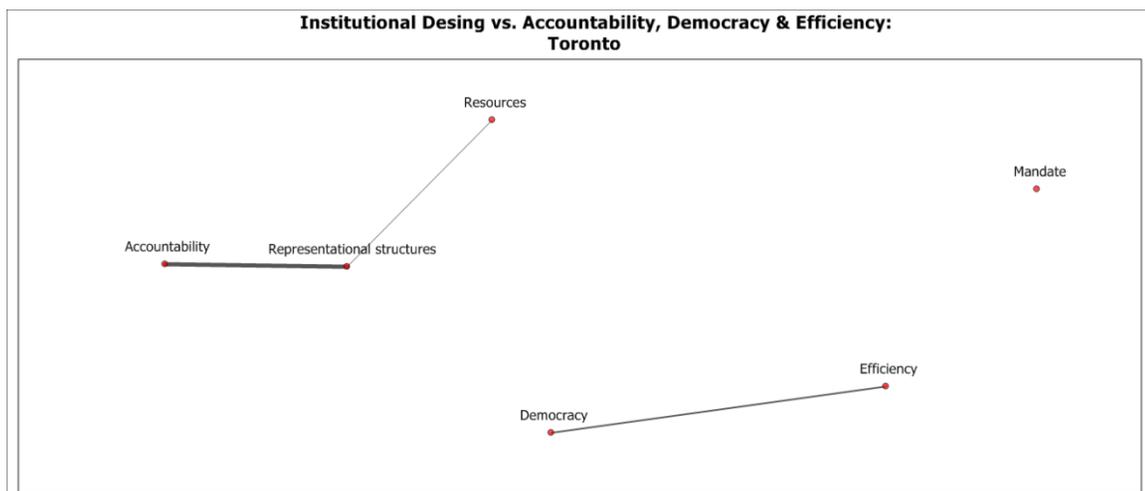
In Toronto, the respondents referred to the “accountability” principle more frequently, with 21 mentions, followed by “efficiency” and “democracy” with 13 and 12 mentions respectively.

Description Chicago

In Chicago, the respondents mentioned the principle of “democracy” more frequently, with 19 occurrences, whereas the “accountability” principle was mentioned 11 times and “efficiency”, 10 times.

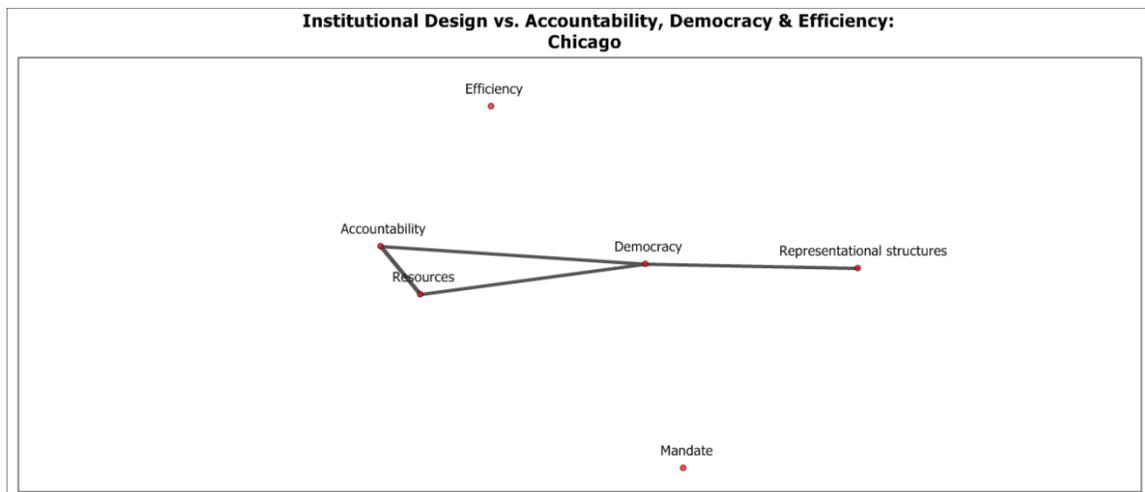
Institutional Design versus Accountability, Democracy & Efficiency - Cluster Graphs

The cluster graph below illustrates the co-occurrence of the codes associated with the institutional design (mandate, resources, and representational structure), as well as the codes “accountability”, “democracy”, and “efficiency”. The respondents were asked directly whether the new institutional structure represented any tradeoffs between accountability, democracy, and efficiency.



Description Toronto

The most important co-occurrence here between the three principles and the three elements of the institutional design is the relationship between the representational structures and accountability. “Democracy” also co-occurs frequently with “efficiency”.



Description

In Chicago, the code “resources” is closely tied to “accountability”, and also to “democracy”. The code “representational structures” also co-occurs frequently with “democracy”, which is also linked to “accountability”.

Institutional Design & Decision-Making - Frequency Table

The table on the next page shows the number of times each of the “decision-making” sub-categories was referred to in the interviews. Respondents were asked about the determinants of a transportation project selection, and whether the reform changed the way decisions were made. The codes could also be assigned to a segment anywhere else in the interviews to characterise a transportation or land use decision, or the way decisions are made in general.

Coding Frequencies : Decision-making				
	Toronto		Chicago	
	Count	Cases	Count	Cases
Methodology (indicators)	5	4	13	8
Prioritization (criteria)	22	12	31	14
Politics (influence)	31	13	11	8
Total	58	-	55	-

Description Toronto

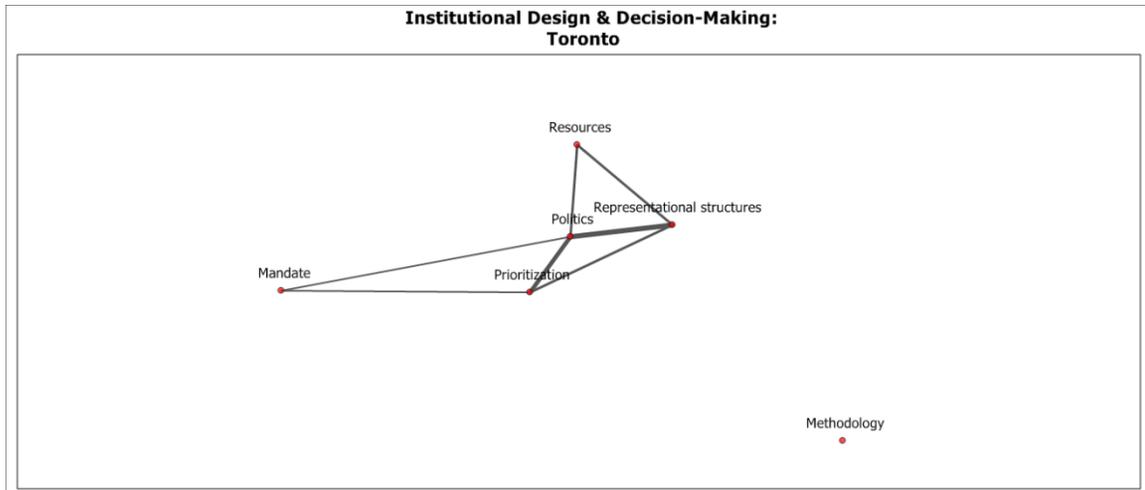
In Toronto, the role of “politics” was a topic of discussion in 31 instances, whereas “prioritization” was mentioned 22 times and “methodology”, only 5 times.

Description Chicago

In Chicago, the “prioritization” of projects was at the topic of discussion 31 times, while “methodology” was mentioned 13 times and “politics”, 11 times.

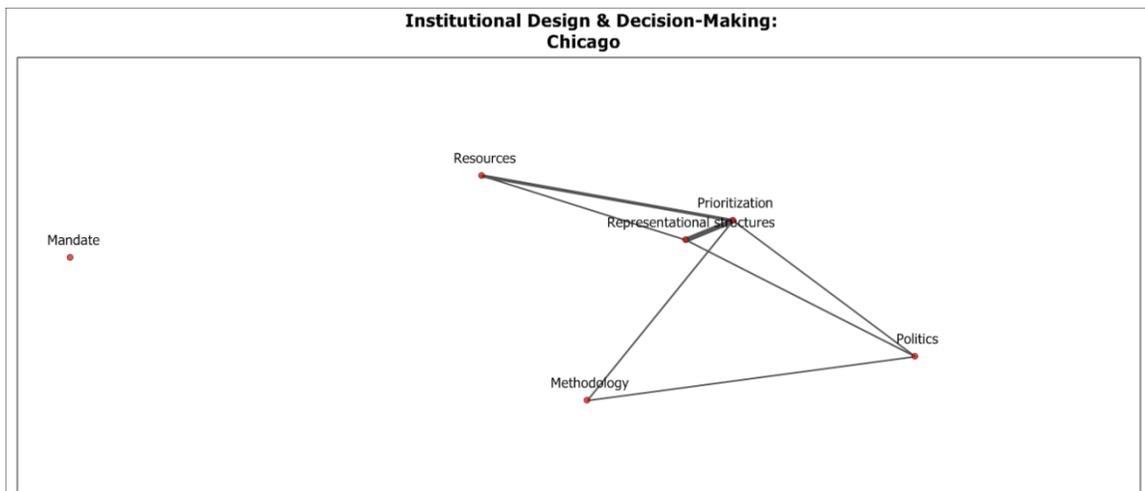
Institutional Design & Decision-Making - Cluster Graphs

The cluster graph below show the co-occurrence of the three aspects of the institutional design and the codes associated with decision-making, i.e. methodology, prioritization and politics. It is interesting to see which element of the institutional design is more often associated in conjunction with which aspect of the decision-making process.



Description Toronto

In Toronto, the code “politics”, which was most frequently at the heart of an interview segment, co-occurs more often with “representational structures” and “resources”, as elements of the institutional design. It is also strongly linked to “prioritization”, another element of the decision-making process. “Prioritization” also co-occurs frequently with “representational structures”. The “mandate” is used most frequently in conjunction with “prioritization” and “politics”.



Description Chicago

In Chicago, the code “prioritization” is closely tied to “representational structures” but also “resources”. The code “politics” is linked to “prioritization”, “representational structures” and also “methodology”.

INTERESTS, POLICY INSTRUMENTS & OTHER CODES

Interests – Frequency Table

The following table compares the coding frequency of different types of interests. Respondents were asked to describe the planning process, the actors involved and their interests, so this code is more meaningful when used in conjunction with other codes. The interests could also be assigned to another segment about the decision-making process leading to an investment or a policy action, for instance. Nonetheless, it is interesting to observe how the interest at play can vary.

Coding Frequencies : Interests				
	Toronto		Chicago	
	Count	Cases	Count	Cases
Money	7	6	20	12
Power	11	5	2	2
Political agenda	7	2	10	5
Values	1	1	2	2
Total	26	-	34	-

Description Toronto

In Toronto, the interest that was mentioned most frequently is “power”, with 11 mentions, followed by “money” and “political agenda” with 7 mentions each. However,

“money” was mentioned in the highest number of interviews, i.e. 6, whereas “power” was mentioned in 5 interviews.

Description Chicago

In Chicago, the interest that was most frequently at the center of an interview segment was “money”, with 20 mentions, followed by “political agenda” with 10 mentions.

Policy Instruments – Frequency Table

The following table is comparing the coding frequency of specific policy instruments. Respondents were not specifically asked about instruments, but some of them were a recurring theme emerging from the interviews when talking about policy recommendations or improvements in the planning process, for example. Sometimes respondents were simply mentioning that some policy instruments were more politically feasible in the region, for instance, or that some instruments were currently the object of internal studies.

Coding Frequencies : Policy Instruments				
	Toronto		Chicago	
	Count	Cases	Count	Cases
Carrots (incentives)	0	0	5	3
Sticks (regulation)	7	6	0	0
Subsidies	7	5	8	5
Funding tools (gas tax, TIFF)	16	10	16	8
Total	30	-	29	-

Description Toronto

In Toronto, the policy instrument that was most frequently mentioned is “funding tools”, with 16 mentions, followed by “sticks” and “subsidies”, with 7 mentions each. The respondents did not mention any “carrots” or incentives.

Description Chicago

In Chicago, the respondents referred to the “funding tools” 16 times, the subsidies 8 times, and the carrots, 5 times. They did not refer to any sticks or regulation.

Other Codes – Frequency Table

The table below shows the coding frequencies of other codes that were not fitting into any category.

Coding Frequencies : Other codes				
	Toronto		Chicago	
	Count	Cases	Count	Cases
Role of structure	5	4	3	2
Role of leadership	13	8	13	6
Purpose of planning	24	13	26	11
Conflict of interest	12	7	12	6
Policy recommendations	33	14	26	14
Unspoken	2	1	5	3
Challenge	60	15	43	12
Limited	21	10	44	13
Total	170	-	172	-

Description Toronto

Out of all the codes in the category “other”, Toronto respondents mentioned the code “challenge” more frequently with 60 mentions. “Policy recommendations”, “purpose of planning”, and “limited” were also mentioned frequently, with 33, 24, and 21 mentions respectively.

Description Chicago

In Chicago, out of all the codes in the category “other”, respondents referred to the codes “limited” and “challenge” most frequently with 44 and 43 mentions. The codes “policy recommendations” and “purpose of planning” were also often assigned to interview segments, as they were assigned 26 times each.

HIGHLIGHTS

Highlights Toronto

Actors & Relationships

In terms of actors and relationships, the province of Ontario and the municipalities hold the center stage, followed by the regional organization, Metrolinx. The most important relationships in Toronto are between: 1) the province and the municipalities; 2) the province and Metrolinx; 3) Metrolinx and the operator(s); and 4) the municipalities and the operator(s). In terms of characterizing those relationships, the ones that were most frequently coded were “control” and “coordination”, followed by “conflict”. The code “control” is closely tied to the province and the municipalities, whereas “coordination” co-occurs with a number of actors: private/market, federal, region, municipal, and the province.

Integration of Transportation & Land Use

In terms of the coherence of transportation and land use decisions, the codes “transportation integrated with land use” and “land use integrated with transportation” dominate, and respondents noted that the integration was improving since the reform.

However, some respondents seemed to have a different story, saying that transportation decisions were not integrated with land use decisions, and that this situation remained the same since the reform. In terms of evidence, the code was more frequently associated with positive instances of transportation-land use integration, and vice-versa.

Institutional Design

In Toronto, questions related to the institutional design applied more specifically to Metrolinx. Elements of the institutional design include “mandate”, “resources” and “representational structures”. “Representational structures” occupy the center stage here, followed by “mandate” and “resources”. For some reason that remains to be found, there is a strong co-occurrence of the codes “representational structures” and “resources”. It also seems that the representational structures are associated with cooperation, rather than conflict. In terms of the institutional design and the tradeoffs between the principles of accountability, democracy, and efficiency, the most important co-occurrence is with the representational structures and accountability. There is also a strong co-occurrence of the principles of democracy and efficiency. I also looked at the co-occurrence of elements of the institutional design and elements of decision-making, i.e. “methodology”, “prioritization” and “politics”. The representational structure is closely tied to politics and prioritization. The code “resources” is also closely tied to politics. The strongest relationship remains between politics and prioritization, two elements of the decision-making process themselves.

Interests, Policy Instruments & Other codes

I added the code “interests” because I was curious about knowing the forces at play in the decision-making process and what are the actors fighting for. The interests are “money”, “power”, “political agenda”, and “values”. In Toronto, the interests that are mentioned most frequently are “power”, followed by “money” and “political agenda”. In the same vein, the theme “policy instruments” (comprised of “carrots”, “sticks”, “subsidies” and “funding tools”) was added to get a sense of the policy environment and the types of public interventions that

were discussed. The policy instrument that is most frequently coded is “funding tools”, followed by “sticks” and “subsidies”. The respondents did not mention any “carrots” or incentives. Finally, out of all the codes in the category “other”, “challenge” was assigned more frequently to a segment, followed by “policy recommendations”, “purpose of planning”, and “limited”.

Highlights Chicago

Actors & Relationships

In Chicago, the municipalities dominate the interviews, followed by the regional organization, CMAP. The “closest” relationship is between the state of Illinois and CMAP, and the municipalities and CMAP. There is also an important “federal-state-regional” triad. The center city is also closest to the CTA. In terms of characterization of those relationships, the most frequently coded are “conflict” and “cooperation”. “Conflict” is closest to and strongly associated with the state and the region (CMAP), and also the sub-regional (county) level. “Cooperation” is closer to the federal, the regional, and then the state level.

Integration of Transportation & Land Use

“Land use integrated with transportation” was coded more frequently, followed by “transportation integrated with land use”. However, in terms of evolution, respondents observed that land use decisions were not integrated with transportation decisions before the reform, but that situation has improved after the reform. Similarly, it also seems that transportation decisions were not integrated with land use decisions, but that also has improved since the reform. Respondents provided more evidence of land use decisions integrated with transportation, and of land use decisions not integrated with transportation. There was less evidence provided for transportation decisions integrated with land use, or for transportation decisions not integrated with land use.

Institutional Design

In Chicago, questions about elements of the institutional design (representational structures, resources, and mandate) applied to CMAP. The element that was coded most frequently was representational structures, followed by resources and mandate. “Representational structures” co-occurred most frequently with “conflict” and “resources” co-occurred most frequently with “conflict” as well. In terms of the tradeoffs between accountability, democracy, and efficiency, it is “democracy” that stands out the most, followed by “accountability” and “efficiency”. The strongest co-occurrences happen with “resources” and “accountability”, and also “resources” and “democracy”. The code “representational structures” also co-occurs frequently with “democracy”. I am also looking at the co-occurrences of elements of the institutional design and decision-making (methodology, prioritization, and politics). “Prioritization” really takes the center stage of the interviews, followed by “methodology” and “politics”. “Prioritization” co-occurs most frequently with “representational structures” and “resources”, to a lesser extent. “Methodology” is mostly associated with another element of the decision-making, i.e. “politics”, and also “prioritization”.

Interests, Policy Instruments & Other Codes

In Chicago, the interest that is most frequently at the center of an interview segment is “money”, followed by “political agenda”. In terms of policy instruments, respondents referred mostly to the “funding tools”, followed by the “subsidies”, and the “carrots”. They did not refer to any “sticks” or regulation. Lastly, out of all the codes in the category “other”, respondents referred to the codes “limited” and “challenge” more frequently, followed by “policy recommendations” and “purpose of planning”.

COMPARISONS & QUESTIONS

Case Similarity

There seems to be a consistent storyline in Toronto, whereas in Chicago, this consistent storyline seems to be accompanied with outliers, perhaps pointing to divergent point of views.

- Is there really one consistent storyline in both regions, as it seems to be the case?
- What do the “outliers” mean in Chicago? What is the divergent storyline there?
- Are there also divergent storylines in Toronto?

Actors & Relationships

The municipal level of government seems to be a prominent, very important actor in each region. The state/provincial level seems to be more important and/or more involved in the Toronto region than it is in the Chicago region, whereas the federal and the regional levels seems to be more important in the Chicago region than it is in Toronto. It is also interesting to see that there are no mention of NGOs in the Toronto case, and that there are more mentions of the private/market sector in Toronto than in Chicago.

- Although in both cases, the municipalities play a central role in terms of transportation and land use, is this role the same? Are municipalities important in the same way in both regions?
- What is the prominent role of the province of Ontario and how does it differ from the role played by the state of Illinois?
- Why are the federal and regional levels relatively more important in the Chicago region than they are in the Toronto region?
- What is the role played by NGOs in Chicago? Are they really absent in Toronto?
- Similarly, why are there more mentions of the role of the private/market sector in Toronto than there are in Chicago?

In terms of relationships among actors, the aggregated results point to a relationship of “control” between the province and the municipalities, as well as greater overall coordination in Toronto, whereas in Chicago, the dominant relationships are one of conflict between the state, the region, and the sub-regional levels, as well as the federal-state-regional cooperation.

- How does the province of Ontario control the municipalities, and how does that impact regional planning?
- Why is there greater coordination in Toronto? How does that operate and does it lead to “better” or “increased” integration of transportation and land use?
- What is the difference between “coordination” in Toronto and “cooperation” in Chicago? How does it impact planning?
- In Chicago, what are the state and the region fighting over?
- What is the source of federal-state-regional cooperation and how/where does that operate?
- How can the state and the region be in conflict and cooperate at the same time?
- Does the reform have anything to do with those relationships? Is there an improvement over time? How does it impact planning and decision-making?

Integration of Transportation and Land Use

As shown in the frequency table, respondents of both regions provided more accounts of an improvement of transportation and land use integration since the reform. The cluster graph shows that Toronto respondents provided more evidence of positive instances of transportation and land use integration (and vice-versa) than negative instances. Chicago respondents provided more evidence of land use integrated with transportation, and of land use not integrated with transportation, and less evidence related to transportation decisions altogether. Despite the fact that in both regions, respondents pointed to some improvement in terms of planning integration, they also pointed to negative instances. In Toronto, some respondents said that transportation decisions were not coherent with land use decisions, and that remained the same since the reform. In Chicago, respondents agreed that before the reform, transportation and land use decisions were not integrated, and although it improved, it is still not clear whether they are fully integrated now.

- Although respondents of both regions provided more accounts of improvements, what were they pointing to when they said that the conditions were getting worse?
- Why did the Chicago respondents provide more evidence related to land use (both positive and negative), than evidence related to transportation?

- More generally, what kind of evidence respondents provided? Were they referring to micro-level decisions about a station or a block, more macro-level decisions about a zoning ordinance or aggregated location choices, or regional or state-level decisions about highway spending?
- How is the evidence provided linked to the reform or the change in the institutional design? Is there a chain of causation that can be traced?
- How did the reforms impact the decision-making process? Did they really have an impact on the ground, and if so, at what scale?
- Based on the evidence provided by the respondents, did the reforms meet their respective goals?
- What factors facilitated or hindered the reforms from having an impact?
- Are there things that were unexpected? Did the reform bring any positive or negative externalities?

Institutional Design

In both regions, “representational structures” is the element of the institutional design that is coded most frequently. In Toronto, the elements that come second and third are mandate and resources, whereas in Chicago, it is resources and then the mandate. In Toronto, the “representational structure” co-occurs more frequently with cooperation, whereas in Chicago, it co-occurs more frequently with “conflict”. “Resources” co-occur more frequently with “conflict” in Chicago as well.

- What is it that in Toronto, the mandate “comes before” resources, whereas in Chicago, the resources “come before” the mandate?
- What makes the “representational structures” a source of cooperation in Toronto, and what makes it a source of conflict in Chicago?
- In Chicago, the codes “representational structures” and “conflict” co-occur frequently. What is the meaning of this? Is it the “representational structures” themselves that are a source of conflict, or it is that conflict occurs within the structures?
- What is it that makes the “resources” a source of conflict in Chicago? Is it really the resources of the regional organization available for its work program? Or the resources it distributes?

In terms of the elements of institutional design and the tradeoffs between the principles of accountability, democracy, and efficiency, the most important association in Toronto is the co-occurrence of “representational structures” and “accountability”, whereas in Chicago it is the co-occurrence of “resources” and “accountability. In Toronto, there is also a strong co-occurrence of two principles, “democracy” and “efficiency”, whereas in Chicago, “democracy” co-occurs more frequently with “resources” and “representational structures”.

- Why is “accountability” linked to “representational structures” in Toronto, whereas it is linked to “resources” in Chicago?
- Similarly, why is “democracy” linked to “efficiency” in Toronto, whereas it is linked to “resources” and “representational structures” in Chicago?
- How are the principles of “accountability”, “democracy” and “efficiency” defined in each region?
- It seems like the principles are not always conceived in terms of “tradeoffs”, but rather more conceived as if they were championed by certain aspects of the institutional design. Is it just my impression?
- Are some principles more or less valued in each region?
- What are the implications of these observations about the “governing principles” for sustainable planning?

I also looked for the co-occurrences of elements of the institutional design and decision-making (methodology, prioritization, and politics). The ranking of coding frequencies of elements of the decision-making are totally different in each region. In Toronto, “politics” comes first, then “prioritization” and “methodology”. In Chicago, “prioritization” comes first, then “methodology”, and then “politics”. In terms of co-occurrence, the strongest relationships in Toronto are between “representational structure” and “politics”, as well as two elements of the decision-making, i.e. “politics” and “prioritization”, whereas in Chicago, the strongest relationship is between “representational structures” and “prioritization”. In fact, what stands out the most from the Toronto cluster graph is that “politics” is at the heart of the decision-making process. In Chicago, it is the triad “representational structure, prioritization, resources”

that stands out the most. Also, note that there are two “stand-alone” elements: methodology and mandate. In Toronto, “methodology” co-occurs with no other elements, whereas in Chicago, it co-occurs with “politics” and “prioritization”. Likewise, “mandate” co-occurs with no other code in Chicago, whether in Toronto, it co-occurs with “prioritization” and “politics”. It might be because these two elements are not frequently mentioned in each region.

- Why did the respondents of each region put a completely different emphasis on the elements of decision-making process? What does the order “politics, prioritization, methodology” in Toronto and “prioritization, methodology, and politics” really mean?
- Why is “politics” at the center of the cluster in Toronto? Does it really mean that everything is led by the influence of political factors? Does the co-occurrence of representational structure and politics mean that the representational structure itself is a political choice, or that political battles are fought within the representational structures of the regional organization? Same question can be asked for the co-occurrence of “politics” and “resources”.
- In Toronto, what is the meaning of the co-occurrence of “politics” and “prioritization”?
- Similarly, in Chicago, what is the meaning of the co-occurrence of “representational structures” and “prioritization”? What can be said about the relative “remoteness” of political factors and the role of influence?
- What about the two “stand-alone”? What is it that “mandate” co-occurs with “prioritization” and “politics” in Toronto, but that it co-occurs with nothing in Chicago? Similarly, what is it that “methodology” also co-occurs with “prioritization” and “politics” in Chicago, but with nothing in Toronto?

Interests, Policy Instruments & Other Codes

Toronto and Chicago respondents put a somewhat different emphasis on the interests that are at play. They mentioned “political agenda” and “values” almost the same amount of time, but the emphasis put on “money” and “power” is completely different. “Money” was mentioned frequently in Chicago, but not in Toronto, whereas “power” was mentioned quite frequently in Toronto, but almost never in Chicago.

- What values were the respondents referring to?
- What type of “political agenda” was followed and by whom? Were the respondents referring to purely electoral interests or strategic considerations?
- Although “money” and “resources” are an issue everywhere, why is it more of a salient issue in Chicago than it is in Toronto?
- There seems to be a game of power in Toronto, what is it about?

Similar to the “interests”, respondents of each region put a different emphasis on the policy instruments that were either discussed or more appropriate. Respondents of both regions put the same emphasis on the importance of funding tools and subsidies. However, the other two policy instruments, the “carrots” and the “sticks”, differed greatly in terms of their frequency. “Carrots” were mentioned in Chicago, whereas they were not mentioned at all in Toronto, and “sticks” were mentioned in Toronto, whereas they were not mentioned at all in Chicago.

- What types of funding tools are referred to in each region? Why are funding tools becoming so important?
- Similarly, what types of subsidies are referred to? From what level of government and for what purpose?
- Why is a “carrot” approach more appropriate in Chicago, and a “sticks” approach more appropriate in Toronto? Are they really more “appropriate” or simply more “discussed”?

In terms of all the “other codes”, what is surprising is that almost all the codes were mentioned about the same amount of time in each region. “Role of structure”, “role of leadership”, “purpose of planning”, “conflict of interest”, and “unspoken” were all mentioned almost the same amount of time. There were only three major differences: 1) there were more policy recommendations mentioned in Toronto than in Chicago; 2) there were more challenges mentioned in Toronto as well; and 3) the code “limited” was mentioned more frequently in Chicago.

- Although they were mentioned the same amount of time, these codes were probably not referring to the “same things” in both places. Are the “role of structure”, “role of

leadership”, “purpose of planning” and “conflict of interests” conceived differently in each region? What was qualified as “unspoken”?

- Why are there more policy recommendations in Toronto than there are in Chicago? What are they in qualitative terms?
- Similarly, why are there more challenges in Toronto? What are they qualitatively?
- Are the challenges and policy recommendations related?
- Why is the code “limited” appearing more frequently in Chicago? What are the limitations? Are they linked to “policy recommendations”?