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The Creative Destruction of Place in an Ontario Heritage Conservation District

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Abstract

Woodfield is a neighbourhood in the historic core of London, Ontario, Canada that contains two designated Heritage Conservation Districts (HCDs); the East and West Woodfield HCDs, designated in 1992 and 2008, respectively. This thesis considers the impacts of the designation of these two HCDs on the *sense of place* experienced by residents, and the ways in which the HCD plans support or challenge the *physical and community aspects of place* that are valued by the interviewed residents. This research is grounded in the geographical literature related to the concepts of place, sense of place, place branding, heritage conservation, gentrification and ultimately the geographical theory of creative destruction.

Four objectives guided this research: 1) to identify explicit and implicit references to sense of place, along with the power dynamics that are created and reinforced in the HCD government texts; 2) to reveal whether the HCD texts have had an impact, implicitly or explicitly, on the experienced sense of place of the residents of the Woodfield neighbourhood; 3) to produce a theoretical model of the power dynamics and the various factors that impact residential sense of place and the HCD place brand in the neighbourhood; and 4) to gain the perspective of City of London Planners, engaged in the creation and enforcement of the HCD government texts, on my analysis.

A discourse analysis of the HCD plans revealed the hegemonic discourses within, and how power/rhetoric flow through them. These were compared to the discourses, and notably the counter-discourses, that emerged through qualitative depth interviews. The interviews were conducted with residents of the Woodfield neighbourhood (n=39) and City of London Planners (n=3) in 2016 and 2017.

The results of this research show: that there is a lack of engagement among interviewed residents with the HCD brands and plans; that a mix of people, land uses, and architectural designs are valued elements of residential sense of place among those
interviewed; and that this runs counter to the discourses in the HCD plans. A revised theory of Mitchell’s model of creative destruction is presented to model changes to the underlying place, over time, following designation.

The research findings contribute to a limited body of research into residential sense of place in the context of designated heritage districts, and the impacts of the associated guidelines and plans on sense of place. This dissertation provides policy recommendations developed in consultation with three professional City of London Planners. The findings contribute to the growing body of research relating to the geographical theory of creative destruction, revised here as a model of the creative destruction of place in the context of HCDs. The revised theoretical model has potential as a tool to assist residents, planners and City officials in understanding the progression of place creation and destruction in this context. This dissertation ultimately calls for a reconsideration of the approach taken to HCD designation and management, including better resident engagement, recognition and encouragement of broader types of residents and land uses in the HCD plans, and the creation of a policy mechanism for revisiting the HCD plans over time.

**Keywords:** Sense of Place; Place Branding; Place Making; Place Discourses; Place Identities; Community Identities; Gentrification; Heritage Conservation; Heritage Conservation Districts; Creative Destruction
Acknowledgments

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Table of Contents

Abstract ............................................................................................................................................... ii
Acknowledgments .......................................................................................................................... iv
Table of Contents ............................................................................................................................ vi
List of Tables ...................................................................................................................................... xiii
List of Figures ...................................................................................................................................... xv
List of Appendices ............................................................................................................................ xviii
Chapter 1 ........................................................................................................................................ 1
1 INTRODUCTION AND COMMUNITY CONTEXT ................................................................. 1
  1.1 Life in a Heritage Conservation District in London, Ontario ............................................ 1
  1.2 The economic and other advantages of designation ......................................................... 6
  1.3 The perceived disadvantages of designation ...................................................................... 9
  1.4 Research objectives .............................................................................................................. 11
  1.5 Community context: An introduction to Woodfield ......................................................... 13
    1.5.1 Woodfield: A tale of two Heritage Conservation Districts ........................................ 19
  1.6 Policy context: the HCD government texts .................................................................... 21
    1.6.1 Local context for the policy framework ................................................................... 21
    1.6.2 An overview of the HCD policy framework in Ontario ........................................ 24
  1.7 Thesis outline ...................................................................................................................... 31
Chapter 2 ........................................................................................................................................ 34
2 PLACE, GENTRIFICATION, COMMUNITY IDENTITIES AND CREATIVE DESTRUCTION .... 34
  2.1 Introduction ......................................................................................................................... 34
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.2 Place, and sense of place</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2.1 Sense of place in a Heritage Conservation District</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3 Place branding</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3.1 Place branding in a Heritage Conservation District</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4 Gentrification</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4.1 Gentrification in the context of HCD Designation</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4.2 Who benefits: The economic impacts of historic conservation</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4.3 How we got here: The economics of conservation for property owners</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4.4 At what cost: Beyond the homeowner</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.5 Community identities in the context of HCD plans</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.5.1 The building blocks of neighbourhood-level community identity</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.5.2 The effects of inclusion and exclusion at the neighbourhood level</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.6 Creative destruction</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.6.1 Mitchell’s model of creative destruction</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.6.2 A critique of the original model</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.6.3 Applications of the model in other settings</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 3</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 METHODS AND RESEARCH DESIGN</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1 Introduction</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2 Research objectives</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3 Grounded theory and the researcher as instrument</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3.1 Grounded theory for sense of place research</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3.2 Data-driven coding</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3.3 The researcher as instrument</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.3.4 Researcher position statement ................................................................. 77
3.3.5 The insider researcher ........................................................................... 80
3.4 Key terms revisited: Sense of place .......................................................... 82
  3.4.1 Key terms revisited: Place branding .................................................. 83
3.5 Stage one: Discourse analysis of government texts .................................... 84
3.6 Stage two: Depth interviews with residents .............................................. 86
  3.6.1 Interviewing for sense of place ........................................................... 89
  3.6.2 The interview guide ............................................................................ 90
  3.6.3 Participant recruitment for resident interviews ................................... 92
  3.6.4 Interview format and participants ......................................................... 93
3.7 Stage three: Theoretical modelling ............................................................ 96
3.8 Stage four: Depth interviews with City of London Planners ....................... 96
  3.8.1 Participant recruitment for City of London Planner interviews .......... 97
Chapter 4 ............................................................................................................. 99
4 PLACE DISCOURSE: SENSE OF PLACE AND PLACE BRANDING .................. 99
  4.1 Introduction ............................................................................................. 99
  4.2 Sense of place discourse in the policy framework .................................... 100
  4.3 Interviews: Sense of place and place branding discourse ....................... 102
    4.3.1 Place branding discourse in the interviews: An introduction .......... 108
    4.3.2 Place branding discourse in the interviews: The neighbourhood and
        HCDs by name ..................................................................................... 109
    4.3.3 Place branding discourse in the interviews: Neighbourhood
        boundaries ......................................................................................... 111
  4.4 Other indicators: Place branding ............................................................. 116
    4.4.1 Place brand engagement: Heritage Alteration Permit applications .... 117
4.4.2 Place brand engagement: Signage in the East Woodfield HCD............. 122

4.4.3 Place brand engagement: Participation in the HCD creation process ... 125

4.5 Summary .................................................................................................................. 126

Chapter 5 ..................................................................................................................... 128

5 PLACE DISCOURSE: THE COMMUNITY ASPECTS OF PLACE............................. 128

5.1 Introduction: Community aspects of place in Woodfield............................... 128

5.2 The government texts: Place discourse and the community aspects of place .. 129

5.2.1 Community discourse in the East Woodfield HCD Plan......................... 129

5.2.2 Community discourse in the West Woodfield HCD Plan....................... 135

5.3 Interviews: Place discourse and the community aspects of place ............... 139

5.3.1 Community discourse in the interviews: mix of people ......................... 141

5.4 Other indicators: The community aspects of place .................................. 145

5.4.1 Acceptance of the mix: Community service organisations .................. 146

5.4.2 Acceptance of the mix: Geared to income residential developments ... 147

5.4.3 Aspects of gentrification: The Vernon’s London City Directory .......... 149

5.4.4 Aspects of gentrification: Housing prices .................................................. 150

5.4.5 A single case .................................................................................................... 153

5.5 Summary .............................................................................................................. 159

Chapter 6 ..................................................................................................................... 161

6 PLACE DISCOURSE: THE PHYSICAL ASPECTS OF PLACE.............................. 161

6.1 Introduction: Physical aspects of place in Woodfield................................. 161

6.2 The government texts: Place discourse and the physical aspects of place ...... 162

6.2.1 Physical discourse in the HCD Plans ......................................................... 162

6.2.2 Physical discourse in the East Woodfield HCD Plan ............................. 163
7.4.4 Suggestions for future research................................................................. 217

7.5 Mix of land use and architectural design in Woodfield............................... 218

7.5.1 Discussion and conclusions........................................................................ 218

7.5.2 Interviews with the City of London Planners............................................ 219

7.5.3 Policy implications....................................................................................... 230

7.5.4 Suggestions for future research............................................................... 233

7.6 Discussion: Neighbourhood engagement in the HCD process...................... 234

7.6.1 The limits of community associations....................................................... 234

7.6.2 The potential of community associations.................................................. 235

7.6.3 The conditions that drive associations to assume this role......................... 236

7.6.4 Conclusions............................................................................................... 237

7.7 Summary of conclusions, policy implications and future research............... 238

7.7.1 Place branding and engagement in Woodfield........................................ 238

7.7.2 Mix of people in Woodfield....................................................................... 239

7.7.3 Mix of land use and architectural design in Woodfield............................ 239

7.8 Limitations of this research.......................................................................... 240

Chapter 8............................................................................................................. 244

8 THE CREATIVE DESTRUCTION OF PLACE................................................. 244

8.1 Introduction.................................................................................................... 244

8.2 The need for a model of the creative destruction of place............................ 245

8.3 Discussion: A revised model and theory..................................................... 249

8.3.1 The model of creative destruction of place in an HCD.............................. 252

8.3.2 Stage one: Early conservation............................................................... 252

8.3.3 Stage two: Advanced conservation......................................................... 253
8.3.4 Stage three: Early place destruction .................................................. 255
8.3.5 Stage four: Advanced place destruction ........................................... 256
8.3.6 Stage five: Post destruction .............................................................. 257
8.3.7 The utility of this revised model ....................................................... 258

8.4 Summary and suggestions for future research ...................................... 259
8.5 Final thoughts ....................................................................................... 261

Bibliography ................................................................................................. 262
Appendices .................................................................................................... 276
Curriculum Vitae ............................................................................................ 308
List of Tables

Table 2a: The revised model of creative destruction .......................................................... 68
Table 3a: Answers to demographic questions by rounded percent ........................................ 95
Table 4a: “What one word would you use to describe your neighbourhood?” ........ 107
Table 4b: Neighbourhood boundaries as identified by interviewee ................................. 115
Table 4c: Heritage alteration permit applications by year ............................................... 118
Table 4d: Heritage alteration permit approvals by year ............................................... 119
Table 4e: Heritage alteration permit approvals by type ............................................... 121
Table 5a: General attitude toward community mix and diversity .................................. 140
Table 5b: Change in number of rental units over time: The East Woodfield HCD .... 150
Table 5c: Change in number of rental units over time: The West Woodfield HCD .... 150
Table 5d: Survey results for question 11 ........................................................................ 151
Table 5e: Survey results for question 12 ........................................................................ 152
Table 5f: Unit changes by building, address and year .................................................. 156
Table 6a: Architectural details mentioned in resident interviews ................................ 173
Table 6b: Change in number of businesses over time: The East Woodfield HCD .... 189
Table 6c: Change in number of businesses over time: The West Woodfield HCD .... 189
Table 6d: Demolition Permit Applications by year ...................................................... 190
Table 6e: Demolition Permit Approvals by year ............................................................ 191
Table 8a: The original five-stage model of creative destruction ........................................ 249
List of Figures

Figure 1a: A map of the Woodfield Neighbourhood showing the West and East Woodfield Heritage Conservation District Boundaries .............................................. 1

Figure 1b: An article/photo that appeared in the London Free Press................................. 2

Figure 1c: Heritage Conservation Districts in London, Ontario ..................................... 4

Figure 1d: Heritage Alteration Permits and Heritage Designated Properties ................... 5

Figure 1e: A map of the Woodfield Neighbourhood ...................................................... 13

Figure 1f: Hume Cronyn and his son Hume in the garden at Woodfield c 1915 ............... 16

Figure 1g: A streetscape in Woodfield ............................................................................. 17

Figure 1h: A streetscape in Woodfield ............................................................................. 17

Figure 1i: First St. Andrews United Church, one of several historic churches in Woodfield ........................................................................................................... 18

Figure 1j: Looking east and west from Maitland Street .................................................. 23

Figure 1k: The policy framework for the creation of the East and West Woodfield HCDs .................................................................................................................. 24

Figure 1l: The HCD Designation Process ........................................................................ 29

Figure 1m: Some residents of Woodfield enjoying the Historic Woodfield Street Fair ... 32

Figure 2a: A model of creative destruction ....................................................................... 62

Figure 3a: Map of the entire Woodfield neighbourhood ................................................ 94

Figure 4a: “How would you describe your neighbourhood?” ........................................ 104
Figure 4b: “What one word would you use to describe your neighbourhood?” .......... 105

Figure 4c: The friendly, lively, passionate people of Woodfield ................................. 107

Figure 4d: Unique street signage that indicates the East Woodfield HCD ..................... 110

Figure 4e: Overlaid maps of the various boundaries of Woodfield ............................. 114

Figure 4f: Unique street signage that indicates the East Woodfield HCD ..................... 122

Figure 4g: Boundaries of the East Woodfield Heritage Conservation District ............. 123

Figure 4h: Overlaid maps of the various boundaries of Woodfield with the East Woodfield HCD boundaries superimposed ................................................................. 124

Figure 5a: Geared to income housing at 390 Princess Avenue ...................................... 148

Figure 5b: A second, newer building constructed immediately west of the one above 148

Figure 5c: Context map. The red circle indicates the section of Princess Avenue .......... 152

Figure 5d: Princess Avenue homes from Palace to William – north side ..................... 154

Figure 5e: Princess Avenue homes from William to Palace – south side ..................... 155

Figure 5f: Home with a new porch .................................................................................. 157

Figure 5g: Home with a new porch and major interior/exterior renovations ............... 158

Figure 5h: Duplex with new entrances, exterior renovations and major interior renovations ................................................................................................................. 158

Figure 5i: Home with major exterior renovations, a large rear addition, significant upgrades and repairs and an interior gut and reno ...................................................... 159

Figure 6a: Word cloud for the East Woodfield HCD Plan ............................................. 164
Figure 6b: Part II of the Table of Contents for the East Woodfield HCD Plan .......... 166

Figure 6c: Word cloud for the West Woodfield HCD Plan.................................................. 167

Figure 6d: Decorative vinyl trim on gables on a newer suburban home as compared to original wood trim on a heritage home in Woodfield .................................................. 174

Figure 7a: Woodfield Commons at 390 Princess Avenue ................................................. 209

Figure 7b: A second, newer building .................................................................................. 209

Figure 7c: The Waterloo Apartments in the West Woodfield HCD ................................. 212

Figure 7d: Woodfield Variety (closed) in the East Woodfield HCD ................................. 226

Figure 7e: A photo studio in the West Woodfield HCD ....................................................... 227

Figure 7f: A residential conversion in the East Woodfield HCD ....................................... 227

Figure 8a: The creative destruction of place in an HCD ...................................................... 251
# List of Appendices


Appendix B: Interviewee references to insider researcher status ........................................... 278

Appendix C: Interview Guide for resident interviews (2016-2017).......................................... 282

Appendix D: Recruitment Letter for resident interviews ......................................................... 286

Appendix E: Letter of Information and Consent for resident interviews ............................... 287

Appendix F: Interview Guide for City Planner interviews (2017) ........................................... 290

Appendix G: Letter of Information and Consent for City Planner interviews ......................... 294

Appendix H: Coding schema for resident interviews .............................................................. 297

Appendix I: NMREB approvals ................................................................................................. 306
Chapter 1

1 INTRODUCTION AND COMMUNITY CONTEXT

1.1 Life in a Heritage Conservation District in London, Ontario

We have a problem in society if someone else is allowed to tell me what to do with my property and house. These ‘Woodfield’ snots need to mind their own and let this family live in an efficient, safe home. This is disgusting. (LawAbidingCitizen93, 2012, comment section)

In 2012, a demolition permit was requested for a small home in the Woodfield neighbourhood in London, Ontario. The home sat on a street at the edge of two adjoining Heritage Conservation Districts (HCDs); the West Woodfield HCD, designated four years earlier in 2008, and the East Woodfield HCD, just across the street and designated 20 years earlier in 1992 (Figure 1a).

Figure 1a: A map of the Woodfield Neighbourhood showing the West and East Woodfield Heritage Conservation District Boundaries. (by author)
The home (Figure 1b) had not been well maintained over the years and was not among the largest or grandest homes in the neighbourhood. While many could see value in preserving the more architecturally unique homes found throughout much of the
neighbourhood, that this home would also be preserved caused some confusion. The local newspaper called it a “street fight” (Weber 2012). A petition to support the demolition gathered more than 60 signatures, while the London Advisory Committee on Heritage and the local community association opposed the demolition.

Those who believed that the house should be demolished voiced support for the comfort and safety of the homeowner, and the concerns of some nearby neighbours about the visual state of the home. Those who opposed the demolition and called for renovation were concerned with the protection of the intact historic streetscape, and expressed a need to preserve the smaller homes in the neighbourhood as well as the mansions. Eventually a design was submitted that incorporated much of the streetscape presence of the home into a larger rebuild, approval was given, and the story disappeared from the headlines.

This polarisation in the neighbourhood brought to bear an underlying tension that can be found in many conversations about heritage conservation, both in the context of individual buildings, and in the broader context of designated HCDs. The question of why we preserve, for whom, and the impact of designation on the lives of district residents is critically important, and of interest to research in geography. This dissertation will examine this issue by uncovering the power dynamics that are created and reinforced in the government texts that guide conservation and change in these HCDs, and by identifying any explicit and implicit impacts of these texts on residential sense of place.

Time is of the essence, for designated HCDs are rapidly expanding across Ontario. Since the first HCD emerged in 1980, over 125 districts have been designated (Ministry of Tourism Culture and Sport 2017). In London, there are currently seven designated HCDs (Figure 1c), that are for the most part found within the older core areas of the City.
There has been a rapid expansion of designated districts, with the first appearing in 1992 (East Woodfield HCD), the second in 2001 (Bishop Hellmuth HCD), and five more in the 11 years since 2006 (Figure 1d) with seven more on the books. Due to the nature of the designation process in Ontario, that allows for unique plans to be created for each individual HCD, specific guidelines, enforcement and levels of conservation vary across these districts. There is a contradiction between the creation and enforcement of HCD plans; although they are often initiated through ‘grass roots’ efforts, there is a shift on designation to a top-down enforcement model. The HCD guidelines are interpreted by Heritage Planners, Advisory Committees, and City Councillors, rather than the residents.
who live in these districts. New boundaries are formed, along with the potential for a new or renewed sense of place in the community. This new place may, over time, be contested – as we have seen in the example above.

Figure 1d: Heritage Alteration Permits and Heritage Designated Properties. (Corporation of the City of London 2016)

A great deal of research into the designation of heritage properties has come from a position of advocacy (Mason 2005). As a result, much of this work has focussed on combatting myths about the economic costs of designation (e.g. Ijla, Ryberg Roesntraub and Bowen 2011; Kovacs, Shipley, Snyder & Stupart 2008; Schaeffer & Millerick 1991; Shipley 2000; Shipley, Jonas & Kovacs 2011; Shipley & Parsons 2006). Although the evidence has grown regarding the numerous economic advantages of individual and district designation, for many this alone does not prove their value. Even if such evidence were palatable, the disdain expressed in the comments written by
LawAbidingCitizen93 reflects deeper concerns. For many the concept of living in a heritage designated home is imbued with an inconceivable surrender of freedoms. As occurred above, opponents of HCDs usually argue this point in terms of the associated increases in regulations. This is misleading though, for all citizens are regulated regarding changes to their “property and house” (LawAbidingCitizen93, 2012, comment section). Such regulations are found in the by-laws and standards for everything from the height of a porch rail to the width of a driveway, and impact all homes, not just those designated as heritage properties. For some though, this added layer of regulation is a bridge too far, regardless of benefits. Why then would anyone willingly accept such constraints?

1.2 The economic and other advantages of designation

In Ontario, people who live in HCDs generally experience property value performance that is equal to or better than in other areas of their city (Shipley 2000; Shipley, Jonas & Kovacs 2011; Kovacs, Jonas-Galvin & Shipley 2015). This mirrors the experience in much of North America, and is reflected throughout the literature, although outside of academic circles misconceptions persist. In a 2007 article Robert Shipley reveals some of his frustration with this in his title; *The Real Impact of Heritage Designation: Too Many Municipal Officials Have It Upside-Down*. He begins by asking “What is the impact of heritage designation?” and replies that it has “a very straightforward answer” (Shipley 2007, p. 9). The author refers to a Brookings Institution publication which reviewed 272 studies focused on the economic aspects of historic conservation. This comprehensive review found that the clear majority of research is in line with Shipley’s position that historic conservation exerts neutral to positive, but not negative effects on economic value along numerous lines (Mason 2005). Mason opens his review with an excellent summary of the state of the relationship between economics and historic conservation. He presents this in a very positive light, advising the reader that “nearly
any way the effects are measured, be they direct or indirect, historic preservation tends to yield significant benefits to the economy” (Mason 2005, executive summary).

There are many economic benefits to historic conservation, for both the individual property owner and the larger community. These benefits accrue in different but related ways through both the designation of individual properties and of larger districts. As noted, for the individual these benefits are largely realized through higher property values and increases in eventual property sale prices. The larger community benefits as well, through higher tax revenues, City Council attention, job creation, and a unique place that can serve to draw in customer and tourist dollars.

Authors have also considered the environmental benefits of conservation. Gilderbloom, Hanka and Ambrosius (2009) found that while central city dwellers exhibited more environmentally friendly behavior than their suburban counterparts, those living in historic homes scored even higher. The authors note that historic renovation preserves and reuses existing houses, conserves costs of construction, including material and energy costs, and “encourages individuals to reside in neighbourhoods that naturally foster more environmentally friendly behaviours” (Gilderbloom, Hanka & Ambrosius 2009, p.98). The environmental advantages of historic conservation produce local benefits, and accrue far beyond as well. The buildings of our cities are the “largest and most important recyclable resources we have” (Shipley 2007, p. 11). Shipley sees these buildings as vessels of stored energy. Every brick, beam and nail required the burning of fossil fuels. By holding onto them we avoid repeating these expenditures, and keep massive amounts of debris out of the waste system (Shipley 2007).

Moreover, there are benefits for the individual who resides within the district, including the enjoyment of a unique historic property, pride of ownership and satisfaction with one’s neighbourhood. Shipley, Jonas and Kovacs (2011) conducted surveys in 32 of the 93 oldest Heritage Conservation Districts in Ontario. Among their findings the authors noted a high level of satisfaction “with living or owning property in a district” (Shipley, Jonas & Kovacs 2011, p. 628). This was also shown to increase over time, with a higher
level of satisfaction following designation than was encountered before (Shipley, Jonas & Kovacs 2011).

When asked why they choose such a home, the historic home owner is likely to focus on pride of ownership or the beauty of the neighbourhood. These are highly subjective measures of course, but it is fair to say that relative rarity ensures unique home buying opportunities in historic neighbourhoods. Heritage Conservation Districts conform to ideas of good urbanism in modern planning. Many districts pre-date the automobile, providing “pedestrian oriented, mass transit-friendly and mixed use” neighbourhoods, adding to the unique qualities of the place (Ijla, Ryberg, Rosentraub & Bowen 2011, p. 279). The tendency for neighbourhoods that are worthy of designation to be close to the core means that pedestrian opportunities can in fact spread well beyond the borders of the district. Though not speaking of designated districts specifically, Jane Jacobs reminds us that while walking in the “old city” we have the “safety of the streets and the freedom of the city ... bringing with it a constant succession of eyes” (1961, p. 107).

Somewhat ironically given that they are the source of so much concern, one of the advantages of Heritage Conservation Districts may be the standards and regulations themselves. Standards can act to provide some comfort that the character of the neighbourhood will not slip into decline (Shipley 2000) offering the homeowner confidence that the atmosphere of their preferred neighbourhood, fundamental to sense of place, will be there to enjoy for years.

Though less prominent in the literature, there may be neighbourhood-level societal benefits as well. For example, one concern in any rarified area of a city is gentrification, for as home prices increase, lower income earners are invariably pushed out. District conservation holds the potential to preserve vintage homes of all sizes, and well-enforced districts may have the side-effect of preserving smaller homes for local, lower income homeowners. At the other extreme, immense preserved homes which are too large for modern families make excellent rental conversions, providing a place in these
neighbourhoods for those who cannot afford even the smallest home. Coulson and Leichenko for example, came to the “overriding conclusion that historical designation does not lead to gentrification or any other kind of neighbourhood turnover” (Coulson & Leichenko 2004, p. 1598). The authors found that over a decade after designation the social mix in historic neighbourhoods stayed relatively the same (Coulson & Leichenko 2004). This finding is somewhat antithetical to much of the geographical literature discussed in this chapter though, in relation to impacts on home prices. A decade is not a particularly long time-frame in the grander scheme, and incidents such as those in the example above show that the interpretation of HCD plans, and what is deemed worthy of retention, remains subject to political pressures of the day. As outside interest in a district increases, decisions made by City Councils will not always favour the lower income home owner or renter. I will address this in greater detail in the chapters ahead.

1.3 The perceived disadvantages of designation

There are also disadvantages for those living in designated historically preserved neighbourhoods. Added regulations do accompany designation, and should not be disregarded. Schaeffer and Millerick contend that “regulations aimed at preserving a neighbourhood can be too restrictive” (1991, p. 311). Any added bureaucracy can be a nuisance, and Sharpe (2006) argues that these regulations are tied to lost opportunities for the homeowner. Ashworth (2002) picks up this discussion from an economist’s perspective. He argues that logically historic designation, with its associated constraints through regulations of finish, use and design should not raise but rather lower property values. The author provocatively points to the lack of published cases of failure, again echoing the lean toward advocacy found in much of the literature.

For some, the perception of a home in a preserved neighbourhood may be akin to an insect in amber, locked in time with no accommodation of current and future needs. Although most guidelines stipulate only that “future development fit into the existing
character” of the neighbourhood (Shipley & Snyder 2013, p. 309), for many residents
the restrictive nature of the guidelines may preclude or delay changes to their
neighbourhood that are needed or progressive, such as new businesses (e.g. a coffee
shop, a neighbourhood pub) or alternative forms of housing (e.g. high-density
apartments, modern condominiums). These themes will emerge again in the coming
chapters.

Finally, while there is a great deal of consensus about the straightforward relationship
between designation and property values, a deeper look reveals potential concerns here
as well. Attention must turn to the forces that are driving these increases in value.
Clearly there is more to this trend than simple designation. Coupled with heritage
designation are certain standards in both design and maintenance. It can be presumed
that higher standards in these areas will likely themselves positively impact the sale
price of a property, and further that its inclusion in a designated district will provide
some assurances against the decline of the neighbourhood at large (Shipley 2000).

While the enjoyment of a historic home may entice many owners, others may move into
such homes simply to gain the benefits of these standards, most notably in the district
context. These maintenance and design issues come with associated costs, and a fair
picture of property value increases should take these into account. In a related way, the
“substantial restrictions on how a property may be maintained and altered” or indeed
“demolished” (Coulson & Leichenko 2004, p. 1587) represent opportunity costs to the
owner, which are not reflected in simple measures of increased property values. The
story is more complex than sales prices alone may reveal.

Amusingly but not inaccurately, Schaeffer and Millerick speculated that “historic district
designation may serve a function similar to a designer label: it guarantees the quality of
the merchandise, reducing ... uncertainty” (1991, p. 311). As with any designer label, we
should consider the social costs of our investment. There is a potential human cost in
historic conservation, and a danger that some will be trodden under in the generally
well-meaning push to preserve. As I have shown, many studies have touted the positive
effect of historic conservation on property values, but as property values increase in a neighbourhood so too, generally, will rents, and poorer residents may be pushed out. As many of the neighbourhoods most worthy of designation are found in the inner city, those pushed out may be among the most vulnerable. As they move further from the historic core in pursuit of lower rents, they may face higher costs of transportation, and longer commutes. These problems are not new, and much of the related research into gentrification has revealed these and other negative impacts of increased property values on poorer residents (Coulson and Leichenko 2004). This potential will be further explored ahead in this dissertation.

1.4 Research objectives

This dissertation is presented in the form of a single monograph, and follows a grounded theory qualitative research approach. Grounded theory does not afford a traditional research question a major role (e.g. Charmaz 2006; Flick 2007; Glaser and Strauss 1967). The starting point is purposefully a more general observation or observations, knowing that specific questions will shift and change along the way. Similarly, my own research objectives arose more generally from years of personal first-hand observations of the creation of, management of and indeed life in an HCD (see Chapter 3: Methods and research design).

Still, no one embarks on a research project without a question, or questions, in mind. To begin, my question was simply this: Does the designation of a Heritage Conservation District (HCD) impact the sense of place experienced by the residents who live there, and if so, do the HCD Plans support or challenge the physical and community aspects of place that are valued by these residents? I did not know if this would be the case, and if it was, why or how it would be the case.

The following research objectives, explored through a grounded approach, provided the flexibility that I sought to allow the data to guide the evolution of theory.
Four key objectives informed this research:

1. To identify explicit and implicit references to sense of place, along with the power dynamics that are created and reinforced in the government texts that guide conservation and change in these districts. These government texts include the Provincial Policy Statement, the Ontario Heritage Act, the Ontario Heritage Toolkit and the specific East and West Woodfield Heritage Conservation District Plans;

2. To reveal whether the HCD texts have had an impact, implicitly or explicitly, on the experienced sense of place of the residents of the Woodfield neighbourhood;

3. To produce a theoretical model of the power dynamics and the various factors (including but not limited to power relationships, the government texts themselves, the physical setting and community relationships) that impact residential sense of place and the HCD place brand in the neighbourhood;

4. To gain the perspective of City of London Planners, engaged in the creation and enforcement of the HCD government texts, on my analysis.

This research has provided insights to inform future policy decisions, and indicates that there is a need to revisit existing HCD plans to better accommodate the changing needs of residents over time. Historically in London, no HCD plan has ever been revisited, although the oldest one (East Woodfield) is now approaching three decades since it was adopted. Completing these research objectives informed a theoretical model of the changes that occur within an HCD, in relation to residential sense of place, over time. These objectives guided the initial stages of research, and the grounded theory approach taken here. I will return to all of this ahead, and throughout, this dissertation.
To begin though, I will turn to a discussion of the neighbourhood of Woodfield, and the unique attributes that make it worthy of study.

![Figure 1e: A map of the Woodfield Neighbourhood. (by author)](image)

1.5 Community context: An introduction to Woodfield

The neighbourhood of Woodfield is found in the core area of London, Ontario. This neighbourhood sits to the northeast of London’s downtown, to the east of the shopping district known as Richmond Row and to the west of the Old East Village neighbourhood and shopping district. Woodfield is surrounded by other neighbourhoods, including the Downtown and Midtown to the south, North Talbot to the west, Piccadilly to the north and the Old East Village to the east. The boundaries of the neighbourhood, like most neighbourhoods in London are for the most part set by the community itself. As such, neighbours’ conceptions of the boundaries of Woodfield, and even their use of the
name itself vary. This will be explored ahead in Chapter 4: Place discourse: Sense of place and place branding.

The boundaries that are recognised by both the City of London and the local community association formed the starting point for this current research. These boundaries are Richmond Street to the west, Queens Avenue to the south, Adelaide to the east and the CPR tracks to the north (Figure 1e).

Woodfield’s position so near to the core of London is reflected in its historic connection to the early growth of the city, and within these boundaries lie many important London landmarks and places, including City Hall, Victoria Park, Centennial Hall and many of London’s oldest residences and churches. According to Residential to the Core (Robbins and de Blois 2007), a local history book:

When London was incorporated in 1840, the town plot’s original boundaries were extended east to Adelaide and north to Huron. The Woodfield area (formerly part of London Township) was now surveyed along with the rest of the village’s new lands. An 1840-41 map shows little in the area that will become Woodfield with the exception of a large plot belonging to a Mr. Shofield and several blocks belonging to Rev. Benjamin Cronyn. (Robbins and de Blois 2007, p. 8)

The Cronyn family would go on to play an important part in the eventual naming of the neighbourhood. Woodfield was not the original name of the area, which would have simply been referred to as a part of London Township in the earliest days. Even when the neighbourhood became more active in the 1960s, for many years the area was simply referred to as Northeast Central London, a name taken by the local community association in 1969. Outside of the community association and City Hall, it is unclear how many people would have used even that name. The Woodfield name was adopted formally in the 1980s, when several neighbours:

...began to meet about what direction a rate-payers’ association should take. On February 10, 1982, a new Executive agreed on the basic goals and objectives of the re-christened Woodfield Community Association. (Robbins and de Blois 2007, p. 28)
The name of Woodfield is rooted in a house, now demolished, that was owned at various times by the Cronyn family. Originally called *The Pines*, Hume Cronyn and his wife Amelia Labatt would eventually rename the house Woodfield as an homage to the house in England in which they became engaged (Robbins and de Blois 2007, p. 16). Their son (also called Hume) would go on to be one of the neighbourhood’s most famous residents, a Hollywood actor who appeared in numerous movies and was married to Jessica Tandy (Figure 1f). Although the home called Woodfield was itself demolished in 1968, the neighbourhood of Woodfield houses a wealth of Victorian architecture and largely intact historic streetscapes to this day.

When considering the heritage character of the area and the “historical themes and built heritage that distinguish the larger community of Woodfield” (East Woodfield HCD Plan 1992, p. 1-3) The East Woodfield Heritage Conservation District Plan draws attention to the:

...considerable range and diversity in its architectural heritage of frame and brick residential development including the following styles and building practice: Vernacular, Gothic Revival, Italianate, High Victorian Gothic, Second Empire, Queen Anne, Prairie/Craftsman, Four Square (a sub-type of the Prairie style), Tudor Revival, and International. (East Woodfield HCD Plan 1992, p. 1-4)

Given this rich architectural heritage, many historical associations and a position so close to the centre of the original township, it is not surprising that this neighbourhood (Figures 1g, 1h and 1i) contains London’s first HCD, East Woodfield, as well as the newer West Woodfield HCD.
Figure 1f: Hume Cronyn and his son Hume in the garden at Woodfield c 1915. (Robbins and de Blois 2007, p. 15)
Figure 1g: A streetscape in Woodfield. (photo by author)

Figure 1h: A streetscape in Woodfield. (photo by author)
Figure 1: First St. Andrews United Church, one of several historic churches in Woodfield. (photo by author)
1.5.1 Woodfield: A tale of two Heritage Conservation Districts

The neighbourhood of Woodfield uniquely contains the entirety of these two Heritage Conservation Districts, with specific and different plans and guidelines created for each. The earlier district, formed in 1992, is formally called the East Woodfield Heritage Conservation District, while the second district, created in 2008 is called the West Woodfield Heritage Conservation District. The details of the creation of these two districts will be explained more fully ahead in this chapter. Outlines of the districts are superimposed on the greater Woodfield neighbourhood in Figure 1e, above.

For the purposes of this research, Woodfield offers an opportunity to consider the effects of heritage district designation on a single place under different policy frameworks, and at different time scales. The 16-year gap between the creation of these two districts brought with it differences in policy rhetoric and focus (discussed ahead in this chapter). These differences, affecting two parts of a neighbourhood immediately abutting one another, and in some places on either side of the same street, allow for some interesting analytical opportunities.

The natural turnover of homes in Woodfield since 1992 also means that in the East Woodfield HCD, most owners purchased their home in an existing HCD, complete with street signage roughly indicating the district boundaries, and a registration on title as a designated heritage property which they would be made aware of on purchase. In the West Woodfield HCD however, many more home owners pre-date the district designation in 2008, have no signs yet installed to indicate their place in an HCD, and would have no need to consider their title until they choose to move. Complicating this neighbourhood further, there are small remnant areas of the neighbourhood that fall

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1 There is a third HCD that falls partially within the Woodfield neighbourhood, called the Downtown London HCD. This HCD was not considered in this dissertation for two reasons: 1) only a small part of the HCD is within the boundaries of Woodfield (the bottom left corner of Figure 1e, outside of the WWHCD), and; 2) this area is predominantly populated by commercial and public uses such as the London Life Insurance Company building, St. Paul’s Cathedral and several offices and restaurants.
outside of either of these HCD boundaries, excluded for reasons either political (e.g. an owner of a block of properties who wished to not be included) or practical (e.g. orphaned areas cut off from the boundaries when the West Woodfield HCD was formed). However, as noted in the East Woodfield HCD Plan, the “historical themes and built heritage” are consistent throughout “the larger community of Woodfield” (East Woodfield HCD Plan 1992, p. 1-3).

Although this neighbourhood has retained much of its original architecture, change has also been a constant in Woodfield. Even as the first HCD was being created, the authors of the plan acknowledged that changes had already occurred, stating that:

The East Woodfield heritage conservation district exhibits a rich variety of architectural styles, building techniques and construction materials. Few, if any, of these buildings have survived as they were originally constructed. Repairs, changing domestic needs and new services all make their mark upon the fabric and form of the buildings. Some have resulted in the alteration of windows and doors, the recladding of frame structures or the construction of new additions. (East Woodfield HCD Plan 1992, section 4.1; emphasis added)

In the West Woodfield HCD, variety is expressed in a slightly different way. For example, while the opening pages consider that “despite some redevelopment, the area contains a high concentration of recognizable architectural styles and features that are consistent with the styles and methods of construction associated within the era” (West Woodfield HCD Plan 2008, p. 8.2.1), later in the text the authors indicate that:

throughout the WWHCD there are splendid examples of purpose built multi unit residential buildings. The original builders saw the advantage of offering a variety of living unit sizes while maintaining a streetscape of compatible buildings of similar, large size. These original buildings typically were semi-detached houses, or row house constructions. (West Woodfield HCD Plan 2008, p. 8.2.5; emphasis added)

Attention to the importance of variety, found in the pages of both plans, foreshadow an important theme that emerged in the resident interviews, and will be discussed ahead in this dissertation. First though, for context I will provide an outline of the government
texts that guide preservation and change within these two adjacent districts, and are
the focus of the first stage of the research presented here.

1.6  Policy context: the HCD government texts

Heritage Conservation District (HCD) Plans in Ontario are created and enforced in the
center of a multi-tiered framework of government texts. At the highest level, the
process is guided by government texts produced by the Province of Ontario, but their
aims are ultimately made manifest in the specific HCD guidelines and plans that are
designed, adopted and enforced at the municipal level. In this section I will review the
various government texts that guide the process of HCD designation in Ontario, namely
Heritage Toolkit, and the specific HCD Plans created for each unique district.

1.6.1 Local context for the policy framework

In the context of HCDs, the relevant government texts establish and privilege what is to
be conserved (e.g. physical features, community features), who is to be consulted (e.g.
property owners, renters, Planners) and where the power lies (e.g. resident types,
resident obligations, resident oversight). To uncover how power relations are created
within the texts, and where they place this privilege in both explicit and implicit ways,
this thesis will consider the discourses within the texts themselves.

Winkel & Leipold (2016) describe discourse as an interpretive truth that uses a
dominant perception of truth to exert power. This is relevant when considering the
discourse of government texts (the relevant policies, guides, plans, and by-laws). These
texts by their nature define and quantify what makes one part of a city, or even one part
of a neighbourhood, unique and worthy of designation. Once adopted, the texts
provide the power to enforce and reinforce this perception. As such, these texts
explicitly offer both a perception of truth, and a mechanism to exert power over the reinforcement of that truth. This is most notable in the ultimate and specific HCD plans designed at the municipal level.

While one aspect of such discourse is therefore interpretive, Winkel and Leipold (2016) also consider that:

> On the other hand, it has a process dimension. It is produced through agents and, consequently, constantly subject to change. This twofold character of a discourse as both structure and practice – and the resulting tension between stability (structures) and dynamic (practices) – is the essence of the policy discourse concept (Winkel and Leipold 2016, p. 112).

This thesis will explore the relationship between the two unique government texts (the HCD plans) that guide preservation and change in the neighbourhood of Woodfield. Woodfield is unusual in that while its two HCDs exist side by side, and as noted earlier occasionally on either side of the same street, their relevant plans were created 16 years apart.

If one were to wander from one HCD to the next, they would be hard pressed to notice a significant or abrupt change in architecture (Figure 1j) or visible socioeconomic cues. The districts are similar in many ways, including the neighbourhood that they are found in, their names, architectural styles, vintage, and proximity to the core. Conservation and change within the East and West Woodfield HCDs however is governed in accordance with plans established under different circumstances, with different guidelines for heritage conservation and different potential impacts on residential sense of place and resident engagement.
Figure 1j: Looking east and west from Maitland Street. (photos by author)
1.6.2 An overview of the HCD policy framework in Ontario

The focus of this research on two adjacent HCDs, within the same neighbourhood but written 16 years apart adds a layer of complexity to the discursive comparison. While similar, the policy framework and the relevant government texts varied in significant ways, altering the context of each HCD-specific plan. An overview of the texts that guided the process in each HCD is presented as Figure 1k, including specific version and amendment years. In this section, each government text will be listed and briefly explained in relation to the overall process of district designation.

![HCD Policy Framework Diagram]

**Figure 1k:** The policy framework for the creation of the East and West Woodfield HCDs. (by author)
1.6.2.1 The Planning Act

The Planning Act establishes rules for land use planning in the Province and considers how land uses are controlled, and by whom. In part, the Planning Act indicates matters of Provincial interest. Heritage conservation policy in Ontario originates in this section of the Planning Act (Section 2) which states that:

The Minister, the council of a municipality, a local board, a planning board and the Municipal Board, in carrying out their responsibilities under this Act, shall have regard to, among other matters, matters of provincial interest such as ...

(d) the conservation of features of significant architectural, cultural, historical, archaeological or scientific interest (Government of Ontario 1990, Section 2d)

Importantly, Section 3.1 of the Act also authorises the Minister to issue Provincial Policy Statements (PPSs) from time to time on matters relating to municipal planning if they are deemed by the Minister to be of provincial interest. I will return to the PPS below.

1.6.2.2 The Ontario Heritage Act

The Ontario Heritage Act gives Ontario municipalities the powers needed to conserve heritage in the province. It provides for heritage conservation of both individual properties and districts (HCDs). Many aspects of heritage designation are identified in the Act, including listings of individual buildings of heritage interest in a municipal heritage register, the designation of these properties, the establishment of heritage easements and the designation of archaeological significance. Part V of the Act allows for the designation of HCDs:

The council of a municipality may undertake a study of any area of the municipality for the purpose of designating one or more heritage conservation districts. (Government of Ontario 1990, Part V Section 40)
1.6.2.3  The Provincial Policy Statement

In accordance with The Planning Act, from time to time the Province of Ontario will issue a Provincial Policy Statement (PPS). These statements provide policy direction on matters deemed to be of Provincial interest by the Act. The latest of these statements was issued in 2014, but the West Woodfield HCD Plan was established earlier, following the 2005 PPS. The East Woodfield HCD Plan predates both statements.

Heritage interests are referred to repeatedly in the 2005 PPS. In Part IV for example, the Statement links heritage resources to the “long-term prosperity and social well-being of Ontarians” (Government of Ontario 2005, Part IV). The clearest guidance for matters of cultural heritage is provided in Section 2: The Wise Use and Management of Resources. Specifically, Section 2.6.1 states that “significant built heritage resources and significant cultural heritage landscapes shall be conserved” (Government of Ontario 2005, Section 2.6.1; emphasis added).

The PPS is the first point of departure in the policy framework between the two adjoining Woodfield HCDs. While the East Woodfield HCD Plan (1992) was established after the Planning Act came into force and effect, it was written before the first PPS was issued (in 1997), and does not find guidance in a PPS.

1.6.2.4  The Ontario Heritage Toolkit

The Ontario Heritage Toolkit (Government of Ontario 2006) is different from the other guiding government texts presented here in that it serves primarily as a guide for “municipal staff, heritage committee members and heritage community groups” (Government of Ontario 2006, p. 1) who are considering developing an HCD plan. The guide provides an overview of the concept and practice of HCD designation, the benefits, legislation and practical advice on the preparation of a plan and guidelines, and the ultimate management of an HCD.
The toolkit also addresses more thoroughly the criteria by which potential HCDs should be considered, answering the fundamental questions of what makes an HCD unique, and how municipalities may identify them:

Municipalities and communities choose to designate HCDs to conserve their heritage character. The cultural heritage value of individual sites can be expressed in terms of their design or physical, historical or associative or contextual values. The values that contribute to the character of heritage conservation districts may be expressed more broadly as natural, historic, aesthetic, architectural, scenic, scientific, cultural, social or spiritual values. (Government of Ontario 2006, p. 10)

Although the toolkit acknowledges that each district will be created for unique reasons, many have common characteristics, including:

- A concentration of heritage buildings, sites, structures; designed landscapes, natural landscapes that are linked by aesthetic, historical and socio-cultural contexts or use;

- A framework of structured elements including major natural features such as topography, land form, landscapes, water courses and built form such as pathways and street patterns, landmarks, nodes or intersections, approaches and edges;

- A sense of visual coherence through the use of such elements as building scale, mass, height, material, proportion, colour, etc. that convey a distinct sense of time or place;

- A distinctiveness which enables districts to be recognised and distinguishable from their surroundings or from neighbouring areas (Government of Ontario 2006, p. 9).

As such, while districts will vary, often dramatically, in their overall make-up and specific features, there are consistencies across the province (see also Appendix A).

Ultimately the government text that directly guides conservation and change within a specific, local London HCD is the Heritage Conservation District Plan. This is the ultimate product of the HCD policy framework, and while each City produces it in unique ways (e.g. consultants or Planning staff, City Council only, Advisory Committee input), the resulting plan is voted on by the local City Council, and enshrined in by-laws that then
guide and directly influence planning decisions within the district. The process of designation is laid out in Figure 1.

1.6.2.5 The HCD designation process

While there are minor differences in the process as it applied to the creation of the East and West Woodfield plans, overall the process has remained relatively unchanged. The process begins with a request or proposal to dedicate the district. This may come from anyone in the community (e.g. a neighbour, a local historian or historic society, Planning staff, a City Councillor). In practice in London, and certainly in the two HCDs discussed here, this request has come from residents living near or within the proposed districts, in coordination with their local community association.

City Planning staff, including the Heritage Planner, become involved at this stage and offer guidance to the community as they consider preliminary boundaries and reasons for designation. If the preliminary boundaries and reasons for designation are deemed sufficient, staff puts forward a recommendation to City Council to authorise a Heritage Conservation District Study. If City Council votes yes, the Municipal Heritage Committee is consulted. In London, this advisory committee is referred to as the LACH or London Advisory Committee on Heritage (formerly the LACAC or London Architectural Conservation Advisory Committee). The study then commences.
Figure 11: The HCD Designation Process. (Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport 2006)
In London, a consulting firm is usually engaged by the City to conduct the study (Unterman McPhail Cuming Associates for the East Woodfield HCD; Stantec for the West Woodfield HCD). A limited number of local residents and other interested citizens from outside of the neighbourhood are given an opportunity to sit on the steering committee, which works with the consultants throughout the process. They consider the character of the study area, with a focus on physical structures, buildings and other features, along with the historic context. They recommend boundaries and objectives for the HCD. The findings and recommendations arising from the study are then presented to City Council, and a decision is made as to whether to proceed with designation. If City Council again votes yes, the plan and guidelines are prepared, presented to the public, and a final vote at City Council is made as to whether or not to designate the area. By-laws are passed and made public, and if there are no objections (to the Ontario Municipal Board) then the plan and guidelines are adopted, and the plans come into effect.

It is important to note that although some residents are involved in the initial recommendations and may join the steering committee as the plan is developed, following designation there is no official role for those living in these districts in the interpretation and enforcement of the plans. In London, this power transfers to City Planners and Heritage Planners, the London Advisory Committee on Heritage and ultimately City Council. Any ongoing citizen involvement is less formal (e.g. lobbying City Councillors, speaking at public meetings) or adversarial (e.g. complaints in the press, Ontario Municipal Board challenges). While the community is actively engaged in the creation of the plans, ongoing interpretation and enforcement can vary year to year and City Council to City Council, and the residents are left with no formal control over this interpretation. This loss of influence over a process initiated by the residents themselves is one way in which these texts effect the placement of power in the HCD process, and one that I will return to throughout this dissertation.
1.7 Thesis outline

This thesis is written as a single manuscript, and is the result of a grounded theory qualitative research approach. It is comprised of 8 chapters. This first chapter has introduced this research, provided some background, and explained the community and policy context for the thesis, including the reasons for the selection of Woodfield as the neighbourhood of interest.

Chapter 2 provides a review of the relevant literature. This chapter begins with an overview of sense of place and place branding. A review of the concepts of gentrification and community identities is also provided, considering their role in HCD place making, and the potential for place destruction. This chapter concludes with an introduction to the model of creative destruction put forward by Mitchell (e.g. 1998, 2000, 2001, 2009), advanced by others, and revised in the final chapter of this dissertation.

Chapter 3 explains my research methods and design. A review of grounded theory, and how this qualitative approach was applied to the research precedes a detailed discussion of the discourse analysis of relevant government texts, depth interviews with HCD residents (including participant recruitment), and depth interviews with City of London Planners engaged in the creation and enforcement of the HCD government texts. I also consider the complexities of interviewing for sense of place and strategies for doing so effectively. As I have lived and worked in Woodfield for many years, this chapter also provides the reader with my position statement, and considers the researcher as instrument. The chapter ends with a reflection on the impacts that my dual role as insider researcher and resident may have had on the manuscript.

Chapters 4, 5 and 6 summarise the findings from my discourse analysis of the government texts that guide conservation and change within the HCDs, and provide an analysis of the depth interviews with HCD residents (Figure 1m). Chapter 4 follows the theme of place discourses about sense of place and place branding. Chapter 5 considers
the community aspects of place, and Chapter 6 turns to the physical aspects of place. In all three chapters, data from the discourse analysis of government texts and depth interviews is presented alongside other data sources, to provide local indicators of place destruction in support of these findings.

Figure 1m: Some residents of Woodfield enjoying the Historic Woodfield Street Fair. (Woodfield Community Association photo archive with art effect by author)

Chapter 7 summarises these findings and presents conclusions. Suggestions for policy changes and future research are also provided, with input from depth interviews with three City of London Planners, who have been engaged in the creation and enforcement of these districts. At this stage in the research, a grounded theory approach led to the development of my revised theory of the creative destruction of place.
Finally, Chapter 8 puts forward this revised theory: the creative destruction of place in a Heritage Conservation District. This theory builds on the work of Mitchell and others. References, appendices and a curriculum vitae round out the manuscript.

In this thesis, I move beyond the economic considerations of district conservation and the level of satisfaction experienced by those living in these HCDs. Through a discourse analysis of the relevant government texts, depth interviews with HCD residents, and triangulation with other data sources I map the sense of place experienced by residents, and consider how this is created, perpetuated and challenged. I draw linkages between the government texts that guide conservation and change in these districts, and the expressed attachment to community and the physical aspects of place, as reported by residents. Through a grounded theory approach, I let the data speak for itself wherever possible, and guide the development of theory.
Chapter 2

2 PLACE, GENTRIFICATION, COMMUNITY IDENTITIES AND CREATIVE DESTRUCTION

2.1 Introduction

Sense of place is mentioned prominently and explicitly in the highest levels of the policy framework that guides the creation and enforcement of Heritage Conservation Districts (HCDs) in Ontario. It will be shown that this concept, however, is poorly defined in these texts, providing little guidance for the designation of specific HCDs. While the maintenance of sense of place is heralded as a benefit of designation (The Ontario Heritage Toolkit 2006), there are no specific guidelines provided for how to achieve this. As a result, this language is generally absent in the local HCD plans. This is important, because as de Wit has argued:

Place meanings, and sense of place in particular, have a profound influence on residents’ sense of community and personal identity. Events, policies, or decisions that impact that intangible sense of place can result in very tangible political, social, and economic ramifications. (de Wit 2013, p. 139)

Sense of place is a particularly complicated concept in the context of an historic neighbourhood. By nature, it is shaped by connections to a long-standing and contested physical place: a place imbued with historic meaning that appeals to those beyond the boundaries of the neighbourhood itself, and a place that means different things to different residents. Generally found in core areas, the parallel opportunities for conservation and change are constantly at odds.

The process of designating an historic core neighbourhood as an HCD only complicates this further, adding new regulations and guidance that may enhance or challenge the existing residential sense of place. Residential sense of place has been defined by Billig as “formed by the subjective feelings and patterns of behavior” resulting from relations
amongst residents “and from their attitude towards the physical aspects of the residential environment” (2005, p. 118).

In this review, I will consider sense of place and the associated concept of place branding in the context of HCD designation. This thesis will demonstrate that the process of HCD designation privileges certain physical aspects of a neighbourhood. Designation is an act of place branding; one generally concerned with “conserving, managing and protecting the district’s heritage features” (East Woodfield HCD Plan 1992, p. 1-1) and those aspects of a place that “contribute to the streetscape as a whole” (West Woodfield HCD Plan, 2008, p 2.1). The act of creating or renewing a place brand through HCD designation will therefore encourage (and discourage) certain fundamental physical aspects of the place itself. It will be shown that in so doing, this process also privileges certain residents over others in various implicit and explicit ways.

In this context, place branding through HCD designation is closely tied to the concept of gentrification, privileging one type of built form over another in ways that ultimately benefit certain residents over others. HCD designation has been shown, for example, throughout the literature to exert a neutral to positive impact on sales prices. As one group benefits, another may face difficulty, and the act of designation therefore has the potential to encourage or accelerate gentrification. This review will consider this potential as well, and reflect on the relevance of community identities to this discussion.

This act of place branding through HCD designation is a process of creative destruction. As one place is created, to varying degrees the older place is destroyed. As such, this review will ultimately turn to Mitchell’s model of creative destruction (e.g. 1998; 2000; 2001; 2009). Mitchell developed this model over many years and in different heritage places to explain a process of entrepreneurialism, the commodification of heritage and the eventual destruction of what she referred to as the rural idyll in heritage shopping villages. While quite different from the less commodified residential heritage districts at the heart of this dissertation, Mitchell’s work will ultimately lay the groundwork for a
revised theory of place destruction, presented in the final chapter of this thesis. To begin, I will first consider the concepts of place, and sense of place.

\section*{2.2 Place, and sense of place}

Place, and the related concept of sense of place, are central to this dissertation. Although place has been the subject of decades of research by cultural geographers, planners, sociologists and others, it remains a vague and contested concept. In considering place, many geographers first turn to the writings of Tuan (1977), who explored the oppositional nature of space and place, including how certain places are imbued with a reverence for the past, and how we are rooted to such places – a relationship central to this dissertation. Foundationally, Tuan defined places as locations in space that derive their meaning through human experience.

The concept is broad though, and this can result in a lack of clarity about what a researcher intends by using the word. While Tuan’s focus on the human experience is helpful, more is required. Moving from the abstract to the specific is one way to clarify the concept. In Cresswell’s Place: An Introduction, the distinction between spaces and places is made through examples of each:

\begin{quote}
A child’s room, an urban garden, a market town, New York City, Kosovo and the Earth … What makes them all places and not simply a room, a garden, a town, a world city, a new nation, and an inhabited planet? One answer is that they are all spaces which people have made meaningful. They are all spaces people are attached to in one way or another. This is the most straightforward and common definition of a place – a meaningful location (Cresswell 2014, p. 7).
\end{quote}

Here Cresswell refers to the work of Agnew (1987) who outlined the fundamental aspects of place as a meaningful location. Meaning, then, is one central and generally agreed upon aspect of place throughout the literature (e.g. Relph 1976; Tuan 1977; Agnew 1987; Sack 1997).
Much of what defines place, though, is contested, and the concept is “constantly evolving, as over time places are reconstituted with new meaning, reflecting for example urban dynamics, evolving sociocultural perceptions, or significant events” (Jenkins et al 2016, p. 20). In revisiting his own earlier seminal work, Place and Placelessness (1976), Relph considers this evolution, and finds that over time the concept of place has taken on a global meaning, and is increasingly seen as “a fundamental aspect of being, and that being is always articulated in and through particular places, yet reaches out beyond them to grasp what it means to exist in the world” (2008, preface).

Places, then, are complex by nature, and “include the physical setting, human activities, human social processes and psychological evaluations, such as identity, dependence, and attachment rooted in the setting” (Stedman 2006, p. 188). Places are more than locations in space, and while the setting itself is a key aspect of place, the human connections to that setting and the people within it are what transform a space into a place (McCunn and Gifford 2018). These connections further move us from the broader conception of place to that of a shared sense of place:

Human engagement within a place connects materiality to meaning, in an open and ongoing process, that brings together social, cultural, and natural dimensions of place. The experience of engagement and interaction requires presence (being in) and action (being with), always influenced by physical, historical, social, and cultural aspects that, together, contribute to creating a shared sense of place (Campelo et al 2014, p. 155).

The tangible, physical aspects of a place are critical. One’s sense of place is by nature developed relative to a specific physical location (Stedman 2003). Hu and Chen, for example, consider that:

Urban designers and architects play important and determining roles in defining the physical qualities and characteristics of a place. In fact, [sense of place] is a guiding principle in designing the built environment for sustainability and livability (2018, p. 2).
Sense of place, though, is multidimensional and implies a relationship between those in the place and the setting itself (Abou-Shouk et al. 2017). Sense of place describes both “an emotional connection to a physical environment” but also the “values, symbols, and cultural meanings ascribed to the place” (McCunn and Gifford 2018, p. 209). The concept is often considered in three related ways: place attachment, or the affective bonds between people and places; place dependence, or how a place serves a person’s actions and behaviour; and place identity, or how a place can be significant for a person's identity (Christiaanse and Haartsen 2017, p. 328). Christiaanse and Haartsen relate these to affective, conative and structural components of an attitude structure, which is “useful in explaining reactions to place change” (2017, p. 328).

Such changes to a place are most acutely perceived by those who reside in that place. Hay has noted that “the development of a sense of place is particularly influenced by residential status” (1998, p. 5). As noted, residential sense of place has been defined by Billig as “formed by the subjective feelings and patterns of behavior” resulting from relations amongst residents “and from their attitude towards the physical aspects of the residential environment” (2005, p. 118). This conception of sense of place broadly along physical and community lines is useful for this grounded research. Stedman found that while visitors may form attachments based on the more physical aspects of place, resident, or “year-rounder attachment is rooted in social networks and community meanings” (2006, p. 187). The two are of course related, and as McCunn and Gifford remind us “individuals who feel a strong sense of place for an urban environment also tend to recall more physical features that make it meaningful” (2018, p. 214).

Puren, Roos and Coetzee consider that “an overemphasis of physical space (the spatial setting in which sense of place is shaped) may culminate in a general lack of acknowledgment of places as symbolic contexts that incorporate implicit phenomena of people-place relationships” (2018, p. 18). As this dissertation will show, however, Heritage Conservation District (HCD) plans are concerned almost exclusively with the physical aspects of place. This is not surprising, for while there is some limited resident
involvement in their creation, the HCD plans are generally written and managed by outsiders (see Chapter 1: Introduction and community context). I will now explore sense of place in the context of HCDs.

2.2.1 Sense of place in a Heritage Conservation District

As North American cities grew, and residents moved to the suburbs, many traditional core neighbourhoods slipped into neglect and decline. Early attempts at regeneration tended to focus on “wholesale material change in the face of urban blight” through the razing and rebuilding of these neighbourhoods (Jones & Evans 2012, p. 2316). As historic neighbourhoods were replaced with modern ones, this process often resulted in “nondescript places that are eminently forgettable because of their lack of any real distinguishing features”; a phenomenon defined in the literature as placelessness (Galway & McEldowney 2006, p. 399).

Residents reacted to these changes, and while decisions about urban regeneration had traditionally rested in the hands of professionals, in recent decades residents came to care deeply about their local landscapes and became protective of the sense of place in their communities (Moore-Colyer & Scott 2005). Designated heritage districts emerged as one alternative approach to reconstruction, with the potential to maintain or reawaken the sense of place found within these historic neighbourhoods (Hakim 2007), while still encouraging residential investment and regeneration. The “creation of a sense of place within a small urban nucleus to anchor a strong essence of heritage and attract further conservation efforts” (Ouf 2001, p. 75) became a significant aspect of heritage conservation. The literature has repeatedly referenced sense of place as a central concern in heritage landscapes, towns and districts (e.g. Jamal & Hill 2004; Human 2010; Dobson & Selman 2012), and yet the application and use of the concept is underdeveloped from a geographer’s perspective. As will be shown, developing this
concept further will better explain and challenge the processes of HCD creation, management and change.

As the lifecycle of the HCD moves from creation to enforcement, much of the process is driven by those living outside of the HCD. A key characteristic of placelessness is direction from outsiders. If HCD enforcement is directed mostly from above and outside rather than by residents, placelessness may become more pronounced. This may eventually change the existing character of the place (e.g. Mitchell & Coghill 2000; Zukin 2009) to something more non-distinct and less appealing to residents. My dissertation will address this phenomenon theoretically in Chapter 8: The creative destruction of place.

In recent years government texts have come to reflect the importance of sense of place as a feature of HCDs. In Heritage Conservation Districts: A Guide to District Designation under the Ontario Heritage Act for example, it is explicitly stated that “designation allows a community to recognize and commemorate what it values within an area, that contributes to its sense of place” (Ministry of Culture 2006, p. 8). There is, however, a “mismatch between policy rhetoric on the importance of sense of place and the outputs of regeneration schemes which often seem deliberately to efface these affective connections” (Jones and Evans 2012, p. 2315). Jones and Evans contend that if research can uncover the connections that people have to a particular place, there may be opportunities to guide development in ways that respect the values of the existing residents (2012).

Sense of place in an HCD is intimately connected to place branding, as the HCD designation is heavily responsible for promoting and preserving key physical elements of a place that may come to define the brand. The process of place branding, with its potential for the commodification of a place is therefore another important concept to consider here.
2.3 Place branding

In the context of heritage places, place and sense of place are closely linked to the concept of place branding. The connection is relevant to this current research, because often “residents are left aside in the branding process leading to brands that communicate only tacit connections to and simplistic understanding of the sense of the place” (Campelo et al 2014, p. 154).

The concept of branding has emerged as a central component of place promotion. The term branding as it relates generally to products has been defined in many ways. In broad terms, a branded product is made distinctive by positioning it in direct relation to competing products, while highlighting the unique combination of attributes and symbolic associations that add value to that basic product (Kavaratzis & Ashworth 2005). “Brand identity, brand positioning and brand image” are related concepts, and represent a spectrum from the way that the creators intend for the brand to be perceived (brand identity), through the communication of the competitive value of the brand to a target group (brand positioning), to the way in which the brand is actually perceived by the consumer (brand image) (Kavaratzis & Ashworth 2005, p. 508). These concepts of identity, positioning and image also carry importance for the marketing of places, and this has led in part to the adoption of branding in place promotion.

A place brand is created, and regardless of authenticity at the time of creation, the brand may be reinforced and reified due to its benefits to businesses or residential housing prices. This “recursive mechanism” that reinforces “particular places as centres of social activity” (Currid and Williams 2010, p. 425) may influence the decisions of businesses and individuals with an interest in this image, who may relocate to the branded place.

To date, branding at the neighbourhood level has been the subject of less research than branding at the national or city level. Branding does however occur in neighbourhoods, for like nations and cities, “neighbourhoods must develop community institutions and
tools (such as branding) that address the challenges and opportunities that emanate from market forces” (Johansson and Cornebise 2010, p. 189).

In relation to the broader city, neighbourhood branding can perhaps work best as a tool of residential retention, once larger scale branding efforts have succeeded in bringing in these new citizens. We may focus too narrowly when we only look outward to implications of such branding for investment and tourism. Branding can also be a tool for “achieving community development, reinforcing local identity and identification of the citizens with their city” (Ashworth and Kavaratzis 2010, p. 7).

To achieve this, as suggested by Gert-Jan Hospers (2011), perhaps the gaze of place branding needs to be refocused somewhat, to include a more inward-looking approach. He suggests that in an era of global competition it may be more useful to focus on retaining those place customers already at home in a given place. Hospers (2011) reminds us that the effect of places on people is greater than the effect of products. For most people, home carries an emotional attachment, a sense of place. If a place brand feels inauthentic to existing residents, it may not only risk failure on a global stage, but may lose touch with those residents already in place.

Resident buy-in is important, notably so in neighbourhood settings. Hudson, Cardenas and Meng note that “If the local community agrees with the image projected of their place of residence, they will ‘live the brand’” and that “by developing a close connection with the place brand, they are more likely to hold a positive attitude toward the brand” (2017, p. 365). This is a theme that will emerge in the chapters ahead.

Place branding in the context of this research specifically relates to the symbolic and material practices of neighbourhood branding, in that it “aim[s] to enhance the appeal of local areas within the city in order to attract investment, promote consumption, reduce criminality, or to achieve social and cultural aims such as invoking civic pride (Masuda and Bookman 2018, p. 166, emphasis added). Heritage preservation falls within this agenda of social and cultural aims, and among other things has the potential
to increase pride of place. Masuda and Bookman see such “branding as a primary enabler of urban gentrification and dispossession” (2018, p.165) a theme that will emerge ahead in this dissertation. I will turn now then to consider place branding in the context of an HCD.

2.3.1 Place branding in a Heritage Conservation District

The government texts reviewed in the previous chapter define and guide enforcement of the boundaries and physical aspects of an HCD. As outlined above, this process will privilege certain parts of a neighbourhood, and certain physical aspects of a place. While most of the related literature is concerned with the explicit and purposeful branding of places, the creation of an HCD is somewhat unique, in that the branding aspects are secondary to the conservation mandate, and may even emerge as a side-effect of the designation process, rather than as an intended consequence. Purposefully or not though, designation contributes to the creation or renewal of a residential place brand.

In the complex context of a designated HCD, the clear and simple image that branding generally benefits from may be difficult to achieve. The foundational work of Anholt challenges us to question whether places even benefit from such simplicity of image (2010). This point is well made, and geographers see a place brand as only one part of the more complex concept of sense of place. Places are not generally clear and simple. Places are instead rich and varied, and the history, functions and symbolism of a place and its residents may be in constant flux, and vary greatly internally. While brands, by their nature tend to oversimplify, locking in on one simple brand image cannot fully capture the complex reality of a place.

If a place brand is imposed, feels inauthentic, or misrepresents the place, it may alienate those residents already there. Overlooked in this process are the ways in which “places evoke feelings among individuals as a result of the memories, experiences or routines
associated with these locations” and as such, “it is hard to re-launch a place” (Hospers 2011, p. 372). Successful examples are generally guided by the residents themselves. The concept of branding in an HCD, and the associated challenges, will be considered ahead in this dissertation.

Flawed though it may be, the brand concept implicitly or explicitly remains central to the process of HCD designation. Certainly, an HCD as seen through the developer’s lens of commodification would benefit greatly from a clear recognizable brand. Stern and Hall note that the economic potential of heritage areas, especially for tourism, has made place branding a common practice in their development, but questions arise as to “who owns or shapes the message” (2010, p. 212), and to what end?

Despite these concerns, place branding can benefit residents, encouraging the cohesiveness of neighbourhoods through clear connections to a shared place with shared values. Place branding, for better or worse, is intimately linked to sense of place within HCDs, and it is important to understand who holds the power in its determination. As such, geographical research must consider both the direction and impacts of these power relationships.

The privileging of an HCD, or aspects of the HCD, will ultimately impact those who can and cannot live there. This leads us to consider the forces of inclusion and exclusion that are fostered within such places. In the HCD context this may be made manifest through gentrification, with its related potential for displacement of both people and land uses in neighbourhoods with HCDs. In the next sections I will consider gentrification alongside the connected concept of community identities, or place identities in the context of neighbourhoods.
2.4 Gentrification

The term *gentrification* was coined in the 1960s by Ruth Glass, a British sociologist. Glass observed the conversion of working class homes into homes of the *gentry*, or those of high social class. Initiated by a small number of home purchasers who saw potential in inner-city housing, Glass described a process that would spread rapidly until most of the lower-class residents were displaced, resulting in wholesale changes to the local social character of the effected districts (Glass, 1964). Initially this was a phenomenon generally identified within large city centres such as New York, London or Toronto. Over time the phenomenon was observed by other researchers in smaller urban centres, and around the globe.

Even though the phenomenon has been studied for some time, “as inevitable as gentrification now seems in most cities of the world, it takes you by surprise” (Zukin 2016, p. 202). Before a neighbourhood, attracts its first gentrifiers, a loss of services and deteriorating housing stock may cause many to view such areas as *too far gone*. The somewhat sudden and renewed interest of property investors can therefore be unexpected, even 50 years after Glass coined the phrase. In many cases though, low house prices and proximity to core areas eventually do attract such investments, causing prices to rise, and fundamental aspects of social or ethnic fabric of the place to become altered.

When gentrification reaches this point, people tend to say it was inevitable. But it is not. There are failed examples and limited cases where visible signs of gentrification—say, artists’ studios, or espresso bars do not expand in scope and scale to change a neighborhood’s reputation. Or it may take a very long time for them to do so. What really makes gentrification possible is a convergence toward geographically targeted investment on the part of private capital and public policy makers (Zukin 2016, p. 203).

For the current study this emphasis of the role of private capital combined with public policy is of particular interest, as the HCD designation process involves both.
In contemporary gentrification research, attention has turned to more global impacts, concerning forces of globalisation and neololiberalism. Gentrification is seen by some contemporary authors as ‘‘a global urban strategy’ linked to a new globalism and a related new urbanism’’ (Lees, Slater and Wyly 2008, p. 163). These authors see modern urban policy as expressing capitalist impulses rather than social ones, and point to the change in scale from North American and European cities to a world-wide phenomenon (e.g. Smith 2002). Policies that encourage gentrification are but one example of this.

While earlier gentrification research may be fairly criticized for being somewhat parochial, and narrowly applicable to large urban centres, this too is changing. Comparative work is pushing the concept into new territory. For example, Bernt considers that “gentrification studies are currently facing a period of intensive reorientation” and that, encouragingly “gentrification research has not only been comparative for decades, but also that it [has] employed a broad range of comparative tactics reaching from individualizing, via variation-finding and encompassing, towards universalizing variants of comparison” (2018, p. 31). The author considers the work of Phillips and Smith (2018) that compare the urban and rural manifestations of the concept. Bernt notes that rural gentrification is in fact just one such example, and that research is moving in manifold directions, including new build gentrification, commercial gentrification, tourist gentrification, studentification, and retail gentrification, along with “other forms of upgrading which do not follow the traditional demographic, cultural and spatial patterns known from early gentrification studies” (2018, p. 34).

For the purposes of this dissertation though, an earlier concept of gentrification, closer to that of Glass (1964) remains appropriate. The heritage districts that are the focus of this research remain very much like the places that Glass was concerned with – those of inner city housing in decline. This decline is in fact often the very spark that ignites the desire to designate a district. Freeman identifies changes to the more recent conception of gentrification in this way:
This latest wave of gentrification may also be qualitatively different inasmuch as the 1970s to 1980s gentrification was much more closely tied to the physical renovation of dilapidated housing. ... The recent wave of gentrification, however, may be less attached to renovating older dilapidated housing (Freeman 2016, p. 163).

By definition, though, gentrification in the context of HCDs remains within this earlier conception, occurring as it does in predominantly “inner-city neighborhoods that have a stock of deteriorated but potentially fine old housing and a supply of young professional families eager to restore it” (Goldberger, 1971, p. 1 quoted in Freeman 2016, p. 163). I will now consider the concept of gentrification within this specific context.

2.4.1 Gentrification in the context of HCD Designation

A concern for economic factors lies at the heart of much of the academic discourse about heritage conservation. The impacts of conservation on the value of the designated properties, the costs of maintaining these properties, the economic spinoff in the local community, and other related concerns have been the focus of a great deal of research. This is not surprising, for as is true for most North Americans, a home is the largest single purchase that the HCD homeowner will make in their lives.

Heritage conservation, in both district and non-district settings has been shown to have a generally positive economic impact. The benefit is enjoyed primarily by the property owner (see Chapter 1: Introduction and community context), but also by others in the district and beyond through spin-off effects, including increased city revenues through higher taxes, and job growth through local service opportunities. In recent decades, this has been an important message to get out for those who care about heritage conservation.

In my experience, many developers and speculators have been skeptical, and some certainly remain so, voicing concerns for the effects of greater regulation and restrictions in designated districts on their bottom line. This has frequently led to
arguments based on a false dichotomy, positioning heritage conservation in opposition to the economic stability of the property as an asset. A wide body of research has emerged to show that this concern has been largely misplaced (e.g. Ijla, Ryberg Roesntraub and Bowen 2011; Kovacs, Shipley, Snyder & Stupart 2008; Mason 2005; Schaeffer & Millerick 1991; Shipley 2000; Shipley, Jonas & Kovacs 2011). As research linking heritage conservation to stability, and even growth, in property values has continued, heritage advocates have applauded. Homeowners, they argue, should embrace designation, not only for the sake of heritage conservation but as a way of protecting their asset.

What is often lost in this discussion is that while one group benefits, another may face difficulty. It is here that the discussion of HCD designation blends into the longstanding research on the topic of gentrification. While much has been written on this topic since it was coined by Glass, research in Heritage Conservation Districts in Ontario has less frequently considered the interplay between HCD designation and gentrification explicitly. This is important work, for HCD designation may impact those in the neighbourhood who do not benefit alongside homeowners, in ways that may not be anticipated.

As noted, the gentrification is now a global process, and is “often concealed behind terminology like regeneration, social mixing or even urban sustainability” (Ley and Dobson 2007, p. 2471). In the context of historic central city areas, gentrification has been described as a “dramatic shift in ... demographic composition toward better educated and more affluent residents”, but community activists have cautioned that it can lead to “lower-income households [being] vulnerable to displacement resulting from redevelopment projects or rising rents” (Freeman and Braconi 2004, p. 39). There is both a cost and benefit side to gentrification. The importance of gentrification in the revitalisation and restoration of neighbourhoods, especially in the inner city has been observed around the world (Ashworth 2002, p. 22). It is also, however, a force known to “change the cultural landscape in a way that alienates long-time residents and makes it
difficult for them to sustain their ethnic or social community” (Zukin 2016, p. 205). Gentrification is then, at heart “a struggle of contending interests vying for control”, and potentially a “tremendous disruption of community life” (Betancur 2002, p. 780). In the context of the designated district, this is complicated by the potential that increased property values and increased renovation costs may provide further hardship and exclusion (Howell 2008, p. 554)

While the public discourse about HCDs in Ontario remained largely concerned with the potential for property value loss, gentrification was not generally front of mind. It has even been argued at times (including by this author) that designation might potentially hold gentrification at bay, by keeping housing price increases in check and maintaining all sizes of housing for all people, through strict regulations on demolition. Now that the tide has turned, and research has predominantly painted a picture of benefits to the home owner and investor, we must reconsider what all this means for those who see the districts not primarily as an investment, but simply as a home.

Authors who have done the heavy lifting in past research are aware of this. Mason, for example, reviews the economic impacts of conservation in a very positive light, advising the reader that “nearly any way the effects are measured, be they direct or indirect, historic preservation tends to yield significant benefits to the economy” (2005, executive summary). Notably though, he also cautions that there is more to this relationship than meets the eye, and that many challenges persist. I will return to these challenges in the context of gentrification below, but will first explore some of the perceived benefits discussed in the literature.

2.4.2 Who benefits: The economic impacts of historic conservation

At the highest civic levels, the literature makes it clear that district conservation is of interest to our cities and neighbourhoods. Spinoff benefits work their way up from the individual home owner, with economic benefits for neighbourhoods, local businesses,
cities and beyond. Neighbourhoods benefit as a whole from heritage designation, which “contributes to the prestige of the neighbourhood, and makes it politically more difficult for governments to neglect the area” (Schaeffer & Millerick 1991, p.304). Even without district designation, undesignated homes in the same neighbourhood as designated properties appear to benefit from their proximity, expressed in higher sale prices (Coulson & Leichenko 2004, p. 1588).

For local businesses, especially in the historic core, competition with outlying shopping centres has become a difficult reality. A successfully designated district may become a destination for local residents, acting as a “powerful marketing tool for local business, attracting customers to the look and feel of an area” (Shipley & Snyder 2013, p.316) and mitigating the lure of the smart centre. The very process of renovation of historic buildings can prove economically beneficial to local businesses. The need for repair and custom construction is often more easily met by local contractors with experience in the specific local housing stock of their city (Shipley & Snyder 2013). This effect is reciprocal, as the local presence of those holding these skills has a “direct impact on the quality of conservation work” (Shipley & Reeve 2010, p. 235). It is likely then that a healthy stock of designated heritage buildings will breed a solid base of local businesses to service it, with benefits accruing for both.

Another potential key beneficiary of designation is the City itself, which profits in numerous ways. One obvious benefit comes directly from the related increased property tax revenue (Ijla, Ryberg Roesntraub & Bowen 2011, p. 278). Historic conservation has also been shown to have a positive impact on job creation (Gilderbloom, Hanka & Ambrosius 2009). In New Jersey for instance, Mason (2005) tells us that investments in historic conservation outperform both new building construction and highway construction in terms of jobs. He notes that “nearly any way the impacts are measured – generation of jobs, income, state and local tax revenues – historic preservation exceeds other sectors” (Mason 2005, p. 8).
District designation holds value as an important tool for allowing a rapidly changing city to cling to the architecture that defines it, and hold on to the characteristics that make it unique (Shipley & Snyder 2013). Tourism is therefore a related spinoff benefit of historic conservation for the city at large. The conservation of historic resources adds to the uniqueness of a place, and the designation of sites and districts provides a vital tourism draw that can “stimulate local economies” (Gilderbloom, Hanka & Ambrosius 2009, p. 85).

If anything, there is concern in the literature for taking this too far. There is a danger that communities will eventually over-capitalise on presumed benefits, searching for what Ijla, Ryberg Roesntraub and Bowen (2011, p. 278) refer to as a “silver bullet”. The authors caution that the stock of historic housing is limited, that not every neighbourhood is historic, and that the designation of entire cities would not be an effective tool for raising property values (Ijla, Ryberg Roesntraub & Bowen 2011). Imagine for a moment the entirely designated city. Important opportunities within the city would be left unrealized if properties in most key areas of commerce within the city were heavily protected. Many businesses require flexible space and purpose-built environments that are difficult to accommodate in historic buildings. Unless the economic benefits of heritage-related businesses were substantial, the city could suffer the fate of a single industry town, as those with more specific property needs would look elsewhere.

Despite these cautions, the literature generally points to many economic spinoff benefits of district designation for the broader community. To designate a district however, it is first important to convince existing homeowners that they too will realise benefits.
2.4.3 How we got here: The economics of conservation for property owners

Decades ago, in 1991, Schaeffer and Millerick presented an empirical study of two heritage districts in Chicago which focussed on the impact of designation on property values. The authors considered that for the owner of a heritage designated home, returns went far beyond the financial. Generally, owners choose a heritage home because they also enjoy the more personal benefits of the purchase, including pride of ownership, and the enjoyment of a specific vintage or architectural style. Ideally though, a home should serve as both a lifestyle and financial asset, and the long-term viability of the designation movement is likely best served if benefits are to be found in both areas. The authors found that heritage designation significantly increased sales prices, notably at a time in which the “general trend in the study area was one of declining sales prices” (Schaeffer & Millerick 1991, p. 311).

More recently Ijla, Ryberg Roesntraub and Bowen examined the same issue in 2011, about twenty years after Shaeffer and Millerick (1991). Their research quantitatively assessed “the impact of local historic district designations on the enhancement of residential property values (measured by sales price)” (Ijla, Ryberg Roesntraub and Bowen 2011, p. 264). This paper’s substantial, and novel contributions include a multi-city comparative analysis (in the United States), and the addition of a variable for the position of a home in either a declining or growing city. Again, the authors found that “in all six locations, homes in the designated historic district had higher sales prices, at statistically significant levels, compared with homes in comparable (non-designated) neighbourhoods” (Ijla, Ryberg Roesntraub & Bowen 2011, p. 277).

A similar connection between designation and higher sale prices has been found in the Ontario context (Kovacs, Shipley, Snyder & Stupart 2008; Shipley 2000; Shipley, Jonas & Kovacs 2011). One study from Ontario, believed to be the largest North American study of its kind, found that 59% of designated properties performed better than the average property in their communities and that only a quarter of the homes investigated
underperformed the market average (Shipley 2000). Overall the picture is compelling, and it is notable that this positive relationship is seen in studies of both individually designated properties (e.g. Shipley 2000) and properties designated as part of larger districts (e.g. Ijla, Ryberg Roesntraub & Bowen 2011).

It is important to also look carefully at dissenting outlier researchers, that see the relationship to property value differently from most of the studies. Although they are fewer in number, they offer deeper insights into what is happening under the hood regarding the economics of designation in the context of property values. Sharpe, for example, examined “almost 1500 house sales in St. John’s Newfoundland between 1982 and 2004” and “failed to find clear-cut evidence of a generic heritage premium” (2006, p. 195). While he found that mean prices were higher in the designated district, he attributed this to their size and quality, and noted that their rates of increase were not above homes outside the district. Sharpe speculates that it is weak enforcement and even abandonment of district regulations that has contained potential economic benefits in St. John’s (Sharpe 2006). This argument would surprise many opponents of historic conservation who often argue that tougher enforcement of regulations will scare off investors and stall growth.

Ashworth points to numerous difficulties that he sees at the root of the troubled relationship between historic conservation and economics, a relationship he describes as “at best uncomfortable and at worst founded on fundamental misunderstanding” (Ashworth 2002, p.11). The difficulties are presented in detail, but I will consider one which is of value in the current discussion. Within a section on problems related to heritage investment, Ashworth notes that a preserved building, generally requiring a great deal of investment to restore it to an appropriate state for use, will repay benefits over its lifetime. The restrictions and lost opportunities for alternate use however fall disproportionately on the head of the current owner. What makes this situation unusual among such investments is that conservation constraints are often “suddenly and externally imposed” (Ashworth 2002, p.13), such as when an HCD is designated and
immediately comes into force and effect for those already living there. Homeowners with deep pockets will likely ride this out, but those with fewer resources who are already in the neighbourhood at the time of designation may not be able to keep up with these increased costs of compliance, and may be pushed out. Enforcement of heritage by-laws acts then both as a protection of the economic asset, and a potential burden on the lower income home owner.

The benefits to the district more generally are quite clear. Not only has higher satisfaction been found in districts with stricter enforcement but “it also appears that consistent enforcement results in higher property value increases” (Shipley 2000, p. 633). This makes sense, for if City Councils allow changes to fundamental aspects of designated homes through incongruous designs and inappropriate material choices, the benefits of district designation may erode. Those who live in the district may be less likely to follow the rules if others do not. More importantly, those who are considering a purchase in the district would have little faith that any benefits stemming from high standards of maintenance and design will bear fruit. With such uncertainty, the property purchase becomes one like any other, and the prices and increases may adjust to reflect that.

It is therefore somewhat paradoxically beneficial to the higher income homeowner to support these minimum standards, for while the higher maintenance costs may be a burden in the short term, in the long run they protect the aesthetic quality of the neighbourhood and home itself, and therefore the asset price. For the lower income homeowner though, this burden may be too much to bear.

2.4.4 At what cost: Beyond the homeowner

As noted earlier, Schaeffer and Millerick have speculated that “historic district designation may serve a function similar to a designer label: it guarantees the quality of the merchandise, reducing... uncertainty” (1991, p. 311). Some existing residents can
afford this designer label, but others are unable to keep up. Pushed away from their older core neighbourhoods now labelled *historic*, they must find a home elsewhere. If they are pushed away from core resources and jobs, and lack the funds needed in more car-centric parts of the city, these residents may face increases in transportation costs and loss of time due to long commutes. As described above, this is a form of gentrification, which places these and other negative impacts of increased property values disproportionately on the shoulders of poorer residents.

Again, this position is contested. In their study of the impacts of historic conservation on neighbourhood change, Coulson and Leichenko (2004) found that revitalization was at times the driving motivation behind neighbourhood conservation. The authors measured various indicators of change however and found that the “overriding conclusion is that historical designation does not lead to gentrification, or any other kind of neighbourhood turnover” (Coulson & Leichenko 2004, p. 1598). The authors looked at Fort Worth Texas, and tested the assumption that designation led to gentrification and the displacement of poorer residents. Ten years on the authors found that in the designated district there had been little demographic change (Coulson & Leichenko 2004).

Gains do not come from thin air though, and the long-standing research focus on property values may have masked hidden economic costs to certain segments of these neighbourhoods. Perhaps in some places these may not surface in a decade, but the long-term impacts of sustained increases will have an effect. If housing prices increase, eventually, so too, will local rents. As noted, even the lower income *homeowner* can experience negative impacts. Although they may technically benefit from gains in the value of their home, these long-term benefits may yield high short-term costs. Property values are a future gain, but day-to-day issues such as higher property taxes and costs of compliance with heritage by-laws may strain the ability of lower income homeowners to remain in their preferred neighbourhood (Ijla, Ryberg Roesntraub & Bowen 2011).
Historic conservation, especially in districts, is often promoted as a useful tool for neighbourhood uplift in areas of decline. This of course depends on one’s personal definition of uplift. Historic conservation, through the standards mentioned earlier, is a powerful tool for the beautification of a community, but does little to address the deeper issues faced by poorer residents. In the end, designation may contribute to driving them out. This push and pull of competing values is wrapped up in the power structures of neighbourhood level *place identities*, referred to in the literature more specifically as *community identities*.

### 2.5 Community identities in the context of HCD plans

Community identities at the neighbourhood level are constructed in complex ways that both influence, and are influenced by, social, economic and political factors. While the forces of gentrification may privilege home owners over renters and lower income residents in an HCD, this is only one part of a broader concept of community identity. Whether those with more will speak up for, or even consider those with less in the creation and management of HCD plans depends on the depth of connections and the expression of these identities.

#### 2.5.1 The building blocks of neighbourhood-level community identity

As noted above, in the context of neighbourhoods, community identities are place identities, “defined as an interpretation of self that uses environmental meaning to symbolize or situate identity” (Cuba & Hummon 1993, p. 112). The personal and social meanings that neighbourhoods hold for us are what frame the construction and maintenance of these identities (Cuba & Hummon 1993). If concern, for example, for the presence of a mix of people in the neighbourhood is to cross over to action on their part to preserve a place for those with less, connections must move beyond casual,
occasional encounters to a deeper level of engagement. The question then is how connected residents are to those who are demographically different from them, while geographically close.

In exploring the building blocks of neighbourhood-level community identities therefore, it is important to first consider whether we identify our social networks at the neighbourhood community level at all. Foundationally, Wellman & Leighton (1979) presented three arguments from a network perspective. Community lost and community liberated arguments contend that neighbourhood connections have eroded because of industrial bureaucracy, while community saved arguments hold that these connections remain as “important sources of support and sociability” (Wellman & Leighton 1979, p. 373). The authors contend that all three arguments are valid in different contexts. The community saved depiction of “densely knit ties and tight boundaries” (Wellman & Leighton 1979, p. 381) of neighbourhoods may offer a connective basis for the construction of neighbourhood-level community identity, particularly relevant in these older, inner city neighbourhoods. Something beyond geography is needed though, if these densely knit ties are to form.

As identity is grounded in social meaning, the nature of these connections is pivotal. While physical proximity may enable connections, social and economic factors may exclude certain connections within neighbourhoods. The socially mixed inner-city neighbourhood, often associated with early stages of gentrification (Lees 2008), provides a unique opportunity to explore the construction of neighbourhood community identities in the context of social and economic inequalities. Proponents of social mixing tout numerous benefits for poorer residents. These include enhanced local economies; access to networks of better connected neighbours; and the stronger advocacy power of middle class residents. Unfortunately, numerous studies have shown that even if these ends were achievable (which is suspect), mixing doesn’t generally occur (Lees 2008). Even if, as will be demonstrated in this thesis, residents show an appreciation for a mix of people, the literature suggests then that there is likely
little significant interaction between the differing social and economic groups. As a result, any push out of lower income residents may not be immediately recognised by the higher income residents, despite their stated desires to live in a mixed neighbourhood.

May, for example, found that in a socially mixed inner-city London (England) neighbourhood, a “politics of differential mobility” emerged which favored white middle-class newcomers (1996, p. 207). May found that while these pioneer gentrifiers actively sought out neighbourhoods in which they would encounter a social mix, their eventual social and political behaviours did not involve mixing. Instead they adopted the identity of the *flaneur*; one “for whom an interest in difference represents only a new form of cultural capital and the contemporary inner city little more than a colourful backdrop against which to play out a new urban lifestyle” (May 1996, p. 197). The neighbourhood level community identities of residents therefore remained closely tied to class and ‘race’, rather than following the geography of the neighbourhood. This construction of class identity plays out in a different but related way at the edge of gentrified neighbourhoods, where “young white artists and neo-bohemians” (Douglas 2012, p. 3583) distance themselves from the cultural scene of the more established middle-class gentrifiers. In these ways and more, conflicting identities are constructed along social and economic lines within the neighbourhood community.

### 2.5.2 The effects of inclusion and exclusion at the neighbourhood level

The lack of a unifying neighbourhood community identity is not a trivial concern. In the contemporary, socially mixed inner city and elsewhere, social and economic inequalities affect the ability of residents to actively participate in political decision making (Horak & Blokland 2012). Fagotto and Fung explored “initiatives that invite residents to participate directly in urban governance at the neighborhood level” (2006, p. 638) through the fiscal and political empowerment of neighbourhood associations. The
authors found that even these policies tend to reinforce inequalities, through a narrow focus and limited participation from renters and minorities. Only 2% of residents attended neighbourhood meetings to set local priorities, and those remained largely middleclass homeowners with the time and resources to participate (Fagatto & Fung 2006). Goetz and Sidney (1994) found a similar divide between the interests of property owners and renters, coded along lines of class. It should be of little surprise then that beyond the concerns of the propertied, “significant neighbourhood change or social justice” (Harwood 2007, p. 262) is generally unrealized.

I will argue in this thesis that HCD designation may directly contribute to gentrification. As the district improves, and prices increase, lower income renters and homeowners may be pushed out of their neighbourhood, thereby reducing the economic mix of residents. Even if residents indicate an appreciation for such an economically mixed neighbourhood (see Chapter 5: Place discourse: The community aspects of place), whether those with more will speak up for those with less (or even notice) as they are pushed out depends on the depth of connections across economic lines. It is evident in the literature, though, that significant interaction across social and economic lines does not generally occur. If mix is valued only in the ways of the flaneur, but gentrification acts to reduce the appreciated mix, then a significant aspect of place may be destroyed.

This potential for the destruction of key aspects of place, set in motion by the creation of a designated HCD led me to consider the utility of the concept of creative destruction as developed by Mitchell (e.g. 1998; 2000; 2001; 2009). In the following section I will review Mitchell’s model of creative destruction, as the inspiration for my own revised theory of place destruction.

### 2.6 Creative destruction

Starting in the late 1990s, Mitchell developed and refined a model of creative destruction (e.g. 1998; 2000; 2001; 2009). In the decades that followed, other authors
have employed this model to explain changes to similar urban and rural heritage landscapes (e.g. Chang & Huang 2005; Chang, Su & Chang 2011; McMorran 2008). In this section, I will identify the historical origins of the concept of creative destruction, and discuss the model that Mitchell built on this foundation. I will then review and critique the application of this model of creative destruction to various historic villages by Mitchell and others. This discussion will provide the background for Chapter 8: The creative destruction of place, in which a revised model of creative destruction will be presented, based on Mitchell’s foundation and reflecting the theory that emerged in this current research.

The concept of creative destruction originates with Joseph Schumpeter (1942), who used the term to describe the repeating cycle of destruction and (re)creation which he saw as central to capitalism. In this original context, creative destruction refers to the abandonment of products and methods of production perceived as waning in productivity, the profits of which are applied to the creation of newer, more profitable products and methods. This process continues in an endlessly repeating cycle of accumulation (Page 2001). Harvey (1989) later borrowed this concept and applied it to rationale landscapes. Rationale landscapes can be similarly described as product and accumulation centres that are ultimately destroyed as they are rendered obsolete by advances in technology and transportation (Mitchell 1998). The concept is both flexible and compelling, and has been applied in many contexts including “the literal, physical destruction and creation of buildings and natural landscapes in Manhattan” (Page 2001, p. 2), and the “planned acts of wholesale destruction and renewal” of 19th century Montreal street widenings (Gilliland 2002, p. 37).

Mitchell saw this process as “equally applicable to consumption centres such as the heritage shopping village” (1998, p 276). The author put forward a model of creative destruction which was based on entrepreneurialism, the commodification of heritage and the eventual destruction of the rural idyll. This idyll is described as a rural landscape perceived by residents as “happy, healthy, problem free” with “a close social community
and a contiguous natural environment” (Mitchell, Atkinson & Clark 2001, p. 287). The model progresses through five stages, each driven by the activities of entrepreneurs, conservationists and others; supported (or rejected) by the choices of local and visiting consumers; and impacting the attitudes and contentment of residents. Since 1998, Mitchell and others have applied this model to various villages, including St. Jacobs, Elora and Niagara-on-the-Lake in Ontario, Salt Spring Island in British Columbia as well as cities in China and Japan (Mitchell 1998; Mitchell, Atkinson & Clark 2001; Mitchell & Coghill 2000; Halpern & Mitchell 2011; Chang & Huang 2005; Chang, Su & Chang 2011). Mitchell has also revisited this model in St. Jacobs, to update her earlier work there, and make important adjustments (Mitchell & de Waal 2009). I will return to a number of these studies below, but will begin with a brief exploration of the stages of the model itself.

2.6.1 Mitchell’s model of creative destruction

The model of creative destruction is originally described in five stages, and “as a community progresses through these stages, increases occur in investment levels, visitor numbers and negative attitudes towards tourism” (Mitchell, Atkinson & Clark 2001, p. 287). In the first stage of Mitchell’s original model, called early commodification, the creative destruction process begins with the recognition of potential profits in a historic community (Figure 2a). Mitchell identifies the entrepreneurial activity inspired by this potential as “the catalyst for commodification” (1998, p. 277). Local resident reaction may be quite favorable at this stage, since most of the changes are beneficial to the community. Heritage buildings are restored, and businesses open providing local employment and a growing tax base. Significant local changes are underway at this stage, and while the facades of buildings are indeed preserved, their functions begin to change to meet the fledgling tourist market. Shops shift from providing goods geared generally to a local market, to include offerings of
goods and experiences reflecting a theme of local heritage. At this stage, the rural idyll does not diminish (Mitchell, Atkinson & Clark 2001).

![Figure 2a: A model of creative destruction. (Mitchell and Coghill 2000)](image)

Entrepreneurs in a heritage landscape which has entered the second stage of advanced commodification rapidly expand on the “mix of locally crafted products, dining opportunities and experiences that capitalize on the exceptional attributes of the setting” (Halpern & Mitchell 2011, p.213). Tourists who come to these landscapes are still seeking authentic experiences, but their numbers grow in direct response to more advanced and coordinated marketing, and expanded local services (Mitchell & de Waal...
2009). Awareness of negative impacts grows in the attitudes of residents, and there is some destruction of the original rural idyll (Mitchell 1998).

As a community moves into the third stage of the model, referred to as *pre-destruction* (and in later years as *early destruction*) the community finds itself in the full throws of the creative destruction process. “Surplus value is reinvested into businesses that provide for the needs of the expanding visitor population” (Mitchell, Atkinson & Clark 2001, p. 293) and some of these investments begin to diverge from the heritage associations of the place. As investment and tourist numbers increase, congestion increases in step and changes to the original authentic place escalate. Growing numbers of residents begin to sense the destruction of the rural idyll (Mitchell, Atkinson & Clark 2001).

The complacency and resignation of residents regarding the continuing destruction of the community may lead to the fourth stage of the model, called *advanced destruction* (Mitchell 1998). At this point, there are many deviations from the original authentic heritage landscape, and larger scale hotels and entertainment complexes may emerge with weak ties to the original heritage scape. The original sense of village community wanes. Many residents may leave, while “those residents who remain [may] come to accept changes and may opt to seek involvement in the lucrative tourist market” (Mitchell 1998, p. 277). It is here that Mitchell considers the rural idyll to have met its final destruction.

Following this stage, and the complete destruction of the rural idyll, the community enters the stage of *post-destruction*. This is the least predictable stage for Mitchell and others, and may result in the creation of an entirely new place, or perhaps even falling numbers of tourists “as [the] community is no longer unique” (Mitchell & de Waal 2009, p. 157).
2.6.2 A critique of the original model

Mitchell relies in large part on resident attitudes and opinions to track the perceived destruction of the rural idyll. In Mitchell’s first study of St. Jacobs, Ontario, for instance, she uses sources such as resident articles in local newspapers and past resident surveys from other researchers (Mitchell 1998). Returning to the same residents was generally not realistic, as much of this research was looking to the past for evidence of earlier progression through the model of creative destruction. This is not an unusual state of affairs, for when investigating the history of a place the researcher is of course limited to the sources of data that are available at the time of the study. This is never ideal, but without this concession very little retrospective research could be undertaken.

The important point here is that the residents’ voices from earlier stages of the model are likely not the same voices as those encountered in the villages later in the process. They may be quite different in makeup and opinion by nature of the progression of the place itself. This makes comparison difficult and the argument for changes in resident attitudes less reliable. As noted, this is de rigour for retrospective studies, and the model in fact predicts these changes, if perhaps a little too tidily. In the stage of advanced destruction Mitchell describes “an out-migration of local residents” which may “lead to the disintegration of sense of community” (Mitchell 1998, p. 277). I would argue that this process is perhaps more continuous than is suggested in the model. It is likely that residents would come and go as changes escalate, perhaps in greater numbers at critical stages, but nonetheless in a fluid fashion. Changes would both be reflected in and triggered by those who choose to move in and out as the village changes. The predicted disintegration of sense of community assumes that the newer residents have not been attracted by the current, altered state of affairs. This would seem to be counterintuitive.

The changes reflected in the model often take place over decades, and the demographic makeup of villages can vary greatly over such timeframes, even in more stable places. Critically, new residents would likely buy in to their current iteration of the village,
otherwise one wonders why they would come. New residents would also be less likely to compare this place to the earlier versions of itself, which they were not a part of, or to experience a loss of the rural idyll in the way that long term residents might. At times there appears to be evidence of this mismatch between resident perceptions and the model’s predictions in the studies themselves.

For example, the stage of early destruction predicts that “a growing number of residents [will] perceive an erosion of their community as problems of crowding, congestion or crime escalate” (Mitchell 1998, p.277). As Mitchell describes St. Jacobs at the stage of early destruction; however, she reveals that a resident’s survey has “suggested that despite widespread recognition of the problems created by the tourism industry, many residents (46%) still valued St. Jacobs for its small-town ambience and sense of community” (Mitchell 1998, p.282). So, while they perceive of these problems, many are not bothered by them. For nearly half of the residents, community has not eroded as predicted. I would argue that this is likely the result of a changing residential base, coupled with a moderation of attitudes which Mitchell does not expect until later in the model. Mitchell does compensate for this, and strengthens the model by integrating other measures of creative destruction, such as the changing use of commercial buildings, rising tourist numbers and the substance of marketing campaigns (Mitchell 1998).

It is important to keep in mind therefore that while the model provides a powerful framework for conceptualizing change in historic settings, it is by nature a simplification. Chang and Huang (2005) for example, acknowledge Mitchell’s model, but see creative destruction in a different way. The authors consider “the simultaneity of urban creation and destruction” (Chang & Huang 2005, p. 269). On the ground, changes likely occur in less distinct stages, with demographic changes and other aspects of creation and destruction occurring simultaneously. With this in mind, I will now consider the adaptability of Mitchell’s model to a variety of settings.
2.6.3 Applications of the model in other settings

In Ontario, Mitchell’s model has been studied in St. Jacobs (Mitchell 1998; Mitchell & de Waal 2009), Elora (Mitchell & Coghill 2000) and Niagara-on-the-Lake (Mitchell, Atkinson & Clark 2001). The authors found evidence of the process of creative destruction, and concluded that erosion of the idyll was underway in these villages, though in various forms and at differing speeds. It would be useful to compare the findings of these studies to those Ontario villages that have not followed this path of tourism development. Future research might contrast the perceptions of residents in villages experiencing the advanced destruction stage of the model with the perception of those in villages that have not placed any significant investment into tourism. It is possible that through the mechanisms of decay, smaller villages that have lost their primary industries might feel an equal, or even greater loss of rural idyll than those that have encouraged tourism. One could speculate that the loss of jobs, population stagnation and eventual outmigration may have a similar negative impact on the “happy, healthy, problem free” life and “close social community” associated with the rural idyll (Mitchell, Atkinson & Clark 2001, p. 287).

As noted above, it is important to consider the changing demographic landscapes of these villages as one applies the model of creative destruction. Such consideration inspires tough questions regarding the purpose of historic conservation. If the loss of the rural idyll is not felt by the current residents, or indeed by visiting tourists, one wonders who is left to mourn it? Attention turns then to those who are displaced rather than only those who remain, to consider what specific changes in the place have caused them to leave. I will consider these residents throughout this dissertation.

Of those who remain, many may come to see value in this new place. Even the long-term residents may be swayed. McMorran (2008) looks at the remote Japanese village of Kurokawa Onsen on the Island of Kyushu Japan. Kurokawa reinvented itself in the 1980s, and played on carefully selected aspects of an idealised historic rural village. The tourist destination which emerged because of this reinvention now draws roughly one
million visitors per year. McMorran states that “while [Mitchell’s] model of creative destruction may apply in some cases, it does not seem to hold true in Kurokawa” (2008, p. 348). The author finds that residents overwhelmingly support the past and ongoing expansion of heritage tourism, for both the economic and the more intangible benefits created. Local pride has increased, opportunities for employment outside of farming have been embraced, and a younger demographic who now find the village cool have joined longer term residents. The author concludes that the changes to the village have inspired “a stronger overall sense of place among residents” (McMorran 2008, p. 349). This finding is contrary to that predicted by Mitchell (1998). I am again drawn to consider though, for whom? Who was displaced by this process and why? What this means specifically in relation to the experienced sense of place is a complex question.

In 2009, Mitchell and de Waal (2009) returned to St. Jacobs Ontario, a decade after the original study. Even though the evidence provided by investment patterns and visitor numbers seemed to “suggest that St. Jacobs entered the stage of advanced destruction” the authors found that attitudes of residents did not reflect the negative sentiment predicted by that stage, and as such they concluded that “the village may, indeed, recently have moved into the latter stage of post-destruction” (Mitchell & de Waal 2009, p. 160).

The authors modify Mitchell’s original model, most notably through the addition of a pre-commodification stage. This expansion of the model acknowledges the roots of many historic villages as part of a “productivist landscape” which is “based on extractive activities” (Mitchell & de Waal 2009, p. 163). The term heritage shopping village is replaced here with heritage-scape, widening the possible applications of the model. While the original model remains largely intact the authors add a new dimension, running from productivist rural landscape, through post-productivist heritage-scape and ending in a neo productivist leisure-scape, concurrent with the post-destruction stage (Table 2a). Mitchell carries this addition into future studies with other authors (Mitchell & Verderwerf 2011; Halpern & Mitchell 2011). The motivators of the model expand
from the original, simpler entrepreneurial focus to include “profit, preservation and the promotion of growth and/or development” (Mitchell & de Waal 2009, p. 163). The addition of preservation is notable for this current dissertation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage</th>
<th>Activities of drivers: profiteers, preservationists and promoters</th>
<th>Consumers [hosts and guests]</th>
<th>Attitudes towards tourism</th>
<th>Dominant landscape</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre-commodification</td>
<td>Inactive. Private-sector investment in commodification may be initiated. Preservationists’ activity may be initiated. Policy promoting development may be implemented.</td>
<td>Few. Some heritage-seekers</td>
<td>Largely positive. Some awareness of negative implications amongst ruralities</td>
<td>Productivist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early commodification</td>
<td>Active private-sector investment in commodification. Preservationists may be active; some may oppose non-heritage-type investments. Public sector policy/action promoting development may be implemented or continue.</td>
<td>Growing numbers of heritage-seekers</td>
<td>Increasing awareness of negative implications amongst ruralities</td>
<td>Post-productivist Heritage-scape</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advanced commodification</td>
<td>Very active private-sector investment. Some will deviate from the heritage theme. Preservationists may actively oppose non-heritage investments (often unsuccessfully). Public sector policy/action promoting development may be implemented or continue.</td>
<td>Heritage-seekers accompanied by post-tourists</td>
<td>Much awareness of negative implications amongst ruralities</td>
<td>Post-productivist Heritage-scape</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early destruction</td>
<td>Scale of private-sector investment increases (e.g. hotel), with much deviation from the heritage theme. Preservationists may actively oppose non-heritage investments (often unsuccessfully). Pre-development policies/actions may be implemented or continue.</td>
<td>Post-tourists are in the majority.</td>
<td>The majority of ruralities offer negative comment; an out-migration of this cohort may occur.</td>
<td>Productivist leisure-scape</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advanced destruction</td>
<td>Non-heritage, private-sector investments dominate. Preservationist activity may be diminished. Pre-development policies may be in place.</td>
<td>Numbers of heritage-seekers is very low.</td>
<td>The over all attitude in the community should be positive, as fewer ruralities remain. Those ruralities who choose to remain will either maintain their negative attitude, or express one of resignation.</td>
<td>Non-productivist leisure-scape</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2a: A revised model of creative destruction. (Mitchell and de Waal 2009)

On Salt Spring Island in British Columbia, Halpern and Mitchell explored the possibility that a “dominant ideology of preservation” might halt the process of creative destruction (2011, p. 208). The authors identified a “post-productivist rural space; landscapes that preserve aspects of the rural, while providing some financial gain for those involved” (Halpern & Mitchell 2011, p. 208). This outcome is promising, for although longer term residents may not perceive the same erosion of their sense of place, the downward spiral of lost industry might also be mitigated. The authors conclude that an ideology of preservation can indeed halt the process of creative
destruction at a point which provides “some economic benefits for local residents, while preserving cultural markers of significance” (Halpern & Mitchell 2011, p. 223).

A thorough review of productivist, postproductivist and neo-productivist landscapes is beyond the scope of this chapter, but it is important to note that the model continues to grow richer and more complex with continued application. This dissertation will continue to expand the model’s application, by revising it to model the creative destruction of place, in the context of an HCD, in Chapter 8: The creative destruction of place.

The discourse analysis of the government texts and depth interviews with residents that follows in this dissertation, in the context of a predominantly residential and largely HCD designated neighbourhood, will lay the groundwork for this adaptation of Mitchell’s model. There is a similar process of creative destruction occurring in the Woodfield HCDs, although the drivers underlying this process, and the resulting impacts, are somewhat different from those of the more commodified tourist landscapes that Mitchell describes. Rather than a focus on destruction of the rural idyll, here the model is adapted to describe the progression of changes to a residential place that follow the designation of an HCD.

While one’s home is certainly a commodity in part, and especially so for the real estate speculator, there are different forces at play in a residential Heritage Conservation District as compared to Mitchell’s heritage shopping village. At the very least the home as commodity is only one of many drivers, both of movement in and out of an HCD, and of the experience of place. In Chapter 8: The creative destruction of place, I will present this revised model based on the foundation of the work of Mitchell and others, incorporating the data that has emerged in my current research, and triangulated with supporting indicators of place destruction. To explain how I arrived at this theoretical model, the following chapter will first turn to my methods and research design.
Chapter 3

3 METHODS AND RESEARCH DESIGN

3.1 Introduction

In this chapter I will provide a description of the research design and methods that I employed to complete my four research objectives in the Woodfield neighbourhood and its two Heritage Conservation Districts (HCDs). Place making in an HCD is a complex undertaking involving many agents. While there is generally some resident involvement in the development of the HCD plans, the eventual enforcement of these plans is largely under the control of City Planning Staff and the local City Council. City Planning Staff and City Council must represent many interests in the city (e.g. developers, business owners), whose needs often differ dramatically from those living in the HCD (e.g. Zukin 2009). The research design presented here is intended to unpack and explore this complex relationship, investigate the sense of place experienced by Woodfield residents, and draw links between the HCD texts, place branding and this residential experience of place. A grounded approach to research design laid the foundations for the development of my subsequent theoretical contributions.

As such, this chapter will begin with an overview of this grounded theory approach. This discussion will include an explanation of my data-driven coding approach, a reflection on the researcher as instrument and the challenges and opportunities that accompany my status as an insider researcher. I will then frame the stages of this research design and provide clear definitions for two key terms: sense of place and place branding. The methods employed in the discourse analysis of government texts, and the depth interviewing of both residents and City Planners will also be explained. Participant recruitment, data collection, and analysis will be addressed throughout this chapter.
3.2 Research objectives

The four key objectives presented in Chapter 1: Introduction and community context informed this research design. Once again, these objectives are:

1. To identify explicit and implicit references to sense of place, along with the power dynamics that are created and reinforced in the government texts that guide conservation and change in these districts. These government texts include the Provincial Policy Statement, the Ontario Heritage Act, the Ontario Heritage Toolkit and the specific East and West Woodfield Heritage Conservation District Plans;

2. To reveal whether the HCD texts have had an impact, implicitly or explicitly, on the experienced sense of place of the residents of the Woodfield neighbourhood;

3. To produce a theoretical model of the power dynamics and the various factors (including but not limited to power relationships, the government texts themselves, the physical setting and community relationships) that impact residential sense of place and the HCD place brand in the neighbourhood;

4. To gain the perspective of City of London Planners, engaged in the creation and enforcement of the HCD government texts, on my analysis.

This research design is divided into four distinct stages that reflect these objectives. Conducting this research in these four stages allowed for the guiding research objectives to be deconstructed and considered from multiple perspectives.

Of note, the use of the term power in the above objectives is purposefully somewhat narrow and pragmatic in it’s conception. While the author acknowledges the wide range of geographic research that has considered power relations from a social scientist’s perspective, including the writings of (for example) Hobbes, Marx and Harvey,
here the term is used specifically to denote the power that one has over the control of changes to the physical and community aspects of place. This thesis will not add significantly to the broader debates related to the geographical concept of power.

I employ a minimal and foundational definition of power in this thesis, as the ability of an individual or group to achieve their own goals or aims when others are trying to prevent them from realising them (Weber 1925). This is grounded in the related concept of legitimate, authoritative power. The HCD government texts, for example, will be shown to determine who will have the power to direct and enforce conservation and change in the districts (e.g. Heritage Planners, residents, City Councillors). I will now turn to the grounded approach that informed all stages of this research.

3.3 Grounded theory and the researcher as instrument

Grounded theory emerged as most suited to these research objectives. Silverman and Marvasti discuss the great potential of an inductive grounded theory approach, calling on the qualitative researcher to:

be especially open to chance learning. Indeed, qualitative methods incorporate chance into the research process ... grounded theory, inductivism, and open-ended or unstructured questions are all founded on the belief that researcher cannot know from the start where their observations may lead. (Silverman & Marvasti 2008, p.122)

In this section, I will explore how grounded theory is uniquely equipped for this sense of place research, with attention to those specific aspects of the approach that matched well to my research objectives. I will discuss open, data-driven coding and its advantages within a grounded approach. Next, I will provide the reader with a reflection on my research positionality. I will describe my own personal background in relation to this place, and consider my dual position as both a researcher and an active resident of the Woodfield neighbourhood. Finally, I will draw attention to strategies taken to recognise and accommodate this status as an insider researcher.
3.3.1 Grounded theory for sense of place research

Grounded theory, as pioneered by Glaser and Strauss (1967), is closely connected to the concept of *open coding* to which I will return below. In fifty years, it has grown into one of the most commonly used qualitative approaches, and an “acclaimed method in diverse fields” (Charmaz 2009, p.127). As noted, grounded theory does not afford a traditional research question a major role (e.g. Charmaz 2006; Flick 2007; Glaser and Strauss 1967). Rather, a more general observation or observations are often the starting point. At its core, grounded theory is simply a set of strategies for “inducing theoretically based generalisations from qualitative data” (Silverman & Marvasti 2008, p.403). Charmaz notes that grounded theorists share much in common, and while “we may have different starting points and conceptual agendas ... we all begin with inductive logic, subject our data to rigorous analysis, aim to develop theoretical analyses, and value grounded theory studies for informing policy and practice” (2009, p.127). For these reasons, grounded theory holds unique potential for interviewing for sense of place in the context of a Heritage Conservation District.

While much has been written about sense of place, interviewing for sense of place is less common. Fundamentally this stems from difficulties surrounding the intangible nature of place. de Wit observes that this difficulty has led to the lack of “a substantial body of research methods that might encourage more geographers to take the humanistic plunge”, specifically in regard to “the study of place perceptions, regional identity and sense of place” (de Wit 2013, p. 120). The author put forward guidelines for “conducting interviews in a way appropriate to sense of place study” (de Wit 2013, p. 139). Three of these stand out when considering the value of a grounded theory approach:

- Keep an open mind about what will be relevant;
- Allow the interests and inclinations of the interviewee to guide interviews, and;
- Maintain patience as you collect the initial chaotic mass of information, and have faith that you will eventually discern patterns and order around which you can structure your continued study and final interpretations (de Wit 2013, p. 140).

I will expand on de Wit’s guidelines ahead in this chapter, as part of a more fulsome discussion of the approach taken to the interviews. All of de Wit’s guidelines point to, or fit within an inductive grounded theory approach, and support this choice as a framework for my current research.

3.3.2 Data-driven coding

A more complete discussion of the specific approach taken to coding will be presented ahead in this chapter. To begin though, when broadly considering a grounded theory approach a good starting place is to lay out the conceptual schema behind the construction of codes. Rather than a concept-driven coding approach, in which “categories or concepts the codes represent may come from the literature, previous studies, topics in the interview schedule, hunches you have about what is going on, and so on” (Gibbs 2007, p. 44), my four objectives lent themselves to a more open, data-driven coding approach.

In both the discourse analysis of government texts and my analysis of the interviews, I approached the data with an open mind, rather than a focus on my own preconceptions. Reflection on my positionality, and a regular return to my journal and memos were critical at this stage (more on this below). I began the process without any pre-set notion of codes beyond an initial division of the data broadly into themes of the physical and community aspects of place, to mirror my guiding definition of residential sense of place. Everything else came from a reading of the texts, designed to keep my interpretations clear of any pre-existing or pre-determined theory. This involved a movement from the initial broad coding mentioned above in pass one, to a line-by-line coding approach in the second pass. As the line-by-line coding continued, finer codes
within each of the above broad themes emerged, but new codes also emerged that did not fit neatly into these categories. Some of the most interesting and unexpected observations were found in these emerging codes. Finally, these line-by-line codes were amalgamated again into collected themes that flowed organically from the texts. This process was inherently inductive, and the theory was build from the coding up, rather than the other way around.

Although I purposefully disregarded my own preconceptions, I remained aware of these throughout, and worked to minimise their influence on my coding. Line-by-line coding was helpful in this regard, as each thought was considered in isolation during this pass. This approach allowed the interviewees to speak for themselves. As Gibbs notes however, “no one starts with absolutely no ideas” (Gibbs 2007, p.45). As I have stated earlier, the exception here to a process free of presuppositions was that I grounded this coding in the elements of residential sense of place, as broadly classified into the physical and community aspects of place.

Gibbs (2007) reminds us that this is acceptable, and even to be expected. One need not take an exclusively data-driven approach. Admittedly some of the codes that emerged here were ones that did not surprise me. For example, all of those interviewed referenced the heritage buildings in Woodfield at one point or another (n=39). Patrick (a pseudonym) put it this way:

I personally am very interested in history and local history, and I think that the buildings, and buildings in general, embody a lot of heritage value - for the technical term. Or like, they embody our ‘who we are’, and it's very enriching to be around.

Other emerging codes were more surprising though. For example, nearly as many interviewees referenced the physical mix of the area, in terms of architecture or building use (n=38), often with no reference to the protected heritage architecture. Roger described the neighbourhood in terms of:
Well, the sizes of houses - that this is a neighbourhood where there's lots of cottages - you know smaller houses - and then lots of two stories, and lots of ones with multiple bedrooms and so forth ... there are many apartment units as well in the neighbourhood - and not just residential.

The themes that emerged from this data-driven coding of the interviews will be fully explored in Chapters 4, 5 and 6. The point here is that open, data-driven coding allowed for nuances to emerge, in this example between the more anticipated references to heritage buildings, and more unexpected references to the physical mix of buildings more generally (the latter at times linked to, but different from the former – more on this in Chapter 6: Place discourse: The physical aspects of place). Both heritage and mix clearly matter to the interviewees, but are these sustained or challenged by the HCD plans? This is one of many questions that emerged through this analysis, and will be presented throughout this dissertation, uniquely because of the application of a grounded theory approach.

3.3.3 The researcher as instrument

In qualitative research, the researcher is an active instrument. As an interviewer, rigor demands that the researcher move beyond concerns for data-rich conversations to consider “power relations and the presentation of self” that can affect the responses of the interviewees (Baxter & Eyles 1997, p.523). As an insider researcher, a primary concern for the researcher as instrument is the development of strategies to address one’s own biases and preconceptions. To mitigate any negative effects that these might have on this research, bracketing is an appropriate strategy. Bracketing has no one single accepted approach. In practice, this is one of the strengths of the strategy, as “this lack of uniformity [may] afford qualitative researchers a range of choices and methods, and the opportunity to interject their own perspectives and embark on their own research journeys” (Tufford & Newman 2010, p.93). For my part, this took the form of an initial reflexive journal prior to initiating or even planning my interviews, and memos throughout all stages of this research. Memoing took the form of “theoretical
notes which explicate[d] the cognitive process of conducting research, methodological notes that explicate[d] the procedural aspects of research, and observational comments that allow[ed] the researcher to explore feelings about the research endeavor” (Tufford & Newman 2010, p.86).

Discourse analysis is centrally concerned with the position and biases of the researcher (Fairclough 1995; Rapley 2007; Swain 2013). This concern is therefore also reflected in my analysis of both the interviews and the government texts. I used similar strategies here, journaling and reflecting on my familiarity and experience with the texts, and memoing about my own biases and preconceived notions as themes emerged in the discourses. I constantly reflected on my role as researcher, my biases and my assumptions in all aspects of data collection and the associated analysis. I will present some of this here, in the form of my researcher position statement.

3.3.4 Researcher position statement

I moved to London in 1989 to begin my undergraduate degree at the University of Western Ontario, having grown up in Niagara Falls, Ontario. For most of my life in London I have lived within a short distance of Woodfield, and since 1995 I have lived either in or just on the outskirts of the neighbourhood. I started out as a renter living in a small apartment within a home just on the edge of the East Woodfield Heritage Conservation District (HCD), next moved briefly into a condo on the edge of Woodfield just off Richmond Street, and then purchased a house with my wife about two blocks away from that first apartment in 1999. I have lived there, within the East Woodfield HCD ever since.

I joined the executive of the Woodfield Community Association as the Social Chair, and transitioned to the Chair position a couple of years later, a position that I held from 2004 to 2014. My research interest in Heritage Conservation Districts developed slowly over that time. As the Chair of a community association that contained both the oldest
HCD in London, and a second more recently designated HCD, along with other undesignated areas, I became interested in the differing experiences of residents inside and outside of these designated districts.

As I began to prepare for this research in 2012, I put my name forward to sit on the London Advisory Committee on Heritage (LACH). I was eager to learn more about the processes of designation and enforcement of the local heritage guidelines, and this committee allowed me direct access to, and a deeper understanding of, these processes. I was accepted as a committee member and voted in as the committee Vice-Chair. In 2013, I became the Chair of the LACH. From late 2014 to mid 2015 I sought the nomination for the Liberal seat in London North Centre (a riding that includes Woodfield), but I was not successful in this bid and was not declared the nominee. I then refocussed on my LACH duties, and remained in that position until 2015. As of 2015 I had accumulated the knowledge, and questions, that would feed the more active stages of my research that followed. I stepped down from this role and removed myself from active participation in the neighbourhood itself, and heritage matters more generally.

As a resident of a unique neighbourhood with two HCDs and undesignated areas, I have observed differences in both the physical changes to these areas and the people who live there. As an urban geographer, and someone who has worked briefly as a student planner in Niagara Falls, I was drawn to learn more about how these policies were experienced by those who lived in this neighbourhood and others like it, either explicitly or implicitly. I explored the geographic literature on heritage designation, which was preoccupied largely with economic impacts. My questions though, were different. I wanted to understand the experiences of those who lived here, beyond the quantifiable aspects of resale value and general satisfaction. My advisor, Jeff Hopkins, suggested that sense of place might be an appropriate focus for my research. I read a great deal about the topic and came to agree that what I was most concerned with was how the experience of residential sense of place was impacted by these district designations.
I have remained deeply reflexive about my role within this neighbourhood, and the preconceptions and biases that this might create. I care for the neighbourhood, and have come to see that this unique and multifaceted perspective has given me a clear and intimate view of both the neighbourhood itself and the HCD designation process. I have developed biases regarding this neighbourhood over time as anyone would, but I am aware of these, and through journaling and memoing I have kept these at the front of my mind in all aspects of research design and implementation. I have remained committed to a deeper understanding of both the positive and negative impacts of designation and indeed of life in the neighbourhood itself. I have reflected extensively on my own privilege, and have worked to recognise and understand the many perspectives that differ from my own.

My background has affected my interpretation of the interviews and my discourse analysis of the government texts. My extensive knowledge of the community provided me with a deeper understanding of the underlying neighbourhood and facilitated a more thorough understanding of references discussed in the interviews. My involvement in the HCD designation process has given me a broad perspective on that process and allowed me to ask better questions. I am aware however that my involvement may have impacted my analysis of the government texts and interviews. To mitigate this, reflection on my position as researcher, and regular consultation with my journal and memos remained a constant strategy during my analysis. I reviewed each research finding by considering my positionality in this way, particularly when a finding supported a recognised bias. More often they challenged my preconceptions.

I will provide an example of this reflection. As mentioned, I have long believed a personal theory that HCD designation, because it preserves homes of all sizes, may act as a stalwart against the exclusion caused by gentrification. As will be seen in this dissertation, this is a belief that was challenged as I proceeded through the discourse analysis, interviews and other data sources. By carefully considering this potential
source of bias early in my research process, and returning to it regularly, I was able to keep this front of mind, and mitigate the influence of this belief on my analysis.

Similarly, as a long-time Chair of the Woodfield Community Association, I believed that such associations could represent the interests of the neighbourhood effectively in various civic matters, including discussions of changes within the HCDs. In Chapter 7: Conclusions, policy implications, City Planner feedback and future research, I consider challenges to this assumption, and this renewed understanding is incorporated into my conclusions. These are but two examples of the many biases that I identified in myself, and considered carefully throughout this research by returning frequently to my journal and memos. The experience of interviewing the people who live here, some of whom were known to me, but most of whom were not, has forever changed my viewpoint. I will now turn to consider my role as an insider researcher.

3.3.5 The insider researcher

...some researchers, like me, find topics close to home, or close to our hearts - topics so compelling we can’t leave them alone - and we try to find ways to use our "insider" status to help, not hinder, insights. (DeLyser 2001, p.442)

A great deal has been written about the advantages and pitfalls of conducting insider research. The insider researcher positions themselves in such a way as to be at once connected to while estranged from their social setting, which can result in “difficulties of extracting shared knowledges and implied knowings when interviewing a community of which you are a member” (Taylor 2011, p.5). Advantages identified in the literature include better access to the population of concern, a minimising of power differentials due to the perception of the researcher as part of the community, a deeper knowledge of the experience of those at the heart of the research and a better rapport that may lead to richer data. Disadvantages include the potential for presumptions by either the researcher or participant based on familiarity, a lack of researcher objectivity and discomfort due to a lack of participant anonymity, all of which may interfere with useful
analysis if left unchecked (Blythe et al 2013). This insider/outsider binary is of course not as concrete as the debate may imply, as it “seeks to freeze positionalities in place, and assumes that being an **insider** or **outsider** is a fixed attribute” (Mullings 1999, p.340).

The reality is far more complex, and in my experience each participant views the researcher in different and nuanced ways, perhaps as an insider in some parts of the discussion, and an outsider when considering other questions.

Insider researchers must therefore take care when doing face to face interviews. DeLyser (2001) recommends that insider researchers develop alternatives to more traditional interview strategies. For example, if an interviewee is aware that you are a member of their community (something that I made all my interviewees aware of before starting) they may grow frustrated if you ask them to explain something that they believe you should already know. DeLyser conducted research with staff at a tourist attraction where she herself worked, and approached this by asking fellow staffers to give her “the same answers to questions they gave to visitors every day” (DeLyser 2001, p.444). I applied this strategy in the design of my own interview guide. For example, for my opening question, rather than simply asking residents to describe their neighbourhood, I approached the question in this way:

> Imagine that you are talking to someone who is not familiar with your neighbourhood – how would you describe your neighbourhood to them?

For my research, as for DeLyser’s, this approach resulted in “a series of interviews at times more like discussions” (DeLyser 2001, p.444), and encouraged the interviewees to provide greater depth and detail than they might otherwise have. I will provide more detailed information on how these interviews were designed and conducted ahead in this chapter. During the creation of my interview guide my insider status remained front of mind, and informed the design of my open-ended questions. This status informed every aspect of this research, from design to analysis. Appendix B, for example, provides a thorough documentation of each point in the interviews that an interviewee commented on my insider status in any way. In each case, I carefully
considered the surrounding discussion to determine if this may have influenced their comments.

Having explained my choice of a grounded approach and data-driven coding, and reflected on the researcher as instrument and my status as an insider researcher, this chapter will now provide a more detailed description of the specific stages of this research design and the methods employed. I will first briefly revisit the two key terms that informed these research stages: sense of place and the related concept of place branding.

3.4  Key terms revisited: Sense of place

As discussed in Chapter 2, in the context of residential environments, sense of place has been defined by Billig (2005, p. 118) as “formed by the subjective feelings and patterns of behavior” resulting from relations amongst residents “and from their attitude towards the physical aspects of the residential environment”. This will be expanded ahead in this chapter as part of a discussion about interviewing for sense of place, but I present it here to identify the two points of focus that guided the first pass of my discourse analysis: the community and the physical aspects of place. This analysis carefully considered both the community relations (e.g. relationships with neighbours, interactions with the larger community) and the physical attributes (e.g. architectural details, neighbourhood features) of Woodfield simultaneously.

As any geographer wades into the unclear waters of sense of place research, it is important to recognize that:

[because] sense of place is intangible, it is difficult to study. It can be intimidating and overwhelming to investigate something that cannot quite be measured, or even reliably defined. To reduce that barrier of intimidation, and therefore encourage more geographers to engage in sense of place studies, it behooves us to establish a candid and robust body of methods... [Investigating] contemporary
sense of place requires going to the place in question and talking to people. (de Wit 2013, p. 139; emphasis added)

While quantitative data can tell us much about the economic impacts of a designated HCD, or the level of satisfaction reported by surveyed residents, as de Wit advises, investigating sense of place requires that we talk to people (2013).

Complex power relationships underpinning the perception of place lay at the heart of this research. This required a methodology designed to uncover the underlying motivations for the beliefs and behaviors of HCD residents. Qualitative techniques lend themselves well to this research priority. This research design adopts a post-structural approach, which leads the researcher to reflect on assumptions about the location of power. Smith notes that if “geographers employ a post-structural understanding of power, we may be able to achieve a more sophisticated analysis of power relations” (2006, p. 643). In HCDs, power rests in the government texts, as interpreted by professional Planners and elected officials to guide and inform conservation and change.

Discourse analysis of the government texts, coupled with the open coding of in-depth interviews assisted in the discovery of how place is created and perpetuated in an HCD, and how sense of place is perceived by the residents. In an HCD, sense of place is intimately wrapped up with place branding. The HCD designation is responsible for the privileging of features in the existing neighbourhood that define a new or renewed place brand. The process of place branding, with its potential for impacts on the commodification of a place, is an important concept to consider at the research design stage.

3.4.1 Key terms revisited: Place branding

Also discussed in Chapter 2, government texts that define the boundaries and physical aspects of an HCD draw attention to specific elements of the place, contributing to the creation or renewal of what is referred to in the contemporary literature as a place
brand. While place branding is described by Ashworth and Kavaratzis as a “recently popularized concept”, many of the elements of place branding, including “identities, image, promotion or sense of place, have been around for a long time” (2010, p. 1).

Place branding has been defined in many ways (see Chapter 2). As noted, a branded product is made distinctive in comparison to competing products, by highlighting the unique attributes and symbolic associations that add value to that product (Kavaratzis & Ashworth 2005). Adapted for places, branding concepts are applied to foster “instant recognition”, play on our “desire for both comfort and certainty” and provide a “point of identification... in an increasingly crowded marketplace” (Hannigan 2003, p. 352). The relationship between HCD designation and place branding informed the coding and analysis of the government texts, and resident interviews. This concept will also be explored further in relation to interviewing for sense of place, ahead. Having revisited these two key terms for context, I will now describe the associated four stages of this research design.

3.5 Stage one: Discourse analysis of government texts

Stage one of this research addresses the initial study objective: to identify explicit and implicit references to sense of place, along with the power dynamics that are created and reinforced in the government texts that guide conservation and change in these districts. Fundamental to this was understanding the texts themselves, and how power/rhetoric flow through them. This was accomplished by conducting a discourse analysis of the HCD government texts. Discourses are structures that embrace a specific combination of narratives and ideologies. This research approach therefore “proceed[ed] through an exercise in discourse analysis that enable[d] a repeated focus on... meaning and interpretation” (Goodchild & Cole 2001, p.104). As Lees informs us, “language, knowledge and power are all interconnected through discourse” (Lees 2004, p. 103).
In considering the many interconnected government texts (e.g. the Provincial Policy Statement, the Ontario Heritage Act, the Ontario Heritage Toolkit and the specific East and West Woodfield Heritage Conservation District Plans), the objectives of this study assume “a multicentred distribution of social power”, an assumption shared by post-structural discourse analysis (Goodchild & Cole, 2001, p.106). The agents who engaged in the creation of these texts range from local citizens, through to political appointees, government employees and professional consultants. The resulting policies and related texts range from those at the provincial level which apply to all HCDs across Ontario, down to the local plans custom-designed for individual HCDs. The complex power relationships within and between these policies required detailed analysis, which in turn informed the design of the supporting interviews. This was a task well served by post-structural discourse analysis.

The methodological focus of the “post-structural strand of discourse analysis is on wider constructions of the urban/the city in rhetoric” (Lees 2004, p. 103). Specifically, this method allowed for an examination of the rhetorical organization of the related HCD texts, or “the argumentative schema that organize a text and establish its authority” (Lees 2004, p.104). Discourse analysis facilitated deeper consideration of linkages between government texts and the residents of HCDs, and the ideological context in which these texts were conceptualized.

The approach taken here is based in part on that of Stenson and Watt (1999) who completed a discourse analysis of two local government texts in the Wycombe District in south-east England. The authors considered that discourses in the government context created a “cast list of political and economic agents which government must consider, objects of concern, agendas for action, preferred narratives for making sense of current situations” and “conceptual and geographical spaces” (p. 192). The authors note that these texts also contain other agents, agendas and so forth, and notably may be absent of counter discourses. Stenson and Watt saw value in the analysis of the government texts themselves as elements of knowledge; historically significant, systematically
interrelated and imbedded with “tensions between logics of government” which are “manifest in the same texts in a struggle for dominance” (p. 192).

Discourse analysis of Ontario’s various policies and other related government texts at the provincial, municipal, and specific HCD levels identified explicit and implicit aims and potential impacts on place through the enforcement of the HCD plans. An initial, broad coding pass uncovered key themes in the texts. This was followed by a more detailed coding and a comparison of the HCD Plans created specifically for each of the two Woodfield HCDs. The discourse of these two plans was considered in relation to references to both the community and physical aspects of residential sense of place, through multiple subsequent passes. In each instance that residents were mentioned, particular consideration was given to how they were defined (e.g. owners, renters, pedestrians), and the direction of the power relationships within the plan (e.g. obligations, oversight).

3.6 Stage two: Depth interviews with residents

Stage two of this research addressed the second study objective: to reveal whether the HCD texts have had an impact, implicitly or explicitly, on the experienced sense of place of the residents of the Woodfield neighbourhood. Central to this research stage was a comparison of the hegemonic discourses that had emerged in the analysis of the government texts to the discourses, and notably the counter-discourses, that emerged in the resident interviews.

I have noted that the neighbourhood of Woodfield is unique in that it contains two HCDs, which are similar in many ways (e.g. proximity to the core, vintage of housing, socio-economic makeup) but were created years apart. The East Woodfield HCD was established in 1992 and the West Woodfield HCD was established 16 years later in 2008 (Corporation of the City of London 1992; Corporation of the City of London 2008). The broader Woodfield neighbourhood also contains areas that are similar architecturally to
the two HCDs, but fall outside of either and are therefore not directly under the enforcement of the HCD plans. The creation of each HCD was guided by government texts that evolved over the intervening years. The designation process changed as well over this time, as explained in Chapter 1: Introduction and community context. This unusual juxtaposition of two districts within one neighbourhood provided an opportunity to consider these changes within one geographically contiguous neighbourhood.

This qualitative approach compliments recent quantitative research conducted in parts of this same neighbourhood. Through a 2012 survey, Jonas-Galvin determined that 93% of residents of the East Woodfield HCD were satisfied or very satisfied with life in the district (Jonas-Galvin 2012, p.14) supporting earlier similar findings in other parts of Ontario (Shipley, Jonas & Kovacs 2011). This current research was therefore able to reflect on these earlier quantitative findings, while taking a qualitative approach to dig deeper and investigate the sense of place experienced by individual residents of these HCDs.

Interviewing for sense of place is rare in geographic research, but as de Wit notes “sense of place is worth studying from a geographer’s perspective simply because it is a fundamental component of regional character” (de Wit 2013, p. 139). de Wit considers interviewing to be a key, underused method in sense of place research, and presents a guide for “interview techniques developed and refined during a study of sense of place” (de Wit 2013, p. 120). This detailed approach informed, in part, the development of my interview guide (ahead).

The interviews were designed to facilitate an understanding of the experienced sense of place of the residents in the HCD. In post-structural research, “interviews are conceptualized as an arena for identifying and exploring participants’ interpretative practices” (Potter 1996, p. 15), which is essential to understanding and comparing resident interviews with the discourse of the government texts. The approach revealed
subjective descriptions by those interviewed to determine which, if any, of the discourses within the HCD texts implicitly or explicitly impact their sense of place.

Qualitative, open-ended, semi-structured interviews were therefore based in part on the prior discourse analysis of government texts, with additional guidance from the literature (e.g. de Wit, 2013; Potter, 1996). The Interview Guide can be found in Appendix C of this dissertation, and the specific questions will be further explored ahead in Chapters 4, 5 and 6. The number of interviews conducted was 39. This was not pre-determined, rather the interviews and analysis were considered complete when saturation was achieved; in other words, when no new themes or categories emerged (DiCicco-Bloom & Crabtree 2006).

Data analysis took the form of an editing approach, rooted in grounded theory, which relied on codes for “tagging segments of text and then sorting text segments with similar content into separate categories for a final distillation into major themes” (DiCicco-Bloom & Crabtree 2006, p. 318). Analysis occurred concurrently and iteratively with the interviews themselves until saturation was achieved and no new themes or categories emerged.

I reflected on my positionality throughout the process by returning regularly to my journal and memos, to keep my own biases and preconceptions front of mind. I employed data-driven coding, and as such began the process without pre-set codes. As noted, the first pass did however move responses into broad themes related to the physical and community aspects of place, in keeping with my concern for residential sense of place. I followed no pre-existing or pre-determined theory, and the detailed coding emerged iteratively from a repeated reading of the interviews, using a line-by-line coding approach in the second coding pass, and subsequent passes. Finer codes emerged within each of the broad themes, and new codes were also created outside of this framework. In the final coding pass, these line-by-line codes were collected into themes where appropriate. This inductive process allowed my eventual theoretical contribution to emerge directly from the coding itself.
3.6.1 Interviewing for sense of place

As noted above, the call for geographers to engage in the development of “robust qualitative methods for assessing what places mean to people” came from de Wit in 2013, in an article simply entitled Interviewing for Sense of Place (de Wit 2013, p. 120). de Wit makes the case for a vigorous and consistent application of interview techniques designed specifically for the investigation of sense of place, and puts forward several carefully considered guidelines. I have included these guidelines here in their entirety:

Investigating contemporary sense of place requires going to the place in question and talking to people, what social scientists call field interviews. Interviewing is a big part of exploring contemporary sense of place because to find out what really matters to people, you have to spend a lot of time talking to them. I have attempted here to lay out the steps to conducting interviews in a way appropriate to sense of place study. These are my main guidelines:

• Keep an open mind about what will be relevant.
• Keep your schedule flexible to accommodate unexpected opportunities.
• Develop sensitivity for local social protocol.
• Be straightforward about what you are doing and why.
• Take plenty of time for in-depth interviews.
• Allow the interests and inclinations of the interviewees to guide interviews.
• Make interviews a rewarding experience for the interviewees.
• Corroborate your findings with the people you are purporting to represent.
• Maintain patience as you collect the initial chaotic mass of information, and have faith that you will eventually discern patterns and order, around which you can structure your continued study and final interpretations. (de Wit 2013, p. 140)

As noted above, de Wit’s guidelines fit well within an inductive grounded theory approach, and support them as a framework for this current research. de Wit’s
guidelines formed the bedrock of my own qualitative approach to the interview process. For the first, second and fourth points above, I simply followed these as written. As an insider researcher, having spent 17 years in the neighbourhood, I was very familiar with local social protocol. I allowed each interview to carry on for as long as the participant wished to speak, and did not impose any limit on my time with them. While I followed my interview guide carefully (Appendix C), I frequently probed for more detail when an interviewee would raise a side point, or contribute an observation that may have drifted from the original question. I believe that the interviews were rewarding. There was frequent laughter and storytelling throughout. The interviews were relaxed and conversational, and always took place somewhere that was comfortable for the interviewee. The main findings of the study were shared with the interviewees as a form of member checking. In the case of the professional planners who were interviewed for Chapter 7: Conclusions, policy implications, City Planner feedback and future research, each planner was provided with a copy of that entire chapter so that they could reflect on our discussions and comment further. Finally, patience was critical to this process. A great deal of writing was done that does not appear in this final dissertation. Many interesting observations and patterns were explored and discarded as part of a grounded process. Eventually the findings included here came to the surface, and the writing was restructured around these. This process was iterative and time intensive, but ultimately rewarding, both personally and from a research perspective.

3.6.2 The interview guide

The resident interview guide is presented in its entirety in Appendix C. The questions were designed to illuminate the sense of place experienced by the residents in their own words. Careful attention was paid in this design to avoid any mention of heritage, the physical or community aspects of place, or even the name Woodfield itself in the
early questions. None of the printed matter (e.g. recruitment letter, letter of information and consent) included these elements.

The first five questions were very broad, and allowed the interviewee to consider their neighbourhood in their own words, from several perspectives:

- Imagine that you are talking to someone who is not familiar with your neighbourhood. How would you describe your neighbourhood to them? (What do you consider the boundaries of your neighbourhood to be?)
- What one word would you use to describe your neighbourhood?
- What is the best thing about your neighbourhood?
- What is the worst thing about your neighbourhood?
- What, if anything, do you feel makes your neighbourhood unique?

At this point, the physical and community aspects of place were introduced in two separate questions, in case the interviewee had not yet discussed one or the other:

- Please describe your feelings toward the physical characteristics of your neighbourhood.
- Please describe your feelings about your connections to your neighbours and community.

Next, the interviewee was prompted to consider the name of their neighbourhood:

- What do people call this neighbourhood?

Then, to begin to explore their awareness of the HCD plans, the interview turned to a broad discussion of local regulations, without prompting for heritage:

- Are you aware of any specific by-laws or regulations in your neighbourhood?
- How do you feel about these specific by-laws or regulations in your neighbourhood?
At this point in the interview, in case it had not yet come up, the historic nature of the
neighbourhood was explicitly raised:

- What are your thoughts about the historic nature of this neighbourhood?

Finally, some clean-up questions were posed, to get a better sense of the interviewees
themselves, and some final thoughts about the neighbourhood:

- How many years have you lived in this neighbourhood?
- What are your thoughts about moving from this neighbourhood?
- Where do you see this neighbourhood going in the next few decades?
  What changes do you expect? (If you could wave a magic wand, what
  changes would you like to see?)
- Is there anything else that you would like to add?

An analysis of these open-ended, semi-structured resident interviews that formed the
second stage of this grounded, qualitative approach is presented in Chapters 4, 5 and 6.

3.6.3 Participant recruitment for resident interviews

Participant recruitment began with a Recruitment Letter dropped at every home that
was accessible in the Woodfield neighbourhood during the summer and early fall of
2016 (Appendix D). To ensure a diversity of resident participants, recruitment letters
were dropped throughout the entire neighbourhood, at both single and multi-family
homes in the East Woodfield HCD, the West Woodfield HCD and in the areas outside of
both districts. Most homes were accessible, and in buildings with limited access, a
sufficient number of letters were left in a location visible to residents. A second drop
was made approximately one month after the first to catch any residents that may have
missed the first copy.
Any resident who responded to the letter was interviewed, and this process continued until saturation was reached, although all those who made contact after this point were also interviewed.

3.6.4 Interview format and participants

Potential participants for the in-depth open-ended, semi-structured interviews who contacted the researcher were presented with a Letter of Information and Consent (Appendix E). If they signed this letter, which all did, the interview would begin. I was the sole researcher who conducted these interviews, and informed each participant that I was a long-time resident of Woodfield, and familiar with the neighbourhood. I conducted face-to-face semi-structured interviews with 39 Woodfield residents. All names have been replaced with pseudonyms throughout this dissertation.

Interviews were generally conducted at the home of the participant (n=29). At the request of the participant, occasionally the interview would take place in a coffee shop (n=5), a place of business (n=2) or my own home (n=2). In one instance, the interview took place on a large rock in front of Lord Roberts Public School in Woodfield (n=1). Interviews ranged from 24 minutes (an outlier) to one hour and thirty-three minutes. The interviews were conducted from late July to early December of 2016 (n=35) with three additional interviews for residents who could not meet in that timeframe (January 2017, n=3) and one final interview for someone out of the country (April 2017, n=1).

Most of these residents (n=34) resided in one of the two Woodfield Heritage Conservation Districts (HCDs), with 13 residing in the East Woodfield HCD (est. 1992) and 21 residing in the larger West Woodfield HCD (est. 2008). A further 5 of the interviewees resided within the smaller, undesignated areas around the broader Woodfield neighbourhood, just outside of the two established HCDs (see Figure 3a). All of those interviewed defined the boundary of their own neighbourhood as overlapping at least one of the two HCDs (n=39). Most (n=34) identified boundaries that contained
both, either completely or in large part (this will be further explained ahead in Chapter 4: Place discourse: Sense of place and place branding).

Figure 3a: Map of the entire Woodfield neighbourhood, including both the East and West Woodfield Heritage Conservation Districts. (by author)

Demographic questions were presented at the end of the interview, and were adapted from the Standards for the Conduct of Government of Canada Public Opinion Research (Government of Canada 2009). Table 3a provides an overview of the breakdown of residents by demographic question. The table exhibits a good deal of diversity of age, gender and income, but does not closely match the overall percentages in the neighbourhood according to census data. This is not unusual in low-n interview research, as a small number of additional people in any one category can cause a larger swing in overall percentages in that category, such that achieving a close representation across categories is difficult.
Employment and language percentages matched well to the neighbourhood at large, and gender was relatively balanced, although it skewed higher toward males (59%). Approximately one quarter of the interviewees were renters and three quarters were owners, while in the neighbourhood at large this relationship is reversed. Related to this, the number of single person households is therefore underrepresented in the interviews (28% vs 56%), the number of two and three-person households is overrepresented (49%/18% vs 34%/6%), and the 55+ age categories were overrepresented (59% vs 24%). These variations, relating to ease of access to different housing types, and time available for interviews with age and lifestyle, are acknowledged as a potential source of bias.

This is difficult to control for in low-n interview work, and as such no claims are made in this dissertation as to the ability to generalise from the findings (see Chapter 7: Conclusions, policy implications, City Planner feedback and future research.) That said, while the percentages do not closely match the broader community, care was taken to ensure that the interview process was not completed until representation of all groups was achieved.

### Question:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. Gender</th>
<th>41% (16)</th>
<th>59% (23)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>13% (5)</td>
<td>13% (5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>28% (11)</td>
<td>31% (12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Age</td>
<td>15% (6)</td>
<td>13% (5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18-34</td>
<td>13% (5)</td>
<td>13% (5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35-49</td>
<td>28% (11)</td>
<td>31% (12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-54</td>
<td>28% (11)</td>
<td>31% (12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55-64</td>
<td>5% (21)</td>
<td>5% (21)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65+</td>
<td>5% (21)</td>
<td>5% (21)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Education</td>
<td>3% (1)</td>
<td>18% (7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trade App.</td>
<td>3% (1)</td>
<td>26% (10)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Univ. Cert.</td>
<td>18% (7)</td>
<td>41% (16)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College Dg.</td>
<td>18% (7)</td>
<td>41% (16)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B.A.</td>
<td>10% (4)</td>
<td>10% (4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grad Dg.</td>
<td>10% (4)</td>
<td>10% (4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not stated</td>
<td>41% (16)</td>
<td>41% (16)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Language</td>
<td>97% (38)</td>
<td>3% (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>3% (1)</td>
<td>3% (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eng + other</td>
<td>3% (1)</td>
<td>3% (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Employment</td>
<td>5% (2)</td>
<td>8% (3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student</td>
<td>5% (2)</td>
<td>5% (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part-time</td>
<td>5% (2)</td>
<td>5% (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self Empl’d</td>
<td>13% (5)</td>
<td>13% (5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full-time</td>
<td>10% (4)</td>
<td>10% (4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retired</td>
<td>15% (6)</td>
<td>15% (6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Household Inc.</td>
<td>15% (6)</td>
<td>41-60000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20-40000</td>
<td>5% (2)</td>
<td>5% (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>61-80000</td>
<td>13% (5)</td>
<td>13% (5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100-150000</td>
<td>10% (4)</td>
<td>10% (4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>150000+</td>
<td>15% (6)</td>
<td>15% (6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Household #</td>
<td>28% (11)</td>
<td>49% (19)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 person</td>
<td>18% (7)</td>
<td>18% (7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 people</td>
<td>5% (2)</td>
<td>5% (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 people</td>
<td>5% (2)</td>
<td>5% (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 people</td>
<td>5% (2)</td>
<td>5% (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Ownership</td>
<td>74% (29)</td>
<td>26% (10)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Own</td>
<td>26% (10)</td>
<td>26% (10)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rent</td>
<td>26% (10)</td>
<td>26% (10)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 3a: Answers to demographic questions by rounded percent.**
3.7 Stage three: Theoretical modelling

The next stage of this research design addresses the third objective: to produce a theoretical model of the power dynamics and the various factors (including but not limited to power relationships, the government texts themselves, the physical setting and community relationships) that impact residential sense of place and the HCD place brand in the neighbourhood. This theoretical contribution again emerged through an inductive grounded theory approach, from my analysis of the government texts and resident interviews, and ultimately adjusted in light of the City Planner interviews.

Further literature was reviewed at this stage in the areas of gentrification, community identities, and Mitchell’s model of creative destruction (e.g. Mitchell 1998, 2000, 2001, 2009). This literature is presented in Chapter 2: Place, gentrification, community identities and creative destruction, and lays the groundwork for my revised theory of creative destruction of place in a designated Heritage Conservation District. A detailed explanation of this theory is presented in Chapter 8: The creative destruction of place.

3.8 Stage four: Depth interviews with City of London Planners

Stage four addresses the final study objective: to gain the perspective of City of London Planners, engaged in the creation and enforcement of the HCD government texts, on my analysis. This final stage of the study was conducted on completion of all writing except for the final two chapters of this thesis. In-depth open-ended, semi-structured interviews were conducted with three City of London Urban and Heritage Planners, each responsible for the management of the Woodfield HCDs.

The participants were presented with the summarised findings of my research, and were asked for comment from their experienced perspective, particularly regarding suggestions for changes to policy. In-depth interviewing, which “opens the way to understanding how particular individuals arrive at the cognitions, emotions and values
that emerge in the conversational journey” (Miller & Crabtree 2004, p. 200) provided a final form of rigor, through a professional critique of my analysis. The Interview Guide is presented in Appendix F, and a detailed description of these conversations is provided in Chapter 7: Conclusions, policy implications, City Planner feedback and future research.

3.8.1 Participant recruitment for City of London Planner interviews

Interviews with the City of London Urban and Heritage Planners were conducted in the fall of 2017. The three participants were selected because of their direct involvement both in the creation and enforcement of the London HCD plans. Each of these Planners has a long and direct involvement with HCDs in London. John Fleming, the Managing Director of Planning was approached for his high level urban planning perspective, and for the fact that he had worked in the City of London Planning department for 26 years, since before the first London HCD was designated. Kyle Gonyou, one of two current Heritage Planners with the City of London joined the department in 2012. Kyle was approached for both his current direct experience with the creation and management of the London HCDs, and his related private sector work. Finally, Don Menard, a retired Heritage Planner (2004-2016) with the City of London was selected for his experience in the early days of HCD management in London. Menard served during the creation of five of London’s seven HCDs, including the West Woodfield HCD.

Menard and Gonyou are the two individuals who have been most engaged in the day to day management and enforcement of the Woodfield HCD plans. No one has spent more time pouring over HCD plans in London than these two gentlemen. Fleming’s unique high-level management perspective on planning in the City of London provided the broader planning context. Their brief biographies are presented at the beginning of

\[\text{\textsuperscript{2} NMREB approval was given to indicate these three City of London Planners by name, which the participants also agreed to (see Appendix I).}\]
Chapter 7: Conclusions, policy implications, City Planner feedback and future research.

The interviewees were first contacted with an initial phone call or email. Once they expressed an interest in participating (all three agreed), a date and time was arranged for the interview to take place, and the Planners were provided with a Letter of Information and Consent (Appendix G). If they signed this letter, which all did, the interview would begin.

Unlike the resident interviews, these Planners were asked to allow themselves to be identified by name and position and informed that should they choose to take part, any quotations used would not be kept anonymous. This was important for two reasons. First, as a small number of agents are engaged in the creation and enforcement of the local government texts, it would be impossible to guarantee anonymity given the specific nature of the questions asked. Second, this stage of the research was designed to establish a professional critique/assessment of the analysis presented in the first three stages, and as such the specific credentials of the interviewees were deemed to be relevant. For rigor, each planner was finally given an opportunity to read the completed relevant chapter, and provide additional feedback and comment.

The interview guide that was prepared for the professional planners was written after all other research was completed. This guide is presented in Appendix F and discussed in detail in Chapter 7: Conclusions, policy implications, City Planner feedback and future research. The interviews were conducted in a quiet board room at London City Hall (n=2) and in a coffee shop downtown (n=1), each at the request of the interviewees, and lasted from 30 minutes to just under 1 hour. Excerpts from these interviews are presented as part of that same chapter.
Chapter 4

4 PLACE DISCOURSE: SENSE OF PLACE AND PLACE BRANDING

4.1 Introduction

While the discourse analysis of government texts and depth interviews were conducted in distinct stages as outlined in the previous chapter, the findings will be presented here and in the following two chapters collected instead into the themes that informed my three major research findings (ahead).

In each chapter, a discourse analysis of the government texts will first examine the language in these texts, to identify the power/rhetoric that flows through them, along with any explicit or implicit references to sense of place, particularly any discourses relating to the physical and community aspects of place making. This discursive analysis will focus primarily on the plans created specifically for the two adjoining HCDs in the Woodfield neighbourhood in London, Ontario: The East Woodfield Heritage Conservation District Plan (Corporation of the City of London 1992) and The West Woodfield Heritage Conservation District Plan (Corporation of the City of London 2008) (Figure 1a). In the two chapters that follow, I will demonstrate that the weight of the text is heavily focused on physical heritage details, with little attention to guiding inevitable change in the districts, and the changing needs of district residents.

Community on the other hand, is infrequently mentioned or considered in the texts. When it is, property owners are privileged over all other types of residents. These hegemonic discourses that emerged in the analysis of the government texts will be compared in each case to the discourses, and notably the counter-discourses, that emerged in the resident interviews.

Holton and Riley contend that “placed-based interviewing may enlighten and enliven research into the lived experience of place” (2014, p. 63). To this end, each chapter will
also present an analysis of the open-ended, semi-structured interviews that I conducted in the second stage of this grounded, qualitative research. Throughout these chapters I will provide the reader with selected quotations in the participants own words. This presentation is of course curated, and I have selected quotations that were representative of the broader discussion associated with a given theme, derived through data-driven coding. The themes discussed here were selected for a variety of reasons. Those that illumined elements of the physical or community aspects of sense of place, those that reflected or countered themes found in the discourse analysis of government texts, those that were mentioned by many participants, and even outliers that defied expectations are all included here. This analysis will only touch on a small number of the many codes that emerged over multiple passes, as outlined in Chapter 3: Methods and research design. The coding schema can be found in Appendix H.

In this chapter, I will present evidence that there is a lack of engagement with, and stated awareness of or connection to the Heritage Conservation District (HCD) place brands among the interviewed residents of Woodfield. This finding is supported by other indicators, including Heritage Alteration Permit applications and resident participation in the HCD designation process.

To set the stage for this and the chapters that follow though, I will first broadly consider the sense of place discourse within the government texts. I will show that despite repeated references in the relevant literature to sense of place as a central concern, in the government texts that guide HCD conservation in Ontario it is rarely referenced and poorly defined.

4.2 Sense of place discourse in the policy framework

As discussed, for the purposes of this research I considered residential sense of place as defined by Billig (2005): “formed by the subjective feelings and patterns of behavior” resulting from relations amongst residents “and from their attitude towards the physical
aspects of the residential environment” (p. 118; emphasis added). While the literature frequently references sense of place as a central concern in heritage landscapes, towns and districts (e.g. Jamal & Hill 2004; Human 2010; Dobson & Selman 2012), within the government texts that guide heritage district conservation in Ontario, the term is rarely referenced explicitly or implicitly, poorly defined if at all, and generally unsupported in the ultimate HCD plans beyond the conservation of the physical aspects of place. Notably, policy rhetoric about sense of place, even when present, does not always find its way into related outcomes (Jones and Evans, 2012).

In the relevant government texts in Ontario, while a broader conception of sense of place is given lip service at times, as will be shown below, it is never considered beyond the surface. Focus rests squarely, and not surprisingly, on the physical nature of the district (e.g. heritage features of buildings, heritage streetscapes) and associations with historically important people and events. While indeed central to the concept, there is more to a place than the physical backdrop or historic connections. How residents live in and interact with the residential environment and each other is also significant. Jones & Evans (2012) issue something of a call to action in this regard, stating that “by accessing the embodied connections people have with particular places, there is the potential to improve the quality of subsequent redevelopments, retaining or re-creating some of the elements which are valued by the individuals who currently use them” (p. 2316; emphasis added). The application and use of the concept of sense of place in Ontario HCD policy is therefore underdeveloped from a geographer’s perspective.

Sense of place is not explicitly mentioned in the guiding versions of the Planning Act, the Provincial Policy Statement (2005), the Ontario Heritage Act or indeed in either of the two Woodfield HCD plans. The term does appear in the Ontario Heritage Toolkit (2006), a guide provided to municipalities for district designation under the Ontario Heritage Act and available at the time of the designation of the West Woodfield HCD. On the first page of the Toolkit, sense of place appears prominently in the second paragraph, which reads:
In many cases, these areas have maintained their uniqueness and *sense of place* because the local municipality has taken the opportunity to designate them as Heritage Conservation Districts. (The Ontario Heritage Toolkit 2006, p. 1; emphasis added)

The concept is not defined here or anywhere in the toolkit, so what precisely is being maintained, or how, remains unclear.

Sense of place rhetoric also appears in the later 2014 revision of the PPS, notably after the creation of both the East and West Woodfield HCD plans. This highlights a potential concern with the policy framework. Although a new focus, in this case sense of place, may be added to the upper tier guiding policies, the nature of HCD designation is such that the plans are rarely revisited after they are first implemented. This results in a mismatch between the aims of the most current Provincial policies, and the on-the-ground enforcement guidelines enshrined in a lasting way in the HCD plans.

In the end, while these upper tier texts guide the broader process, it is the HCD plans themselves, produced for each unique district, that directly guide conservation and change within the districts themselves. As explicit references to sense of place are rare in the guiding texts, and absent from the specific East and West Woodfield HCD guidelines, a discourse analysis of these texts is required to uncover any implicit references. This analysis will be presented throughout this and the two chapters that follow; *Chapter 5: Place discourse: The community aspects of place*, and *Chapter 6: Place discourse: The physical aspects of place*.

### 4.3 Interviews: Sense of place and place branding discourse

The interviews were designed and coded to reveal the sense of place that the interviewed residents experience in their own neighbourhood. As such, the physical and community aspects of residential sense of place informed the first coding pass. As was the case in the earlier discourse analysis of government texts, this again resulted in
an initial coding schema split into two broad categories. Subsequent rounds of line-by-line coding generated finer detail and greater nuance (Appendix H).

The first interview question was kept purposely broad. The interviewees were asked to imagine that they were talking to someone unfamiliar with their neighbourhood, and the question was simply “how would you describe your neighbourhood to them?” To this point, the residents were only aware of the general information presented to them in the Letter of Information and Consent (Appendix E). No indication was given about any specific interest in the heritage districts or the historic nature of the neighbourhood. Even the name Woodfield was kept out of this initial material and not mentioned in the interview until it was voiced by the resident. Instead, the participants were informed that the conversation would be more generally about their neighbourhood:

You are being invited to participate in this research study on your description of, and the thoughts and opinions that you have toward your neighbourhood in London, Ontario … The purpose of this study is to better understand your thoughts about the communal and physical aspects of your neighbourhood, and how you interact with the neighbourhood and your neighbours. (Letter of Information and Consent, Appendix E)

Ahead in this thesis I will provide greater detail about the specific responses of the participants, and the themes that emerged through data-driven coding. To start though, Figure 4a provides a simple snapshot of these responses in the form of a word cloud of the top 1000 words, excluding colloquial words and words such as, the or at.

The larger the word, the higher the number of mentions it received. This is not intended to be particularly analytical, but rather serves as an introduction to the tone of the conversations that follow.
Figure 4a: “How would you describe your neighbourhood?” (by author in NVivo)
Figure 4b: “What one word would you use to describe your neighbourhood?” (by author in NVivo)
The second question was again designed to elicit an initial impression from the interviewees, to determine those features that are front of mind when considering the neighbourhood. The residents were simply asked “what one word would you use to describe your neighbourhood?” All the interviewed residents provided an answer to this question (n=39). Notably, by this point the interviewee had already had an opportunity to ‘warm-up’ by considering and discussing their general description of the neighbourhood in the first question.

Figure 4b (above) presents another word cloud created in NVivo by running a word frequency query. The query was set to include stemmed words (for example diverse and diversity are both included as diverse). Words such as heritage and historic that were similar in meaning but not stemmed were included independently. The response most frequently given was diverse (n=4), although counted together the words historic, heritage and old were selected an equal number of times (n=2, 1, 1, respectively).

In Table 4a, these words are presented with attention to context. The conversation surrounding each word was considered, and where possible each word was designated as positive, negative or unclear, and assigned to a physical or community category, or both. Most of the words given could be considered neutral to positive, such as comfortable, friendly or good (n=29/31), while only two words (challenging, WASP) reflected a neutral to negative sentiment in the context of the surrounding statements.

About half of these words (n=15), when considered in context explicitly referenced the community (e.g. friendly, lively, passionate; Figure 4c) while others (n=12) focused on the physical aspects of the neighbourhood exclusively (e.g. central, boundary). In four cases, the meaning was unclear.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>“One word”</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>“One word”</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Diverse (c+)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Enriching (p+)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comfortable (p+)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Good (?)+</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eclectic (c+)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Heritage (p+)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friendly (c+)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Livable (p+)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Historic (p+)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Lively (c+)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home (?)+</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Neighbourhood (c+)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban (p+)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Nice (c+)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boundary (p+)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Old (p+)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central (p+)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Passionate (c+)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Challenging (c-)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Residential (p+)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classy (c+)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Settled (c+)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community (c+)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Stimulating (p+)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cool (?)+</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Vibrant (c+)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cozy (p+)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Warm (c+)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Easy (?)+</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>WASP (c-)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eccentric (c+)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4a: “What one word would you use to describe your neighbourhood?”
p indicates a generally physical description; c indicates community; ? indicates that the meaning was unclear; + indicates a word used positively; – indicates a word used negatively (when considered in context).

Figure 4c: The friendly, lively, passionate people of Woodfield. (Woodfield Community Association photo archives with art effect by author)
As discussed in Chapter 2: Place, gentrification, community identities and creative destruction, the HCD designation process ultimately identifies and conserves key aspects of a place that come to define the HCD place brand. This process of place branding, along with resident awareness of and engagement with the resulting brand, is therefore an important place to start. As will be discussed ahead, a lack of engagement with the HCD brands would indicate a related and noteworthy lack of awareness of the plans themselves, and their purpose and effect, among residents. In the two chapters that follow a detailed picture of the elements that make up this place brand will emerge through further analysis. In this chapter, resident awareness of and interaction with the HCD texts that define this brand will first be considered.

4.3.1 Place branding discourse in the interviews: An introduction

In this section I will consider any indication in the interviews of direct or indirect references to the HCD brand. Before this thesis turns in the coming two chapters to the themes related to specific physical and community aspects of place, it is useful to first set the stage with a more general picture of place branding in the HCDs, and the level of resident engagement with the HCD brand. To do so I will consider the broad themes that emerged in the first round of coding as informed by the discourse analysis of government texts, which will be referenced and reconsidered throughout.

Interview coding revealed that the HCDs themselves were not explicitly front of mind for residents in their descriptions of place, and were infrequently mentioned in the interviews. The term heritage district or any variation that indicated an awareness of designation (e.g. heritage conservation district, historic district, designated area) was mentioned in only 6 of the interviews (n=6) and in most of those cases, was mentioned only once (n=5). When this is broadened to terms that capture the simpler historic nature of the neighbourhood more generally, with less concern for any acknowledgment of the officially designated areas (e.g. historic area, heritage neighbourhood), this
wording is found in 10 additional interviews (n=10), but again mentioned only once in most cases (n=8), over interviews ranging from 24 minutes (an outlier) to roughly an hour and a half. This is not to say that the heritage features of the districts did not impact the sense of place experienced by these residents, but rather that discussion of the more formal HCD brand occurred infrequently.

4.3.2 Place branding discourse in the interviews: The neighbourhood and HCDs by name

All of those interviewed lived either within the East Woodfield Heritage Conservation District (n=13), the West Woodfield Heritage Conservation District (n=21) or within one block of one of these two HCDs (n=5). While the neighbourhood name of Woodfield was often cited by residents (n=35), the HCD names themselves were rarely mentioned (East Woodfield n=2; West Woodfield n=4) in the interviews. Notably, every participant (n=39) defined their neighbourhood boundary to include most or all of at least one of the two HCDs when mapped (see Figure 4e, below).

That these district names are not front of mind may be a result of many factors. The district names are not clearly visible anywhere within the neighbourhood. While signage does exist in the older East Woodfield HCD (Figure 4d), this signage refers only to the anonymous *Historic Woodfield*. Despite its visual prominence, even this phrase was only mentioned in 4 of the interviews (n=4: Max, Steven, Pam, Maria) and then only once in all but one case. In general, the only interactions that residents would have with the official HCD names would be in dealings with City Hall. As will be discussed below, residents demonstrated a low level of familiarity and experience with the HCD plans, which indicates that any formal interaction with the plans is likely infrequent. As City Hall is the only place that these HCD names and boundaries are on prominent display, this lack of interaction likely serves to further weaken any specific brand effects within the official boundaries of these districts.
The collective neighbourhood name of Woodfield was mentioned more frequently (n=35). When asked “what do people call this neighbourhood” in question 9 however, many participants also referred to their neighbourhood as Downtown (n=26), while others indicated some degree of confusion or disagreement over the name Woodfield (n=19). When prompted to consider how they would describe where they lived to someone outside of the neighbourhood, many of the participants indicated that they would use other specific landmarks (e.g. street names, City Hall n=29).

Place brands “tend to opt unequivocally for projecting a clear and simple image” that can be “seen essentially as a process of reduction” (Anholt 2010, p. 38). The infrequent use of the official HCD names in the interviews, even when prompted to consider the historic nature of the neighbourhood, may hold negative implications for a clear and recognisable heritage brand in Woodfield. The observed variation in the neighbourhood name used by the interviewees, and a repeated confusion about the name Woodfield itself, weakens this connection further.
4.3.3 Place branding discourse in the interviews: Neighbourhood boundaries

As HCD plans are enacted, they serve to create new boundaries within or around a place. As discussed in *Chapter 1: Introduction and community context*, the process of deciding HCD boundaries is carried out in discussion with residents, but ultimately rests with the heritage planning consultants. The resulting HCD does not generally conform to the boundaries of an existing neighbourhood, but rather is based on technical heritage criteria. In the East Woodfield HCD Plan for example, Part 1.4 states that the:

...proposed boundaries ... closely follow the original study area [in an] attempt to ‘capture’ those buildings, streetscapes and spaces that generally form visually cohesive units. In this regard, the compact rectilinear grid of East Woodfield has resulted in a number of coherent streetscapes and distinctive edges. (East Woodfield HCD Plan, 1992, p I-5)

In the West Woodfield HCD Plan, the rationale for the final boundary is stated as follows:

- Despite some redevelopment, the area contains a high concentration of recognizable architectural styles and features that are consistent with the styles and methods of construction associated with the era in which they were developed;

- It includes several long-standing landmarks such as the major public buildings and institutions facing onto and adjacent to Victoria Park, including City Hall, the enclave of fraternity houses and multi-residential buildings along Princess Avenue and the collection of exceptional houses and businesses along quiet Wolfe Street and others that contribute positively to the cityscape;

- The area incorporates many of the key buildings previously listed or designated in London and will allow the protection of these structures and the intervening buildings and landscape features that contribute to the streetscape as a whole.

- The areas added exhibit strong architectural and streetscape similarities to the original study area with consistent building styles and details;

- The removal of mainly commercial buildings along Richmond Street is based on the rationale that commercial areas tend not to benefit from the stability a Heritage Conservation District provides. These areas require the ability to respond to marketing trends without the constraints of heritage conservation;
• It incorporates the majority of the original Study Area, particularly the area that reflects the core residential area and has the greatest architectural and streetscape consistency and integrity;

• It includes the properties on the east side of Maitland Street that were originally left out of the East Woodfield Heritage Conservation District that would otherwise be ‘orphaned’ between the two districts;

• The majority of buildings ranked ‘A’ and ‘B’ are included, thereby providing protection for the most important heritage attributes. (West Woodfield HCD Plan, 2008, p 2.1)

In each case, the consultants are concerned primarily with architectural and historic cohesiveness, but there are political aspects at play here as well. In some areas HCD boundaries avoid specific houses or blocks that would appear by age and date to be inconsistent. In some cases, boundaries run right down the middle of a street. At times, this happens to avoid an unsupportive land owner, despite meeting all other criteria. The result can be a somewhat confusing, or at times inexplicable saw tooth boundary that is not easily recalled (discussed ahead, and shown in Figure 4g, below). All of this further confuses any visual cues that a boundary has been crossed, or any clear delineation related to a unique place brand.

As a result, the Woodfield HCD boundaries do not conform in any way to the greater Woodfield neighbourhood, other than that each HCD is wholly within that neighbourhood. It is not surprising then, that when prompted to consider the boundaries of their neighbourhood in the interviews, none of the residents put forward boundaries that matched either HCD (n=0). While the HCD boundaries are well delineated within the plans, these do not manifest themselves physically in the day to day experience of residents, created as they are through a somewhat bureaucratic and technical process, and visually absent of reliable cues on the ground.

In the East Woodfield HCD, even though a visible reminder of this boundary can be seen in the form of heritage street signs (Figure 4d, above), not one resident interviewed identified this boundary as their neighbourhood (the newer HCD has yet to see these signs installed). This is not to say that the heritage streetscapes themselves have no
effect on one’s conception of neighbourhood. When prompted to define what connects their neighbourhood, several participants did refer to the heritage architecture \(n=7\). This connectivity of heritage architecture, though, does not conform in the minds of even these participants to the boundaries set out by the HCD designation process, or to the explicit HCD brand.

More often, the participants referred to other factors such as where they walked \(n=19\), or a general cozy, familiar or comfortable feeling \(n=13\). It would simply appear that as even the authors of the East Woodfield HCD Plan have indicated, “within the Woodfield community, the East Woodfield study area is a microcosm of those historical themes and built heritage that distinguish the larger community of Woodfield” (East Woodfield HCD Plan 1992, p 1-3). This fuzziness distracts from the clear identification of the HCD brand.

Even the greater Woodfield *neighbourhood* boundary, as understood by the City and promoted by the local Woodfield Community Association, was not commonly agreed upon in the interviews. Although most participants identified their neighbourhood as Woodfield at some point in their interview \(n=35\), only 4 participants (Loni, Alex, Patrick and Steven) closely indicated the boundaries followed by the community association and the City. Four more participants \(n=4\) indicated neighbourhood boundaries somewhat consistent with the Woodfield neighbourhood. All the others varied more dramatically.

Indeed, variation was a striking and recurring feature in the descriptions of neighbourhood boundaries provided by the interviewed residents, as can be seen in Figure 4e and Table 4b.
Figure 4e: Overlaid maps of the various boundaries of Woodfield. Darkness of grey indicates degree of overlap among interviewees; The white line indicates the Woodfield neighbourhood boundary. (by author)
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<th>South</th>
<th>West</th>
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Table 4b: Neighbourhood boundaries as identified by interviewee.

(v) = some variation in definition; **bold** indicates a close alignment with the ‘official’ neighbourhood boundaries, and *bold* indicates a boundary somewhat consistent with the official boundary. The final column indicates that the interviewee lives in the East, West, or neither HCD (X).
The eastern boundary of the neighbourhood was identified as Adelaide or William by most of the interviewed residents (n=32), the southern boundary as Queen or Dundas by a similar number (n=31), and the western boundary as Richmond or Victoria Park by a smaller majority (n=25). These three boundaries closely mirrored those recognised by the City and community association. Residents who did not indicate these boundaries identified a variety of others, but generally these fell near or within the official neighbourhood boundaries. The northern boundary was a different story. Many residents indicated this boundary as Oxford (n=17), a number identified either the tracks or Pall Mall (n=6) and still others picked streets close to the official boundary such as Central or Piccadilly (n=9). Oxford is notably the next major intersection to the North of Woodfield, and between Woodfield and Oxford lies the neighbourhood of Piccadilly, a distinct but visually very similar neighbourhood. The variation of definitions revealed in the interviews, then, again raises doubt that that either HCD, or even Woodfield itself, is perceived with clear and agreed upon boundaries that would reflect a deeper awareness of the place brand.

4.4 Other indicators: Place branding

While all interviewed residents indicated neighbourhood boundaries that included at least one of the two HCDs as part of their neighbourhood (n=39), and most included both (n=34), few mentioned the HCDs by name anywhere in their descriptions of place (n=6) and none drew their boundaries in a way that conformed with either district (n=0).

A great deal of variation was indicated in the formal aspects of the perceived neighbourhood, among the interviewed residents. As noted, even the name Woodfield, while popular (n=35) was not the only name used, and names such as Downtown were also frequently cited (n=26). This indicates that these broad aspects of place branding are not consistently understood or agreed upon in the neighbourhood, and that the interviewed residents’ perceptions of place have little to do with the designated HCDs.
themselves. As will be discussed ahead in Chapter 6: Place discourse: The physical aspects of place, while heritage aspects of the district were referenced at some point in all the interviews (n=39), the heritage details, that make up so much of the body of the HCD plans, were also less frequently mentioned when unprompted (n=14). Engagement between residents of Woodfield and the HCDs themselves or their management was also infrequently mentioned, and may explain this lack of connection to the HCD brand. As the HCD plans hold so much power to guide change and development in the districts, this lack of connection and engagement is worth considering. In the sections below, I will present some other measures of resident engagement with the HCDs, to triangulate with my findings above, and consider whether this is a wider phenomenon in Woodfield.

4.4.1 Place brand engagement: Heritage Alteration Permit applications

The most common formal interaction that residents would generally have with the HCD plans would occur if they wished to make a change to one or more of the designated features of their home or property. To make such changes, residents of a London HCD must apply for a Heritage Alteration Permit (HAP). If the number of applications per year were high, this would indicate that many residents regularly interact with City staff, and by extension would need to interact with the HCD plan itself as part of that process, building familiarity.

A freedom of information request was filed with the City of London to gain access to the heritage records of the London Advisory Committee on Heritage (LACH, formerly LACAC). Prior to 1997 these records were kept in paper form, and thereafter digitally. This necessitated sifting through many boxes to sort out the earlier HAPs from other related materials, for the first four years that they were available. Post 1997, the digital reports of the advisory committee meetings were examined, and each HAP was noted in all cases, along with its outcome and application details where available.
Table 4c presents the amalgamated data by year. The first column indicates the number of HAPs requested in the East Woodfield HCD. The second column indicates those requested in the West Woodfield HCD, and for reference the third and fourth columns present all applications for individually designated homes city-wide (or those in other districts), along with an overall total, respectively.

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Table 4c: Heritage alteration permit applications by year. * = East WF HCD in effect; ** = Digital records begin; *** = West WF HCD in effect; **** = Delegated authority (change occurred before or during each year).
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<td>2009***</td>
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<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015****</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
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</tbody>
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Table 4d: Heritage alteration permit approvals by year. * = East WF HCD in effect; ** = Digital records begin; *** = West WF HCD in effect; **** = Delegated authority (change occurred before or during each year).

It is clear that a very small number of Woodfield residents have come in regular contact with the HCD plans in this way. Over the 23 years, no more than 4 home owners have applied for permits in any given year in the East Woodfield HCD, and no more than 8 have applied in any given year in the larger West Woodfield HCD. It is also interesting to note that most of the HAPs were approved over these years (Table 4d). In 23 years only one application in the East Woodfield HCD was denied outright, and only three in the
West Woodfield HCD. Much of the credit for this record goes to the proactive approach taken by the City Heritage Planners, who consult with the home owner ahead of application to assist in understanding and meeting the guidelines. This does however indicate a low level of interaction with the plans themselves by most residents. Even when such interaction does occur, it would appear to be brief and infrequent for any given resident. In fact, most residents would never have cause to interact with the HCD plans at all.

Table 4e provides further details about the types of application requests that were made in each year. Those in bold indicate the type of application that was denied, in each of the 4 cases that this occurred across the two districts. This low number is notable, as denied requests often result in further consultation and revision of plans, or ongoing conflict in a worst case. A clean approval again limits the amount of interaction needed with the process, and exposure to the HCD plans.

This is supported in the findings of Jonas-Galvin, who conducted research in the East Woodfield HCD (only) in 2012. She surveyed a total of 67 residents, and found that:

Only 14 of the 67 respondents indicated they had made applications for alterations. All but two applications were approved. Only one person indicated the application took four-to-five months to approve. The remaining respondents (13) indicated the applications were approved in under three months. The time lines reported were: one-to-three months (four people), under one month (four people), and “not long” (three people). (Jonas-Galvin 2012, p. 15)

*Note: the 2 denied applications differ from the 1 reported above. This may be due to a lost paper record, a misunderstanding, or a resident who moved between districts, etc.*

This means that only 20% of Jonas-Galvin’s respondents had ever applied for a Heritage Alteration Permit over as many years as they had lived in the district. Most often residents only apply once for such approval, and as noted above this approval is
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year and district</th>
<th>Types of Heritage Alteration Permit requests</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1996 East WF HCD:</td>
<td>Dormers, windows, patio doors, porches.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997 East WF HCD:</td>
<td>Dormers, windows,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998 East WF HCD:</td>
<td>Screened rooms.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999 East WF HCD:</td>
<td>Windows, additions, internal subdivisions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002 East WF HCD:</td>
<td>Dormer removals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003 East WF HCD:</td>
<td>Garages, additions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004 East WF HCD:</td>
<td>Attic conversions, <strong>removals</strong>, skylights, dormers, porches.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006 East WF HCD:</td>
<td>Gables, additions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007 East WF HCD:</td>
<td>General repairs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009 East WF HCD:</td>
<td>Porches, stucco, general alterations, signage.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West WF HCD:</td>
<td>Windows, general alterations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010 East WF HCD:</td>
<td>Porches, general and interior alterations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West WF HCD:</td>
<td>Repairs, general alterations, porches, windows, new buildings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011 East WF HCD:</td>
<td>Solar panels, porches, replacements, roofing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West WF HCD:</td>
<td>None.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012 East WF HCD:</td>
<td>Roof alterations, porches.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West WF HCD:</td>
<td>Doors, windows, verandas, steps, <strong>addition</strong>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013 East WF HCD:</td>
<td>None.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West WF HCD:</td>
<td><strong>Window removal</strong>, porches, alterations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014 East WF HCD:</td>
<td>Porches, windows, general alterations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West WF HCD:</td>
<td>Chimneys, façade alterations, ramps, general alts, secondary structures, replacements, <strong>porch</strong>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015 East WF HCD:</td>
<td>Façade alterations, porches, general alterations, windows, landscape, gables.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West WF HCD:</td>
<td>Windows.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016 East WF HCD:</td>
<td>None.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West WF HCD:</td>
<td>Porches, brick, windows.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 4e: Heritage alteration permit approvals by type (**bold** = not approved).**
generally granted. These data taken together would support the finding that few residents have any regular interaction with the HCD plans through the formal HAP process, which again is the only process that would bring the average resident in contact with the HCD plans from year to year.

Figure 4f: Unique street signage that indicates the East Woodfield Heritage Conservation District. (photo by author)

4.4.2 Place brand engagement: Signage in the East Woodfield HCD

The most visible and constant engagement that residents would have with the HCD would therefore be through the presence of the aforementioned HCD signage (Figure 4f). This is currently only installed in the East Woodfield HCD, but it will eventually also be prepared for the West Woodfield HCD. Although this signage exists at every intersection indicated in the dark grey area of Figure 4g, when compared to the boundary maps that were defined by the interview participants (Figure 4h), there is very
Figure 4g: Boundaries of the East Woodfield Heritage Conservation District shown in dark grey. (Corporation of the City of London, 1992)
Figure 4h: Overlaid maps of the various boundaries of Woodfield with the East Woodfield HCD boundaries superimposed. Darkness of grey indicates degree of overlap among interviewees; White line indicates the boundary of the neighbourhood. (by author)
little correlation between interviewee perception of neighbourhood, and the edge of the HCD. Not one interviewed resident indicated these HCD boundaries as their neighbourhood. This is not necessarily surprising in and of itself, as neighbourhoods are defined in different ways by different people.

A greater indication though, is that although this signage is ubiquitous and could be seen daily, only two of the participants mentioned the East Woodfield HCD by name anywhere in their interviews \((n=2)\). As mentioned above, in part this may stem from the fact that the signage in Woodfield does not list the HCD name, but rather the more anonymous *Historic Woodfield* (although even this name was only mentioned 4 times).

### 4.4.3 Place brand engagement: Participation in the HCD creation process

One further way in which residents may be engaged with the HCDs is at the very beginning of the process. This measure is less continuously impactful than HAP applications or signage, as resident involvement in the HCD creation process is a one-time commitment. Those engaged in this process may eventually leave the neighbourhood, taking this experience with them. There are two ways to consider resident involvement in the creation of an HCD: as part of the HCD committee, or as an attendee at one of the informational meetings held throughout the process. The committee-level commitment can be a significant one, and certainly would foster a deeper connection to the HCD among those most involved in the process.

The East Woodfield HCD committee members are mentioned in the acknowledgments section of the East Woodfield HCD Plan (*Corporation of the City of London 1992*). Eleven names are listed, and of these only four were confirmed as residents of Woodfield. In the West Woodfield HCD Plan (*Corporation of the City of London 2008*) the acknowledgements again list eleven names, although this time eight were identified as Woodfield residents. This would still indicate, though, a relatively low level of resident engagement in the initial creation of either HCD plan.
More residents were certainly engaged through public meetings. Participation numbers are readily available for West Woodfield HCD public meeting attendance. A June 16, 2008 Planning Committee Report indicates that “the three public meetings witnessed about 70 people in attendance at each” (Corporation of the City of London 2008). It is likely that many of these were repeat attendees who were following along in the process, while others may have been non-resident heritage advocates, although this remains speculation as names were not recorded. Records were not readily available for the East Woodfield HCD meeting attendance, although the acknowledgments section of the East Woodfield HCD Plan does thank “the residents of East Woodfield who attended public meetings and expressed support for the continuing care and protection of their community” (Corporation of the City of London 1992, acknowledgements). In any case, although the West Woodfield numbers would indicate a higher level of citizen engagement in the initial meetings, these numbers are still relatively small in comparison to the neighbourhood as a whole, and any formal engagement ended as soon as each HCD was designated.

4.5 Summary

Taken together with the interviews, these data paint a picture of a low level of engagement among the residents of the Woodfield neighbourhood with the Woodfield HCDs or their ongoing management, and a limited awareness of or connection to the HCD brands. This lack of connection to the HCD brands is noteworthy, as the plans have the power to guide change and development in these districts. A lack of regular engagement and understanding of the plans contributes in part to the mismatch between the implicit and explicit aims of the plans themselves, and the needs and desires of the residents, discussed ahead in the following two chapters.

Over time this may result in changes to the underlying place that are not anticipated by the residents. I will explore the relationship between the government texts and
experienced sense of place further in the following two chapters, along the separate lines of the *community* and *physical* aspects of place, and ultimately in *Chapter 7: Conclusions, policy implications, City Planner feedback and future research*. 
Chapter 5

5 PLACE DISCOURSE: THE COMMUNITY ASPECTS OF PLACE

5.1 Introduction: Community aspects of place in Woodfield

Community relations amongst residents are a fundamental element of residential sense of place as defined in Chapter 2: Place, gentrification, community identities and creative destruction. While HCD plans more directly and explicitly impact the physical environment (as will be discussed in the next chapter) they also have the potential to directly and indirectly impact the community itself. In the previous chapter, the HCD designation process was described as a form of place branding. This place brand, while not well understood, is reified through the enforcement of the HCD plans. The resulting new or renewed place, with its associated impacts on residential sense of place, will be appealing to some residents, but will be unappealing to, exclude or even push out others.

The plans, for example, directly impact the mix of residents in the neighbourhood. HCD plans privilege those who desire or can afford specific types of housing that are encouraged by the plan, while excluding those who seek other forms of housing that may be discouraged. The enforcement, or threat of enforcement of these plans will also influence the community mix, as designation brings with it additional costs, responsibilities and a layer of added bureaucracy (see Chapter 2). Before designation, given their age and location generally close to the core of the city, these neighbourhoods are often in transition. Prior to the implementation of these new and additional costs and controls, the neighbourhood may hold a place for many types of residents. The very act of designation alters fundamental aspects of the neighbourhood, and is ultimately made manifest in a new community mix.
In this chapter, I will provide interview evidence to support my position that the mix of people in Woodfield is an important aspect of residential sense of place for the interviewed residents, notably along economic lines. It will be shown that this, however runs counter to the discourse of the HCD plans. Finally, supporting evidence will be presented to suggest that this mismatch, as anticipated, has resulted in changes to the place itself. I will begin this discussion by considering place discourse and the community aspects of place found in the texts of the East and West Woodfield HCD Plans.

5.2 The government texts: Place discourse and the community aspects of place

In this section, a discourse analysis of the government texts will explore the language within these texts and the power/rhetoric that flows through them, with a focus on any demonstrated explicit or implicit concern for, and potential impacts on, the community aspects of place. This discursive examination will focus on the two adjoining HCD plans which were enacted in the Woodfield neighbourhood in London, Ontario: The East Woodfield Heritage Conservation District Plan (Corporation of the City of London 1992) and The West Woodfield Heritage Conservation District Plan (Corporation of the City of London 2008) (Figure 1a). It will be shown that while there are differences between the two plans, community is infrequently mentioned in either, and when it is, owners are generally and specifically privileged over all other types of residents.

5.2.1 Community discourse in the East Woodfield HCD Plan

Each HCD plan begins by setting out the purpose of the plan, and this is an appropriate starting point for analysis. Part I of the East Woodfield HCD Plan lays out a central
recommendation concerning designation of the district. The plan begins by stating the overall purpose as such:

The District Plan provides the basis for the sensitively (sic) conserving, managing and protecting the district’s heritage features, notably its wealth of nineteenth and early twentieth century buildings, boulevards and street trees. (East Woodfield HCD Plan 1992, p. 1-1)

The introduction then expands on this purpose in calling for the plan to be consulted to provide guidance for planning and development matters. A list of those who should consult this plan is provided, which includes City Council, City staff and the City heritage advisory committee (p. 1-1). Included on this list are property owners, but no other types of residents, and the East Woodfield Conservation District Committee (which appears to have been formed for the purpose of the creation of the HCD, but disbanded shortly after). This is the only point in the introduction that references those who live in the district. It is important to consider that this is a one-way relationship, included only in the context of those who should consult the plan when considering changes, and does not suggest that the residents themselves should be consulted.

The community is mentioned in Section 1.3, which provides a summary of the heritage character of East Woodfield. This is in reference to guidance found in the Official Plan (Corporation of the City of London 1989), and the summary lists among factors to be considered: a particular historical event or era unique to the community; properties significant to the community because of location or setting; construction historically or architecturally significant to the community; connections to the development of the City or:

The presence of physical, environmental, or aesthetic elements which, individually, many not constitute sufficient grounds for the designation of a Heritage Conservation District, but which collectively are significant to the community (East Woodfield HCD Plan 1992, p. 1-3; emphasis added)

The concept of community is vague here, and may be referring to the community at large, possibly the City itself. The plan states that “within the Woodfield community,
the East Woodfield study area is a microcosm of those historical themes and built heritage that distinguish the larger community of Woodfield” (East Woodfield HCD Plan 1992, p. 1-3). While considering whether (and how) this area possesses those features set out in the Official Plan, residents within Woodfield are mentioned only regarding their contributions to a “well maintained, scenic setting” (East Woodfield HCD Plan 1992, p. 1-4).

In Section 1.4, which considers boundary delineation, the future West Woodfield HCD is foreshadowed by the statement that “the Woodfield area [neighbourhood] comprises a considerable wealth of heritage buildings and streetscapes and with further detailed study the entire area would probably qualify for heritage district designation” (East Woodfield HCD Plan 1992, p. 1-5). Although the study boundaries were originally suggested by residents, here the boundary justification is based on loosely defined visually cohesive units. This appears to be subjective, and perhaps based in something more community-based than physical, as evidenced by the fact that the final proposed boundaries “closely follow[ed] the original study area” suggested by the residents (East Woodfield HCD Plan 1992, p. 1-5), and encompass a large part of that earlier defined microcosm of the larger Woodfield neighbourhood.

Section 2.2 is explicitly concerned with Heritage Interests, Property Owner Interests and Community Interests:

Council recognizes that within the East Woodfield Heritage Conservation District there may be a number of diverse interests. In certain instances, these interests may be complementary. Inevitably, others may be in direct conflict. Some owners of heritage property may see themselves as custodians of the family’s, community’s and the province’s heritage with a responsibility to conserve and protect. Conversely, other property owners may see it as their obligation to provide comfortable and livable domestic surroundings for themselves and their family. Council does not seek to give primacy to any one particular interest, but seeks to ensure that any conflict amongst these interest is at best avoided or otherwise minimized (East Woodfield HCD Plan 1992, p. 1-9).
Unpacking this statement reveals many layers in relation to the consideration of the impact of this designation on residents. By stating that “Council does not seek to give primacy to any one particular interest“, the enforceability of the plan is challenged right within the text. *Heritage custodianship* and *comfort/livability* are positioned conversely to one another without any explanation as to why both could not be achieved. Once again, the only resident considered in the plan is the property owner. Residential renters, institutions (e.g. schools, group homes), renters of commercial space, and others whose lives would also be affected by this plan are not mentioned here.

Section 2.5 again only recognises the “owners of heritage property” as those “to be considered the prime custodians of East Woodfield’s heritage” (East Woodfield HCD Plan 1992, p. 1-10). Property owners are mentioned elsewhere in Section 2: Section 2.7 considers that property owners will seek to restore their property and may seek grants; Section 2.8 recognizes that they may wish to change their property to accommodate required living space or new facilities, and finally Section 2.9 recognises that property owners shall be afforded fair and equitable consideration when applying for permit applications. One exception is Section 2.9 which again deals with permit applications. The phrase “residents and property owners” (East Woodfield HCD Plan 1992, p. 1-11) is used here, but as only property owners may apply for these permits the broader term residents seems out of place and does not in any practical way widen the plan’s recognition of those who live in the district.

In only one instance does the plan consider residents more inclusively, in advising that the pedestrian should be considered (notably, not consulted) in relation to the visual impact of an addition to a heritage building (East Woodfield HCD Plan 1992, p. II-33). The pedestrian is not defined and could be read to include not only all of those living within the district, but anyone simply passing through. Notably, while even pedestrians are considered explicitly here in the text, renters (for example) who actually live in the district remain entirely absent.
Elsewhere, the plan actively discourages housing that would accommodate other types of residents, without a clear indication of what impact to the district would result from the discouraged residential uses. Part II Section 2.2.4 encourages a “stable, low density residential environment within the district” (East Woodfield HCD Plan 1992, p. II-6). How increases in density, especially within existing built structures, would negatively impact the purposes of the plan is not clearly stated. This position is not explained or expanded here, nor referred to again at any other point in the text. In relation to new construction, the plan indicates that there is “little potential for the introduction of new buildings” (East Woodfield HCD Plan 1992, p. II-35). This, coupled with the encouragement for low density residential development, results in a plan that is obstructive to the needs of renters who reside or work within the district.

Overall, Part I Section 2.2 (outlined above) is the only section in the plan that explicitly considers the impact of the plan on the lives of those living in the district. This section privileges the property owner over all other residents. Guidance for dealing with potential conflict is vague: the direction being that it is “best avoided or otherwise minimized” (East Woodfield HCD Plan 1992, p. 1-9) - but how? The plan does not explain or provide further guidance, nor does it return to this discussion at any other point in the text.

Any direct consideration of residents of the HCD is greatly reduced in Parts II, III and IV of the plan. Property owners are mentioned from time to time in Part II, but generally in relation only to their responsibilities under the plan (e.g. advice to property owners (p. II-1); encouragement of maintenance and repair (p. II-5); guidance and encouragement to apply for funding (p. II-5); as a steward/custodian (p. II-7); encouragement to choose the level of care that best suits their financial and property needs (p II-8); and suggested maintenance techniques and materials (p. II-9-24)). Indeed, most of the plan addresses physical matters of maintenance and construction in the HCD, and even when not explicitly mentioned, the implication is that any advice or guidance is intended only for the property owner.
The importance of resident *buy-in* is not lost within the plan though. In Part III, Section 3.1 it is explicitly stated that “key [to successful implementation] is the enthusiasm and cooperation of individual property owners in protecting and maintaining the heritage building stock of the district” (East Woodfield HCD Plan 1992, p. III-13). Again, the plan considers only property owners, and even then, only regarding their obligations rather than input or oversight.

Overall, the power relationship between residents and the plan is one-dimensional. Property owners have obligations to the district plan, but residents are rarely given any formal opportunity to advise or contribute to the ongoing management of their neighbourhood. In only two instances, outlined below, is this flipped, and the consultation of property owners is advised. Even here, this is mentioned only in passing and without any clear indication of the mechanism by which they would be consulted, or what weight their input would have. Part II Section 1.3 states that:

> The District Plan provides more specific guidance in the management of change and development within this special setting in a way that respects the heritage building stock, the quality of the streetscape, *and the wishes and views of individual property owners* (East Woodfield HCD Plan 1992, p. II-4; emphasis added).

There is no further detail or guidance given for this in the plan. Without a clear, direct mechanism of consultation and an understanding of the weight to be given, it is unclear how these *wishes and views* would be considered, and to what ends. The meaning here, it seems, is intended to indicate the wishes and views of individual property owners *as anticipated by the plan*. Similarly, Part III, Section 1.5 which deals with site plan control advises that “LACAC and local residents should monitor building activity and review the appropriateness of this from time to time” (East Woodfield HCD Plan 1992, p. III-9; emphasis added), but again the specific form this would take is not stated here or revisited anywhere in the plan.

Overall the plan outlines many obligations for the property owner, but offers no reciprocal opportunity for formal oversight or input into the management of the HCD, or
interpretation of the guidelines in the plan. Even in its obligations, the plan only considers one type of resident in any meaningful way: the property owner. In fact, residents are rarely mentioned at all in any context outside of these obligations.

Informal engagement is possible in the process. Residents can appear before the City heritage advisory committee and make a case for the change that they wish to see in their community. In practice though, the community at large is not explicitly made aware of applications. Even if residents appear, and are able to sway the committee, “The Ontario Heritage Act makes no requirements in this regard and does not make any specific reference to the role of LACAC after designation of the district” (East Woodfield HCD Plan 1992, p. III-13).

Residents may also appear and voice their opinion directly before the ultimate decision of City Council at a public participation meeting, but their voice as a resident of the district holds no more formal weight than any other citizen or interested party, from any part of the City would. In fact, resident input holds no formal standing or official weight anywhere in the process. In practice therefore, residents of an HCD have very little formal interaction, and no formal role, in the decisions that affect the interpretation of the plan and management of changes in their neighbourhood. Those residents who do not have property in the district are not meaningfully considered at all.

5.2.2 Community discourse in the West Woodfield HCD Plan

The West Woodfield HCD Plan was created 16 years later than, and anticipated by, the East Woodfield HCD Plan. As noted in Figure 4c above, the policy framework that guided the development of this later plan had changed, and the resulting plan differed from the earlier one in various ways, including the discourse about district residents.

Section 1.3 outlines the purpose of the HCD, and here the wording is expanded to the more inclusive residents and property owners:
The purpose of the conservation plan is to establish a framework by which the heritage attributes of West Woodfield can be protected, managed and enhanced as the community evolves and changes over time. It will provide residents and property owners with clear guidance regarding appropriate conservation, restoration and alteration activities and assist municipal staff and Council in reviewing and making decisions on permit and development applications within the district. (West Woodfield HCD Plan 2008, p. 1.4; emphasis added)

Later, Section 7.3.1 states that:

The City’s heritage planning staff, within the Planning and Development department, should be the first source of contact for anyone contemplating renovations, restoration or other building alteration and maintenance projects. Heritage staff has the knowledge, skills and resources to assist residents in making decisions regarding whether or not a proposed project requires a Heritage Alteration Permit and the type of approval process. (West Woodfield HCD Plan 2008, p. 7.3; emphasis added)

While the wording appears to be more inclusive, the intent however remains largely the same. Throughout the plan, residents and property owners are generally guided in matters of maintenance and alteration, making the distinction largely moot, as only property owners can authorize or undertake such changes.

More encouragingly, the impact of designation on the lives of residents in the HCD is more deeply considered at times in the newer plan. In Section 1.5 it is stated that “residents should not view designation as overly restrictive, cumbersome or an imposition on property rights, but rather as an opportunity to retain and enhance an area’s most unique and attractive features for the overall benefit of themselves and the community and city as a whole” (West Woodfield HCD Plan 2008, p. 1.6; emphasis added). In Section 3.1 it is noted that “identifying opportunities for interpretive features that can bring awareness of the District's heritage attributes to residents and visitors” (West Woodfield HCD Plan 2008, p. 3.2; emphasis added).

This shift in focus to the resident continues in other sections: Sections 7.5, 8.2 and 9.3.2 indicate a need for accessible information and assistance; Section 8.1.4 recognises that many residents are less concerned with scholarly architectural terms than they are with
the texture of buildings, in regard to nearby structures; Section 8.2.5 recognises that institutional buildings are used by residents both within and beyond the district; Section 9.2.1.1 lays out guidelines for residents; Section 9.2.3 encourages residents to assist in the stewardship of Victoria Park; and Section 9.2.7 similarly encourages them to do so for shared laneways.

Neighbours more generally, and even those living outside of the district are considered in opposition to the property owner in one instance in Section 10.8, which cautions that:

Some owners object to the additional work required to maintain the intricate design of trim details and remove the decorative trim or cover it with a simple, flat cover. This is a denial of the special quality and beauty of the original construction, and on street facades, the denial of enjoyment to the public using the street. (West Woodfield HCD Plan 2008, p. 10.37; emphasis added)

Despite these few changes, as in the East Woodfield HCD Plan references to residents appear almost exclusively in regard to their obligations under the plan, for which property owners are ultimately responsible. The property owner therefore remains the focus of most sections that indicate residents. These again relate generally to conservation, maintenance and alterations: Sections 1.5, 3.1 and 7.5, 8.2 indicate a need for accessible information and assistance on matters of the district itself, and the conservation of buildings; Section 4.0 outlines policies to be considered when making proposals; Section 8.2.2 provides advice for owners seeking to add additions; Section 8.2.4 offers advice on interior (non-restricted) renovations; Section 9.2.7 provides advice for the selection of fencing; Section 9.3.2 and 9.3.3 advise on landscape matters; and Sections 10.1-10.93 offer advice on property owner maintenance and conservation approaches.

Perhaps most clearly, the impact of the plan on the lives of those living in the district is expressed in Section 8.0, which sets out Architectural Design Guidelines:

The intent of the designation of a heritage conservation district is not to cripple desirable improvements in the area or to force the area to stagnate economically. On the contrary, many forms of growth and change are not only
inevitable, but desirable to keep the area viable and vibrant. *Methods must be found to incorporate new lifestyle patterns and technology that are the expectation for most residents and owners.* It is appropriate to replace some materials and assemblies with modern equivalents. However, the intent of the designation of the heritage conservation district is to preserve an adequate stock of the heritage features that define the character of the area to preserve the cohesive nature of the district. (West Woodfield HCD Plan 2008, p. 8.0; emphasis added)

Here the plan recognises change as “inevitable” and even “desirable”, encouraging consideration for “lifestyle patterns and technology expected by residents” (West Woodfield HCD Plan 2008, p. 8.0). Guidance though, is absent here and the statement amounts to little more than lip service in the context of greater HCD plan.

The community aspect of residential sense of place is mentioned explicitly only once in the text, as a “sense of community” when referring to Key Elements in Section 9.1:

> The parks and open spaces of a neighbourhood are equally important in terms of defining a district, as they are often strongly associated with the identity of a neighbourhood, *contributing greatly to the sense of community held by residents*. Design elements such as signage, lighting and street furniture can also be used as visual cues, *lending strength to the identity of the neighbourhood*. Characteristic of neighbourhoods of the same age, the laneways of Woodfield also serve as important linkages, and strong identifiers due to their unique and intimate qualities. (West Woodfield HCD Plan 2008, p. 9.2; emphasis added)

Later in relation to Victoria Park, this focus on neighbourhood identity is expanded on in the description of “a green oasis for the residents of Woodfield, as well as for residents of London, and visitors alike. It is *an integral part of the identity of the neighbourhood,* and of the city” (West Woodfield HCD Plan 2008, p. 9.7; emphasis added).

One notable change from the older HCD text comes in an anticipated allowance for both broader types and the changing needs of residents. In direct contrast to the East Woodfield HCD Plan, Section 8.2.6.2 of this plan applauds the conversion of large homes with many bedrooms from single family to multi-unit residences, if done with sensitivity and care, adding that this can “provide unit sizes that are more appropriate for current lifestyles for [smaller] families and single residents” (West Woodfield HCD Plan 2008, p. 8).
8.2.5). This change in wording explicitly makes room in the West Woodfield HCD for the sort of resident ignored or even discouraged by development guidance in the East Woodfield HCD.

In the intervening 16 years, a departure from the discourse of the East Woodfield HCD Plan is evident in a number of ways, including broader definitions of residents, a reduced emphasis on the property owner, more flexibility in consideration of the changing social make-up and related housing requirements, and greater responsibilities for information and assistance from the City to the resident. Two foci relevant to this dissertation have remained the same however. The relationship remains one predominantly of obligations of residents to the City, with no accommodation for formal involvement in the oversight and interpretation of these HCD plans, and the property owner is still the resident of greatest concern to the plan. The impact of the designation on the lives of residents, the way that they live their lives, the value that they place on the community aspects of the HCD, and any meaningful concern for on input from non-owner residents remains largely unaddressed or accommodated in the plans.

5.3 Interviews: Place discourse and the community aspects of place

In the section above, it was shown that in the HCD Plans for East and West Woodfield, community aspects of place, and the residents themselves, are infrequently mentioned. When they are, the relationship is almost exclusively one-way: one of obligations of residents to the aims of the plans. Even then, property owners are specifically privileged over all other types of residents. Throughout both plans, overwhelmingly the conservation and restoration of existing single-family housing takes precedent over all other housing types (more on this in Chapter 6: Place discourse: The physical aspects of place).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Attitude</th>
<th>Type of diversity mentioned by interviewee</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jessica</td>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>Age</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sonja</td>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>Employment (&amp; students); halfway houses; occupations; attitudes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ellen</td>
<td>Negative</td>
<td>Petty criminals; missions; shelters; protestors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maddy</td>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>Employment; education; age; income; religion; homeless</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edward</td>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>Economic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sarah</td>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>Economic; age</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sandra</td>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>Employment (&amp; students); age; activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Max</td>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>Renters/owners; age; family status; sexuality; economic; social</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amanda</td>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>Employment (&amp; students); age; family status; economic; ethnic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loni</td>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>Economic; ethnic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rebecca</td>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>Economic; age</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alex</td>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>Not specified</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bill</td>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>Economic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roger</td>
<td>Mixed</td>
<td>Lifestyle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John</td>
<td>Mixed</td>
<td>Economic; age; style; family status</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michelle</td>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>Economic; cultural; family status</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arthur</td>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>Age</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patrick</td>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>Economic; ethnic; addiction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Steven</td>
<td>Mixed/Ps</td>
<td>Economic; age; family status; petty criminals; tastes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jana</td>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>Addictions; ethnic/cultural; economic;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raymond</td>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>Employment; age; ethnic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kurt</td>
<td>Mixed/Ps</td>
<td>Homeless; economic; petty criminals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emily</td>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>Economic; cultural; mental health; homeless</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alexa</td>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>Age; sexuality; economic; family status; interests; addiction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pam</td>
<td>Mixed</td>
<td>Renters/owners; economic; students;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Darlene</td>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>Economic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valerie</td>
<td>Unclear</td>
<td>Economic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tammy</td>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>Economic; age; family status</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dan</td>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>Mental health; age</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maria</td>
<td>Negative</td>
<td>Ethnic; renters/owners; students; criminals;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quinton</td>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>Petty criminals; addiction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Macy</td>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>Employment; age; halfway houses; homeless; economic; education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Macy</td>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>Employment; age; halfway houses; homeless; economic; education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roland</td>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>Halfway houses; economic; age; interests; ethnic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rhonda</td>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>Mental health; age; family status</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 5a: General attitude toward community mix and diversity, and type of diversity.*
Complicating this further, as was reviewed in the literature, the act of designation itself generally has been shown to have a positive impact on sale prices, further excluding those who may increasingly be unable to afford to live in the district over time. In this section, I will present evidence from the qualitative depth interviews that the focus of the government texts, and the potential impacts of designation, run counter to important community aspects of place as described by the interviewed residents.

5.3.1 Community discourse in the interviews: mix of people

A theme which I will refer to as a mix of people emerged frequently in the depth interviews when the interviewees were discussing the community aspects of place. A majority of those interviewed (n=35), for example, specifically discussed the diversity of people in Woodfield in their interviews. Most often, this diversity or mix of people was described in a positive light (see Table 5a, above). Sonja put it this way:

You've got a variety of people - you've got professionals living there, you've got students ... you get, you know - some interesting people walking by. But I think, you know, that's kind of good. That's a part of society here. They also have a few halfway houses and homes for people with developmental challenges, and you know it makes a very interesting mixed-use environment.

At times, this positive view of diversity linked elements of both the physical and community mix together. This connection of thought anticipates the potential for limiting built form to also limit the mix of people in the neighbourhood. Maddy for example begins with architectural diversity, but links this to other types of diversity as well:

...diversity is what I like about this neighbourhood - architecturally, the people who live here - you can live next to someone who's unemployed and beside someone who's well educated and employed.

...there's a wealth of differences but the neighbourhood brings everybody together ... so to me - as you know, there's children in the neighbourhood, there are senior citizens in the neighbourhood, there's people who live basically in
government housing. You get everything, and to me the city can't be alive without embracing it all.

Or as Sarah put it she found something unique in the neighbourhood's:

...ability to be able to absorb all socio-economic subgroups. The fact that we don't have any cul-de-sacs, so you always feel you belong to the whole greater community.

...the mixture of people moving around the street as well as - you could see that everybody could live here easily - relatively easily.

When considered in comparison to newer suburbs, some of those interviewed were aware that others might not see the diversity in a similarly positive light. Macy for example told me that:

I've never lived anywhere else but downtown, wherever I've lived - because it's very eclectic. Now you need to be - a suburban person is abhorred when they see the eclectic people walking around this neighbourhood, but actually it makes it much more vibrant.

Similarly, Roland told me that:

Well I have conversations with some of my former colleagues or my buddies - and there have been times where they don't understand why necessarily we live exactly where we do, when there is a halfway house just around the corner, and whatnot, and you see ten guys going for a walk in the morning ... they feel a bit uncomfortable. We don't see it that way.

Jana saw this diversity as more indicative of being close to downtown, and less a function of Woodfield itself:

There's so much diversity when you walk around downtown, even though in Woodfield there's less diversity. But as soon as you hit - go past Wellington you could meet somebody in a Ferrari or meet somebody who's maybe going to the Ontario Works office.

As a person of colour living in Woodfield, Jana gave me a personal perspective on this theme. She did not see this as a situation unique to the neighbourhood, but perhaps more pronounced here:
Yeah, I - my sense in London since I've moved here is I've always felt more like an outsider in London than most of the other cities ... and I'm asked more often where I'm from in London than when I was in [another Ontario city] where there is more diversity. So, I've always felt a little bit of this constant message that “oh, you're definitely not a Londoner” - and I'm not, coincidentally. I'm also not white, but you know I also happen to not be from London. And that feeling that I constantly have to say, “no I've been here quite a while” it, it does permeate my feeling of being part of this community.

So, when I'm walking downtown and I'm at the festivals and I start to get to know the vendors who sell the [specific regional] food that I'm obsessed with ... And I'm like “Hey, I'm here every year, I don't know if you remember me, but I eat here pretty much all summer long” ... and I just love it because you go out there and I'm like, “oh my gosh there are other brown people in London that I don't actually see on a daily basis” [laughs] but I see them at the festivals.

This was echoed in the interviews of others.

Joy - I find Toronto more friendly than London. And, I guess it’s the multiculturalism, I love being around different people from different parts of the world because everybody's got something to share, and I used to find London - like I'd be like “it's not mixed here”. And it was really uncomfortable to me...

I really find I like multiculturalism, and London's a little too white for me.

Because we live in a world that is multicultural, and I don't like to see people separated because of colour, or where they come from, and all that stuff.

Experiences with those living with mental health and addiction also emerged as a recurring theme of mix and diversity; however here there was a bit more polarisation of responses. Living near those experiencing various forms of difficulty or distress was at times described as a positive experience:

You know what - like, that's what the world looks like. Like, you need to know the difference between, sort of like ‘mentally ill’ - and like ‘dangerous predator’ ... and the fact that they [my children] get to sort of, you know, sort of interact with those kinds of people every day. They can go and live anywhere now, you know, whereas if they were sort of in a bubble - sort of a suburban bubble - then you would have a harder time I think when you have to go out into the world and meet different types of people. (Emily)

In other interviews, their presence was viewed with caution or concern:
I guess it's more obvious downtown, like sometimes I walk downtown, and I feel I'm in Dante's Inferno - you know, the people waiting for the bus, and as I said physical fights have broken out there. (Ellen)

I did have one instance where some guy on Cartwright - that way - there's kind of an apartment building that's a little bit [sketchy]. But he somehow had it in his head - I think he was on drugs - that he knew me ... and so, you know, I go out to the porch, sometimes I go out to the porch at like one in the morning for a cigarette, and he'd be standing in front of my house, staring at it. (Steven)

Occasionally, these two themes appeared within the same interview. Sometimes, within sentences. This is indicative of how even when diversity was seen in a mixed way as a complex aspect of place, it could be considered at least somewhat positively.

Just the other day I was walking with [my baby] on Saturday morning and a young man was coming down - or on the way up - from some kind of trip, a drug trip. And he was very young too, could have been 16 or 17, and had no shoes on. And on, like right up near Princess and Maitland, and I just watched him - kind of assessing whether or not he was going to be a danger to himself or someone else. And I felt he was gonna be okay and I had my baby, so I didn't want to do anything, obviously. And I got her on the corner and the guy, one of the guys on Princess here had just called 911 and was expressing concern for him ... and I think that I'm happy to be living in a neighbourhood ... that [my child will] be exposed to the realities of our society and not a pretend barrier - a fake-ness of the suburbs. (Patrick)

Overall then, as indicated in Table 5a (above), a majority of interviewee discussions of diversity cast them as a generally positive community aspect of place. While many Woodfield residents discussed the diversity of existing residents in their descriptions of the neighbourhood, it is important to note that this diversity was generally not cultural or ethnic, but was more often economic or generational (see Table 5a).

Economic diversity, and to some degree generational diversity, so frequently referenced as an important community aspect of place (n=27), is challenged by a plan preference for low density single family homes in the HCDs. This should not be taken to mean that there are not implications for diversity of ethnicity, culture, gender, sexuality and so forth. The forces that exclude lower income earners and renters, or discourage those seeking specific land uses in their community may also exclude those whose identity
intersects with lower income and housing status. This is beyond the scope of this dissertation, but it worth noting for future research in this area.

Limited opportunities for, and restrictions on, higher density rental developments, coupled with the potential for increasing property values post designation increase the likelihood of a shift away from economic and generational diversity over time, as certain residents are excluded or pushed out by these changes. Gentrification then, as discussed in Chapter 2: Place, gentrification, community identities and creative destruction, is bolstered by the language of the HCD plans, challenging the mix valued by the interviewed residents. To consider whether this is evident on the ground in Woodfield, I will now consider other related indicators, as a form of triangulation.

5.4 Other indicators: The community aspects of place

Finally, I will triangulate these qualitative findings with other data sources to consider them in the context of changes within the districts. As noted, the local mix of people was a prominent positive theme in the interviews. A repeated positive focus on this community-based aspect of place, indicates that this mix is an important element of place among those interviewed. As such, I will first present data to provide supporting evidence of a broader positive attitude toward a mix of people in the neighbourhood beyond those interviewed, by considering local reaction to community service organisations in the neighbourhood, and to geared to income housing developments. Finally, changes to the mix of people in Woodfield since designation that indicate gentrification will be presented through shifts in rental numbers, and changes in housing prices since designation.

I have noted above that the discourse of the HCD plans actively encourages aspects of gentrification and exclusion in Woodfield. As discussed in Chapter 2: Place, gentrification, community identities and creative destruction, as places gentrify prices rise. In the context of older neighbourhoods, this will often lead to units being
converted from higher density rentals back to single-family homes. Since the plans discourage development that could replace these loses, it becomes increasingly difficult to accommodate renters and lower income home owners in the HCD. As a result, these lower income earners will gradually be excluded or pushed out.

Woodfield is a complex downtown neighbourhood, and many factors will have influenced these trends. If, however the implicit and explicit aims of the HCD plans are in line with trends that potentially reduce mix, and run counter to the experience of mix as a key aspect of residential sense of place among those interviewed (n=35), this would indicate a mismatch. In other words, if HCD residents value a mix of people, and the HCD plans discourage this, then by following the plans, City Council decisions may run counter to the desires of residents, and this may eventually alter the place.

5.4.1 Acceptance of the mix: Community service organisations

One potential indicator of broader neighbourhood acceptance of a mix of people (beyond those interviewed) is the reaction of residents to local community service organisations. The potential for NIMBY (not in my backyard) reactions to such services is high, and if the community was experiencing difficulties or concerns with their presence, it would be likely that these would be reflected in complaints to City Councillors directly, or indirectly through staff reports.

Quintin Warner House is a Men’s Mission and Rehabilitation Centre located in Woodfield. I spoke with three local City Councillors: Tanya Park, the current Councillor for the area, and the two previous Councillors, Judy Bryant and Joni Baechler. Each were asked the same question. “Do you recall any concerns from Woodfield residents in regard to the Centre?” All three indicated that they had not received, nor were they aware of any complaints. For many years in fact, the local community association made an annual donation to the centre.
I contacted the City Councillors again regarding a CMHA (Canadian Mental Health Association) Middlesex centre within the neighbourhood. The goals of this facility are to promote good mental health, prevent further illness, offer treatment, support recovery and provide mental health education. Again, all of those contacted confirmed that they were unaware of any local concern or complaints.

Finally, although a less controversial service, I also considered Queens Village. This is a large retirement home in a converted Victorian mansion for seniors that includes facilities designed for those living with Alzheimer’s. The City Councillors again indicated that they had never received any indication of local resident dissatisfaction with the home. In some years in fact a group of local carollers had even made the effort to carol to the residents during the Christmas holidays, and the residents had often attended local community events.

One exception was the experience of a local coffee house that ran for many years on the corner of William and Dundas, just outside of the neighbourhood. Due in part to it’s proximity to a methadone dispensary, complaints were filed with the local police services, City staff and the Woodfield Community Association. Residents near the coffee house reported fighting, discarded needles and various criminal activities at or near the site. While this reaction is out of step with the experiences of the other two organisations, the circumstances here were more severe. Faced with actual criminal nuisance, the neighbours did respond, but short of that there would appear to be a good deal of acceptance of these service providers and their clients in Woodfield.

5.4.2 Acceptance of the mix: Geared to income residential developments

Another potential indicator of local acceptance of a mix of people is the conversion of an historic apartment building, the Jarvis building on Princess Avenue in the West Woodfield Heritage District, to geared to income housing (Figure 5a). Years later a second building was also constructed that complimented the style of the original. Built
Figure 5a: Geared to income housing at 390 Princess Avenue (originally called the Jarvis Building) in the West Woodfield HCD. (photo by author)

Figure 5b: A second, newer building constructed immediately west of the one above. (photo by author)
on an empty lot that was used for parking, this new building was completed in 2017 (Figure 5b).

A search for articles in the London Free Press about both projects indicated no negative resident reaction to the conversion or new construction. A call to City Councillors Park and Bryant, who where each active for parts of these changes, again indicated no negative reaction. John Fleming, Managing Director of Planning did not recall any push-back, seeing this as indicative of residential attitudes in this type of neighbourhood:

People that are in these highly urban environments tend to be those that aren’t looking for homogeneity ... when you come into an urban environment, most people are accepting - “Yeah, there’s going to be a diversity of income levels in my neighbourhood, and I’m ok with that.”

Don Menard, retired Heritage Planner with the City of London, also said that he did not remember any negative reaction to these conversions, saying that “no I didn’t really hear anything negative about it at all”.

5.4.3 Aspects of gentrification: The Vernon’s London City Directory

Losses in rental property numbers are one possible indicator of a local reduction in the economic mix of people. The Vernon’s London City Directory is an annual listing, by street address, of residences and businesses in the city. These directories are available until 2013, when they were discontinued. Directories were consulted for each HCD, starting at the year that the HCD plan was created, and comparing this to the situation 5 years later in each case. The results are presented in Tables 5b and 5c.

A list was made of all addresses found within each HCD, and these were isolated. As multiple people who live at the same address are often listed separately in the directory, those addresses with an indication that they were independent apartments (e.g. ‘number’, ‘upper’, ‘A/B’) were counted. In both districts, there was a steep drop in the number of rental units over the first five years following designation.
While this relationship again cannot be said to show causality, this drop in rental unit numbers is in line with the HCD plan priority for lower density development in the HCDs as outlined above. This change is in line with the discourse in the texts. If not a cause of this decline, the plans contain no language to mitigate such loses, and little opportunity to replace these losses.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1992</th>
<th>1997</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>East Woodfield HCD</td>
<td>257 rental units</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5b: Change in number of rental units over time: The East Woodfield HCD.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2013</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>East Woodfield HCD</td>
<td>891 rental units</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5c: Change in number of rental units over time: The West Woodfield HCD.

5.4.4 Aspects of gentrification: Housing prices

Rising housing prices are another factor that can exclude or push out lower income residents, both because they will reduce the number of homes that can be purchased on a lower income, and are likely to eventually be reflected in a loss of rental units (through conversion) and rent increases. A detailed study of housing prices in the two HCDs is beyond the scope of this dissertation, but some housing price data does exist.

The following is from the earlier mentioned report by Jonas-Galvin (2012). Though slightly dated and only looking at East Woodfield, it does indicate that as of 2012 prices were stable to positive in the East Woodfield HCD. The perception of residents was more positive:

According to the resident surveys, over 70% of respondents believed that the designation has increased their property value. Another 20% believed there was
no impact and no respondents thought the designation had a negative impact on
the value of their home.

The data from GeoWarehouse indicated that only 76 of the 187 properties had
sales histories. Of these, 27 properties preformed above average, 26 at average
and 21 below average. Four of the properties sales histories were difficult to
determine. ... If anything, there is a slight indication that designation has had a
somewhat positive effect.

Of the four properties whose sales histories were difficult to determine, one only
had sales before designation and the other three were highly erratic. There is
some evidence of renovation resale among the better performing properties,
they seem to have been purchased at the low end of the market and perhaps
upgraded and resold at the higher end in a short amount of time ... Among the
poorer performing properties there may have been misguided speculation when
the property was purchased. The owners may have hoped to replace the
structures but then discovered such actions would not be permitted. (Jonas-
Galvin 2012, p. 15)

The rosier resident perception of prices may in part indicate a greater awareness of
more recent sales, whereas the GeoWarehouse data would track back further. At any
rate, as of 2012 prices were stable to positive in the district, although there is no
evidence that they were rising dramatically in comparison to near areas. A closer look
at the two questions posed in the survey are revealing when considering resident
attitudes toward the price and the ability to sell one’s home in the district (Tables 5d
and 5e).

11. How do you think the HCD designation has affected the value of your property
compared to similar non-designated districts? (Responses = 60)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mean Score/5</th>
<th>Increased a lot</th>
<th>Increased</th>
<th>No impact</th>
<th>Lowered a lot</th>
<th>Lowered</th>
<th>Don’t know</th>
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<tr>
<td>Counts</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Percentage</td>
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<td>53.85</td>
<td>21.15</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>13.33</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Table 5d: Survey results for question 11 (Jonas-Galvin 2012, p. 22)
12. Do you think the HCD designation will affect your ability to sell your property?
(Responses = 56)

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes, easier</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes, harder</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t know</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maybe</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5e: Survey results for question 12 (Jonas-Galvin 2012, p. 22)

Figure 5c: Context map. The red circle indicates the section of Princess Avenue displayed in the following two figures. (by author)
5.4.5 A single case

Near the middle of the East Woodfield HCD lies Princess Avenue between Prospect Street and William Street. This example is presented as an *illustration only* of the impacts of changes in rental numbers along one small block in the HCD. This section is intended to give the reader a sense of how the changes discussed earlier in this section appear ‘on the ground’, house by house.

This block (Figure 5c, above) contains homes of greatly varying sizes, from small cottages to large mansions. This stretch has seen dramatic change from rental to single family, in part because of the opportunities provided by this variety in stock. Along this block, as elsewhere in the neighbourhood, several lower income renters have been pushed out since designation.

Figure 5d shows the north side of this stretch of Princess Avenue from west to east, and Figure 5e shows the south side from east to west. Changes along this stretch since HCD designation in 1992 are considered here house by house, starting at the upper left of each figure. These changes are summarised in Table 5f.
Figure 5d: Princess Avenue homes - Palace to William - north side. (photos by author)
Figure 5e: Princess Avenue homes - William to Palace - south side. (photos by author)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Address</th>
<th>1992 (units)</th>
<th>2017 (units)</th>
<th>Change (units)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>North Side:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>510 Princess Ave</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>512 Princess Ave</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>520 Princess Ave</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>522 Princess Ave</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>524 Princess Ave</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>526 Princess Ave</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>528 Princess Ave</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>528 Princess Ave</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Side:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>529 Princess Ave</td>
<td>*1</td>
<td>*3</td>
<td>*+2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>527 Princess Ave</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>525 Princess Ave</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>517 Princess Ave</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>515 Princess Ave</td>
<td>3 (duplex w above)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>513 Princess Ave</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>507 Princess Ave</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>505 Princess Ave</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5f: Unit changes by building, address and year (using Vernon’s Directory 1992). *bold* indicates the one case in which unit number increased, in a large mansion.

All told, there has been a net loss of 12 units within only these 15 contiguous buildings. Every building except for one (529 Princess) has either remained a single-family home, converted to a single-family home, or lowered the number of units within the building. In each case that saw a reduction of number of units, renovations had also occurred, improving the quality of the remaining units. This example can again only be taken as illustrative of the changes outlined earlier in this section. Though beyond the scope of this dissertation, it would be beneficial to continue this *home by home* process for the entirety of both districts, to better track the overall shift of housing types in the neighbourhood. Given, though, the earlier-noted overall drop from 257 rental units to 155 rental units in the East Woodfield HCD as a whole since designation (Vernon’s
Directory), it is reasonable to infer that some form of conversion away from rental units is occurring throughout the HCD.

Much of the change on this block was internal to each house, and the exterior of the homes has remained largely the same. In four cases (Figures 5f, 5g, 5h and 5i), the improvements to the home are apparent in the streetscape itself, as a visual indicator of the process of gentrification in the area. The most dramatic change on the street appears in Figure 5i, a home that recently sold *individually* for approximately $1.475 million (having been purchased along with the neighbouring duplex for a total of approximately $750,000 only four years earlier – for *all three* properties).

![Figure 5f: Home with a new porch: left side is in the fall of 2017; right side is a July 2009 image captured from a Google Street View archived image. (left photo by author)](image)
Figure 5g: Home with a new porch and major interior/exterior renovations: left side is in the fall of 2017; right side is a July 2009 image captured from a Google Street View archived image. (left photo by author)

Figure 5h: Duplex with new entrances, exterior renovations and major interior renovations: left side is in the fall of 2017; right side is a July 2009 image captured from a Google Street View archived image. (left photo by author)
Figure 5i: Home with major exterior renovations, a large rear addition, significant upgrades and repairs and an interior gut and reno: left side is in the fall of 2017; right side is a July 2009 image captured from a Google Street View archived image. (left photo by author)

5.5 Summary

These data point to changes that have impacted lower income renters and home-owners in the HCDs. Since designation, many rental units have disappeared, and prices of housing have generally stabilised or increased somewhat. Specific areas of the HCDs are beginning to show signs of more dramatic increases. When lower income renters and owners are pushed out by these changes, the mix of people in the neighbourhood changes.

In the interviews, this mix of people emerged as an important and accepted element of place for residents, but this may be at risk. The data has also indicated local acceptance of services and developments that would encourage a mix of people in the neighbourhood, economically. These community aspects of place, prominent in the interviews, run counter to the language of the HCD plans. I will consider the
implications of this ahead in *Chapter 7: Conclusions, policy implications, City Planner feedback and future research*. Before doing so, I will now turn to consider place discourse and the physical aspects of place.
Chapter 6

6 PLACE DISCOURSE: THE PHYSICAL ASPECTS OF PLACE

6.1 Introduction: Physical aspects of place in Woodfield

Along with the community aspects of place addressed in the previous chapter, the physical aspects of a neighbourhood are also a fundamental element of residential sense of place as defined in Chapter 2: Place, gentrification, community identities and creative destruction. The HCD plans are, however, more direct in their language about, and impacts on the physical place. The changes to the physical aspects of a place are also by nature more visible and tangible than those discussed in the previous chapter.

Changes to residential sense of place, guided by the language and enforcement of the HCD plans, will be appealing to some residents but not others. In some cases, these changes may cause the neighbourhood to fall short of meeting the needs of particular types of residents. Once again, the very act of designation therefore alters fundamental aspects of how the neighbourhood will change (or not) in use and design, and impacts who wishes, or is able, to move to or remain there.

In this chapter, I will provide interview evidence to support my position that a mix of use and design is also an important aspect of residential sense of place for the interviewed residents in Woodfield, including a mix of inclusive residential building types, a greater diversity of local commercial and service uses, and variety in architectural design. It will be shown that these desired aspects of place again, however, run counter to the discourse of the HCD plans. Finally, supporting evidence will be presented to suggest that this mismatch has again resulted in changes to the place itself, and a lack of opportunity for desired changes. I will begin this analysis by considering place discourse and the physical aspects of place within the texts of the East and West Woodfield HCD Plans.
6.2 The government texts: Place discourse and the physical aspects of place

In this section, a discourse analysis of the government texts will explore the language within these texts and the power/rhetoric that flows through them, with attention to demonstrated explicit or implicit concern for, and potential impacts on, the physical aspects of place. This discursive examination will again focus on the two adjoining HCD plans which were enacted in the Woodfield neighbourhood in London, Ontario: The East Woodfield Heritage Conservation District Plan (Corporation of the City of London 1992) and The West Woodfield Heritage Conservation District Plan (Corporation of the City of London 2008) (Figure 1a). This analysis will show that the weight of the text is heavily focused on physical heritage details, with little attention to allowing for and guiding inevitable physical change in the districts, and the changing needs of district residents.

6.2.1 Physical discourse in the HCD Plans

As noted above, the description of residential sense of place presented in this dissertation is concerned with a combination of both the community and physical aspects of place. Connection to the physical aspects of the district is a necessary but not sufficient building block of residential sense of place. It will be shown that the HCD plans, however, are dominated by discourses concerning the physical aspects of place. This weighting is not inconsequential, and is arguably inconsistent with the broader strokes of HCD policy in Ontario. Remember that the first page of the Ontario Heritage Toolkit (2006) gives prominence to the overall concept of sense of place:

> In many cases, these areas have maintained their uniqueness and sense of place because the local municipality has taken the opportunity to designate them as Heritage Conservation Districts (HCDs) (East Woodfield HCD Plan 1992, p. 1, emphasis added)
Ahead in this chapter I will illuminate how the focus on the conservation of the physical aspects of place at the expense of the community aspects of place can impact the neighbourhood in unexpected ways. These impacts are neither carefully considered nor satisfactorily addressed in the government texts themselves. To set the stage for that analysis, I will first briefly discuss the clearly articulated purpose and focus of the East and West Woodfield HCD Plans: the conservation of physical heritage features. As the reader proceeds, consider the analysis in this chapter in light of the relatively negligible attention to the community aspects of place evident within the plans, as described in the previous chapter.

6.2.2 Physical discourse in the East Woodfield HCD Plan

As the texts are read with focus on discourses concerning the physical aspects of place, a return to the stated purpose of the East Woodfield HCD Plan, and its focus on heritage features is again helpful:

The District Plan provides the basis for the sensitively (sic) conserving, managing and protecting the district’s heritage features, notably its wealth of nineteenth and early twentieth century buildings, boulevards and street trees. (East Woodfield HCD Plan 1992, p. 1-1; emphasis added)

The Statement of Intent in Section 2 explicitly states that “it is the intent of Council to guide and manage physical change and development within the heritage conservation district” (East Woodfield HCD Plan 1992, p. 1-8; emphasis added). Physical change is therefore the explicitly stated primary focus of the plan. This is perhaps not surprising, but it is also not without consequence. Without greater regard to the community aspects of the district, and the interaction of residents with the conserved environment, we are left with a plan to achieve conservation for conservation’s sake.

The HCD plans lack substantial and explicit regard for the impacts of designation on the land use needs of residents who live there now, or will in the future. Yet they will certainly impact these residents. The ways that such physical conservation will
enhance, conserve or challenge the desires of residents, however, is almost entirely unaddressed in the texts. For a process initiated at the request of residents, and grounded in a policy framework that explicitly references the importance of sense of place, this exclusion is peculiar.

Figure 6a: Word cloud for the East Woodfield HCD Plan. (by author in NVivo)

What then do the plans predominantly address? For illustration only, Figure 6a (above) provides some insight. The text of the plan was run through NVivo’s word frequency
utility, and the resulting text was converted to a word cloud of the top 1000 words, excluding common words such as *as, the* or *at*, and words found in the document titling. The larger the word, the higher the number of mentions it received. In both cases, physical aspects of place are dominant, and a lack of community rhetoric is evident. Compare this to the prominence, from the resident interviews, of the word *people* in Figure 4a and words such as *diverse, comfortable, eclectic* and *friendly*, most often mentioned in Figure 4b (*Chapter 4: Place discourse: Sense of place and place branding*).

In reviewing the discourse of the plans more thoroughly, the same conclusion is reached. Apart from the community discourse discussed in the previous chapter, the rest of the text is concerned predominantly with detailed guidance for various aspects of physical conservation. These include guidelines for everything from exterior wall cladding, to windows, to additions to heritage buildings. Figure 6b presents this visually, through a reproduction of the entirety of the Table of contents for Part II of the plan.

### 6.2.3 Physical discourse in the West Woodfield HCD Plan

The text of the West Woodfield HCD Plan was also run through NVivo’s word frequency utility, and again the resulting text was converted to a word cloud of the top 1000 words (Figure 6c). Once again, the physical aspects of place are dominant, and a lack of community rhetoric is evident.

While not so contiguous as in the East Woodfield HCD Plan, with the exceptions discussed in the previous chapter, the rest of the text is dominated by guidelines for physical conservation and change in the district. Parts 8 through 10, which make up the largest part of the plan are concerned exclusively with architectural design guidelines (e.g. porches, additions), streetscape guidelines (e.g. street trees, laneways) and conservation guidelines (e.g. the conservation of slate roofs, shutters).
Part II: Conservation, Design and Landscaping Guidelines

1.0 CONSERVATION GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND PRINCIPLES

1.1 Introduction
1.2 Heritage character
1.3 East Woodfield District Conservation Principles

2.0 EAST WOODFIELD DISTRICT CONSERVATION GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

2.1 District Conservation Goals
2.2 District Conservation Objectives

2.2.1 Objectives: Heritage buildings
2.2.2 Objectives: Landscape
2.2.3 Objectives: Archaeology
2.2.4 Objectives: Land use
2.2.5 Objectives: New development

3.0 CONSERVATION GUIDELINES

3.1 Building Conservation
3.2 Foundations
3.3 Structure
3.4 Exterior Wall Cladding

3.4.1 Brick and Stone Masonry
3.4.2 Stucco
3.4.3 Wooden Siding
3.4.4 Synthetic Siding

3.5 Roofing
3.6 Decorative Wooden Detailing
3.7 Windows and Doors
3.8 Exterior Paint
3.9 Energy Conservation
3.10 Large Structures
3.11 Archaeological Sites

4.0 GUIDELINES FOR ALTERATIONS, ADDITIONS AND NEW CONSTRUCTION

4.1 Introduction
4.2 Alterations to heritage buildings

4.2.1 Roofs and sites
4.2.2 Walling
4.2.3 Windows
4.2.4 Entrances
4.2.5 Features and spaces around buildings

4.3 Additions to heritage buildings

4.3.1 Location and sites
4.3.2 Design

4.4 New building construction

4.4.1 New building location
4.4.2 New building height
4.4.3 Roofs on new buildings
4.4.4 Windows and entrances on new buildings
4.4.5 Walling of new buildings

4.5 Public Works

5.0 LANDSCAPE CONSERVATION GUIDELINES

5.1 Introduction: Historic landscape features
5.2 Historical landscape summary
5.3 Landscape features: General

5.3.1 Street trees
5.3.2 Boulevards
and municipal initiatives
5.3.3 Fencing and hedges

Figure 6b: Part II of the Table of Contents for the East Woodfield HCD Plan. (1992)
6.2.4 Managing change: Development discourse in the East Woodfield HCD Plan

Change is inevitable, even in a Heritage Conservation District. In the East Woodfield HCD Plan, this is first addressed in Part I section 2.6: Management of Change. There is promise here, as the section states that consideration for change will be given, recognising that change has occurred in the past and should be “expected in the future”. City Council’s intention is described as such:
Council recognizes' that:

- many heritage buildings over the past decades have witnessed the introduction of a variety of changes to building fabric including additions, at the rear, side and in roof spaces;

- change in East Woodfield's built heritage is to be expected in the future, yet it must be carefully managed in a manner that does not adversely affect this special environment;

- any proposed change to the district shall be considered:

  ...within a number of Council approved design, landscaping and planning guidelines; and with consideration of the individual merits of the proposed change. (East Woodfield HCD Plan 1992, Part I 2.6)

Later in the plan, though, in Part II section 2.2.5 under objectives for new development the plan states that the objectives are:

- To discourage the demolition of existing heritage buildings and their replacement by new development;

- To permit new development only where it respects or otherwise complements the prevailing character of existing heritage buildings and structures within the East Woodfield district. (East Woodfield HCD Plan 1992, Part II 2.2.5)

Detailed direction for new building construction is given in Part II Section 4.4, including:

guidelines for location (e.g. maintaining existing setbacks); heights (e.g. maintaining predominant heights); roofs (e.g. in keeping with existing roofscapes); windows (e.g. that generally reflect traditional proportions); and walling (e.g. that reflects traditional materials and colours) (East Woodfield HCD Plan 1992, Part II 4.4).

This is somewhat undermined though in the opening paragraph of the section, which states that “the residential streets within the East Woodfield heritage conservation district, however, must be considered as having little potential for the introduction of new buildings” (East Woodfield HCD Plan 1992, Part II 4.4). For those few exceptions, there is little advice given regarding design beyond that it be compatible and sympathetic to the existing buildings in the area.
Amusingly the introduction to this section ends by stating that the owners will be enabled to “design creatively within a general context for future built form” (East Woodfield HCD Plan 1992, Part II 4.4), immediately before laying out a series of rather dogmatic guidelines in the subsections that follow. Note also the repeated use of the phrases such as maintaining existing in the examples above. Combined, this direction would have a chilling effect on any new construction at all, let alone new construction designed to inject variety into the streetscape. This becomes important in light of the interview analysis, and I will return to this theme ahead in this chapter.

6.2.5 Managing change: Development discourse in the West Woodfield HCD Plan

In the West Woodfield HCD Plan, there is more guidance provided for new construction, but again the plan anticipates little opportunity for the accommodation of change:

Within the heritage conservation district boundary, there are few sites where new buildings could be constructed without the demolition of existing structures. However, there may be occasions where infill development or limited integrated redevelopment is possible in the future or where redevelopment is required due to loss of buildings through fire, severe structural decay, etc. (West Woodfield HCD Plan 2008, section 4.3)

The detailed guidelines in the West Woodfield HCD Plan are found in section 8.2.3. Again, the language actively discourages variety. The first guideline indicates that the construction should “match setback, footprint, size and massing patterns of the neighbourhood, particularly to the immediately adjacent neighbors” (West Woodfield HCD Plan, section 4.3). Once again, the guidelines repeat a theme of conformity, including words and phrases such as consistent, complementary, common patterns, local palette, standard elements and matching. This section does recommend that the construction “respond to unique conditions or location” but limits this to rare circumstances such as corner lots (West Woodfield HCD Plan, section 4.3).
As in the East Woodfield HCD Plan, this detailed guidance is undermined in the opening paragraph of the section, which states that “There are a few locations in the residential core area of the West Woodfield Heritage Conservation District where new buildings are likely to be constructed” (West Woodfield HCD Plan 2008, section 4.3).

6.3 Interviews: Place discourse and the physical aspects of place

In the section above, it was shown that in an HCD, enforcement of the plans directly impacts the physical environment in numerous ways. As a form of place branding (discussed in Chapter 2: Place, gentrification, community identities and creative destruction), an HCD creates new legal boundaries, and a new or renewed heritage brand within those boundaries. The physical aspects of the neighbourhood are then guided by these plans, which have been shown to focus largely on that heritage architectural details that are found on the buildings that populate the districts. The enforcement, or threat of enforcement of these plans therefore directly influences the physical environment by privileging certain changes and discouraging or denying others.

In this section, I will consider the themes that emerged in the interviews through data-driven coding regarding the physical aspects of place, in the context of the analysis presented in the previous section. The hegemonic discourses that emerged in the analysis of the government texts will be compared to the discourses, and notably the counter-discourses, that emerged in the resident interviews.

6.3.1 Physical discourse in the interviews: Architectural details

To review, the discourse analysis of the government texts revealed that the direction provided within the plans is predominantly dedicated to specific architectural details. For example, from the East Woodfield HCD Plan:
Decorative Wooden Detailing: In East Woodfield a high degree of fine quality woodworking decorates even some of the smaller residences in the district. The area’s distinctive Victorian, Queen Anne, Italianate and more modest cottage style homes exhibit exuberant wood decoration. One of the most striking examples is the commonly detailed front gable end. (Section 3.6, East Woodfield Heritage Conservation District Plan)

Similarly, from the West Woodfield HCD Plan:

Windows, Doors and Accessories: The penetrations of the exterior wall of a building to permit entry of people, light, ventilation, and to permit a view to the exterior, also provide the builder with huge design opportunities to decorate a simple box and to add functional and decorative building features such as rounded arches, stone lintels, projecting sills, keystones, decorative frames and contrasting materials, transom windows, leaded glass, beveled glass, decorative mullions and muntins, operating sashes, shutters and others. Doors and windows are necessary elements for any building, but their layout and decorative treatment provides a host of opportunities for the builder to flaunt the unique qualities and character of each building. (Section 8.1.7, West Woodfield Heritage Conservation District Plan)

Given the prominent focus on architectural details found in the HCD plans, a central way in which these plans directly influence the districts themselves is through the visual impact of the mandated maintenance and conservation of such details. One question then is whether this visual impact is also evident in the sense of place described by those who live there: do the residents acknowledge and value these architectural details in their descriptions of place? Through the repeated line-by-line coding passes, occasional references to heritage architectural details did indeed emerge and were coded as part of the participants’ physical descriptions of place.

Before being prompted to consider heritage in question 10, participants mentioned heritage details in about one third of the interviews (n=14) (prior to question 10, no indication was given by the interviewer that the historic or heritage aspects of the neighbourhood were of concern). This allowed any reference to heritage features of the neighbourhood to emerge from the residents’ own place descriptions. Once prompted to consider heritage, such details were mentioned by an additional 8 participants (n=8).
When architectural details were mentioned, it was often in a very general way, for example Max reflected on the heritage architectural details that he noticed while walking through the neighbourhood:

...going for walks, looking at the homes. The homes being built with more character, more detail, more finesse, more uniqueness. You could say - when I think of the neighbourhood that’s one of the things that stands out ... is that they’re century homes, is that they all are a bit different and have all these cool quirks and character things that, that make them unique I guess.

Unprompted, when *specific* architectural details were mentioned this was generally in a brief and cursory fashion. For example:

I'm attracted to rooflines and you know ... how people paint their houses, their colours and so forth. So, all those things ... attract me, and if I was in a conversation with somebody walking through the streets, whether [they’re] from the neighbourhood or from someplace else it would be “oh look at that” and “isn't that interesting” and “I wonder how that came about?” (Roger)

I think of, like tiny - like really perfect detailing - on people's front porches. (Steven)

I just love that house on the corner with the turret. (Jana)

One particular peeve I have is the attic maid’s rooms being - the windows being enlarged out of proportion to the house, and that kind of thing. (Pam)

Overall then, when architectural details were mentioned at all, it was generally in the form of brief acknowledgements of features, such as windows, doors and chimneys (see Table 6a).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Resident</th>
<th>Architectural detail mentioned</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jessica</td>
<td>Plaques noting who lived in home</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Max</td>
<td>General mention of heritage details only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alex</td>
<td>Windows (details, size) *<em>Doors (colour, shape, design, material, quality) <em>detailed discussion</em></em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roger</td>
<td>Rooflines (general mention) Paint colours (general mention) Mailboxes (general mention) Light fixtures (general mention)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michelle</td>
<td>*<em>Exterior (brick, heritage insulation) <em>detailed discussion</em></em> *<em>General home position (relation to breezes) <em>detailed discussion</em></em> High ceilings Windows (wooden, wavy glass) Porches (general mention)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Steven</td>
<td>Porches (general mention)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jana</td>
<td>Turret (specific home) Chimney (rebuilt to match original)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pam</td>
<td>Windows (size, proportion to house, glass) Porches (general mention)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tammy</td>
<td>Porches (general mention) Materials (brick, stone, fire department maps) Detached sheds and garages (general mention)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maria</td>
<td>High ceilings *<em>Flooring (newspaper insulation) <em>detailed discussion</em></em> Victorian features (wrought iron signs)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quinton</td>
<td>Brick (local ‘white’ brick) Roof gables (general mention)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Macy</td>
<td>High ceilings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rhonda</td>
<td>Servant quarters (general mention) Bathtub Boiler Cabinets Windows (general mention) Porches (general mention) Gas lamps</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rebecca</td>
<td>Windows (general mention) Woodwork (general mention) Doors (general mention) Plaster (walls)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 6a: Architectural details mentioned in resident interviews.* (before being prompted in question 10; **in bold** indicates a detailed discussion)
In only three interviews did a resident move beyond a quick mention in a sentence or two, and in each of these cases the details discussed were present on the resident’s own house. Alex for example discussed her own front door in some detail, noting that:

Well of course our door I love. ... Partly because it's a big door, so it says “welcome” ... I love the size of it. I love the wood. It makes a statement - the colour of the door makes a statement that I think is warm and welcoming ... [We had it] made for the house. It was the identical door we had when I bought the house ... These doors are absolutely to the last centimetre identical to the doors that were there, and [the carpenter] made them out of solid oak ... Oh they'll be standing when the house falls down.

Figure 6d: Decorative vinyl trim on gables on a newer suburban home (left) as compared to original wood trim on a heritage home in Woodfield (right). (left image downloaded from the Vinyl Siding Institute at vinylsiding.org; right photo by author)

This is not meant to imply that heritage details have had no impact on the participants. The conservation of architectural details is of course a critical part of the conservation of entire heritage buildings and streetscapes. Perhaps more than overall design, it is these details that can set a historic building apart from newer structures. For example, while
many new subdivisions have opted to replicate a broad *Victorian* style of architecture, it is not uncommon to find on their facades some form of mass produced vinyl trim, in place of the custom hand finished woodwork found on many preserved heritage buildings (Figure 6d, above). Even if one is unaware of, or fails to mention the specific details themselves, they may be at the heart of what makes these buildings seem *unique*.

While heritage architectural details, then, played a modest role in resident descriptions of place, the more general heritage nature of the neighbourhood writ large was a prominent theme that was mentioned in some form in all of the interviews (n=39 before being prompted to consider heritage in question 10). This indicates a general awareness of and appreciation for the heritage buildings, even if the protected architectural details are not front of mind. These mentions ranged from discussions of specific heritage houses to the general beauty of the heritage architectural streetscapes. Most often though, these were part of a broader conversation. For example, Jana explained that:

> I am a heritage geek, so ... my partner and I will walk downtown and we’ll often take different routes - coming and going - just because we like walking by different buildings. Although by this point we know every single one of them, but we like going through and just looking at them again. Every time we’ll go “oh I just love that house on the corner with the turret” and we never get tired of doing that. So, in terms of physical space that’s what I love the most ... again you’re downtown, and yet I can walk two blocks up and see incredible architecture - you know, even the London Music Club and the Shriners - just really, really extraordinary.

A common theme that emerged in the coding is evident in this quote. Jana refers here to vastly differing architectural styles, ranging from the Italianate home that houses the London Music Club to the Edwardian pile of the Shriners, built decades later. In a largely residential neighbourhood, Jana has focussed also on buildings of incongruous use (a music club, a meeting hall). This was common among the interviewees. It was not the specific details that are preserved by the HCD plans that were most often front of mind
for the interviewed residents. More frequently, these residents considered the broader theme of physical mix (n=38) in their neighbourhood, a theme to which I will now turn.

6.3.2 Physical discourse in the interviews: Physical mix in general

Broadly, physical mix emerged as a theme in almost all of the interviews (n=38). Related to but separate from the earlier concept of mix of people discussed in the previous chapter, this is the physical mix that one could experience while travelling through the neighbourhood, independent of any contact with the community itself. This theme appeared in far more of the interviews than did specific architectural details (n=14). This is notable, for as was discussed in the section above, the HCD plans exert most of their influence in the service of preserving or enhancing those specific heritage architectural details. A result of preserving the details is, as noted, the conservation of the unique character of the buildings themselves, but these details take a back seat in resident descriptions of place. The depth interviews revealed instead that the residents are more concerned with the broader variation between the buildings, the collective variety of unique architectural styles, and the mix of uses of the buildings themselves. As shown in the sections above, while the HCD plans encourage conformity in guiding change within the districts, the interviewed residents clearly value mix.

This broad theme of physical mix was broken down in subsequent coding passes to dig deeper for the specific associations to residential sense of place. For example, the theme of architectural mix was coded whenever a resident discussed the variation in style and form of the buildings themselves, whether in relation to heritage or not. Similarly, mix of commercial and residential use was coded when an interviewee talked about the mix of building uses in the neighbourhood, and mix of residential unit type was coded when the conversation turned to the variety of residential types in the neighbourhood, such as apartment buildings as compared to single-family homes.
These themes: *architectural mix* (n=28), *mix of commercial and residential use* (n=16) and *mix of residential unit type* (n=17) emerged as common and recurring, present in almost all the interviews (n=37). In the sections that follow I will unpack these separate aspects of physical mix, as coded in the interviews, and provide a more detailed examination of their contributions to residential sense of place.

### 6.3.2.1 Physical mix discourse: Architectural mix

The first and most common of the *physical mix* themes, *architectural mix* (n=28) was almost always explicitly considered *in relation to* local heritage architecture, the historic nature of the neighbourhood, or more generally to the age of the homes (n=26). The focus here, though, is on the variation of physical aspects of design and vintage, at times in relation to more modern architecture. Occasionally this comparison to vintage homes was not explicitly made, and instead a resident spoke of the physical mix of architecture more generally. Even then, the use of a common local architectural style such as a *cottage* was likely reflective of the heritage housing stock of the neighbourhood:

> Well the first thing that came to my mind is the disparity of the houses. So, you have these huge houses right next to small cottages, and I don't recall seeing that [elsewhere]. (Michelle)

Carrying on with the conversation, Michelle makes an allusion to roots in the past, if not as physically as in most cases, when she discusses the origins of this mix:

> I know that that was all part of the social - you know the employer watching over employees and things - I think that's where it started.

Even in the one case in which there was no reference at all to the heritage or vintage of the neighbourhood when mix is discussed, Valerie refers to the *character of the housing, which may refer* to the heritage character, in a way that is implied or perhaps tacitly understood:
Depending on what street you're on, like the - certain houses have a lot of character ... they're not uniformly built, or they have the different siding, and moulding, and like that.

At times, the historic nature of the physical environment was mentioned in direct contrast to the newer buildings in the neighbourhood:

Because it's such an old neighbourhood you can see there's beautiful heritage buildings and, you know, stuff where, you know, like this house here [interviewee’s own home] is like 125 years old, you know what I mean? And it's probably not even the oldest house on this street, let alone in the neighbourhood, you know what I mean? ... I think a lot of the enjoyment I get from heritage is seeing it in contrast to newer buildings ... Like when I think about going to Europe - when you're standing at the Acropolis and you're looking down at a 7/11 - that's part of it for me, is I like it to be like 'wow these things could not be further apart’. So, when you get like, even you know a 20-year-old house next to a 100-year-old house it really, I’m like - that’s great - like that’s what I like. It would be less interesting if it was all 125-year-old houses. (Steven)

This last line speaks to this repeated emphasis on a desire for architectural variety, or as Amanda more explicitly put it:

There's a nice variety of the older houses, and then you see like a newer house in there - so I like the housing.

6.3.2.2 Revisited: Architectural mix discourse in the HCD plans

A question then is whether architectural mix is as important, or even more important, than heritage itself to residential sense of place in Woodfield. In other words, if newer architecture replaces heritage architecture, would these residents find this acceptable so long as an architectural mix is maintained? This is an important matter when changes inevitably come to the districts. Architectural mix may be compromised if new construction in the districts is not guided by policies that encourage a diversity of unique design. The East Woodfield HCD Plan is again relatively quiet on this topic, with the architectural mix mentioned only in introductory remarks:
The East Woodfield district exhibits considerable range and diversity in its architectural heritage of frame and brick residential development including the following styles and building practice: Vernacular, Gothic Revival, Italianate, High Victorian Gothic, Second Empire, Queen Anne, Four Square, Tudor Revival, and International ... The distinctive architectural features of the area are its variety of scale, mass, decorative detailing and building siting. (East Woodfield Heritage Conservation District Plan, section 1.2)

[the] heritage conservation district exhibits a rich variety of architectural styles, building techniques and construction materials. (East Woodfield Heritage Conservation District Plan, section 4.1)

Where the Plan offers direction for new construction, the guidance is contrary to the protection of this mix though, instead encouraging architectural conformity:

New construction comprising freestanding buildings should respect the prevailing character of: adjacent buildings; the existing streetscape; landscaping and grade levels; and the district as a whole. New construction must be of compatible design in location, size, height, setback, orientation, materials, colour, roof and roofline, fenestration, scale and proportion. (East Woodfield Heritage Conservation District Plan, section 1.3, emphasis added)

The West Woodfield HCD Plan employs similar conformist language when guiding new construction, advising (in part) that:

New or replacement buildings may be constructed in some cases as a result of fire or structural instability. In such situations, new buildings must be designed to be compatible with the heritage characteristics of the West Woodfield Neighbourhood to help retain the overall visual context of the area [and should]:

- Match setback, footprint, size and massing patterns of the neighbourhood, particularly to the immediately adjacent neighbors …

- Size, shape, proportion, number and placement of windows and doors should reflect common building patterns and styles of other buildings in the immediate area …

- Use materials and colours that represent the texture and palette of the West Woodfield Neighbourhood [etc.] (West Woodfield HCD Plan, section 8.2.3)

This runs counter to the discourse revealed in most of the interviews. For example, Rhonda describes the neighbourhood as having:
That sort of ‘cool’ thing, and it's delightful is the word that comes - so there's little things, like just to delight while you're walking or doing something. It’s like you come across ... enough variety that you, you can walk it again, and again, and again and see maybe something different. You can't see it all. Yeah. So, that's the historical variety ... and then you, I mean you get some of the new places that come in, and some of them fit really [well].

As noted, residents frequently referenced heritage architecture when setting the context for their value placed on the architectural mix:

We are surrounded by heritage, and there's diversity is what I like about this neighbourhood - architecturally... (Maddy)

When describing the mix itself though, this was usually described in more general terms, evoking qualities such as charm, uniqueness or variation – all features of heritage homes to be sure, but not necessarily unique to them. Maddy goes on to say:

... but what I like is the charm - that it's different - even though I'm looking at two identical houses, they couldn't be more different right across the street. You know, it's that charm ... they’re unique, the variation, and also sometimes it can be random you know? I really like that.

Visually then, mix is important to almost all the residents, and mentioned in more cases than the heritage architectural details at the centre of the HCD plans. This is intriguing, for it may indicate an openness to variety running hand in hand with conservation, counter to the conformist rhetoric of the HCD plans. While the conservation of an HCD will by nature preserve a greater mix than many newer subdivisions, this is clearly not the only way to achieve such a mix. I will now turn briefly to a related theme that emerged in the interviews to shed some light on this possibility – architectural design fit.

6.3.2.3 Physical mix discourse: Architectural design fit

In many of the interviews (n=31) residents discussed the types of buildings that would fit within their neighbourhood. This is an interesting theme to explore, for during these conversations it was often revealed that the residents had a tolerance, or even
appreciation for new buildings within their neighbourhood, if carefully designed. While not one person interviewed argued for the unqualified removal of heritage buildings, all who spoke of this idea of fit (n=31) held more nuanced positions regarding the addition of new buildings from time to time. For example, Sonja considers how well the addition of new buildings into the neighbourhood had been handled so far:

It seems to be working. You know? You know, it's just maybe that's kind of what you need. I don't know, I have a pretty open mind that way. I don't know - yeah, I'm not opposed to it.

Or as John put it:

There are some modern houses that are going up, and you notice that. ... [They] kind of stand out a little bit, but it's also a lot nicer than seeing rundown old homes.

Others, like Mark were more openly enthusiastic in their endorsement of a mix of newer buildings coming into the neighbourhood:

I'm super enthusiastic about ... that sort of four-story with a six-story penthouse on Central and Waterloo because it doesn't overwhelm the neighbourhood. I mean I know the people whose backyards front on it are gonna say, 'hey it could be one story shorter', or you know - whatever. I respect that, but the reality is it puts people in the neighbourhood.

What mattered in many cases was how well the buildings fit, although on the specifics of this subjective measure there was less agreement. Some of the interviewed residents voiced broad concepts of fit, in a general way:

Yeah and you know that [demolished and replaced] property was long past its best before date, and it was getting to the point of being a hazard ... but what they put in there - is it perfect? No, but were they sensitive to the streetscape and the community? Absolutely. And what more can you ask for than that kind of responsible development? ... It's still the first year. In five years, it's going to look like a new development in an old neighbourhood. Give it 10 years you're not gonna notice the difference, so. And all these houses where - I mean we clearly stand out like a sore thumb compared [to other houses] ... I think these units are 25 years old or so, and they'll never be, you know they'll never have 'native status' - but there is an acceptance of them, you know, and that works out just fine. (Edward)
Others were much more specific in their ideas about fit:

Yeah, it's very hard. You know, I don't want to come across as being sort of totally anti-modern architecture, but I don't think most of it would fit ... like flat roofs, very angular, sort-of huge big windows. So, the fact that maybe they put siding on it, or made it to look a little bit like the cottages, if there are cottages on the same street. (Tammy)

But even Tammy quickly recognises the potential for too much specificity in design recommendations, going on to caution that:

...on the other side of it you don't want it to be all cookie-cutter - that it all looks the same.

When specifics were mentioned, they varied widely from interview to interview. Some mentioned scale, material, design, and details. There was, perhaps unsurprisingly, little agreement about exactly what constitutes fit from interview to interview. The general theme was one of ‘I’ll know it when I see it’. Alex pointed to the inherent difficulty in describing what does fit, even alluding to gaps in current HCD plans:

I wish that our city had some sort of - and of course this is impossible - but I wish we had some sort of aesthetic measure. Aesthetic measure. And that's hard because everybody has a different sense of aesthetic.

Fit is perhaps at its clearest when considering the differences between the introduction of what could broadly be referred to as modern architecture, and the existing heritage architecture already in place throughout Woodfield. Some interviewees said that they explicitly appreciated the introduction of modern architecture into the neighbourhood mix. Jana for example:

[I’d like to see] more interesting [architecture] ... and more allowance for interesting new modern design. I think it would fit. I mean Darwin Martin House [a Frank Lloyd Wright building in Buffalo, New York] looks fantastic and it’s surrounded by Victorian homes - and it still looks great.

Of course, not all interviewees agreed that there is a place for modern architecture in a neighbourhood full of heritage buildings, and some argued for a more careful reflection of the existing character:
I'm horrified. They're pulling down hundred-year-old houses and putting in, like modern Scandinavian. Or, like it looks like it should be in BC or something. I just am like, 'oh man this is not fitting'. (Rhonda)

I think what I wouldn't like to see is an ultra-modern glass, concrete, block, dramatic thing heading to the stars or something. (Dan)

Finally, it is important to qualify the discourse about the fit of newer buildings in Woodfield by noting that some residents (n=8) also expressed more general concerns about the loss of heritage buildings in the first place:

I don't believe in just destroying things without, without understanding. I personally really appreciate the historic aspects of things, and am a true believer that once it's gone, it's gone forever - and you take your time before making decisions to annihilate things ... once it's gone it's gone - it's like an extinction. (Michelle)

I guess the other thing is - and I'm not a heritage nut, although I appreciate history very much, and the heritage - but it does bother me when I see some of the things that were built, or torn down in the 50s and 60s ... that makes me seethe. (Quinton)

The landlords let them run down, and then they say, ‘I have to knock it down to put something new up, because it's not safe anymore’ - that bugs me. (Macy)

### 6.3.2.4 Physical mix discourse: Commercial and residential uses

*Mix of use* is another notable recurring theme in the interviews, in regard to both the *mix of residential unit type* (e.g. apartment buildings, single-family homes) and the *mix of commercial and residential use*. The last two questions of the interview were particularly useful in considering the impacts of HCD plan restrictions on use. The second last question asked for the participants thoughts about moving from the neighbourhood. Several participants indicated that they would do so for age related reasons, or if their home got to be too difficult to manage (n=12). The fact that this would result in their need to move entirely away from their neighbourhood, and not just their home, would suggest that there are few perceived local options available. Sandra put it this way:
I don't want to be - I don't want to have to be in an apartment right now. Most of the housing down here is larger than what one person needs ... After a while, home ownership - it’s nice (laughs).

Alex considered a time that:

...I could no longer climb stairs. Is there a place in this [neighbourhood]? I'm not sure. Because there are a lot of small cottages which are one floor, but ... the ones I've been into, I experience them as being a little pinched inside - the rooms are little small for me.

This question also revealed themes relating to the mix of service and business uses in the neighbourhood. Many participants indicated that they would leave the neighbourhood for amenities not locally available (n=21). Often this related to a lack of certain services or businesses. Tammy shared her concerns in this way:

It's terrible, but having to say - like for instance if we were in our 90s and then we had to cope by ourselves. The fact they we’re so far from buying food would be a huge - you know, and if we couldn't drive - yeah - and if there was no decent public transportation. All those things would definitely be - it would be a bit isolating to live here and not be able to go and buy your daily groceries.

Similarly, Macy told me that:

I have to be honest with you that as time is going on my husband and I have discussed [moving away]. In Wortley Village - the services in Wortley Village, to be within walking distance as we age. So, we can walk to the grocery store, the drugstore, you know the bank etc. That is very appealing to us - like 50 million other people (laughs). That would take us away from here.

In the final question, the participants were asked to consider changes that would come to the neighbourhood, and were invited to ‘wave their magic wand’. Several participants indicated that they would use it to bring pubs, cafes or other local services to the neighbourhood (n=14). Such comments included:

...it would be nice to see the Woodfield Variety changed into a pub - would be kind of nice (laughs). (Edward)
[If] I could wave a magic wand and fix - I think more places like this [coffee shop] would be good for the neighbourhood, interspersed throughout. So, more coffee shops or, like that type of place. (Arthur)

I’m thinking of a place, yes you go - [my partner] and I would go - and there'd be other people that we know, that you can socialize... And it’s just like the British pubs, where people meet. ... Yeah, I think that would be a super, super thing. That would really make me want to stay. (Macy)

Once again, a mismatch appears between the physical aspects of place desired by the interviewees and the themes that emerged in the discourse of the government texts. If this results in the need for residents to leave their neighbourhood before they would otherwise wish to, then perhaps the discourse of HCD plans needs to be reconsidered.

6.3.2.5 Revisited: Commercial and residential mix of use discourse in the HCD plans

As is true of architectural mix then, sense of place may also be compromised if a mix of use is valued by residents, but discouraged by the HCD plans. The two HCD plans are more vocal in their language regarding mix of use than they were on the topic of architectural mix in the HCDs. The East Woodfield Heritage Conservation District Plan is silent on the presence of existing commercial uses in the HCD. The plan explicitly favors residential use, and in fact discourages other uses in numerous sections. For example, the district conservation goals explicitly include the direction:

- to maintain the residential character of the East Woodfield heritage conservation district;

- to protect and enhance existing heritage residential buildings. (East Woodfield HCD Plan, section 2.1, emphasis added)

Regarding the heritage character of the area, the plan states that Council recognises that:
-the East Woodfield Heritage Conservation District comprises a distinctive ensemble of heritage buildings and landscapes that have resulted from a century and a half of many social, economic, natural and physical changes;

It goes on to qualify this, however, as such:

-this unique residential heritage character is to be conserved and protected in the process of future change. (East Woodfield HCD Plan, section 2.3, emphasis added)

Section 2.2.4 goes further when considering land use objectives. All three points listed focus on the residential nature of the district, culminating in this final objective:

-to prevent the establishment of those land uses which would be out of keeping with or have detrimental effects upon the residential and open space character of the district. (East Woodfield HCD Plan, section 2.2.4, emphasis added)

The West Woodfield Heritage Conservation District Plan does acknowledge a mix of use in section 8.2.4. This HCD was designated later, and had a greater businesses presence in place at the time of designation:

The West Woodfield Heritage Conservation District already includes a significant number of commercial/office use buildings. Some are purpose built for commercial use, some are converted from residential use buildings. (West Woodfield HCD Plan, section 8.2.4)

Notably though, section 8.2.3 which presents design guidelines for new buildings, does so only in the context of residential construction. When design guidelines are presented regarding commercial uses, these focus on changes to existing buildings. Where new conversions are considered, the wording again leans toward conformity with the residential buildings:

Where buildings are being converted to office or commercial uses, retain original features (doors, windows, porches) and details of the building to reflect the residential history. (West Woodfield HCD Plan, section 8.2.4, emphasis added)

Mix of residential unit type (e.g. apartment buildings, single-family homes) is also considered in the HCD plans. Wording in the East Woodfield HCD Plan is strongest in this regard, and as discussed in the previous chapter, encourages a “stable, low density
residential environment within the district” (p II-6, emphasis added). The plan also indicates that there is “little potential for the introduction of new buildings” (p II-35) at any rate. As noted earlier, however, a mix of newer and heritage buildings, was not generally perceived negatively by the interviewed residents, and was discussed positively by many (n=31).

The West Woodfield Heritage Conservation District Plan is softer in its single-family rhetoric, envisioning broader housing types to meet the changing needs of residents. As noted in the previous chapter, the conversion of large homes from single family to multi-unit residences is considered as one method to “provide unit sizes that are more appropriate for current lifestyles for families and single residents” (p 8.25). This change in wording explicitly makes room in the West Woodfield HCD for conversions to housing types not encouraged in the East Woodfield HCD. A focus only on conversions here still, however, runs counter to the many desired (or required) types of housing that are not compatible with the existing heritage building stock, and is less likely as prices increase.

Limited opportunities for, and restrictions on this mix increases the likelihood of a shift away from diversity in the physical built form and land uses, and may actively exclude opportunities to address the new and changing needs of residents over time. As such, certain residents will again be excluded or even pushed out by these changes. To consider whether the neighbourhood is indeed experiencing a loss of such mix, or the potential for future mix, I will now turn to two indicators, as a form of triangulation.

6.4 Other indicators: The physical aspects of place

To support the findings presented in this chapter, I will triangulate these qualitative findings with other data sources to consider them in the context of changes within the districts. The importance of a mix of use and design in Woodfield was a recurring theme in the interviews. Residents expressed this in different ways, but there was generally an acceptance, and at times even a desire for land use and design changes not supported in
the HCD plans. While more prominent in the East Woodfield HCD, both plans contain language that affords a preference for residential uses, and in various ways discourages the introduction of business uses or higher density residential options. The interviews revealed that the residents of these districts were more open to such changes, even supportive of them. For example, a concern for lack of local amenities was revealed in many interviews (n=21). Others indicated, for example, that a lack of local alternative housing options might cause them to eventually leave the neighbourhood (n=12).

Appreciation for other indicators of physical mix, including architectural mix (n=28), mix of commercial and residential use (n=16) and mix of residential unit type (n=17) emerged as prominent themes, present in almost all of the interviews (n=37). Data presented in this section will consider mix of use in two ways: changes to the number of businesses in the HCDs over time, and the number of permitted demolitions that could make room for new, alternate land uses.

6.4.1 Loss of existing physical mix: Business use by number

Losses in the number of businesses in the HCDs is one possible indicator of a reduction of a mix of use. The Vernon’s London City Directories (available until 2013) were again consulted for each HCD, starting at the year that the HCD plan was created, and comparing this to the situation 5 year later in each case. The results are presented in Tables 6b and 6c.

A list was made of all addresses found within each HCD, and these were isolated. The directories indicate businesses with a special symbol, which was counted. In both districts, there was a drop in the number of listed businesses over the first five years since designation. Again, causality is not implied here, but these results are in keeping with the discourse of the HCD plans.
### Table 6b: Change in number of businesses over time: The East Woodfield HCD.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>East Woodfield HCD</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1992</td>
<td>35 businesses</td>
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<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>27 businesses</td>
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### Table 6c: Change in number of businesses over time: The West Woodfield HCD.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>East Woodfield HCD</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>417 businesses</td>
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<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>398 businesses</td>
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#### 6.4.2 Loss of potential physical mix: Demolitions in the districts

Finally, the HCD plans indicate that there is little room for new construction in the two HCDs without demolition. Very few empty lots exist, nor are many lots wide enough to fit a new building in between two existing ones. Demolitions are therefore the only reliable option if new construction for purpose-built businesses or mid-rise and higher architecture is to occur. On this the two HCD plans are in complete agreement however.

In section 2.2.5, the objectives of the East Woodfield HCD guidelines state:

> Objectives: New development ... To discourage the demolition of existing heritage buildings and their replacement by new development. (East Woodfield HCD Plan 1992, Part II 2.2.5)

In the West Woodfield HCD guidelines, it is stated similarly:

> Goals and objectives ... Encouraging the retention, conservation and adaptation of the District’s heritage buildings and attributes, as described in the Study and Plan, rather than their demolition and replacement (West Woodfield HCD Plan 2008, Part 3.1)

Given this wording, it is not surprising that demolitions have been rare in the HCDs. Tables 6d and 6e list the number of demolition permits requested by year, and the number of approvals. Notably only two demolition permits have ever been granted.
This would indicate little room for increased future development and mix in the HCDs to accommodate changing resident needs and desires in the neighbourhood.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
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<th>West WFHCD</th>
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<th>Total (City)</th>
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**Table 6d: Demolition Permit Applications by year.** * = East WF HCD in effect; ** = Digital records begin; *** = West WF HCD in effect; **** = Delegated authority (change occurred before or during each year).
Table 6e: Demolition Permit Approvals by year. * = East WF HCD in effect; ** = Digital records begin; *** = West WF HCD in effect; **** = Delegated authority (change occurred before or during each year).

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<th>WWHCD</th>
<th>Not approved</th>
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6.5 Summary

The indicators presented here point to a low level of opportunity in the Woodfield neighbourhood for the inclusion and development of a mix of uses desired by residents, as expressed in the interviews. Neighbourhoods change, but the HCD policies carry on
in full force and effect for decades without the opportunity for any accommodation for these changes. In the case of the East Woodfield HCD, a plan created nearly three decades ago, to address the specific challenges of that time, remains in effect today. As the neighbourhood has aged and new residents have moved in, resident needs and desires have shifted and may no longer match those addressed in the HCD plans. This mismatch is notable, as the plans discourage uses that are now desired by and would benefit the interviewed residents. Perhaps more importantly, flexibility in the mix of residential building types in Woodfield may enable some residents to remain in the districts in the longer term, or stay if prices increase. Housing and services geared to meet the needs of, for example, an aging demographic currently run counter to the discourses in the plans. For others, increased variety would provide them with an opportunity to enter the neighbourhood without the resources to purchase the historic low density single-family homes favoured by the HCD plans. The loss of these residents over time would result in changes to the underlying place that run counter to those aspects of place that are valued by the interviewed residents.

In this and the preceding two chapters, support has been provided for the major findings that have emerged in this dissertation, namely that there is a lack of engagement among interviewed residents with the HCD brands and plans; that the mix of people, land uses, and architectural designs are valued elements of residential sense of place among those interviewed; and that this runs counter to the discourses in the Woodfield HCD plans. I will now turn to my conclusions, along with suggestions for policy changes and future research.
Chapter 7

7 CONCLUSIONS: POLICY IMPLICATIONS, CITY PLANNER FEEDBACK AND FUTURE RESEARCH

7.1 Introduction

In the fall of 2017, I interviewed three Planners with the City of London: John Fleming, Kyle Gonyou and Don Menard. The purpose of these interviews was threefold. First, I presented the three major findings of this dissertation for their consideration and comment:

1) **Place Branding and Engagement in Woodfield**: There is a lack of engagement with, and stated awareness of the Heritage Conservation District (HCD) brands among the interviewed residents of Woodfield, and this finding is supported by other indicators, including Heritage Alteration Permit applications and participation in the HCD designation process;

2) **Mix of People in Woodfield**: The mix of people in Woodfield is an important aspect of residential sense of place for the interviewed residents, notably along economic lines. This runs counter to the language and effects of the HCD plans; and,

3) **Mix of Land Use and Architectural Design in Woodfield**: A mix of use and design is also an important aspect of residential sense of place in Woodfield, including a mix of inclusive residential options as well as a greater diversity of local commercial and service uses. This also runs counter to the language and effects of the HCD plans.

Second, I hoped to gain insight from their direct engagement with the HCDs from a planning perspective, to support or question whether these findings were in keeping with their own experiences. Finally, I sought their advice regarding the possible policy implications of these findings.

In this, the penultimate chapter, I will intertwine three related sections of this dissertation, namely the Conclusions, Policy Implications and Suggestions for Future Research. Throughout this chapter, for each of the three findings summarised above I
will first present my own Conclusions, followed by relevant highlights from the Interviews with the City of London Planners. Finally, considering these conversations and my own research, I will present several Policy Implications, specifically possible changes to the relevant HCD policies and other government texts, and end with relevant Suggestions for Future Research. In the final chapter that follows, I will present my own theory of the creative destruction of place in an HCD, as informed by this research and my own years of direct experience with HCD placemaking.

Before addressing my conclusions, interviews, policy implications and suggestions for future research, I will introduce the three City of London Planners whose thoughts will be presented throughout this chapter.

### 7.2 An introduction to the City of London Planners

John Fleming is the Managing Director of Planning and City Planner with the City of London. He has an Honours degree in Urban Development from Western University and a Masters Degree in Planning from the University of Toronto. He has worked in both the private and public sectors as a Planner in the province of Ontario for over 25 years. He has played key roles in establishing several organizations, including the London Economic Development Corporation, Mainstreet London, Landmarks London and others. In his current position as the Chief City Planner, he is responsible for a broad portfolio that includes planning policy and programs, urban design, heritage conservation, urban regeneration, parks and trail planning, growth management, environmental planning, urban forestry and planning application review.

He led the ReThink London process and the subsequent development of The London Plan, representing a leading-edge approach for planning in Ontario. He and his team have prepared city-building plans such as London’s Downtown Plan, the Urban Forestry Strategy, and London’s Urban Agriculture Strategy. He is also playing a major role in various current initiatives such as Shift London Rapid Transit, the Dundas Place Flex...
Street, and the Back to the River project at the Forks of the Thames. He has received several Awards of Planning Excellence from the Ontario Professional Planners Institute, is a Board Member with the Council for Canadian Urbanism and is Vice Chair of the Regional Planning Commissioners of Ontario.

Kyle Gonyou is a City of London Heritage Planner who joined the department in 2012. After growing up in London, Kyle obtained his Bachelor of Arts Honours (art history) and Master of Urban and Regional Planning, both from Queen’s University in Kingston. He was the recipient of the Architectural Conservancy of Ontario’s NextGen Award in the fall of 2014, which recognizes the contributions of students and emerging professionals to the field of heritage conservation. Kyle is a professional member of the Canadian Association of Heritage Professionals (CAHP).

Don Menard is a graduate of Queens University with an honours degree in History and Political Science. He taught history and contemporary studies programs in secondary school for 35 years. Don was a member, and later President of the London Region Branch of the Architectural Conservancy of Ontario, and a member of the London and Middlesex Historical Society. He joined the City of London Planning Department as a part time Heritage Planner in 2004, becoming the full-time Heritage Planner in 2007. Don retired from this role in June of 2016.

The selection and recruitment of these planners, as well as an explanation of how the interviews were conducted is presented in Chapter 3: Methods and research design, under the section entitled Stage four: Depth interviews with City of London Planners. The full interview guide is presented in Appendix F, although several relevant questions are also provided below, individually, to inform the interview text that follows.
7.3 Place branding and engagement in Woodfield

A lack of connection to the place brand created through the HCD plans has led to a low level of engagement among residents, including but not limited to homeowners, in the management of the HCDs. This lack of engagement has been demonstrated through qualitative interviews with Woodfield residents, and supported by other indicators, including Heritage Alteration Permit applications and participation in the HCD designation process.

7.3.1 Discussion and conclusions

This thesis contributes to the extensive literature on the impacts of historic designation on residents (e.g. Ijla, Ryberg Roesntraub and Bowen 2011; Mason 2005; Schaeffer & Millerick 1991) and more directly to the emerging literature that specifically considers historic designation in the context of the Ontario Heritage Conservation District (e.g. Kovacs, Shipley, Snyder & Stupart 2008; Shipley 2000; Shipley, Jonas & Kovacs 2011). The current study extends this literature, by supporting a recurrent quantitative focus on property value and satisfaction (see Mason 2005) with a deeper qualitative understanding of how the HCD plans alter the experience of place. This has been accomplished by qualitative depth interviewing coupled with an analysis of the power dynamics created within the associated HCD government texts. Ahead in this chapter I will discuss how counter-discourses in the interviews, when compared to the power/rhetoric that flows through the HCD plans, indicate tensions between the focus of preservation and change privileged in the texts, and that valued and desired by the interviewed residents.

This research indicates that the new place brand created through the process of HCD designation is not accepted or even clearly understood by the interviewed residents of the HCD. This is consistent with the position of Hospers that “it is hard to re-launch a place” when there are competing pre-existing aspects of that place tied to “memories,
experiences or routines associated with these locations” (2011, p.372). This thesis also contributes to research that has sought to clarify who owns and controls the brand message that emerges through the designation of heritage areas (Stern and Hall 2010). Ultimately this research supports the position that a simple, accepted brand image is hard to achieve in such a place (e.g. Anholt 2010). Whether HCDs even benefit from the enshrined and lasting simplicity of a brand that is created through the HCD texts is ultimately challenged here, in light of the complex and changing nature of a residential neighbourhood.

Meaningful resident engagement in the process is critical. This research supports the position of Johansson and Cornebise that “place branding should, under ideal circumstances, align the identity of the resident/citizen with the perception of outsiders” (2010, p. 189). Branding privileges certain aspects of the culture and history of heritage places to achieve specific preservation objectives, and when imposed from outside this may exclude or marginalize the existing residents of a neighbourhood. HCD designation is accomplished mainly by outsiders (see Chapter 1: Introduction and community context) and this research has shown that although attempts are made to engage residents in the process, few become involved in any meaningful way, and fewer still engage with the management of the HCD in the years that follow (see Chapter 4: Place discourse: Sense of place and place branding).

I submit that a lack of ongoing engagement with the HCD is important in relation to both residential sense of place in Woodfield, and the theoretical model that I will present in the final chapter of this dissertation. As discussed, the creation of a designated HCD is an act of place branding. If residents are not engaged with the HCD brand, it is unlikely to become a prominent factor in their residential sense of place. As years pass and residents turn over, newer residents are less likely to be made aware of the reasons for, and details of this designation. Residents would have little reason to interact with the HCD plans in any formal way.
The creation of an HCD has lasting effects on the management of conservation and change in the neighbourhood itself. It is rare for these plans to be revisited, and in London this has never happened. As such, policies enacted years, or even decades earlier remain in full effect. There is no impetus or opportunity for new generations of residents to re-engage with or update these plans to reflect changing neighbourhood needs and desires. If residents are not engaged in the perpetuation and management of the district, they are unlikely to value, or even be aware of the purposes and effects of the plans, and in fact these plans may run counter to the desires of current residents, and the aspects of place that they value in their neighbourhood.

7.3.2 Interviews with the City of London Planners

During the interviews with the City of London Planners, this low level of resident engagement with the HCDs, and ways to mitigate this were discussed. The question was put to each of the Planners in two parts. To begin, the following context was provided to each interviewee:

*Generally, a small percentage of those living in HCDs have any regular contact with the plans or the process of management of the district that would keep them engaged. Even though in the East Woodfield HCD there are street signs indicating boundaries, only a handful of those interviewed explicitly referenced the districts themselves when describing their neighbourhood. A relatively small number of Heritage Alteration Permit requests per year from each district would also indicate a low level of engagement.*

Each Planner was then asked to first consider whether there was “any room for some form of formal neighbourhood resident oversight in the management of HCDs to engage these residents more meaningfully”.

Kyle Gonyou notes that more formal oversight was “something that was contemplated when East Woodfield was rolling out” in the form of specific resident bodies related to each HCD. He notes that while potential exists, management of the many resulting bodies would be difficult. Shortly after the East Woodfield HCD was designated, the City
produced a document called *Heritage Places* (Corporation of the City of London 1993) that indicated 14 areas of London with potential to be designated as HCDs.

Gonyou - ... there was concern that if there were 14 [HCD] resident associations that were commenting on things it would be unwieldy, so London did not take that approach. ...from a management perspective we [already] have seven Heritage Conservation Districts now.

Gonyou notes that there is already an opportunity in the process for resident groups to be heard:

...the LACH [London Advisory Committee on Heritage] is really the appropriate forum to direct those kinds of comments ... the LACH is based on a sectoral representation, and the Urban League Representative is ... intended to represent the community associations, and be that vehicle to the LACH. There isn't a specific HCD [representative on LACH] because in London our HCDs have traditionally had community associations associated with them.

Gonyou notes that while “those perspectives aren't always brought to the table”, the City does work to ensure that information is readily available to those living in neighbourhoods with HCDs:

The LACH agenda is also public, so I think there is a bit of ownership on the community to stay involved and stay engaged - and to actively participate. I think we do an okay job of making that available, but the agendas are only posted a week in advance of LACH [because there are] a lot of constraints [including] legislated timelines.

A lot depends on how various members play their roles. This can vary from one LACH Chair to the next, and with the diligence with which various LACH representatives follow the terms of reference for their roles. On balance though Gonyou believes that:

...when a community association speaks I think the LACH does listen, and as a Heritage Planner, when there are major things coming up we try to reach out to the known representatives of that community association to make sure there's awareness within the community of planning applications, or demolition requests, or major heritage alteration permits coming forward - but it's really up to an ownership of the community to stay involved.
Herein lies the difficulty. Community associations vary greatly in makeup, communication and governance. While some work hard to represent and communicate with a broad range of neighbours, the reality is that many do not achieve this. I will consider this further at the end of this chapter. Equally importantly, while the executives of some associations will have members well versed in planning and HCD matters, many will not. Don Menard notes that:

...we wrestled with this a couple times, especially forming the more recent districts. I think it came down to the fact that ... the communities were more comfortable with having “experts” who weren’t directly living beside the neighbours make the decisions, or lead the process, or say to people what you could do or couldn’t do. If you bring it down to a community level, and to a group within a community, I think the politics of human nature are such that it would be seen as a personal attack by one person against his neighbour ... so I think having it removed to both the LACH and to the Planning Department removes a little bit of that - gives a degree of expertise...

This absence of any formal oversight though, while potentially avoiding conflict, also results in lower engagement. If the residents are not formally expected to be a part of the process, it should not be surprising that years into their management, few neighbours take the time to attend LACH meetings or comment on permit applications. It is not surprising then that district boundaries, names and policies were infrequently referenced in the interviews. As Menard puts it “residential support was essential to form the districts ... community support [is] essential, and community relationships are essential [to the designation process].”

Lacking any formal ongoing role for residents, the place that is created through the engagement of these residents in the early stages, then generally moves to a top-down management process. As the decades pass, residents may be decreasingly aware of the districts themselves, or the reasons for designation in the first place.

John Fleming eludes to this shift from his own perspective:

...what we find is when we’re engaged in the study and the plan [during the HCD designation process] the community comes out, and there's a lot of involvement,
and then over time people ... continue their lives. They know that the plan’s in place and there are certain regulations around it, but they’re not necessarily continuing to interface.

Fleming’s mind is not closed to the potential for deeper and more formal ongoing resident engagement, despite some of the difficulties. When asked to consider whether this should be revisited, he offers that:

...maybe there’s a deliberate attempt to set up a neighbourhood-oriented group that acts as a steward of the HCD from the community perspective over time. How [to] keep that going is going to be unique to the neighbourhood I guess - but it’s a great concept.

Fleming sees twofold potential in deeper resident engagement, offering the capacity to both deal:

...with the technical aspects of an HCD but [also the] celebration of it ... so that same group could be charged with some of the event planning you know. Just trying to get people enthused and involved in their neighbourhood from a heritage perspective.

Gonyou agrees that connections to communities should be explored further, whether formal or informal:

I would like to see a stronger role of the community association chairpersons in working with, at least, Heritage Staff in Heritage Conservation Districts. Some are better than others, and it’s not consistent. In London some community associations are very strong, some are weak [and] some really don't care about heritage ... that's the human factor. What has to be the undertone of this is that implementation comes down to a human factor.

In the second part of this question each Planner was asked to consider more informal engagement approaches. They provided thoughts on “other ways to reach out to these residents and keep them engaged”. Continuing his thoughts on resident engagement, Fleming sees informal approaches this way:

I think the celebration of [the heritage aspects of the neighbourhood] overtly is really key. It's one thing to sort of know it's there, and that there are some regulations around it - but getting together with the people that are in that neighbourhood [to celebrate it is important].
Fleming cautions that traditional event-based celebrations should be only one part of the engagement process however, noting that:

...some people just don't like to be involved in events. They're not really interested in being with their neighbours ... the conventional thinking is ‘how can we celebrate together’ but maybe there are things like walking tours - routes that people can take ... things that you can introduce that maybe are attractive to people that really aren't looking for the socialization aspect.

As one of two current City Heritage Planners, Kyle Gonyou is tasked with this outreach in an ongoing way:

So, we do the postcards for Heritage Week. We try to attend major community events: the Woodfield Street Fair, Gathering on the Green, things like that. We do the best we can with the resources we have.

Considering the HCD street signs, which could act to visually engage residents with their HCD, Gonyou notes that due to production constraints “the street signs are something that's been really, really slow to implement, and I think that could reinforce that character.” The discrepancy of the text on the signs with the actual district names though (opting for the generic Historic Woodfield over the specific HCD names), is something that was done specifically at the request of the community association, and may in the end contribute to some confusion about the boundaries and names of the specific HCDs.

Don Menard, with his long experience in London Heritage Planning sees community engagement as critical:

...the importance of an active community association is invaluable for HCD's based on my experience. In every one that I've been involved in so far up to ... the point I retired - if that community association hadn't been active, hadn't been proactive - there's no point as far as I was concerned in trying to take it on. ... Anything that can be done to strengthen the relationship between the Planners, and the Heritage Planners in particular, in terms of their roles administering the plans and engagement with the community association on a regular basis, should be encouraged.
These planner interviews provided clarity and insights from three knowledgeable and experienced professional perspectives, in support of my own findings. These conversations added greater depth and specificity to my thoughts, and have confirmed and informed the related policy and research suggestions, to which I will now turn.

7.3.3 Policy implications

First, to inspire ongoing engagement with the HCD plans and management, I would suggest that some form of formal oversight by local residents should be built into the HCD designation and management process, and indicated in the plans themselves. As Gonyou notes, this was contemplated, but the unwieldy nature of maintaining multiple neighbourhood oversight committees made the concept problematic. One possibility then would be to provide a formal role for local residents, perhaps through their community association, in the management process. Gonyou alludes to this in his comments above, and his thoughts are supported in the literature. Further on in this chapter, I will consider some of the concerns around the representative nature of such associations, that may open the door to considering a new representative body for engagement. One form that this could take would be a permanent or revolving seat on the London Advisory Committee on Heritage (LACH). Currently the Urban League of London seat is intended to serve this function, but in practical terms it is not possible for this representative to engage designated neighbourhoods ahead of every application.

A better approach may be the formation of a civic alliance of representatives of all of the London HCDs, complete with a digital outreach strategy designed to quickly circulate information about HCD permit applications to any interested neighbour, not just those who are part of the local community association. This alliance would be independent of City Hall, but could be given a permanent seat, and an elected representative on the LACH. Interested residents would be encouraged by this alliance to attend the LACH meeting, and given a formal and recurring opportunity to speak to each relevant
application through the LACH Chair. The LACH representative of this civic alliance would ensure (through the Chair) that the residents present are given this opportunity to speak, that any correspondence from residents is read aloud, and that the remarks of these residents are included (perhaps in summary form) in the LACH report to Council. At the end of each calendar year, a summary of all permitted and denied applications along with relevant details, HCD by HCD, would be disseminated to the residents. In this way, even those unable to attend LACH meetings or write in to the LACH would be made aware of the changes occurring in their neighbourhood over the years.

Outside of this formal role, this alliance could also provide educational opportunities, and as Fleming suggests above, “get people enthused and involved in their neighbourhood from a heritage perspective.” In this way such an alliance could reinforce and amplify the ongoing engagement efforts of City Heritage Staff, and augment these with independent events, tours and educational materials. Together, such an alliance, with official recognition both from the City and within the plans themselves, could support deeper engagement of residents in their own HCDs in both formal and informal ways.

7.3.4 Suggestions for future research

To support the findings of this qualitative dissertation, regarding limited HCD resident engagement, a turn to quantitative evidence is recommended. A survey could be designed, based on this research, to sample a broader cross-section of Woodfield residents. Questions could tease out the level of local awareness of and engagement with the management of HCDs in the neighbourhood at large. The survey instrument should be designed to break down responses along many lines, including time lived in the districts, home ownership, housing preference and so on.

This dovetailing of discourse analysis of government texts, resident interviews and follow-up surveys could act as a model for research into HCD engagement in other
neighbourhoods and other cities, to address the needs of each unique and specific place. Cumulatively, this research could serve to inform and refine theoretical models, such as the one that I will present in the final chapter of this dissertation.

7.4 Mix of people in Woodfield

A mix of people, particularly along economic lines, was frequently referenced in resident interviews as a positive aspect of their descriptions of place. This has been demonstrated through qualitative interviews with Woodfield residents, and supported by other indicators, including resident response to local community service organisations and geared to income residential conversions. A drop in rental unit number though, evident in the Vernon’s London City Directory, and coupled with a possible stabilisation or increase in housing prices, sets the stage for an overall decrease in the mix of people in Woodfield that runs counter to the desires expressed in the resident interviews.

7.4.1 Discussion and conclusions

This study contributes to an understanding of how the government texts that guide HCD designation, alongside other forms of urban policy that privilege certain land uses over others, ultimately encourage gentrification through property sale price increases and a reduction in available rental units geared to the lower income earner (e.g. Freeman and Braconi 2004). Furthermore, this research supports the addition of *heritage designation* to the growing list of positive terminology that may *conceal* gentrification, alongside “regeneration, social mixing or even urban sustainability” (Lee and Dobson 2007, p. 2471).

This qualitative work expands both on the geographic literature concerned with the impacts of heritage designation on housing prices (e.g. Ijla, Ryberg Roesntraub and
Bowen 2011; Kovacs, Shipley, Snyder & Stupart 2008; Mason 2005; Schaeffer & Millerick 1991; Shipley 2000; Shipley, Jonas & Kovacs 2011) and the related but separate gentrification literature (e.g. Ashworth 2002, Betancur 2002, Freeman and Braconi 2004, Ley and Dobson 2007, Zukin 2016). Through qualitative depth interviewing this research builds on that literature, by revealing counter-discourses between the resident interviews and the HCD plans. Coupled with a lack of resident engagement in the management of these plans (discussed above), this research posits that the potential gentrifying influences of the HCD texts on the neighbourhood are neither understood nor desired by the interviewed residents.

This is noteworthy, for consistent with recent work by Kovacs, Jonas Galvin and Shipley (2015), interviewed residents generally indicated that they were satisfied with life in the neighbourhood as it is. This study has extended that work by deepening the qualitative understanding of why these residents are satisfied, and what aspects of the place are associated with this satisfaction. This depth of understanding will allow future research to theorize about, and test, the impacts of changes to the underlying place on residential sense of place. In the current study, an appreciation for mix was a consistent and recurring theme in relation to both the existing community and physical aspects of place. In this section and the next, I will discuss the ways in which the discourse of the HCD plans runs counter to this preference for mix.

I submit, then, that the privileging of the home owner in various implicit and explicit ways in the HCD plans may add to the disengagement of other types of residents, and eventually reduce the strength of their voice in the management of their own neighbourhood. If such residents are not visible as a part of the management of this guiding plan for their neighbourhood, they are less likely to be considered as changes are debated. This may in turn contribute to the privileging of single family homeowners over renters, and encourage the process of gentrification in the neighbourhood. This may eventually alter the mix of people, to something different from that which is valued by the current residents.
A mismatch between an appreciation for a mix of people in the neighbourhood, and the language found in the HCD plans, is therefore of interest to those concerned with the erosion of place in the HCDs.

7.4.2 Interviews with the City of London Planners

While interviewing the City of London Planners, the potential for these plans to impact the mix of people in the neighbourhood was addressed in two separate questions. First, this was explored as follows:

For years there was concern among many home purchasers that owning property in a designated HCD would depress property values. As research into these districts has proceeded, it is now generally believed that designation either stabilizes or increases prices in these districts. Property value stability along with HCD plan preferences for lower density uses has the potential to encourage forces of gentrification and exclusion, pushing out residents who can no longer afford rent or ownership. Are there ways to mitigate this in your experience?

John Fleming reflected on this in relation to the early days, when London had only one HCD (East Woodfield):

I do remember the Robert Shipley work [on property values] because I was trying to, at the time - with only [East] Woodfield underneath us - trying to encourage more Heritage Conservation Districts ... Bishop Hellmuth [the second HCD in London, designated in 2001] was one that we were dealing with where there was a fair bit of pushback at that time. I’ve seen the pushback decline over time and I think ... if we weren’t the first, we were certainly among the first to say, ‘let’s use Heritage Conservation Districts as a tool for revitalization’.

The potential impacts on revitalization were recognised early on by City Planners, and by 2006, when the third district was designated in the Old East Village:

Fleming - ...it was [intended] to create the sense of pride, the sense of place identity that people could self-identify with. ‘I’ve got something here of value’, ‘we have something here of value’. So, then you know, in the Old East that was always one of the underlying concerns. We were working towards revitalization, not just in the HCD but in the area as a whole. How are we going to revitalize
without broadly getting ... into gentrification? It's an age-old question, and I don't know that there's ever a complete answer to it.

This is an important problem, as the resident interviews revealed that a mix people is an important component of their sense of place, one that could be threatened by gentrification. Fleming noted that in his experience the people of these neighbourhoods behave much in the way that the coding of the current resident interviews would suggest:

I think that the reality is that people that are in these highly urban neighbourhoods tend to be those that aren't looking for homogeneity - and you know the suburbs tends to be a bit of a poster child for homogeneity unfortunately – and we’re trying to change that as you know. [But] when you're coming into an urban environment, most people are accepting – ‘yeah there's going to be diversity of income levels in my neighbourhood, and I'm okay with that’.

To allow for this mix of incomes to continue, Fleming pointed to the potential of an emerging by-law to mitigate the push-out effects of gentrification, at least somewhat:

I'll go back to the secondary suites [a by-law that offers residents the opportunity to create infill, including in their rear yards]. It's a great opportunity for continuing to offer rental opportunities, at the same time as allowing for revitalization investment in - even repurposing of - heritage buildings.

Menard also raised this emerging by-law as a potential opportunity:

...the introduction of the by-law that allows for secondary units as of right I think helps do that ... It offers the potential to have increased density without necessarily changing the built form dramatically, so you maintain the heritage character that presumably you're trying to protect.

Other possibilities were noted by Fleming as well:

I think that some of the answer may be in programs that are out there relating to people's incomes - help with affordable housing projects. So, we've seen some in Woodfield, for example, which are affordable housing projects. Beautiful conservation occurring, and at the same time not pushing people out of the neighbourhood - actually inviting them into the neighbourhood.
Figure 7a: Woodfield Commons at 390 Princess Avenue (originally called the Jarvis Building) in the West Woodfield HCD. (photo by author)

Figure 7b: A second, newer building constructed immediately west of the one above. (photo by author)
Here Fleming is referring to the geared-to-income housing conversion mentioned earlier (Figure 7a, above) in which an older apartment building was renewed and repurposed. Later this project was expanded, and a second building was constructed over the adjacent parking lot, designed to respect the architecture of the first (Figure 7b, above). When asked if he had heard any considerable concern about this development expressed by neighbours at the time, Fleming recalls that:

I didn't - no ... I don't remember a huge amount of pushback from the neighbourhood. I thought that, particularly when they were shown what they were going to do with the built form, it was pretty positive.

Don Menard did not remember any negative reaction to these conversions either, saying that “no I didn't really hear anything negative about it at all”. Menard went on to explain that:

My sense was partly tainted by the fact that I had some awareness of the building prior to anything happening, because I had a personal awareness [through a family relationship] of someone in there at one point who had a really bad experience. So, I knew that it was a bit of a cess-pit, and I thought anything that could make that building function more effectively – and keep the building - would be better than what was there ... I was given a vibe that that feeling was shared by the community, you know that bad things were going on there - whether the building can be saved or not was secondary to cleaning up the building and what was happening - and if the new ownership seemed to be on track to do that, they were supportive of the fact that they were not dramatically proposing to change the exterior the building. And later on, the [additional] new building ... guided by the old building - I think worked successfully.

The example here then is the repurposing of an old building to make room for lower income renters in the neighbourhood, much as envisioned in the West Woodfield HCD Plan. Realistically however, there are limited opportunities in the neighbourhoods for such conversions. To maintain or increase density in an HCD then, other tools must be employed. Fleming notes the importance of identifying developable lots as part of this process, and perhaps prioritizing more intense developments for these sites:
Where there are opportunities for greater intensification we should be seizing on those, and should be allowing for those … So, the whole notion of trying to keep an R1 [single detached dwellings] type of mentality: ‘this is single-family home only - no conversions to multiple unit repurposing, and no opportunity for taking vacant sites and developing midrise’ or something that increases the density - that’s where I think the problem really occurs. You’re pushing people out [of the neighbourhood] - at that point you're just not diverse.

Gonyou notes that “HCD preferences for lower density are based on the existing form” rather than a specific intent to serve an exclusionary function:

I think that density is a measure that can cloud that because, really, I think the focus for Heritage Conservation Districts is the form, and the relationship of the form to the public realm, and how people interact with that. So, density is a measure that isn't one that I spend a lot of time thinking about [from a heritage management perspective].

Language in the plans is improving, and Gonyou notes that “that's what we see in the newer, better ones … when that density overwhelms the form is when we get the conflict [between increased density and the aims of the plans]. Gonyou reminds us that gentrification is a two-sided process. While the mix of people may change over time:

I don't know if that is entirely a bad thing because I think there's buildings and resources in these HCDs that we value and [due to] some of the economic constraints of [maintaining these buildings] the current property owners, or even absent property owners don't maintain them. Going through a gentrification process takes a dilapidated, beautiful Victorian building and turns it into a mansion, you know. So, I can see both sides of that, and how that can affect change.

For the time being, Gonyou notes that both East and West Woodfield are somewhat fortunate to have a diversity of housing options available, but acknowledges the advantages of district designation that may attract a more affluent resident over time:

I think it offers reliability too, and I think that when we see [major changes proposed] like a high rise within a Heritage Conservation District, we obviously see a negative reaction, because it's out of character - it doesn't comply with the policies and guidelines and it's something that may not be appropriate.
Figure 7c: The Waterloo Apartments in the West Woodfield HCD. (photo by K. Gonyou)
When asked then if gentrification and the push-out of certain residents is inevitable, Gonyou considers that:

I wouldn't want to say inevitable - like I said Woodfield is fortunate to have a variety of housing types within it. I'm thinking of the example of the Waterloo Apartments [Figure 7c, above]. There are some really great multiunit buildings that are purpose built that still fit within the character of the area. I think that the challenge will be affordability, and I think that's something that is not possible to mandate through a heritage process.

Gonyou also draws attention to the geared-to-income conversion mentioned earlier (Figure 7a, above):

There are provisions for affordable housing - let's say the Jarvis Apartments [now Woodfield Commons] on Princess Avenue. You know, those ... are affordable. So, I think that there are ways to accommodate that, but it's not something that really is the focus of a Heritage Conservation District. It would be beyond its realm. Its focus is on form.

Don Menard offered one final thought:

[The] only other thing - the thought that escaped me - Council hasn't done this as far as I know, but a provision for affordable units within a development proposal may be one way to mitigate it. Developers tend not to want that, or like that, because it reduces their net profits. But it might be a way of encouraging some degree of diversity in an area that has started to become very gentrified ... [but that would be a] political football.

The push out potentially caused by gentrification is exasperated in the language of the HCD plans, which privileges the input and concerns of the homeowner in the management of the districts. Continuing with this line of thought, the Planners were next asked to consider the following:

Related to this, the language of the HCD Plans, especially those for East Woodfield, potentially privileges homeowners over other types of residents when considering management and change in the district. ... Can you suggest changes in language, or other means to encourage consideration for other types of residents, who do not own property in the district, as part of the process of managing an HCD?
Fleming begins by noting that, regardless of the language in the HCD Plans, all residents are accommodated in the public input/consultation process:

[Renters] have a valuable contribution to the conversation ... when we do our planning applications, we put the signs out - just as an example - we don't just mail to property owners. We put signs out and say ‘interested in this? We’re interested in your opinion’. It doesn't matter if you're a renter or an owner - your opinions are valuable. In fact, we don't even ask whether they own property or not when they're providing the comments. But in terms of the language - yeah, I think - you know you talk about property owners as having a contribution to the conversation, whether a proposed development or alteration is appropriate or not. I think that it's missing a big piece of the community, and we should be improving that language for sure.

Gonyou similarly considers this to be:

...part of a broader planning challenge. Everything that we’re directed [to do] is with the property owner. All our mailings are based on property owners. Legislative requirements are to the property owner - they’re not to tenants. So, this is a broader planning issue. I think that there are some things that we do to help to mitigate that, but it's not always that successful ... LACH meetings for example are open to the public. The public is welcome to attend notices for things like planning applications [and] development applications. Demolition requests are published in the newspaper, and they're also on the city website of course. So those things do have a public process to them, but tenants don't get notification [directly].

Regardless of what language exists in the plans, this is simply a reality of the planning process.

Gonyou: That's who we have to work with on alterations. It may be really great that the tenant cares about heritage conservation and all of these things, but the tenants are not responsible for maintaining the property. And the tenant doesn't usually paint the porch, for example, or change the windows or things like that. Those are things that the property owner has to take responsibility for, even if they don't live in that property, or in London.

Don Menard agrees with the root of the difficulty here:

...I mean obviously all those districts were aimed at property owners because they were the ones who would receive the impacts - whatever they were - negative or positive. And they were the ones whose support you needed in
order to establish a district. So, I think [that one possibility is] to bring in something like the community association as a partner, where the members of the association could be both owners and renters ... [perhaps there] could be specific language with respect to persuading owners to work with tenants in the alteration process - but there is that alteration process that has to happen. I don't know how many owners would want to discuss with their tenants the proposed elimination of a unit to expand another one (laughs).

Menard sees potential here for a district-by-district approach:

We do a demographic analysis of each district prior to creating the district and so the figures come out as to what portion of people within the community are renters as opposed to owners. So, if that's a very high proportion it probably makes a little bit of sense to at least give tacit recognition of that fact one way or another. Although the nature of a rental - a renter in some ways [is] transient, or they can be seen to be transient - so to give them a lot of influence might be problematic.

Once again, these interviews provided support, clarity and insights to my own analysis, and have been folded into the related policy implications and research suggestions, below.

7.4.3 Policy implications

One clear method to open doors to a variety of residents is to ensure that an HCD plan encourages residential units designed for all income levels. There is evidence that this is acceptable within the HCDs, for as the planners note above, the conversion and later construction of geared to income residential units was met with little resistance in Woodfield. Affordable and high-density housing then must be considered at the earliest stages of HCD designation, in recognition of the potential for related property value increases and gentrification. Authors have noted this potential for geared to income housing to at least stall gentrification (e.g. Ley and Dobson 2007). Ryberg-Webster and Kinahan describe it this way:

The creation of affordable housing in moderate-, middle- and upper-income areas provides low-income residents with housing options in a variety of
neighbourhoods. Creating affordable units in wealthier areas may also hinder future displacement, should gentrification escalate in more popular legacy city neighbourhoods (2017, p. 1685).

The question then, in the context of an HCD, is where and how. I draw here on Fleming’s comment above that opportunities for intensification should be identified and “seized on” in the HCD. To begin, within the plans themselves effort should be made to clearly identify those areas in a proposed district that could tolerate higher density conversions, and perhaps even new builds, without compromising the stated objectives of the plan.

This evaluation should consider not only empty lots and existing larger buildings, but also deep lots with the potential for infill, along the lines of the emerging secondary suites by-law in London. Buildings that contribute little to the character of the HCD should be explicitly flagged for possible demolition to make room for compatible higher density infill. Language in the HCD plans that privileges low-density development should be removed, or at least qualified to allow for a broader mix of residential unit types in these districts. The purpose here is to support a more inclusive residential makeup, while remaining mindful of the heritage character of the HCD. This is happening in some of the more recent plans, as the Planners indicate above. Lessons have been learned over time, and newer plans are beginning to accommodate a wider variety of residential preferences than they once did. A fundamental problem here is that, for a variety of reasons, HCD plans are not often revisited and revised to reflect the changing needs of residents, and lessons learned. I’ll return to this opportunity below, as part of my policy suggestions in the section on mix of use and architectural design in an HCD.

Finally, in practice, and perhaps even in explicit language in the plans themselves, recommendations for areas of possible infill should include geared-to-income units. This could be accomplished if a mix of people in an HCD became a protected aspect of the heritage character. This would be difficult, for as Gonyou correctly notes this is not currently the focus of HCD plans. Language would also have to be carefully designed to not exclude newcomers, but rather to resist the tendency toward gentrification that
may drive long time residents out. HCD plans acknowledge and accommodate other
historic aspects of the way of life in a district, including historic industries, recreational
features and even the homes of prominent residents. Perhaps the time has come to
consider a mix of people, at least economically, more directly in these plans. Better
engagement of these individuals, as indicated in the previous section, is again critical to
the success of this process.

7.4.4 Suggestions for future research
To provide further evidence of the indicators that point to processes of exclusion and
gentrification in the HCDs, a comprehensive quantitative analysis would be required,
similar to the work of Shipley and others (Shipley 2000; Shipley, Jonas & Kovacs 2011;
Kovacs, Jonas-Galvin & Shipley 2015). Housing price increases within the two districts
should be compared to the city as a whole, as well as other similar neighbourhoods. A
more comprehensive and detailed analysis of conversions from rental units to single
family homes would also assist in supporting or challenging the notion that these HCDs
are gentrifying, and pushing out lower income residents.

A survey based on this research, and sampling a broader cross-section of Woodfield
residents, would again be of value. Questions should be designed to explore whether
the concern for mix of people, revealed through these qualitative interviews and
supporting indicators, is evident in the broader population of Woodfield residents. The
survey instrument should again be designed to break down responses along many lines,
including time lived in the districts, home ownership, and demographics.
7.5 Mix of land use and architectural design in Woodfield

Finally, a mix of land use and architectural design was also frequently referenced in resident interviews as a positive aspect of their descriptions of place. Other indicators that were reviewed in the previous chapter, however, point to a drop in the number of businesses in the districts post designation, and a low level of demolition permits that would allow for new construction. This runs counter to the expressed desire of interviewed residents for a greater mix of use and design in their neighbourhood.

7.5.1 Discussion and conclusions

The findings of this thesis dovetail interestingly with the outlier position of Sharpe, who “failed to find clear-cut evidence of a generic heritage premium” on property values in a designated heritage district in St. John’s (2006, p. 195). As noted earlier in this thesis, this runs counter to most of the research that has considered the effects of designation on sale prices (see Mason 2005). Sharpe speculated that weak enforcement of, or even non-adherence to district guidelines may have limited the economic impacts of designation in this case (2006). A paradox of needs results. While strict adherence to the HCD guidelines would likely benefit housing prices, it would also limit flexibility of use and design in the districts. The interviewed residents in this current study, however, indicated a desire for some degree of flexibility in design and use within their neighbourhood. Strict enforcement, then, would have a twofold effect of increasing pricing and potentially lowering the mix of people in the HCD, while simultaneously restricting changes desired by the residents of the districts. Both effects run counter to the stated desires of the interviewed residents.

The impacts of HCD designation are lasting. As noted earlier in this chapter, the creation of an HCD has enduring effects on the management of conservation and change in the neighbourhood. In Ontario these plans are rarely revisited, and London has never done so, even though the East Woodfield HCD Plan is now approaching 30
years since designation. As such, policies such as this, enacted years or even decades earlier, generally remain in full effect. This finding is consistent with the position of Stern and Hall that branding, even in the service of *authentic* and *historic* places, may remain a simplified “marketing device in the sense that it represents places through widely intelligible symbols” and is ultimately “a limiting activity that locks places in time” (2010, p. 209). Over time, the needs of residents may change, but HCD plans are rarely revisited to accommodate these changing needs.

I submit that the privileging of low density residential development in various implicit and explicit ways in the HCD plans may limit the potential for other new and desired land uses to be introduced into the districts. If the uses that residents value are not available in their own neighbourhood, they may disconnect and eventually leave. This potential was indicated explicitly in several of the interviews. Similarly, when considering the addition of new buildings within an HCD, the privileging and encouragement in the plans for *conformity of design* may reduce the eventual mix of styles that the interviewed residents indicated was important to their experience of place. A desire for a mix of use and architectural design in the neighbourhood, mismatched with the language found in the HCD plans, is therefore of interest to those concerned with the erosion of place in the HCDs.

### 7.5.2 Interviews with the City of London Planners

The question of whether, or how a mix of use could be accommodated within the structure of the HCD plans was broken into two questions. First, the Planners were asked to comment in this way:

*One of the main goals of an HCD plan is to preserve and enhance the heritage architecture of the district. From time to time change does happen, and this is envisioned in the plans. ... Language of the HCD plans leans toward architectural conformity. In my interviews however, participants indicated an interest in mix of architectural design. When a new building is constructed, are there ways in*
which to encourage mix over conformity, while still respecting the heritage architecture of the neighbourhood?

John Fleming began by acknowledging that newer HCD plans are changing:

...we’re getting better, I think, as we evolve our thinking around Heritage Conservation Districts. Being on the leading edge - which I think we are in the province, or at least one amongst a handful that are on the leading edge of Heritage Conservation Districts over the last 20 years - is tough because you’re pioneering, and you don't have models.

Fleming sees the issue though, especially in relation to the older HCD plans as part of the broader concept of good urban planning;

...homogeneity is the enemy of good city building, period. In subdivisions where every house looks essentially the same, there is no mix and variability, in terms of height, architectural style, the relationship to the street … whether it's in a new subdivision context, or a Heritage Conservation District.

Fleming links this matter to deeper concerns addressed at the Official Plan level, referring here to The London Plan (Corporation of the City of London 2016) – London’s new Official Plan that was created after a long and celebrated citizen engagement process:

I think that when we look at The London Plan, we tried to do just that. We talk about ‘fit’ - I think it’s a better word than conformity - and I think that there are some principles that relate to fit. … [a more appropriate approach is] to define fit as we’ve done in The London Plan - more around the principle of not being the same as everything around you, but being able to integrate well within that context.

Fleming considered several examples of how a focus on ‘fit’ can allow more variation than a focus on conformity, while still working within a given context:

So, the rhythm of the street, the rhythm of the datum lines, we’ll get a roofline that's different from what is adjacent to it, but that continues the kind of overall continuity of how those rooflines are working together. Even the height of the building - you can have a one story beside a two-story, and it can fit very well if again it then relates to - maybe it's the pitch of the roof that's bringing it up to 1 1/2 stories in terms of the appearance the height. Or it could be that the
architectural style is raising the perceived height of the building, so it doesn’t look entirely out of place.

Again, Fleming relates this to broader concepts of good urban planning:

In The London Plan there's this notion of - if you see the word ‘should’, you have the opportunity to go back and unravel ‘what was the purpose of the policy’, and achieve it in a different way. Same goes here - how do we create a great neighbourhood, great streetscape - how do we make sure that we’re not undermining the quality of the built form. Because you’re really talking about the built form here when you’re talking about the architecture. ... allow for lots of flexibility and variability, contrast. I mean the layers of time ... seen within neighbourhoods is just as valuable as preserving a streetscape in absolute amber. I think the most interesting places that we experience are those that have different layers to them, and relate back to different periods of time. So, I think all of that can be done within the context of the Heritage Conservation District. We need to be a little bit more careful in terms of how we write them, so that comes out.

Kyle Gonyou echoes this perspective:

I think one of the things that I keep in mind in reviewing development applications is compatibility. I think that is a more appropriate word for what were trying to work on within heritage conservation, on a big picture scale, as opposed to conformity. So, in East Woodfield I know the guidelines tend to [encourage] a lot more of the replication of existing patterns. And I think we get more into that conservation approach of distinguishing new from old in West Woodfield. But I think the common thread that weaves those two together is compatibility. So, looking for form, scale, massing, materials, finishes that are compatible with the areas but still reflect their different characters.

It is in the introduction of larger buildings into the mix that Gonyou sees the greatest challenge in this regard:

...the challenge comes when you’re working with a multiunit building. It should look like a multiunit building, but there’s been a preference I think, in the past, to see it look like a single detached dwelling. ... it's a challenge that we’re constantly confronted with in terms of ‘how does the built form fit within its existing heritage context?’
Gonyou draws attention here to the legacy issues around older plans, such as the East Woodfield HCD Plan:

Well I think a lot of the challenges with - especially the older HCD plans - is they are written not as policy documents. And really, with their status under the Ontario Heritage Act they are policy documents, that have guidelines that support their implementation. [The plan for] East Woodfield really reads like all guideline. ... in newer HCDs, and definitely for future HCDs, [we’re] looking for a much stronger policy framework. So, for example driveways. I don't think there's anything on driveways in East Woodfield, but driveway expansion is one of the top things that generates calls from neighbours. So, in future HCD's I'd be looking for policy language that prohibits the expansion of driveways in the front yard.

In newer plans, this issue is addressed more appropriately according to Gonyou:

Compatibility is something that we see in the newer HCD plans, and I think that's also something that we are able to achieve going through the approvals process - because new buildings do require consultation with the London Advisory Committee on Heritage, and ultimately a decision by Council.

Gonyou recognises that this process is highly interpretive saying that “absolutely it's a lot more judgment, and it's very subjective”. How closely the guidelines are followed, and how much room for unique design is permitted is ultimately a decision of Council.

Well ultimately it comes down to a recommendation that comes forward from staff to LACH, that [then] comes to Council. These are all opinions in a public forum, so I think it's appropriate when it's grounded in policy.

When faced with change in the HCDs, Don Menard looks back on his experience in this way:

It's a very big question – a difficult question to sort of come up with a general answer. The guidelines were there as guidelines, and so as a Planner ... I would look at what was being proposed and try to see if I could justify [it] with what's in the guidelines - and if I could, I felt more comfortable going ahead - and if I couldn't, I would probably talk to my manager about it before we did anything else.

When asked if the guidelines might lead applicants to lean toward conformity in their designs, especially in East Woodfield, Menard replied that:
They did - I think partly because the applicants were interested in acquiring something of value to them, and so when they knew what the guidelines said they could often have their architect, or themselves if they were doing it individually, work towards establishing a degree of conformity to the guidelines - recognizing the vagueness in them at some points.

Menard though, sees value in the addition of unique architecture in the context of an HCD:

My own feeling was that if it was a unique architectural design, [and] I felt that it added value in a long-term basis to the community, I would tend to support it. It was the attempt to say it had to be a ‘Disney reproduction’ I found I resisted ... once in a while. But even [with] a cookie-cutter Disney approach at least you get something done, because it would ‘conform’ in the long run. It may not enhance the neighbourhood much, but in the short term you could move forward.

So, while the guidelines were only that, and approvals were, as noted earlier, in the hands of Council with the advice of the LACH, these guidelines did of course have an impact on the submitted designs.

Menard - ...and so at times you know I was just trying to avoid a conflict situation and see if we could resolve something - but you know I really prefer a unique architectural style - but rarely did we get those. ... In all the districts that I was involved with ... we never had any statement to discuss the request for a really unique building and how that should be treated. So possibly in the guidelines there could be some recognition that a singular design that had unique characteristics and qualities should be given some degree of attention rather than simple conformity to existing guidelines.

Gonyou sees a focus on change in the districts, though, as somewhat of a distraction from their core function:

I think the Heritage Conservation Districts are intended to conserve what’s existing and I think that really should be emphasized as their first point. These are areas that are recognized for their significant cultural heritage value or interest. They have a defined heritage character, and the real focus of them is to conserve what’s existing rather than to encourage new development that is compatible. That’s part of it, but that’s an unusual special circumstance that is usually on a property by property circumstance.
Gonyou draws attention then to a fundamental problem for residents seeking a greater mix of architecture and use within their HCD:

Most HCDs have very few vacant lots in them at the time of designation. It's really unusual, and not something that is their primary focus - and I think that has an impact on the guidelines that they produce. It's something that I think the earliest HCDs have a greater shortcoming in. I think East Woodfield has very specific guidelines on the proportion of muntins in the window [for example], and how narrow they should be, and sometimes it misses the forest for the trees - because it doesn't really do a great job at recognizing how to achieve compatible infill. ... we start to see the tides change a little bit when we get to ... Old East [in 2006] and then moving on from there.

Conservation is of course the core function of HCD plans, and naturally limits the amount of change that can be introduced into an HCD. This leads then to the next question, in which the Planners were asked to consider mix of use from a different angle:

Language of the HCD plans and guidelines prioritize low density and single-family homes. In my interviews participants indicated an interest in mix of use and mix of people. What are your thoughts on the potential for each of these, and whether there are means to permit them?

We started by discussing mix of use in the HCD context. Several of the interview participants indicated a desire for some businesses, especially local services like groceries, cafes, pubs. John Fleming sees a similar issue here:

...and again, I'd rather go back a little bit to context here. I think that the evolution of Heritage Conservation Districts has come from one that is of extreme protectionism. So, this is a tool communities use to try and keep development out, to keep other uses out too, you know. An understandable perspective where they are in highly urban neighbourhoods, often under assault from expansion ... in the 50s, 60s, 70s, 80s - to get rid of the old stuff and bring in the new stuff. So, there's a lot of protectionism that's involved in these.

Times have changed over the years since these early designations, and as was indicated in the resident interviews, Fleming sees the potential that views of these matters have changed as well:
...now I think there's absolutely an opportunity to insert commercial uses into - very successfully into - existing neighbourhoods, and these Heritage Conservation Districts. And I think you find too an evolution - that there's more allowance for that. So, one example is the small-scale restaurant or pub. Not just like anywhere else in the city - we need I think to balance the desire ... to introduce some variability, and some sort of dynamism into a neighbourhood. The convenience of commercial services close to home, the opportunity for walking to those sorts of things - balancing that versus some sort of reasonable expectation of ‘what can I expect next door to me’ and ‘how much is it going to influence my living conditions?’ So, balancing those two things, I think is important.

Again, Fleming points to aspects of The London Plan to guide this process somewhat, not only in the HCDs but citywide, with greater potential on higher order collector streets, or corners, and less on quieter internal streets. In an HCD Fleming sees potential:

...in particular when it's mixed in. It's great when it's mixed in with residential up above [in the same building]. I think that's a key, because what you have is some sort of built in mitigation of impact, because it's not just my neighbours that are now nagging me - I'm also trying to preserve the quality of the living experience of people above. So, this is not just in terms of noise for uses like commercial uses, but also for things like office conversions. ... At one point in Woodfield [there] was a sort of massive conversion of houses along entire streetscapes into offices, and what ended up happening was you entirely lost the residential character, and also the evening residential life of these buildings. And that created all kinds of problems, from dark streetscapes to potential for crime.

By maintaining a mix of residential in with these other uses, though, Fleming believes:

...that there absolutely should be an allowance for them, and ... the less intrusive the commercial impact, the more opportunity there is to be integrated deeper into these neighbourhoods.

Gonyou agrees that there is room for other uses, and sees this again as separate from the HCD policies:

Totally. Absolutely. Woodfield Variety [for example] from what I understand, it closed for business reasons [Figure 7d, a local variety store that recently went out of business]. So, I don't think that this is a policy regime that would prohibit that kind of use. I think it's a market factor, and that is totally outside of my
world. I know that it does have specific zoning on it that may restrict some of the uses, but that wouldn't prohibit going through a zoning by-law amendment to add uses or change uses. It has an existing form that I could see adapted to suit a variety of uses while still maintaining the heritage attributes and heritage character.

Figure 7d: Woodfield Variety (closed) in the East Woodfield HCD. (photo by author)

Gonyou also drew attention to other businesses that have worked well with the guidelines, including a photo studio, and another property that had seen many uses before converting back to a residential use (Figures 7e and 7f).

...that's exactly why the decision rests with Council, is they have the ability to make those changes, and have that bigger perspective in terms of what fits within the area.
Figure 7e: A photo studio in the West Woodfield HCD. (photo by author)

Figure 7f: A residential conversion in the East Woodfield HCD. (photo by author)
Regarding matters such as signage and parking, that may conflict with heritage features of the original building, Gonyou sees this as generally:

...a question of ‘how best to’ rather than ‘yes/no’ ... I think that’s the kind of context I try to frame these alterations in, is ‘what are the ultimate end objectives’ and ‘how can we best achieve those while respecting the desires of the property owner’ with the community benefit of heritage conservation within the policies and guidelines we have in the HCD plans.

In regard to changing language in the plans Gonyou continues:

I think that they get away from using ... ‘low density residential’ and focus more on the form - and I think that's where the conflict comes. ... From my perspective it can be high density if it fits within the form that exists, and is part of that prevailing character. I think it's when the density overpowers the form is when there are challenges.

Menard concurs with Fleming and Gonyou on the potential for mixed uses:

I wouldn't discourage it, although I know when we were looking at a couple of the districts - Old East Village particularly - we tried to exclude commercial areas. ... we were trying to say, ‘this is a residential district’.

In cases such as the Woodfield HCDs though:

Menard - I think Woodfield is a good example of where there can be some mixed uses to create that sense of community ... where there were commercial activities or office institutional activities that I think did not disrupt the neighbourhood - they added to the neighbourhood. ... I don't have any problem with mixed uses as a feature of the Heritage Conservation [District], I think it adds some value.

Menard again draws attention to the changing needs of the community in relation to the times in which the earlier guidelines were written:

I think part of those policies reflect the prevailing political ideology of the time - the people who are pushing for the district. East Woodfield - now I wasn't there at the time, but finding out or reading about it later - I think there was a real fear that there was such massive development and intensification tied to student housing that there was an overwhelming drive to solidify the neighbourhood as single-family residential one way or another. ... West Woodfield was much larger to begin with, and had much more varied stock in it - and the architects of the
plan had to take that into consideration. But I think also, at that time [16 years later], there was a greater recognition that there were other kinds of housing needed within communities - especially one adjacent to the downtown.

The final way that mix of use was considered in these interviews dovetailed with the earlier conversation about mix of people. The Planners were asked for their thoughts on the potential of an allowance for greater variation of residential unit types – that is to say, purpose built or converted residential buildings. John Fleming again sees room for greater flexibility here:

I think it’s great. I think conversions are very useful because they actually created, in the past, this economic context for conservation, where if they were just kept as single-family homes 20 years ago when ... demand was a lot softer in these areas, they would have deteriorated. And we needed these conversions to break them into manageable economic units - and it's interesting because some of them are now converting back [to single family homes].

Fleming again points to the emerging secondary suites opportunities:

This actually allows for new development retaining and conserving the heritage component, in giving an economic boost for those that would want to live in the larger heritage home [with] an opportunity for somebody to live either in a rear laneway home or some other form of secondary dwelling. It could even be in the basement or some other portion of the building. So, I think it's a great opportunity to inject, in a very ‘invisible’ density kind of way, the opportunity for rental units. Especially within Heritage Conservation Districts, because it's not going to have a negative impact on what were trying to conserve - it's another sort of economic boost to help with the economic viability of conservation.

Though rare, and perhaps because of their rarity, Fleming again sees the identification of empty or underused lots in the districts as critical:

Where there is a vacant parcel - where we are not talking about demolition of the heritage building - there is a great opportunity for injecting new midrise development. As you know I'm a big believer that it's got a be in the right place again, but I think that there is lots of opportunity. There might even [be opportunities] on the internal parts of some of these neighbourhoods - where you have the really long lots - as long as it's done in a very sensitive way.
Gonyou again sees this as something best left outside of the HCD plans:

So again, my same comments would apply. We don't *people zone*. We won't zone for students or for seniors or you know, those sorts of things - but it's a question of the compatibility of the form.

Although a desire for mixed housing types was expressed in resident interviews, Gonyou generally sees the opposite occurring:

I think that it's worth noting that the trends that I've observed - most of the major projects that I'm seeing - are converting multiunit into single-family. And that's a big, big trend.

Menard though sees the potential for coming pressure for intensification, and the provision of higher density residential in these near-core HCDs:

With a neighbourhood that's adjacent to a growing downtown - and our downtown revitalization is a key city goal - I think you need to have accommodation nearby, not dependent on mass transit. So, walkability becomes a factor. So yeah, I would support if I was in the position to do so - having a mix of housing types and rental types if it's possible. ... I'm not as comfortable with extreme height because that does hurt the character of the district, but if you are to introduce four or five story units ... I think [that] adds to the character of the neighbourhood - and extreme high-rises, 25/26 stories, especially in the heart of the neighbourhood - I think it would hurt.

Regarding mix of use and architectural design, the planners again added greater depth and specificity to my own conclusions, informing the substance of the related policy implications and research suggestions, presented in the following two sections.

7.5.3 Policy implications

The first, and most important consideration, which has been mentioned throughout this chapter, is the need to provide a mechanism for review and revision of the HCD plans over time. Resident needs change, and in most other matters of urban planning (e.g. official plans, zoning by-laws), policies are revisited over time to address these changing needs. This is problematic in regard to HCD designation for several reasons. In a
practical sense, with so many potential HCDs on the books (7 more are currently being considered in London), planning departments have little time to spend on revisiting past HCD plans, and the value of updating older plans must always be weighed against the value of establishing protections in other neighbourhoods.

Also, if a mechanism for revisions were built into the process on some regular time frame, the politics of the day may influence a lasting decision – even the complete abandonment of the district. As Menard puts it, “the issue with reopening it means that if there's a current issue, and it coincides with, say, a prescribed five-year or ten-year review, the current issue may cloud the long-term view.” It is possible that by reopening the plans, those with other interests in the HCD (e.g. commercial developers) may capitalise on the moment to remove the designation entirely, opening up development opportunities that are incompatible with the heritage attributes of the district.

Under the right circumstances however, Menard still sees value in revisiting HCD plans. Fleming agrees, saying “I think that we need to do it”, not only for the reasons above, but as part of a broader planning concern. Fleming notes that some HCD plans may not work well with changing City objectives for infill and intensification, such as those included as part of The London Plan.

Gonyou presented a creative option for reopening the HCD plans without putting them entirely on the chopping block:

...one idea I had is [to] designate the HCD under one by-law, and adopt the plan under another. So, then you still have the designation [in place while revising the plan].

Gonyou notes that this would require a great deal of study and thought, because the HCD plan became a requirement of designation in 2005, tying the two pieces more closely together. To do this, then, one would need to first revisit the higher-level policies. Once established, these new tools could be used to revise the local HCD plans.
While difficult, this is not impossible, and even without this change, plans have been revisited.

Gonyou notes that:

Meadowvale [HCD] in Mississauga went through an *HCD Plan 2.0* and Barriefield [HCD] went through a very complicated process in Kingston - and that was its third plan - so there's a precedent for it.

When reopened, changes in relation to mix of use and design could be implemented. A move toward the language of compatibility over conformity is critical to encouraging a mix of unique buildings over Disneyland recreations of the past. The tide in heritage planning is moving away from mimicry toward the introduction of unique buildings that speak to their own vintage, while respecting the heritage architecture around them. This is what Fleming, and many of the interviewed residents, refer to as *fit*. Fit is an elusive concept to enshrine in HCD policy, but as the Planners note, they are getting better at this. As Menard put it above, “some recognition that a singular design, that had unique characteristics and qualities, should be given some degree of attention, rather than simple conformity to existing guidelines” is one possible way to achieve this.

Also, when reopened, language that privileges one form of use (e.g. low density residential) should be reconsidered to accommodate changing needs in the HCD. Appropriate commercial uses need not be actively discouraged, but rather language should be included that lays out the conditions for a use to be deemed compatible. This will vary HCD to HCD. The idea of fit, as discussed above, is one example. Compatibility of a proposed use with a residential environment may be another. Still others have been proposed above by the Planners themselves, under various specific circumstances.

Opportunities for new uses are generally rare in an HCD, so getting this language right in the HCD plans is critical. As the Planners have noted repeatedly above, there are few opportunities for new construction in a designated HCD. Within the plans themselves, effort should be made to clearly identify those areas in a proposed district that could
tolerate new uses, and even new construction, without compromising the stated objectives of the HCD plan.

Ultimately though, no matter how well written the HCD plans are, it will always rest with the interpretation of the plans and guidelines by City Staff and City Council to ensure that this fit is achieved, or that a proposed use is compatible with the HCD. Once again, better engagement of the residents of the HCDs, in the ways suggested above, will be critical to these interpretations being welcomed locally, and ultimately enhancing rather than detractive from the HCD as place.

7.5.4 Suggestions for future research

One critical area of future research then would be an extensive review of existing Ontario HCD policies, at all levels, to inform recommendations for the best approach to reopening and revising older HCD plans. The importance of this work cannot be overstated. The East Woodfield HCD Plan is now approaching three decades since it was adopted in 1992. Its age is already showing in the many ways discussed throughout this dissertation. As the neighbourhood continues to change, these issues are likely to become more acutely problematic over time.

Before conducting this review, a survey would again be of value, based on this research, and sampling a broader cross-section of Woodfield residents. Questions should be designed to explore whether the concern for mix of use and design, revealed through the qualitative interviews with residents, is evident in the broader population of Woodfield. Revisited throughout this chapter has been the importance of better engagement with the residents of HCDs in addressing many of the issues presented here. In reconsidering the mechanisms of engagement, it is important to consider academically how the City could best reach residents of all types, beyond the home owners that have been given privileged status in the existing HCD plans. To conclude
7.6 Discussion: Neighbourhood engagement in the HCD process

One last word on engagement then, and the form it might take. I have suggested the formation of a civic alliance of representatives of all of the London HCDs, complete with a digital outreach strategy designed to quickly circulate information about Heritage Alteration Permit applications to any interested neighbour, engaging not only those who are part of the local community association. If all neighbours had an equal voice within neighbourhood-level community associations, and if all associations had an equal voice within city politics at large, they would hold greater potential to become motivators of such change for the disadvantaged voices, such as those subject to the out-push of gentrification. Local governments often work with community associations, believing that they “empower residents, develop local leadership [and] improve communication between [the] city and residents” (Harwood 2007, p. 262), but which residents? In this final section I will explore the limits and potential of community associations for giving voice to the needs and preferences of the socially and economically disadvantaged, and the conditions under which associations might assume this role. I will turn first to the limits to such advocacy.

7.6.1 The limits of community associations

The social and economic makeup of community associations is a hurdle preventing an equal voice for the disadvantaged. Numerous authors have noted the prevalence of higher income homeowners among those who participate in community associations (Fagatto & Fung 2006; Harwood 2007; Swindell 2000). This has led some to criticize these associations as “oligarchic cliques that do not well represent the interests of
residents in the neighbourhood” (Swindell 2000, p. 125). If the disadvantaged are not represented they are unlikely to be heard, but they face many barriers to participation, “tied to social class position” (King, Feltey & Susel 1998, p. 322).

Lower income residents may lack the time, resources and cultural skills (such as language) to get involved (Fagatto & Fung 2006). Harwood notes that the resulting demographic makeup of associations tends to focus efforts into a local, narrow and “repetitive cleaning agenda” aimed at middle class suburban ideals (Harwood 2007, p.264). Even when they are inclined to, members of the association find it difficult to act beyond this agenda. The result is an “inability to advance city-wide objectives such as affordable housing” and other broad programs that might more directly benefit the disadvantaged (Fagatto & Fung 2006, p.653).

To make matters worse, the aesthetic improvements of a cleaning agenda may “greatly contribute to property value escalation” (Hyra 2006, p. 74) which may encourage gentrification. Already underrepresented in the association, as rents increase the economically disadvantaged may be pushed out of their neighbourhood (Goetz & Sidney 1994; Lees 2008). As their numbers decline, their voices are silenced further. This situation is difficult to resolve. Associations would be less common without the time and resources of middle class members, yet this privileged position makes them less representative of (and perhaps less responsive to) the needs of the economically and socially disadvantaged. While these limits are concerning, there is certainly potential within the community association.

7.6.2 The potential of community associations

Community associations find local governments to be more responsive, which creates opportunities for change (Harwood 2007). This generates potential for more representative action on the part of community associations, but wrestling the agenda from middle class interests is difficult. In certain settings success has been achieved
despite the limitations outlined above. Fagatto and Fung (2006) explored the impact of Neighbourhood Revitalization Programs (NRP) in Minneapolis. These programs provided power and financial backing to associations for projects in their neighbourhoods, but in return required accountability and assurances of fair representation of the neighbourhood population. Despite numerous difficulties, the “NRP seems to have delivered benefits of a general, even redistributive, nature” (Fagatto & Fung 2006, p. 647). The highest award levels went to the lowest income neighbourhoods, and within neighbourhoods, allocation matched well with need. Demands for accountability and fair representation then, could be one method to assure that community associations could be more effective at educating and engaging residents in the HCD management process.

There is more that associations can do to expand the voices of disadvantaged neighbours. Swindell (2000) suggests that while many variables are external to the association and difficult to change, others are within reach. Measures such as frequent meetings allowing less involved neighbours to have a say, or active outreach in areas of high turnover, can have a powerful effect on participation. Whether by the democratic imperatives of a well-meaning association or the top-down encouragement (or insistence) of the City, such measures could facilitate better access for the disadvantaged, and more representative engagement in the process.

7.6.3 The conditions that drive associations to assume this role

Why would community associations wish to take on this role, and improve their representation? Change is one reliable motivator. Neighbours gather in an attempt to “either preserve the existing neighbourhood or transform it into something new” (Hyra 2006, p. 74). If these associations are coopted by middle class influences, how might they be encouraged to address the needs of the disadvantaged?
The provision of financial incentives and power coupled with clear representative responsibilities are factors that may drive associations to take on this role. In Minneapolis this approach achieved numerous redistributive aims, “contributed to the formation of associations where there were none, and strengthened existing associations throughout the city” (Fagatto & Fung 2006, p. 651). Increasing the participation rates of the disadvantaged in associations is more difficult to achieve. This is important work, for the voting presence of the disadvantaged could foster a renewed focus within the association at large. Once the ball is rolling, more members would follow, for when “programs address needs that are especially important to disadvantaged residents those residents often participate at high rates” (Fagatto & Fung 2006, p. 647). This higher level of participation would make community associations better partners in the management of change in their HCD.

7.6.4 Conclusions

Whether deeper resident engagement would best come through a network of existing community associations with HCDs, held to a higher standard of representation, or through the creation of a new civic alliance is beyond the scope of this dissertation. This decision would have to be made by the residents themselves, in cooperation with City Council and City Staff.

Better engagement in the process though, coupled with the policy suggestions made throughout this chapter holds the potential for HCDs to better reflect the needs and desires of existing residents. Notably, this work will not end with the revision only of the HCD plans and related policies. These are but one set of government texts that will need to be considered in future research. As has been noted above, other policies (e.g. secondary suites by-laws, minimum geared-to-income housing requirements, or provisions for higher density development) are better suited to address specific concerns raised here, but the door must first be opened in the HCD plans themselves.
7.7 Summary of conclusions, policy implications and future research

In this chapter I have presented several conclusions drawn from my findings, and affirmed and elaborated on these through depth interviews with three City of London Planners, all of whom have many years of direct experience with the creation and management of HCDs in London. The interviews have supported my conclusions, and informed the discussion of policy implications and research suggestions that followed. These were presented in relation to the three main findings of this dissertation, which I will summarise here.

7.7.1 Place branding and engagement in Woodfield

A lack of connection to the place brand created by the HCD plans has led to a low level of engagement among residents in the management of the HCDs. Evidence of this was provided through depth interviews with residents and supported by other local indicators. The significance of this is that low engagement with, and awareness of the plans may distance residents over time from the purposes and effects of the HCD plans. As these plans guide conservation and change in their HCD, this could lead to a mismatch between the sense of place fostered by the HCD plans, and that experienced and valued by the residents themselves. I have suggested several possible policy remedies for this, including that some form of formal resident oversight be built into future HCD management process, and addressed in the plans. This could take the form of a permanent resident seat on the London Advisory Committee on Heritage (LACH), to be held by a representative of a civic alliance of all London HCDs, and held to a high standard of representation.
7.7.2 Mix of people in Woodfield

Second, the privileging of the home owner in the HCD plans has disengaged other types of residents, and diminished their visibility and role in the management of change in their own neighbourhood. The significance of this is that coupled with associated impacts of gentrification, the mix of people in the neighbourhood will likely reduce over time, at least in an economic sense. This mix has been shown through the interviews to be valued by the interviewed residents. Erosion of this important aspect of place is a significant concern, then, for both the current residents and for those pushed out. Again, I have suggested several policy changes that could alter this outcome. The HCD plans could be written to clearly identify places within the districts that would be suitable for higher density, affordable and geared-to-income development (e.g. empty lots, low priority buildings, large lots and buildings with potential for conversion). This identification could then guide planners and politicians as they consider where and how to increase density and income diversity in the HCD. Better engagement with lower income home owners and renters who would benefit from this process would also be advantageous.

7.7.3 Mix of land use and architectural design in Woodfield

Finally, while the interviews revealed a mix of land use and architectural design to be a positive and desired aspect of residential sense of place, the HCD plans provide little opportunity for adjustments to support the changing needs and desires of residents. This is significant, for if the uses that residents value are not available to them, they may disconnect and eventually simply leave the neighbourhood. Language that privileges one form of use, or conformity of design should therefore be reconsidered to accommodate changing needs over time in the HCDs. To further address these changes, perhaps the most important suggestion is that the HCD plans should be revisited over time, something that has never happened in the nearly thirty-year history of HCDs in London. A review from the Ontario Heritage Act down to the individual HCD plans
would first be required, to thoughtfully allow for HCD plans to be reopened when appropriate, without putting the entire designation at risk.

The future research suggestions presented throughout this chapter have generally focussed on the need to test these findings, both within Woodfield and beyond. It has been suggested that the qualitative, grounded work presented here will be strengthened by supporting quantitative research. A survey of a broader cross-section of Woodfield residents has been suggested numerous times above, and attached to specific aspects of this research. A comprehensive quantitative analysis of the impacts of gentrification, such as housing prices and conversions of rental units, has also been proposed. This would add further quantitative support for these qualitative findings. At the top of these recommendations, though, is an extensive review of all levels of Ontario HCD policies to provide recommendations for the best approach to reopening and revising older HCD plans, something I have come to see as critical to the ongoing successful management of HCDs in London, and throughout Ontario.

In the final chapter, Chapter 8: The creative destruction of place, I will present one more round of suggestions for future research, with a focus on the more theoretical questions that arose in the development of the model.

7.8 Limitations of this research

A grounded theory approach has research limitations. Grounded theory, by nature, lacks generally accepted standard rules, and turns the traditional research approach somewhat on it’s head. As such developing the skills to conduct research in this way can be time consuming and cumbersome, resulting in a great deal of inefficiency in the early stages. For example, one aspect of a grounded approach that can be seen simultaneously as a benefit and a limitation is that the approach creates a great deal of data, resulting in difficulties for management and analysis. Rigorous adherence to open, data-driven coding is helpful (see Chapter 3: Methods and research design), but in the
end the researcher must choose from among many possible data streams to hone in on the final research focus. Researcher bias will inevitably be a factor in this work, although it can be mitigated through a consideration of and constant reflection on researcher positionality (see Chapter 3).

Another limitation of the research presented in this dissertation is found in a common critique of qualitative work. This research in and of itself is not generalizable beyond those residents who were interviewed. The sample size is small (n=39) and does not consistently match the larger neighbourhood, demographically (see Chapter 3: Methods and research design). My own position both as a neighbour and as a one-time chair of both the local community association and the London Advisory Committee on Heritage has introduced bias into my analysis, which I have attempted to address through rigor in my methods, also outlined in Chapter 3: Methods and research design. My roles in the community, along with my failed attempt at the federal Liberal nomination, may have influenced those who took part in the study. Notably, a majority of the interviewees did not indicate any awareness of me, and I carefully noted and considered any indication in the interviews of my past (see Appendix B: Interviewee references to insider researcher status). As is evident in Appendix B, such references were brief and infrequent in the interviews.

The thoughts and opinions of residents presented here are personal and unique and there is no claim here that they can be generalised to the greater community. For that, further qualitative work will be required, as has been suggested throughout this chapter. Common themes have nonetheless emerged, and are revealing and informative. It is important to recognise that this work was conceived of as a complement to earlier (and future) quantitative work, such as that conducted in the East Woodfield HCD by Shipley, Jonas and Kovacs (2011). This earlier survey-based research has provided the broad strokes indicating, for example, a high level of satisfaction within the districts. What surveys are less able to provide is a detailed picture of why this satisfaction is high, and what physical and community elements of a
place underlie this satisfaction. This is an area in which research that employs qualitative methods can excel. Much of this grounded work was by nature unpredictable, and many of the findings of this dissertation were not anticipated by the author, even with the benefit of years of personal experience in the creation and management of such districts.

The objectives of this research required a deeper dive into the foundations of place, as experienced resident by resident. To describe both the sense of place experienced by these residents, and how that sense of place is challenged by the relevant HCD plans, depth rather than breadth was required. Qualitative depth interviewing, coupled with discourse analysis of the relevant government texts, provided the best opportunity to uncover these complex relationships, build a theoretical model of place destruction, and inform future research. The interviews revealed findings that challenged preconceptions of the needs and desires of residents as expressed in the plans, and indeed held by this author. Although not broadly generalizable, this research has provided deeper insights into place making in an HCD. While grounded in Woodfield, the knowledge and theory generated in this dissertation is certainly applicable to, and should inform research in other HCDs.

It is notable that even a wider survey of a substantial number of Woodfield residents would not necessarily be generalizable beyond this one neighbourhood, and likely in the end could only expand our knowledge about this one unique place. Above, I have recommended future survey work in this same neighbourhood, based on the current findings, to better paint a general picture of the residential sense of place in Woodfield. From there though, this model will need to be repeated in other HCDs in Ontario and beyond. This ongoing research will challenge and inform future versions of the theoretical model.

Another limitation of this formative work therefore, is that the resulting theory cannot yet be used to fully describe the progression of place destruction in other HCDs without further supporting research. This first step is intended to develop rather than test
theory. A cyclical process of qualitative and quantitative testing will now need to be repeated, as was true of Mitchell’s model (e.g. 1998; 2000; 2001; 2009), to increase the value and generalisability of the theoretical model. I will now turn to the final chapter of this dissertation, and fold the conclusions presented above into a revised model of creative destruction in Chapter 8: The creative destruction of place.
Chapter 8

8 THE CREATIVE DESTRUCTION OF PLACE

“Better never means better for everyone... It always means worse, for some.”
The Handmaid’s Tale (Atwood 1986, p. 211)

8.1 Introduction

In this final chapter I will outline a theoretical model of the creative destruction of place. This chapter has purposely been placed after the conclusions and contributions of this research. What precedes this chapter should be taken as the complete product of this dissertation. What follows is only a beginning. The fledgling theory presented here is informed by this dissertation, but is not definitively supported by it. To do so will require further research, as will be suggested throughout this chapter.

This dissertation has presented qualitative evidence that has led to three main findings, discussed at length in the previous chapter:

1) Place Branding and Engagement in Woodfield: There is a lack of engagement with, and stated awareness of the Heritage Conservation District (HCD) brands among the interviewed residents of Woodfield, and this finding is supported by other indicators, including Heritage Alteration Permit applications and participation in the HCD designation process;

2) Mix of People in Woodfield: The mix of people in Woodfield is an important aspect of residential sense of place for the interviewed residents, notably along economic lines. This runs counter to the language and effects of the HCD plans; and,

3) Mix of Land Use and Architectural Design in Woodfield: A mix of use and design is also an important aspect of residential sense of place in Woodfield, including a mix of inclusive residential options as well as a greater diversity of local commercial and service uses. This also runs counter to the language and effects of the HCD plans.
As summarised in the final pages of the preceding chapter, I have concluded that the process of the ongoing management of HCDs, guided by the discourse of the related HCD plans, has fostered a lack of connection to the HCD brands among residents. I have also posited that these plans act to change the mix of people, land uses and architectural designs in the districts, in ways that do not reflect the stated needs and desires of the interviewed residents. I have shown therefore that the discourse of these plans run counter to important aspects of residential sense of place. All of this indicates that Woodfield, as a place, is changing. The similar goals of HCD plans across Ontario, informed by the Provincial Policy Statement, the Ontario Heritage Act, and the Ontario Heritage Toolkit, suggest that these shared processes may have shared outcomes from place to place, to some degree. A theoretical model of the impacts of the HCD plans on a given place is therefore of practical and theoretical value.

The previous conclusions have all come from the substantial research stages of this thesis, while what follows has emerged from it. This first iteration of the model will not yet reliably describe the creative destruction of place in an HCD, because this dissertation has led to, rather than thoroughly tested it. Theory has emerged through a grounded approach, informed by qualitative interviews with residents, a discourse analysis of government texts, and inspired by the pioneering work of Mitchell (e.g. 1998; 2000; 2001; 2009). It is therefore the result of an inductive process: my theorization of what I suspect is generalizable arises from the specifics of my findings, but will require further testing: I will return to this below.

8.2 The need for a model of the creative destruction of place

Places change. This change may happen slowly due to the natural evolution of a place, and changes in the makeup, needs and desires of residents. At other times, this change may be stirred from the outside, and more suddenly imposed through exercises in place branding, such as the creation of an HCD. Both creation and destruction are
acknowledged in the title of this theoretical model. This model does not intend to present a moral case as to whether the new place or the old is superior.

A theoretical model that provides an understanding of how places change, and why, is beneficial both practically and theoretically. Practically, a model of the creative destruction of place in an HCD will allow residents, planners, City Councillors and other decision makers to consider the impacts of new HCD plans at the start of the process, when they may be readily integrated into the emerging plans. In existing HCD settings, a model could be used to assess the current level of place destruction, or risk of destruction, and allow for interventions and changes to the management to alter this progression, if desired. This could lead to HCD plans that better engage residents, better reflect the aspects of place that matter to them, and better anticipate their need for changes to the plan in the years to come. Theoretically this model will facilitate a deeper geographical discussion and understanding of the process of placemaking, place branding, and the building blocks of residential sense of place itself. Notably the stated focus of this theory holds the potential to advance geographical knowledge of the forces acting on the creation, destruction and perpetuation of places that are impacted by city planning policy decisions. Although this model is explicitly written to explain these processes in relation to HCDs, it could eventually be modified to explore changes to place in other settings.

When a new or renewed place brand is imposed through HCD designation, some residents will embrace and foster the dominant place brand, while others will reject it. In some cases, changes to a place may even reject and exclude the residents themselves, through forces such as gentrification. A new place is created in tandem with the destruction of the old. This model is intended to assist in explaining this process, to encourage residents, planners, City Councillors and other decision makers to consider who is embraced, and who is excluded by these changes.

In many ways, this model follows a classical progression of gentrification as discussed in Chapter 2: Place, gentrification, community identities and creative destruction. This
progression though, in the context of an HCD is different in two notable ways. First, as numerous authors have reported (e.g. Ijla, Ryberg Roesntraub and Bowen 2011; Kovacs, Shipley, Snyder & Stupart 2008; Mason 2005; Schaeffer & Millerick 1991; Shipley 2000; Shipley, Jonas & Kovacs 2011), the conservation of heritage homes will in and of itself often result in increased housing prices in the designated district. As has been shown in this dissertation, the language of the HCD plans frequently encourages single family heritage homes and low density residential uses above all others, potentially initiating or amplifying residential displacement. Second, the resulting losses of rental units in an HCD cannot easily be accommodated, as the HCD plans often limit incongruous architecture such as larger scale apartments. As such, when homes that were previously divided into multiple units are returned to single family, the HCD offers little opportunity within the neighbourhood to accommodate for these rental unit losses.

As Gonyou reminded us in his interview, the forces of gentrification can be beneficial to the HCD in several ways:

[There are] buildings and resources in these HCDs that we value and [due to] some of the economic constraints of [maintaining these buildings] the current property owners, or even absent property owners don't maintain them. Going through a gentrification process takes a dilapidated beautiful Victorian building and turns it into a mansion, you know. So, I can see both sides of that, and how that can affect change.

Throughout this dissertation I have not intended to indicate a preference for locking the existing place in amber, or any desire to interfere with the changes that will come. Rather, the observations and conclusions presented here are meant to illuminate the possibility that, rather than changes to a place that are driven by the residents themselves, HCD plans have acted to shape these places in ways that are counter to the needs and desires of the existing interviewed residents. If the residents accept and buy-in to a new place brand, the change will likely be accepted. If the residents are excluded or disengaged from the creation and management of the place, they may reject it, or be pushed out.
As noted in my position statement (see Chapter 3: Methods and research design), I have spent almost two decades living and working in Woodfield, and for many years I was the chair of the local community association. I am currently the past chair of the London Advisory Committee on Heritage and have served on several committees involved in the creation and enforcement of Heritage Conservation District plans. This perspective has allowed me to observe these districts and others for many years, and consider theories about how they progress. As discussed in Chapter 2: Place, gentrification, community identities and creative destruction, through the grounded theory process that guided this dissertation I have come to see Mitchell’s model of creative destruction (Table 8a) as the natural precursor to my own theoretical contribution.

Based on qualitative interviewing and discourse analysis of government texts, combined with supporting data, the revised model presented here differs from Mitchell’s model, though, in significant ways:

a) The model is concerned with residential HCDs, rather than heritage shopping villages and tourist places;
b) The model is less driven by investment and commodification. Although the properties themselves may still be considered commodities\(^3\), the HCDs of interest are not predominantly consumption centres;
c) This model does not address the concern for dominant landscapes presented in later iterations of Mitchell’s model (e.g. productivist, post-productivist heritage-scapes, neo-productivist leisure-scapes);
d) The model stages are less distinct;
e) The focus of the model is on the destruction of place, rather than the destruction of the rural idyll (although these concepts are somewhat linked, as explored below).

\(^3\) As Molotch reminds us, “land, the basic stuff of place, is a market commodity” (1976, p.309) and that commodity’s value is directly affected by inclusion in an HCD (e.g. Mason 2005).
I will now present an overview of the theoretically underpinnings of the model, which were more thoroughly explained above in Chapter 2: Place, gentrification, community identities and creative destruction.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage</th>
<th>Investment</th>
<th>Tourist numbers</th>
<th>Resident attitudes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Early commodification</td>
<td>Investment in commodification initiated.</td>
<td>Authentic heritage-seeking visitors arrive in low numbers</td>
<td>Largely positive (rural idyll is still intact)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advanced commodification</td>
<td>Commodification investments increase. Community marketing campaigns may emerge.</td>
<td>Growing numbers</td>
<td>Some awareness of negative implications</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early destruction</td>
<td>Continued increase in investment levels, with some deviation occurring from heritage theme</td>
<td>Growing numbers</td>
<td>Increasing awareness of negative implications</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advanced destruction</td>
<td>Scale of investment increases (e.g. hotel construction) Greater deviation from heritage theme</td>
<td>Growing numbers</td>
<td>Extremely negative, creating potential out-migration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-destruction</td>
<td>a) Non-heritage investments likely dominate or b) No further investment</td>
<td>a) Few authentic heritage-seeking tourists. b) Falling numbers as community is no longer unique</td>
<td>a) Fewer negative attitudes as remaining residents accept tourism activities (but the idyllic rural landscape has been destroyed) b) Fewer negative attitudes as tourist numbers begin to fall (a partial return of the rural idyll)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 8a: The original five-stage model of creative destruction. (Mitchell and de Waal, 2009)

8.3 Discussion: A revised model and theory

Mitchell’s model of creative destruction was centrally concerned with the rural idyll. The model included the eventual destruction of the rural idyll, perceived by residents as “happy, healthy, problem free” with “a close social community and a contiguous natural environment” (Mitchell, Atkinson & Clark 2001, p. 287). Although it could be argued that this idyll is linked to sense of place, a shift in the focus of my model to the residential HCD does not fit well with this description. This necessitates a shift to the broader concept of residential sense of place, as defined by the residents themselves, and varying from place to place. As noted, residential sense of place is subjective, defined here as “formed by the subjective feelings and patterns of behavior” resulting from relations amongst residents “and from their attitude towards the physical aspects of the residential environment” (Billig 2005, p. 118).
Focus therefore shifts from the destruction of the physical landscape as catalyst, to the destruction of elements of residential sense of place, initiated in part by the HCD plans that privilege certain aspects of the physical environment and certain types of residents. One concern that was explored in the previous chapter is that as residents’ needs and desires change, and new residents come into the districts, the HCD plans remain unchanged. Aggravated by a low level of engagement among residents in the management of the HCD (see Chapter 7: Conclusions, policy implications, City Planner feedback and future research) this may result in a growing mismatch between the aspects of place that are valued by the residents, and the limitations imposed by the top-down enforcement of the HCD plans.

As in Mitchell’s original model, my revised model progresses through 5 stages. Here, each is driven by the impacts of HCD government texts, the actions of residents and others which may lead to gentrification, and the eventual reduction of mix of people, land uses and architectural design in the district. These impacts cause changes to the underlying place. Those residents who do not embrace these changes may leave, while others may be pushed out.
Figure 8a: The creative destruction of place in an HCD. (by the author, based on Mitchell and de Waal, 2009)
8.3.1 The model of creative destruction of place in an HCD

By substituting early and advanced conservation for early and advanced commodification, Mitchell’s model can be transformed from a description of the progression of a historic shopping village to that of a residential HCD. Tested further, I am confident that this framework (Figure 8a, above) would be useful in explaining the evolution of the Woodfield HCDs. With further revisions it has the potential to accommodate other HCDs in Ontario, and beyond. Where Mitchell (1998) held early investments in commodification as the driving force behind creative destruction, in Woodfield a comparable force was the early investment in historic homes by pioneering conservationists that led to the desire to designate the districts. Where Mitchell (1998) sees deviation from the local heritage theme as a sign of early destruction of the rural idyll, I see the disengagement of residents as an early sign of place destruction.

Finally, where Mitchell (1998) forecasts the end-game of post-destruction as indicated by the dominance of non-heritage investments, I see the same in substantial changes to the mix of people, and a mismatch between the stated objectives of the HCD plans and the needs and desires of disengaged residents. As in Mitchell’s model, these changes over time hold the potential to impact on the attitudes and contentment of residents, and ultimately their sense of place.

8.3.2 Stage one: Early conservation

In this first stage, the creative destruction process begins as early flaneurs and heritage architecture enthusiasts are drawn to a neighbourhood that holds a substantial stock of heritage architecture. The flaneur is again defined as one “for whom an interest in difference represents only a new form of cultural capital in the contemporary inner city - little more than a colourful backdrop against which to play out a new urban lifestyle” (May 1996, p. 197). These newcomers are drawn to the existing community aspects of place, including the mix of people, while the heritage architecture enthusiasts are drawn
to the availability of reasonably priced heritage homes. Still others will be drawn to both.

At this stage both the physical and community aspects of place would be generally maintained because of the small numbers of involved. The place remains intact, and any improvements begin to draw the attention of City Planners and City Councillors to the neglected area. Local existing resident reaction to these newcomers might be quite favorable at this stage, as potential advantages for both the new and existing residents may be perceived (e.g. pride of place, property value stability, City Council attention). At this point the place is likely not noticeably changed or diminished, physically nor socially.

The conditions of this stage are those least demonstrated in my current, generally cross-sectional research, and will require a longitudinal focus in future research. My research design was built on an initial interest in the neighbourhood post designation, including the impacts of the government texts, and the residential sense of place experienced post designation. That said, the presence of flaneurs and heritage architecture enthusiasts was indicated in my interview analysis. The pre-existing heritage value of the neighbourhood prior to designation is evidenced in the extensive documentation of the two HCD plans, as part of the HCD designation process (Corporation of the City of London 1992, 2008). Increased attention to the area is indicated by the documented interest of City Planners and City Councillors, and their past support for an initial HCD study of the area (Corporation of the City of London 1992, 2008). Suggestions for further supporting research will be presented at the end of this chapter.

8.3.3 Stage two: Advanced conservation

At the second stage, more flaneurs and heritage enthusiasts are likely to move into the neighbourhood as it begins to improve aesthetically, and organically rebrand as a *heritage neighbourhood*. Residents (generally wealthier heritage homeowners as part
of a community association) work with the City Planners and City Councillors to gain HCD status, to preserve the physical aspects of place that drew them in. A relatively small number of residents are involved in the designation process at all, and even fewer in the direct creation of the HCD plans. Although this will impact change in their neighbourhood, those more interested in the community aspects of place may not be concerned by or aware of these new regulations. They may see the two as intertwined and mutually beneficial. The disengagement of many residents in the process of HCD management begins at this stage.

Protections from incongruent development, and property price stabilization draw the interest of increasing numbers of home owners who may be less concerned with the specific heritage protections now in place. Rather, many of these newcomers will see the opportunity for a good home at a reasonable price, in a beautiful setting, as part of an improving neighbourhood - with a mix of people that matches their own self image (second wave flaneurs). Changes are noticed by some existing residents, and there is some destruction of the original place, both physically and socially.

The conditions included in this stage are informed by this dissertation in several ways. The rebranding associated with this stage of the model is evidenced by the active engagement of some residents in requesting designation of the HCD. This is further evidenced by the resulting purposeful privileging of specific aspects of place made manifest in the new HCD plans, as discussed throughout this thesis. That a relatively small number of residents were engaged in this process is supported by the indicators that were presented in Chapter 4: Place discourse: Sense of place and place branding. That these engaged residents were generally connected to the local community association (especially the handful that sit on the committee) was confirmed in the interview with Don Menard. Finally, the initial disengagement of residents immediately post designation is reflected in the evidence of a low level of interaction with the ongoing management process, even one year out, that was presented in Chapter 4.

Suggestions for further supporting research will be presented at the end of this chapter.
8.3.4 Stage three: Early place destruction

The management of the HCD now moves entirely to City Council, on the advice of City Heritage Planners and the local heritage advisory committee. A very small number of residents engage in any meaningful way with the enforcement or interpretation of the HCD plans from this point on, as indicated by a small number of people attending the advisory committee meetings, a low number of Heritage Alteration Permit applications, and no formal point of engagement and oversight provided for them in the process.

As the neighbourhood stabilises (e.g. housing prices, perceived safety) demand grows. Homes that were once converted for multiple rental units begin to convert back to single family, pushing out lower income residents. The mix of people, economically at least, is reduced. This continues in a somewhat fluid way throughout the rest of the model.

Lacking engagement with the purpose and effect of the HCD plans, the specifics of the heritage regulations may be lost on most residents, who merely see the historic buildings as part of a beautiful, mixed backdrop. Some may try to tear down smaller, less attractive homes. Although protected by the HCD plans, this process is ultimately political. If resident engagement with, and appreciation for, the HCD plans is low, at times these demolitions will be allowed, further reducing the number of available homes for economically disadvantaged residents. Other homes are maintained but improved, and values increase. Rents in remaining units may begin to rise in tandem.

The neighbourhood still perceived with uncertainty by many outsiders. The mix of people in the community therefore remains a draw for some newcomers. The mix of architecture is also valued, but perhaps not in the ways explicitly stated in the HCD plans. Growing numbers of existing residents begin to sense physical and social changes in the place, and place destruction accelerates. The East and West Woodfield HCDs would appear to be currently at this stage of the model.
The conditions included in this stage are again informed by this dissertation in several ways. The movement of management away from residents and into the hands of City Council, City Planners and the advisory committee is again evidenced by the ongoing lack of residential involvement presented in Chapter 4: Place discourse: Sense of place and place branding, coupled with a lack of any formal role for residents in the language of the HCD plans. Evidence of the conversion of units away from rental is presented in Chapter 5: Place discourse: The community aspects of place as well, and would likely lead to a reduction of mix of people (in economic terms) in the neighbourhood. Demolitions, though infrequent, are also noted in Chapter 6: Place discourse: The physical aspects of place. Maintenance and improvement was demonstrated for one small area of the East Woodfield HCD in Chapter 5, and this research could be expanded in the future. Evidence of an overall lack of awareness of, and engagement with, the HCD plans was also provided in Chapter 4: Place discourse: Sense of place and place branding. That the neighbourhood perception by outside residents would remain unchanged in these early days may be logically inferred prior to broad city-wide awareness of the HCD, but requires greater evidence. The destruction of place, as indicated, is discussed throughout this thesis in the numerous mismatches between the HCD plans, their impacts, and the stated aspects of place valued by the interviewed residents. Several more suggestions for supporting research will be presented at the end of this chapter.

8.3.5 Stage four: Advanced place destruction

The reputation of the area is now seen as stable and safe. Having been driven out by the loss of rental units, renters are not as visible and may become less valued as part of the mix of people. The homeless and those in distress may still be valued as indicative of the neighbourhood mix by the early and later wave flaneurs.
The original mix of people and uses found in the district is now deeply altered, and the original place is changing rapidly. Physically, conversions from multi-unit dwellings and apartments to single family homes, additions to existing homes, and overall aesthetic improvements are now widespread. Deteriorating or smaller homes may occasionally be demolished, allowing for larger homes of higher quality. The language of the guidelines encourages conformity, so new construction may mimic existing, rather than contributing to the architectural mix through innovative design. Socially, the mix of people along economic lines will be reduced as renters and lower income home owners can no longer afford to live in the area. The East Woodfield HCD may be moving into this stage of the model, as evidenced by the case presented in Chapter 5: Place discourse: The community aspects of place. This stage is envisioned as a continuance of stage three, with the only major difference being time, accelerating physical changes and greater numbers of people being pushed out. Evidence of the conversion of units away from rental is also presented in Chapter 5. That these changes in the mix of people would run counter to residential sense of place, which includes placing value on this mix, is also provided in Chapter 5. Suggestions for further supporting research will be presented at the end of this chapter.

8.3.6 Stage five: Post destruction

The mix of people and use that once defined the place has fundamentally changed through gentrification and a changing resident makeup, within the guidance and protections of HCD plans that favor home owners over renters (see Chapter 5: Place discourse: The community aspects of place). Gentrification in the HCD context has taken on a slightly different form; many residents may have moved in because they value the perceived mix of people and uses in the neighbourhood, but much of that mix may no longer exist. Many lower income residents will have been pushed out, and others may choose to leave as the place moves away from, and excludes their desired mix of people and uses.
It can be said at this stage that important aspects of the original place have been destroyed, and a new place created. This stage remains the most speculative of the model, as neither the East or West Woodfield HCD are believed by this author to have entered this stage. This remains therefore an abstraction, based on the preceding stages of the model and informed by the outcomes presented by Mitchell. It would seem logical though, that if lower income residents have largely been pushed out, fundamental aspects of the place would be destroyed. Whether this would indeed result in the voluntary exit of other residents who value that mix remains to be tested.

8.3.7 The utility of this revised model

While I would agree with Tonts and Greive that Mitchell’s model, and by extension this revised version, is “somewhat deterministic” (2002, p. 62), I also consider it a useful conceptual framework. Applied thoughtfully and carefully, following further testing and refinement, there is a great deal of potential value to be found here. As new communities consider HCD designation, a model of the creative destruction of place will allow residents, planners, City Councillors and other decision makers to better understand and forecast the impacts of designation in their own unique place. This will inform better decision making at the design stage of the HCD plans. There is value too in neighbourhoods with existing HCDs. By applying the qualitative methods presented throughout this dissertation, along with the quantitative supporting data as suggested in Chapter 7: Conclusions, policy implications, City Planner feedback and future research, a community could identify their current position among the stages above. An assessment of the current level or risk of place destruction could inform management interventions and possibly signal the need to reopen and revise the HCD plans.

Mitchell’s model provides a tool to recognise, and if desired, to avoid the cascade from late commodification to early or late destruction (see Chapter 2: Place, gentrification, community identities and creative destruction). Revised and tested, this new model
holds the potential to eventually provide the same tool in the context of an HCD: a staged progression of place destruction, with clear indicators, alongside methods to assess these indicators in other unique settings. What remains is for this testing and revision to begin. To this end I will now present several final suggestions for future research, in relation to the testing of this theoretical model.

8.4 Summary and suggestions for future research

In the preceding chapter, the substantive contributions of this dissertation were presented as they relate to the impacts of HCD government texts on residential sense of place, including place branding and engagement, the mix of people, and the mix of land use and architectural design in Woodfield. I have suggested changes to policy to address this mismatch, including changes to the language of the HCD plans, and a policy mechanism for revisiting these plans over time (see Chapter 7: Conclusions, policy implications, City Planner feedback and future research). In this final chapter I have presented a theoretical model of the creative destruction of place in an HCD. While this model is admittedly in its fledgling stage of development, it has been informed by the findings and conclusions of this dissertation.

Future research should first test the specific stages of the model in detail, to provide a greater depth of supporting evidence for the model stages as written, or to challenge and refine them. Stage one of the model (early conservation) should be further tested though a combination of qualitative and retrospective quantitative research. This research should include depth interviews with residents who were present in the district prior to designation to consider why they moved in, the ways in which the neighbourhood differed from that experienced post designation, and to help fill in the gaps in existing data with their own first-hand accounts. This would also be useful in identifying whether these residents could be classified as early flaneurs and heritage architecture enthusiasts, and reveal why they were drawn to the neighbourhood. This
qualitative work could be supported by quantitative data including housing prices and changes to rental unit numbers over time. The central research questions at this stage of testing the model would then be “what features of a place influence early flaneurs and heritage architecture enthusiasts to purchase in a neighbourhood, outside of simply having a substantial stock of heritage architecture?”; “what are the driving motivations of these purchasers, and what aspects of the place are valuable to them?”; and “what aspects of place remain of value to them, once they have settled?”

Stages two and three (advanced conservation, early place destruction) would benefit from a quantitative study into housing price increases, to determine if indeed the prices of housing remain low and attractive to these early pioneers in the time immediately surrounding designation. Qualitative depth interviews and surveys could be designed to determine if the improving image of the area, and increased quality of the residential stock was a factor in home purchase and investment decisions. Questions at these stages of the research could include “what features of a place influence second wave flaneurs and heritage architecture enthusiasts to purchase in a given neighbourhood?”; “what are the immediate impacts of HCD designation on residential sense of place, post designation?”; and “how and why do residents disengage with the management of the HCD, post designation (if they do)?”

Stage four (advanced place destruction) and stage five (post destruction) would also benefit from qualitative depth interview research that isolated those residents who come to the district years after designation, and after quantitative evidence of price increases and out-push of lower income residents is clearly indicated. Questions at these stages of the research could include “what features of a place influence late-comer purchases in a neighbourhood with an established HCD?”; “what are the long-term impacts of the HCD process on residential sense of place?”; and “what are the impacts of HCD designation on factors that may lead to gentrification in a neighbourhood, including price increases and the loss of lower cost rental units and homes?”
Throughout this process, as research continues new indicators will be added to the mix, broadening and deepening the model’s applicability and value. Ultimately, as was true of Mitchell’s original model, this revised model will then need to be tested in other settings, and revised again to explain the process of creative destruction of place in other HCDs. The model will be refined through progressive passes, and with each iteration will come closer to explaining the process of creation and destruction of place in an HCD.

8.5 Final thoughts

Place matters. One fundamental criticism that I placed on Mitchell’s original model in Chapter 2: Place, gentrification, community identities and creative destruction, was that it relies in large part on resident attitudes and opinions to track the perceived destruction of the rural idyll. By nature, this is a less reliable measure in the final stages of the model. As places change, we must consider too the voices of those no longer there, and the reasons for their departure.

Although one place may be destroyed, another place has been created, and for the heritage advocate the HCD may have served its primary function – to preserve and enhance the heritage attributes of the district. In many ways the place can be perceived as improved. As Margaret Atwood reminds us though, “better never means better for everyone... It always means worse, for some” (1986, p. 211). If the HCD plans foster a mismatch with the needs and desires of existing residents, then we must carefully reconsider their impacts on the place itself. The time has certainly come to rethink the language and management of these plans, and revisit and revise the older ones.

We must acknowledge those who are pushed out, for their absence both changes the place that they have left, and denies them a role in its ongoing story.


Appendices


Apart from a small number of districts where the main use is institutional, the majority of Ontario’s designated HCDs comprise residential or commercial “main streets” districts.

The following examples help to illustrate the range and diversity of Ontario’s HCDs:

- Galt downtown, a late 19th century commercial block in the City of Cambridge;
- The Square in Goderich, a 19th century urban square with a unique layout based on classical design principles;
- The former Village of Rockcliffe Park, now part of the City of Ottawa, where the whole municipality was designated, in large part, because of its character as a cultural heritage landscape;
- Fort York in Toronto which includes over 40 acres, original earthen fortifications, blockhouses, a cemetery, magazines and garrison buildings;

"The Square" Heritage Conservation District, located at the heart of the Town of Goderich downtown is renowned for the uniqueness and integrity of its design and layout. (Graphic: The Square Heritage Conservation District Plan (1976), prepared by Nicholas Hill)
• Kleinburg-Nashville in the City of Vaughan, a discontinuous district which links two scattered former mill villages within their natural setting;

Kleinburg-Nashville HCD comprises two discontinuous historic mill villages which were founded in the 1840’s, their connecting road link and valley lands. (Plan prepared by Philip Carter & Associates)

• The HCDs in Cabbagetown and North and South Rosedale in the City of Toronto, Ontario’s largest residential districts, with over two thousand properties in total;

The “Victorian” character of the Cabbagetown Metcalfe HCD is visible in the relatively unchanged streetscape, many surviving examples of row housing and single family residences displaying late nineteenth century architectural styles and an integrity of form. (Photo courtesy of Unterman McPhail Associates)

• Waverley Park in Thunder Bay, which includes a mix of residential, institutional and park uses.

The Waverley Park Heritage Conservation District in Thunder Bay includes the historic park which retains many original features including its walkways, cenotaph, fountain and bandshell which is the focal point for the surrounding area. The park provides a rich setting for a number of schools, churches and prominent residential and commercial buildings that are an integral part of the district and provides a strong edge to the district. (Photo courtesy of City of Thunder Bay)

The list of Ontario’s HCDs can be viewed at: www.culture.gov.on.ca

• St. Mary’s in the City of Kitchener, a post World War II veteran housing project comprising small scale homes of relatively simple design in a landscape setting;

The St. Mary’s Heritage Conservation District comprises unique architecture and suburban landscapes characteristic of post-Second World War veteran housing. (Photo courtesy of Kitchener-Waterloo Record Photo Collection, The Library, University of Waterloo)
Appendix B: Interviewee references to insider researcher status

I began each resident interview by making the interviewee aware that I was a resident of the neighbourhood, and had been active in the local association in the past. 11 interviewees (n=11) referenced my past role or my resident status in their interviews. Their comments are included below. The associated interviews ranged from 38 minutes to 1 hour and 33 minutes.

One interviewee (n=1) noted that I had been present at local meetings, presumably at City Hall. The specific meetings were not indicated, but heritage matters were specified as the topic. This was in a single sentence and the conversation immediately moved on.

Sarah: “I don’t want holus-bolus ‘you can knock this down’, and you and I have been in meetings where people say, ‘well this is sort of like the snow plough – the first one to go’” (discussing potential removals of heritage buildings for new higher density housing needs).

One interviewee (n=1) indicated an awareness that I had once served on the London Advisory Committee on Heritage (LACH). This was in a single sentence and the conversation immediately moved on.

Bill: “I don’t know if Londoners really know much about London, you know I’m not sure - maybe they do and maybe they don’t. You probably, being on LIAC or LEAC [LACH] you’re going to be more aware of people’s awareness” (discussing the awareness of the Woodfield name outside of the neighbourhood).

One interviewee (n=1) folded me into two of their examples, somewhat related to my residency in the neighbourhood.

Alex: “Wouldn’t it be nice if there was a coffee place which was open at seven in the morning, and I could stop by and ‘hey there’s Wes coming to pick up his Free Press on his way to wherever he is going’ and ‘hi Wes’ – just that. It doesn’t have to be to sit down and have a coffee” (discussing the desire for a neighbourhood meeting place).

“They’re all different people, with different interests in life and with a complete respect for each other’s boundaries – and yet - I know you, because you’re the same as this - and yet [a neighbour] will come to the fence and say, ‘I’ve just opened this
bottle of rosé, and I know you enjoy rosés - just taste it’” (discussing positive connections with near neighbours).

**Two interviewees (n=2) inquired about my personal memory of a local incidents.**

**Michelle:** “*Do you remember when we had to go to court?* ... That was a bad use of a porch” (discussing a problematic neighbour that was loud on their porch, in comparison to the positive community aspects of porches).

**Maria:** “I *don’t know if you remember* but there’s a guy who - and he still does - he hands out these flyers for – and he used to be called [company name] or something like that, just on a white eight by ten” (discussing an incident of crime in the neighbourhood)

**Two interviewees (n=2) briefly made assumptions about my position regarding what they were discussing. In both cases this was in opposition to their own position, voiced in a single sentence, and the conversation immediately moved on.**

**Alex:** “I think that the one that’s going where that old garage was years ago - *I think that you approve of that* - I don’t - not because of its height of anything, but because there’s no set back from the road. That’s ridiculous, because every square inch has to be economically viable” (discussing change in the neighbourhood, specifically a proposed mid-rise building).

**Steven:** “*I think me and you personally differ on this*, I think a lot of the enjoyment I get from heritage is seeing it in contrast to newer buildings” (discussing an appreciation of a mix of heritage and modern buildings).

**Three interviewees mentioned my status as a resident of the neighbourhood (n=3), indicating an awareness of the part of the neighbourhood that I live in, or that I live in the neighbourhood more generally.**

**Mark:** “I think if you live on a street where it’s – *even your end of the neighbourhood* – there are houses with families living on basically both sides, and everything’s occupied and stuff. It’s a bit more complex landscape [here]” (discussing differences in the neighbourhood).

“Yes, I walk to *your end of the neighbourhood* too, but would I call it a casual stroll? No, it’s a purposeful trip” (discussing neighbourhood boundaries).
“I wouldn’t have wanted to live in your end of Woodfield. It’s too far from the restaurants, it’s too far from the shops” (discussing the best thing about the neighbourhood).

“I think your end of Woodfield, I think things are a little bit more rejuvenated – you’d pay more money for the same place” (discussing differences in the neighbourhood).

Bill: “It’s reasonably stable, probably more so were you are, maybe a little bit more - but we’re a little bit closer to you know, you know to Queens where it’s a little bit dicey here, because we have halfway houses and things like that. But that generally has been okay” (discussing the potential for crime in the neighbourhood).

“I feel there’s more young people moving in. Well, I mean you probably see it more on your street than we do. I haven’t seen it so much here, although – no, not so much - now there’s more grandparents” (discussing the changing demographics of the neighbourhood).

Maria: “I think in your neck of the woods it’s mostly owner-occupied, right?” (discussing homes occupied by renters and owners in the neighbourhood).

“It’s nice to know your neighbours, like in your area you would know your neighbours” (discussing differences in social aspects of different parts of the neighbourhood).

“It’s so nice to see people fixing up… right? Because when I first bought here every second house was run down, right, but – you’ve seen, you’ve lived here – you’ve seen the changes” (discussing the improving upkeep of homes in the neighbourhood).

As detailed in this dissertation, I was a past chair of the local community association. Again, I stated this in my preamble to the interviews so that all interviewees were made aware that I lived in the neighbourhood and had been active in the local association in the past. Five of the interviewees (n=5) voiced an awareness of this role. This was generally in relation to events that I helped run or unspecified work in the neighbourhood. In each case this was only mentioned in a single comment during the interview, and conversation immediately moved on.

Bill: “That thing that you organized several years back - you know that street fair - I mean that's classic, it's fantastic, it's well attended. I know people who come, who have shown up from all around. People who are definitely not from our neighbourhood. You know they show up because it's cool” (discussing the unique aspects of the neighbourhood).

Roger: “I think it’s the Woodfield Community Association. You know to me it is the feature of it that it's been able to go along - and whether you and Wendy or Kate now - but the incredible energy that the people that put that organization together, and
kept it going, and creating some activities - that allows for a format for the community to meet” (discussing the unique aspects of the neighbourhood).

**Steven:** “I think it's hard work, I mean I think a lot of people have kind of like, *yourself included*, you know what I mean, have tried to make a ‘neighbourhood community’ kind of feeling where people come out and do things and stuff like that” (discussing the best thing about the neighbourhood).

**Rebecca:** “Well I think the community association is very strong, and *I think that you did a wonderful job when you were chair, really you were astounding*” (discussing the unique aspects of the neighbourhood).

**Tammy:** “I think now having, with a lot of what you've done in all the years you were chair, and you know this thing about the best neighbourhood in Canada [a recognition given to the neighbourhood], and just in the newspaper you see it mentioned much more as well when things came up, so I think there’s much more presence in London of where Woodfield is” (discussing how widely known the name Woodfield is).

*In one interview (n=1), an awareness of this role was indicated as a final closing thought in the last sentence of the interview, unrelated to a specific question or line of thought.*

**Pam:** “I think all those events that we do together are very important I think it's wonderful, and *of course you deserve a lot of credit for that*, but I think they're great” (final thought about the neighbourhood at the end of the interview).

Depth interview questions:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number/purpose</th>
<th>Question</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 (Baseline description)</td>
<td>Imagine that you are talking to someone who is not familiar with your neighbourhood. How would you describe your neighbourhood to them?</td>
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<tr>
<td>1a (Boundaries)</td>
<td>What do you consider the boundaries of your neighbourhood to be?</td>
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<tr>
<td>2 (Baseline description)</td>
<td>What one word would you use to describe your neighbourhood?</td>
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<tr>
<td>3 (Baseline positive)</td>
<td>What is the best thing about your neighbourhood?</td>
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<tr>
<td>4 (Baseline negative)</td>
<td>What is the worst thing about your neighbourhood?</td>
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<tr>
<td>5 (Baseline unique)</td>
<td>What, if anything, do you feel makes your neighbourhood unique?</td>
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<tr>
<td>6 (Physical aspects)</td>
<td>Please describe your feelings toward the physical characteristics of your neighbourhood.</td>
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<tr>
<td>7 (Community aspects)</td>
<td>Please describe your feelings about your connections to your neighbours and community.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 (Place name)</td>
<td>What do people call this neighbourhood?</td>
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<tr>
<td>9 (Awareness of HCD plans)</td>
<td>Are you aware of any specific by-laws or regulations in your neighbourhood?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9a (Interaction with above)</td>
<td>How do you feel about these specific by-laws or regulations in your neighbourhood?</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
10 (Prompt to consider historic nature of place)
What are your thoughts about the historic nature of this neighbourhood? (or: You have mentioned...)

11 (Time spent in neighbourhood)
How many years have you lived in this neighbourhood?

11a (Needs satisfied – intention to stay)
What are your thoughts about moving from this neighbourhood?

12 (Change anticipated – realistic)
Where do you see this neighbourhood going in the next few decades? What changes do you expect?

12a (Changes desired – magic wand)
If you could wave a magic wand, what changes would you like to see?

13 (Final thoughts – anything missed)
Is there anything else that you would like to add?

14 (Demographic questions, below)

Demographic questions:

1. Gender
What gender do you identify as?
☐ Female; ☐ Male; ☐ Prefer not to answer

2. Age
Would you be willing to indicate in which of the following age categories you belong?
☐ 18 to 34; ☐ 35 to 49; ☐ 50 to 54; ☐ 55 to 64; ☐ 65 or older; ☐ Prefer not to answer
3. Education

What is the highest level of formal education that you have completed?

☐ Grade 8 or less; ☐ Some high school; ☐ High School diploma or equivalent;
☐ Registered Apprenticeship or other trades certificate or diploma; ☐ College or other non-university certificate or diploma; ☐ University certificate or diploma below bachelor's level; ☐ Bachelor's degree; ☐ Post graduate degree above bachelor's level;
☐ Prefer not to answer

4. Language

What language do you speak most often at home? (all that apply)

☐ English; ☐ French; ☐ Other (specify); ☐ Prefer not to answer

5. Employment Status

Which of the following categories best describes your current employment status? Are you...

☐ Working full-time (35+ hours per week); ☐ Working part-time (35- hours per week);
☐ Self-employed; ☐ Unemployed, but looking for work; ☐ A student attending school full-time; ☐ Retired;
☐ Not in the workforce; ☐ Not looking for work; Other; ☐ Prefer not to answer

6. Household Income

Which of the following categories best describes the total income of all persons in your household combined, before taxes?

☐ Under $20,000; ☐ $20,001-$40,000; ☐ $40,001-$60,000; ☐ $60,001-$80,000;
☐ $80,001-$100,000; ☐ $100,001-$150,000; ☐ $150,001 and above; ☐ Prefer not to answer
7. Number of household occupants

*How many people live in your household?*

☐ #_____; ☐ Prefer not to answer

8. Home ownership

*Do you rent or own your home?*

☐ Rent; ☐ Own; ☐ Other (specify); ☐ Prefer not to answer

Appendix D: Recruitment Letter for resident interviews

Invitation to participate in research

You are being invited to participate in a study that we, Dr. Jeff Hopkins (PhD Advisor) and Wes Kinghorn (PhD Candidate) are conducting.

The purpose of this study is to better understand your thoughts about the communal and physical aspects of your neighbourhood, and how you interact with the neighbourhood and your neighbours.

Briefly, the study involves a one-on-one interview which will take approximately one hour and will be audio recorded (this recording will remain anonymous, and is not mandatory - you may choose not to be recorded).

The interview will be conducted at a location and time of your choice. Following this interview, you may be contacted with a request for a second interview of less than half an hour (although this is unlikely to be necessary).

If you would like to participate in this study, would like more information on this study or would like to receive a letter of information about this study please contact the researcher at the contact information given below.

If you would like to participate in this study, please contact Wes Kinghorn at

We will send out a reminder letter in one to two months.

Thank you,

Wes Kinghorn
PhD Candidate
Department of Geography
The University of Western Ontario
Phone: [redacted]
Email: [redacted]

Dr. Jeff Hopkins (Supervisor)
Associate Professor
Department of Geography
The University of Western Ontario
Phone: [redacted]
Email: [redacted]

Version Date: 20/12/2015
Appendix E: Letter of Information and Consent for resident interviews

December, 2015

Title: The place making processes underlying the creation, perpetuation and management of neighbourhoods

You are being invited to participate in a study that we, Dr. Jeff Hopkins (PhD Advisor) and Wes Kinghorn (PhD Candidate) are conducting. Please read the Letter of Information below for details about this study.

Principal Investigator:  
Dr. Jeff Hopkins (Supervisor)  
Associate Professor  
Department of Geography  
The University of Western Ontario  
Phone: [Redacted]  
Email: [Redacted]

Research Associate:  
Wes Kinghorn  
PhD Candidate  
Department of Geography  
The University of Western Ontario  
Phone: [Redacted]  
Email: [Redacted]

Letter of Information

You are being invited to participate in this research study on your description of, and the thoughts and opinions that you have toward your neighbourhood in London, Ontario. The purpose of this letter is to provide you with the information required for you to make an informed decision regarding participation in this research.

The purpose of this study is to better understand your thoughts about the communal and physical aspects of your neighbourhood, and how you interact with the neighbourhood and your neighbours.

If you agree to participate, you will be asked to carry out a one-on-one interview. It is anticipated that the interview will take approximately one hour and up to two hours and will be audio recorded (this recording is not mandatory, and you may choose not to be recorded). The interview will be conducted at a location and time of your choice. Following this interview, you may be contacted with a request for a second interview of less than one hour (although this is unlikely to be necessary).

There are no known or anticipated risks or discomforts associated with participating in this study. You may not directly benefit from participating in this study but information gathered may provide benefits to society as a whole. This may include a better understanding of how various aspects of neighbourhood design, interaction and governance affect the descriptions, thoughts and opinions of residents toward their neighbourhood.
Participation in this study is voluntary. You may refuse to participate, refuse to answer any questions or withdraw from the study at any time without any complications. You will not be compensated for your participation in this research. If you chose to participate, a written consent will be provided at the interview.

As part of this study we will collect your name, address and postal code. We will collect your name only to identify which member of your household participated, and to allow us to contact you at the end of this study to give you more detail about this research, should you wish. Your address and postal code will be used to aid us in identifying what part of the neighbourhood you live in. All data collected will remain confidential and accessible only to the investigators of this study. This data will be encrypted and stored on two memory sticks which will be kept in a single safe. At the end of this project, these memory sticks containing your personal information will be destroyed. If you choose to withdraw from this study, your data will be removed and destroyed from our database. While we will do our best to protect your information there is no guarantee that we will be able to do so. If the results of the study are published, your name will not be used. If you would like to receive a copy of any potential study results, please provide your name and contact number on a piece of paper separate from the Consent Form at the time of the interview.

You do not waive any legal rights by participating in this study.

If you require any further information regarding this research project or your participation in the study you may contact:

Wes Kinghorn
or
Dr. Jeff Hopkins

Additionally, if you have any questions about your rights as a research participant or the conduct of this study, you may contact The Office of Research Ethics.

This letter is yours to keep for future reference.
Consent Form

Project Title:
The place making processes underlying the creation, perpetuation and management of neighbourhoods

Study Investigator’s Name:
Dr. Jeff Hopkins (Supervisor)  
Wes Kinghorn  
Associate Professor – Department of Geography  
PhD Candidate – Department of Geography  
The University of Western Ontario  
The University of Western Ontario  
Phone:  
Phone:  
Email:  
Email: 

I have read the Letter of Information, have had the nature of the study explained to me and I agree to participate. All questions have been answered to my satisfaction.

I agree to be audio recorded in this research:

☐YES  ☐NO

I consent to the use of unidentified quotes obtained during the study in the dissemination of this research:

☐YES  ☐NO

Participant’s Name (please print): ____________________________________________

Participant’s Signature: ____________________________________________________

Date: _____________________________________________________________________

Person Obtaining Informed Consent (please print): ______________________________

Signature: __________________________________________________________________

Date: _____________________________________________________________________

Page 3 of 3  
Version Date: 20/12/2015  
Participant Initials: ________
Appendix F: Interview Guide for City Planner interviews (2017)

Depth interview questions for City of London Planners:

Q1) One of the main goals of an HCD plan is to preserve and enhance the heritage architecture of the district. From time to time change does happen, and this is envisioned in the plans. For example:

East Woodfield: Objectives include: To permit new development only where it respects or otherwise complements the prevailing character of existing heritage buildings and structures within the East Woodfield district. (East Woodfield HCD Plan 1992, Part II 2.2.5)

Detailed direction for new building construction is given in Part II Section 4.4, including: guidelines for location (e.g. maintaining existing setbacks); heights (e.g. maintaining predominant heights); roofs (e.g. in keeping with existing roofscapes); windows (e.g. that generally reflect traditional proportions); and walling (e.g. that reflects traditional materials and colours) (East Woodfield HCD Plan 1992, Part II 4.4).

West Woodfield: Indicates that the construction should “match setback, footprint, size and massing patterns of the neighbourhood, particularly to the immediately adjacent neighbors” (West Woodfield HCD Plan 2008, section 4.3).

Language of the HCD plans leans toward architectural conformity. In my interviews however, participants indicated an interest in mix of architectural design. When a new building is constructed are there ways in which to encourage mix over conformity, while still respecting the heritage architecture of the neighbourhood?
Q2) Language of the HCD plans and guidelines prioritize low density and single-family homes, for example:

Wording in the East Woodfield HCD Plan is strongest in this regard, and encourages a “stable, low density residential environment within the district” (p II-6). The plan indicates that there is “little potential for the introduction of new buildings” (p II-35)

The West Woodfield Heritage Conservation District Plan is softer in its single-family rhetoric, envisioning broader housing types to meet the changing needs of residents. The conversion of large homes from single family to multi-unit residences is considered as one method to “provide unit sizes that are more appropriate for current lifestyles for families and single residents” (p 8.25). This change in wording explicitly makes room in the West Woodfield HCD for conversions to housing types not encouraged in the East Woodfield HCD. A focus only on conversions here may still be at odds however with many forms of housing type not compatible with the existing heritage building stock.

In my interviews, participants indicated an interest in mix of use and mix of people. What are your thoughts on the potential for each of these, and whether there are means to permit them?

a) Let’s start with mix of use. Many participants indicated a desire for some businesses, especially local services like groceries, cafes and pubs.

b) Mix of people was also a common theme, and one that would be encouraged by greater variation of residential unit types. What are your thoughts on the potential for this, and means to permit such changes?

Q3) For years there was concern among many home purchasers that owning property in a designated HCD would depress property values. As research into these districts has proceeded, it is now generally believed that designation either stabilizes or increases prices in these districts. Property value stability along with HCD plan preferences for lower density uses has the potential to encourage forces of
gentrification and exclusion, pushing out residents who can no longer afford rent or ownership. Are there ways to mitigate this in your experience?

Q4) Related to this, the language of the HCD plans, especially those for East Woodfield, potentially privileges homeowners over other types of residents, when considering management and change in the district:

East Woodfield: The District Plan provides more specific guidance in the management of change and development within this special setting in a way that respects the heritage building stock, the quality of the streetscape, and the wishes and views of individual property owners (East Woodfield HCD Plan 1992, p. II-4).

Can you suggest changes in language, or other means to encourage consideration for other types of residents, who do not own property in the district, as part of the process of managing an HCD?

Q5) Needs change in neighbourhoods over the years, as does direction from higher levels of policy. The district plans in London though have not historically been revisited in light of these changes. Reopening existing HCD plans can be difficult for many reasons (expensive, risky). Do you have any thoughts about reopening HCD plans to accommodate changes in needs and direction over time?

Q6) Generally a small percentage of those living in HCDs have any regular contact with the plans or the process of management of the district that would keep them engaged. Even though in the East Woodfield HCD there are street signs indicating boundaries, only a handful of those interviewed explicitly referenced the districts
themselves when describing their neighbourhood. A relatively small number of Heritage Alteration Permit requests per year from each district would also indicate a low level of engagement.

a) Do you see any room for some form of formal neighbourhood resident oversight in the management of HCDs to engage these residents more meaningfully?

b) Are there other ways to reach out to these residents and keep them engaged?

Q7) In light of this conversation, do you have any final thoughts on changes to policy or process that might benefit those living in HCDs?
Appendix G: Letter of Information and Consent for City Planner interviews

September 2016

Title: The place making processes underlying the creation, perpetuation and management of Heritage Conservation Districts

You are being invited to participate in a study that we, Dr. Jeff Hopkins (PhD Advisor) and Wes Kinghorn (PhD Candidate) are conducting. Please read the Letter of Information below for details about this study.

Principal Investigator: Dr. Jeff Hopkins (Supervisor) Associate Professor Department of Geography The University of Western Ontario Phone: [Redacted] Email: [Redacted]

Research Associate: Wes Kinghorn PhD Candidate Department of Geography The University of Western Ontario Phone: [Redacted] Email: [Redacted]

Letter of Information

You are being invited to participate in this research study into the policies which impact Heritage Conservation Districts, and resident descriptions of their 'sense of place' in these districts. The purpose of this letter is to provide you with the information required for you to make an informed decision regarding participation in this research.

The purpose of this study is to better understand the place making processes underlying the creation, perpetuation and management of Heritage Conservation Districts.

If you agree to participate, you will be asked to carry out a one-on-one interview. It is anticipated that the interview will take less than one hour and will be audio recorded (this recording is not mandatory, and you may choose not to be recorded). The interview will be conducted at a location and time of your choice. Following this interview, you may be contacted with a request for a second interview of less than half an hour (although this is unlikely to be necessary).
There are no known or anticipated risks or discomforts associated with participating in this study. You may not directly benefit from participating in this study but information gathered may provide benefits to society as a whole.

Participation in this study is voluntary. You may refuse to participate, refuse to answer any questions or withdraw from the study at any time without any complications. You will not be compensated for your participation in this research. If you choose to participate, a written consent will be provided at the interview.

As part of this study we will collect your name, as well as your professional title and government branch/department or business name. We will collect your name in order to identify you as a professional engaged in the creation, management or enforcement of Heritage Conservation District policy. Your professional title and government branch/department or business name will be collected in order to identify your professional role in this process. **Your name, as well as your professional title and government branch/department or business name will be included with selected quotes taken from this interview.** If you exercise your right not to consent to direct quotes, you will be thanked for your time and will not be interviewed. If you make this decision after being interviewed, the interview and any information gathered to that point will be destroyed from our database. If you choose to withdraw from this study for any reason, your data will be removed and destroyed from our database. While we will do our best to protect your information there is no guarantee that we will be able to do so. If the results of the study are published, your name will be used. If you would like to receive a copy of any potential study results, please provide your name and contact number on a piece of paper separate from the Consent Form at the time of the interview.

Representatives of The University of Western Ontario’s Non-Medical Research Ethics Board may require access to your study-related records to monitor the conduct of the research.

You do not waive any legal rights by participating in this study.

If you require any further information regarding this research project or your participation in the study you may contact:

Wes Kinghorn

or

Dr. Jeff Hopkins

Additionally, if you have any questions about your rights as a research participant or the conduct of this study, you may contact The Office of Human Research Ethics.

*This letter is yours to keep for future reference.*
Consent Form

Project Title:
The place making processes underlying the creation, perpetuation and management of Heritage Conservation Districts

Study Investigator’s Name:
Dr. Jeff Hopkins (Supervisor)  Wes Kinghorn
Associate Professor – Department of Geography  PhD Candidate – Department of Geography
The University of Western Ontario  The University of Western Ontario
Phone: ______________________  Phone: ______________________
Email: ______________________  Email: ______________________

I have read the Letter of Information, have had the nature of the study explained to me and I agree to participate. All questions have been answered to my satisfaction.

I agree to be audio recorded in this research:

☐ YES  ☐ NO

I consent to the use of identified quotes (including your name, as well as your professional title and government branch/department or business name) obtained during the study in the dissemination of this research:

☐ YES  ☐ NO

Participant’s Name (please print): _______________________________

Participant’s Signature: _________________________________________

Date: _________________________________________________________

Person Obtaining Informed Consent (please print): __________________

Signature: _____________________________________________________

Date: _________________________________________________________

Page 3 of 3  Version Date: 27/09/2016  Participant Initials ___
Appendix H: Coding schema for resident interviews

The chart below is a summary of the coding of the resident interviews.

The bold text indicates early pass coding, with lower and indented coding representing subsequent passes and refinement of codes.

Boundaries
Boundaries - All Inside
  Boundaries - Inside - Architecture is similar or consistent
  Boundaries - Inside - Community Association
  Boundaries - Inside - Cozy, familiar, comfortable
  Boundaries - Inside - Hard to define edge
  Boundaries - Inside - Heritage architecture
  Boundaries - Inside - Mix of residential and businesses
  Boundaries - Inside - People that I know
  Boundaries - Inside - Quiet streets
  Boundaries - Inside - Recreational places
  Boundaries - Inside - Residential quality
  Boundaries - Inside - School
  Boundaries - Inside - Transit
  Boundaries - Inside - Trees
  Boundaries - Inside - Unique businesses
  Boundaries - Inside - Urban
  Boundaries - Inside - Where I walk or walkable
  Boundaries - Inside - Where my services are

Boundaries - All Outside
  Boundaries - Outside - Connections to near neighbourhoods
  Boundaries - Outside - Differences outside of boundaries
  Boundaries - Outside - Major streets

Boundaries - All Woodfield
  Boundaries - Woodfield - Agree with traditional Woodfield boundaries
  Boundaries - Woodfield - Dispute traditional Woodfield boundaries
  Boundaries - EDGE - East
  Boundaries - EDGE - North
  Boundaries - EDGE - South
  Boundaries - EDGE – West

Changes - Magic wand
Changes magic wand - All Architecture
  Changes magic wand - Architecture & Buildings - Developments on parking lots
Changes magic wand - Architecture & Buildings - Homes renovated and improved
Changes magic wand - Architecture & Buildings - More development around park
Changes magic wand - Architecture & Buildings - More development that compliments the area
Changes magic wand - Architecture & Buildings - More diversity
Changes magic wand - Architecture & Buildings - New buildings should 'fit' with heritage
Changes magic wand - Architecture & Buildings - Not high-rise
Changes magic wand - Architecture & Buildings - Want to keep heritage architecture
Changes magic wand - All General
  Changes magic wand - General - Improvements to downtown
  Changes magic wand - General - Increased property values
  Changes magic wand - General - Keep service costs down
  Changes magic wand - General - Things are moving in the right direction
Changes magic wand - All Infrastructure
  Changes magic wand - Infrastructure - Bike paths
  Changes magic wand - Infrastructure - Parking related
  Changes magic wand - Infrastructure - Parks or green spaces
  Changes magic wand - Infrastructure - Schools
  Changes magic wand - Infrastructure - Train
  Changes magic wand - Infrastructure - Transit
Changes magic wand - All Neighbourhood
  Changes magic wand - Neighbourhood - Aesthetics improved e.g. better landscape or hidden garbage
  Changes magic wand - Neighbourhood - Environmental (more trees, tree protection, etc.)
  Changes magic wand - Neighbourhood - Historic details (non-architectural)
  Changes magic wand - Neighbourhood - Keep things as is
  Changes magic wand - Neighbourhood - Less events and festivals
  Changes magic wand - Neighbourhood - More density
  Changes magic wand - Neighbourhood - More events and festivals
  Changes magic wand - Neighbourhood - More families
  Changes magic wand - Neighbourhood - More people moving in who appreciate the neighbourhood
  Changes magic wand - Neighbourhood - People work together for positive change
  Changes magic wand - Neighbourhood - Pubs or cafes or other local services
  Changes magic wand - Neighbourhood - Traffic (less)

Changes - Realistic
Changes realistic - All Architecture
  Changes realistic - Architecture & Buildings - Conversion to single family homes
Changes realistic - Architecture & Buildings - Development around park
Changes realistic - Architecture & Buildings - Gentrification
Changes realistic - Architecture & Buildings - Heritage considerations
Changes realistic - Architecture & Buildings - High towers
Changes realistic - Architecture & Buildings - Higher density development
Changes realistic - Architecture & Buildings - Intensification
Changes realistic - Architecture & Buildings - Midrise
Changes realistic - Architecture & Buildings - More development generally
Changes realistic - Architecture & Buildings - More residential
Changes realistic - Architecture & Buildings - New buildings that fill a need in the community
Changes realistic - Architecture & buildings - Newer cheaper construction
Changes realistic - Architecture & Buildings - Not a lot of room for large growth
Changes realistic - Architecture & Buildings - Renovation of heritage homes
Changes realistic - Architecture & Buildings - Will stay as is or improve on what's here
Changes realistic - All General
  Changes realistic - General - Change will be slow
  Changes realistic - General - Higher housing prices
  Changes realistic - General - Improving overall
Changes realistic - All Infrastructure
  Changes realistic - Infrastructure - General infrastructure improvements
Changes realistic - All Neighbourhood
  Changes realistic - Neighbourhood - Change of business types in area
  Changes realistic - Neighbourhood - Decay of housing stock
  Changes realistic - Neighbourhood - Improved gardens and green spaces and parks
  Changes realistic - Neighbourhood - Less friendly or less connected
  Changes realistic - Neighbourhood - Less student housing
  Changes realistic - Neighbourhood - Loss of homeowners or families
  Changes realistic - Neighbourhood - Loss of school
  Changes realistic - Neighbourhood - More businesses
  Changes realistic - Neighbourhood - More community events
  Changes realistic - Neighbourhood - More entertainment & leisure venues
  Changes realistic - Neighbourhood - More families
  Changes realistic - Neighbourhood - More people moving in
  Changes realistic - Neighbourhood - More problematic residents
  Changes realistic - Neighbourhood - More trees
  Changes realistic - Neighbourhood - Parking lots
  Changes realistic - Neighbourhood - People moving away
  Changes realistic - Neighbourhood - Younger people

Community
Community - All Casual Encounters
Community - Casual encounters - Indifferent
Community - Casual encounters - Negative
Community - Casual encounters - Positive
Community - Casual encounters - With homeless or those in distress or considered 'unsavory'

Community - All Comparisons
Community - Comparison - To near or similar neighbourhoods
Community - Comparison - To other cities
Community - Comparison - To suburbs or newer neighbourhoods

Community - All Mix
Community - MIX - Good for kids to experience differences
Community - MIX - Not much diversity
Community - MIX - Of people or diversity

Community - All Neighbourhood Collectively
Community - Neighbourhood collectively - Allow you to be yourself
Community - Neighbourhood collectively - Artistic
Community - Neighbourhood collectively - Changing
Community - Neighbourhood collectively - Cliquey or set in ways
Community - Neighbourhood collectively - Community - friendly people or close knit
Community - Neighbourhood collectively - Community Association or other neighbourhood groups
Community - Neighbourhood collectively - Draws in a certain type of person
Community - Neighbourhood collectively - Events at Victoria Park or other events
Community - Neighbourhood collectively - Family in or near neighbourhood
Community - Neighbourhood collectively - Home or roots (my home)
Community - Neighbourhood collectively - Improving or used to be problems
Community - Neighbourhood collectively - Kids and families
Community - Neighbourhood collectively - Lively and active neighbourhood
Community - Neighbourhood collectively - Not enough people getting involved
Community - Neighbourhood collectively - Not many kids or families
Community - Neighbourhood collectively - Out front (people are out front - porches or walking)
Community - Neighbourhood collectively - Owners vs renters
Community - Neighbourhood collectively - People coming from outside of the neighbourhood
Community - Neighbourhood collectively - Pets
Community - Neighbourhood collectively - Pride (shared sense of)
Community - Neighbourhood collectively - Safe here
Community - Neighbourhood collectively - Shared values or vision or similar to me
Community - Neighbourhood collectively - Similar age
Community - Neighbourhood collectively - Spend more time outside of neighbourhood
Community - Neighbourhood collectively - Stereotypes by outsiders (negative)
Community - Neighbourhood collectively - Young people or families moving in
Community - Neighbourhood collectively - Youthfulness to neighbourhood
Community - All Neighbours
   Community - Neighbours - Are friends
   Community - Neighbours - Aware of but only occasional contact
   Community - Neighbours - Differing views on heritage preservation
   Community - Neighbours - Disagreements or problems between neighbours
   Community - Neighbours - Doing or asking for things inconsistent with the rules
   Community - Neighbours - Don't connect or get along
   Community - Neighbours - Friendly and or helpful
   Community - Neighbours - Have lived here a long time
   Community - Neighbours - Issues positively resolved
   Community - Neighbours - Known well
   Community - Neighbours - Move away
   Community - Neighbours - Nosy, busybodies
   Community - Neighbours - Not friends with near neighbours
   Community - Neighbours - Not known well
   Community - Neighbours - Not sure if they live here or are passing through
   Community - Neighbours - Respect each other's boundaries
   Community - Neighbours - Some fixed in their thinking
   Community - Neighbours - Transient and high turnover
   Community - Neighbours - Would like to be closer
Community - All Problems
   Community - Problems - Absentee landlords
   Community - Problems - Annoying but not so afraid or bothered as to want to leave (safety or crime or nuisance)
   Community - Problems - Are not a burden
   Community - Problems - Bad neighbours (near or far)
   Community - Problems - Crime
   Community - Problems - Crime (personal experiences)
   Community - Problems - Noise from students or people
   Community - Problems - Related to diversity
   Community - Problems - Socioeconomic changes
   Community - Problems - Student renters

Name of neighbourhood
Name of neighbourhood - All Woodfield
   Name of Neighbourhood - West vs East Woodfield
   Name of neighbourhood - Woodfield
Name of Woodfield - Confusion
   Name of neighbourhood - Woodfield but doesn't really apply
Name of neighbourhood - Woodfield is misunderstood
Name of neighbourhood - Woodfield not well known outside of
neighbourhood
Name of neighbourhood - Downtown
Name of neighbourhood - No name for it
Name of neighbourhood - Old East Village
Name of neighbourhood - Old North
Name of neighbourhood - Other specific references (e.g. park or street etc.)

One word: * selected word coded*

Physical
Physical - All Architectural Topics
  Physical - Architecture and buildings - Changes without proper process or
  permits
  Physical - Architecture and buildings - Facilitates human contact
  Physical - Architecture and buildings - General thoughts
  Physical - Architecture and buildings - Homes & bldgs. kept up
  Physical - Architecture and buildings - Homes & bldgs. not kept up
  Physical - Architecture and buildings - Houses have character
  Physical - Architecture and buildings - New buildings and houses
  Physical - Architecture and buildings - Scale of housing
  Physical - Architecture and buildings - Single family homes
  Physical - Architecture and buildings - Fit
    Physical - Architecture and buildings - New architecture that doesn't fit
    Physical - Architecture and buildings - New architecture that fits
Physical - All Comparisons
  Physical - Comparison - To other cities
  Physical - Comparison - To other neighbourhoods generally
  Physical - Comparison - To other similar or near neighbourhoods
  Physical - Comparison - To suburbs
Physical - All General Neighbourhood Topics
  Physical - Neighbourhood - Beautiful neighbourhood
  Physical - Neighbourhood - Boulevards or wide streets
  Physical - Neighbourhood - Businesses or student rentals mean less eyes on
  street and more crime
  Physical - Neighbourhood - Can afford a home or rent
  Physical - Neighbourhood - Changing (negative)
  Physical - Neighbourhood - Character to neighbourhood
  Physical - Neighbourhood - Clean or kept up
  Physical - Neighbourhood - 'Cool' neighbourhood (positive)
  Physical - Neighbourhood - Cosmopolitan or 'urban'
  Physical - Neighbourhood - Cozy or comfortable or homey
  Physical - Neighbourhood - Gardens
Physical - Neighbourhood - Good parking
Physical - Neighbourhood - Grid pattern to streets
Physical - Neighbourhood - History or historic (not directly architectural)
Physical - Neighbourhood - Houses or people close together
Physical - Neighbourhood - Idyllic
Physical - Neighbourhood - Improving
Physical - Neighbourhood - Lack of density due to businesses and rentals
Physical - Neighbourhood - Large lots
Physical - Neighbourhood - Older neighbourhood
Physical - Neighbourhood - Parks and green areas
Physical - Neighbourhood - Quiet or peaceful
Physical - Neighbourhood - Residential
Physical - Neighbourhood - Some parts of neighbourhood viewed more positively than others
Physical - Neighbourhood - Street layout or streets themselves
Physical - Neighbourhood - Trees - old or large - or 'green' generally
Physical - Neighbourhood - Unique businesses
Physical - Neighbourhood - Victoria Park - festivals and events
Physical - Neighbourhood - Victoria Park - itself (also other parks)
Physical - Neighbourhood - Walkable or bike-able
Physical - Neighbourhood - Wildlife
Physical - All Heritage Topics
  Physical - Architecture and buildings - Heritage - Architectural details
  Physical - Architecture and buildings - Heritage - Architecture general mention
  Physical - Architecture and buildings - Heritage - Architecture restored or cared for
  Physical - Architecture and buildings - Heritage - Balance preservation with modern needs
  Physical - Architecture and buildings - Heritage - Better construction than newer
  Physical - Architecture and buildings - Heritage - Concerned about losses
  Physical - Architecture and buildings - Heritage - Some need to go
Physical - All Infrastructure Topics
  Physical - Infrastructure - Older or needs work
  Physical - Infrastructure - School is important
  Physical - Infrastructure - Train - like it
Physical - All Location Topics
  Physical - Location - Central or close to downtown
  Physical - Location - Close to parks
  Physical - Location - Close to services and shops
  Physical - Location - Close to transit
  Physical - Location - Close to work
Physical - All Mix Topics
  Physical - MIX - Architecture
  Physical - MIX - Businesses and homes (use)
Physical - MIX - Housing types (use)
Physical - MIX - Other features

Physical - All Problem Topics
Physical - Problems - Downtown problems e.g. seedy or underdeveloped
Physical - Problems - General noise
Physical - Problems - Getting more difficult to find local goods and services
Physical - Problems - Housing is expensive
Physical - Problems - Lack of bike lanes
Physical - Problems - Lack of parks or greenspaces
Physical - Problems - Lack of transit
Physical - Problems - Noise (ambient)
Physical - Problems - Noise (bars)
Physical - Problems - Noise (businesses)
Physical - Problems - Parking problems
Physical - Problems - Price increases or expensive (own or rent)
Physical - Problems - Rent increases due to architectural improvements
Physical - Problems - Supermarket or cafe or other local needs (lack of)
Physical - Problems - Traffic or speed of traffic
Physical - Problems - Train problems

Regulations
Regulations - All Heritage
  Regulations - Heritage – Regs expensive or exclusionary
  Regulations - Heritage - New buildings should 'fit' with heritage
  Regulations - Heritage - Other mentions
  Regulations - Heritage - Regs important or should be enforced
  Regulations - Heritage - Regs will have to be relaxed at times
Regulations - All Impact
  Regulations - Do not affect me or no negative effect
  Regulations - Personal experience with heritage designation regs
  Regulations - Personal experience with other regs
Regulations - All Zoning
  Regulations - Zoning - General
  Regulations - Zoning - Mixed business and residential
  Regulations - Zoning - Rooming and fraternity
Regulations - Not aware of any unique ones
Regulations - Other - Noise at events or noise generally
Regulations - Other - Parking
Regulations - Other - Various other regs mentioned

Staying in neighbourhood
Staying in neighbourhood - All Staying
Staying in neighbourhood - Reasons for staying
Staying in neighbourhood - Staying - Considered leaving but stayed
Staying in neighbourhood - Staying - Despite problems
Staying in neighbourhood - Staying - Don't want to leave
Staying in neighbourhood - Staying - Moved away but didn't like it and returned
Staying in neighbourhood - Staying - My business is here
Staying in neighbourhood - All Would Leave
  Staying in neighbourhood - Would leave - If received a windfall of money
  Staying in neighbourhood - Would leave - But to a similar neighbourhood
  Staying in neighbourhood - Would leave - For age or if house got to be too difficult
  Staying in neighbourhood - Would leave - For amenities not here
  Staying in neighbourhood - Would leave - For kids or family
  Staying in Neighbourhood - Would leave - For work
  Staying in neighbourhood - Would leave - If it got too expensive
  Staying in neighbourhood - Would leave - Like it here but would move
  Staying in neighbourhood - Would leave - Problems got to be too much

Years lived in neighbourhood
  Years lived in neighbourhood - A 0 to 5 years
  Years lived in neighbourhood - B 6 to 10 years
  Years lived in neighbourhood - C 11 to 20 years
  Years lived in neighbourhood - D 21+ years
  Years lived in neighbourhood - Have moved within neighbourhood
  Years lived in neighbourhood - Moved from far or different neighbourhood
  Years lived in neighbourhood - Moved here from near or similar neighbourhood
Appendix I: NMREB approvals

Western University Non-Medical Research Ethics Board
NMREB Delegated Initial Approval Notice

Principal Investigator: Dr. Jeffery Hopkins
Department & Institution: Social Science/Geography, Western University

NMREB File Number: 107371
Study Title: The place making processes underlying the creation, perpetuation and management of Heritage Conservation Districts
Sponsor:

NMREB Initial Approval Date: January 13, 2016
NMREB Expiry Date: January 13, 2017

Documents Approved and/or Received for Information:

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<td>Letter of Information &amp; Consent</td>
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<td>Instruments</td>
<td>Interview Guide</td>
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The Western University Non-Medical Research Ethics Board (NMREB) has reviewed and approved the above named study, as of the NMREB Initial Approval Date noted above.

NMREB approval for this study remains valid until the NMREB Expiry Date noted above, conditional to timely submission and acceptance of NMREB Continuing Ethics Review.

The Western University NMREB operates in compliance with the Tri-Council Policy Statement Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans (TCPS2), the Ontario Personal Health Information Protection Act (PHIPA, 2004), and the applicable laws and regulations of Ontario.

Members of the NMREB who are named as Investigators in research studies do not participate in discussions related to, nor vote on such studies when they are presented to the REB.

The NMREB is registered with the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services under the IRB registration number IRB 00000941.

Ethics Office on behalf of Erika Hanlon, NMREB Chair or delegated board member

Ethics Officer to Contact for Further Information: Erika Basile, Nicole Kaminski, Grace Kelly, Meta Mohamed, Vikki Tran

This is an official document. Please retain the original in your files.
Western University Non-Medical Research Ethics Board
NMREB Delegated Initial Approval Notice

Principal Investigator: Dr. Jeffery Hopkins
Department & Institution: Social Science/Geography, Western University

NMREB File Number: 108441
Study Title: The place making processes underlying the creation, perpetuation and management of Heritage Conservation Districts (Part 2)

NMREB Initial Approval Date: October 13, 2016
NMREB Expiry Date: October 13, 2017

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The Western University Non-Medical Research Ethics Board (NMREB) has reviewed and approved the above named study, as of the NMREB Initial Approval Date noted above. NMREB approval for this study remains valid until the NMREB Expiry Date noted above, conditional to timely submission and acceptance of NMREB Continuing Ethics Review.

The Western University NMREB operates in compliance with the Tri-Council Policy Statement Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans (TCPS2), the Ontario Personal Health Information Protection Act (PHIPA, 2004), and the applicable laws and regulations of Ontario.

Members of the NMREB who are named as Investigators in research studies do not participate in discussions related to, nor vote on such studies when they are presented to the REB.

The NMREB is registered with the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services under the IRB registration number IRB 00000941.

Ethics Officer, on behalf of Dr. Riley Hinson, NMREB Chair or delegated board member

Ethics Officer: Erika Hamiel, Nicole Kaniki, Grace Kelly, Katnys Harris, Yuki Tran, Karen Gopal

Western University, Research Support Services Bldg., 8th Fl., 5150 London, ON, Canada N6G 1H0
www.uwo.ca/research/ethics

307
Curriculum Vitae

EDUCATION

2018 PhD, Geography (University of Western Ontario, London, Ontario, Canada)

1996 Master of Arts, Geography (University of Western Ontario, London, Ontario, Canada)

1993 Bachelor of Arts, Honors Geography (University of Western Ontario, London, Ontario, Canada)

RELATED AWARDS AND HONOURS

2017 Wall of Fame (School of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies, University of Western Ontario, London, Ontario, Canada)

2017 USC Teaching Honour Roll – Award of Excellence (University Student Council, University of Western Ontario, London, Ontario, Canada)

2014 Ontario Graduate Scholarship, Doctoral (Ontario Ministry of Training Colleges and Universities)

2014 Allen K. Philbrick Scholarship in Cultural Geography (University of Western Ontario, London, Ontario, Canada)

2013 Pass with Distinction, Ph.D. Comprehensive Examination (University of Western Ontario, London, Ontario, Canada)

2013 Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal, awarded for a significant contribution to one’s fellow countrymen, their community, or to Canada (Governor General of Canada)

1996 Pan Hellenic Council Recognition: Teaching Assistant (University of Western Ontario, London, Ontario, Canada)

1993 Canadian Association of Geographers Thesis Award (University of Western Ontario, London, Ontario, Canada)

1993 Award of Merit for Academic Excellence (University of Western Ontario, London, Ontario, Canada)
RELATED WORK EXPERIENCE

2018  Lecturer, Social Geography, Winter 2018 (University of Western Ontario, London, Ontario, Canada)

2017  Lecturer, Social Geography, Winter 2017 (University of Western Ontario, London, Ontario, Canada)

2012-2015  Teaching Assistant, Department of Geography (University of Western Ontario, London, Ontario, Canada)

1993-1995  Teaching Assistant, Department of Geography (University of Western Ontario, London, Ontario, Canada)

RELATED VOLUNTARY LEADERSHIP ROLES

2015-2018  President of the Urban League of London (London, Ontario, Canada)

2013-2015  Chair of the London Advisory Committee on Heritage (City of London, Ontario, Canada)

2004–2014  Chair of the Woodfield Community Association (London, Ontario, Canada)

THESES


1993  Bachelor of Arts Thesis: The Utility of Photo-Realistic Computer Imaging for Visual Landscape Assessment (University of Western Ontario, London, Ontario, Canada)