

**“YOU HAVE TO FIND YOUR OWN PLACE”: NEIGHBOURHOOD PARTICIPATION
AND BELONGING IN CALGARY, ALBERTA**

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ABSTRACT

Residents of Calgary neighbourhoods experience socio-spatial inequalities that contribute to an uneven landscape of participation, where not everyone has an equal voice or place. Drawing on theories of belonging and spatial justice, this comparative case study of eight Calgary neighbourhoods examines ways in which community-based organizations both challenge and reproduce exclusionary dynamics that shape residents' experiences of belonging and not-belonging. The study used in-depth qualitative interviews and participatory maps to explore how participants understand and negotiate these complex geographies of belonging in their day-to-day lives. Thematic analysis of data underscored the importance of both formal and informal modes of participation, in particular everyday neighbouring practices such as sharing, helping and caring, through which residents navigate social difference and inequality. The study offers insights for research and policy within urban contexts to promote more inclusive, representative, and just neighbourhoods.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|-------|---|
| BRCA | Bridgeland-Riverside Community Association |
| CA | Community Association |
| CHCA | Capitol Hill Community Association |
| CKE | Chinook Park/Kelvin Grove/Eagle Ridge |
| CSW | Community Social Worker |
| FCC | Federation of Calgary Communities |
| HCA | Hawkwood Community Association |
| LRT | Light Rail Transit |
| MDAC | Martindale Development and Action Committee |
| MRCA | Mount Royal Community Association |
| NCRP | Neighbourhood Change Research Partnership |
| NIMBY | Not in My Back Yard |
| NPC | Neighbourhood Partnership Coordinator |
| RA | Residents Association |
| SAIT | Southern Alberta Institute of Technology |
| UK | The United Kingdom |
| US | The United States |

Chapter 1: Introduction and Study Rationale

1.0 Introduction

During the past three decades North American cities have experienced growing socio-spatial inequality, characterized by increasing geographic concentrations of both poverty and wealth (Wilson, 1987; Massey, 1996; Sampson et al., 2002; Forrest, 2008; Chen et al., 2012; Walks, 2013). Researchers have identified intensified divisions between rich and poor neighbourhoods, which have arisen for many reasons: Lack of interaction between socio-economic groups can leave some residents isolated from income gains (Distasio and Kaufman, 2015), while income disparities between neighbourhoods can also mean that residents have unequal access to services, facilities and amenities (Rose and Twigge-Molecey, 2013). While some scholars note the increasingly racialized patterns of poverty in cities (e.g., Cowen and Parlette, 2011; Pothier et al., 2019), Kearns et al. (2014, p.473) call out the “corrosive effects” of residential segregation, arguing that it weakens cooperation, sympathy and empathy amongst neighbours, ultimately undermining social cohesion (see also Winlow and Hall, 2013; Witcher, 2013; Dorling, 2015).

As this last point suggests, research on socio-spatial divisions is strongly linked to a perceived crisis of social cohesion in cities. As early as the 1970s Sarason (1974) claimed that growing alienation, anomie and isolation, as well as declining feelings of safety and stability, represented a “destructive force” in society (p.276). More recently, Putnam (1995; 2000) has argued that widespread civic disengagement is symptomatic of a “civic malaise” and a weakening of community bonds that threatens the basis of civil society. Policy discourse, particularly in the UK and European countries, highlights increasing transnational migration and the ways in which mobility further undermines shared values such as tolerance and equality (Crowley and Hickman, 2008; Yuval-Davis, 2011; Askins, 2015). Moreover, other scholars

blame residential segregation along racial and ethno-cultural lines for exacerbating social fragmentation (Crowley and Hickman, 2008). All of these perspectives point to a need for interventions that can counteract deepening social divisions and help restore the social glue that binds civil society together.

As a way of fostering a sense of cohesion and belonging in communities, governments around the world have made social inclusion an urgent policy priority (Miciukiewicz et al., 2012; Askins, 2015). Some have focused particular attention on local settings to combat urban decline and enhance cohesion through place-based policies. Examples include strategies of urban renewal meant to attract middle classes and business investments to areas in decline (Pomeroy, 2006). The strategy of developing mixed-tenure neighbourhoods has also been widely adopted as a way to increase interaction between distinct socio-economic groups—whether or not such strategies actually succeed (van Kempen and Wissink, 2014). Meanwhile, community development approaches have evolved as government and citizens look toward communities themselves to address social change and inequities by increasing local control over decisions and actions (Lewis et al., 2019; Pothier et al., 2019).

In Canada, measures to combat concentrated disadvantage and dissociation have increasingly taken the form of targeted neighbourhood interventions, such as the Neighbourhood Action Strategy in Hamilton or the United Way's Strong Neighbourhood Initiative in Calgary (Pothier, 2016). However, place-based solutions often assume that neighbourhoods are where inequalities not only manifest, but also develop. Therefore, they can fail to address broader and more systemic causes of inequality and exclusion, while also perpetuating oppressive racist or classist discourses—even when they are committed to inclusive processes (Cowen and Parelette, 2011; Pothier, 2016; Pothier et al., 2019). Recent work on neighbourhood change by Modai-Snir

and van Ham (2018) suggests that people-based policies may be more relevant than place-based policies, even in tackling spatial disparities. Meanwhile, other researchers critique resident-led neighbourhood strategies for burdening citizens with state responsibilities, and for reinforcing power imbalances between residents in ways that exclude already marginalized individuals (Elwood, 2002; Peck and Tickell, 2002; Pothier, 2016; Pothier et al., 2019).

More broadly, there is also critical debate around the extent to which the perceived crisis of social cohesion has occurred or is occurring—and what role the residential neighbourhood plays (e.g. Forrest and Kearns, 2001; Yuval-Davis, 2011; van Kempen and Wissink, 2014). As Kearns and Forrest (2000) argue, socio-spatial divisions within neighbourhoods are complex and must be understood as part of processes operating at multiple spatial scales; moreover, solutions to such divisions cannot be founded on solidaristic or homogeneous notions of community.

Overall, these debates raise many unanswered questions about the dynamics of income inequality in Canadian cities and how they play out in neighbourhood contexts. How do socio-spatial inequalities unfold in the everyday lives and routine spaces of Calgary communities? How do residents carve out a place for themselves within contested geographies of belonging? To what extent is the neighbourhood a meaningful frame for examining or addressing such dynamics? And what potential strategies can neighbourhood-based organizations use to foster belonging and meaningful participation among all residents?

1.1 Structure of Dissertation

This dissertation comprises a total of eight chapters organized into two major parts. In the first part, beginning with Chapter 2, I provide a critical analysis of key questions and approaches emerging from several streams of neighbourhood-oriented literature. To examine issues of inequality and exclusion, I draw on theories of belonging and spatial justice, which are

elaborated in the conceptual framework I describe toward the end of Chapter 2. Chapter 3 follows with a description of my research design, which uses qualitative interviews and participatory mapping to better understand how residents understand socio-spatial inequalities within their neighbourhoods. In Chapter 4 I describe the research setting, including the networked approach to neighbourhood services and programs within Calgary generally, and overviews of each case study community in particular.

In the second half of this dissertation I critically examine the empirical data generated in this study, through theoretical lenses of belonging and spatial justice. Chapter 5 traces residents' geographies of belonging and not-belonging within their neighbourhoods and re-examines the concept of neighbourhood in light of participants' experiences and understanding. This is followed by two more empirical chapters that explore the "politics of belonging" (Yuval-Davis, 2006; Youkhana, 2015) enacted in neighbourhood settings through the intersection of formal modes of community participation, and more informal spatial routines and neighbouring practices. I conclude in Chapter 8 with some discussion of how those politics both reproduce and potentially challenge socio-spatial divisions; and by highlighting the overall research findings. Ultimately the study offers empirically informed insights that can be used by community organizations, service providers and policymakers to promote more just and inclusive cities, while extending theoretical understanding of socio-spatial inequality, community participation, and geographies of belonging.

Chapter 2: Context and Conceptual Approach

2.0 Introduction

In this chapter I outline the scholarly context and conceptual basis for this study. I review research focusing on neighbourhood change and community participation, primarily from the perspective of human and social geography. I also draw insights from urban sociology, community development, community psychology, and environmental planning literature, to consider alternative perspectives on urban and neighbourhood issues. In the final section of this chapter, I discuss theories of belonging and spatial justice as the basis of the conceptual framework for my research.

2.1 Neighbourhood Change

There has been a vast amount of neighbourhood research in recent decades, several streams of which are examined here as they relate to issues of socio-spatial inequality. In this section I begin with a brief overview of different approaches to the concept of neighbourhood. I then turn to scholarship on gentrification, neighbourhood effects, social mixing, and divided cities, all of which describe patterns and underlying sources of socio-spatial inequalities. Next, I consider research on community participation and community organizations for insights into how formal and informal modes of participation relate to residents' experiences of neighbourhood change. I conclude with some critiques, and questions that arise from these diverse research streams that will be explored in this dissertation.

2.1.1 Conceptualizing Neighbourhood

Although the terms community and neighbourhood are often used interchangeably, they have distinctive meanings. Many social scientists differentiate between communities as place, such as neighbourhoods, towns, or cities; and communities as human relationships, such as among

professional or spiritual groups (Gusfield, 1975; McMillan & Chavis, 1986; Chavis & Wandersman, 1990; Omoto & Malsh, 2014). While communities may not have a spatial referent, neighbourhoods typically do; yet neighbourhoods too are a contested concept. Lohmann (2016) argues that at their core, neighbourhoods are socio-spatial entities—a “complex mix of geography and relationships” (p.94) that have physical design, social composition, experiential, and symbolic dimensions. He suggests that while community-based research often uses pre-established or administrative boundaries (such as a census tract or school catchment area), neighbourhoods can also be defined through the context-based, phenomenological experiences and cognitive maps of residents.

The recent “mobilities turn” in social science research highlights the increasing flows of people, goods, ideas and information around the world, and the dramatic ways in which mobility has reshaped cities (e.g., Urry, 2007; Christensen and Jensen, 2011; Sheller, 2011). The highly mobile nature of contemporary society has raised questions about the continued relevance of neighbourhoods in individuals’ lives (Wellman, 1979; Kingston et al., 1999; Amin, 2004; van Kempen and Wissink, 2014). Some scholars argue, for example, that social contacts today emerge in many places other than the neighbourhood, such as the workplace, shops, or the virtual world, while people’s day to day routines and networks regularly extend beyond their place of residence (Sampson, 2004; Bourne and Walks, 2011; Robinson, 2011; van Kempen and Wissink, 2014). Taking the opposite view, Forrest and Kearns (2001) argue that residential neighbourhoods remain important for individuals’ social identities and wellbeing, and as key sites for their everyday routines (see also Forrest, 2008; Kearns and Andrews, 2010). Within the vast amount of literature on social capital and neighbourhood effects (see discussion below), one’s place of residence is seen to be everything from a “reservoir of resources into which we

can ‘dip’ in pursuing our lives,” to a crucial influence on our lifestyle and life chances (Kearns and Parkinson, 2001, p.2109).

Overall, however, van Kempen and Wissink (2014) argue that the place where one lives is steadily declining in importance. Considering the increasing mobilities that characterize urban centres and the diverse settings in which social contacts are made, they suggest that researchers and policy makers need to reimagine how neighbourhoods are conceptualized, “not as closed spaces, but as the location where nodes of various networks come together” (van Kempen and Wissink, 2014, p.96). This resonates with the views of relational socio-spatial theorists (e.g., Amin, 2004; Massey, 2005), who emphasize the multiple spatial connections, affiliations, and overlapping networks that constitute space and place. Neighbourhoods are not fixed or static entities with defined characteristics and boundaries, but rather open, fluid, and dynamic social constructions that are actively produced (Benson and Jackson, 2012; Elwood et al., 2015; Shelton et al., 2015). As products of complex social and political relations, they are also highly politicized and contested (Hoekstra and Pinkster, 2019).

2.1.2 Socio-Spatial Inequality

Socio-spatial inequality refers to the geographical or spatial manifestations of social cleavages and societal exclusion mechanisms (Cassiers and Kesteloot, 2012). In the past three decades, the neoliberal economic environment has intensified social inequalities around the world, transforming cities and exacerbating economic distress, neighbourhood decline and social alienation. Several factors have served to reinforce uneven development, including the flexible accumulation regime of late capitalism, globalization, migration, more differentiated forms of governance, and the changing role of the state in the provision of social welfare (Harvey, 1989; Hall, 2004; van Kempen, 2007; Walks, 2009; Miciukiewicz et al., 2012). These divisive social

processes occur within spatial contexts and yield distinctive spatial patterns. However, as spatial theorists Lefebvre (1976) and Soja (1980) argue, space itself is also socially produced and has a generative influence over the social; therefore, the relationship between society and space is “dialectically inter-reactive, inter-dependent” (Soja, 1980, p.211). While spatial inequalities are produced through social processes, they also serve to reinforce social unevenness (Soja, 1980; Cassiers and Kesteloot, 2012)—though spatial segregation and social inequality are not necessarily or always correlated (van Kempen, 2007; Cassiers and Kesteloot, 2012).

Socio-spatial inequalities can be exacerbated by a variety of exclusionary practices that physically or symbolically define who has a right to use public spaces, and that regulate behaviour within those spaces (Willis, 2010). More than four decades ago, Suttles (1972) considered the idea of the “defended neighbourhood,” (p.21) as both the physical structure of an urban area, and the cognitive maps that regulate people’s spatial movement and underpin the “myth of unity and cohesion” (p.41) that separates insiders from outsiders. He argued that defended neighbourhoods had previously emerged organically as a “union of similar people,” but were increasingly being created through development processes and “ready-made” identities (p.43). Unger and Wandersman (1985) add that the boundaries and identities of such “symbolic communities” are influenced both by the residents themselves and by external agents with whom residents regularly interact.

This notion of symbolic communities can be linked to more recent analyses of the ways in which boundaries are drawn and guarded through the process of place-privatization. For Forrest (2008), the commodification of neighbourhood is symptomatic of a growing trend toward the self-segregation of the rich as a new form of socio-spatial patterning in cities. Marcuse (1997) uses the term “citadel” to denote the spatially concentrated, exclusionary areas where

wealthy or socially dominant residents congregate in order to protect their status. Townshend (2006) examines this trend in relation to private communities in Calgary. He argues that while they are often difficult to distinguish from “public” communities, common interest developments work to exclude non-residents through symbolic or implied separation. This is symptomatic of a broader social fractionation, characterized by the retreat of more affluent citizens from public life. As Fraser et al. (2016) illustrate, the proliferation of privately governed neighbourhoods also signals the growing importance of non-state actors, specifically homeowner associations (HOAs), in shaping the “terrain of citizenship” (p.839). While HOAs impose covenants, conditions and restrictions that govern residents’ everyday lives, they also shape what it means to belong to and participate in community by encouraging norms about appropriate community-oriented behaviour.

Another exclusionary process occurs through gentrification, which Walks and Maaranen (2006) argue plays a key role in neighbourhood transformation and social polarization. Gentrification can be described as a process of inner-city redevelopment, designed to “attract the middle classes back to the city” (Davidson, 2008, p.2385). While classical forms of gentrification were hotly contested because of the resulting displacement of low-income residents, gentrification has more recently been embraced as a positive state-led urban renewal solution (Walks and Maaranen, 2006; Davidson, 2008). It is typically associated with ideals of more diverse, tolerant, and sustainable cities, and can indeed create opportunities for what Willis (2010, p.143) calls “cross-class encounters.” However, it also creates new forms of segregation that make actual encounters between members of different social groups less likely to occur, and risks further marginalizing and possibly dislocating already disenfranchised residents (Walks and Maaranen, 2006; Davidson, 2008; Ishem, 2011; Lel vri r, 2013). As Lees (2008) sees it,

gentrification has been used as a policy tool to reduce spatial concentrations of poverty under the moralistic guise of social mixing. Rather than encouraging tolerance or diversity, she argues, gentrification causes overwhelmingly negative effects such as displacement, socio-spatial segregation, and reduced social mixing.

Davidson (2008) concedes that gentrification brings benefits to areas in decline but agrees that even indirect displacement has unjust consequences for low-income groups related to mounting affordability pressures, the loss of control over place identity and political processes, and the loss of local shops, services, and meeting places. These processes can be particularly harmful for residents of well-established immigrant enclaves who either cannot afford to move or choose not to, as Murdie and Texeira (2011) have shown. For Kern (2016, p.447), gentrification is a form of “slow violence”—both a “*place-taking*” and a “*place-making*” process. Through a case study of Toronto’s Junction District, Kern shows how new kinds of lived neighbourhood spaces are produced through consumption-oriented and place-making events. These often exclude long-time residents and marginalized community members from the new rhythms of everyday life in public social spaces, and thus also from a sense of place or belonging.

2.1.3 Neighbourhood Effects

In his seminal work on urban poverty, Wilson (1987) drew attention to the “truly disadvantaged,” which he saw as socially isolated individuals with low employment prospects, living in high concentrations of poverty. Stemming from Wilson’s work, the idea of neighbourhood effects has since become widely accepted as the hypothesis that “living in a neighbourhood of concentrated poverty has pernicious effects on a wide range of individual outcomes” (Sampson, 2008, pp.189-190). Neighbourhood effects scholars have used statistical

research and experiments to identify the structural dimensions of concentrated disadvantage, which they consider to be particularly damaging for already marginalized or vulnerable individuals (Sampson et al., 2002; Forrest, 2008). Researchers have observed outcomes in areas such as school dropout rates, deviant behaviour, social exclusion, health, and social and occupational mobility (van Ham and Manley, 2012). Currently, neighbourhood effects researchers are attempting to identify the social networks, social interactions and other causal mechanisms that link neighbourhood inequality to these individual outcomes (van Ham and Manley, 2012; Miltenburg, 2015; Jürgen, 2016).

Poor reputation or stigma associated with disadvantaged neighbourhoods is one of the mechanisms thought to reproduce socio-spatial inequality (Forrest, 2008). Some researchers have found that negative perceptions can be “sticky” and endure over long periods of time. According to Sampson (2009), perceptions of disorder—such as public drunkenness, garbage, or broken windows—are a critical dimension of social inequality. However, Sampson challenges the “broken windows theory,” which suggests that such perceptions of disorder are influenced primarily by visual cues, instead arguing they are also mediated by social and cultural structures, in particular the shared understandings and meanings attached to particular public spaces or areas—which urban theorists Lynch (1960) and Suttles (1972) might call cognitive maps. Wacquant (2007) suggests that “territorial fixation and stigmatization” underpins a form of advanced marginality that is consistent with Marcuse’s (1993) observations, discussed further below, about the particular social divisions brought on by neoliberalism. If internalized by residents, stigmatization can increase shame and inhibit collective support within a neighbourhood. However, Christensen and Jensen (2011) have found that this is not always the

case, and that processes of stigmatization can be overcome through a combination of local collective action and supportive state action.

While there is widespread agreement that neighbourhood effects do exist, scholars vigorously debate how intense or important these effects are (van Ham and Manley, 2012; Lelévrier, 2013; Slater, 2013). The neighbourhood effects approach is criticized on several counts, not least because experiments fail to explain why neighbourhoods matter for people—or, as Miltenburg (2015) notes, to whom they matter, or under what conditions. Sampson (2008) contends that most research in the field is fraught with methodological and analytical problems. Sampson et al. (2002) advocate redefining the boundaries of neighbourhoods in ways that are more consistent with residents' experiences and social interactions, and which better capture the influence of surrounding areas (see also Sampson, 2004; van Ham and Manley, 2012). As Robinson's (2011) qualitative study points out, residents of poor neighbourhoods do not live spatially bounded lives; rather, their everyday routines extend far beyond their residential neighbourhoods. This raises a need for more critical analysis of the relationships between poverty and place, and the notion of "neighbourhoods" as static or closed spatial categories.

Slater (2013) presents a more direct critique of the basic neighbourhood effects thesis that where you live affects your life chances. He sees the widespread acceptance of neighbourhood effects as a form of "ecological determinism," which misses the structural and institutional arrangements that create poverty and urban inequality, such as the role of the market and cost of housing in determining where people live. Bauder (2002) too rejects the concept of neighbourhood effects, seeing it as the product of an ideological "underclass discourse" that "blames marginal communities for their own misery" (p.88), rather than looking to the wider socio-political context. Indeed, as van Ham and Manley (2012) argue, while living in severe

concentrations of poverty is not unproblematic, oversimplifications about the causal nature of neighbourhood effects can actually reinforce stigmatization and exacerbate the negative effects of living in a disadvantaged neighbourhood. Other researchers also emphasize the possibility that the negative effects of living in a poor or segregated neighbourhood can be mitigated by social capital and collective efficacy (Morenoff et al., 2001; Alexander, 2012).

2.1.4 Social Mixing

One of the direct outcomes of neighbourhood effects research, and its underlying integrationist ideal, has been a slate of social policies in North America and Europe that attempt to deal with spatially concentrated urban poverty and segregation through housing experiments that are commonly referred to as “neighbourhood social mix” or “mixed-income communities” (Galster et al., 2010, p.2916). Social mix policies encourage diverse housing types by price and tenure, in order to promote a mix of residents by income, ethnicity or immigrant status. One of the underlying assumptions of these policies is that prolonged residential contact with other disadvantaged groups is associated with negative outcomes (Galster, 2007). Mixed tenure neighbourhoods are therefore seen as an alternative to ghettoization and deprivation (Sautkina et al., 2012). They are thought to reduce stigmatization and crime, to encourage upward mobility and social opportunities amongst the more disadvantaged members of a community, and to promote social cohesion (Musterd and Andersson, 2005; Lel vri r, 2013).

Social mix policies have been enthusiastically adopted in Europe, the UK, North America and elsewhere, based on these assumptions (Musterd and Andersson, 2005; Lees, 2008; Sautkina et al., 2012). However, empirical studies call into question whether diversifying neighbourhoods can actually achieve the policies’ intended impacts. Sautkina et al.’s (2012) systematic review of UK research concludes that mixed tenure may help to support kinship networks and positively

influence property values, but it has not been effective in producing the expected social, economic and human capital outcomes. In another study, Galster et al. (2010) found that income mixing in neighbourhoods affects individuals differently, depending on various factors such as gender and the presence of children. Their research suggests that one-size-fits-all programs for neighbourhood mixing may not achieve their intended consequences. As Musterd and Andersson (2005) point out, this is largely because of a flaw in the underlying assumption that housing mix relates directly to social mix, a relationship that their work on Swedish neighbourhoods does not bear out.

Moreover, other studies confirm that despite living in close proximity, different social groups may live “parallel lives” (Amin, 2002, p.968) in “distinctive social worlds” (Lelévrier, 2013, p.410) that fail to promote interdependence. In other words, propinquity does not necessarily promote mixing or reduce social distance. Lelévrier (2013) finds that different scales and arrangements of housing provide varying opportunities for residents to either practice avoidance or engage in a sort of forced daily interaction. Tenure diversity at the street level, for example, is conducive to daily interactions, while diversity at the block level may exacerbate tensions. Amin (2002) cites more problematic outcomes of engineered ethnic mixture in neighbourhoods, despite the good intentions of such initiatives. He comments that mixed housing programs in the UK have created a cycle of either “White flight” or entrenched resentment on the part of more established residents. Bolt et al. (2010) are critical of the assimilationist agenda of social mix policies as they relate to immigrant populations, pointing to evidence that they do not positively impact the social integration of ethnic minority groups.

Overall, recent social mix research has adopted a cautious tone, more critically examining the assumption that diversifying housing options will encourage social mixing and improve the

social outcomes of disadvantaged residents (Lees, 2008; Sautkina et al., 2012). Van Ham and Manley (2012) note that the majority of social mix policies presume that lower-income residents contribute nothing to the urban regeneration process and are the beneficiaries of mixing with higher income households. Indeed, as Arthurson et al. (2015) point out, while social mix housing projects are thought to offer “role modeling of good citizenship” (p.419) for disadvantaged residents, they rarely achieve the integrationist ideal they promote. Lees (2008) rejects the “trickle-down” assumption and argues that social mixing can in fact have detrimental effects on the lives of the original residents in urban renewal areas. Ultimately, as Musterd and Andersson (2005) argue, researchers and policy makers should avoid focusing on the neighbourhood as the source of problems, as it can distract from other more relevant factors, such as level of education or ethnicity. It can also, as Sautkina et al. (2012) assert, divert attention from broader structural inequalities that need to be addressed.

2.1.5 Divided Cities

Cities across Canada are experiencing rising income inequality and income polarization (Myles et al., 2000; Walks and Maaranen, 2006; Walks, 2009; Yalnizyan, 2011; Breau, 2015; Distasio and Kaufman, 2015; Townshend et al., 2018). As Wilkinson and Pickett (2010) argue, such income inequality *within* a society—not the overall wealth of a given country or state—is a significant correlate of mental illness, infant mortality, homicides, imprisonment rates, and other health and social outcomes. In other words, it is not poverty *per se*, but the inequality of its distribution that is problematic. Income polarization has resulted from the growing tendency for wealth to be directed towards the already very wealthy, leaving an ever-widening gap between the ‘haves’ and the ‘have-nots’ (Witcher, 2013; see also Soja, 2010). As Massey (1996) and others more recently have shown (e.g., Breau, 2015), income inequality has important spatial

dimensions. Economic spatial segregation, and the tendency of “like to live with like,” has fueled the growth of urban ghettos in Canadian cities (Chen et al., 2012). Geographic concentrations of poverty on the one hand, and the propensity for the richest 1% to live within “well-resourced enclaves” on the other (Essletzbichler, 2015; see also Marcuse, 1997), can exacerbate difference, exclusion, and distrust between social groups at either end of the income spectrum (Massey, 1996; Walks and Maaranen, 2006).

Research on income polarization and socio-spatial inequality has converged around the concept of the “divided city,” which some scholars have adopted to represent urban spatial fragmentation (e.g., van Kempen and Murie, 2009; Hulchanski, 2010; Allegra et al., 2012). Much of the divided cities research has evolved from earlier work on segregation, particularly human ecology and factorial ecology approaches, which continue to be important in understanding urban change (van Kempen, 2007). However, the idea of the divided city goes beyond economic or racial segregation, covering a range of “political, economic and social cleavages” and their spatial manifestations (Allegra et al., 2012, p.560). Divided cities literature places more emphasis on the changing role and priorities of the state, and the related structural constraints that influence residential patterns (van Kempen and Murie, 2009). At the same time, Marcuse and van Kempen (2002, p.50) recall that “cities are not ‘naturally’ divided: they are actively partitioned” by a range of social actors and processes, only one of which is the state. They highlight the complexity of divisions between internally heterogeneous social groups, noting that such divisions can sometimes be desirable, voluntary, and consistent with democracy—such as with nonexclusive ethno-cultural enclaves that promote the welfare of their members (Marcuse, 1997).

As van Kempen (2007) argues, all cities are divided to some extent, and the notion of an “undivided city is a myth and a utopia” (p.15). However, the causes of social and spatial divisions have changed in recent years, giving rise to new forms of division and marginalization. Marcuse (1997) attributes these divisions to four processes characteristic of the post-Fordist era: “technological change, internationalization, concentration of ownership, and privatization of the public sphere”; however, he also emphasizes the state’s role in reinforcing the effects of market forces. Elsewhere, Marcuse (1993) uses the term “invidious differentiation” to denote new forms of division within advanced industrial economies that reflect hierarchies of wealth and power, inclusion and exclusion, and privilege and deprivation. In the context of decentralized neoliberal governance, disempowered groups are often forced to bear the cost of their own deprivation (Massey, 1996). For example, while advanced homelessness has increased, so has the assumption that it “arises from particular characteristics of the homeless” rather than broader social processes (Marcuse, 1993, p.359). Privatized communities, meanwhile, exacerbate social divisions and make coalition building more difficult. These examples illustrate that, while divided cities themselves are not new, cities in the neoliberal era are divided in unprecedented ways with profound political and social consequences including, but not limited to, increased ghettoization and displacement of the working class and poor due to gentrification (Marcuse, 1993, 1997; Massey, 1996).

Hulchanski (2010) has engaged with the divided city concept in his study of neighbourhood change in Toronto. He found that between 1970 and 2005, Toronto became increasingly polarized into wealthy and disadvantaged neighbourhoods, while middle-income neighbourhoods were disappearing. In a comparable study of Calgary, Townshend et al. (2018) found an increase in both income inequality and income polarization, which is manifest in

distinctive spatial patterns that constitute Calgary's "Three Cities": City 1, concentrated in the core, has experienced increasing relative income, City 2 has remained fairly consistent, and City 3, concentrated in the suburban periphery, has experienced a significant income decline. As a result of these changes, Calgary has become the second most unequal city in the country in terms of neighbourhood income inequality (Chen et al., 2012; Townshend et al., 2018). For Townshend et al. (2018), the social and housing attributes associated with the large region of declining incomes is particularly concerning, and the disparities underpinning Calgary's increasing socio-spatial polarization represent a significant policy challenge.

2.2 Community Participation

Research on neighbourhood change is closely related to scholarship on community participation, which recognizes the capacity of different social and territorial groups to organize themselves and negotiate their futures (Cassiers and Kesteloot, 2012; Townshend, Benoit and Davies, 2020). Community participation includes social involvement and civic engagement (Talò et al., 2014), and has been commonly defined following Heller et al. (1984) as "a process in which individuals take part in decision making in the institutions, programs and environments that affect them" (p.339). This section briefly reviews literature on participation as it relates to ideals of social cohesion, as well as research that deals specifically with neighbourhoods and community associations.

2.2.1 Social Cohesion and Participation

Social cohesion has become a major policy objective in the UK, Europe and North America as a way of counteracting socio-spatial divisions and promoting the inclusion of diverse groups and individuals into urban society (Miciukiewicz et al., 2012; Askins, 2015). The Department for Communities and Local Government (2007) in the UK, for example, profiles a range of women's

groups, neighbourhood initiatives, youth programs and other approaches meant to promote cohesion in London-area neighbourhoods. However, social cohesion is an elusive concept, with diverse and evolving meanings. As Cameron (2006) notes, cohesion is often equated with social inclusion but is typically weakly defined as the absence of social problems that threaten the social order. Some scholars question the link between social inclusion and social cohesion, noting that while social cohesion can drive people closer together, it can also serve to polarize or exacerbate social fragmentation (McMillan and Chavis, 1986; Kearns and Forrest, 2000; Forrest and Kearns, 2001). For example, cohesion is sometimes achieved by purposely excluding individuals who are deemed different, thereby shoring up group boundaries (Witcher, 2013). Discourses around social cohesion are therefore contested and complex, and can function as an exercise in “normative boundary setting” (Cameron, 2006, p.401). As Cassiers and Kesteloot (2012) argue, social cohesion is not necessarily about consensus, as it is often constructed in normative terms, but is a “continuous process of negotiating conflicting visions” (p.1915). It is inherently pluralistic rather than homogeneous, and conflictive rather than consensual, incorporating diverse value systems, interests and behaviours (Crowley and Hickman, 2008; Miciukiewicz et al., 2012).

Despite these divergent views, academics and policy makers commonly draw a strong link between social cohesion and civic participation. On the one hand, they argue that segregation and socio-spatial divisions discourage civic participation, and therefore undermine social cohesion (see discussion in Musterd, 2005; also Bolt et al., 2010). Conversely, it is commonly assumed that if people are actively engaged as neighbours, the local community is likely to have a vibrant civic culture (Forrest, 2008), which in turn is essential for “being a full member of the local community” (Miciukiewicz et al., 2012, p.1859). Putnam (1995; 2000) in

particular links civic engagement and democratic participation, arguing that engaged communities produce more cohesive societies. For him, what binds communities together is social capital—the reciprocity, collective norms, and ultimately the trust that facilitates cooperation between community members.

Civic engagement as expressed through volunteering in community services or organizations has been shown to have numerous benefits (Talò et al., 2014). It can lead to improvements in neighbourhoods, stronger relationships amongst neighbours, and feelings of personal and collective efficacy (Florin and Wandersman, 1990). It can also be empowering for both individuals and communities (Mannarini et al., 2010); it can promote local development, social justice, and population health; and it can enhance quality of life, social wellbeing and social empowerment and thus change the circumstances of people's lives (Mannarini et al., 2010; Talò et al., 2014). As numerous scholars agree, civic engagement or participation is further encouraged by sense of community, and is therefore beneficial for social cohesion (e.g., Chavis and Wandersman, 1990; Hughey et al., 1999; Hughey et al., 2008; Peterson et al., 2008; Barati and Samah, 2012; Omoto and Malsh, 2014).

From a place attachment lens, Manzo and Perkins (2006) have examined the processes by which place meanings and attachments influence citizen participation in community development efforts. Along with other researchers (Devine-Wright, 2009; Comstock et al., 2010; Mihaylov and Perkins, 2014), they suggest that people's positive bonds to neighbourhoods can lead to higher levels of community engagement and place-protective actions, especially when a place is threatened by proposed developments. Mihaylov and Perkins' (2014) work in particular highlights the value of connecting place attachment with social capital and collective action at the community level. As they and others demonstrate, the emotional component of place bonding

can be a powerful motivator for participation in collective environmental protection, change efforts, or even recreational programs (Unger and Wandersman, 1985; Mihaylov and Perkins, 2014; Langager and Spencer-Cavaliere, 2015).

2.2.2 Empowerment

Verba and Nie's (1972) extensive empirical study on political participation examined the question of why some American citizens were active and some not. While Verba and Nie identified various institutions, attitudes, and social circumstances that influence a person's decision to participate, they found socioeconomic status, or class, to be a particularly strong predictor of participation. Participation remains a powerful social force, they argued, but its ability to increase or decrease inequality depends upon who participates; at the time of their study in the US, higher-status individuals were more active, but more importantly they held leadership positions more often when they did participate—meaning their input was heard more loudly by governmental leaders. Other researchers in the 1980s attempted to identify the demographic and contextual factors that explain community participation. As Hutcheson and Prather (1988) note, these studies consistently identified a negative association between participation rates and community affluence, and suggested that a sense of community identity increases participation. Julian et al. (1997) also found that sense of community can promote participation, but that the relationship between participation and sense of community is mediated by individuals' ability to exercise power and influence events.

The issues of power and empowerment, therefore, are critical to understanding participation. Arnstein's (1969) model of citizen participation described eight levels of participation ranging from non-participation at the bottom, to degrees of tokenism in the middle, and degrees of citizen power at the top where former "have-not citizens" have decision-making

and managerial power. Arnstein's model was later criticized for its dualistic 'state versus community' conceptualization of participation (see Lombard, 2013); however, it succeeded in highlighting the significant variation that exists within 'participation,' depending on the level of power citizens hold. Without the power to actually influence policy and decisions, citizen participation becomes tokenistic, and merely consulting citizens or collecting input is not sufficient to afford "actual empowerment" (Julian et al., 1997, p.354). Lewis et al. (2019) extend such findings to place-based initiatives, arguing that in order to enhance residents' collective control, attention must be paid to both the breadth and depth of participation—that is, the degree to which multiple individuals and groups are included; and the extent to which residents experience participation as empowering.

The question of empowerment is particularly salient for disadvantaged communities, given what Hutcheson and Prather (1988) noted as the "close to axiomatic" understanding that "lower-socioeconomic-status individuals participate less in public decision making" (p.348; see also Almond and Verba, 1965). For Hutcheson and Prather (1988), increasing participation is about achieving more equitable distribution of power and access to local government processes. Their research suggests that the formalization of citizen participation in planning processes—involving real influence in planning decisions—could help offset deficits in personal resources that disadvantaged communities might have, and thereby help redress inequalities and redistribute power. Ohmer (2010) extends this idea, suggesting that actively engaging residents and fostering neighbourhood social processes can help reduce the negative effects of living in a poor community. Using an ecological perspective, she looks at the neighbourhood as a "transactional setting" that influences residents' behaviour while also being influenced by active

resident involvement. For Ohmer, citizen participation is not merely taking part in decision-making, but:

the active, voluntary involvement of individuals and groups to change problematic conditions in poor communities and influence the policies and programs that affect the quality of their lives and the lives of other residents (p.2).

In this framing, participation is an important mechanism for developing collective efficacy, fostering trusting relationships, empowering citizens, and ultimately achieving positive community outcomes.

Despite the growth of citizen participation in recent years, however, the underlying empowerment discourse has been subject to important critiques. Peck and Tickell (2002) outline the process of “neoliberalization” that has transformed state modes of governance in North America since the 1980s, with broad social and economic consequences. At the local scale, the politics of neoliberalism involve a form of “regulatory dumping” (Peck and Tickell, 2002, p.386) in which local actors and institutions are given responsibility without power. This often takes the form of expanded citizen participation in strategies aimed at rectifying urban social problems, a process that engages residents and voluntary organizations as the primary service providers and agents of neighbourhood change (Ilcan and Basok, 2004; Pothier, 2016). In her empirical study of urban renewal schemes in the US, Elwood (2002) shows that this devolution of responsibility from the state to citizens and community organizations has not been accompanied by an attendant increase in power and influence, or by adequate resources. Silverman et al. (2019) similarly argue that public participation has continued to be a “pro forma exercise” within neoliberal policy processes. “Responsibilizing” citizens (Ilcan and Basok, 2004) is therefore problematic, as it positions individuals as responsible for their own wellbeing, while also undermining voluntary agencies’ role as a communal voice for social justice.

Other researchers suggest the limited potential for genuine participation by socially excluded and marginalized individuals within a neoliberal system that produces “democratic deficits” and is inherently unequal (Lombard, 2013). Lombard (2013) echoes Elwood’s (2002) finding that participatory practices do not necessarily lead to citizen empowerment and may in fact reinforce existing power relations and inequality (see also Pothier et al., 2019). Holman (2014) also challenges what she considers “thin” views of participation and the “shared fallacy” that individuals will successfully engage as active citizens in community life once empowered to do so through the policy actions of centralized governments. These arguments are a reminder that while participatory governance practices may increase the influence of citizens and the capacity of community organizations to challenge local state priorities in important ways, such challenges may not be enough to topple what Peck and Tickell (2002) refer to as the broader “system” of neoliberalism as an “ongoing ideological project” (p.401).

2.2.3 Community Organizations

Much of the literature on participation focuses on formal modes of community participation, and the growing role of community organizations—neighbourhood associations in particular—within the neoliberal urban governance systems described above. Neighbourhood associations are generally characterized as grassroots, geographically based, volunteer-driven community organizations focused on problem solving (Florin and Wandersman, 1990; Koschmann and Laster, 2011). They are recognized as an important mechanism through which residents protect their local territories, advocate for improvements, and assert alternatives to state-driven urban planning and revitalization strategies (Oropesa, 1995; Elwood, 2002; Knickmeyer et al., 2003). As Li (1996) argues, neighbourhood associations are social actors, which play a key role in

implementing positive neighbourhood change. They are active in both responding to and initiating strategies within broader urban planning and renewal processes (Elwood, 2002).

Davies and Townshend's (1994) research on Calgary communities identifies substantial variation in community association characteristics and functions, which they attribute to the initiative and agency of residents. As Hoessler (2010) argues, community associations are also strongly shaped by their settings, which influence the availability of resources the organization might access, the nature of challenges the organization faces, and the impetus for ongoing organizational learning. In Hoessler's case studies in Kitchener, Ontario, setting played a significant role in the extent to which neighbourhood organizations could effect meaningful change in their communities. Li (1996) too found that an organization's success depends upon the community's economic environment, the support of municipal governments, and their coalition with other local organizations.

Oropesa (1995) looks more closely at how neighbourhood associations work to improve local conditions, arguing that they allow residents to "pool resources and share the costs of collective organization" (p.236). Rich (1979) identifies three distinct roles that community associations can potentially have in providing public services to improve neighbourhood conditions: as consumers' cooperatives (aggregating and articulating residents' desires), as alternative producers of services, and as co-producers of public services. Given effectiveness and efficiency considerations, he argues that the coproduction role and a decentralized administrative structure offer the most viable means for community associations to promote citizen participation in local service provision. Knickmeyer et al. (2003) add that effectiveness can also be enhanced through collaboration among neighbourhood associations and other community organizations, though few organizations in their study had engaged in inter-association collaboration to address

common community problems. Ostrander (2012) agrees with the importance of collaboration but cautions that organizations should maintain their agency to choose when and where to collaborate with government, in order to preserve their independence while enabling relationships of shared governance (see also Sorensen and Sagaris, 2010).

There has also been a substantial scholarship focused on what influences or motivates participation in voluntary community associations. Oropesa (1995) distinguishes between membership and participation, the latter of which involves actually “mobilizing” resident members. He notes that property ownership, parenthood, and residential stability are particularly important in motivating association membership as people seek to protect the “use value” of neighbourhoods. Residents can also be mobilized by neighbourhood associations through communication channels and through “material, solidarity, or purposive incentives” (Oropesa, 1995, p.237) in the form of pamphlets or newsletters, social activities, and opportunities to give input into development plans. Koschmann and Laster (2011) bring attention to the particular importance of communicative processes in enabling collective action among community associations, noting that such processes are often fraught with tensions and inconsistencies. At the same time organizational tensions can be productive and necessary components of developing collective action, retaining members, and accomplishing goals.

Urban policies on social cohesion and empowerment have often focused on community-based organizations as sites of shared and purposeful activities that can help foster meaningful encounter within neighbourhoods that are increasingly “super-diverse” (Vertovec, 2007; Visser, 2017; Hoekstra and Dahlvik, 2018). Neighbourhood centres in particular are promoted as spaces that can open up opportunities for residents to negotiate across difference and reduce feelings of estrangement (Hoekstra and Pinkster, 2019). The underlying theory is that increased contact and

daily encounters between residents, particularly within diverse neighbourhoods, will decrease social isolation and intercultural tension. Indeed, Valentine (2008) shows that more sustained encounters that take place in local community centres and other “spaces of interdependence” (p.330) can encourage empathy, mutual understanding, and a sense of belonging. Even fleeting encounters—which Hoekstra and Dahlvik (2018, p.453) describe as engendering a “low-level form of familiarity”—can lead to a greater sense of comfort within one’s neighbourhood.

However, Valentine (2008) also questions the romanticized notion that mere contact with social ‘others’ automatically translates into a “respect for difference” (p.325). Indeed, in their empirical study of encounters in Berlin, Matejskova and Lietner (2011) found that superficial encounters that occur in everyday public spaces do little to change negative stereotypes, and in fact may reinforce them. As Hoekstra and Pinkster (2019) further point out, the contestation that occurs over the meaning and use of neighbourhood spaces can reinforce broader power relations, making community organizations themselves spaces of exclusion rather than encounter.

Moreover, community associations are institutional actors that can exclude individuals and groups with uneven abilities to engage with the “institutional apparatus” (Hoekstra and Pinkster, 2019, p.6). Community processes are often dominated by the interests of a small number of residents who are not necessarily representative of the range of neighbourhood interests, and who may claim to have a higher stake in the neighbourhood. This can make participants from different socio-economic or ethnic backgrounds feel unwelcome and counteract some of the benefits neighbourhood initiatives are intended to achieve (Hoekstra and Dahlvik, 2018).

2.3 Summary of Literature Review

Much of the neighbourhood research reviewed above describes increasing income inequality and socio-spatial differentiation within neighbourhoods in North America, and its negative

consequences for residents and communities. Some scholars have questioned whether the neighbourhood continues to be meaningful in the context of mobility and globalization (e.g., Wellman, 1979; Kingston et al., 1999; Amin, 2004). However, others contend that the neighbourhood remains an important factor in individuals' lives and imaginations (e.g., Forrest and Kearns, 2001; Kearns and Parkinson, 2001; Forrest, 2008). On both sides of the debate scholars have cautioned against one-dimensional or essentialist explanations of inequality in cities (Allegra et al., 2012; Shelton et al., 2015; Marcuse, 2016), in favour of more nuanced understanding of socio-spatial relations and people's lived experience of neighbourhoods.

Literature on civic participation suggests that community-based organizations can help increase social cohesion and contribute to positive neighbourhood change. However, empirical research on the relationship between neighbourhood context and participation is limited. Existing studies question the assumption that neighbourhood poverty results in decreased participation; or conversely that strong social ties and neighbourly interactions thrive in residentially stable neighbourhoods (Swaroop and Morenoff, 2006). For example, Swaroop and Morenoff's (2006) finding that informal, expressive forms of participation (neighbourly behaviours that encourage feelings of community) may in fact be higher in disadvantaged neighbourhoods challenges the conventional belief that neighbourhood poverty undermines local social organization. Van Eijk (2012) also critiques studies that assume "problem" neighbourhoods are socially dysfunctional, pointing to a double standard in which researchers attribute dissociation to neighbourhood factors where a "bad" neighbourhood is concerned, but look outside to explain dissociation in "good" neighbourhoods.

As a way of moving beyond these limitations, Lombard (2013) urges more attention to the range of non-state supported, informal or autonomous forms of participation in which

individuals engage. Jupp (2008) also calls for a broader view of participation, in which the “micro-level feelings and interactions” (p.340) that occur in spaces of engagement are themselves potentially powerful forms of participation. Community associations can foster meaningful encounters across diverse social groups. However, community spaces and actions designed to encourage social cohesion can also have the opposite effect of exacerbating exclusion (Hoekstra and Pinkster, 2019). It is therefore critical to keep in mind, as Miciukiewicz et al. (2012) argue, that social cohesion is not about achieving homogeneous communities but rather accommodating diverse and sometimes-conflicting value systems, interests and behaviours. It is also about the mundane experiences of everyday life within neighbourhood settings (Forrest and Kearns, 2001), which are highly politicized (Hoekstra and Pinkster, 2019).

2.4 Research Questions

Globalization, increasing mobility, and neoliberal forms of governance have all served to generate new forms of inequality in cities. Wood and Waite (2011) argue that these processes have both disrupted and increased individuals’ desire for “‘locally-based’ belonging” (p.201). Yet for the most part, belonging has yet to be explored in research on neighbourhood change and socio-spatial inequalities, despite its importance as both a resource for cohesion and social wellbeing, and as a basis for exclusionary behaviour and social divisions (Wood and Waite, 2011). Moreover, as the research context above suggests, existing scholarship on civic participation and community organizations focuses overwhelmingly on formal community structures and processes, with few studies examining the everyday spatial practices, informal exchanges, and neighbouring activities that constitute diverse ways of “‘doing’ neighbourhood” (Benson and Jackson, 2012; Pinkster, 2016). Overall this points to a need for more qualitative studies to understand the ways in which people make sense of and participate in neighbourhood

change (Pinkster, 2016), and the complex dynamics that both strengthen and preclude neighbourhood belonging.

To contribute toward these research gaps, this dissertation uses case studies of eight Calgary neighbourhoods to explore the following research questions:

1. How do diverse geographies of belonging within Calgary neighbourhoods illuminate underlying socio-spatial inequalities?
2. What role do formal modes of community participation play in residents' experiences of belonging?
3. How do residents practice belonging through informal modes of participation, in particular neighbouring, and everyday spatial routines?

In exploring these three related questions, this study enriches understanding of how socio-spatial inequalities are produced, reproduced, and challenged within neighbourhood settings—but also how neighbourhoods, as dynamic social constructions (Benson and Jackson, 2012; Elwood et al., 2015), are meaningful in people's lives. It makes theoretical contributions to scholarship on the geographies of belonging, and it offers empirical insights that can help community-based organizations foster inclusive practices that empower all residents to participate in creating more just place-communities.

2.5 Conceptual Framework

This study approaches the identified research questions through a theoretical lens of belonging and spatial justice. As noted above, much of the existing neighbourhood research relies heavily on statistical approaches to analyze inter-neighbourhood patterns and differentiation (Kitchen and Williams, 2009; Murdie and Logan, 2014). A focus on belonging reorients this study toward residents' heterogeneous experiences of their neighbourhoods and the “politics of social boundary-making” (Youkhana, 2015, p.12) through which socio-spatial inequalities are produced.

In the conceptual framework described below, I draw on De Certeau (1984) to explore belonging as practice, an approach which is attentive to the interplay between structural power and the ways in which individuals assert agency through everyday spatial practices. As illustrated in Figure 2.1, I conceptualize belonging as an assemblage of people, places, emotions, and practices. These practices include modes of formal participation or civic engagement; everyday routines or spatial practices; and practices of care or reciprocity between neighbours. They are always political, shaped by the dynamics of power that regulate who belongs in place and what sorts of activities belong in place. After elaborating this conceptual framework, I end with a discussion of spatial justice, which critiques the systems that help to produce socio-spatial inequalities in cities, toward more socially just alternatives.

Belonging

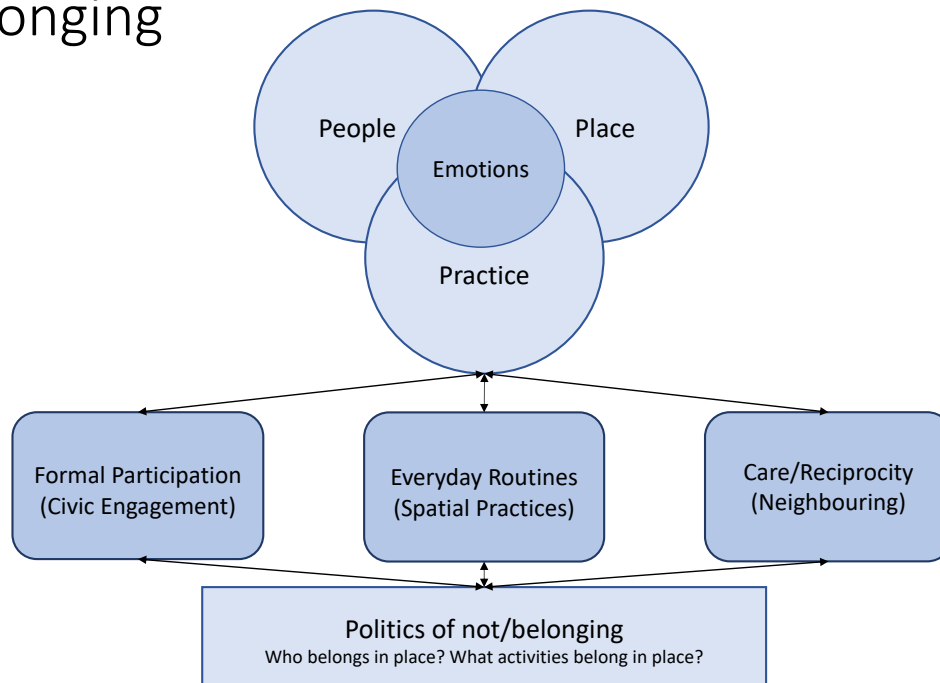


Figure 2.1: Conceptual Framework of Belonging

2.5.1 Relational Dimensions of Belonging

Neighbourhood researchers often view belonging as a feeling that constitutes a lesser dimension of either social cohesion (e.g., Forrest and Kearns, 2001; Miciukiewicz et al., 2012), or sense of community (e.g., MacMillan and Chavis, 1986). However, recent scholars, in particular human geographers, have theorized belonging as a more complex process through which people “make a place in the world” (Mee, 2009). Belonging is relational in nature, developed through interactions with other people (Wright, 2015; Pinkster, 2016); but it is also fundamentally linked to place, and individuals’ affective place attachments at potentially multiple scales (Mee, 2009; Crisp, 2010; Den Besten, 2010; Wood and Waite, 2011; Askins, 2015; Tomaney, 2015; Wright, 2015). As Fenster (2005) shows, everyday belonging is a gendered process that develops through one’s spatial knowledge and the ways in which individuals use their environment. This view resonates with Youkhana’s (2015) conceptualization of belonging as a “bounded conception” that relies on imposed collective identities, but which also derives from complex interconnections that are mediated through infrastructure, signs or even urban art. Thus, belonging can be seen as a relational spatial and social phenomenon.

Bennett (2015) adds to this relational perspective, theorizing “ontological” belonging as the intersection of place, people and time. For Bennett, belonging arises from one’s attachment to a place, in combination with one’s relationships to others and the materiality of that place. Individuals may choose to link their personal biographies to a particular place, which Savage et al. (2005) call “elective belonging”; however, belonging requires both choice and acceptance by others (Bennett, 2015). For this reason, belonging should not be seen as a taken-for-granted part of life but rather an “active and rhythmic practice” through which an “ethic of care” forms between people and places (Bennett, 2015, p.955). In this multi-layered view, belonging is an

“assemblage of place, people and time” (p.958), which is enacted and materialized through everyday activities of reciprocity, such as shoveling a neighbour’s walk.

2.5.2 Emotional Geographies of Belonging

As suggested in discussions of care, belonging also has important emotional dimensions that are rarely explored in the literature, despite the centrality of belonging to human experience (Wood and Waite, 2011). Wright (2015) argues that belonging is constituted through deep emotional attachments or affiliations to both people and places; conversely, not-belonging may be associated with feelings of exclusion, loneliness, or isolation (see also Wood and Waite, 2011). This attention to emotion is particularly important in understanding experiences of immigration and resettlement, and the role of belonging in what Christensen and Jensen (2011, p.146) frame as the “dynamic interplay between the roots and routes” of people’s lives. For example, in her research on encounters between refugees and more settled residents in Newcastle, England, Askins (2016) found that emotions are critical for understanding how individuals make meaningful connections with each other. The “emotional geographies of intercultural interactions” (Askins, 2016, p. 515) are at once intimate and tied to wider geopolitical processes. They are produced through interactions that occur in everyday local spaces, such as cafes, shops, or parks, in which diverse residents discover both differences and shared positions or desires.

Similarly, Probyn (1996) highlights the relational and affective dimensions of belonging as a desire or longing for attachment, which thus hinges on “not belonging” (p.14). She also highlights the ways in which belonging is played out in everyday moments, movements, and “manners of being” (p.14). Many scholars (e.g., Garbutt, 2009; Mee, 2009; Sandu, 2013; Askins, 2015; Askins 2016) have taken up Probyn’s interest in the mundane to explore how individuals develop a feeling of belonging in their residential communities, even in the context of mobility

and “super-diversity”—a concept that describes the unprecedented and complex interplay of factors that coalesce to condition immigrants’ lives (Vertovec, 2007). For Kalendidias and Vaiou (2012), it is the everyday routines of living and working, and in particular the reciprocal acts of caring between neighbours, through which migrants develop familiarity, a feeling of security, and the sense of belonging in place.

In her work on the politics of emotion, Ahmed (2014) moves beyond personal or subjective feelings to explore the question “what do emotions do?” She chooses not to distinguish between affect and emotion, as other scholars have done (e.g., see discussion in Thien, 2005; Gorton, 2007; White, 2017), instead engaging with the “messiness of the experiential” (Ahmed, 2014, p.210) in which emotions are bound up with judgements and shared perceptions that work to differentiate between others. Although Ahmed (2014) does not address theories of belonging directly, she is interested in techniques through which some individuals become recognized as strangers, as “bodies out of place, as not belonging in certain places” (p.211). Thus, she offers a useful lens for understanding how emotions work to construct insiders and outsiders, belonging and not-belonging. As all of this literature shows, belonging is not merely a feeling or a sense, but a relational and political practice that incorporates complex, fluid, and often deeply emotional connections to people and place that develop through mundane routines and experiences.

2.5.3 Belonging as Practice

Theorizing belonging as a practice, rather than a state, brings attention to the ways in which belonging is enacted and contested through competing meanings about “who belongs in place, what sorts of activities belong in place” (Mee, 2009, p.844; also Mee and Wright, 2009). De Certeau (1984) offers a way of theorizing belonging as practice, which bridges the analytical gap

between structure and human agency (Youkhana, 2015). He recognizes the state's "panoptic" role in urban systems, which creates a rational order or discourse to cities and imposes constraints on individuals' rights and choices. At the same time, he argues that individuals can manipulate or appropriate that totalizing order through everyday spatial practices. The simple act of walking, and the selections one makes in navigating multiple possibilities, become "a spatial acting out of the place" (De Certeau, 1984, p.98) that reinforces a distinction between the constructed form of the city (as ordered through discourse) and the ways in which spaces are used. De Certeau's view of urban social order therefore recognizes the sometimes-powerful constraints inherent in the "field of programmed and regulated operations" (p.95), but also suggests how individuals exert agency in reshaping those systems.

De Certeau's views can be extended to conceptualizations of belonging in urban contexts. Further to the everyday routines through which people develop a sense of belonging in their place communities, several scholars also emphasize ways in which belonging is enacted through spatial performances (e.g., Bell, 1999; Leach, 2005; Benson and Jackson, 2012; Pinkster, 2016). Gregson and Rose (2000) insist that places are not simply 'stages' for social action but are produced or brought into being through repeated spatial performances, such as car boot sales (Gregson and Rose, 2000), neighbourhood association meetings and celebrations (Elwood et al., 2015), shopping (Benson and Jackson, 2012), or even lawn care practices (Fraser et al., 2016). These performances are saturated with power (Gregson and Rose, 2000) in that they naturalize what Fortier (1999, p.42) calls "terrains of commonality" that define the dynamics of fitting in. In other words, they actively construct and normalize place-based identities in which some people belong, and some do not (Elwood et al., 2015; see also Youkhana, 2015).

Both Benson and Jackson (2012) and Elwood et al. (2015) explore how power operates in practices of belonging by examining particular place-making activities that produce and reproduce place-based identities and normalize social difference. In contrast to narrow and apolitical views of place-making as a physical design or planning intervention (Balassiano and Maldonado, 2015), Elwood et al. (2015) see place-making as “the cultural, material, and discursive practices through which people imagine and transform places” (p.125). They argue that the ways in which residents enact neighbourhood ideals through everyday behaviours and interactions can serve to normalize middle-class values and identities. For example, middle-class residents in gentrifying neighbourhoods reproduce middle-class norms in their efforts to “improve” neighbourhoods through housing aesthetics, civic participation, and the creation of enclaves with coffee shops, yoga studios, and other businesses. These same practices also produce poverty politics by constituting the status of “deserving and undeserving poor subjects” as resulting from their own individual actions and choices (Elwood et al., 2015, p.127). Place-making and place maintenance practices, the latter of which are actions focused on warding off unwelcome change (Benson and Jackson, 2012), are thus deeply political; they serve to consolidate class boundaries, while also contributing to inequality within neighbourhood settings.

2.5.4 Politics of Belonging

Belonging is therefore fundamentally about power relations, which moves the concept from a personal feeling of belonging, toward institutionalized patterns of belonging aimed at particular collectivities—in other words, the boundaries that separate people into “us” and “them” (Yuval-Davis, 2006; Youkhana, 2015). Yuval-Davis (2006) explores the politics of belonging in the context of increasing immigration, and ways in which different conceptualizations of citizenship

may or may not confer “full and legitimate belonging” (p.206), inclusive of both rights and responsibilities. As Yuval-Davis notes, debates on the politics of belonging centre on the question of “who ‘belongs’ and who does not, and what are the common grounds...that are required to signify belonging” (p.207). Thus, while they entail criteria and classifications that define membership within a group, the politics of belonging are more explicitly about the “specific political projects” and boundaries that exclude (Yuval-Davis, 2018, p.230). Such boundaries can be both discursive and material, but are often also spatial (Antonsich, 2010; Yuval-Davis, 2018). Moreover, practices that maintain boundaries within neighbourhoods—such as the place-making and place maintenance practices described above—are central to an understanding of socio-spatial inclusion and exclusion (Antonsich, 2010).

On the other hand, there are also possibilities for disruption and resistance to structures of power. As noted above, De Certeau (1984) theorizes the potential for individual “tactics” or practices of everyday life that work as a form of spatial appropriation, against official discourses and urban systems. These tactics are not transformational forms of social action, but rather everyday routines through which individuals or groups “territorialize” particular places, identify with those places, and negotiate and renegotiate who belongs in those places (e.g. Leach, 2005; Williamson, 2015). They emphasize a recursive view in which human agents use and reshape social structures, even if they can only do so from a position of weakness. Just as place-making practices can produce powerful boundaries within communities, they can also be a way for residents to resist socio-spatial oppression and to challenge normative views of how they “should” belong (Elwood et al., 2015; Tomanney, 2015).

Balassiano and Maldonado (2015) see “lived placemaking”—people’s day-to-day actions and social relationships—as empowering acts through which one becomes “intimate with one’s

surroundings” (p.644; see also Williamson, 2015). Veronis (2007), for example, illustrates how Latin American communities in segregated Toronto neighbourhoods adopt spatial strategies—such as developing a distinct *barrio latino*, or Latin neighbourhood—to carve out a collective identity and assert a claim of belonging. Place-making offers a way for marginalized communities to redress inequalities through collective ownership, such as housing co-ops, or by appropriating space for community gardens (Sutton and Kemp, 2011; Veronis, 2007). Such place-making strategies can help empower newcomers (Jupp, 2008), and can foster more inclusive, participatory government (Balassiano and Maldonado, 2015). As Elwood et al.’s (2015) research demonstrates, place-making also provides opportunities for “progressive, alliance-building moments” (p.125) across classes where even middle-class residents may question previously unexamined norms about idealized neighbourhoods. Therefore, while place-making activities can consolidate exclusive boundaries between insiders and outsiders, they can also work to challenge exclusionary practices toward what Wright (2015, p.402) calls more “hopeful belongings.”

2.5.5 Intersectionality of Belonging

Among the deficits that Wood and Waite (2011) identify in literature on belonging is that it rarely accounts for the intersectionality of belonging. Intersectionality was introduced as a theoretical perspective by antiracist and feminist scholars to emphasize that social locations are “never constructed along a single power axis,” but are multidimensional (Youkhana, 2015, p.12; also Carbado et al., 2013). Intersectionality thus stresses an understanding of inequality through the connections between various categories of experience such as gender, race, class, ethnicity and so on, rather than through a single framework. Accordingly, Yuval-Davis (2006, p.200) uses an intersectional approach to understand belonging as a dynamic process that is constructed

along “multiple axes of difference” which constitute and are constituted by each other. Youkhana (2015) too highlights the ways in which various intersecting social divisions produce “un-belonging” (p.12) in the case of inequality and exclusion.

As some scholars (e.g., Valentine, 2007; Youkhana, 2015; Hoekstra and Pinkster, 2019) have pointed out, however, intersectional approaches rarely deal with the spatial, which is also productive of difference. Valentine (2007) argues that dominant spatial orderings define who does and who does not belong where, thereby producing place-based inequalities and exclusion. She urges more attention to the everyday, and to the ways in which power operates in particular spaces. In an empirical example of this approach within neighbourhood research, Hoekstra and Pinkster (2019) found that the extent to which residents develop a sense of belonging depends on many factors, including both their individual social positions and place characteristics. They argue that boundary drawing within diverse neighbourhoods incorporates the socio-spatial imaginaries through which certain groups lay claim to spaces and neighbourhood identities. With Askins (2016), they suggest a need to go beyond an essentializing focus on ethnicity or class to consider the multiple and shifting axes of differentiation that produce exclusion, including spatialized dynamics. With its grounding in issues of income inequality, this study’s primary focus is on class; however, it also seeks to understand which other forms of difference matter, in which contexts, in individuals’ experiences of belonging,

2.5.6 Spatial Justice

Studies on place-making and belonging are a reminder of the agency and resilience through which individuals actively shape their neighbourhoods, and the social justice considerations involved. In response to growing socio-spatial inequalities arising from neoliberal governance, some scholars have adopted an explicit concern for social justice and the “right to the city,”

which Walks (2009) argues “should be the key goal and question that drives the next generation of urban geographers” (p.352). The right to the city concept was first elaborated by French sociologist Henri Lefebvre (1968/1996), in response to what he saw as exclusionary redevelopment patterns in Paris in the 1960s. Lefebvre called for a right to the city based not on land ownership, but on participation and appropriation (use or occupancy). Groups loosely organized around the right to the city framework today share an anti-capitalist approach and a focus on community, lived experience, and participatory democracy (Marcuse, 2014).

Geographers have focused more attention on the spatial aspects of justice, insisting on the importance of both social and spatial processes in producing justice and injustice. Soja (2011) argues that seeking a specifically spatial justice can add new strategies to all kinds of justice struggles, “especially to the building of cohesive, lasting and innovative coalitions across divisive lines of class, race and gender” (p.262; also Soja, 2010). One of the most vocal advocates of the right to the city, David Harvey (2003; 2012) also views spatial rights as an indispensable part of social justice. He is deeply critical of the capitalist market system and the inequalities it engenders, and calls for ideals of justice in which the right to the city is “not merely a right of access to what already exists, but a right to change it after our heart’s desire” (p.939). This emphasizes citizens’ right to enjoy and access urban spaces, but more importantly to influence decision-making processes. While spatial justice is therefore about re-ordering urban spaces, it is also about taking action against, and finding alternatives to, the wider processes and relations that generate forms of injustice in cities (Iveson, 2011).

Ultimately the concern with justice recognizes equality as something that is “made rather than pre-given” (Marston, 2010, p.417). Community organizations represent what Cassiers and Kesteloot (2012, p.1919) call “enabling institutions” that can help confront, negotiate, and create

compromises that aim at a socially just city that serves urban society as a whole. Sorensen and Sagaris (2010) argue that if neighbourhood organizations possess the right combination of expertise, institutional memory, and self-governance capacity, they can generate a powerful response, challenge, and complement to top-down, government-initiated participatory processes. In this sense, neighbourhoods are a key setting for the deliberative processes that help to define and exercise a community's spatial rights. Such coalition building and collective action are fundamental to the struggle for social and spatial justice, and more open, participatory and inclusive forms of democracy (Mitchell, 2003; Soja, 2010). If neighbourhoods are sites of disadvantage and inequality, they are also potentially arenas for social empowerment, belonging, and positive change. As Sutton and Kemp (2011) insist, place matters: It is at the heart of persistent structural inequities, but also a "site for collective action to achieve a more just, fair society" (p.2).

2.6 Summary

Social divisions along income, ethnic, and other lines are clearly manifest in spatial terms in Canada's Census Metropolitan Areas (CMAs). As recent analysis indicates (Townshend et al., 2018), Calgary is second in terms of neighbourhood income inequality among major Canadian cities. Growing socio-spatial divisions are concerning to researchers in several disciplines, as they suggest decreasing levels of social cohesion and greater potential for both social isolation and exclusion (Barry, 1998; Winlow and Hall, 2013; Witcher, 2013; Dorling, 2015). Much of the neighbourhood research examining these trends has focused on statistical patterns of inter-neighbourhood inequality, with little attention to intra-neighbourhood differentiation or the complex ways in which residents experience and participate in neighbourhood change. The lens of belonging as practice invites critical consideration of how, as Garbutt (2009) argues, "we are

all implicated to varying degrees in practices and structures that privilege and disadvantage individuals and groups” (p.84). As illustrated in the literature review above, this understanding is necessary for addressing socio-spatial inequalities in cities.

This qualitative study of the geographies of belonging within various Calgary neighbourhoods provides empirical examples of how socio-spatial inequalities are produced and reproduced through both local and broader socio-political processes, as well as some ways in which they might be challenged. The insights from these case studies can help strengthen theoretical approaches to belonging, and suggest ways in which community organizations and policy makers might work to create more just and inclusive place communities.

Chapter 3: Research Methodology

3.0 Introduction

In this chapter I outline the research design that I used to address the research questions identified in Chapter 2. I begin with a description of the research design, including my position as a researcher in this context and the setting in which the study was conducted, with a view to making the implications of my methodological decisions more transparent. I detail the sample of participants, the data generation and analysis methods, and finally the strategies that were used to address rigour and ethical considerations.

3.1 Description of Research Design

In order to contrast and compare a full range of residents' experiences within diverse neighbourhood settings, I used a qualitative, multiple case study design for this research. Yin (2018) argues that case study methods are ideal for investigating contemporary phenomena in their real-world contexts. Multiple-case studies are generally thought to be more compelling and may be preferred over single-case studies because of their substantial analytic benefits (Yin, 2018). The findings of case study research cannot produce statistical generalizations; however, they can yield analytic generalizations that apply to other situations. They can also produce valuable context-specific insights, help give voice to underrepresented or marginalized individuals (Riger and Sigurvinsdottir, 2016), and advance broader theoretical concepts (Seale, 2012; Yin, 2018).

Unlike quantitative research, which is primarily concerned with hypothesis testing and a search for causal relationships among variables, qualitative research focuses on individuals' subjective meanings and experiences within a given context (Riger and Sigurvinsdottir, 2016). Qualitative case study research thus often follows from a constructivist paradigm, which

recognizes meaning as subjective and reality as socially constructed (Baxter and Jack, 2008). Case studies allow for in-depth analysis of the complexity and contradictions inherent in individual experiences and meanings of a given phenomenon; they also offer tools appropriate for community-based inquiry that privileges local knowledge and social action (Brodsky et al., 2016). I selected a qualitative multiple case study design based primarily on qualitative interviews and participatory mapping methods as an ideal opportunity to understand how the characteristics of diverse neighbourhoods and community-based organizations relate to individuals' experiences of belonging, toward the goal of informing more inclusive community practices.

3.2 Position as Researcher

Qualitative researchers recognize that their own positionality and situatedness influence the type of knowledge they produce (e.g., Bourke, 2014; Kristensen and Ravn, 2015; Mason, 2018). In other words, researchers are not neutral observers but “instruments” in their research—as England (1994) writes, “differently positioned subjects with different biographies” (p.85). Because both researchers' and participants' multiple and overlapping identities impact all aspects of the research process, we must be aware of and acknowledge who we are and how we move within various social positions (Bourke, 2014). One's positionality is made visible through the practice of reflexivity, which refers to ongoing self-awareness and analytical scrutiny throughout the whole research process (England, 1994; Pillow, 2003). At the same time, a researcher's position relative to the people being studied shifts over time and in different contexts, meaning that positionality should be considered within particular moments and spaces of interaction rather than through fixed categories of “insider” and “outsider” (Baser and Toivanen, 2018).

My current research centres on the notion of belonging, through case studies of eight Calgary neighbourhoods. As a former resident of Calgary, my personal knowledge of the research setting impacts how I understand inter- and intra-neighbourhood dynamics; however, my lack of continuing ties to any of these neighbourhoods makes me an ‘outsider’ in this research. At the same time, I am more of an ‘insider’ among participants who share (or partially share) my position as a white, straight, middle-class, university-educated woman. As a researcher committed to spatial justice, I have also experienced “‘moments’ of insiderness” (Baser and Toivanen, 2018, p.2076) with individuals in more vulnerable circumstances who saw the study as an opportunity to bring to light certain issues needing attention in their neighbourhoods. In these cases, I was able to develop a rapport with participants who felt heard, and thereby validated, in the interview process.

Still, my position within the dominant culture (Bourke, 2014) gives me a privileged position in relation to these participants in particular, which means that throughout the research process I have had to be cautious not to appropriate their voices. I also had to remain cognizant of the partiality of my own perspective (England, 1994). In creating my research design, I reflected on these embedded power imbalances and have attempted to address them in part by 1) offering choices about the mode and location of interviews; 2) inviting participants to review transcripts of their interviews; and 3) supplementing interviews with participatory mapping methods that recognize participants as experts of their own neighbourhoods and lived experiences. I have also engaged in ongoing critical reflection throughout the processes of data collection, analysis and interpretation about the effects of my position on the knowledge I produce. I detail each of these strategies in the following discussions of data collection, analysis, and rigour.

3.3 Setting

According to recent research by Townshend et al. (2018), Calgary has the second highest levels of neighbourhood income inequality in Canada, after Toronto. Policy reports point to high levels of vulnerability in numerous Calgary communities (e.g. The City of Calgary, 2010), and a need to strengthen disadvantaged neighbourhoods in particular (see The City of Calgary, 2014). The city is also unique because of its system of 152 volunteer-run community associations that provide local amenities, advise on local planning issues, and advocate for residents within their neighbourhoods (Conger et al., 2016). Calgary is therefore a rich setting for researching experiences of participation and belonging, as well as the relations of power that structure exclusions within particular place communities.

This study draws from and contributes to research conducted for the “Income Polarization and Participation in Community Organizations in Calgary” project, co-led by Ivan Townshend (University of Lethbridge) and Byron Miller (University of Calgary). The Income Polarization project is in turn part of a broader mixed-methods Neighbourhood Change Research Partnership (NCRP) study directed by David Hulchanski, which aims to understand socio-spatial polarization trends in major Canadian cities (neighbourhoodchange.ca). For the Calgary study, eight communities were selected using a mixed-methods sampling strategy. First, census tract (CT) income data was mapped for the entire city of Calgary according to two key variables: a) the census tract income ratio, measured as census tract average individual income (of the population aged 15 or older) compared to average individual income (aged 15+) of the CMA, and b) level of income diversity/inequality within each census tract. Income inequality was measured using a “Gini Coefficient” (Gini Concentration Ratio) computed from census data—a measure which Walks (2013) describes as the best measure of income inequality.

On each of the two variables, CTs were grouped based on quartiles (Q1, Q2, Q3, Q4). The CTs were then classified on both variables simultaneously, i.e. based on a 4 x 4 cell rubric (see Figure 3.1). The extremes are represented by groupings in Q1Q1 (low income and low diversity), Q1Q4 (low income and high diversity), Q4Q1 (high income and low diversity), and Q4Q4 (high income and high diversity). Finally, a more qualitative purposive sampling strategy was then used to select two communities from each of the four extreme categories (e.g. two from Q1Q1, two from Q1Q4, etc.), which is consistent with Yin's (2018) recommendation that at least two individual cases be selected per subgroup. This involved selecting census tracts that closely matched administrative community boundaries and community association area boundaries, and engaging the two community partners (the Federation of Calgary Communities and the United Way Calgary and Area) to help select cases that were likely to yield rich results.

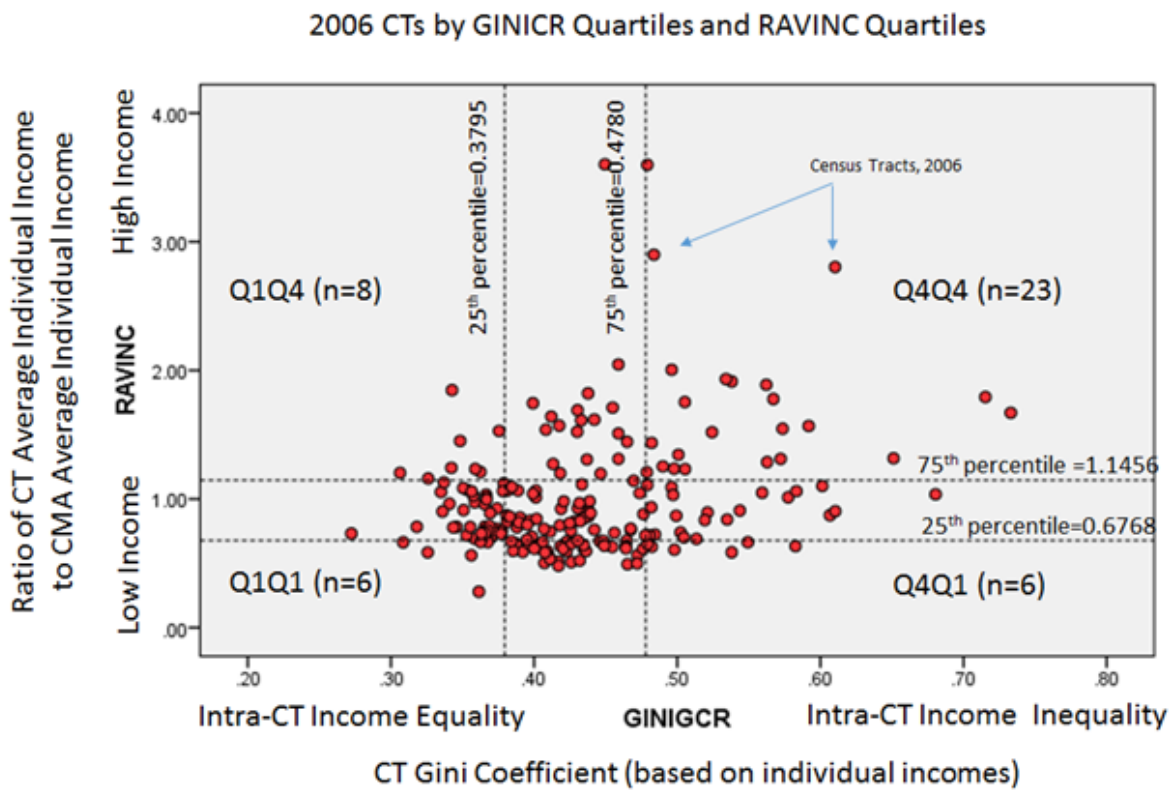


Figure 3.1: 2006 Calgary Census Tracts by Gini Coefficient quartiles and Average Individual Income quartiles

This dissertation uses the same eight Calgary communities: Mount Royal, Chinook Park/Kelvin Grove/Eagle Ridge (CKE), McKenzie Towne, Hawkwood, Bridgeland-Riverside, Capitol Hill, Dover, and Martindale. These eight communities represent a range of neighbourhood income profiles, and are also diverse in other respects, notably their geographical quadrant, historical development, physical characteristics, and amenities. Forrest and Kearns (2001) suggest that neighbourhood research has been skewed toward disadvantaged or so-called “problem” neighbourhoods, which has helped create a “deficit theory syndrome.” Other scholars agree that deficit approaches can lead to victim blaming (Taket et al., 2014), while ignoring structural and institutional forces that create conditions of inequality (Mohan and Mohan, 2002; Cameron, 2006). A multiple case study design that looks at communities with diverse income profiles and other characteristics provides an opportunity to avert this potential shortcoming.

3.4 Recruitment Process

The “Income Polarization and Participation in Community Organizations in Calgary” project involved two phases of interviews, on which this dissertation draws. The first phase of interviews, completed between May and September 2016, was designed to generate an understanding of how community leaders perceive residents’ participation and social inclusion/exclusion in Calgary. I used a purposive sampling technique to locate information-rich participants who were most knowledgeable about neighbourhood-based programs and services within each case study community (Seale, 2012; Riger and Sigurvinsdottir, 2016). Two community partners associated with the broader study served as mediators to help identify and gain access to participants. Mediators can influence the material by recruiting others with similar experience to their own (Kristensen and Ravn, 2015). In this case, the connection helped created a sense of trust because community partners had established professional networks and positive

relationships with City of Calgary neighbourhood services staff and community association executives. They made initial email introductions to potential participants, after which I followed up with detailed information and a formal invitation to participate.

The second phase of qualitative interviews took place between October 2016 and August 2017. This phase aimed to explore residents' experiences of belonging through formal community participation, as well as more informal, expressive forms of participation such as neighbouring activities (Swaroop and Morenoff, 2006). I used a maximum diversity purposive sampling approach (Seale, 2012; Mason, 2018) to achieve variation in residents' experiences of community participation, as well as diverse age, gender, income, housing tenure, household composition, and ethno-cultural characteristics. As Patton (1990) observes, maximum variation samples can generate rich descriptions while also capturing core shared experiences, making this sampling strategy particularly suited to comparative case study research (Yin, 2018). To help track the sample diversity, I recorded basic demographic data at the beginning of each interview using a demographic data sheet.

In order to access potential participants in the second phase, I posted recruitment flyers (see Appendix E) in community association halls, and on bulletin boards in local cafes, grocery stores and businesses. I also circulated electronic flyers to a range of community service providers, churches and faith groups, immigrant service centres, ethno-cultural community centres, Indigenous associations, seniors' organizations, post-secondary student associations, and residents' associations. The flyer was translated into Chinese for distribution in Hawkwood and Capitol Hill, which have significant numbers of Mandarin speakers (The City of Calgary, 2019a). I attempted unsuccessfully to have posters translated into Punjabi and Urdu, which are the dominant non-official languages in Martindale (The City of Calgary, 2019a). As Kristensen

and Ravn (2015) acknowledge, indirect recruitment methods such as these rarely work on their own and often need to be supplemented with more direct strategies—which proved true in my experience. As the research progressed, I used theoretical sampling to address emerging issues (King and Horocks, 2010) and to identify under-represented characteristics such as renters, seniors, and members of specific ethno-cultural groups. I then used snowball sampling to access approximately ten more of these harder to reach participants (Liamputtong, 2007; Kristensen and Ravn, 2015), through referrals from other interviewees.

In qualitative research, the quality and not quantity of interviews is used to determine the appropriate sample size, and small samples are widely considered more beneficial for generating in-depth insight (Mason, 2010). Although used inconsistently, many researchers rely on the concept of saturation to determine when data collection and/or analysis should be terminated (Saunders et al., 2018). Data saturation is the point at which new data collection and analysis either no longer provides new insight, or yields significantly diminishing returns (Guest et al., 2006; Mason, 2010). Guest et al.'s (2006) empirical work found that data saturation occurs in a homogeneous sample substantially after only six interviews and completely by 12. They point out that larger samples are needed with more heterogeneous participants or where the goal is to assess variation between distinct groups. As Saunders et al. (2018) emphasize, however, saturation is a matter of degree or ongoing judgement by the researcher rather than a specific point of completion. Consistent with these insights, I used an adaptive approach to saturation, conducting initial data analysis as soon as possible following each interview as a way to help guide decisions about the adequacy of the sample (Saunders et al., 2018). Although not all of the case studies included a diverse range of participants, data saturation was achieved across the entire sample by about 50 participants. The addition of ten more individuals using theoretical

sampling, as discussed above, ensured a greater range of experiences were included in the analysis.

3.5 Data Collection

3.5.1 Qualitative Interviews (Phase One)

I used in-depth qualitative, face-to-face interviews for the first phase of data generation. To reduce overly biased or leading questions (Yin, 2018), I followed a semi-structured interview protocol that used a consistent list of questions for discussion, though I probed participants on their responses in order to remain flexible to new information. This protocol was divided into three domains (see Appendix B). The first, organizational background, allowed me to understand participants' particular roles within their given case study community, and the ways in which they interacted with local residents. The second domain focused on perceptions of residents' participation and inclusion, in which discussion revolved around how community organizers, leaders, and service providers perceived the current state of community participation and the inclusion of residents from diverse socioeconomic and ethnocultural backgrounds. The third domain explored organizational factors impacting participation and inclusion, including potential barriers or successful inclusion strategies. Questions were designed with input from the two community partners taking part in the "Income Polarization and Participation in Community Organizations in Calgary" project: The Federation of Calgary Communities, and United Way Calgary and Area.

I conducted two pilot interviews to provide an opportunity to clarify the conceptualization of the research design (Yin, 2018). After refining the interview protocol, I interviewed 28 participants (see Table 3.1) between June and September 2016. Interviews were held in coffee shops, community association halls or other locations selected by the participants,

after obtaining informed consent according to the ethical procedures described below. I digitally recorded all interviews, transcribed them verbatim as soon as possible following the interview, and sent them to participants for review. Changes to the transcripts were made as indicated by participants and the revised transcripts were retained as the official version. I also recorded, and later analyzed, field notes for each interview.

3.5.2 Qualitative Interviews (Phase Two)

The second phase of interviews involved a diverse range of residents within each case study community. Some of these residents might be considered vulnerable, which Pyer and Campbell (2012, p.311) define as being “at risk of exploitation based on a range of demographic, social, or economic circumstances” and therefore potentially needing more careful ethical consideration in the research process. As Liamputtong (2007) argues, vulnerable individuals are often considered “hard to reach” because they are silent, deviant, or marginalized, and therefore hidden in society. Qualitative researchers emphasize the importance of promoting equitable research processes to ensure vulnerable or marginalized participants do not feel exploited or pressured to discuss personal experiences that make them uncomfortable (Petersen, 2012).

Qualitative research has traditionally used a single interview method, with preference given to face-to-face interviews, due to concerns about the quality of the interaction and data generated in telephone or other virtual modes (Heath et al., 2018). As Novick (2008) notes, face-to-face interviews are thought to encourage rapport and to enable the communication of non-verbal cues, while telephone interviews tend to be seen as an inferior mode. However, recent literature has begun to question this assumption. Several empirical studies and comprehensive comparisons conclude that telephone interviews can be considered a “valuable first choice option” (Ward et al., 2015, p.2775) for qualitative research. While telephone interviews may

present interactional challenges caused by the lack of visual cues, they have been found to achieve both friendly rapport and rich data (Sturges and Hanrahan, 2004; Stephens, 2007; Holt, 2010; Ward et al., 2015; Drabble et al., 2016).

In her study of semi-structured interviews with children, Vogl (2013) found very little difference between the face-to-face and telephone interview modes, but suggested the telephone mode may actually be advantageous, particularly in reducing power imbalances between the researcher and interviewee, because people feel less judged (see also Holt, 2010; Ward et al., 2015). Trier-Bieniek (2012) and Ward et al. (2015) add that telephone interviews are more participant-centered and result in more honest data because of their anonymity and people's increasing levels of comfort with virtual conversation. Mealer and Jones (2014) echo this finding, suggesting that qualitative telephone interviews can help limit emotional distress and protect the confidentiality of participants where sensitive topics are involved (see also Heath et al., 2018). While telephone interviews are therefore increasingly accepted as an appropriate and productive research method among individuals in vulnerable circumstances, Stephens (2007) suggests they can also yield valuable results among those in positions of power and higher social stature.

To optimize data collection and consider participant preferences, Heath et al. (2018) suggest offering multiple interview modes even within a single study. Accordingly, participants in the second phase of interviews were offered a choice of either in-person or telephone interviews. I interviewed 32 participants between October 2016 and August 2017 (see Table 3.1), with interviews typically lasting between 45 and 60 minutes. Nine in-person interviews were held in participants' homes, coffee shops, or another location of the participant's choosing. Another 23 telephone interviews were scheduled for a time that was mutually convenient, and

participants were asked to sign and return a consent form prior to beginning. As with the first phase of interviews, questions followed a semi-structured format (see Appendix D) to minimize leading questions while allowing for exploration of emergent topics. I digitally recorded all interviews and completed verbatim transcriptions, which I then sent to participants for review and approval. I made changes to the transcripts as indicated by participants and retained only the revised versions.

Table 3.1: Selected Participant Characteristics

| | DOV | MRT | BRD | CAP | MCT | HAW | UMR | CKE | Totals |
|------------------|-----------|----------|-----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|-----------|
| External | 2 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 10 |
| Residents | 12 | 7 | 9 | 5 | 4 | 8 | 3 | 2 | 50 |
| TOTALS | 14 | 9 | 10 | 6 | 5 | 9 | 4 | 3 | 60 |
| Residents | | | | | | | | | |
| Men | 5 | 1 | 2 | 2 | | 3 | 1 | 1 | 15 |
| Women | 7 | 6 | 7 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 2 | 1 | 35 |
| 18-34 | 3 | 2 | 2 | | 1 | | | 1 | 9 |
| 35-49 | 4 | 4 | 3 | 4 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 23 |
| 50-64 | 1 | 1 | | 1 | 1 | 2 | | | 6 |
| 65+ | 4 | | 4 | | | 4 | | | 12 |
| Owner | 8 | 7 | 6 | 4 | 4 | 8 | 3 | 2 | 42 |
| Renter | 4 | | 3 | 1 | | | | | 8 |

Q1Q1 – low income, low inequality
 DOV – Dover
 MRT – Martindale

Q4Q1 – low income, high inequality
 BRD – Bridgeland-Riverside
 CAP – Capitol Hill

Q1Q4 – high income, low inequality
 MCT – McKenzie Towne
 HAW – Hawkwood

Q4Q4 – high income, high inequality
 UMR – Mount Royal
 CKE – Chinook Park/Kelvin Grove/Eagle Ridge

3.5.3 Description of Participants

Despite attempts to achieve a diversity of participants across the two phases of interviews, there were challenges in representing all of the inclusion criteria within each community (see Table 3.1). Although participants did come from a variety of backgrounds in terms of ethno-cultural background, age, immigration status and experience, overall there were more women,

homeowners, parents with young children, and middle-income earners compared to men, renters, and very low- or very high-income participants. At the same time, there were more participants in general within lower-income and gentrifying neighbourhoods compared to more stable higher-income neighbourhoods. As Kristensen and Ravn (2015) argue, it is important to keep in mind how such imbalances may privilege certain perspectives while silencing others. In my research, the framing of the study in the recruitment poster generated a greater response from individuals who were actively, often passionately, involved in their neighbourhoods compared to those who did not value their place communities in the same way. Using snowball sampling to hear directly from more marginalized individuals (Liamputtong, 2007) helped achieve greater diversity among participants. Nevertheless, the data collected does privilege the perspectives of white, middle-class homeowners with children living at home.

3.5.4 Participatory Mapping

Qualitative researchers recognize that their own role in interpreting and transforming participants' voices can be problematic, necessitating more collaborative research roles (Stein and Mankowski, 2004). There are many flexible investigative, ethnographic, and participatory action research (PAR) methods that can yield rich in-depth data and lead to positive change for participants (Kindon et al., 2007; Liamputtong, 2007). As Kindon (2010) notes, the use of participatory methods has grown in geographical research in recent years, allowing geographers to better understand how spatial difference informs social relations while also contributing to social justice and participants' well-being. These opportunities are consistent with the purpose of this study in bringing a deeper understanding of the geographies of belonging, and the ways in which individuals can participate in positive neighbourhood change. While ethnographic methods such as walking interviews (e.g., Kusenbach, 2003) might have yielded rich insights

into residents' spatial practices, not all participants had adequate mobility. Therefore, this study used a form of participatory mapping as a second data generation method.

Behavioural geographers have long used mental maps to understand people's perceptions of their spatial environments (Boschmann and Cubbon, 2014; Panek, 2016). In a widely cited study, Kevin Lynch (1960), for example, used cognitive mapping to study inhabitants' "mental image" of three American cities. In recent years, critiques about the power structures inherent in top-down, technicist, and positivist mapping methods (see Schoepfer and Rogers, 2014; Lohmann, 2016) have directed many planners, policy makers, and geographers to more critical and participatory mapping practices. These can generate deeper insight into individuals' experiences and affective relationships with places (Boschmann and Cubbon, 2014; Schoepfer and Rogers, 2014; Merchant, 2017; Panek and Bendiktsson, 2017), help ensure the needs of voiceless or vulnerable populations are included in civic processes (Gordon et al., 2016; Zhou et al., 2016), and capture the complexity of people's lived experiences, such as the mobility barriers facing low-income populations (Ramasubramanian, 2015). Participatory mapping practices can also be beneficial for participants; because they centre participants' spatial knowledge, they can be empowering and educational (Ramasubramanian, 2015; Panek, 2016; Zhou et al., 2016). They can also encourage "critical spatial thinking" about the socio-spatial processes involved in both the production of inequality and forms of resistance to inequality (Gordon et al., 2016).

A number of recent studies have piloted digital mapping tools, noting advantages over print maps (e.g., Schoepfer and Rogers, 2014; Zhou et al., 2016; Panek and Bendiktsson, 2017). Zhou et al. (2016) contend, for example, that paper maps can bias participants' responses, depending on the type of map offered and the inclusion or exclusion of different features. They recommend web-based mapping to maximize interactivity and to facilitate data analysis and

visualization. On the other hand, web-based tools often require access to computers, technical literacy, and specialized training, all of which represent potential barriers for some participants (Schoepfer and Rogers, 2014). Boschmann and Cubbon (2014) note that there has been a resurgence of using hand-drawn maps within critical and qualitative Geographic Information Systems (GIS) research, in response to calls for “alternative cartographies” that capture individual spatial narratives. Boschmann and Cubbon advocate the use of sketch maps, which are geographically referenced base maps onto which research participants place locational markings, as an invaluable way of representing individuals’ complex lived experience.

In view of the potential barriers involved in digital mapping, particularly for some of the elderly and less digitally literate participants in this study, I used paper sketch maps following a general process outlined by Boschmann and Cubbon (2014). Typically sketch maps are incorporated into the interview process; however, this was not possible because it became apparent only during the qualitative interviews that more spatially specific data would enrich understanding of residents’ place-based experiences. Therefore, residents of case study communities who participated in both phases of interviews (n=51) were invited to take part in the mapping exercise. Those who chose to participate (n=30) were provided with a base map of their community and the surrounding areas. To minimize bias introduced by pre-existing data, the map identified only road networks and major places such as schools, parks, rivers and attractions, for orientation purposes (Schoepfer and Rogers, 2014; Zhou et al., 2016).

Participants were asked to draw a line around the area they considered to be “their” neighbourhood and to mark: a) places where they felt a strong sense of belonging; b) places where they typically connected with other people; c) places where they did not feel they belonged; and d) other places that were important in their day-to-day lives. They were also

invited to provide qualitative comments for each place identified, expanding upon topics previously explored in the interviews. Participants were encouraged to use any annotation method they desired, in order to elicit affective and personal representations (Boschmann and Cubbon, 2014). Finally, participants were asked if they would like to take part in a follow-up interview to further discuss any of their responses. An additional 24 follow-up interviews were conducted in the same way as the earlier interviews described above; however, these were less structured, focusing on participant responses noted on the maps rather than a more formal interview guide. In combination with the other two interview phases, this brought the total number of interviews conducted for this study to 80.

Yin (2018) argues that case studies should rely on a variety of sources. Accordingly, I also analyzed selected documents and websites created by community associations and other key organizations, as well as field notes with observations I recorded during visits to each community to do interviews. Overall, the documents, observations, qualitative interviews, and participatory maps offered insights into the ways in which neighbourhoods are meaningful to participants, the emotional relationships between people and their place-communities, and the particular “nodes” and “moorings” (van Kempen and Wissink, 2014) that are significant in participants’ day-to-day spatial routines. The mapping activity in particular enriched the in-depth interviews by giving residents a stronger voice in the data generation process, and by offering a visual representation of neighbourhood characteristics and socio-spatial processes that both encourage and preclude feelings of inclusion and belonging.

3.6 Data Management

Qualitative researchers widely use software applications to support thematic coding and analysis, and to enable searching and annotation of data. As Mason (2018) notes, such software does not

analyze or interpret data, nor does it build theory or arguments. However, it can help to facilitate “an easy closeness with the data” (Mason, 2018, p.195) by helping researchers to organize, visualize and present their materials. In this study I used NVivo software to manage all data including interview transcripts, field notes, analytical memos and participatory mapping comments. I filed data separately for each case in order to increase the overall reliability of the case studies (Yin, 2018). This strategy helps to retain a more holistic view of the wider context in which data are embedded and facilitates scrutiny of what is particular in each case (Mason, 2018).

3.7 Data Analysis

To understand the complexity of different participants’ experiences, I analyzed all qualitative interviews, field notes, and qualitative mapping data using an “abductive” thematic analysis strategy that moved back and forth between the data, my research questions, and broader theoretical concepts (Mason, 2018). Thematic analysis typically involves searching for recurring ideas or emergent patterns across a textual data set in order to understand how people make sense of their experience (Riger and Sigurvinsdottir, 2016). This process ensures that interpretations remain grounded in the data and helps uncover patterns across the data set rather than the more immediate or memorable elements (Mason, 2018). In this study I followed three stages, beginning with line-by-line coding in which I systematically labeled “data chunks” with open or descriptive codes (Rivas, 2012, p.370). Next, I grouped open codes hierarchically into analytical categories to draw out the connections between codes. In the third stage I focused on the higher-order interpretation of patterns and meaning in relation to my research questions and wider theoretical concepts (Riger and Sigurvinsdottir, 2016; Mason 2018). Throughout the thematic

analysis process, I also used analytical memos and conceptual diagrams as recommended by Yin (2018), to help conceptualize the data and record preliminary observations and interpretations.

I also analyzed the results of the participatory mapping exercise for each case study community. As Lohmann (2016) notes, the visual layering of geographic details enables an in-depth analysis of how the social and spatial interact, and a better understanding of the relationship between different spatial variables; more qualitative GIS approaches also highlight residents' understanding and experiences of their neighbourhoods. For this study, I followed Boschmann and Cubbon's (2014) recommendation to digitize sketch maps in order to permit overlay exploratory analysis. I digitized all maps using the open source application Google MyMaps, compiling one composite map per case study. I created individual layers for each participant, marking the points and routes they noted as well as the neighbourhood boundaries they identified. This facilitated comparison between resident-defined neighbourhood boundaries and administrative community boundaries (see Lohmann, 2016), and allowed the visualization of areas of agreement or disagreement amongst participants. I also included qualitative comments that participants marked on the map or shared during follow-up interviews, to enable a deeper level of analysis.

Yin (2018) argues that for multiple case studies, each individual case should consist of a complete study with its own conclusions, which are then analyzed through a cross-case synthesis. This technique involves comparing within-case patterns across the case studies to examine relationships between the cases, and to potentially identify higher order patterns. Following this analytical strategy, I completed separate within-case analyses for all eight communities. I then conducted a cross-case analysis by compiling themes and findings from individual communities into tables and comparing them (Yin, 2018). This cross-case synthesis

facilitated a holistic understanding of the relationship between participation and belonging in neighbourhood settings. It also helped to produce what Mason (2018, p.245) calls “cross-contextual generalities,” derived from strategic comparisons between contexts. These generalities offer insights that can be used by neighbourhood policy makers and community-based organizations to develop beneficial practices and interventions.

3.8 Rigour

Qualitative research cannot be evaluated by the same validity measures used in quantitative research. However, qualitative researchers nevertheless use particular techniques to ensure their data generation and analysis are “thorough, careful, honest and accurate” (Mason, 2018, p.236), and to validate the credibility of their analytic claims (Peräkylä, 2016). For this study I relied on several validation strategies. First, I used multiple data collection methods to explore the research questions. Yin (2018) argues this strategy, which he refers to as triangulation, is fundamental to reducing systematic bias and enhancing the overall validity of case studies. In this dissertation, participatory sketch maps helped to increase the reliability of qualitative interviews by offering an added point of engagement with interview data, a way of visualizing participants’ responses, and a means to explore multiple dimensions of neighbourhood belonging (Mason, 2018). As a further advantage, the maps also addressed issues of power imbalance between the participants and myself by positioning participants as the experts.

I was also attentive to interpretive validity, which Mason (2018) describes as reflexively engaging with one’s own position while considering alternative interpretive perspectives. As a methodological practice, reflexivity means being transparent about how one’s own perspectives and values may shape research choices, as discussed above. As a validity strategy, reflexivity entails presenting sufficient contextual grounding for any claims so that it is clear what strategies

were used to produce interpretations (Mason, 2018). This helps to identify the effects of the researcher's choices.

Considering alternative interpretive explanations, meanwhile, can be accomplished by looking for negative instances—that is, examples, themes, or other materials that do not fit with the explanation you are developing (Mason, 2018). This technique is sometimes known as “deviant case analysis” (Paräkylä, 2016). During my coding process, I paid particular attention to outlier data that did not fit with inductively constructed patterns or themes. Analyzing these exceptions as alternative perspectives helped to avoid interpretations that simply confirmed what I already believed. Finally, I relied on “thick, rich, detailed description” (Brodsky et al., 2016) with direct quotes from participants, to offer readers an opportunity to make decisions about the transferability of my interpretive understandings to other contexts or settings.

3.9 Ethical Considerations

Ethics are important throughout any research process, particularly during planning and data collection stages (Gibbs, 2007). Qualitative researchers must carefully consider their relationships with their participants and mitigate any potentially harmful effects their research may have. They must also consider “issues of power, reciprocity, integrity, and expectations,” (Brodsky et al., 2016, p.18), in terms of their general responsibility to their participants and communities.

As a first step to ensure ethical standards in this study, participants were invited to voluntarily take part in this research, following University of Lethbridge (2017) guidelines for human participant research. They were provided with a letter outlining the purpose of the research, the expectations for the participants, and the option to withdraw at any point during the study (see Appendices A and C). The letter also indicated that no harm would come to

participants and that, while they would not incur direct benefits or compensation (other than a small gift card as a token of appreciation), they would be contributing valuable insight to promote inclusive community practices. Those who agreed to participate were asked to sign an informed consent form before the interview began (included in Appendices A and C).

Participants' anonymity and confidentiality was ensured through the use of study ID numbers rather than names on transcripts or maps. Within the empirical chapters themselves, participants were given pseudonyms and information identifiable to a particular participant was generalized or omitted to ensure anonymity.

3.10 Summary

This chapter has outlined this study's comparative qualitative case study research design. I have described the methodology used to generate and analyze data relating to experiences of participation and belonging in Calgary neighbourhoods, as well as the characteristics of participants and how they were recruited. I have considered how my own positionality and methodological choices might have impacted the nature of research generated in this study, also detailing strategies used to ensure both rigour and high ethical standards. In the next chapter I expand on the research setting introduced here, with a more detailed discussion of the study area context.

Chapter 4: Context of Study Area

4.0 Introduction

According to the most recent 2016 census, Calgary has the highest average household income of all Census Metropolitan Areas (CMAs) in Canada. However, superficial interpretations of the data mask growing disparities among residents (Graff McRae, 2017). A major economic downturn in recent years has had significant impacts on individuals and families in Calgary—for example, greater dependence on social assistance, soaring debt, and high levels of vulnerability in numerous communities within the city (Community & Neighbourhood Services, 2010; Eremenko, 2018). Research that drills down into income distribution shows that Calgary is now Canada’s “most income-unequal CMA” (Townshend, Miller and Cook, 2020), with the highest levels of income inequality between individuals and the second highest neighbourhood income inequality in Canada, after Toronto. Moreover, Townshend et al. (2018) document a steady erosion of the middle class from 1970 to 2006 and a striking increase in income polarization, which is manifested spatially in growing concentrations of both low and high income neighbourhoods.

Social agencies in Calgary link income inequality with the city’s “depth of poverty” (Patmore, 2018) and growing social and geographical fragmentation (Secretariat of the Calgary Poverty Reduction Initiative, 2013). They suggest a need to strengthen disadvantaged or “tipping point” neighbourhoods in particular as a means to avoid problems linked to spatially concentrated poverty (Cooper, 2013; United Way Calgary and Area, 2016). In response, the City of Calgary and various community partners have implemented neighbourhood-based strategies designed to address inequities and reduce poverty, based on the notion that strengthening community bonds can create stronger support networks and opportunities for people to address

issues together (Secretariat of the Calgary Poverty Reduction Initiative, 2013; Patmore, 2018). In this chapter I explore some of these neighbourhood-based strategies in Calgary and the key actors involved, drawing on publicly available reports and interviews conducted with community leaders. Next, I present brief descriptions of each neighbourhood included in this study.¹ These are based on City of Calgary community profiles (The City of Calgary, 2019a); select information produced by community associations, such as websites, newsletters, and reports; interviews with residents; and, to a lesser extent, my own observations gathered through field notes during interviews.

4.1 Neighbourhood Programs

The Strong Neighbourhoods Initiative uses a resident-led community development approach to build neighbourhood capacity through increased sense of community, commitment, and access to resources (Cooper, 2013). Launched in 2010, Strong Neighbourhoods targets eight neighbourhoods, wherein residents work with City staff and partner organizations to identify and reach specific targets over a ten-year period. Ultimately the goal is to mobilize residents to advocate for sustainable social change (The City of Calgary, 2018g). As Naya, a City employee, explained, the program is meant to help residents “be aware of the issues that are surrounding the community and help them to build the capacity to be able to address those needs in the community—so whether it be through social action, advocacy or just awareness.” Ideally, at the end of the ten-year timeframe the community has the tools and skills it needs to “really bring people together, mobilize people to make a difference.”

¹ All statistics within these descriptions, unless otherwise noted, are based on community social statistics profiles compiled by the City of Calgary, using data from the 2016 Census of Canada (see The City of Calgary, 2019a).

Another initiative, called This is My Neighbourhood, is a City-facilitated engagement process to better align City resources with residents' desired neighbourhoods. Selected neighbourhoods work with the City over a period of two years to formulate a community vision, around which a variety of programs, services, and minor infrastructure improvements are then developed. One City employee, Lisa, described the program as an “in-depth engagement with residents to identify gaps in their programs or amenities”; once potential projects or programs are selected the City helps “build momentum for the communities so they can carry it forward.” Some examples of completed projects include the placement of bicycle parking, improvement of green spaces, free live entertainment events, or summer recreation programs for children (The City of Calgary, 2019b).

The City of Calgary also works with other agencies to encourage positive, long-term neighbourhood change. The United Way Calgary and Area, for example, has a Neighbourhood Strategy team that contributes to the Strong Neighbourhoods Initiative, and is currently partnering with the City and Rotary to develop a series of Community Hubs. This latter project supports a broader community-based poverty reduction strategy called Enough for All, which is stewarded by Vibrant Communities Calgary (Vibrant Communities Calgary, n.d. b). The Hubs initiative is based on data showing, first, that poverty in Calgary is clustered within certain neighbourhoods; and further, that lower income residents tend to experience higher rates of loneliness and isolation. It therefore aims to increase residents' sense of belonging by establishing inclusive gathering places in six priority communities, where residents can connect with each other and access support services and resources (United Way Calgary and Area, 2018). Collectively, these place-based initiatives are premised on the philosophy that “when neighbourhoods thrive, the people who live there also thrive” (The City of Calgary, 2018g). This

is attributed not only to the influence of neighbourhood context on individual wellbeing, but also to the belief that stronger and supportive communities enable people to work together to find solutions to economic and social challenges (Vibrant Communities Calgary, n.d. a).

4.2 Key Actors

The City of Calgary’s neighbourhood-based programs and services are delivered through a business unit called Calgary Neighbourhoods. The unit incorporates a Neighbourhood Services division with a mandate to ensure the availability of social and recreational opportunities throughout the city (The City of Calgary, 2018d). Each neighbourhood in Calgary (as defined by formal community association boundaries) is assigned one of 24 Neighbourhood Partnership Coordinators (NPCs) to assist the community association with organizational development, financial management, lease agreements and facility maintenance (where relevant), engagement, and programs and services (The City of Calgary, 2018c). As one NPC, Sandra, described, “we want these groups to be successful because we kind of consider them to be a partner in delivering programs and services to Calgarians.”

In addition, Neighbourhood Services staff manage the Family and Community Support Services (FCSS) funding program, a cost-sharing partnership between the provincial and municipal governments. FCSS programs in Calgary support community organizations within two priority areas: increasing social inclusion and strengthening neighbourhoods (Cooper, 2013). Other neighbourhood supports include Community Social Workers (CSWs), whose role is to address the unique social needs of vulnerable Calgarians within priority neighbourhoods. Unlike NPCs, who liaise with community associations, the CSWs work directly with residents. This relationship is evident in a comment by Bridgeland-Riverside community volunteer Barb that, “to me, the social work role is quite critical... Their job is to move and to get to know

people...Getting people knowing one another, helping one another, you know, supporting good ideas and connecting people. Really, really key position.”

Calgary also has a well-developed system of more than 150 volunteer-run community associations (CAs) that complement the services provided by the City itself. The earliest CAs in Calgary were formed in 1908 and in the 1920s, while the first CA was legally incorporated under the provincial Societies Act in 1930. Following the Second World War, the number of grassroots CAs expanded significantly, and Calgary has since developed one of the most active CA networks in western Canada. Membership in CAs is voluntary and open to all residents within the neighbourhood catchment area, for a modest fee, which results in considerable variation in CA populations and geographical sizes (Davies and Townshend, 1994). Although each CA operates as an independent legal entity, the majority have also chosen to join the Federation of Calgary Communities (FCC)—a not-for-profit umbrella organization incorporated in 1961 to support CAs (Davies and Townshend, 1994). The FCC provides governance support and workshops, financial advice, urban planning, and other programs (<https://calgarycommunities.com/about-us/>).

Calgary’s CAs typically focus on providing recreational and social activities to local residents, in part by establishing and maintaining a community centre and other recreational amenities (Davies and Townshend, 1994). The programming varies broadly between organizations but can include sports programs, community gardens, language classes and a range of other services intended to enhance residents’ lifestyles and surroundings (Federation of Calgary Communities, 2018). A recent survey suggests that a majority of Calgarians are aware of their CA and value its role in providing meaningful services. However, only three in ten respondents were actually members of their CA and only a quarter of households participated in

community association activities (Das and Duncan, 2016). This is suggestive of underlying pressures that may be limiting CAs' potential reach, such as limited funding, ageing infrastructure, and volunteer burnout. As Kaitlyn shared of her own experience, turnover on CA boards is high because "you get excited, you go and you do like a year of 30 hours a week and then you go, 'this is nuts, I need to get a life,' and you quit." CAs have also experienced competition from a growing number of residents' associations (RAs), which provide recreational and maintenance needs using mandatory fees collected through encumbrances on homeowners' properties (Conger et al., 2016). As a result, the mandate of CAs has become somewhat blurred, leading Conger et al. (2016) to suggest that CAs are facing the "looming threat of irrelevance due to the erosion of their roles" (p.16).

CAs have traditionally played an important function as the key geographical and social unit for engagement around proposed land use changes or area redevelopment plans (Davies and Townshend, 1994). Through their involvement in planning activities, CAs have served as a "critical quasi-institutional fourth level of government for Calgarians" (Conger et al., 2016, p.1). Most CAs have planning committees which review applications for re-designation, subdivision and development permits. Although they have no formal authority, these committees have significant influence because of their insight into local experiences (Conger et al., 2016). However, the role of CAs in local planning issues came under scrutiny between 2016 and 2018 as part of a broader Council-mandated review of stakeholder engagement, led by a Community Representation Framework Task Force. Initiated in 2016, the Task Force proposed the development of "district forums" to bring together representatives of various community organizations, including CAs, RAs, and a range of other groups, to represent community interests in planning processes (The City of Calgary, 2018b). The Task Force has concluded its

work and pilot projects are currently underway; however, it remains unclear how new planning and engagement processes will affect the role of CAs in community-building issues.

4.3 Community Profiles

As outlined in Chapter 3, this study explores overlapping issues of participation and belonging through eight case study communities (see Figures 4.1 and 4.2). While I outlined the selection criteria for these communities as part of the research methodology, I elaborate here on the communities' distinguishing attributes and characteristics. The goal is not to provide a comprehensive description of each neighbourhood, but rather to illustrate a broad context for the remaining chapters, which will explore participation and belonging in the context of unique community attributes, needs, and interventions.

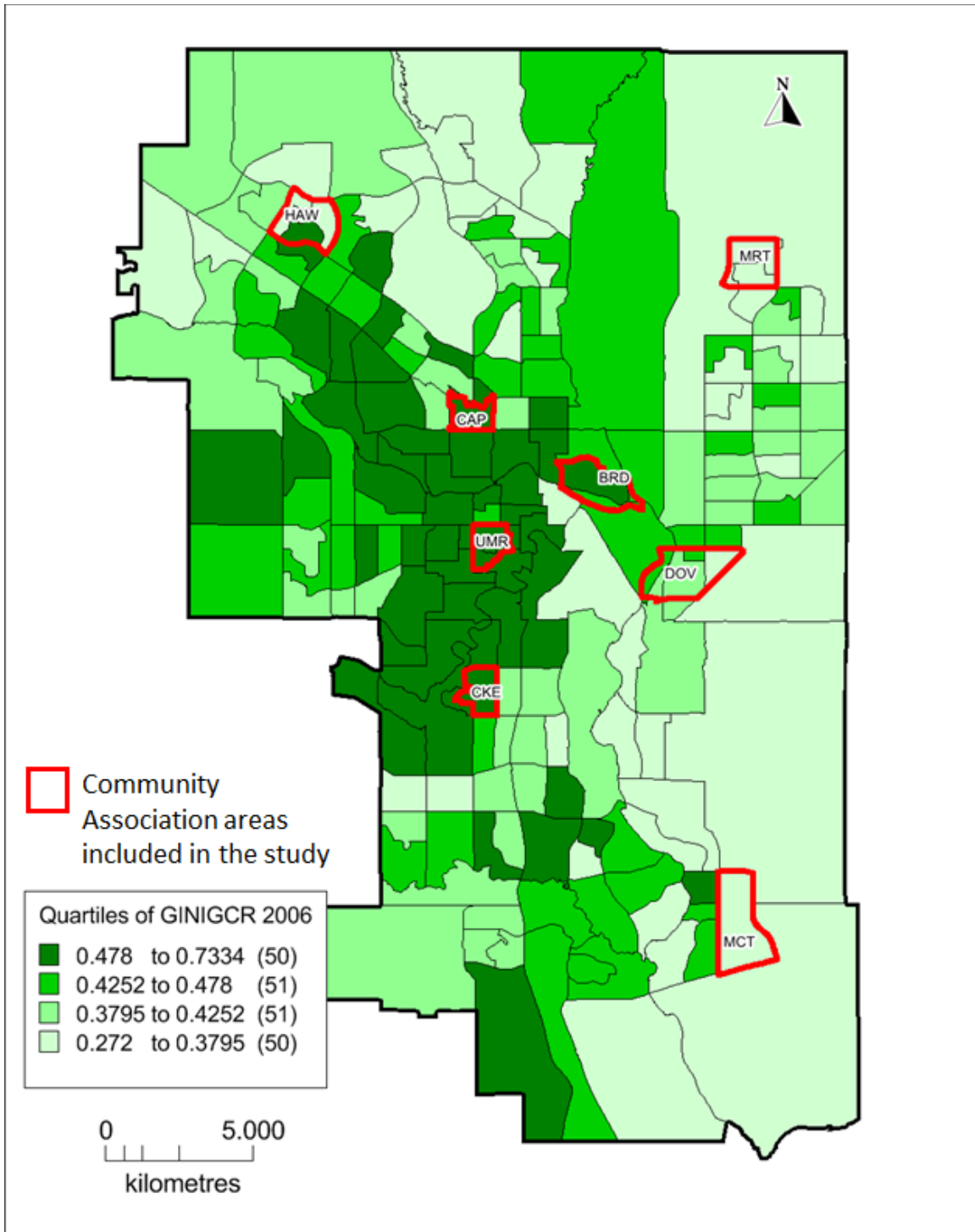


Figure 4.1: Map of Calgary showing case study communities by Community Association areas, and quartiles by Gini Coefficient

BRD: Bridgeland-Riverside; CAP: Capitol Hill; CKE: Chinook Park/Kelvin Grove/Eagle Ridge; DOV: Dover; HAW: Hawkwood; MCT: McKenzie Towne; MRT: Martindale; UMR: Mount Royal

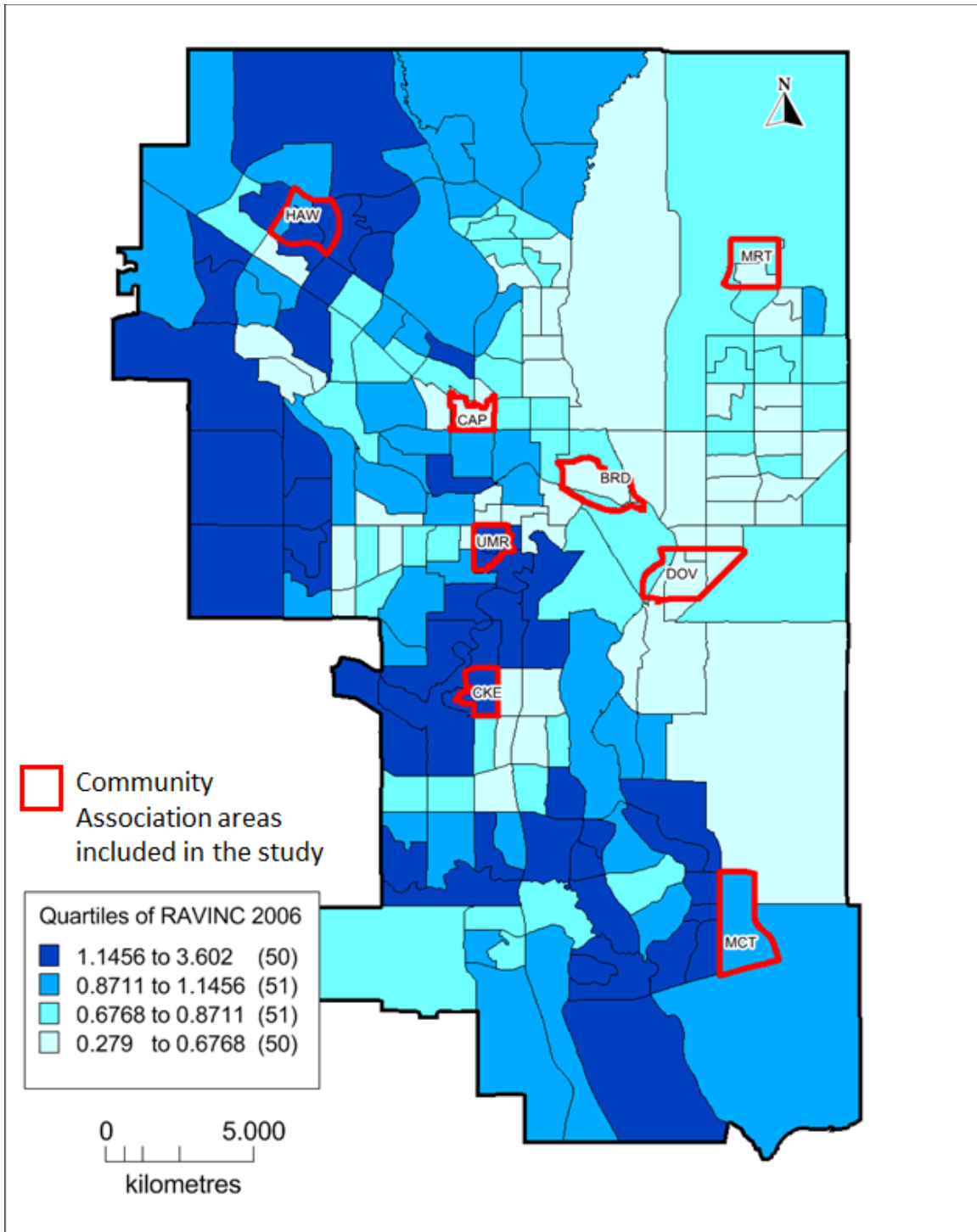


Figure 4.2: Map of Calgary showing case study communities by Community Association areas, and quartiles by Census Tract average individual income

BRD: Bridgeland-Riverside; CAP: Capitol Hill; CKE: Chinook Park/Kelvin Grove/Eagle Ridge; DOV: Dover; HAW: Hawkwood; MCT: McKenzie Towne; MRT: Martindale; UMR: Mount Royal

4.3.1 Mount Royal

Mount Royal is a historic inner-city neighbourhood in Calgary's southwest quadrant, developed by the Canadian Pacific Railway as an exclusive subdivision beginning in 1905. The northernmost section of the community developed first, with luxurious single-detached homes for the city's prominent and affluent residents. The southern section features large lots and curvilinear roads that follow the contours of the hilly district and a prominent escarpment along one border of the community. Early phases of development included restrictive covenants on properties to ensure the area retained its status as a prestigious district. Lots were well landscaped, with trees planted along boulevards and green spaces to create a park-like atmosphere (Corbet and Simpson, 1994). Early residents of Mount Royal included real estate speculators, lawyers and bank managers. Both the demographics and the housing stock gradually diversified after the 1920s, but the community has remained an affluent residence of choice for professionals, entrepreneurs, and executives ("Draft History of Mount Royal," n.d.).

Today Upper and Lower Mount Royal retain distinctive identities based on their historical development and their physical characteristics. Although the boundary between the areas has shifted over time (Corbet and Simpson, 1994), two participants did identify a particular street beyond which, as resident Natasha put it, there are "larger, more grand things as you go up the hill." CA board member Steve explained:

We are divided...into two almost separate communities. There's Upper Mount Royal and Lower Mount Royal—Upper Mount Royal being primarily, almost exclusively, detached homes. A lot of them would be 1910 to 1912 older historic... And then on the north edge of the community is Lower Mount Royal, which is primarily apartment buildings.

The physical distinction between Upper and Lower Mount Royal is also reflected in each area's demographic profiles. Lower Mount Royal, being adjacent to a trendy commercial strip along 17th Avenue S, has attracted a younger and much more mobile demographic, which is reflective

of the “youthification” also evident elsewhere in Calgary’s central city (Townshend et al., 2018). As Steve, a member of the community association, described, “you’ve got renters—people starting out, service industry for a lot of the bars and restaurants along the strip here.” In 2016, Lower Mount Royal’s median household income was \$69,065, considerably lower than the city-wide average of \$97,329. Other notable attributes are that most residents (93%) live in multi-family dwellings; the majority (64%) are renters rather than homeowners; and more than half (61%) live alone.



Figure 4.3: Apartment complexes in Lower Mount Royal

In contrast, 71% of residents in Upper Mount Royal live in single-detached dwellings. While one resident commented that Upper Mount Royal is “not all richy-rich,” the median household income of \$214,282 is more than twice the city-wide average. A majority of residents are homeowners (75%) and non-movers (86%). These social characteristics are reflected in

physical terms as well. Upper Mount Royal remains dominated by estate homes, though as CA member Steve commented, “there is a lot of redevelopment going on... Because of the proximity to the downtown core, they’re bulldozing houses, rebuilding them.” Meanwhile, Lower Mount Royal features smaller lots laid out on a grid pattern and has attracted a growing number of apartment blocks and condominiums since the 1960s.



Figure 4.4: Estate home in Upper Mount Royal

As effectively the only community-based organization in the neighbourhood, the Mount Royal Community Association was registered in 1934 and initially worked to safeguard Mount Royal’s upper middle-class character (“Draft History of Mount Royal,” n.d.; Federation of Calgary Communities, 2015). During the 1960s the Mount Royal Community Association began advocating for barricades to restrict cut-through commuters. Traffic issues have remained a core concern of the CA, while other key initiatives currently include attempting to slow the spread of

scale amongst cotoneasters and providing feedback on local pathway development. The CA maintains a facility known as “The Station” and an outdoor skating rink and playground. Memberships are open to community residents for a cost of \$25 (individual) or \$50 (family), and members enjoy a range of events such as an annual skating party, barbeque, wine night, and progressive dinner (<https://www.mountroyalstation.ca/>). In the words of one City employee, the Mount Royal Community Association is, “a ‘have’ group... They have a lot of money, their facility is in very good condition, their playground is in super good condition... [It’s] a ‘have’ community.”

4.3.2 Hawkwood

Hawkwood is an established upper middle-class suburb in northwest Calgary, first developed in 1981. It has major arterial roads along the perimeter, following neighbourhood unit principles first proposed by Clarence Perry in 1929 (Mehaffy et al., 2015), along with discontinuous curvilinear local streets and commercial uses located at the edges of the neighbourhood. As an upper-middle income community (\$128,810 median household income), nearly all residents live in owner-occupied (94%), single-detached dwellings (91%), most of which are fairly substantial in size. There are several parks and green strips connecting to the municipal pathway system, and a small strip mall located across from an elementary school. There is also a large shopping complex to the west of community that also includes facilities such as a YMCA and public library branch.

Amongst the communities examined in this study, Hawkwood has the lowest rate of mobility, at 7%. Yet despite its relative stability, the neighbourhood has a high number of immigrants (35%) and visible minorities (38%); as white, Canadian-born resident Linda described, “there’s a high percentage of Asian population in this community [and] a fairly

significant population of [what] my kids describe as the Browns.” Although separate data is not available, there is an exclusive community called the Uplands located on a high ridge near the centre of the neighbourhood. This area is governed by a residents’ association and maintains its own recreation facilities through a system of mandatory annual fees paid by homeowners.



Figure 4.5: Semi-gated entrance to the Uplands

The Hawkwood Community Association (HCA) does not currently have a community centre. However, they do maintain an outdoor rink and use a community park to host a number of special events year-round, such as a winter festival and movie in the park. The HCA also organizes community clean-ups, a garage sale parade, a soccer program and other ongoing social and recreational programs. According to a draft community plan by the HCA, residents greatly value the aesthetic experience of the community, in part to maintain property values (Harding, 2014). In 2003 residents took note of the community’s “aesthetic downward spiral” and a

majority of homeowners approved the city's first LEAF program (Landscape Enhancement and Appreciation Fund). The program involves a mandatory tax levy that funds beautification projects including planters at entrances to the community and along medians (Hawkwood Community Association, 2014). Aside from the HCA and a Hawkwood/Citadel Scouts group, there are few other community organizations within the neighbourhood.



Figure 4.6: Typical housing style in Hawkwood, with front garages

4.3.3 McKenzie Towne

McKenzie Towne is a master planned neotraditional community in southeast Calgary. It is based on the new urbanist movement and concepts, including a pedestrian-friendly landscape and a dense “village” feel (Grant, 2006). McKenzie Towne was first developed in 1995 and includes a mix of housing types including brownstones and traditional house styles (Grant, 2006) within three distinctive areas named for Scottish cities: Inverness, Prestwick, and Elgin. According to

Shannon in McKenzie Towne, her family has “everything we need in the community as far as recreational amenities and things like that—but also your grocery store, your barber, doctor, drug store, restaurant, those things.” These amenities are clustered within a “high street” business centre; there is also a mix of big box stores north of 130th Avenue, and an extensive pathway system that runs, in part, around two storm water retention ponds. McKenzie Towne is a relatively young community with 27% of the population aged 19 and under. The average income is just slightly higher than for the city generally, at \$104,506, and 81% of households are owners rather than renters. Other notable demographic characteristics are its relatively low percentage of immigrants (21%), visible minorities (20%), and low-income residents (6%).



Figure 4.7: Inverness Gazebo Park with brownstones in background

McKenzie Towne has a volunteer-run community association that acts as a voice for the community in City matters. Although the CA does not have its own facility, it offers various events, a soccer program and monthly newsletters. McKenzie Towne also has a residents’

association incorporated as the McKenzie Towne Council. Homeowners pay a mandatory yearly fee through an encumbrance on their property title, which is used to fund landscaping, administration of the Council and maintenance of a variety of amenities put in place by the developer. These include a very active “Towne Hall” facility, a toboggan run, gazebo, picnic shelter, skateboard park/hockey rink and other amenities (McKenzie Towne Council, 2018).



Figure 4.8: Storm water retention pond in McKenzie Towne

4.3.4 Chinook Park, Kelvin Grove, and Eagle Ridge (CKE)

Chinook Park, Kelvin Grove and Eagle Ridge (CKE) comprises three distinctive residential areas developed in the 1960s, which straddle 14th Street south of Glenmore Trail. Chinook Park has a higher than average median household income at \$129,427 and a majority are owner households (86%) in single-detached dwellings (85%). It has a low percentage of movers, and only modest numbers of visible minorities (17%) and low-income residents (6%). Kelvin Grove has a lower

median household income at \$84,960; nearly half of residents are renters, and only 40% live in single-detached homes. In recent years, both Chinook Park and Kelvin Grove have seen a resurgence with younger families moving in. According to Mark, a board member who grew up in the community, “it used to be a suburb, now it’s borderline inner-city...So we’re seeing that pressure of becoming a bit more urban.” Meanwhile, Mark saw Eagle Ridge as a “separate entity” from the other two communities, located between Heritage Park Historical Village and the Rockyview Hospital in a relatively secluded area west of 14th Street. Eagle Ridge is also demographically distinct; with only 315 residents, it has a median household income of \$263,754—more than twice that of Chinook Park and three times that of Kelvin Grove.



Figure 4.9: Cul-de-sac in Chinook Park



Figure 4.10: Estate home in Eagle Ridge

CKE has an active community association formed in 1961 (Federation of Calgary Communities, 2015). The CA has several subcommittees and clubs which maintain a brand-new facility, a community garden, tennis courts, two outdoor skating rinks, a soccer league and other programs. The CKE Community Association also organizes annual social events, such as a skating party and Halloween party, and is active in various community initiatives such as “Pay it Forward” events to raise money for the benefit of local and international causes (<http://ckecommunity.com/>). Aside from the CA, there is only a small number of other community organizations based in CKE, which include a complex for homeless youth in Eagle Ridge, a seniors’ care facility in Chinook Park, and several religious congregations. The main commercial areas are located on Elbow Drive, along the eastern boundary of the community.

4.3.5 Martindale

Martindale was established in 1983 in Calgary's northeast quadrant, following neighbourhood unit design principles; similar to Hawkwood, Martindale is bordered by major transportation arteries with commercial establishments located on the perimeter. It was described by an original homeowner in the neighbourhood, Stacy, as a "starter community" with many young families and children. Although the median household income is just below the city-wide average, at \$87,668, the vast majority of residents live in owner households (79%) and single-detached dwellings (86%). One of the most notable demographic characteristics of Martindale is the high number of visible minorities (79%) and immigrants (57%); only 37% of residents speak English most often at home. As City employee Naya related, Martindale has "a lot of newcomers to Canada, immigrants especially from South Asia... The most common language spoken in Martindale is Punjabi." This ethno-cultural diversity is also reflected in the community's amenities, which include a Sikh Gurdwara (see Figure 4.9, Dashmesh Culture Centre), an Islamic mosque on the northern boundary, and a number of Punjabi restaurants and stores, both in Martindale and immediately to the south.



Figure 4.11: Dashmesh Cultural Centre

Further to ethno-cultural and faith-based organizations, Martindale is home to the Genesis Centre, a community hub offering a range of recreational opportunities and social agencies that are accessed by residents of Martindale and surrounding communities. The Martindale Community Association does not have its own facility, but organizes events such as jelly bean dances, family carnivals and community clean-ups at local parks and venues including the Genesis Centre (Martindale Community Association, n.d.). Because of its cultural and religious diversity, and because it has been recognized as a vulnerable “tipping point” community (Community & Neighbourhood Services, 2010), Martindale was selected for the Strong Neighbourhoods Initiative. The Martindale Development and Action Committee (MDAC) was formed in 2010 as part of the initiative, and works as a volunteer-run, resident-led organization to address community issues. With support from the City of Calgary and the United

Way, MDAC distributes small grants of \$600 to support projects designed to connect residents with one another and improve the community—such as workshops, walking groups, or block parties (Martindale Development and Action Committee, n.d.).



Figure 4.12: Level C-Train crossing in Martindale

4.3.6 Dover

First developed in 1971, Dover is located in Calgary’s southeast quadrant and is one of seven communities comprising the “Greater Forest Lawn” area (see <http://intlave.ca/our-community/>).

West Dover is based on an experimental housing design in which residences front onto a shared greenspace, “meant to build a sense of space [and] connection within the community” as a City employee explained. The neighbourhood has a high concentration of affordable housing units, though recent development along the westernmost edge of Dover incorporates higher-end multi-family housing next to a large and well-used park. Because of its location and easy access to

downtown, Dover is currently experiencing redevelopment pressures despite the continuing presence of many original owners; as one of these early homeowners, Gary related that realtors are “promoting this area as buy now, renovate, and generate revenue later, by suite-ing.” However, Dover’s roots as a working-class neighbourhood continue to be reflected in the community’s median household income, which is below the city’s average at \$64,551, and in the relatively high number of renter households (34%). Based on wellbeing indicators, Dover is ranked as Calgary’s sixth most vulnerable community; it is second in the city in terms of single-parent families, fourth in terms of unemployed adults, and fourth in terms of the number of individuals in low-income households (Community & Neighbourhood Services, 2010).



Figure 4.13: Residences fronting shared green space in Dover

In part because of its affordability, and in part because of its proximity to jobs in an industrial area to the south, Dover has been a reception area for several waves of newcomers to

Canada including Vietnamese, South Sudanese and Syrian communities; it also has a relatively high Indigenous (Aboriginal) population (7%), all of which contributes to the community's diversity. Dover has a number of local businesses throughout the community, but is also served by International Avenue, a commercial district along 17th Avenue SE that is distinguished by a wide range of restaurants and retail shops. In terms of community organizations, the Dover Community Association maintains a hall in west Dover, which is used for both rentals and community programs—for example, a dart league, an out-of-school care program, and meet-ups for both seniors and girls aged eight to 13 (<https://www.dovercommunitycalgary.com/>). The CA also works with a Community Social Worker and several social service providers that operate within the Greater Forest Lawn area. These include, among others, Action Dignity (formerly the Ethno Cultural Council of Calgary), the United Way Calgary and Area, Hull Services, and Sunrise Community Link Resource Centre. From 2015 to 2016, Dover was chosen for the City's "This is My Neighborhood" initiative, through which several resident-led community improvements were made. Some examples include basketball infrastructure at the CA hall, a cleanup event, and painting of utility boxes and garbage bins (The City of Calgary, 2019d).



Figure 4.14: Dover Community Association hall

4.3.7 Bridgeland-Riverside

Bridgeland-Riverside is an inner-city community located just north of the Bow River, in the city's northeast quadrant. Riverside and Bridgeland first developed in the late nineteenth century and were formally annexed by the City of Calgary in 1907 and 1910 respectively. The working-class district served as the heart of Calgary's early Italian, Russian-German and Ukrainian communities (Sanders, 2005). Bridgeland, to the north, was and remains primarily residential with single-detached homes, many of which have recently been redeveloped with infill properties. This transition has been driven in part by the City of Calgary's strategy to slow suburban sprawl by increasing density in inner-city neighbourhoods. Bridgeland-Riverside is connected to an extensive river pathway system and the Light Rail Transit (LRT) system, which has encouraged Transit-Oriented Development in the community (The City of Calgary, 2018a).



Figure 4.15: Bridgeland Market

Riverside, to the south of Bridgeland, was dominated for several decades by the General Hospital, which opened in 1910. Over the years the community declined, and as resident Barb recalled, “when I first moved here there was a terrible problem with drug houses and safety issues in the Riverside area, because people had left and were renting out their places. And it was pretty rough.” However, the hospital’s closure in 1997 and demolition in 1998 was a catalyst for dramatic change. The 30-acre site has since been redeveloped through a City-led project known as The Bridges—a walkable, mixed-use “urban village” integrating dense multi-family housing units with commercial and office space (Sturgess Architecture, n.d.). Although some notable multigenerational family-owned businesses remain, such as Bridgeland Market and Luke’s Drug Mart, the community’s two commercial strips along Edmonton Trail and 1 Avenue NE have also been redeveloped with trendy restaurants, cafes, and urban markets.

Bridgeland-Riverside's demographics reflect these recent transitions, with high rates of movers (25%) and renters (56%). There is a distinct population bulge in the 25-34 years of age band, and a higher than average number of residents over the age of 70. This is consistent with the wide availability of multi-family housing, as well as seniors' care facilities located in Bridgeland-Riverside's southeast corner, an area referred to as "East Riverside" (The City of Calgary, 2018a). The median household income in the neighbourhood is \$64,201, which is the lowest of all communities included in this study. Bridgeland-Riverside has a number of non-market housing complexes, and other non-profit associations such as the CNIB, a crisis nursery, and the Women's Centre. Further to these social agencies, the Bridgeland-Riverside Community Association (BRCA) also offers a wide array of programs and services to local residents. The BRCA operates a community centre in Murdoch Park, a large green space on the former hospital site. It also runs a soccer program, a garden club, a Blockwatch group and a farmer's market, and hosts a tool lending library within its hall. The BRCA is heavily involved in urban planning issues and serves as a voice for the community in development, beautification, and transportation issues (<https://www.brcacalgary.org/>).



Figure 4.16: Bridgeland-Riverside Community Association hall

4.3.8 Capitol Hill

Capitol Hill is located in Calgary’s northwest quadrant between 16 Avenue NW (Trans-Canada Highway) on the south and Confederation Park on the north; it is bisected by 14th Street NW.

The community was established in 1948 and developed through the 1950s. It is laid out on a grid street pattern, with housing stock comprising mainly modest mid-century bungalows, some earlier homes, and a growing number of infill housing developments. As one resident described, “there’s still some pretty old homes in the area, but we’re getting some of the snazzy modern infills. And that makes me think that there’s probably a pretty wide diversity of people.” There are several retail establishments along 20th Avenue NW and along the community’s perimeter; however, the main commercial area serving Capitol Hill is the North Hill shopping centre just southwest of the community.



Figure 4.17: Mid-century bungalow next to infill residence

Capitol Hill is home to several non-profit agencies, including an accessible housing complex, an assisted living seniors' facility, and a transition house. The Capitol Hill Community Association (CHCA), formed in 1949, maintains a facility that accommodates both community and private uses; it houses a preschool, established in 1965, and a large community garden also on the site. Capitol Hill's increasing density has attracted more young families to the area, which is reflected in the broad range of community events the CHCA offers, such as a snowman-making competition, Easter egg hunt and Mom's night out (<https://capitolhillcommunity.ca/>). Meanwhile, the proximity of Capitol Hill to both the Southern Alberta Institute of Technology (SAIT) and the University of Calgary adds to the high number of renters in the community (57%) and single-person households (37%); it also likely contributes to Capitol Hill's below-average median household income (\$73,030). From 2015 to 2016 Capitol Hill was included in

the This is My Neighbourhood program, through which residents developed a vision as “an inclusive, connected and pedestrian friendly community” (The City of Calgary, 2019c). Residents also identified several new initiatives that have since been implemented, such as bicycle parking, garbage bins in public parks, Lawn Chair Theatre, and a Community Play Day.



Figure 4.18: Capitol Hill Community Association community garden

4.4 Summary

In the past decade, the City of Calgary has implemented a number of place-based interventions designed to address inequities by fostering social inclusion, active participation in civic life, and a sense of belonging within neighbourhoods (The City of Calgary, 2018e). Together these programs share a broad purpose of strengthening neighbourhoods in order to increase both individual and community wellbeing, and to reduce the spatial concentration of poverty and disadvantage (Secretariat of the Calgary Poverty Reduction Initiative, 2013). Although they are

supported by a combination of City departments and social service providers, the programs are primarily resident-led, following a community development framework focused on capacity building. A major goal is to increase the social inclusion and meaningful participation of all residents in community life, and to remove barriers that lead to isolation and exclusion (Cooper, 2013; United Way Calgary and Area, 2016).

While some similarities can be drawn between the communities included in this study, such as those experiencing rapid gentrification or other more established suburbs, all are economically and socially mixed to a greater or lesser extent. The communities' unique characteristics influence who lives there, which residents participate and how, the local CA's mandate and organizational culture, the nature of City resources and the presence of other service providers in the neighbourhood. These factors in turn also help shape the power dynamics within each community context and the extent to which residents are, or are not, engaged in community life. In the next chapters I explore both the commonalities and variabilities between neighbourhoods in further depth. I begin in Chapter 5 by looking at socio-spatial differentiation within communities, followed by detailed analysis of formal and informal community participation in Chapters 6 and 7.

Chapter 5: Geographies of Belonging

5.0 Introduction

This chapter focuses on diverse geographies of belonging within Calgary neighbourhoods and the ways in which they illuminate underlying socio-spatial inequalities. As described in Chapter 2, a number of recent studies on neighbourhood change have identified patterns of income inequality and polarization between neighbourhoods in Canadian cities, revealing important insights into structural characteristics and inequalities (Murdie and Logan, 2014; Séguin et al., 2012). However, the dynamics of socio-spatial inequality within neighbourhoods are less well understood, despite the fact that, as Kitchen and Williams (2009) argue, change is most strongly felt at the community level. As Sampson et al. (2002) further point out, administratively defined units or census tracts, which are commonly used in neighbourhood research, fall short in capturing the “logic of street patterns and the social networks of neighbour interactions” (p.445); thus, the ways in which residents define their own neighbourhoods bears further investigation.

In this chapter I explore the complex dynamics of neighbourhood change through a qualitative approach. I begin with an overview of the participatory maps created in this study. Using the lens of belonging, I then discuss themes generated through analysis of both the in-depth interviews and maps to 1) illuminate how participants define their neighbourhoods; 2) understand how residents perceive complex socio-spatial divisions within their neighbourhoods; and 3) consider the broader implications of these divisions.

5.1 Participatory Maps

Although not every participant chose to complete a participatory map, those who did shared rich responses that illustrate complex geographies of belonging and not-belonging in Calgary neighbourhoods. Each map identified different points, highlighting the individualized meanings

of local spaces and the diverse emotional connections of residents to their neighbourhoods. At the same time, clusters of similar responses suggest key spaces of encounter or exclusion within each community, and the intersecting nature of residents' everyday lives.

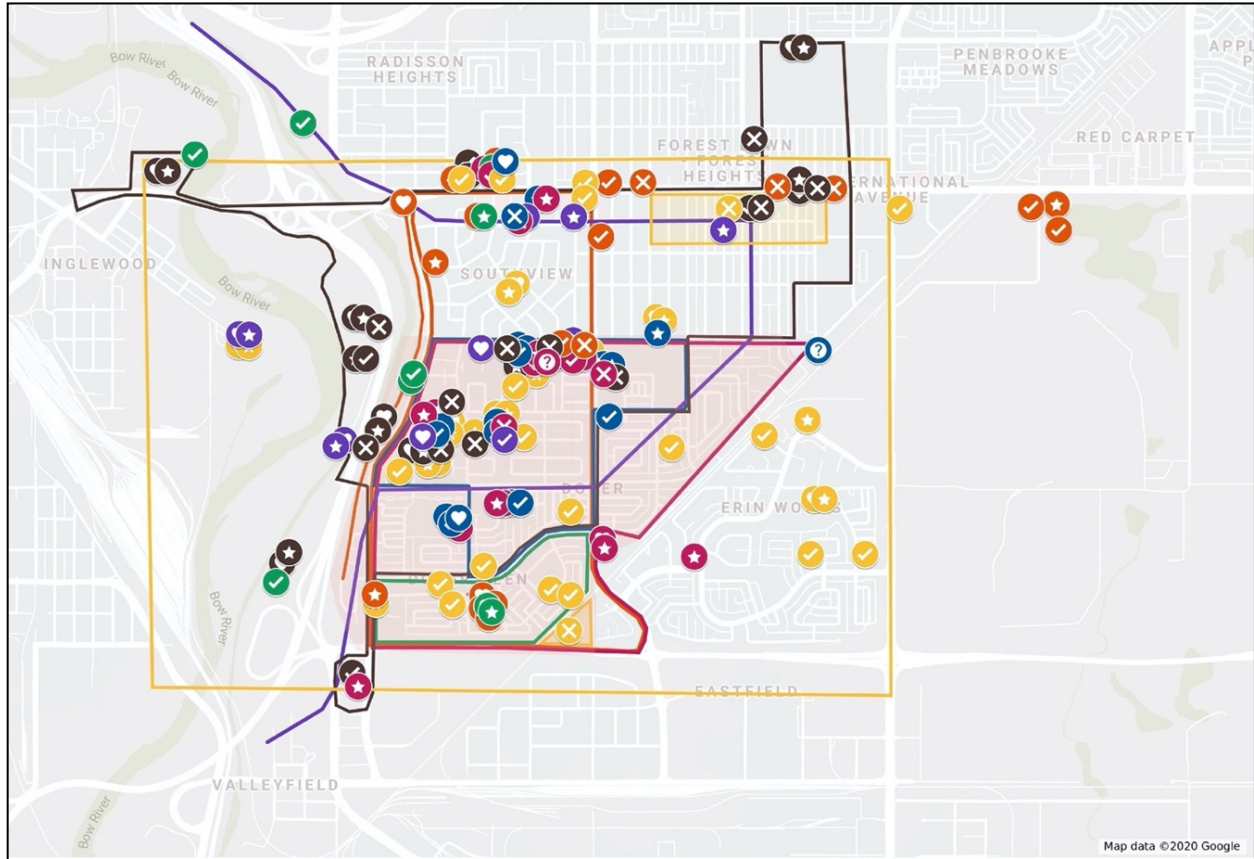


Figure 5.1: Digitized participatory maps of Dover (overlaid)

Unlike this static representation, the interactive version of the Google MyMaps can be enlarged for a more detailed view, and each point is annotated with participants' comments. The base map may also be changed to include additional geographical information.

5.2 Defining Neighbourhood

To begin probing how participants understood their neighbourhoods, participants were asked in both the qualitative interviews and the mapping activity to describe the boundaries of “their” neighbourhoods. In his research, Lohman (2016) noted that resident-defined neighbourhoods were typically significantly smaller than census tracts. However, the participatory maps in this study suggest two cases where residents’ perceptions of their neighbourhoods aligned closely with formal community boundaries. The first was among residents who were active with the community association (CA) board. On every map that CA board members completed, self-identified neighbourhood boundaries were nearly identical to formal CA boundaries. This congruence appears to be related to how individuals understand their mandate to serve and represent the interests of their communities. As a very engaged Bridgeland resident, Barb, explained,

I’m quite aware of where the neighbourhood is... My involvement with the community and crime prevention—like what’s our turf? What’s the stuff that we need to be concerned about, and watching and mindful of?

Longer-term residents’ self-identified neighbourhoods were also largely consistent with formal boundaries. Recent movers typically identified smaller areas around their home street or block, in addition to major commercial areas; meanwhile longer-term residents generally identified with a much larger residential neighbourhood encompassing friends’ homes, businesses, and community facilities. Long-term residents also frequently referenced historical developments when describing their neighbourhood, suggesting that they identified personally with the neighbourhood’s history and place identity, at least to a degree. This had a potentially important bearing on the extent to which they felt rooted in their community, as suggested by Bridgeland-Riverside resident, Clare:

[It is] one of the older communities and I think that makes a big difference in people's feeling like they belong and are engaged. There's lots of families that have lived here for a very long time.

In contrast to the participants who recognized their formal community boundaries, others defined their neighbourhoods in a more functional way based on walkability or the "distance that I'm willing to venture," as Clare put it. Newly established Dover homeowner Justin included the part of the community that seemed more familiar to him and his partner "because we've spent time on foot within that area more than other areas, we ride our bike through that area a bit more, we've met people on the street a bit more." Meanwhile, "bike and foot distance" were the primary criteria for Maria's neighbourhood boundary in Chinook Park. As a recent immigrant from a smaller American city and a mother of young children, the walkability of the neighbourhood strongly influenced Maria's feeling of belonging:

Having schools within walkable distance, having some stores that we could access on foot...at least for me it's a very important part of feeling like you have a place. The ability to go out on foot and not be tied to a car... So in that sense the physical closeness of this neighbourhood to some of those amenities is very important for me to feel that I will have a chance to belong here.

Residents of older inner-city neighbourhoods often felt that physical characteristics such as grid-style blocks, boulevards with trees, and front porches helped foster what one participant in Bridgeland called a "sense of accessibility," in comparison to newer neighbourhoods with curvilinear street plans or front garages. In contrast, Carol, a retired homeowner in the semi-gated part of Hawkwood, commented on the difficulty of navigating "closed streets" and the area's "locked-in design." She questioned, "what does it do to a neighbourhood when you can't easily access one part to another?" As these examples suggest, a neighbourhood's physical environment and design play a role in how residents experience the space, and the extent to which they feel they belong. Some residents—typically those who are more dominant within

neighbourhood politics and social life through the community association—feel more connected to their broadly defined neighbourhoods. However, for most people, the neighbourhood is a much more fluid space that is constituted through a variety of day-to-day uses and interactions.

5.3 Places of Belonging and Connection

In addition to probing perceptions of neighbourhood boundaries, the mapping activity and interviews also sought to understand the “nodes” and “moorings” (van Kempen and Wissink, 2014) within neighbourhoods where people develop social connections and a feeling of belonging in place. This section describes six themes that emerged through data analysis in relation to places of belonging and connection: ownership, encounter, intersecting webs, fitting in, in-between places, and scale.

5.3.1 Ownership

While they were free to use any symbols to annotate their maps, the majority of participants chose a heart to represent the deep emotional connections they had to particular places of belonging. Almost all respondents identified their own homes and blocks as the places where they felt the strongest sense of belonging. Clare valued her “local” lifestyle as a relatively new homeowner in Bridgeland-Riverside, and typically walked with her husband and young daughter to nearby restaurants, markets and even their child-care facility. She commented that the familiar streets near her home felt like they were “partially mine.” This possessive framing suggests an opportunity to belong based not on Clare’s duration of residence, but on the congruence between her chosen place of residence and her own life story, which Savage et al. (2005) describe as “elective belonging.” Clare felt at home because the neighbourhood offered the lifestyle and local amenities she wanted:

it's awesome, it's so close to transit, we're basically right downtown, there's a playground on the street [...] and I would say it's 90% small business owners in the neighbourhood, and that's really, really important to us.

However, the same claim to ownership also resonates with what Kern (2016, p.443) calls “place-taking,” a process whereby middle-class values, consumption-oriented spaces, and place-making events within gentrifying areas exclude more marginalized individuals from a sense of place or belonging. In contrast to Clare’s experience, another young woman, Samira, had lived her whole life in affordable housing in Riverside with her mother, a first generation immigrant from north Africa. Samira associated her home with fear and insecurity after witnessing repeated fights and abuse in her building, and described feeling increasingly out of place as her neighbourhood densified. Rather than shopping at the local specialty markets, Samira typically used public transit to buy groceries at a large supermarket three neighbourhoods away. Although she wished she could move to a safer building, she was limited by what Jeffery (2018) describes as “prescribed” spatial belonging, informed by both the lack of choice in location of residence and the inability to take advantage of newer neighbourhood amenities. In this sense the day-to-day spatial practices that Clare enjoyed within her neighbourhood also inadvertently worked to shape Samira’s feeling of not fully belonging, even within the area where she had grown up.

5.3.2 Encounter

Aside from their own individual homes, many places that participants identified with belonging overlapped with places where they typically connect with others. The homes of friends or family members living in the same neighbourhood were especially important to participants’ feeling of wellbeing, as well as green spaces, community centres and recreational facilities. Public spaces in particular provide opportunities to meet friends or existing acquaintances from neighbourhood-based activities, but also to develop new social contacts. They constitute what

some sociologists refer to as “third places”: everyday public settings outside of work and home that provide opportunities for sociability and serve as a meeting place for people who are “ostensibly different from oneself” (Oldenburg and Brissett, 1982, p.276; for a recent empirical study see Williams and Hipp, 2019). These settings where people gather informally to socialize have alternatively been theorized as “bumping places” (e.g., Bagnall et al., 2018), or “social conduits” (Corcoran et al., 2018). Through residents’ everyday spatial routines within neighbourhood places, these scholars argue that regular encounters over time contribute to familiarity, and ultimately cohesion.

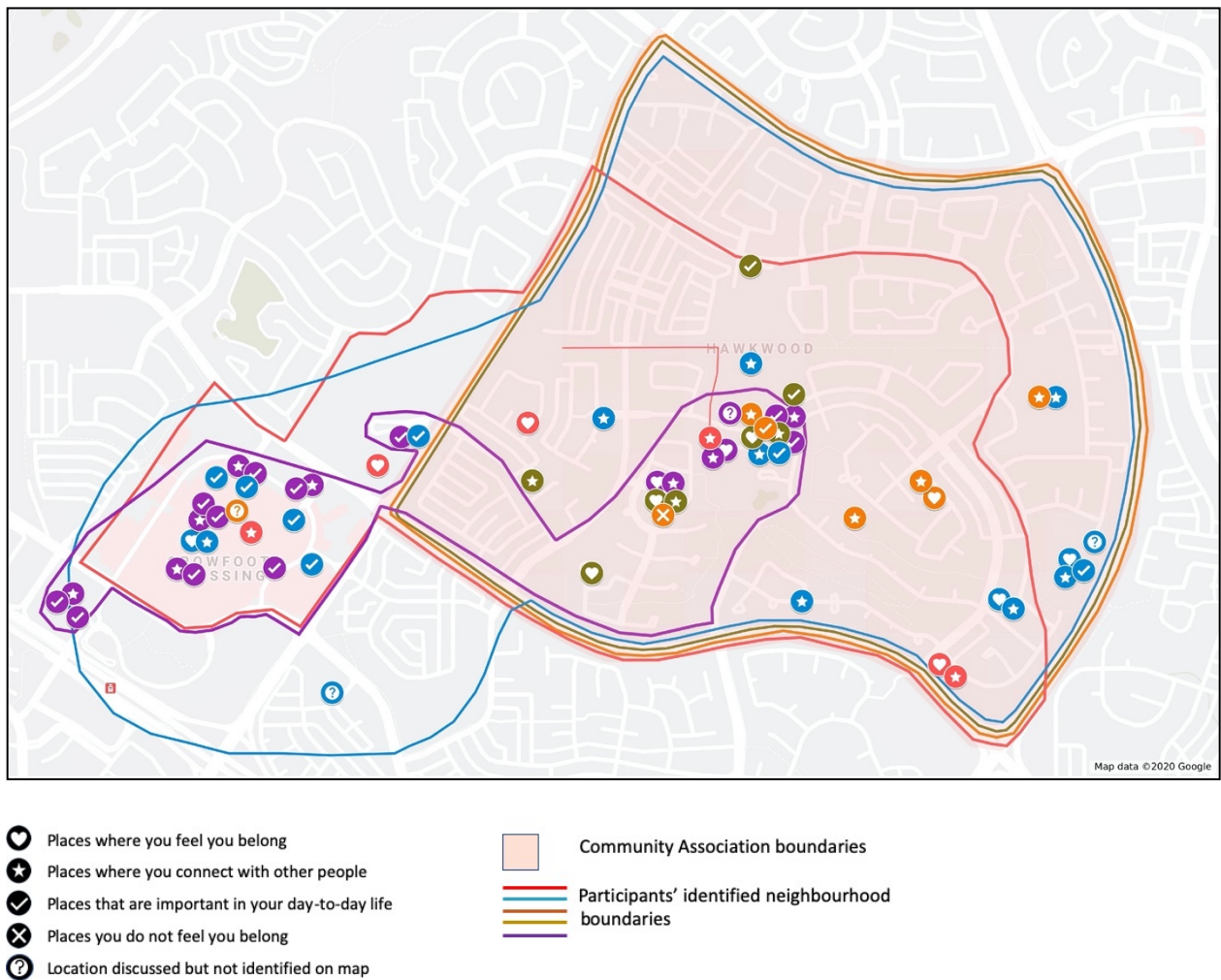


Figure 5.2: Digitized participatory maps of Hawkwood (overlaid)

Unlike the day-to-day commercial locations associated with more transactional encounters, participants also frequently associated particular types of establishments with deeply felt belonging and connection. For some residents, independent, local, or multigenerational family businesses offered a more meaningful interaction than more corporate places of consumption. For example Dana, a homeowner in Dover, described a locally-owned convenience store she frequented near her home as being important because “we’re recognized and we know the people there well enough to go beyond an interaction of just purchasing, into more of a friendly conversation.” In Martindale and Dover, the familiar smells and tastes in ethnic food stores offered comfort, and could help bridge immigrants’ past and current homes. Meanwhile, a community social worker regularly visited a particular thrift shop because it was a neighbourhood hub where he was confident of being able to connect with residents. Thus, while they are rarely considered in community participation research, places of consumption are often important to residents’ spatial routines and the ways in which they experience belonging in their neighbourhoods. They also frequently become *de facto* community hubs for residents who do not have access to, or do not feel comfortable in, other shared public spaces.

As these examples suggest, participants overwhelmingly framed belonging in relation to not just the places themselves but the social encounters that occurred within those places. As Huizinga and van Hoven (2018) have reflected, belonging often emerges and is experienced in everyday local contexts and specific neighbourhood places. However, the quality of encounter is significant in shaping belonging; residents identified many “transitory spaces” where they experienced “fleeting encounters” (Huizinga and van Hoven, 2018, p.313) in their day-to-day lives, but without any significant emotional dimension. In contrast, repeated encounters with neighbours in community halls or parks helped constitute richer dimensions of belonging in

place by providing spaces where contact between neighbours was normalized, and by encouraging more sustained social contact. This contact allowed for friendships and caring bonds to develop. In the words of Capitol Hill resident, Ann, “connection through communication is what allows people to let that barrier down. And it is the secret sauce, you know, to feeling like you belong.”

However, some important qualifications must be noted. Several participants identified community hubs, such as CA halls or Martindale’s Genesis Centre, as being unwelcoming if they were dominated by a “core group” that was perceived to represent their own or a limited range of interests. One participant used a magnet metaphor to describe her community hall’s “repel feeling” after going to put up posters for a workshop she was offering for neighbours. She was frustrated by the difficulty of locating the entrance to the building, and by not finding anyone there once she did get in. Likewise, places of worship can be welcoming to their own membership by offering an opportunity to gather, affirm cultural connections, and celebrate together; but they can also feel unwelcoming to non-members. CKE resident Mark commented about a local church that held regular events that were ostensibly open to everyone, yet felt exclusionary to him: “in some ways they’re a bit of a community gathering spot... but we’re non-religious people, so ‘you’re in the church or you’re not’.” These comments are a reminder that individuals can have very different emotional connections to the same place depending on whether or not they belong in cultural, religious, economic, or other terms. They illustrate how neighbourhood spaces can be ambiguous, fostering both belonging and exclusions at the same time.

5.3.3 Intersecting webs

Another consistent theme across the case studies is captured in a comment by John, a father in Capitol Hill, that “the kids stitch it together.” Individuals with younger children often developed “intersecting webs” within their neighbourhoods through repeated encounters with the same families at playgrounds, schools, soccer fields, or family-oriented community events. These interactions with people at similar life stages often developed into deeper friendships and contributed significantly to a feeling of belonging in place. Clare, who lived in Bridgeland-Riverside, observed that she had a much greater interest in building connections with neighbours after she became a parent:

It has to do with having a child now, and you’re sort of seeking out a community as a parent. Or you happen to be at the playground and see the same people over and over again; or you go to the kids’ Halloween party and you see the same people—definitely I feel a sense that [this] is my community. I belong here.”

However, in some cases schools posed a distinct barrier to belonging. In CKE, McKenzie Towne and Capitol Hill, participants commented that school catchment areas did not align with community association boundaries—meaning that some children’s designated schools, and therefore friend networks, were located outside of the neighbourhood. Other parents deliberately chose alternative educational options; Sarah, a white, middle-class homeowner in Dover, for example, decided to home school her daughter in order to avoid the “unique set of challenges” present in neighbourhood schools—notably the high number of ESL students. Both cases reduced opportunities for children and parents to meet or interact with others living close by.

5.3.4 Fitting in

As with young families, many participants talked about feeling a stronger sense of belonging among residents with similar characteristics. People felt comfortable when they “fit” demographically in their neighbourhoods, as illustrated by Justin, a young homeowner who had

recently moved with his partner to a gentrifying area of Dover: “There’s other people of our same age and place in life... I guess kind of financially we belong here because this is a place we could afford, so there is some kind of practical belonging there.” Some also felt comfortable and at home when they were among others from their own ethno-cultural background. For Aruna, a single mother who had immigrated from India, it was particularly important to be surrounded by the familiar foods and customs that were widely available to her in Martindale:

Every second person I see is coming from my kind of culture... So it’s easy to relate, smile, talk. We have shops where we can go to, where we can find our own stuff [...] I don’t miss India a lot at times because at least those things are available to me where I live around. Yeah, so that makes—it gives me a sense of belonging, you know? I am in a place where I have people from my culture, talking the same language, eat what I eat, go to prayers where I go to prayers, things like that.

Several Canadian-born, white residents of diverse neighbourhoods like Dover or Martindale highly valued the “mixture of people” and the opportunity to interact with individuals from different ethno-cultural backgrounds. However, in general, this study resonates with previous research suggesting that people feel comfortable living among others similar to themselves, or in more socially homogeneous than mixed environments (e.g., Savage et al., 2005; Watt, 2009). As Lauren, a white, upper-middle class homeowner in Mount Royal speculated,

I don’t know if it’s a sense of comfort, or just... Yeah, I just keep coming back to the word belonging. An area where you feel comfortable with other people; a sense of belonging and you’re a unified group.

The tendency for like to live with like—part of a broader phenomenon known as homophily (see McPherson et al., 2001)—reinforces feelings of “being at home in the world” (Watt, 2009, p.2876); however, it can also intensify socio-spatial boundaries and distance between social ‘others’.

5.3.5 In-between places

In contrast to the sedentary places identified on the maps, some participants also drew attention to more transitory spaces of encounter, such as walking paths or bus routes, which Huizinga and van Hoven (2018) have described as “in-between places.” These routes can become somewhat stabilized through repeated use and interactions with the same people. For example, Wendy, a middle-aged woman living in McKenzie Towne said, “there’s certainly some people I’ve gotten to know because they walk on my pathway all the time... we chit-chat and kind of know where each other lives.” Another participant, Gwen, had lived for several years in Martindale and regularly took the bus because of a disability that prevented her from driving. She described herself as “that annoying person” who strikes up conversation with other passengers along her bus route, many of whom are also frequent riders.

However, while they may be friendly, those relationships tend to remain localized to the routes themselves. Although Justin and his partner regularly interacted with others they passed while walking or biking along the pathways in Dover, as he put it, “nothing’s kind of blossomed into ‘I know you from the pathway; let’s go to a barbecue’ or something like that.” As noted above, a similar superficiality was associated with many of the day-to-day commercial spaces that participants identified on their maps, such as the dry-cleaner’s or a grocery store, where they occasionally bumped into neighbours. These in-between places did not tend to engender relationships that shifted the way participants perceived one another or translate into a deeper “respect for difference” (Valentine, 2008). Yet they were important to participants as familiar parts of their day-to-day routines and contributed generally to their sense of being at home.

5.3.6 Scale

Finally, both the maps and interviews suggest differences in the extent to which individuals identified with their neighbourhood compared to other places at other scales. The maps used in this study offered limited scope for participants to mark locations outside of their formal communities; however, the interviews did include questions about connections elsewhere in the city or beyond. Many participants spoke about having a strong feeling of belonging to their workplaces, post-secondary institutions, former places of residence, or locations in other parts of the city. This empirically supports van Kempen and Wissink's (2014) contention that people's mobility must be taken into account in understanding the potentially decreasing relevance of neighbourhoods within individuals' lives.

To this point, some participants did not identify strongly with their neighbourhoods at all. As Ben, a recent university graduate living in Dover with his mother said, "I feel like *Calgary's* a place where I belong...I'm happy I've got a good spot in Dover, but there's nothing about the community itself that makes me feel I belong" (emphasis added). This kind of sentiment was especially true for lower-income renters who had chosen their residence rather than neighbourhood. For example, Ann, a low-income, single mother, chose to move to Capitol Hill simply because she knew a landlord with an available building there: "I would have set up wherever I had the opportunity because my funds are so low."

5.4 Places of Not-Belonging

In the mapping activity participants were asked to identify places where they did not feel they belonged, which respondents interpreted in several different ways. Some talked about a feeling of ambivalence they associated with places that were simply not part of their normal routines or experience. Examples of such places included schools (for participants without children or with

grown children), or areas of a neighbourhood where they simply had not “tested [their] welcome,” as Capitol Hill resident Ann put it.



- | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| ♥ | Places where you feel you belong | □ | Community Association boundaries |
| ★ | Places where you connect with other people | — | Participants' identified neighbourhood boundaries |
| ✓ | Places that are important in your day-to-day life | — | Participants' identified neighbourhood boundaries |
| ✗ | Places you do not feel you belong | — | Participants' identified neighbourhood boundaries |

Figure 5.3: Digitized participatory maps of Bridgeland (overlaid)

The second form of not-belonging was a feeling of intimidation or fear that participants associated with places they perceived as unsafe. For example, four different women living in Bridgeland-Riverside marked an area near an overpass as “super sketchy,” “unwelcoming,” or having “rough characters, begging, drinking, camping and drugs” (see bottom left corner of Figure 5.3 above). This particular overpass connects Bridgeland-Riverside with the Calgary Drop-in & Rehab Centre located across the river. However, two of these participants stressed

that that they only felt unsafe if they were walking alone at night. Residents of other neighbourhoods also talked about safety but, other than similar examples in Dover associated with prostitution and police activity, did not identify specific places where they felt unsafe.

5.4.1 Exclusion

The third form of not-belonging had to do with participants' feelings of being excluded. In some instances, this involved whole areas of a neighbourhood, such as the Uplands in Hawkwood. Symbolically gated through a small unstaffed guardhouse at the area's only entrance, the Uplands consists of just over two hundred "higher-end houses on the ridge," as described by a City employee, where residents have exclusive access to a recreation centre. Rebecca, a mother of a young son in Hawkwood, commented, "I don't feel welcome [in the Uplands] because we're not allowed to use the facilities...and we don't have a recreation centre in the neighbourhood available to the rest of the community." Similarly, Maria, a middle-class, stay-at-home mother in CKE, identified Eagle Ridge, which has significantly higher income than the rest of the neighbourhood, as a place she did not feel she belonged—even though she occasionally took walks through the area with her children. Participants from other neighbourhoods also identified specific locations, such as a members-only club, a golf course, or higher-end specialty food markets, which were beyond their financial means and therefore made them feel unwelcome.

Some places of exclusion were less tied to income than to other cultural dynamics. One Indigenous woman felt excluded by a mixture of racism, sexism and ageism that she and her children had experienced at their community centre. On the other hand Brent, a white, middle-class homeowner in Martindale, commented that he felt excluded at times because members of dominant ethno-cultural communities could be "unfriendly and unaccepting if you aren't part of their clique." Another resident, Gwen, viewed a particular building in Martindale that was

designed and widely viewed as a community hub, as an exclusive space because it was dominated by social agencies and never available for grassroots community events. She found it was “very difficult to actually occupy that space. They have some gatekeepers there to keep you out.” In general, residents of lower-income and culturally diverse neighbourhoods such as Dover and Martindale identified a greater number of exclusive places than residents of more homogeneous, higher-income areas such as Hawkwood or McKenzie Towne.

5.4.2 Divided neighbourhoods

Residents talked about and mapped a number of spatial features within their neighbourhoods that they perceived as exclusive or differentiated areas. Major transportation arteries had an important role in producing both spatial and social divisions. For example, Capitol Hill is bisected by 14 Street, which is a busy north-south artery with four lanes of traffic. Brandon, who is active with the community association, reflected that Capitol Hill has “a small community vibe between 19th Street and 14th Street, and then another part of the community is between 14th Street and 10th Street. And we find that 14th Street has been that divider.” The location of amenities and community facilities relative to those arteries creates differential access and exacerbates a sense of separation. Amaya, a mother of young children who lives east of 14 Street, strongly felt that separation; she struggled to feel connected to her community association because,

There isn't a presence as a community as much on this side. There's no signage to say, 'this is Capitol Hill,' but there is a sign on that side of 14th. There isn't a community hall here... You can't see community at work on this side of 14th.

In Calgary's southwest quadrant, 14 Street also bisects Chinook Park/Kelvin Grove/Eagle Ridge (CKE) and creates a similar sense of division within what is administratively a single neighbourhood. The isolation of Eagle Ridge on the west side of 14 Street contributes to City employee Sandra's sense that, “sometimes the community doesn't feel part of the other two.”

Another consistent form of division was related to either ‘upper’ and ‘lower’ sections, or the similar notion of a “ridge.” The physical distinction between Upper and Lower Mount Royal is mirrored in residents’ perceptions of the neighbourhoods’ socio-economic status, with one resident of Upper Mount Royal describing the lower section as more transient and “lower-income.” Bridgeland-Riverside is similarly characterized by a steep escarpment that demarcates both spatial and social divisions between the two historically distinct communities. Participants associated the area of Bridgeland above the escarpment with redevelopment, gentrification, and a less transient and higher socio-economic demographic, while perceiving Riverside as having more immigrants and low-income residents. As Barb, a long-time Bridgeland homeowner commented, “if you were to say, is there a part of your community that’s poor? I would have to say yeah, it’s probably down there.” Donna, another retired condominium owner living near Bridgeland’s commercial strip along 1 Avenue NE had a similar perception that, “down the hill, I’m guessing there’s a lot of people scraping by on subsidized housing.” These divisions are reflected in terms of participation to some extent, as board member Louis reflected:

I think the one area that we have that’s lacking are the low income or the children down in Riverside. In order for us to sometimes run our programs, even break even, we have to charge a certain amount, and I’m not sure that we’ve kind of looked into how many children that we may be missing out of our soccer program... we just haven’t had the opportunity to kind of reach out to them as of right now.

Finally, residents of both Hawkwood and Dover talked about a “ridge” within each neighbourhood that defined areas of higher income and exclusivity; as City employee Arjun related, “in west Dover there are lots of well-off people, and south Dover they say is not so well developed. So one part of Dover is perceived to be okay, the other part not so okay.”

5.4.3 Pockets

In addition to the more linear neighbourhood divisions created by transportation arteries, escarpments or ridges, participants across the case studies also talked about particular “pockets” that reflect divisions along social categories such as age, ethnicity, income, or class. For example, the southeast portion of Bridgeland-Riverside has earned a reputation as an “old folks’ ghetto,” as a younger participant Clare put it. Margaret, an elderly resident of the district, half-jokingly reflected, “we’re just surrounded by seniors. Now, I would really like to see some younger people—children! I call it the ghetto; they get mad at me, but what else can you call it?” While they would not specifically avoid this area, some participants commented that its association with a distinct age demographic meant they had little connection to it or cause to go there. Clare owned a fourplex in Riverside with her husband, and felt similarly about areas further north in Bridgeland because of differences in housing and income:

We have a lot of multi-family homes [and] most of the affordable housing over here. And so up in that part, you know, it’s like mostly single-family residences, either that have been there for a long time or they’re infills, and it’s just—yeah, it just feels like a slightly different part of the neighbourhood.

As the last comment suggests, class differences play a major role in how people distinguish “their” neighbourhood. In reflecting on the area of the map that she had identified as her neighbourhood within CKE, Maria commented, “I think there’s a real socio-economic boundary...because everything in that circle is on the same level of housing.” Those living within certain “pockets” or circles may feel a greater sense of belonging based on similarity with their neighbours; conversely, they may feel excluded from the broader area depending on the dynamics of social power that work to define the pockets to begin with. For example, the older areas in central and east Dover are widely perceived to be “quite poor,” as a condominium owner from west Dover, Sharon, observed. Meanwhile the west side of Dover, which features newer

housing developments and a picturesque ridge overlooking downtown Calgary, comprises what one-lower income renter, Brooke, described as the “rich part of the neighbourhood...[where] there’s some huge, big houses—obvious wealth.” Middle-class, white homeowner Gary had recently moved from central to west Dover, and was even more explicit about the distinctive pockets as he perceived them:

If you’re in East Dover you’re working-class, blue collar, you have a truck...If you’re in Dover proper, odds are you have some sort of social assistance—that’s just the way it’s looked at. If you’re in Dover Glen, you’re probably in the \$120-140,000 income for the family, and you’re quite happy to just hide away from everybody else...If you’re in Valley View your minimum is a hundred and fifty per annum, and you’re quite happy living in your little estate lot because you’re sitting on a little gold mine waiting for them to finish redevelopment along here.

As this comment illustrates, place identities that develop over time influence residents’ perceptions of those areas as either rich or poor; meanwhile, these perceptions in turn reinforce place identities that help to define who belongs and who does not.

A similar process can be seen at a broader scale, in the fluid ways in which neighbourhood boundaries are shaped by areas’ reputations, a notion explored in depth by Suttles (1972) and more recently conceptualized by Benson and Jackson (2012, p.806) as the “circulating representations of place.” Several participants commented on Dover’s reputation as “the ‘hood”—a label they felt was inaccurate and had developed largely through proximity to other reputedly “bad neighbourhoods.” As Justin, a new homeowner in Dover, defensively stated:

In ways people would talk about Dover, they would lump it all in with the northeast, which then tells you something about how people think about the northeast. [...] So we all just get lumped in to the, you know, dirty, shifty, northeast part of the city kind of a thing. So Dover’s more of an idea to them than an actual place I guess.

The shared meanings attached to particular places were further defined by visual cues, such as how well properties were cared for. In her community in Martindale, Aruna disliked having to

see derelict vehicles or “areas where, when you walk in and you drive by, you don’t see the houses very well kept. They’re older, you know, that kind of feel.” Visual cues also informed participants’ feelings toward higher-income areas. As Chinook Park resident Maria said of Eagle Ridge, there is “a big socio-economic gap between ‘us’ and ‘them’... You can tell when you’re in a different realm of money. It’s just big houses, big lots, expensive cars; yeah, there’s just money over there.”

Meanwhile some socio-spatial divisions also occur more along racial lines, with participants in both Hawkwood and Dover noting pockets of “mainstream,” Indigenous, or distinct ethno-cultural communities. One long-term, white homeowner in Dover described how an area with affordable housing complexes had become, in his words, “Treaty-8 ‘R Us””; in referring to his map, he explained that,

If you take a look at this area, you’ll notice it has one of the highest concentrations of Native Canadians—I don’t care what term you want to put to them—in all of Calgary. And that was [created by the affordable housing agency] Cal-Homes. What they did was they started almost like a mini-range war. And the range war was, the WASPs cut their grass while the Aboriginals watched the weeds grow... *Then* they started to bring in an immigrant population.

This remark, and the identification of socio-economic pockets generally, illustrates how individuals with social power can contribute to exclusive geographies through “disaffiliating strategies” in which they distinguish themselves spatially and discursively from “other social classes” (Watt, 2009, p.2875). In associating racist stereotypes with a particular geographical space, it also provides an example of the “territorial stigmatization” discussed by Wacquant (2007), which is reproduced over time, and which serves to reinforce boundaries that signal who belongs in which places.

5.5 Discussion

This study reinforces research generated by other scholars (e.g., Benson and Jackson, 2012; Elwood et al., 2015; Shelton et al., 2015; Huizinga and van Hoven, 2018) arguing that neighbourhoods are not static, fixed or homogenous places, but dynamic and fluid social constructions. They are understood and experienced differently based on the characteristics and identities of the places themselves, and individuals' own intersecting experiences and social positions. While urban research often takes the neighbourhood as a meaningful unit of both analysis and intervention (for discussion see Oreopoulos, 2008; Séguin et al., 2012; Murdie et al., 2014; Pothier et al., 2019), the findings in this chapter suggest a need for a more cautious and nuanced approach. Rather than being monolithic or homogeneous entities, neighbourhoods are highly heterogeneous, with porous boundaries and internal variations that are important in structuring how individuals understand and experience socio-spatial inequalities.

In most case study communities, residents associated such socio-spatial inequalities with class, gender, age, race, or a combination of social categories. The divisions they described highlight ways in which the “divided cities” concept (e.g., van Kempen and Murie, 2009; Hulchanski, 2010; Allegra et al., 2012) also applies at smaller intra-neighbourhood scales. Just as cities in Canada's census metropolitan areas are becoming polarized into wealthy and disadvantaged neighbourhoods (e.g., Myles et al., 2000; Hulchanski, 2010; Townshend et al., 2018), so too are some neighbourhoods polarized between wealthier and more disadvantaged areas. In some instances, such polarization is manifested spatially in ‘upper’ and ‘lower’ sections (as in Mount Royal or Bridgeland-Riverside), or between east and west areas (as in Dover or Capitol Hill), which tangibly define more exclusive and excluded parts of the community. While class is perhaps the most pronounced form of difference between different areas of

neighbourhoods, inequalities are also dispersed into discontinuous pockets that are constituted through a combination of income, ethno-racial, age, other perceived differences. In highlighting the range of forms that such socio-spatial inequalities take within Calgary neighbourhoods, these findings contribute to the call by Allegra et al. (2012) for less essentialist understandings of how spatial fragmentation manifests than what is typically presumed in divided cities and neighbourhood change research.

Further, qualitative data revealed important perceived income inequalities in neighbourhoods that are not readily visible in statistical analyses based on census tract units. For example, Dover and Hawkwood were both selected for this study as relatively homogeneous neighbourhoods, particularly in terms of income (Dover's lower and Hawkwood's higher). However, participants' experiences reflect pronounced income inequalities within both communities. In the case of Dover, these experiences help uncover what Séguin et al. (2012) theorize as "micro-zones" of poverty that may be missed by analyses conducted at coarser neighbourhood scales or using census-derived data alone. As Séguin et al. also suggest, these findings raise questions as to whether interventions meant to reduce poverty are best directed at individuals rather than whole neighbourhoods, which do not have uniform levels of poverty throughout.

In the case of Hawkwood and CKE, the inequalities that participants described were often between middle- and higher-income residents and were less tied to disadvantage than to unequal access to amenities. They highlight the problematic impacts of place-privatization (e.g., Townshend, 2006) and the segregation of the rich, which, despite being a major point of discussion by participants in this study, Slater (2013) notes has received very little scholarly attention. Finally, an inconclusive observation was that participants in McKenzie Towne did not

describe the sorts of socio-spatial divisions or places of exclusion noted elsewhere. This could be related to a host of factors including the design of the community, the presence of a residents' association that actively regulates community norms and behaviours (e.g., Fraser et al., 2016), the lack of redevelopment pressures compared with other more established communities, or simply that further research is needed with a wider sample of participants.

While helping to illuminate socio-spatial divisions, the participatory maps also identified places within case study neighbourhoods that serve as “nodes” and “moorings” (van Kempen and Wissink, 2014) for local residents. The strong emotional connections that residents have to local places across all of the case study neighbourhoods suggest that neighbourhoods remain important in day-to-day life, even within the broader context of mobility. Public spaces such as parks and community centres were key spaces of encounter, often across social difference, while recreational amenities and places of consumption located within the range of what individuals define as their neighbourhoods also contributed to their feeling of belonging. They act as what Corcoran et al. (2018) call “social conduits”: land use features that create the necessary conditions for “co-presence,” collective efficacy and engagement in local civic actions. However, geographies of belonging are deeply personal and contingent on different times of day, and individuals' changing relationships, life stages, and differential access to certain places. As much as positive emotions generated a sense of wellbeing and connection, negative emotions such as fear also limited participants' mobility and the range of places they felt comfortable being.

Overall, the way participants experienced and understood socio-spatial divisions within their neighbourhoods was influenced by each place's history and identity, by visual cues and shared meanings associated predominantly with class and race, and particularly by participants'

own geographical and social positions. The findings discussed here most strongly reflect middle-class perspectives because of the characteristics of participants included in this study, who often spoke of poor or rich areas from the position of living in what they presumed to be “normal” parts of their neighbourhoods. However, important insights were also gained from individuals living within distinctive socio-economic “pockets” as well—such as residents of Bridgeland-Riverside’s seniors’ “ghetto,” or residents of rental and subsidized housing. These individuals were aware of the stigmas attached to their residential areas, and often felt excluded from places such as golf courses, organic food markets, or even community halls that they understood to be meant for “other” demographics.

While social processes produce and reproduce spatial divisions, spatial forms can also consolidate social divisions—a dialectic theorized by several scholars including Lefebvre (1976) and Soja (2010). In this study, major transportation arteries that bisect neighbourhoods served to isolate some residents from shared public spaces or events, while also reinforcing the segregation of affluent areas such as Eagle Ridge. These divisions echo what Corcoran et al. (2018) describe as social wedges: land use features that “carve up neighbourhoods” (p.2374), and which act as barriers to social interaction. They signal who does and does not belong in certain areas of a neighbourhood, but they also work in more pragmatic ways to limit opportunities for encounter across social difference. Meanwhile, the more fluid and contested division of neighbourhoods into “pockets” illustrates a process of stigmatization in which individuals with social power—often white, middle-class, long-term homeowners—blame poorer areas, renters, or ethno-racial communities, for broader neighbourhood decline.

Moreover, some scholars contend that the socio-physical characteristics of a neighbourhood can actively intervene in social phenomena, including community participation

and collective efficacy (Bottini, 2018; Corcoran et al., 2018). Indeed, Bottini (2018) tentatively argues that spatial factors are even more important than socio-demographic variables in influencing residents' participation. Lewis et al. (2019) agree that physical divisions, such as a major road system that cuts through a community, can prevent community organizations from achieving broad participation. They may also compound divisions arising from socioeconomic difference, particularly if the roadway or other obstruction cuts off residents' access to community meeting places. However, while attending to the built environment of neighbourhoods is important, it can also risk presenting deterministic views of neighbourhood structure and overlook individuals' lived experiences.

5.6 Summary

In this chapter I have explored geographies of belonging across eight Calgary neighbourhoods, through qualitative interviews and a participatory mapping activity in which residents described places of belonging, connection, and exclusion. I have highlighted some of the perceived socio-spatial divisions within each neighbourhood, in particular distinctive "pockets," major transportation arteries, or elevated "ridges" that serve to produce and reproduce socio-spatial inequalities. While some of these divisions might be mitigated through relatively simple design interventions, many involve deeply entrenched structural inequalities between individuals with widely differing social power sharing proximate space.

In the next chapter I delve into the politics of belonging, to better understand the role of community organizations and formal modes of community participation in both reinforcing some of the socio-spatial divisions described in this chapter and potentially bridging divides. I also consider ways in which residents, individually and collectively, assert claims of belonging in response to exclusionary social, economic, and political processes.

Chapter 6: Formal Community Participation

6.0 Introduction

Having begun to explore diverse geographies of belonging in Chapter 5, I now turn to community participation in order to better understand the complex dynamics shaping experiences of belonging in Calgary neighbourhoods. In this chapter I examine the formal ways in which residents participate in processes of neighbourhood change, and the ways in which neighbourhood-based organizations in particular shape how residents experience belonging. I begin by looking at how participants in this study understood the concept of participation. I discuss a range of factors that both encourage and inhibit involvement in community-based (neighbourhood) organizations,² and consider ways in which those organizations shape residents' feelings of belonging in place. For analytical purposes I distinguish between community leaders, which includes both City employees and community volunteers leading neighbourhood programs; and other residents who are not as active. However, this distinction breaks down in practice because residents flow in and out of leadership positions, as discussed further below, and may have influence even without formal leadership status.

6.1 Forms of Participation

Both community leaders and residents were asked to define what participation meant for them. Their diverse responses illustrate that participation can take many forms, which may be grouped into formal and informal modes following a framework proposed by Swaroop and Morenoff

² Residents generally differentiated between community and neighbourhood, seeing the latter as a smaller and specifically territorial unit. However, the two terms are used interchangeably here following the City of Calgary's historical usage of "community" as a proxy for geographical neighbourhoods, particularly in connection with community associations (CAs). According to an employee interviewed in this study, the City has deliberately shifted toward the term "neighbourhood" rather than community within its recent policy framework.

(2006). This chapter focuses on formal modes of participation, which Swaroop and Morenoff associate with the work of organizations dedicated to improving or maintaining conditions within a neighbourhood. As reviewed in Chapter 4, numerous community organizations, service providers, and government departments work within Calgary neighbourhoods. However, community associations (CAs) are the primary organizations that operate across the city with an explicit neighbourhood mandate and are therefore the focus of this discussion. Calgary's CAs are complex institutions that serve a range of social, recreational and political roles, and they vary widely in terms of their resources, activities and membership (Conger et al., 2016). At the same time, they share an interest in engaging a broad range of community members in programs and events for the greater benefit of the community. In this section I discuss four themes generated from the interview data that represent different forms of participation.

6.1.1 Stepping up and helping out

As participants from the case study communities described, formal neighbourhood participation involves taking a leadership role through volunteer board or committee work, usually with the CA. This work varies depending upon the organization itself, the nature of its responsibilities and resources, and the characteristics of the community as discussed in Chapter 4. Most CAs plan neighbourhood events such as barbecues, Easter egg hunts or community clean-ups; or more ongoing programs such as soccer leagues or garden clubs, all of which depend upon volunteer labour. However, in part because of how CAs evolved organically over time in Calgary, their mandates are not always clear to residents or even to the volunteers themselves. As a board member in one neighbourhood stated, "we have bylaws that don't say why the CA exists... What a CA should be or why is fairly unexamined, and really a big problem." The existence of residents' associations (RAs) in some communities adds to the confusion. For example, the

volunteer-led McKenzie Towne (RA) Council offers diverse programs available to all homeowners in the community. Long-time community volunteer Wendy had been involved with both the RA and CA, and commented that,

It's not uncommon for someone to run to be on the residents' association board and find out when they ask a question about the traffic circle, that's the community association. They're like, 'wow, what's the difference? I thought I was here to talk about those issues.' And they're not.

Furthermore, because mandatory fees support RA activities, Wendy felt residents were not as engaged in working for what they needed; "we're not owning it, it's just happening."

The CAs in Dover, Bridgeland-Riverside, Mount Royal, CKE and Capitol Hill maintain community halls, which, unlike the RA facility in McKenzie Towne, are not supported by homeowner fees. As the participatory maps illustrated, these halls are important gathering places within the neighbourhood and largely shape the nature of programs that CAs are able to offer their communities. However, volunteers commented on the amount of work required to maintain them. One CA board member, Kaitlyn, noted that, "we spend so much of our time just trying to fundraise, just to keep the lights on in the hall." Brandon similarly said of the ageing hall in his community, "it's been nothing but renovations. And it's like, is that really what I wanted to volunteer for—taking care of a building? It's like a job, right? It's unfortunate, but it has to be done." As Brandon's comment suggests, facilities tend to divert the energy and attention of CA boards toward operational issues involving building maintenance or ensuring the organization's sustainability. Although some CAs employ a staff person to help with administrative tasks, maintaining a facility can place significant demands on volunteers, causing feelings of frustration when the work itself does not align with what board member Jasmine described as "the fun stuff...the stuff we get involved for."

6.1.2 Speaking out

Most board volunteers also play a critical role in advocating for their residents and communities broadly. Thus, formal participation involves having influence and a voice within the community on behalf of residents. CA planning committee members expressed mixed feelings about their role in providing input into City land use decisions. On the one hand they valued the opportunity; however, they also felt that City representatives and fellow residents had unfair expectations of them, as John conveyed:

Some councillors would love it if communities would deal with development permits entirely. I don't know if we're equipped. You really do need planners and experts. Having housewives and laypeople weigh in on design and construction—yes, this is a criticism; I don't know if that's probably the best thing. It's emotional.

Based on the interviews, neighbourhoods like Mount Royal appear to have an advantage in terms of influence because residents are well-connected within City administration or governance. One City employee, Rhonda, commented that CA members in the affluent neighbourhood of Mount Royal “know how to navigate the City...they go right to the person that would maybe be the decision-maker or have more power for decisions.”

On the other hand, Dover and Martindale leaders often described their communities as being “neglected” by the City. Gwen, who was of First Nations ancestry, felt accepted by her ethno-racially diverse neighbours in Martindale and saw that diversity as a strength of the community. Yet she felt the neighbourhood had been systemically undervalued because of outsiders' poor perceptions, commenting,

we have had the worst representation on City council for the last—well for as long as I've lived in Martindale [...] And we have two level train crossings in residential areas inside of Martindale; I wonder how that happened. [...] I think outside perception of us is very 'oh, they're poor, or they're this; or they're immigrants, or they're that [...] There's a bad impression of us.

A long-term, working-class resident of Dover similarly felt her neighbourhood was a low priority for the City, commenting that her block had streetlights out for 147 days, and only after she contacted City council was the problem fixed. This participant suggested that Dover residents needed to be extra vigilant in bringing forward their concerns through the CA because no one else would on their behalf; unlike residents in Mount Royal, they did not have strong political connections.

Residents can thus have an influential voice as members of the CA. However, across many communities, participants noted the potential danger when CAs represent the interests of the few rather than the community broadly. Volunteering as a CA board member can be difficult work, demanding a significant commitment of time and energy. As one executive board member noted, “there’s only so much the remaining members of the board want to take on, and I get that, because a lot of it will fall on my shoulders and I don’t have the time... I already do a lot, so enough is enough.” Yet board members often feel obligated to continue in their role for fear no one will step up to replace them. This can lead to the dominance of a clique or “core group” within the community association. Rebecca, an active volunteer with a youth organization in Hawkwood, felt that, “the people that are involved in the community give it their best. But it’s always the same people that are doing the work.” Because of this cycle, boards may not be representative of their broader communities. As community social worker Naya commented, “I don’t know if they do a good job of making sure that people really have an opportunity to get their voices heard, or if it’s just the few voices within the community association making decisions.”

6.1.3 Addressing needs

The theme of “addressing needs” took different forms across communities, but it generally involved both seeking out help and finding ways of meeting others’ needs. For example, Aruna shared that when she arrived in Martindale as a new Canadian and a newly single mother, she did not know where to go for help with childcare or work. She commented that typically “people turn to community for help, especially when they are in need, when they are not in good times.” However, in her experience, the CA did not adequately fulfill that role: “I was in trouble and I didn’t know where to go. I didn’t know who to talk to.” The reason could be, as another Martindale resident speculated, that the efforts of CAs often address the “perceived needs of the community, but not the actual needs of the community.” In a neighbourhood such as Martindale, where there is a very high number of recent immigrants and individual incomes are significantly lower than elsewhere in Calgary (The City of Calgary, 2019a), a family barbecue may not be relevant; instead, residents may be looking for practical help with language lessons, locating an affordable grocery store, or accessing social services. Several participants felt that CAs therefore needed to work harder to learn more about their residents, while residents also needed to engage more with CAs to help articulate their needs. On the other hand, one City employee questioned whether this was within the scope of the CA’s role, or whether the City was responsible for providing “the professionals that are needed.”

Other interview participants defined participation in terms of meeting needs by using one’s own talents and interests—more of a grassroots approach than the coordinated efforts of a community organization. For example, Judy, a retired single woman living in subsidized housing in Dover, offered yoga lessons and peer counseling in order for neighbours “to learn how we can be a resource for each other.” Likewise, Ann, another low-income resident of Capitol Hill,

wanted to mentor others so that they felt confident exchanging knowledge and life experience with neighbours. This sort of resident-led leadership may be important for strengthening community by promoting networks based on mutual interdependence—a notion that will be explored further in Chapter 7 in relation to reciprocity. However, Ann suggested there were limited opportunities to take a leadership role outside the scope of formal organizations, because of the need for a physical space and some sort of compensation to make it viable. She felt the ideal situation would involve, “someone from the community association meeting me in person, finding out the skills and abilities that I have that might benefit the community, and inviting *me* to provide those *to* the community, for pay.” These sorts of opportunities were enabled in some communities through micro-grants offered by the Strong Neighbourhoods Initiative described in Chapter 4—but were beyond the usual means of CAs to facilitate.

6.1.4 Showing up

In addition to leading community activities, formal participation also includes taking part in community programs or events, or consuming the services offered by community organizations. Typically, this involves what participants described as either “coming out” or “showing up.” As CA board president Louis put it,

I understand that not everyone wants to be on the board or wants to be on the committee, but even participating and showing up to the events that we host, or like the farmer’s market, the festival we hold, the soccer program, that kind of stuff.

City employee Sandra agreed with this broad view of participation: “whether you register for a program or stop by for a special event or drop your garbage off at the community cleanup day—just whatever they offer, if you take advantage of that.” Although one participant was adamant that participation entailed a physical presence at community events, others made allowances for

more passive ways in which people might participate by reading the community newsletter, following the CA's social media, or simply taking an interest in neighbourhood goings-on.

With some exceptions, community leaders felt strongly that relatively few residents were engaging in the programs offered. They commented about seeing the same people at every event and feeling discouraged by the apparent lack of interest. This discouragement sometimes bordered on a feeling of resentment, which reinforced a division between those who did participate and those who did not. As one exasperated CA board member, Stacy, questioned, "you try to do these things, and then you get no one coming, so it's like, why are we doing this? I don't want to feel that way, but it's hard sometimes not to." Higher rates of participation in some communities might be explained in part by particular strategies employed to recruit new members; for example, an annual door-to-door canvassing program has helped generate a high membership rate in CKE. Success in recruiting members also depends to some extent on what CA board member Kaitlyn called the organization's "value proposition" or the perceived return on invested time or effort. Moreover, as several participants noted, the benefits of having a community association (such as beautification projects or access to outdoor skating rinks) often flowed to the whole community regardless of individuals' membership status, thereby disincentivizing involvement in the CA. Overall, however, membership is only one part of a much broader suite of factors influencing whether and how individuals participate in community life. It is to these factors that I now turn.

6.2 Factors Influencing Participation

Thematic analysis of interview data suggests that the degree and nature of residents' participation is shaped by a range of factors. These can be grouped into three categories: personal circumstances, over which individuals may have some influence or choice; contextual or

structural factors that are largely beyond an individual's control; and the characteristics and actions of community organizations. In this section I describe each of these categories, with particular attention to instances where the perceptions of community leaders differed significantly from those of residents who participate less in neighbourhood organizations.

6.2.1 Personal circumstances

Personal circumstances are conceptualized here as factors over which individuals have a high degree of choice or control, recognizing that this choice may also be subject to external influences and societal expectations that individuals do not perceive. Thematic analysis generated five types of personal circumstances that have an important role in influencing residents' formal participation. Four of these factors serve to motivate participation: life transitions, ideological motivations, the desire to protect one's stake, and feeling needed. A fifth factor, having other priorities, generally discourages participation.

Life transitions

Many residents who do participate as volunteers in their communities talked about the importance of life transitions in sparking their interest, such as having a child and wanting to ensure there were local amenities for them, having one's children start school or move away from home, or retiring. Mark shared that he joined his CA board when he moved into his present community with pre-school aged children: "I thought, okay, this is going to be our life; we'll be hanging around home not doing a lot [so] this is the time to sort of engage in that." Sharon began helping with community events in Dover after she retired, commenting that, "you do reexamine your values, because you have time to do it—because there aren't other competing things. Like, my children are grown, I don't have grandchildren, so I don't need to—my time isn't taken up that way." While major life events such as illness can also limit how actively individuals are able

to participate, transition points in general appear to represent important opportunities for engaging residents in community life.

Ideological motivations

Participants also had ideological reasons for becoming involved in their neighbourhoods, including a desire to improve their own and the broader community's wellbeing. For example, Rosie, a second-generation immigrant who volunteered with a residents' group in Martindale said, "I just saw so much of the segregation [between ethno-cultural groups] and I don't want that; I think people need to understand each other more. And so I was hoping that it would bring people together and open up those channels." In addition to wanting to make the neighbourhood a better place to live, ideological motivations also included a general wish to contribute or give back. However, some residents had a more specific desire to intervene in what they perceived as negative change. Stacy, a member of the minority white population in Martindale, had purchased a starter home with her husband when the neighbourhood was first developed. She felt frustrated that more recently established residents were not taking care of their properties, which motivated her to become involved in the community:

I want to like where I live... When we first moved there it was very different than it is now and I just—I don't know; the stuff that I see is not making me happy. So even just with, whether it be the garbage, whether it be people leaving grocery carts everywhere, whether it be people not keeping their yards clean, whether the City isn't coming and mowing and cleaning the weeds where they're supposed to or emptying the garbage cans [...] I don't want to see it anymore.

Protecting one's stake

On a related note, residents sometimes became involved in community organizations as a way to protect their own property values through "place maintenance" practices (Benson and Jackson, 2012)—a motivation that is, in the words of Bridgeland-Riverside resident Greg, "tied to dirt". Sometimes individuals banded together to voice opposition to a proposed development they felt

would negatively impact them, such as a bike lane or rapid transit route. In other cases, they resented broader changes they perceived as decline. Marilyn, a Canadian-born, retired homeowner in Dover, for example, felt the community was “under attack” by developers seeking to pressure elderly homeowners into selling their homes for below-market prices; she also worried about the neighbourhood’s declining “moral fibre and values” as more refugees and immigrants settled in. Meanwhile Rhonda, a City employee who worked with a higher income neighbourhood, observed that residents there were “very protective... of what they bought into [and] want to make sure their place of living is secure, and exactly the way they came in. Keep it the same.” On the other hand, residents who did not own property sometimes felt excluded from having a voice, especially when communications about planning issues were sent to property owners, many of whom did not even live in the neighbourhood. Indeed, the planning director of one CA admitted that when talking with neighbours about proposed developments, “I don’t go to a tenant’s house, because they can’t have a say; they don’t pay taxes.”

Overall, then, homeowners were often strongly motivated to be involved in community organizations as a means to protect their investment and the value of their homes—a finding that Dear (1992, p.288) has described as “self-interested, turf-protectionist behavior” and McCabe (2014) has documented as a form of “Not in My Backyard” (NIMBY) activism. However, several participants agreed with McCabe’s view that myopic NIMBY attitudes are a form of participation that is inconsistent with the ideals of civic engagement. They saw it as a negative way of participating in community life because the attitude centered individual rather than broader community interests: as City employee Carolyn observed, “some people feel that they’re very privileged and they should get what they want.” This desire to protect property values can bring residents together in opposition to what they perceive as negative change. However, it can

also favour the interests of more socially powerful individuals—typically white, middle-class homeowners—and privilege narrow economic goals over broader social goods (see discussion in McCabe, 2014). Being involved in community life as a means to protect one’s stake can therefore create powerful exclusions by amplifying already dominant voices, while silencing others. It also reinforces assumptions that renters in particular are not as invested in neighbourhood life, justifying the role of homeowners as “gatekeepers” over neighbourhood decision-making (Hoekstra and Gerteis, 2019, p.211).

Feeling needed

An important factor that influenced participants’ choice to become involved as CA volunteers was the feeling of being needed, or that their skills could benefit the organization. One lawyer who was interviewed got drawn into his community organization because of a particular planning issue, through which he discovered that “the CA was in a gong-show of a state of governance.” Another resident stepped up as CA president after he attended his first board meeting, observed a general lack of organization, and felt his background in management could help. In a similar vein, volunteers tended to remain involved because of a feeling of responsibility, or fear that their initiatives would fall apart without them. As one fourth-year board member, Louis, commented, “you almost feel motivated or obligated to stay on and make sure everything keeps going.” This feeling of responsibility was compounded by the difficulty of recruiting for board positions and the very real possibility, as had occurred with one CA in this study, that if volunteers did not continue, the organization could fold due to lack of participation.

The theme of feeling needed had a strongly gendered dimension. At the time that interviews were being conducted, seven of eight CA presidents were men, several of whom believed their professional skills could improve the effectiveness of their community boards.

This reinforced the business style model of CAs and shaped the ways in which both women and men perceived their potential roles. City employee Lisa acknowledged that, “at the end of the day [the CA] is a business... That needs a certain level of skill to be successful, to be sustainable.” However, Jasmine, a younger woman from an immigrant background, described this expectation as “so ‘old white man’,” adding that it had prevented her from being able to see herself as a board member. Else, a resident of a seniors’ facility in Bridgeland-Riverside, contrasted the “top down management” style that was typical of men’s leadership, to the “community-making and no nonsense but very open” approach of women. Based on her experience with several organizations, Else believed that women were better community builders. She actively resisted the expectations she felt were placed on her regarding how she could best contribute to her facility’s social board:

[The men] want a woman to take notes, and I thought, nope, I’m not taking notes on this board ever... And it’s hard for me, because I find maybe I should be a little bit nicer—but then I thought, no, they should be a little bit nicer.

Other priorities

In addition to motivating participation, personal circumstances can also make residents less inclined to participate. Many community leaders speculated that apathy was a significant reason why residents did not engage. Lack of interest was indeed a factor for some residents, along with not perceiving any personal benefit to being involved. For example Michelle, a resident of McKenzie Towne admitted she never attended community meetings now that her children were older; “most of [the issues] personally haven’t concerned me that much—like, I don’t really care for the most part.” Richard and Nancy, both retired Hawkwood residents, were active volunteers with other organizations and wanted to avoid the “volunteer trap,” feeling, as Nancy did, that “everybody wants a piece of you.” However, a more significant reason why residents across the

case studies reported not participating in community events was their choice to prioritize other activities. Rather than being apathetic, they framed their lack of participation in terms of not valuing community events as much as other potential activities that were more relevant to their interests and life-stage. In other words, it was not that they did not care about their neighbourhood, but rather that they cared more about, or were more fulfilled by, other non-territorial communities such as sports teams, seniors' organizations, or even professional communities. As Dana, a small business owner and mother of an active family in Dover shared, "I'm not sure that it's not of interest; it's just that it has to fit into schedules, and unfortunately we're just crazy busy... And honestly when we have time, we're going to music and things like that."

Residents were particularly oriented toward their ethno-cultural and faith communities, building their social and support networks there rather than through their territorial communities. A South Sudanese resident of Dover, Amin, explained that refugees from his country "look at their community as Sudanese. To them they don't belong in a physical community... Back in their country, a physical community is the same as a cultural community—but here they become different." In Hawkwood, CA member Bryan observed that "the Cantonese families hang out with the Cantonese families"; and in Martindale, several participants felt that first generation immigrants in their neighbourhood tended to keep to their own ethno-cultural groups. They did not participate in their territorial communities because they did not value or need them, though they may be very active in faith or ethno-cultural organizations located within their neighbourhood. As City employee Naya questioned:

Some of the communities have so many things going on—they're very active in volunteering, they have community groups, they have educational classes, they offer scholarships; like, they do support their community quite well. So what would be their big draw to be part of something larger?

One Sikh Punjabi participant relayed, however, that her cultural centre also contributes to the broader community through food and clothing drives, interfaith programs and other volunteer activities. This points to differing perceptions about the meaning of community participation and to what extent it is defined geographically—a question that will be discussed further below.

6.2.2 Structural constraints

While the foregoing circumstances influenced individuals' choice to participate formally in neighbourhood activities, other more systemic barriers worked to limit individuals' opportunities to participate. These factors fall into three overlapping themes identified in the interview data: financial limitations, time constraints, and language or cultural barriers.

Financial limitations

Several community leaders speculated that cost was a barrier to participation, and this was true for some individuals. For example, one lower-income participant living in Bridgeland-Riverside routinely looked for free events and felt a special CA membership category for residents on a fixed income would be beneficial. Justin in Dover shared that as new homeowners, he and his partner were “house-poor, so we can't really afford to be anywhere but our home.” In general, however, CAs made a concerted effort to offer free events as a way of encouraging broad participation, and it was the more indirect costs that posed a challenge for participants. For example, one parent in Dover who did not own a vehicle talked about the “hidden costs” of attending community events, such as bus or taxi fare, or having to purchase snacks for her two children while they were out. Thus, while membership fees or event costs may not in and of themselves be prohibitive, income can nevertheless be a barrier to participating in community activities.

Class differences, and one's status as either homeowner or renter, can also make people feel unwelcome. Steve, a resident of Upper Mount Royal, commented that apartment dwellers in Lower Mount Royal likely did not feel welcome to take part in the community's progressive dinners, for which tickets cost \$175; "it's recognizable that there's an income disparity and they don't feel part of it." A renter in Capitol Hill, Ann reported feeling that she did not fit in with her community association because it felt like a clique, comprised mainly of middle-class families with young children: "there's a similar group of people that attend." In relation to this last comment, income may be compounded with age, ethnicity, racial background or other factors to create a sense for some individuals that the CA is simply not meant for them. Moreover, CAs focus largely on social and recreational programs that are often not relevant to the needs of lower-income residents. As Aruna, a single parent and immigrant in Martindale argued, the CA should be a much broader resource that residents can turn to when they "have no other place to go and seek help"; they should serve as "a connector, you know, between other resources and references to the families who are in need." Overall then, CAs can discourage broad participation through offerings that are either beyond the means of certain residents, or that are simply not meaningful to their needs.

Time constraints

Time was a major constraint for a wide range of participants; yet, the reasons for people's time pressures varied depending on their circumstances. Members of two-income households felt restricted by their busy schedules and family commitments, while a resident of the more affluent Upper Mount Royal area described the challenges of "managing a 4,000 square foot house with three kids and a busy husband." Lower-income residents, in contrast, often had to work multiple minimum-wage jobs just to make ends meet. Some were simply in "survival mode," as one

participant in Dover suggested, and their life stresses left little free time or attention for community activities. For example, Aruna, a working single mother in Martindale shared that, “I don’t have time to interact with [neighbours]. I’ve never seen people around me, I’ve never, you know, celebrated anything together or been together in sad times. All I know is people at work, that’s it.”

Participants also had different ways of valuing their time. Some who did serve on boards, such as middle-class, stay-at-home mother Sarah, admitted that the time they had to volunteer was a “freedom” or “luxury.” In contrast, an educated but lower-income participant, Ann, felt that volunteering her services to the community would diminish the value of what she had to offer:

it’s kind of a paradox because what I do have is time... Yet in the volunteer model, I’m kind of expected to just hand it over. But in my case, I can’t really do that because it doesn’t honour the fact that I will have needs unmet if I just give myself away.

As this comment suggests, volunteering with community organizations is sometimes not open to individuals with lower incomes, for complex reasons. Serving on a community board or committee requires a significant time commitment, sometimes upwards of 30 hours per week depending on the role. Residents therefore have to be in a comfortable enough position to take on such a commitment; indeed, many of the active participants interviewed were either retired, stay-at-home parents, or independent business owners with flexible schedules. In combination with the theme of “feeling needed,” discussed above, time therefore reinforced the gendered nature of formal participation in this study. Women (predominantly middle-class) often engaged in “on the ground” community work such as door-knocking campaigns and running programs for newcomers or youth, while men often served as key decision-makers on boards. This reflects

research elsewhere on the gendered politics of community work (e.g. Grimshaw, 2011; Jupp, 2014).

Cultural and language barriers

Many of the community leaders who participated in this study felt frustrated by what they perceived as cultural barriers that created tensions or divisions within their neighbourhoods. One white, Canadian-born member of a community organization in Martindale talked about the challenge of being inclusive while accommodating the needs of specific ethno-cultural or religious groups. When her organization tried hosting a yoga event intended for everyone in the community, some of the Muslim women reportedly wanted it to be segregated by gender. The organizer felt that:

When you're doing something for the community as a whole, it has to be that way. You have to leave that stuff at the door... I wish I knew the magic thing we could do just to make people be okay with each other, and to make everybody want to just do it as a community, as a group."

In Martindale in particular, participants described deep divides between dominant ethno-cultural communities, noting, as young South Asian immigrant Bina did, that "other ethnicities aren't getting involved with each other." Even in schools, Gwen reflected, children "herd in packs of us and them."

While they observed specific communities actively gathering and celebrating amongst themselves, several CA leaders felt it was difficult to engage those communities in broader neighbourhood activities, even if they took special care to offer accommodations such as diverse food choices. Although Stacy in Martindale appreciated having an "insider" who they could go to for advice—in this case another white member of the board who was "married to a Brown fellow"—she also felt that "sometimes it's hard to ask people." This meant that boards dominated by what Martindale university student Hananiah described as "middle-aged white

people” often relied on assumptions in their engagement efforts. For example, they speculated that recent immigrants might be inhibited from participating in their neighbourhoods because of not knowing what was socially acceptable, and described what one Canadian-born Hawkwood volunteer characterized as a cultural “shyness” to “put themselves out of their box.”

On the other hand, comments by newcomers themselves who participated in this study suggest their disengagement was less a matter of choice than a feeling that community-wide events were simply not meant for them. They also felt excluded from events organized by another dominant ethno-cultural group, particularly in cases where there were tensions “like, between the Sikh community and the Muslim community,” as City employee Kathleen observed. Aruna regularly attended both Sikh and Hindu temples near her home in Martindale, but shared her experience that:

If some [other] group is celebrating something you can go still, but you wouldn’t feel comfortable. You wouldn’t feel very easy in there, because you don’t know people—you don’t know how they will take you as one of them.

Amin, a South Sudanese participant in Dover, framed cultural challenges more in terms of navigating differing norms around communication. When he attended a community meeting, two of his friends felt lost in the flow of the conversation, despite having strong English skills and Canadian post-secondary education; “they were not getting what people were talking about... They didn’t understand anything that people were saying.”

Further to the challenge of navigating different communication styles, language was also a barrier in several ethno-racially diverse neighbourhoods. Hananiah, a young woman living in a three-generational Sikh Punjabi household in Martindale, pointed out that her grandmother could not read or write: “even if it was in Punjabi, she still wouldn’t be able to [read community newsletters]; she would probably need verbal communication or some kind of communication

from us.” In multigenerational immigrant households where grandparents care for their grandchildren, language can therefore isolate both generations from knowing what is happening in their neighbourhoods. This sort of barrier seemed to disproportionately impact women; Gwen, a stay-at-home mother in Martindale who had established close friendships with other mothers on her street, observed that, “there’s a lot of women who are at home who don’t speak English, and can’t really communicate with the outside world without a spouse or a child helping [them].” These examples highlight the intersectionality of isolation, where a combination of age, race and gender worked together to differentiate experiences of neighbourhood life, even within a single household.

In some cases, however, language might be only a perceived barrier, reinforced by expectations of the dominant majority that newcomers should make more of an effort to fit in. A European immigrant in Hawkwood, Nadia shared that when she first arrived in Calgary, “it was a big, big challenge to speak up... And if someone like neighbours would come and just try to engage us, we would definitely be able to be more open.” While Nadia felt the community could have been more welcoming, a Canadian-born CA board member Bryan, in contrast, expressed that it was newcomers’ responsibility to step up. Referring to a particular ethno-cultural community that he viewed as unwilling to engage with neighbourhood life, Bryan felt that:

People just need to try and assimilate, be a part of this community. And that’s what’s frustrating, you know? I don’t want to go on a rant, but people come to this country or this city and they don’t want to have anything to do with it.

This comment echoes a pattern that Hoekstra and Gerteis (2019) have observed elsewhere, wherein neighbourhood association members used “civic talk” to define the norms and behaviours of desirable neighbourhood residents, as well as appropriate forms of civic engagement. Such discourse ignores the stress that such pressures can put on minority

populations (see discussion in Valentine, 2008), and shifts the burden to more marginalized individuals to participate in ways that conform to community leaders' expectations. It thereby reinforces existing boundaries of neighbourhood belonging, and maintains structural inequalities (Hoekstra and Gerteis, 2019).

6.2.3 Organizational factors

As the discussion of cultural and language barriers suggests, organizations themselves have an important influence on the nature of individuals' community participation. However, participants also spoke about the constraints that organizations themselves experience, which limit their ability to reach out to all members of their communities. This section explores these organizational constraints, which are grouped into three themes generated from interview data: resources, growing pains, and organizational culture. A fourth theme considers how organizations can also provide a "spark" igniting participation.

Resources

From the point of view community leaders, community organizations themselves face a number of challenges in representing or including residents broadly, most of which stem from a shortage of resources. CA board members felt unable to reach everyone in their neighbourhood or to communicate a clear understanding of their purpose—particularly in communities such as McKenzie Towne that also had residents' associations with partially overlapping mandates, or among newcomers who had no prior knowledge of community associations or their purpose. They commented on board members' lack of time, money and human resources to print and distribute newsletters, manage social media, or mount door-knocking campaigns that might help them expand beyond their existing membership. One active board member in Bridgeland-Riverside recalled a contentious development issue over which the CA had personally reached

out to every potentially affected resident. The campaign had been effective at re-energizing the CA, but also revealed the limitations of volunteer labour. As board member Kailynn noted:

If we all had endless time and we were paid board members I think there's a ton we could do. And I think that outreach is the biggest thing; like, the door-knocking was really great, but that almost killed everybody on the board.

As noted above, volunteers often invest a great deal of personal energy into community activities, which can result in burnout and frequent board turnover.

Inconsistent resources from the City were also problematic. For example, a member of a community-based organization, Rosie, shared that the frequent turnover of her neighbourhood's community social worker made residents feel that, "we're not really getting the support that we need and the commitment that we need, and there's not really any interest in what's going on in our particular community." While neighbourhood services staff were generally viewed as indispensable, turnover in those positions made it difficult for residents to build trusting relationships with City employees. Moreover, the limited number and mandates of community social workers also meant they were only available to neighbourhoods identified as vulnerable—which left marginalized individuals elsewhere with less support or representation. Within the municipal bureaucracy more broadly, participants noted additional constraints that limited their ability to be creative or innovative, such as costs for event insurance or police monitoring. After looking for creative ways to beautify an empty lot in his neighbourhood, one frustrated board member, John, commented that "there's always someone down at city hall that won't let something happen because of some policy."

Growing pains

Communities experiencing development pressures or rapid demographic changes were particularly prone to tensions that could either encourage or discourage participation, depending

on how organizations managed the situation. In Martindale, one resident recalled tensions between the previous boards of two complementary community organizations, which created a sense of rivalry that put them in competition with each other and diverted energy away from the community building work they were mandated to do. When board members of one group felt their voices were not being heard by leaders, they left rather than trying to work out differences. Martindale resident, Rosie, observed that,

no matter what you do, someone's not going to like what's said or decided upon. And I think that's where we lost a lot of people. And there's factions that form. This group thinks this way, the other group thinks that way.

Even in the relatively homogeneous and stable community of Hawkwood, a proposed community garden became a polarizing issue when some residents near the site worried it might impede their sightlines or encourage negative behaviour. CA board member Bryan commented that:

There's resistance to park benches, if you can believe it. And it's a struggle dealing with that... People don't want the perceived negatives that come with a community garden, or a bench, because they're 'hotbeds of criminal activity.'

The CA was generally dismissive of such concerns and had not yet found a way to meaningfully engage dissenting residents toward a resolution, proceeding instead with the compromise of "majority rules."

While seemingly minor changes can thus become divisive if not resolved effectively, contentious issues can also bring community members together. For example, residents of Capitol Hill had ongoing concerns over a transition house located in the neighbourhood until the CA facilitated a resolution. As John relayed:

We had to have our own internal meetings and let everybody vent... A lot of misinformation had to be cleared up, a lot of rumours, innuendo. And people just instantly think of their child's health and wellbeing, and their property values—and I get that. But we still tried to just implore of them that, you know, this could be good.

Everybody should try to help people that can't help themselves or that nobody else is helping. And some people got off the committee, and said, no, I'm not interested in that route. Other people said, you know, let's try it... they're our neighbours; we treat them like neighbours, they will probably treat us like neighbours... And they did, and they do. And it's a really healthy relationship.

While not everyone was happy with the CA's approach, it created a process for residents to deal with concerns directly with the transition house managers on the basis of understanding and mutual respect, instead of appealing to municipal officials or police.

Similarly, tensions emerged in Dover when youth from a particular ethno-cultural community were reportedly causing "a lot of trouble, a lot of assaults, a lot of stealing" in the neighbourhood, as resident Marilyn described. Leaders from the CA and the ethno-cultural community worked out an agreement to give the youth access to a hall to play basketball on designated evenings. The leader of the ethno-cultural community commented that, "[the youth] use the hall for free once a month, which is wonderful. So now there's that realization that, okay, we were bad; but how can we change our name – how can we clean our name up?" The basketball itself was only part of the solution, which was more broadly about building a trusting relationship and being willing to communicate openly to resolve problems. The leaders also worked with a corner store owner in Dover who suspected the youth of stealing. As CA member Gary related,

[the youth] will go in two at a time now, before and after basketball, and they will all be respectful that if you want it, you pay for it. And at the same time the proprietor is mindful that just because they're a little different does not mean they're coming in to do damage.

This approach of working together to find solutions supports research by Koschmann and Laster (2011), which found that communicative tensions within community associations can be productive and can help promote collective action, if individual differences can be overcome in favour of "cooperative understandings" (p.45).

Organizational culture

As the discussion about tensions illustrates, the culture and values of an organization can have a significant impact on residents' experiences of participation and belonging. One of the most intimidating factors that residents talked about was the dominance of a clique or "core group," both on the board and at community events. Despite the benefits of having continuity and invested board members, and despite the frequent challenge of finding new volunteers, having a long-term cohesive leadership can make new members feel like "outsiders coming in," as Brooke experienced in Dover. Donna, a resident of another community, commented that going into her CA hall had felt "a little distant and that you were an outsider... So I mean there is that feeling that maybe some of the members of the board are an in-group." Insular boards may also become self-interested, as CA board member Mark observed with some of his peers, based on a feeling of entitlement that, "I'm the one that volunteered to do this, so I should decide what we do." They may represent only a small segment of their community, be out of touch with what residents need, or lack innovative approaches, as Gwen suggested:

I think complacency comes in any situation that you've been left too long in, and you're not willing to take on any new ideas and you're not willing to explore new concepts even. And because you tried something once ten years ago and it didn't work, you're not willing to try again.

To their credit, some boards recognized this sort of stagnation and actively tried to diversify their membership. In Martindale, for example, Brent was pleased that a new younger board member had begun using social media for CA communications; as he commented, most of the others had been there for years and were "stuck in their ways, I guess. Sometimes you need new young blood to do new things."

Organizational cultures also vary in the extent to which they make room for residents to influence community priorities and outcomes. Several participants in this study felt there was no

point in getting involved in community issues because their input would make no difference. One low-income renter in Capitol Hill, Ann, felt based on previous experience with community associations that CA leaders are “driving the ship, so to speak. And a lot of the time they don’t really take the time to get to know me and find out if I have anything to offer.” A similar sentiment was echoed by Amin, who felt that community leaders often expect new members to conform to existing plans rather than asking, “what can you do for this committee or this organization—you know, what can you bring to us?” The feeling of not having real influence was a particular barrier for working-class, racialized, and both younger and older individuals, who were often treated in paternalistic ways by community leaders who made assumptions about their needs, thereby further marginalizing them. For example, one long-term, white CA board member relayed that,

We had a load of refugees, Syrian refugees come in. The hall, people working at the hall, which is all volunteers, got very busy and set up English classes; they contacted all these people, they were all coming. And on the day of the English class, nobody showed up. And this is typical. So you bust your butt to make these people have opportunities in their area, that they can utilize, and what do you get for it? Zero interest.

This comment illustrates what Hoekstra and Gerteis (2019, p.196) frame as “tensions in the diversity discourse,” in which the participant is openly supportive of a minority community even while censuring them for not engaging in neighbourhood institutions. The comment also positions the refugees as passive consumers of services rather than active brokers of their own needs—a symptom, perhaps, of what Allard and Small (2013) call “partial agency,” in which “the mix of institutional and organizational pressures surrounding a client” (p.16) can actually constrain choices and reinforce the exclusion they intend to offset. This situation was particularly apparent in the so-called “disadvantaged” communities in this study where multiple organizations and social agencies operate with overlapping mandates.

The spark

The first three organizational factors discussed thus far work to discourage residents from actively participating in their community. In contrast, this fourth theme explores how organizations can provide a “spark” igniting interest and mobilizing action. Several community leaders expressed the opinion that people would either participate or not depending upon their personality—whether they were a “doer” or a “watcher,” as Hawkwood resident Richard put it. However, data generated across these case studies challenges such a clear or fixed binary, suggesting rather that participation is more cyclical in nature. Barb, a twenty-year resident of Bridgeland-Riverside, recalled the sense of loss in her community when the General Hospital was demolished in the neighbourhood 1998, comparing it to the way a more recent proposal to demolish a historical school had galvanized neighbours around a common concern:

There was a big participation when the hospital went down... It stirred everybody up, and everyone was like, ‘what’s our community going to be?’ And then it burned everybody out. And they all got jaded and upset, and people didn’t participate for years, apparently. And now there’s another one that’s come up and it got people back caring, you know, ‘we need a vision for Bridgeland’ and ‘what’s our future?’

In a similar way, participation in CAs also ebbs and flows with the changing demographics of neighbourhoods. City employee Lisa described a “revolution” on the Capitol Hill CA board as younger families moved in and the “old guard” was replaced by a more family-friendly membership:

I think there has been a change, but I think the root cause of that was the change in the focus of the community association, in being open to more programs and services, and being open to including everyone. Where the previous board was all about [operating a] bar.

As with organizations, individuals may also experience waves of more or less active participation in keeping with the rhythms of their own lives. Justin, a young professional who was just settling into Dover, said that although he was not presently involved in his community,

“I know that those opportunities are there... there’s definitely a desire to get into that. It’s just a matter of time I suppose.” While the decision to become active relates partly to one’s life-stage, as discussed already above, interview data suggests that latent participation (see Talò and Mannarini, 2015) can also be activated by a particularly dynamic leader, or by a new program that injects resources and energy into the community. City employee Naya noted, for example, that when the Strong Neighbourhoods Initiative began in Martindale in 2010, there was “an attraction to this project that was coming to their neighbourhood... There was definitely some key individuals within that group that were able to mobilize quite a bit of people.” Individuals might also be drawn in by a personalized invitation that makes them feel welcome and needed. For example, Margaret, an elderly woman in Bridgeland-Riverside, agreed to help form a walking club for seniors when “a really vibrant leader said to me, you know, ‘we need you. Would you come on the committee because we want to get the seniors involved.’” Margaret noted that since being invited she had become involved with several other things, “so I feel a part of the community.” Thus, CAs go through different iterations over time, while individuals also experience periods of more passive and active participation related to circumstances in their own lives, but which can also be influenced by a feeling of being needed or the willingness of leaders to reach out personally with an invitation to participate.

6.3 Discussion

As outlined above, the formal modes of participation that emerged in this study included stepping up or helping out, speaking up, addressing needs, and showing up, all of which involve working in or through a community-based organization to improve the quality of the neighbourhood environment and residents’ lives. Whether or not they would articulate it as such, participants in this study valued neighbourhood-based civic engagement as a pathway to what

some researchers characterize as collective efficacy, a means to achieve both increased social control in neighbourhoods and broader systematic changes (e.g., Sampson, 1997; Morenoff et al., 2001). Yet participation takes different forms depending on each community's context—and as McCabe (2014) contends, not all forms of neighbourhood participation encourage broader social goods like inclusion or diversity. In Upper Mount Royal, for example, participation encompassed primarily social activities or advocacy driven by instrumental values, such as reducing cut-through traffic or controlling an outbreak of cotoneaster disease. In more ethno-racially diverse or rapidly changing neighbourhoods, on the other hand, CAs often struggled with meeting social needs, negotiating tensions among religious or cultural communities, or managing conflicting interests around development proposals. Thus, to reiterate a point made already in Chapters 2 and 4, community-based organizations, and CAs in particular, have widely different roles depending on their communities and the individuals involved.

While personal circumstances influence residents' choice and ability to participate in formal community-based organizations, this chapter illuminates the complex ways in which organizations themselves are "social actors" (Li, 2006) that influence participation, largely through their role as connectors. As Anderson et al. (2018) have recently found, CAs can facilitate democratic governance at a local scale by serving as a voice for residents, and by connecting and consolidating shared interests to achieve desired outcomes. They can also help connect residents to services, if they are aware of what the needs are and if residents themselves are aware of the services available. As one resident of McKenzie Towne, Shannon, suggested, even if the CA is not directly responsible for a given issue, "at least they could point me in the right direction to talk to someone that could find a solution." CAs encourage residents to connect to their physical spaces through beautification projects, historical walks, or community clean-up

days. They might also offer an opportunity for residents to connect with one another by providing a gathering space such as a hall or community garden, depending upon the availability of amenities and residents' ability to access them. Through their role as connectors, CAs therefore have a potentially powerful role in addressing concerns about social fragmentation and isolation.

This chapter also confirms a strong relationship between participation in community-based organizations and residents' feeling of cohesion and belonging, which has been well documented in research related to both social capital and sense of community (e.g., Putnam, 2000; Hughey et al., 2008; Peterson et al., 2008; Barati et al., 2012; Omoto and Malsh, 2014). Many residents who were active in their communities spoke about the benefits of participating: it helped them discover new things in their community, made them feel safer, gave them a stronger sense of pride and ownership in their neighbourhood, and helped them feel closer to their neighbours. As Jasmine, a mother with young children in Capitol Hill said, "we've met so many people in the community, and it's kind of nice to build that group, where you can just walk down the street and say hi to people—kind of build that small-town feel." While some residents attributed their weaker sense of belonging to not being more involved, Natasha, an active CA member in Mount Royal, framed her sense of belonging as a form of investment:

I put a lot into it as well, and I get just as much back. I do volunteer with the community, and I do go to community events, and I take part in community happenings... Because that's the point to me, is just to feel like you are part of a neighbourhood and part of a community.

However, the opportunities to participate, and the benefits of doing so, do not extend equally to everyone. Most community leaders generally agreed that only a small number of residents were either volunteering or attending events and programs—typically long-term homeowners, parents of young children, professionals with desired skills, and individuals who

are retired, who have flexible schedules, or who have the financial security to volunteer their time. Board members had less sense of who they were not reaching, while often assuming that non-participants were disengaged by choice. On the other hand, residents from under-represented or marginalized communities, such as renters, recent immigrants, or seniors, revealed a different set of priorities and a different range of limitations than what some leaders expected. Rather than being apathetic, uninterested or withdrawn, they described either structural barriers over which they had limited control, or a general sense that they did not belong. While class was an important factor in differentiating individuals' experiences, the sense of not belonging was compounded by other factors—in particular race, age, and gender. This reinforces some scholars' insistence on the intersectionality of belonging, and the multiple intersecting social divisions that constitute inequality and exclusion (e.g., Wood and Waite, 2011; Youkhana, 2015).

Thus, while CAs' priorities shift over time as their memberships change, they rarely reflect a full range of residents' interests or needs. Some CA boards in this study were making a concerted effort to become more representative and inclusive of their neighbourhoods by ensuring limited terms to board positions, and by reaching out to individuals who could help connect them to seniors, young professionals, or particular ethno-cultural communities. Many also recognized the material barriers that some individuals faced in participating, such as transportation, childcare, or language abilities. Even when they were genuinely interested in becoming more inclusive, however, many CA leaders, who tended to be white, middle-class, educated professionals, were unsure of where to begin or how to engage under-represented members of the community. They also had an ambiguous sense of what it meant to be representative, not recognizing that they may unintentionally help to perpetuate forms of

exclusion based on class, race or other social categories (see Pothier et al., 2019). They typically recruited new members through their existing networks, for example, in part because of a lack of response to more passive appeals, and in part to meet the needs of an efficient and effective board. This reproduces the dominance of white, middle-income, university educated leadership, as well as particular communicative norms—as clearly evidenced by the south Sudanese residents mentioned above who felt alienated by formal agendas and meeting structures. It also makes it even more difficult to attract a diverse range of new members who may feel they are not being asked or recognized for what they have to offer.

Perhaps it is not a surprise, then, that residents in several communities described feeling powerless to influence neighbourhood outcomes. This both reflects and extends existing scholarly discussions around participation and empowerment. For example, researchers have suggested that increasing participation should help to redistribute power and redress inequalities by enhancing the access of disadvantaged communities to political processes (e.g., Almond and Verba, 1965; Hucheson and Prather, 1988; Ohmer, 2010). However, as Verba and Nie (1972) established in relation to political processes, individuals with higher social status tend to hold leadership positions more often, and thus have a stronger voice, which undermines the potential for participation to decrease inequality. More recently, Wargent and Parker (2018) have argued that ensuring social inclusion in neighbourhood organizations involves not only equality of participation but also addressing the “social gradients” (p.394) that make it more likely for better resourced groups to participate. In this study it was clear that the benefits of participation did not always extend beyond those individuals or groups who were actively participating. To truly empower more members of the community to participate, Lewis et al. (2019) therefore insist on

both breadth of participation (i.e., the inclusion of diverse individuals and groups), and depth of participation (increasing residents' collective control).

Yet, community associations also struggle with what many participants felt were unclear and unfair expectations from both municipal government and their own residents. When asked what role a CA "should" play, residents suggested everything from gathering input on planning decisions, to maintaining a hall and/or recreational facility, solving neighbourhood problems, planning events and programs, sharing information, advocating for property owners, organizing beautification and cleanup projects, enhancing safety, and even supporting individuals' childcare or language needs. This could be in part due to the unique community association model in Calgary, which may not be familiar to residents from other cities. As board member Bryan stated with a degree of frustration, "I think there's a lot of misconceptions about what we do and who we are. I'm not paid to do this; I don't do this full-time."

Similar comments from other participants raise questions about the broader system of which CAs are a part, and the effectiveness of the current decentralized model of service delivery (see Allard and Small, 2013). Within the current neighbourhood services system, CAs act as mediators between top-down municipal priorities and programs, and more bottom-up community interests. Does that system place an unfair burden on citizens to fulfill roles that are more appropriately met by community development professionals or facility maintenance specialists? What is the appropriate balance between the local government's provision of services and the development of capacity and efficacy among neighbourhood-based voluntary organizations? And how does the broader downloading of responsibilities to municipal governments add further pressures to the resources available (see Mayer, 2009)? While these questions are largely beyond

the scope of this discussion, the insights in this chapter do suggest a need for further research into this complex policy question.

Finally, this chapter illustrates the need to broaden conceptualizations of what counts as participation in civic life. Community leaders who took part in this study tended to view participation in terms of being involved in neighbourhood organizations. They placed a high value on civic activities such as volunteering on a CA board, helping to organize an event, attending a community barbeque, or taking part in beautification initiatives. Such efforts did help strengthen the sense of cohesion and belonging among residents who actively participated. However, they also reinforced boundaries between the “insider” participants and the “outsiders” who kept to themselves—even though the cyclical nature of participation found in this study suggests that such boundaries are extremely porous. Class and ethnoracial diversity were particularly important in structuring perceived boundaries, primarily through some community leaders’ (explicit or implicit) belief that “they” should follow dominant norms around neighbourhood participation and behaviour (see discussion in Pothier et al., 2019). Thus, this chapter illustrates how belonging is “granted and distributed by those in power” (Huizinga and van Hoven, 2018, p.310) through the structures and day-to-day practices of community-based organizations. Unless community leaders recognize and work to address such power imbalances, they may help to reproduce rather than address the boundaries that create exclusions.

6.4 Summary

This chapter has explored uneven participation in community organizations in selected Calgary neighbourhoods, and the corresponding factors that both motivate and inhibit individuals’ choice and capacity to participate. It sheds light on a range of personal circumstances, contextual factors, and organizational characteristics that influence participation, suggesting that community

organizations themselves can play a key role in mobilizing residents toward greater participation and inclusion. By the same token, community organizations can also exacerbate community divisions and exclusions, particularly along class, race, age and gender lines, thereby further alienating some residents from a sense of belonging. As Poithier et al. (2019) have similarly found in relation to Hamilton's neighbourhood programs, oppressive discourses around social categories such as race, class or age can operate even within programs meant to address neighbourhood inequity. At the same time, these discourses and the inequity itself often extend far beyond the neighbourhood itself, to issues such as labour market access or housing affordability, over which community-based organizations have limited influence. In focusing on the varied opportunities and constraints of community-based organizations, this chapter thus contributes to Allard and Small's (2013) call to move beyond individuals and neighbourhoods in understanding urban disadvantage, toward organizations, the systems of which those organizations are part, and the institutions (rules and norms) that regulate both.

Many of the community leaders who participated in this study were engaged in purposeful and creative efforts to broaden the range of individuals who were participating. The organizations themselves faced barriers based on the resources available and the particular contexts of their neighbourhoods. Yet they often assumed that residents who did not participate were simply not interested or did not care, rather than taking bolder steps to learn who was in their community, what their needs were, and what diverse residents might be able to contribute. Their views of participation and their "civic talk" (Hoekstra and Gerteis, 2019, p.210) suggest that those who truly belong are residents who are actively engaged in neighbourhood organizations. However, in order to better understand the dynamics of place-based belonging it is necessary to look beyond community-based organizations to the more informal and expressive

ways in which diverse residents understand participation, and the everyday spatial routines through which they develop a feeling of belonging. It is to these informal modes of participation to which I turn next.

Chapter 7: Neighbouring and Everyday Spatial Routines

7.0 Introduction

Interviews with residents across the case study communities revealed rich examples of dynamic, everyday forms of neighbourhood participation that fall outside the purview of community-based organizations. In this chapter I explore these informal modes of participation, which, after Benson and Jackson (2012) I characterize as ways of “doing neighbourhood,” to better understand how they influence residents’ experiences of belonging. The distinction between formal and informal modes of participation is an analytical simplification that ignores the complex and intertwined ways in which individuals experience their neighbourhoods—and indeed the potential role of community-based organizations in fostering diverse place-based relations, as will be discussed below. Nevertheless, in contrast to the civic participation described in Chapter 6, this chapter focuses on the more routine and localized social ties that form within the intimate spaces of participants’ immediate neighbourhoods. I begin by exploring the theme of neighbouring generally, then describe six distinctive modes of informal participation that emerged through thematic analysis of interviews: networking, caring, reciprocating, working together, watching out, and getting out. This is followed by a discussion of the themes in relation to existing research.

7.1 Neighbouring

There is a large literature on neighbouring, which relates generally to the social ties and interactions between individuals living near one another. Neighbouring has been summarized on several occasions, notably by Keller (1968), Unger and Wandersman (1985), or in more recent studies such as Kusenbach (2006). In her still widely cited definition, Keller describes neighbouring as “the activities engaged in by neighbors *as neighbors* and the relationships these

engender among them” (p.29). This chapter follows Keller in conceptualizing neighbouring as the day-to-day relationships and interactions that participants described having with their neighbours. Throughout the interviews, participants strongly valued knowing their neighbours and having friendly relationships, even among strangers within the community. They associated neighbourliness with a greater sense of safety, potential business opportunities, the comfort of having someone close by with whom to socialize, provide mutual support, or turn to in an emergency—and, as CKE resident Maria idealized, “a feeling of belonging...of being part of a place.”

However, the interviews also highlight tensions between neighbours. Some participants in this study described incivilities and a feeling of distrust that they observed around them. Donna, a recently retired condominium owner in Bridgeland-Riverside, felt excluded when she would “say hello to someone with a big smile and they just look at you like they don’t know how to respond”—though she also recognized that there might be mental health issues or traumatic experiences at play, particularly among clients of the nearby drop-in centre. Gwen had recently moved houses within Martindale, and shared that she had “not yet developed those stronger bonds” with a large multi-generational family living next-door who were “always in and out. And the ones that are consistently at home are very shy. They won’t answer the door....” Similarly, another longer-term Martindale resident and second-generation immigrant, Rosie, felt that as the community diversified people had started to “shut themselves off”; as the number of renters in particular increased, residents were less willing to reach out to others, were ruder and “not respecting their neighbours’ property [or] parking.” While these examples are from lower-income and ethno-racially diverse neighbourhoods, participants in higher income and more

homogeneous neighbourhoods also shared frustrations around parking, garbage, traffic, and a general decline in friendliness.

Many of these perceived incivilities suggest a failure among certain residents to meet dominant white, middle-class, “Canadian” norms of neighbourly behaviour based on friendly, if superficial, interactions—a clash in expectations participants often framed in terms of decline. However, tensions were also evident among participants from particular ethno-cultural communities based on competing normative value systems. For example, Aruna critiqued the superficial nature of interactions in Martindale compared to her former home in India, where,

I can just knock the door and just give something for the neighbour, maybe something that I cooked. And then sit and talk and interact on a daily basis, no matter what. And that, I don't experience in Canada in ten years. It's not like that. We have a good news or we have a bad news on the channel, or we are listening to some news, we'll just knock the door and talk to each other, and say hey, what is this going on? You know? Just somebody you can connect right away, whether you're happy or sad, whatever it is, right? That's not how it is in Canada.

Ben, a recent university graduate of Vietnamese descent, observed strong stereotypes among members of his ethno-cultural community in Dover:

My mother, lovely woman, thinks that all Sudanese people are terrorists. From what little English Sudanese she's able to consume, that's the impression she's gotten.... And I think those types of stereotypes are—they're not uncommon, because I hear the kitchen conversations. And so, A) there's no reason to ever talk to them; but also, it's okay not to talk to them because they might be terrorists.

As these latter two examples illustrate and other researchers have also emphasized (e.g., Kusenbach, 2006; van Eijk, 2012), neighbouring involves a set of formalized rules and normative patterns. These norms underpin a sense of frustration when neighbourhood ideals are not met and serve to rationalize a certain distancing between social “others.”

Furthermore, interviews strongly support van Eijk's (2012) observation that neighbouring involves a balance between proximity and privacy. Although some participants described neighbours as genuine friends, it was more common for them to differentiate between the two

roles. Marilyn, an older woman living alone in Dover, spoke about a close neighbour, qualifying “we’re not in each other’s pockets—don’t get me wrong. But if I pick up the phone and call [her], she’d be over in a second, and likewise.” A long-time resident of Hawkwood, Linda said she knew her neighbours reasonably well, but added, “we’re not inside of each other’s houses or anything like that, but certainly when you’re out in the summertime you stop and chat.” Linda’s comment further illustrates how neighbouring often takes place through casual encounters in outside public spaces rather than inside private homes—at least until deeper friendships have formed. As van Eijk (2012) has stressed and this study bears out, these sorts of bounded relations between neighbours are common across all types of neighbourhoods, not only the so-called “deprived” or “problem” ones (see also discussion in Keller, 1968; Kusenbach, 2006). In the next section, I explore these bounded relations further through six themes generated from interview data, which describe particular forms of neighbouring.

7.1.1 Networking

The theme of networking highlights ways in which individuals come together for gatherings by using—and thereby consolidating—informal social networks within their neighbourhoods. A common thread between participants from Mount Royal, Hawkwood, and McKenzie Towne was the incidence of block parties organized between homes in a defined area. Natasha, a Mount Royal homeowner who was close with many of her neighbours, described that:

It’s not a community-sanctioned thing; it’s our block. And we have a block party every year, because we all feel it’s really important—plus too, our kids play together, we go across our backyard and chat over the fence; we go to our neighbour’s house for drinks on a sunny afternoon... There’s myself and two other neighbours. So three houses, out of I guess, I think there’s about 16 total on our block? So three of us just get together and send an email to everybody. And one lady kind of hosts it mainly in her back yard and garage; and then the other guy goes around and canvasses all the neighbours, and we do up a little flyer with all the information on it. And then people who are coming contact me, and I organize the food and babysitters and things like that.

As this comment illustrates, these sorts of social events depend upon existing relationships, but they also help to expand the network of connected neighbours. They can also inspire other initiatives, as in Rebecca’s experience of her family’s annual Halloween gathering in

Hawkwood:

All the neighbours are invited to come over and we bring out the fire pit and just come and sit and have hot chocolate or whatever. And it’s sort of grown from there, where somebody else this summer for the first year organized a block party and we had about 50 people from our little area come and join us. Which was amazing, you know. You just have to put yourself out there to meet your neighbours.

Informal social gatherings can thus have a sort of ripple effect—a “growing, extending reaching out,” as Barb described of neighbour relations in Bridgeland-Riverside—that impacts the broader neighbourhood as well.

Similar neighbourhood-based networks can also serve residents looking for support. For example, Natasha recounted her own pivotal role within Mount Royal’s “nanny network,” connecting other mothers of young children with information about childcare or things to do in the area:

I just really work hard to talk with people, quickly get to know them, and always keep them in mind when I’m approached with an issue or something that needs to be done, or something where someone is looking for help... I’m a networker.

Social media can be integral to these neighbourhood-based networks, though the accounts are often administered by or affiliated with community organizations. For example, Jenn, a McKenzie Towne resident, talked about the “incredible” interactions that occurred on the local RA’s facebook page and the role of the platform in mobilizing an informal group of women known as the “McKenzie Towne Angels.” In one incident where a family lost their home, the group responded by organizing bake sales and other fundraising events for the benefit of the

family. In this case the network of social media followers existed through an established organization but enabled collective action that occurred independently of that organization.

Thus, the networking activities described by participants in this study were often intertwined with community organizations and shared a common motivation to build a sense of trust and cohesion among neighbourhood residents. Like more formal community events, they also depended significantly on mobilizers—individuals willing to take a leadership role, who may indeed participate simultaneously in informal activities as well as their community association or other volunteer organizations. However, in comparison to community-wide events, these informal activities occurred at smaller and more intimate scales that were more reflective of the ways in which residents defined their neighbourhoods and their sense of belonging in their participatory maps (see discussion in Chapter 5). They also required a much less sustained engagement, allowing individuals to participate in ways and to the extent they wished, without the commitments involved in more formal volunteer roles. Moreover, as with community-organized events, these activities helped build relationships between residents, giving them a stronger feeling of connection; as Donna, who had recently retired to Bridgeland-Riverside noted, “the more people you know, the more you feel you belong.”

On the other hand, smaller-scale social gatherings may be more limited in terms of who is invited to participate. A block party would include demographically similar residents of a defined street or block—in the case of McKenzie Towne or Mount Royal, likely white, upper-middle class homeowners with young children. The networks are thus more selective and exclusive than with a community-wide barbecue, which would include individuals from across different socio-economic or ethno-racial pockets of a neighbourhood. Furthermore, the block parties and smaller gatherings that participants described in this study typically occurred within

privately owned spaces such as a resident's back yard, rather than a shared public space to which everyone had access. This has important implications in terms of who feels comfortable to inhabit those private spaces, and ultimately who benefits from the networking activity: the host, immediate neighbours, the local block or the neighbourhood as a whole. Moreover, it may be significant that the block parties and other networking practices described here took place only in the more homogenous, middle or higher income neighbourhoods included in this study. This raises questions, such as whether similarity between neighbours inculcates a greater sense of trust, or whether these residents simply have more time and financial capacity to organize informal social events.

7.1.2 Caring

The theme of caring refers to everyday acts through which residents take care of both human and non-human entities within their neighbourhoods. Linda, a long-time resident of Hawkwood, recalled that “the lady across the street from us lost her husband a few years ago, and when he was sick, you’d go over and help her out or take her a casserole.” After describing many incivilities she observed around her home in Dover, Marilyn insisted that, “people are still caring. [One neighbour is] one of the kindest men; he’s got gorgeous rose bushes, so he delivers little bouquets of roses to various neighbours and seniors who are on their own.” Also in Dover, Judy lived in a low-income seniors’ residence and took care of two different neighbours who were having difficulties, by “being a good listener,” offering them food and occasionally taking them out to a movie. Meanwhile, a resident of Bridgeland-Riverside gave bottles and blankets to a homeless man she regularly encountered near her building. These sorts of caring practices often took place between individuals who were not close friends, but neighbours who could recognize when someone needed help because of their proximity, attentiveness, and frequent

day-to-day interactions. As Mee (2009) found in her own research, caring bonds such as these between neighbours contribute significantly to a sense of belonging.

Some participants also talked about shovelling snow and taking care of their own yards or gardens as a form of neighbourhood participation. However, the majority of examples in which participants spoke about care involved caring about, or taking care of, shared public spaces. For example, after retiring to Bridgeland-Riverside, Donna “adopted” a park next to her building when she noticed weeds taking over the flowerbeds. She said, “I never liked to weed my own garden, but this is different; I don’t have to. So I started weeding and just making it nice and making sure that things don’t die.” Other participants described feeding birds or squirrels in the neighbourhood; or reporting graffiti, an overflowing garbage can, or something else that needed attention—a form of participation that involved caring enough about one’s neighbourhood to contact police or file a 311 (municipal services) report. These latter sorts of caring practices illustrate ways in which residents actively worked to create an ideal neighbourhood environment in which they took pride and felt they belonged; they also set a standard to which everyone in the neighbourhood was expected to adhere. As Martindale resident Stacy pleaded, “all I ask is that [neighbours] just mow their grass, pick up the garbage; that’s it... I just want people to love [the neighbourhood] as much as we do, to make it better.”

7.1.3 Reciprocating

The theme of reciprocity as generated from data in this study relates to the many acts of reciprocal exchange that neighbours had with one another, which involved sharing, lending or helping. Participants described instances where they shared a loaf of bread with a neighbour, who later reciprocated with lettuce or carrots from their garden, or where they offered food to a neighbour and in turn used their television to watch a show. Ben recounted that his mother and

neighbours in Dover with either Costco memberships or vehicles banded together for a weekly shopping “caravan.” Marilyn, a retired homeowner in Dover, gave a jar of homemade antipasto every year to a few “lucky people” who had helped her out, including “the fellow who comes up every week, cuts my grass in the summer and shovels the snow in the winter, for nothing.”

Another elderly resident of Bridgeland-Riverside, Margaret, occasionally ordered cakes for social events at her housing facility, but was unable to pick them up; as she explained,

I went over and asked one of the chaps that I knew very well, would he drive me over? ... And he said, ‘I can’t lift things, and there’s many things I can’t do, but I can drive a car. So anytime you need to be driven anywhere I will do it.’ So if you have somebody like that, that’s a tremendous help... And you see, it gets him out of his room; now he’s coming to coffee.

As Margaret’s experience illustrates, many of these reciprocal acts fulfilled mutual needs between the neighbours and thus served an important instrumental role, in addition to sustaining friendly relations.

One particular participant, Andrei, had lived in several different countries before immigrating from eastern Europe to Canada; he shared insights about the ways in which reciprocity differed between two particular neighbourhoods in this study. While he owned a home and lived within the more exclusive Uplands area of Hawkwood, Andrei also spent full-time days, with many overnight stays, renovating a home in Dover that he intended to resell. He characterized Dover residents as more open, friendly and approachable:

You have guys a few houses away that look, like honestly, like little gangsters. But once they just approached me, I was outside and they just approached me and asked me to boost their car. So I just drove over to their house and boosted their car. And since then we’re kind of—[it’s like] we’re best friends; they say hi all the time and they smile at me, and they just kind of ask, if I move things around, they always ask if I need help... While I am in Dover, I know that these guys, they are standing in front of me and there is nothing behind...like whatever they say to you, they mean it.

In contrast, he saw Hawkwood residents as more guarded and private:

To be honest this is why I like this area, is that people don't come over and people don't start talking to me. I really appreciate my privacy. I really appreciate my life inside of my house. In Dover it's the same, but you feel that life around is ready to get into your house as soon as you open the door... I wouldn't go to my neighbours over here to ask for some tool if I need to use, if I don't have it; I would probably go to Rona or any other store like this and buy it. In Dover, though, I can always go to the neighbour next to me and ask for something. I can always go over there and ask them to help me to move something.

Although this is only one individual's experience, it resonates with how many other participants also spoke about their neighbourhoods. Residents of Dover, Martindale, and to some extent Bridgeland-Riverside and Capitol Hill, described more established cultures of lending and borrowing than did residents of Mount Royal, Hawkwood, McKenzie Towne or CKE. The implications of this tendency are considered in the discussion below.

7.1.4 Working together

Participants spoke about having to work together or collaborate in order to resolve specific issues. For example, Gary spoke about the difficulty of removing snow on his block in Dover, and how neighbours agreed on a system that worked for everyone:

We have two slivers of land on either side of our driveway, and we said, pile the snow as high as we can and pack it down; that way we can all get out. Because if you push it back into the middle of the road, nobody gets out.

In other examples, participants worked on shared projects with neighbours. Andrei explained that he and his neighbour in Hawkwood had worked together to build matching platforms for their garbage bins, through which they learned about their common experiences: "You see how a person works, you see how he's helping, and yeah, he opens up way more. He tells his stories, I tell him my stories." Working together allowed Andrei and his neighbour a much deeper sense of connection and understanding than they had previously developed through casual day-to-day interactions.

Parking issues were more contentious and difficult to resolve, even if residents tried working together—especially in neighbourhoods with on-street parking, such as Capitol Hill, or with many secondary suites, such as Martindale. Ann described her unconventional “community house environment,” in which she and several other adults shared a duplex in Capitol Hill. Their frequent gatherings with friends involved “coming and going that creates traffic and need for parking.” When tensions arose with neighbours over parking, she tried getting in touch with them by leaving notes and a telephone number; instead of contacting her directly, however, one neighbour reported her to City authorities. Ann felt that as a renter she had become a target for the collective parking frustrations of nearby homeowners, one of whom had referred to the duplex as a “flophouse”:

It did kind of bring maybe even a semi-conscious sense of, okay, who else on this street thinks that about me, and about us? I’m just so not interested in having to convince anybody that I have a right to say that I belong somewhere... I guess it would be different too for anyone who owns, who owns from a place of ‘I want to be here for a long time’.

As in this example, the propensity to appeal to a higher level of authority was common among many residents in this study, who said they would likely use 311 (the City of Calgary’s municipal service number) or contact the community association if they encountered problems in the neighbourhood, rather than attempting to resolve things more directly themselves.

Sometimes neighbours worked together in larger groups in order to bring attention to shared concerns. A Mount Royal resident related that three horticulturalists mobilized when a cotoneaster disease broke out in their community. As Natasha described, neighbours were “quick to get together and form their own little block watch, and their own little way of communicating. Just to look after each other’s property, basically.” Eventually they got the community association and the City involved in helping to control the outbreak. Richard, an original homeowner in Hawkwood, shared a similar example of neighbours working together to advocate

for a berm to help screen traffic noise from a nearby thoroughfare. They recognized that they needed to align with the community association in order for their concerns to be taken seriously:

When we dealt with the City they were quite happy to deal with us. The folks across the street, in Edgemont, did kind of the same thing, without getting the community association backing. The City wouldn't talk to them.

These examples illustrate ways in which residents worked together, but also through the CA as an established and legitimized channel, to advance their interests.

7.1.5 Watching out

Although sometimes a more passive form of participation than the other themes discussed thus far, participants in every case study community spoke about watching out for one another. This theme includes the small, everyday ways in which residents spoke about keeping an eye on one another's properties or wellbeing, as well as the more intentional forms of social control through which they monitored crime and safety in the neighbourhood.

Many participants discussed sharing the responsibility to watch out for their children. This often involved collectively creating a space, as an extension of the home, which was perceived to be safe for children to play. John, a father living in Capitol Hill explained that,

We've got five or six kids who play on our lot; one of the parents is out making sure, while the other ones are making dinner. It's kind of nice that we share that; it's not really official, just out making sure that the kids are doing what they're supposed to—which is just staying on our side of the street, maybe not going around the corner.

Gwen, a Martindale resident of First Nations ancestry, recalled the close friendships she developed with three other stay-at-home mothers from different ethno-racial backgrounds who lived on her block:

On my list of, you know [really good friends], I think four? Four or five, all came from being neighbours in Martindale. And again, all different races, all different backgrounds... So I was a stay-at-home mom, and, yeah, I think we were all stay-at-home moms. You know, we hung out during the days and whatever else. But we met, basically, through our kids... When the kids were out playing, if one parent was outside and you

needed to run in and start dinner or whatever, you'd just say, okay I'm running in, I'll be twenty minutes, and it was never a problem—you could always just run back in.

In this example, bonds between the women developed around the rhythms of their parenting and household responsibilities, a situation in which shared experiences of gender and motherhood over-rode other social differences. Watching out for each other's children offered a reason to socialize and repeated encounters over time, which helped build trust and eventually friendships between them.

“Watching out” also involved monitoring both public and private spaces for unwanted behaviours, as a form of social control. Carol, an older homeowner in the more affluent Uplands section of Hawkwood, kept an eye on the amenities outside her building:

I mean, we pay—we're paying our \$89 or whatever it is per month. So I also feel in a sense we are owners of that centre. So yeah, I do feel quite as if that's my property, and if I see somebody on a skateboard or go on the tennis court, I'll certainly ask them to move.

While Carol recognized a need for dedicated facilities for youth, she also lamented her homeowner association's decision to open the tennis courts to the broader community, which she felt had resulted in “more cars coming into the parking lot...and you know, drug deals [going] on quite regularly.” She said, “I certainly tried to do what I could to interfere. But it's meant we had to post all kinds of signs up saying, you know, private property, etc.” This example clearly illustrates how individuals enact spaces of belonging and exclusion within neighbourhoods by signaling who, and what sorts of activities, are permitted within those spaces. It is also one of several examples in this study that entangles notions of criminality and youth, exposing particular ways in which age can structure spatial exclusion. After referencing an incident where she chased away children misbehaving outside her home in Dover, for example, Marilyn concluded, “it's up to you to maintain a certain status of acceptable lifestyles.”

At times, concerns around safety overlapped with the networking activities described above, as residents made use of their connections to share information with neighbours. As an example, a long-term homeowner in Dover commented:

I have the emails, the phone numbers, the names, the names of the kids, of all the people that are around us. And I send out little notes saying... ‘just to let you know the CLO—community liaison officer—that, you know, break-ins to the east, west, south of us are going up. We seem to be in relatively good shape, but just keep your eyes open.’ They seem to like it.

In this case the participant’s position as a CA board member gave him access to somewhat privileged information that he could pass along to his closer neighbours. Likewise, an informal residents’ group known as the McKenzie Towne Watch, which is connected to the community’s residents’ association, used social media to report criminal activity to neighbours. As one homeowner who followed the page, Jenn, shared:

[The members] are almost excited to report, like I saw someone jaywalking, or my house was broken into. And I think it’s part wanting to be part of the community—is it gossip? It’s probably gossip too, but gossip is part of wanting to be part of the community.

As this last comment suggests, watching out for one another included a form of participation that two individuals characterized as being a “nosy neighbour.” A middle-class Dover homeowner, Dana, reflected:

It’s important to be able to know who you’re surrounded with and being able to rely on them, just in the very sense of just knowing that, you know, I’m out of town, or I don’t know, my kids are here. It’s that idea of the nosy neighbour. I want nosy neighbours; I want people to know that somebody’s in my backyard that shouldn’t be there.

Despite the common desire for some amount of privacy, as discussed already above, participants also valued knowing there were “eyes on the street” to regulate disorder and activities they deemed undesirable, from break-ins, to drug activity, to adolescents loitering without apparent purpose.

This sort of informal social control is often grounded in negative emotions such as fear and mistrust, and therefore has the potential to create powerful exclusions—particularly for members of racialized communities. Participants across the case studies spoke about fears over safety, though two particular examples illustrate the “sticky perceptions” (Sampson, 2009) and stereotypes circulating behind such fears. As Ben, a younger man of Vietnamese descent said of Dover,

I feel fairly safe in my community. I didn't at first; I used to carry a knife in my backpack. But now I realize that's ridiculous. I've been walking it for six years now and nothing has ever—I've never even seen anything suspicious... Although, I've gotta say, other residents sometimes [have] a perception that it's a very dangerous neighbourhood.

Amin, also from a visible minority community, referenced a safety meeting he attended in which others spoke about being afraid to walk on the streets or be out at night. Never having felt threatened himself, he realized during the meeting that it was members of his own community that were perceived as dangerous. As he described:

Those are the sign that shows you, that tells you that, yeah, the whole community doesn't look at each other as, 'oh yeah, good people, yeah'; there is kind of some judgment around, who are those? What colour are they?... There are those kind of judgment based on background, colour of skin.

Although Amin recognized the racist discourse that excluded him from feeling welcome in public spaces, he shared that his own sense of safety stemmed from knowing fellow members of his community personally; “[even] if I don't know them by name, they are family to me.”

7.1.6 Getting out

The final theme of “getting out” involves ways in which residents described participating in their community and interacting with neighbours by walking, biking, gardening, or simply being outdoors. As mentioned already in Chapter 5, the participatory maps highlight how important walking is to the ways in which people use and navigate everyday spaces within their

neighbourhoods. For Mateo, who had moved to Calgary from California, regular walks through his neighbourhood in Dover engendered a richer awareness of what was happening in the local environment:

I like to spend time walking... And I was seeing graffiti signs that, I would say, copied a known gang in southern California. So, when I was seeing signs like that just spray painted, that's when I thought, you know, we should have a gang talk.

In response to the troubling graffiti, Mateo organized a community workshop in cooperation with a Calgary Police Service resource officer to educate his own teenaged children and other local youth about negative behaviours.

Just as it sharpened Mateo's awareness of his environment, the act of walking can also encourage a strong connection to place. This was illustrated by Amin's experience of the first Calgary neighbourhood where he lived as a new Canadian and where he later chose to purchase a home:

I used to walk around, walk to the bus stop, walk to church, when I was brand new. So this is the first place that I know in Calgary, so I think there's that connection. That I feel this is my home.

Although Amin focused on positive outcomes, walking was not a matter of choice for him, but of financial necessity. This resonates with an observation made by another participant, Sharon, who had retired with her husband from a middle-class suburb to a condominium in Dover, in part to reduce their dependency on vehicles:

I think because of income, there are a lot of people waiting for buses, or they're walking, there are a lot more bikes on the street... so again, there's interaction there. [If] I have to go through a four-way stop, and there's a bike, or there's a couple of us lined up, I will jokingly say to the next biker, this is my kind of traffic."

Participants in inner-city neighbourhoods gave many more examples of walking or biking as part of their day-to-day commutes or routines, in comparison to those living in more suburban areas, who tended to bike or walk primarily for leisure. Nevertheless, both situations offered a deeper

level of engagement with neighbours and the neighbourhood than what Sharon described as the “car capsule” experience.

As was clear from residents’ participatory maps, walking or biking can be a way for people to expand the boundaries of “their” neighbourhood by moving through a wide range of places, or to discover commonalities with individuals with whom they might not otherwise interact. Natasha said of her experiences being out with her children in Mount Royal that:

A lot of the people that I’ve met that live in those big homes are—I mean, a lot of them have young families. So their concerns are the same as mine. And they’ll stop and say hi on the street when you’re out with your kids and you’re walking your dog.

As Natasha’s comment also suggests, walking with dogs and children can add further entry points for people to connect, providing a “safe” opening for strangers to interact. At the same time, by making residents more visible to one another, walking can consolidate existing relationships through chance encounters. As an active CA member in Bridgeland-Riverside, Barb shared:

When I go out walking, my partner will say ‘how long are you going to be gone?’ I’ll say, ‘oh I’ll be gone about an hour.’ And then two and a half hours later I come home; she says, ‘what happened?’ ‘Oh, I saw so-and-so on the street and we got talking and then I saw so-and-so and we had a look at such-and-such.’

These sorts of encounters did not require a purpose, or the sort of commitment that a more formal engagement might; rather, they allowed neighbours to interact in a casual way that nevertheless kept social boundaries intact.

Finally, residents also spoke about simply being out in their yards as a way of connecting with others in their neighbourhood. Dana, a homeowner in Dover, mentioned frequent daily interactions with neighbours because “people are outside working on their yards, or cutting their lawn, or shovelling their walks.” John summed up the three things that invited interaction on his street in Capitol Hill as “the kid and the dog, [and] that we’re smiling on our porch.” As he

suggested, having a public-facing private space and the willingness to engage with passers-by were important factors in providing opportunities to interact. On the other hand, these opportunities were also circumscribed by the highly seasonal nature of “getting out.” As Megan, an active community organizer in McKenzie Towne commented:

It’s so funny, because when I have the block party on our block, we always have it in the spring. And people come out of hibernation; they say, hey I didn’t see you for the last six months, or four months, right? Because it’s just too cold to have community outside in any way.

While people do continue to walk, bike, and care for their yards in winter months, these sorts of routine outdoor activities are heavily curtailed by inclement weather, adding to the cyclical nature of community life.

7.2 Discussion

Neighbourhood participation incorporated a wide range of both formal and informal practices grounded within what participants defined as their neighbourhoods. In comparison to the more structured civic engagement explored in Chapter 6, this discussion has focused on the informal, expressive modes of participation (Swaroop and Morenoff, 2006) that emerged in thematic analysis of participant interviews and maps. While community organization leaders in this study often felt frustrated by limited resident engagement, this chapter suggests that residents do participate actively in their neighbourhoods—albeit often in ways that are not necessarily directed or recognized by community organizations and service providers. Moreover, among residents who were not involved in community associations, very few saw neighbourhood participation as a civic duty. Nonetheless, they described a range of day-to-day spatial routines and interactions within their neighbourhoods through which they developed a sense of belonging—or, at times, not belonging.

These experiences illustrate several key findings that reflect and expand upon existing research. First, the informal ways of “‘doing’ neighbourhood” (Benson and Jackson, 2012) illuminated in this study are highly relational, as other researchers have also found (e.g., Wright, 2015; Pinkster, 2016; Huizinga and van Hoven, 2018). They are played out between friends, acquaintances, and strangers through everyday routines, social encounters, or simply sharing space. As discussed in Chapter 5, everyday encounters are important for building familiarity between neighbours, which ultimately has the potential to create a sense of belonging and bolster community cohesion (Corcoran et al., 2018; Hoekstra and Dahlvik, 2018). Indeed, several service providers interviewed highly valued social interactions between neighbours alongside other forms of local civic engagement. For example, Thuy, who worked for a city-wide community-based organization, commented that, “one of our goals is to connect neighbours so that they can have a natural support system before they need to go to service providers.” This affirms Pothier et al.’s (2019) suggestion that, given the limitations of neighbourhood work, its greatest potential may be its ability to foster connections and support between neighbours and neighbourhoods.

At the same time, this study echoes Wilson (2017) in calling for a more nuanced approach to encounter. As critics of social mix policies suggest (e.g., Amin, 2002; Lel vri r, 2013), and as Valentine (2008) pointedly argues, mere contact between social groups is not sufficient to change values or produce greater respect; despite spatial proximity, individuals may not actually mix with others who are different from themselves. While participants in this study described a range of mundane neighbouring behaviours, often in positive emotional terms, their experiences also suggest that building trust with neighbours takes time and can be fraught with tension. More “sustained encounters” (Wilson, 2017) that build up over time around a shared

purpose, whether taking care of a neighbourhood park, building a garbage platform, or watching out for each other's children, can work to gradually shift relations and understanding across a range of differences. This study thus provides further empirical support to Amin's (2002) call for more "spaces of interdependence and habitual engagement" (p.967) to help develop intercultural understanding, civil participation, and sense of belonging through practice, not merely copresence, in local spaces." It also speaks to the importance of what Elwood et al. (2015) call "progressive, alliance-building moments" (p.125) between residents as a way of breaking down stereotypes that work to normalize social difference and exclusion.

On the other hand, neighbouring is often practiced selectively between individuals who already share commonalities, such as gender, income level or ethno-cultural background, thereby reaffirming rather challenging existing social hierarchies and normative behaviours. As this study found, neighbouring practices can be exclusive, particularly those in which residents enact neighbourhood ideals through day-to-day consumption preferences in gentrifying communities or gatherings that take place by invitation only, in private residential spaces. While participants from a range of backgrounds spoke about neighbouring practices, a few groups in particular were consistently characterized as outsiders who did not participate in neighbourhood life. Youth, seniors, renters and residents of affordable housing units were often represented as being isolated, invisible, or disengaged; meanwhile, immigrants and racialized individuals were said to "flock together," as one CA member, Dorothy put it. An elderly woman living in low-income housing in Riverside, a Sikh Punjabi student in Martindale, an Indigenous woman who rented in Dover, a male South Sudanese refugee in Dover—all individuals who were marginalized along overlapping axes of class, gender, age, and/or ethno-racial differentiation—spoke about specific

interactions that made them feel excluded or unwelcome, but in which they also felt called on to adjust their own behaviours to accommodate others' expectations.

These experiences highlight how particular encounters might actually reproduce rather than reduce anxieties, fears or prejudice. Concerns over safety, for example, often worked to consolidate the exclusion of those already perceived as “outsiders” through stereotypes associating them with crime or danger. On the other hand, even positive feelings of care or pride could exacerbate divisions by constructing particular neighbourhood ideals that some residents consistently failed to live up to. As Ahmed (2014) observed in relation to the nation, “love becomes crucial to the promise of cohesion within multiculturalism; it becomes the ‘shared characteristic’ required to keep the nation together” (p.135). Within the current neighbourhood context, love of place worked to produce differentiation between those (usually long-term, white, Canadian-born homeowners) who affectively bonded over a shared neighbourhood ideal, and those (often immigrants, youth, and lower-income renters) who were blamed for disorder. Participants' experiences of neighbouring thus also illustrate how marginalized individuals must actively negotiate encounters, and the complex politics of emotions, to achieve a sense of belonging (see Huizinga and van Hoven, 2018).

As Wilson (2017) argues, then, “encounters *make* difference” (p.455). They are fundamentally about social distinctions and unequal power relations, which emerge during particular spatial and temporal moments of encounter. Neighbouring behaviours can disrupt people's expectations of each other, including the view of minority communities as “sealed and homogeneous—as ‘the same’” (Ahmed, 2014, p.138), and, as Wilson suggests, help to undo some of the apparently fixed boundaries that constitute belonging. However, power dynamics might also deny certain marginalized individuals the right to fully belong in place, in their own

way (see discussion in Amin, 2002). The informal ways of “doing” neighbourhood in this study ultimately suggest that while neighbouring practices have the potential to destabilize negative perceptions individuals might have of each other, thereby offering hope for more inclusive belonging, encounters themselves may not influence broader socio-spatial inequalities without a suite of actors and strategies in place to address them.

A second area of insight from this analysis involves the discussion of reciprocity, particularly generalized forms of exchange that promote social cohesion and trust (see Molm, 2010). As reviewed in Chapter 2, reciprocity and trust are considered to be cornerstones of social capital, which Putnam (2000) describes as the connections and shared norms among individuals that lead to mutually beneficial cooperation. Moreover, social capital research argues that the benefits of reciprocity between neighbours can extend out from individuals to the broader community—a claim which is similarly made in research on collective efficacy, in which strong ties and trust between neighbours are linked with a greater ability to maintain informal social controls (Morenoff et al., 2001; Sampson, 2004). While reciprocity is believed to be important in combatting crime and other forms of social disorder, there are conflicting findings as to the relationship between reciprocity and particular neighbourhood contexts such as ethnic diversity or concentrated disadvantage (for discussion see Sampson, 2004; Phan and Demaiter, 2009; Kearns et al., 2014).

This study offers qualitative examples that enrich existing work on social capital and collective efficacy, which have generally been dominated by survey-based approaches. It did find rich networks of helping and lending within ethno-racially diverse, lower-income neighbourhoods such as Dover, Martindale and Bridgeland-Riverside. There were relatively fewer examples within higher-income, more homogeneous neighbourhoods such as Hawkwood,

McKenzie Towne and Mount Royal, where participants spoke more often about socializing or watching out for one another's properties. As with Swaroop and Morenoff's (2006) research on Chicago neighbourhoods, these findings challenge the assumption that concentrated disadvantage leads to distrust among neighbours and withdrawal from community life. They add nuance to discussions about how socioeconomic status or "disadvantage" influences reciprocal norms of trust. Most significantly, within the examples that participants gave, income intersected with other factors to inform what sorts of help individuals needed and received, and who benefitted from reciprocal norms. Age, for example, increased some participants' dependency on their social network as well as the types of help neighbours felt were appropriate to offer. Ethnicity and race, meanwhile, often precluded strong neighbourhood-based social networks and belonging through a combination of voluntary and exclusionary processes.

Reciprocal practices were also gendered. Campbell and Lee (1990) note the consistent finding across research on neighbouring that, life-cycle stage and socio-economic status aside, women are still more active in neighbouring than men. They attribute this less to time spent in the neighbourhood, than to dominant gender roles of women as "bearers of emotional and social responsibilities" (p.495). Jupp (2014) urges attention to the differentiated nature of women's experiences, while Grimshaw (2011) warns that uncritically linking women and emotional labour may reinforce gendered divisions within community work. Nevertheless, in the current study, reciprocal neighbouring practices did seem particularly important in helping to cultivate a network of support among the younger middle-class women with children at home; and for recently retired professional women who were looking for social connections outside of the workplace. Although men also gave examples of caring work, such as watching out for their children, women from various backgrounds played a stronger role in the emotional work of

neighbourhoods through informal community organizing, or caring practices such as bringing food to neighbours in need. Moreover, in comparison to the more formal decision-making roles discussed in Chapter 6, which were dominated by men, these often-gendered practices of care and mutual cooperation were largely unrecognized as legitimate forms of participation by community leaders.

A focus on reciprocity thus invites new perspectives in making sense of income inequalities within place-based communities. To counter more deterministic views of neoliberal systems, geographical political economists, such as Varró (2015), have pointed to the ways in which economic spaces are “performed” in situated contexts, through alternative non-capitalistic practices. Gibson-Graham (2008) call particular attention to the non-market transactions and unwaged care work that play a significant role in social well-being. In this study, helping, lending and borrowing were important strategies that individuals used to help navigate and mitigate potential disadvantage, satisfying both their own and their neighbours’ needs.

Participants gave examples of caring for one another, exchanging knowledge, providing support, advocating with and for one another, and giving small gifts to recognize a neighbour’s kindness or encourage continued help. While these practices were not conceived by participants as openly subversive, they nevertheless illustrate how residents use neighbouring behaviours and networks to navigate day-to-day challenges, and to counter the effects of power imbalances.

This study thus emphasizes the agency of individuals across Calgary neighbourhoods, including residents who are marginalized, at least in part through paternalistic policy agendas that emphasize service provision and capacity building. Just as more affluent residents used their local social networks to strengthen business connections, less affluent residents used their local networks to find help, advice, and resources. Yet, while highlighting these individual strategies,

this study also affirms an important role for resident-led community organizations in facilitating channels of communication between residents and enabling more collective social action.

Organizations can influence individuals' access to these channels and their willingness and ability to engage with neighbours, as already discussed in Chapter 6. Overall, the social networks and neighbouring practices illuminated across the case studies, both positive and negative, challenge the notion that “problem” neighbourhoods are socially dysfunctional, as van Eijk (2012) has previously articulated. Rather, they highlight the relational ways in which residents actively navigate broader systems that structure both socio-spatial belonging and exclusion across all types of neighbourhoods.

Finally, this chapter also illustrates ways in which residents actively assert claims of belonging through their day-to-day spatial routines. As de Certeau (1984) theorized, individuals use a range of tactics, including everyday walking, to subvert or manipulate the urban social order. As discussed above and in Chapter 5, walking did indeed emerge as an important way that individuals claimed spaces as part of “their” neighbourhoods. It was also used as a subtle form of subversion when, for example, a resident of Chinook Park spoke about walking through the affluent neighbourhood of Eagle Ridge despite—or in spite of—its signals of exclusivity. In other ways, marginalized individuals also reshaped neighbourhood spaces in ways that reflected their needs; for example, rather than using existing park benches in Martindale, senior citizens could regularly be found “dragging kitchen chairs out to sit by the pond,” as Gwen observed in a park near her home, because that was where their grandchildren played and where they wanted the benches to be. In a similar form of spatial appropriation, youth regularly took over the tennis courts to skateboard in a semi-gated community in Hawkwood. These everyday tactics serve as examples of ways in which residents work against the structures that contain or constrain them,

while illuminating the “acts of resilience and agency” (Huizinga and van Hoven, 2018, p.316) through which they find belonging.

7.3 Summary

This chapter has described ways of “doing” neighbourhood that manifest the rich emotional and social ties between neighbours and the informal, everyday practices through which residents negotiate belonging. It must be reiterated that the relational networks and spatial routines that participants described did not map neatly onto formal neighbourhood boundaries but were instead reflective of the unique neighbourhoods each individual described in their participatory maps and interviews. Yet it is clear from this discussion that, despite persistent questions about its relevance, the neighbourhood continues to be an important site for developing social relations and emotional attachment, for meeting individual and collective needs, and for negotiating social difference. It is a locus for spatial relations of belonging and inclusion, but also of shifting boundaries of exclusion.

While this chapter did note differences in the social ties and reciprocal practices between case study communities, it does not offer conclusions about the effects of neighbourhood income or disadvantage on those networks. Rather, it suggests that a range of social categories work in combination with income to shape individuals’ experiences of belonging—particularly, ethno-racial background, gender and age. It also adds nuance to existing scholarship by highlighting forms of community participation, non-market practices and care work, and spatial strategies that are not always visible to neighbourhood leaders or service providers, but which also shape how individuals practice neighbourhood belonging.

Overall, this chapter affirms the importance of community-based organizations in facilitating sustained encounters and reciprocity between residents, and in enabling opportunities

for residents to work together to improve their environment. However, it also highlights the value of conceptualizing neighbourhood participation in a way that encompasses both formal modes of civic engagement and the more mundane ways by which residents practice belonging within their neighbourhoods (see also Swaroop and Morenoff, 2006; Bertotti et al., 2012). This lens opens up a much more dynamic range of experiences, including those of more marginalized individuals who are often invisible within civic engagement processes and research. It also allows for a deeper consideration of how socio-spatial inequalities and injustice are both produced and challenged in everyday contexts, highlighting the agency of residents, working individually and collectively, to “do” neighbourhoods in ways that accommodate a range of different, sometimes conflicting, ideals and values.

Chapter 8: Conclusion

8.0 Introduction

This dissertation has sought to understand how socio-spatial inequalities unfold in individuals' everyday lives and routine neighbourhood spaces. More specifically, it has considered how residents carve out places for themselves within contested geographies of belonging, through diverse ways of "'doing' neighbourhood" (Benson and Jackson, 2012). This analysis has focused on three separate but related questions:

1. How do diverse geographies of belonging within Calgary neighbourhoods illuminate underlying socio-spatial inequalities?
2. What role do formal modes of community participation play in residents' experiences of belonging?
3. How do residents practice belonging through informal modes of participation, in particular neighbouring and everyday spatial routines?

Each question comprised a separate chapter (Chapters 5 to 7), based on cross-case analyses of eight case study communities in Calgary, Alberta. To understand how neighbourhood programs in Calgary operate "on the ground," these case studies involved in-depth interviews with various community association leaders, service providers, and City of Calgary neighbourhood services staff. I compared these with interviews and participatory maps from a range of individuals living within each neighbourhood to achieve a better understanding of residents' lived experiences.

In this concluding chapter I extend the analysis from the three empirical chapters by summarizing major characteristics of each case study community, followed by cross-case findings relating to neighbourhood change, the relevance and limitations of the neighbourhood scale for research on socio-spatial inequalities, participation, and the role of community organizations. Next, I identify key strategies emerging from this analysis, which neighbourhood-based organizations might use to foster meaningful participation and belonging. Finally, I reflect

on how the intersecting lens of participation and belonging adds new perspectives to existing theoretical approaches, concluding with some comments on the research design of this study and areas for further research.

8.1 Summary of Key Findings

As introduced in Chapter 3, this study contributes to the Neighbourhood Change Research Partnership (neighbourhoodchange.ca), which examines growing socio-spatial polarization in Canadian cities. Although the Calgary case study communities were selected for that project based on neighbourhood income characteristics (a combination of average income and income inequality within the neighbourhood), each community also exhibited a diverse range of morphological, historical, and demographic characteristics as summarized in Chapter 4. It was evident from the cross-case comparison that, despite some common patterns, socio-spatial inequalities manifest differently in relation to each of these unique community contexts. In this section I consider the unique characteristics of each case study community as context to the summary of key cross-case findings that follows.

8.1.1 Characteristics of case study communities

Bridgeland-Riverside is an established inner-city community in which recent and ongoing redevelopment has created a vibrant but complex dynamic. On the one hand, the combination of affordable housing units, seniors' care facilities, condominiums and single-family homes contributes to a unique social mix and sense of place. Both newly established and long-time family-run businesses contribute to an active local neighbourhood culture, which has attracted middle-class incomers and a range of new developments. The Bridgeland-Riverside Community Association, meanwhile, has been reinvigorated by this redevelopment and the wave of younger

families moving in, which in turn helps create a market for activities and a range of issues for which the CA helps advocate.

However, there were notable differences in participants' experiences of belonging, particularly between long-term, lower-income renters and recently established higher-income homeowners, between younger families and older adults living in care facilities, and between residents of Bridgeland and Riverside in general. Lower-income and longer-term residents of Riverside felt crowded out by densification and excluded from specialty businesses or even the farmer's market, which catered more to middle class incomers. The deep sense of "elective belonging" (Salvage et al., 2005) among such incomers, meanwhile, sometimes translated into a desire to intervene in signs of disorder, such as graffiti on park benches or drug activity; or in processes of change that could disrupt what they had "bought into," such as the potential loss of an historic school to a new housing development. Their passionate engagement energized the community but also had the effect of silencing more marginalized voices from deliberations about their collective future. In this sense Bridgeland-Riverside illustrates what both Kern (2016) and Pothier et al. (2019) have characterized as the slow erasure of working-class people from neighbourhood processes and spaces through gentrification.

In Dover, which is at an earlier stage of gentrification, participants experienced less contiguous but equally pronounced pockets of socio-spatial inequality. Interviews with Dover residents illustrated a pronounced difference between ageing original owners, who were predominantly Canadian-born, white and working class; and both the ethno-racially diverse residents and more affluent homeowners who have come in recent years. The long-term residents who were interviewed evoked boundaries between "us" and "them," describing a perceived invasion by both developers and migrant communities, particularly South Sudanese and Syrian

refugees. This can be likened to Yuval-Davis et al.'s (2018) notion of autochthony, which represents the naturalization of belonging based on the logic of who came first. Income differences in Dover were less significant to not-belonging than intersecting differences of race, gender and immigration status. This is illustrated by Amin, a Canadian-educated professional who spoke English well but felt judged by neighbours because of his colour and status as a refugee; or Brooke, another working professional who felt she had been pushed out of community life as a renter and Indigenous woman.

Yet in spite of, or perhaps because of, the diversity within Dover, residents had a much more notable culture of sharing and reciprocity than higher income neighbourhoods in this study. While participants were careful to draw the line between neighbours and friends, interviews were rich with examples in which residents depended on one another for help, often as a way to manage modest incomes or obtain services they would not have been able to pay for—such as snow removal or boosting a car. There was also a much greater presence of community development professionals and social agencies in Dover than in other case study communities, which reinforced the neighbourhood's sense of being “disadvantaged.” Community members were occasionally brought together by a common impulse to defend against this view of their neighbourhood; however, the top-down interventions seemed to exacerbate divisions between the more socially powerful community leaders, and the various “others” in the neighbourhood on whose behalf they were working.

Martindale was also strongly divided along racial lines, with clear tensions and social distance between residents of various ethno-racial and faith backgrounds. While participants in Martindale described fewer spatial disparities and less sorting based on income, this was the one case study community where white, middle-class individuals described feeling out of place at

times because of the prevalence of other ethno-racial communities—even when they exerted influence as CA board members. Interviews alluded to ways in which recent immigrants pooled resources, such as by living in multi-generational households or when multiple families shared a single household. While these sorts of arrangements generated tensions between neighbours around parking and secondary suites, income itself did not emerge as the most critical form of inequality in Martindale. Instead, as in Dover, class intersected with race and other forms of difference to shape who did not “fit in” with the community—for example, in the instance of Hananiah’s elderly grandmother who was isolated by virtue of her age, her inability to speak English, and her lack of social connections outside of the home. Gender was especially important in Martindale, where a high number of mothers and grandmothers reportedly stayed at home to care for children; this made the neighbourhood a particularly important site for encounter and social connection—but also potentially isolation.

Meanwhile, participants’ lived experiences of belonging and not-belonging in Capitol Hill were more rooted in class-related inequalities between homeowners and renters—and, as in one example of this tension, struggles over who had the right to use shared public spaces for parking. While they reflected McCabe’s (2014) research associating homeownership with greater levels of neighbourhood participation, residents’ experiences in Capitol Hill also reveal that homeownership is a critical factor underlying the politics of neighbourhood belonging. As another community experiencing redevelopment, Capitol Hill has a large number of newly settled younger families who are engaged in community life and who are, as CA board member John put it, “cut from the same cloth.” This creates a strong normative sense of who belongs in the neighbourhood and a “repel feeling” for those who fall outside of that norm, such as empty nesters, post-secondary students or elderly individuals. At the same time, interviews in Capitol

Hill illustrated the extent to which communities can actively work toward spatial justice, as exemplified by the intentional way in which the CA engaged with residents of the transition house as neighbours.

Within the higher-income communities in this study, socio-spatial divisions were not always as evident but were nonetheless present. The semi-gated community of Uplands was recognized as wealthier than the rest of Hawkwood, and their exclusive use of amenities through a Homeowners' Association created feelings of resentment among some residents elsewhere in the neighbourhood. Participants in Hawkwood also perceived strong divisions between white and Asian or South Asian residents, the latter of whom were marginalized more by ethnicity and race than by income. Community leaders often spoke of "them" in ways that made it clear ethno-cultural minorities were expected to conform to the norms of neighbourhood-based civic participation rather than "keeping to themselves." Age was also a significant form of difference in Hawkwood, as illustrated by several retired participants' feeling that the CA did not reflect their interests, by frustrations expressed about loitering youth, and by tensions that emerged between the CA and seniors over the location of a new community garden.

As in Hawkwood, CKE and Mount Royal also suggested wide socio-spatial gaps between more affluent districts and middle-income areas, highlighting a need for further attention to what Forrest, Koh and Wissink (2017) describe as the "super-rich" in neighbourhood change research. Participants described income differences largely in terms of housing or other conspicuous symbols of wealth, such as luxury cars, that they observed. In comparison to CAs in Dover or Martindale, the CAs in CKE, Mount Royal and McKenzie Towne were much less focused on problem-solving, except around issues that could impact property values or safety; instead, they played a largely social role within their respective neighbourhoods. Similarly, neighbours

seemed to develop relationships with one another based on common interests rather than need or mutually beneficial cooperation. One unique aspect of Mount Royal was that, while Upper and Lower Mount Royal did fall within the same CA boundary, participants generally considered Lower Mount Royal to be a separate community altogether. This particular socio-spatial division reflects a combination of historical development patterns and current demographic trends, wherein a highly mobile and diverse population of condominium owners and renters were not considered to be part of the rhythms of Mount Royal neighbourhood life.

8.1.2 Neighbourhood change

As a qualitative comparative case study, this dissertation cannot offer generalizations about socio-spatial polarization in Calgary; however, four particular insights about neighbourhood change do emerge from the cross-case comparison. First, the analysis confirms other scholars' contention that a range of factors, including a place's historical socio-spatial context, must be considered in neighbourhood change research (e.g., van Kempen, 2007; Modai-Snir and van Ham, 2018). As Modai-Snir and van Ham (2018) argue, urban inequality affects each neighbourhood differently "based on their starting positions" (p.115); as this study illustrates, it also affects each individual within a given neighbourhood differently based on their social positionings. Thus, while neighbourhood income is important in structuring socio-spatial inequalities, other factors, particularly class, race, ethnicity, gender, and age, often work together to shape how individuals experience those inequalities, and who is most affected. This reflects work by Youkhana (2015), Yuval-Davis (2018) and others, which calls for an intersectional understanding of belonging and not-belonging, and attention to how different social hierarchies mutually constitute one another.

A third insight is that, while to some extent socio-spatial inequalities are produced and reproduced within local settings, they are also rooted in broader structural systems. As an example, renters experienced exclusion from neighbourhood planning activities and were perceived by long-term, home-owning neighbours to be less invested in their communities; yet these experiences were also linked to issues around housing affordability and lack of choice about where they lived. Similarly, first generation immigrants and Indigenous participants often felt out of place because of specific encounters within their neighbourhoods that drew on broader racist or essentializing stereotypes that shored up insider/outsider boundaries. This contrasts with a fourth insight that emerged in the cross-case comparison, that urban inequalities and the negative effects of neighbourhood change can be either mitigated or further reinforced by collective action, depending on the culture of local organizations and the broader institutional arrangements in place. These last points are elaborated further in the next two sections.

8.1.3 Significance of neighbourhood

As discussed in the literature review in Chapter 2, scholars debate the extent to which the neighbourhood remains significant in individuals' lives. This study suggests that it is important, though not in the same way or to the same degree to all residents. Some individuals had a greater sense of their "territory"; they valued their neighbourhood as an important part of their lifestyle and identity and chose to be involved in community life to maintain or improve their local environment. Others sought to build social networks or have access to amenities close to home for their children, and found these needs could be met by organizing with other residents within their defined territorial community. On the other hand, many participants were unaware of their formal community association boundaries. Instead, they described their neighbourhood in terms of their day-to-day practices and spatially proximate social networks—the more functional

spaces defined by regular walking paths, places they shopped, or the homes of nearby friends or family.

Overall, rather than being homogeneous, closed or static spatial categories, neighbourhoods emerged as dynamic spaces that integrate both material and imagined dimensions. As combinations of people, places and everyday spatial routines, neighbourhoods are essentially relational; they are thus key sites for emotional connection and experiences of belonging. Emotions were central to relations between neighbours—and to the ways in which belonging was felt, practiced and lived, as Wright (2015) has theorized. Helping or caring practices generated a feeling of belonging and wellbeing among both the helper and the helped, the carer and the cared-for. Caring practices also cultivated deeper attachment among residents to their place communities as they cultivated public gardens, reported vandalism, or cleaned up their neighbourhoods—especially when they worked together to do so. On the other hand, neighbourhoods were also the locus of various “sexist, racist, and exclusionary logics” (Wright, 2015, p.393) circulating behind negative emotions such as fear or mistrust, which constituted powerful forms of not-belonging. Even positive emotions behind benevolent intentions, such as some residents’ deep love of their neighbourhood, could create distance between the “insiders” who took pride in their homes and the “outsiders” who failed to meet expected standards.

Thus, this study also found neighbourhoods to be sites where differences matter. They are lived and imagined in many ways simultaneously, depending upon individuals’ experiences and social positionings as well as broader cultural conventions, social norms and place identities. They are contested, political spaces. When tensions erupt around issues such as parking, safety, or a divisive development proposal, residents may prioritize their own “stake” or what they perceive to be the greater well-being of the neighbourhood—sometimes at the expense of other

more marginalized residents, and in ways that exacerbate divisions. Subtle behaviours and neighbourhood processes can just as easily exclude individuals from a feeling of belonging by constructing them as un-citizenly for keeping to themselves, occupying spaces they have no explicit right to use, or simply not conforming to neighbourhood ideals. That is not to say, however, that marginalized individuals are powerless to act. As Williamson (2015) has observed, local spaces can foster both overt and more subtle moments of resistance—of “spatial creativity and re-appropriation” (p.276). In other words, residents can reimagine and reshape neighbourhoods through their everyday routines, encounters and practices.

8.1.4 Participation

This study confirmed uneven patterns of participation across the eight case study communities, and a range of views about what constitutes participation. It drew on an analytical distinction proposed by Swaroop and Morenoff (2006; see also Talò and Mannarini, 2015) between formal participation or civic engagement activities motivated by instrumental interests; and informal participation, encompassing more expressive forms of social exchange and neighbourly behaviours. As Swaroop and Morenoff acknowledge, the relationship between the two modes is fluid and non-linear; indeed, in this study, they often overlapped with and reinforced one another. Yet, the distinction did help to highlight the diversity of ways in which residents understood participation, which, as Yuval-Davis et al. (2018) concluded, “is experienced and viewed differently by individuals of differential positionings, identifications and normative value systems” (p. 234).

Members of CA boards, who were often white, middle-class, middle-aged, educated homeowners, tended to think of participation in terms of civic engagement, leadership and volunteer work within their administrative community boundary. They were motivated by a

range of personal ideals, ambitions and circumstances, by contextual factors and by the characteristics of their local organization. Generally, they shared the view that neighbourhood-oriented civic engagement had value in maintaining or improving the quality of their environment and lives. Some individuals who were not active simply prioritized other non-territorial communities or were at life stages during which they did not perceive any benefit from being involved in neighbourhood work. For others with less social power, such as renters, young adults, Indigenous people or immigrants, lack of involvement was less a matter of choice than of feeling unwelcome or unable to participate. At times this was due to the dominance of a core group to which they did not feel they belonged—a barrier that could be compounded by a mixture of classist, racist or other stereotypes that undervalued residents' potential contributions. Individuals in the most precarious situations faced even more systemic barriers, such as lack of access to affordable housing or having to work multiple low-income jobs, which meant they were not in a position to even consider voluntary activities.

This study did find rich social networks, however, as well as “diverse economies” (Gibson-Graham, 2008) in the form of non-market transactions and unwaged care work, which helped to offset the challenges individuals faced. Reciprocal helping and caring practices required a measure of trust between neighbours, but in turn reinforced the feeling of cohesion that community associations were striving to foster. They also represented an important challenge to structural constraints affecting residents, and a means through which individuals could improve their day-to-day wellbeing. Yet informal, expressive modes of participation often fell outside the scope of how successful community participation was measured or defined—which tended to focus instead on the number of households holding CA memberships, or the number of participants turning out to neighbourhood events. Much of the existing research

assumes that neighbourhood poverty negatively affects individuals and inhibits both belonging and local social control (e.g., see discussion in Forrest and Kearns, 2001; Swaroop and Morenoff, 2006; Kelly, 2014). However, informal neighbouring practices in this study were more pronounced in less advantaged neighbourhoods, simply because neighbours needed each other more, and had to work harder to solve problems and build community across a range of intersecting differences.

Across all types of neighbourhoods, informal modes of participation also represented means by which individuals asserted claims of belonging despite potentially exclusive neighbourhood norms. This study found many examples of what Askins (2015) has referred to as the “quiet politics of encounter” (p.471) that occur within everyday neighbourhood spaces. This included everything from working together on a shared building project, to negotiating tensions over parking, or the more sustained friendships that developed between parents watching over their children. In all of these examples, participants described subtle shifts in how they felt about their neighbours and a greater level of understanding, even though relations were not always or progressively positive. Moreover, as participants used their local spaces through daily acts of walking, biking, shopping, or even sitting on a park bench, they reshaped those spaces into “their” neighbourhoods, to which they often felt a deep sense of attachment and belonging. Overall, approaching neighbourhood participation from an open-ended perspective based on individuals’ lived experiences thus provides a valuable lens for understanding how socio-spatial inequalities unfold in residents’ everyday lives, as well as the mundane ways in which individuals carve out a place for themselves.

8.1.5 Role of community organizations

In focusing explicit attention on community associations, this study responds to a noted lack of research on how organizations influence neighbourhood social control and collective efficacy (e.g., Morenoff et al., 2001; Allard and Small, 2013). It also contributes to the scarce literature on neighbourhood belonging that expressly considers the role of community organizations (for recent exceptions see Hoekstra and Dahlvik, 2018; Hoekstra and Pinkster, 2019; Hoekstra and Gerteis, 2019). As discussed in Chapter 4, community associations in Calgary serve as a sort of intermediary between top-down municipal government processes and policies, and more grassroots, resident-led action; they also interact with service providers that have a dominant neighbourhood focus. As a key part of this networked mode of neighbourhood service delivery, CAs can thus either reproduce socio-spatial exclusions or enhance belonging—or both concurrently—depending on their membership, goals and values, as well as the broader institutional context.

In several case study communities, CAs helped enact neighbourhood ideals that reflected a narrow range of interests. For example, some CA board members expressed frustration with particular groups of residents who did not participate in their offerings; yet they did not make concerted efforts to learn what those residents needed or how they might contribute, instead making assumptions that non-participants simply did not care. Furthermore, without the formal mandate or resources to carry out comprehensive consultation on proposed planning and development issues, CAs often presumed to speak for all residents. Some CA board members felt deeply uncomfortable with this role, while others were more prone to NIMBY-influenced advocacy or even self-interest, particularly when they had become entrenched through years of service and unlimited terms on boards. The very notion of membership further reinforced the

expectation that some residents “belonged” more than others or were entitled to a stronger voice. Thus, community organizations can act as powerful gatekeepers over key public processes and spaces.

The institutional context in which CAs operate also limits the range of individuals and interests represented on CA boards, as well as the forms of participation that are “activated” in communities (Hoekstra and Dahlvik, 2018, p.443). Interview participants gave examples of projects that had been initiated through City-led programs such as This is My Neighbourhood, or micro-grants associated with the Strong Neighbourhoods Initiative. These initiatives often encouraged creativity and resident ownership, and participants reported feeling more engaged in their neighbourhoods as a result of taking part. On the other hand, many of the initiatives were one-time offerings and, based on anecdotal information, had only minimal success in sustaining a greater depth of participation. Moreover, efforts that were aimed at beautification or eradicating signs of social disorder may have helped gradually reduce territorial stigmatization, but they did little to address the broader systemic issues that create or reproduce inequalities to begin with (see Cowen and Parlette, 2011; Pothier et al., 2019). Indeed, neighbourhoods labeled as disadvantaged or “tipping point” communities were saturated with service providers, while more affluent neighbourhoods had only minimal municipal or agency presence. The varying levels of support seemed to perpetuate a sort of dependence in the first case that worked to erode collective efficacy, and a neglect in the second case that ignored the existence of structural inequalities in neighbourhoods perceived to be better-off.

Despite their significant role in local politics of belonging, community organizations can also be critical agents of positive neighbourhood change. Some CAs were actively working to better understand residents’ needs, to increase the breadth of participation in their communities

and to create more representative boards and programs. In some cases, they challenged spatial injustices, for example by working to build neighbourly relations with tenants of a transition house in Capitol Hill, or by helping to facilitate a controversial skate park for youth in CKE. Community organizations in general play a significant role in enabling collective efficacy by facilitating connections between neighbours to support one another or resolve tensions. They offer spaces and forums for residents to gather, interact and work together to increase their control over their local environment—whether through a berm to screen traffic noise, or by advocating for better services where they feel their neighbourhoods are being neglected by municipal authorities. They have considerable capacity to influence residents’ awareness and opinions around a range of community issues. Thus, even if not all residents are members or active participants, CAs and other community organizations enhance opportunities for local civic action by promoting encounter and informal social control (see Corcoran et al., 2018). As Cassiers and Kesteloot (2012) argue, they also act as key “enabling institutions” (p.1919) that work against socio-spatial inequalities, toward more just neighbourhoods.

Yet there is a limit to what voluntary, community-based organizations can do. In Calgary, CAs in particular are critical partners in municipal neighbourhood program and service delivery; but they do not have the professional training, resources, or even mandate to address all of residents’ social needs. Unclear or unrealistic expectations can discourage people from wanting to engage, or cause burn-out among individuals who feel a sense of obligation to carry on. Moreover, as scholars have already suggested (e.g., Kearns and Forrest, 2000; Pothier et al., 2019), many of the socio-spatial divisions and inequalities that manifest locally have causes far beyond the neighbourhood and must be understood as part of processes operating at multiple spatial scales. This study thus adds to existing scholarship (e.g., Cowen and Parlette, 2011;

Séguin et al., 2012; Pothier, 2016; Modai-Snur and van Ham, 2018; Pothier et al., 2019) conceding that, while targeted neighbourhood interventions are important in addressing neighbourhood decline and promoting collective efficacy, they may have limited effects on broader structural inequalities.

8.2 What Works? Strategies for Increasing Participation and Belonging

This project has identified a number of strategies that community organizations in Calgary presently use to encourage more inclusive participation and belonging, which reflect and extend insights from existing literature. Perhaps most importantly, this study echoes the finding by Lewis et al. (2019) that place-based initiatives must address both the breadth and depth of participation in order to empower residents and develop collective control. In other words, it is not enough to simply plan events and expect residents to attend; community organizations need to expand the range of individuals who participate by offering diverse opportunities, encouraging residents to engage in ways that work for them, and, most importantly, sharing power. Many of the community leaders in this study became involved in neighbourhood work as a result of personal invitations rather than general calls for help; however, as noted already, such invitations are rarely extended to more marginalized residents who may not be perceived to have the desired skills or backgrounds. By the same token, reaching marginalized individuals can be a major challenge for community organizations. Some CAs and service providers have experienced success by using “brokers” or liaisons to better understand the needs of particular ethno-cultural or faith communities. These liaisons can help to build trusting relations and provide more isolated individuals or communities with a better understanding of the opportunities and benefits available to them.

Another related strategy involves collaboration. Rather than competing for residents' attention or scarce resources, some community organizations actively sought ways to work with other groups within their neighbourhoods in order to access expertise and to meet identified needs they could not address themselves. They also worked with local businesses who were supportive of community work as sponsors, donors, or gathering spaces. In some cases, CAs have facilitated unique encounters between residents who may not otherwise have interacted, for example through a shared gardening project between elementary students and a seniors' group. Collaboration between community organizations, service providers and municipal services was particularly important to the success of deliberative processes to identify community needs and negotiate desired outcomes. At the same time, some participants were cautious of state involvement in what they felt should be grassroots work—a reminder of Ostrander's (2012) call for community organizations to maintain agency and independence in relationships of shared governance to avoid the potential pitfalls of "regulatory dumping" (Peck and Tickell, 2002, p.386).

A third key strategy for increasing participation and belonging involves the role of connecting. Many participants in this study, whether active in their neighbourhoods or not, felt that CAs could play a greater role in connecting residents with one another or with services they needed. In the lower income neighbourhoods, there seemed to be more acceptance of and reliance on reciprocal exchanges—even small acts such as shoveling snow from a shared driveway or borrowing a tool to complete a project. Residents of more affluent neighbourhoods also expressed a desire to connect with neighbours, but primarily as a way of making friends who lived nearby or increasing their feeling of safety. Despite research showing that individuals do not necessarily mix with social 'others' living in close proximity (e.g., Amin, 2002; Lelévrier,

2013), participants' experiences in the current study suggest that neighbourly interactions provide an important opportunity for individuals to encounter, and better understand, others who are not part of their professional, leisure, ethno-cultural, or other existing networks. Across all case studies, being connected with neighbours was essential to participants' feeling like they belonged in their place communities.

8.3 Participation and Belonging: Reflections on Theory

In Calgary, as in many other jurisdictions, social inclusion has become the cornerstone of neighbourhood policies and initiatives designed to address social issues and foster social cohesion (e.g., The City of Calgary, 2018f; see discussion in Miciukiewicz et al., 2012; van Kempen, & Wissink, 2014). However, social inclusion is a contested concept that Witcher (2013) argues is often simplified in policy discourse as participation in mainstream society. It is typically constructed as a normative concept, which can focus responsibility on the individuals who are most excluded and lead to moralistic judgments if vulnerable individuals do not achieve expected norms or values (Cameron, 2006; 2007; Cobigo et al., 2012). As Cameron (2006) suggests, if they are not critically examined, inclusion policies can therefore reinforce existing power structures and have a determinant effect on people.

Using the conceptual lens of belonging opens possibilities for considering exclusions and inclusions within the context of individuals' "complex and emergent realities" (Cameron, 2007, p.525). Rather than being a fixed state, belonging involves the constant, situated negotiation of insider/outsider dynamics between people in places; it is essentially relational. When asked what the terms social inclusion and belonging meant to them, participants in this study generally described inclusion as the opportunity for everyone to participate and have a voice in society, regardless of their background. However, it was very difficult for them to describe what

inclusion meant to them personally, with one university-educated participant commenting that it sounded “like an academic term that should mean something.” Belonging, in contrast, was usually expressed as feeling part of a place, and having relationships within that place. Many participants made a connection between the extent to which they were involved in the community and the extent to which they felt they belonged. Participation in the form of local civic engagement was therefore an important—for some, even necessary—condition for belonging.

In explicitly linking neighbourhood participation and belonging, this study underscores belonging as practice—as the various ways of “‘doing’ neighbourhood” (Benson and Jackson, 2012) that signal who belongs or does not, in which spaces or contexts. It highlights the power dynamics that underlie questions about who participates, who does not, and why. It also illuminates how belonging, if conceived as having been “earned” through one’s neighbourhood work and effort exerted, can also have the effect of excluding others from belonging, if they lack either the opportunity or capacity to be involved. Practices of belonging draw upon and recirculate neighbourhood ideals that privilege certain voices within neighbourhood processes, while silencing others. Even within lower income neighbourhoods it was still the relatively better-off, white, long-term homeowners who held the power to grant belonging or decide the terms by which ‘others’ could belong. Being “cut from the same cloth” contributed to cohesion among community leaders and enabled them to work together toward a collective ideal. However, it also exacerbated inequalities, particularly those based on class, race and age, by squeezing out and even censuring minority groups who “flocked together,” “cause[d] a lot of trouble” or “watched the weeds grow.”

At the same time, framing belonging as practice also points to the diverse ways in which people claim a place for themselves despite exclusionary processes. As de Certeau (1984) theorized in his notion of a “spatial acting out of place” (p.98), everyday spatial routines and “micro-level interactions” (Jupp, 2008, p.333) such as talking to fellow passengers on the bus, boosting a neighbour’s car, or sharing responsibility to watch out for children, also constitute participation; they offer means by which individuals who may not be in positions of social power exert influence and agency in their lives, whether quietly or with intent. Neighbouring behaviours, such as helping out, caring or working together, are also fundamental to the ways in which residents negotiate relations and differences between one another—sometimes in ways that open up possibilities for understanding and justice, despite inequalities. Ultimately, belonging is thus experienced in diverse, situated and intersectional ways. It is a complex and often deeply emotional intersection of people, place and practices; it is both political and hopeful.

8.4 Comments on Research Design

In this study I used a qualitative case study approach to compare and contrast participants’ experiences across diverse neighbourhoods. The number of participants varied in each case study community and there were some gaps, which, as discussed in Chapter 3, were not entirely filled despite rigorous recruitment efforts. For example, in Mount Royal there were no renters interviewed from Lower Mount Royal or residents of the highly affluent areas of Upper Mount Royal. Similarly, there were no participants from significant ethno-cultural communities in Hawkwood, or elderly residents of Martindale. To a significant extent, these gaps mirror the nature of civic participation described within the case study communities themselves. Nevertheless, the overall sample was diverse enough to fulfill the sampling criteria and to

generate insights through a comparison of residents' experiences across the case studies. Another potential limitation that had to be dealt with was that, given the research focus on participation and belonging, this study attracted more participants who were actively involved in their communities than not. As discussed in Chapter 3, this created a need for more direct recruitment efforts in order to incorporate less visible members of communities who felt ambivalent about their neighbourhoods for a variety of reasons.

As with the interviews, the mapping activity also elicited a small number of participants in some communities, which made it difficult to draw meaningful insights relating to those particular cases. However, each response that was received enriched the interview data and made unique contributions to the aggregated collection of maps. In the mapping activity, participants interpreted the third question (regarding places where they felt they did not belong) in different ways. The different conceptualizations made responses less comparable across maps; but they also offered a richer sense of how "not-belonging" can be understood, on a spectrum ranging from a more mundane lack of attachment to a feeling of active exclusion.

This study was initially conceptualized in two data collection phases that distinguished between community "leaders" (community association executives, municipal employees, service providers, or other community organizations) and "residents." The distinction proved beneficial in thinking about the systems of power that operate within neighbourhoods and questions around who benefits from local participatory processes. However, data analysis underscored that community association executives are also residents, while residents participate in diverse ways beyond the CA; thus, the two groups could not always be meaningfully contrasted. Individuals move in and out of leadership positions, while participating in different ways at different times; residents could therefore speak to changes in their own lives that precipitated periods of more or

less active involvement in neighbourhood life, highlighting the contingency of both leadership and participation.

8.5 Areas of Further Research

Studies of neighbourhood change within Canada typically use statistical approaches to analyze socio-spatial patterns of change over time (e.g., Walks, 2009; Hulchanski, 2010; Rose and Twigge, 2013; Townshend et al., 2018). Townshend et al.'s (2018) research on neighbourhood change in Calgary since 1970, for example, revealed increasing income inequality in Calgary, which is both racialized and spatially manifested. The qualitative approach of the present study confirms these findings, while contributing new insights into how such changes are lived and experienced within diverse neighbourhoods. It also adds a finer perspective on the inter-urban inequalities observed, for example highlighting the close association between particular neighbourhood forms and socio-spatial divisions, and the combined effects of class, race, ethnic background, age and gender in structuring individual experiences of inequality. A qualitative approach also underscores, however, that these neighbourhood forms and categories of difference are not deterministic; residents across all types of neighbourhoods mediate socio-spatial inequalities, both individually and through the collective efforts of community-based organizations, toward a sense of belonging in place.

The insights emerging from the comparative case studies also raise a number of questions for further research. For example, how do patterns of income inequality in Calgary compare with those in smaller urban centres? How do residents in other Canadian cities negotiate difference and inequality through diverse practices that constitute neighbourhood participation? Given the limitations of neighbourhood work noted in this study, what are the implications for policies designed to address social problems through place-based programs and interventions? As one of

the few qualitative studies that examines neighbourhood participation and belonging in Canada (for exceptions see Pothier, 2016; Pothier et al., 2019), this research suggests a need for more rigorous evaluation of existing place-based policy approaches in order to clarify whether or not they effectively address poverty, concentrated disadvantage, neighbourhood decline, or other forms of socio-spatial exclusion that they purport to work against. At the same time, comparative qualitative studies in other jurisdictions can perhaps help tease out which forms of exclusion can be approached through local policies and which may be more systemic in nature.

8.6 Conclusions

Residents of Calgary neighbourhoods experience socio-spatial inequalities that contribute to an uneven landscape of participation, where not everyone has an equal voice or place. This study provides convincing evidence that the “divided cities” concept is applicable at both the inter-urban and the intra-urban scale, illuminating specific geographies of exclusion and belonging within neighbourhoods. Although residents of each case study neighbourhood had unique experiences of inequality, there were several distinct forms of socio-spatial division that recurred across communities. Ridges, upper and lower sections, pockets, and major transportation arteries seem to be particularly meaningful to the ways in which many residents recognized and experienced spatialized difference. However, these divisions were strongly influenced by intersections of income, ethnicity, race, gender, and age, which also shaped the dynamics of fitting in.

Community-based organizations in Calgary represent important vehicles for addressing exclusionary dynamics associated with neighbourhood change. They advocate for residents’ interests, provide opportunities for encounter across difference, encourage networks of support and reciprocity—thereby strengthening trust between neighbours—and foster residents’ sense of

attachment to and belonging in place. CA volunteers currently exert commendable creativity and energy to encourage widespread participation in neighbourhood life, and to reduce the material barriers to participation that residents face. However, they need clear and achievable mandates, as well as adequate resources, in order to support residents and encourage inclusion and belonging. On the other hand, community leaders, inclusive of CAs, municipal neighbourhood staff and other service providers, need a nuanced understanding of the uneven landscape of participation and belonging, and of their own role in shaping how various place-based inequalities play out. They need to make room for diverse voices and multiple versions of the ideal neighbourhood, rather than expecting everyone to conform to dominant norms of local civic life or shifting the blame for neighbourhood decline to already marginalized residents. These insights are relevant to community organizations across Calgary but can also be applied more broadly to ensure more inclusive, representative, and just neighbourhoods where everyone has a place.

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Appendix A: Letter of Invitation and Consent (Phase 1, Community Leaders)

Income Polarization and Participation in Community Organizations in Calgary

PROJECT OVERVIEW AND PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

You are being invited to participate in a research project about the relationship between income inequality, average neighbourhood income, and isolation/inclusion and participation in community-based organizations in Calgary. This research will illuminate the enabling and inhibiting factors in meaningful participation, the forms that community participation takes, and how these various forms of participation relate and interact. A better understanding of this system will help enable community-based organizations in Calgary to become more equitable, inclusive, and effective in addressing the consequences of socio-spatial inequality and income polarization.

The key research questions of this project are:

- What are the barriers to participation in community based organizations and initiatives?
- How are ‘inclusiveness’ and ‘participation’ conceptualized by community associations, other community organizations, and individuals?
- What influence do community based organizations have on the social fabric and built form of neighbourhoods?
- What organizational forms might be most effective in promoting collective efficacy?

This interview will require about one hour of your time, during which you will be asked about your experience working with the community of Bridgeland-Riverside. The interview will be conducted in a location that is convenient and comfortable for you. In addition to taking handwritten notes, we would like to digitally record the interview for accuracy. It is your right to request that the entire interview or any part of the interview not be recorded.

Your participation in this research is completely voluntary. You will not benefit directly from this research, nor are there any anticipated risks or discomforts. You have the right to refuse to answer any question you do not wish to answer and you can terminate the interview at any time. Should you terminate the interview before its completion and withdraw from the study, you will be asked if the information you have provided to that point can be retained or if you would like it destroyed.

A verbatim transcript will be sent to you for review as soon as possible after the interview is complete. To protect your anonymity and identity, your name will not be included in the transcript, which will use a Study ID Number instead. All consent forms and transcripts will be kept secure, either in a locked cabinet at the University of Lethbridge or in password protected computer files; only designated researchers (the principal and co-investigator or their designated research assistants) will have access to the interviews. After five years, all interview materials including hand-written notes, audio files, and the transcription of your interview will be destroyed.

The perspectives you offer will be combined with those of other community-based organizations in various Calgary neighbourhoods. The results from this study will be used for the completion of a Preliminary Research Findings Report, to be shared with community partners including community associations, faith groups, citizen organizations, and social agencies engaging in community development work. The results will also be shared in a Community Forum, and may be presented in writing in academic journals. At no time, however, will your name be used or any identifying information revealed. If you wish to receive a copy of the study's findings, you may contact the researcher at the telephone number given below.

If you require any information about this study, or would like to speak to the researcher (principal investigator), please call Dr. Ivan Townshend at (403) 329-2226, or email at townio@uleth.ca. Questions regarding your rights as a participant in this research may be addressed to the Office of Research Ethics, University of Lethbridge (Phone: 403-329-2747 or Email: research.services@uleth.ca).

I have read the above information regarding this interview, and consent to participate in the interview.

_____ (Participant's Printed Name)

_____ (Signature)

_____ (Date)

_____ (Researcher's Printed Name)

_____ (Signature)

_____ (Date)

Appendix B: Interview Protocol (Phase 1, Community Leaders)

Introduction to Research Project

The purpose of this research project is to examine the relationship between income inequality, average neighbourhood income and isolation/inclusion and participation in community-based organizations in Calgary. This project will increase our understanding of the barriers vulnerable individuals face in participating in creating positive change in their neighbourhood through community organizations and activities. This understanding will help enable community-based organizations in Calgary to become more equitable, inclusive and effective in addressing the consequences of socio-spatial inequality and income polarization.

For this phase of the project, we hope to understand the perceived social, participatory and isolation characteristics of residents of several Calgary neighbourhoods, from the perspective of community associations, city government and local community service workers. *[Review and sign letter of consent; include participant's title]*

A. Introduction and background

1. Tell me about XXX neighbourhood [that you work with].
2. Can you tell me about your [organization/department]?
 - a. Probes: organizational structure; resourcing, etc.
3. What role does your organization have in the community?
 - a. What types of services or programs do you offer?
 - b. What are your goals with regards to neighbourhoods/CA's?
 - c. How are your programs funded? [who pays for them?]
 - d. How does your organization work with other neighbourhood-based and external (i.e. City) organizations?
4. What motivates you to be involved in your community?

B. Perceptions of residents' participation and inclusion

5. What does participation mean to you?
6. What does inclusion mean to you?
7. What does community mean to you?
8. In what ways do you perceive that residents currently participate in this neighbourhood?
 - a. Probe: in your view, who currently participates?
 - b. Thinking about how you described the neighbourhood at the beginning of the interview, how do you think the community's identity relates to residents' participation?

9. Are there certain members of the community that you feel are not currently participating?
10. What do you think are some of the factors that prevent them from participating?
 - a. [Probes: what are the specific barriers to participation?]
11. How would you characterize XXX neighbourhood in terms of its inclusivity?
 - a. [Probes: what are the barriers to social inclusion?]
12. Relative to all Calgary neighbourhoods, how would you characterize average income levels in neighbourhood XXX? What effect do you think income level has on participation or inclusion?
 - a. How would you characterize income diversity in neighbourhood XXX? [probe: diverse/heterogeneous; or do you think household incomes are fairly similar/homogeneous?
 - b. Do you think neighbourhood income diversity impacts residents' participation in community associations? If so, how?
13. In what way(s) do you think the nature of participation in XXX neighbourhood has changed during the past 20 years [or in your time with the organization]?

C. Organizational factors

14. What are some of the successful things that your organization does to promote inclusion?
 - a. In what ways does your organization currently address the barriers to participation and inclusion that we discussed?
 - b. What specific strategies do you use to communicate with and engage members of the community?
15. Thinking about your organization's goals and programs, how do you feel about the range of representation from different neighbourhood residents?
 - a. Probes: different income levels; ethno-cultural backgrounds, etc.
16. What are the challenges you or your organization face in ensuring broad participation?
 - a. Is there anything that you think needs to change in order to increase participation?
 - b. What do you think would provide the greatest enhancement of resident participation?
17. What are the challenges your organization faces in ensuring inclusion?
 - a. Is there anything you think needs to change in order to promote broad inclusion?

D. Close

14. Is there anything else that we haven't talked about, that you feel is important to discuss?
[Thank participant for their time]

Appendix C: Letter of Invitation and Consent (Phase 2, Residents)

Dear Resident;

You are being invited to participate in a research project about the relationship between income inequality, average neighbourhood income, and isolation/inclusion and participation in community-based organizations in Calgary. This research will illuminate the enabling and inhibiting factors in meaningful participation, the forms that community participation takes, and how these various forms of participation relate and interact. A better understanding of this system will help enable community-based organizations in Calgary to become more equitable, inclusive, and effective in addressing the consequences of socio-spatial inequality and income polarization.

The key research questions of this project are:

- What barriers and opportunities exist for residents to participate in community change, through community based organizations?
- How do different individuals understand ‘inclusiveness,’ ‘participation,’ and ‘community’?
- What impact does income have on community involvement?
- Under what circumstances do community organizations act to either promote or discourage neighbourhood diversity?
- How does neighbourhood form (affordable housing options, transit, public spaces, etc.) and the structure of community organizations influence isolation/inclusivity, or residents’ sense of belonging?

If you agree to participate, you will be asked to take part in an interview that will require about one hour of your time, and to complete a demographic data sheet. During the interview you will be asked about your experience of community life, and the data sheet will ask you for demographic information such as your age range, ethnicity, occupation and housing type, and whether you have children at home. The interview will be conducted either face-to-face in a location that is convenient and comfortable for you, or by telephone, depending on your choice of format. In addition to taking hand-written notes, we would like to digitally record the interview for accuracy. It is your right to request that the entire interview or any part of the interview not be recorded.

Your participation in this research is completely voluntary, and there are no anticipated risks or discomforts. If you do complete an interview you will receive a \$20 gift card to recognize your time and contributions. You have the right to refuse to answer any question you do not wish to answer and you can terminate the interview at any time. Should you terminate the interview before its completion and withdraw from the study, you will be asked if the information you have provided to that point can be retained or if you would like it destroyed.

A verbatim transcript will be sent to you for review as soon as possible after the interview is complete. To protect your anonymity and identity, your name will not be included in the transcript, which will use a Study ID Number instead. All consent forms and transcripts will be

kept secure, either in a locked cabinet at the University of Lethbridge or in password protected computer files; only designated researchers (the principal and co-investigator or their designated research assistants) will have access to the interviews. After five years, all interview materials including hand-written notes, audio files, and the transcription of your interview will be destroyed.

The perspectives you offer will be combined with those of other residents in various Calgary neighbourhoods. The results from this study will be used for the completion of a Preliminary Research Findings Report, to be shared with community partners including community associations, faith groups, citizen organizations, and social agencies engaging in community development work. The results will also be shared in a Community Forum, and may be presented in writing in academic journals. At no time, however, will your name be used or any identifying information revealed. If you wish to receive a copy of the study's findings, you may contact the researcher at the telephone number given below.

If you require any information about this study, or would like to speak to the researcher (principal investigator), please call Dr. Ivan Townshend at (403) 329-2226, or email at towni0@uleth.ca. Questions regarding your rights as a participant in this research may be addressed to the Office of Research Ethics, University of Lethbridge (Phone: 403-329-2747 or Email: research.services@uleth.ca).

I have read the above information regarding this interview, and consent to participate in the interview.

_____ (Participant's Printed Name)

_____ (Signature)
_____ (Date)

_____ (Researcher's Printed Name)

_____ (Signature)
_____ (Date)

B. Neighbourhood identity/form/selection

18. Can you tell me about [XXX neighbourhood]? [is there a lot of diversity?]
 - a. How would you characterize average income levels in [XXX]?
 - b. Where do you see yourself within that income spectrum?
 - c. Why did you move to [XXX]?
19. I'd like to talk about the community's sense of identity. Is there a strong feeling of community in [XXX neighbourhood]?
 - a. How do you think other people see [XXX]? [probe: reputation?]
 - b. How strongly do you identify with your neighbourhood? [probe: versus broader geographical/other communities]
 - c. To what extent do you feel you belong in [XXX neighbourhood]?
 - d. How do you feel about [XXX] overall? [probe: quality of life]
20. How do you think the design, or architecture, or physical character of the neighbourhood affects your sense of community or belonging?
 - a. Where do you feel most comfortable in [XXX]?
 - b. Where do you connect with other people? [physically or virtually]
21. How well do you know your neighbours?
 - a. What kinds of interactions do you have with them? [probe: frequency/intensity; sense of trust]
 - b. To what extent is it important to know your neighbours? [why/why not?]

C. Participation and inclusion

22. What does community mean to you?
23. In the context of [XXX], what does participation mean to you?
24. In what ways do you currently participate in [XXX] community?
 - a. Are you involved in the community association or other organizations in the community? Do you attend events or programs?
 - b. If yes: what motivates you to be involved?
 - c. If no: what prevents you from being involved? What, if anything, would make you want to be involved?
25. What does social inclusion mean to you?
26. To what extent is/is this not an inclusive community?
 - a. What specifically makes it feel that way?
 - b. What do you think could change to make it more inclusive?

D. Organizational form

27. From your perspective, what is the role of the community association?
 - a. How do you feel about the range of programs/events it offers?
 - b. To what extent does the community association represent your views in issues (e.g. planning) that involve the City? [and is that its role?]
28. How/where do you learn about what's happening in your neighbourhood?
29. If there was something you were not satisfied with, or something you wanted to change about your neighbourhood, would you feel the need to do something about it? If so, how would you go about addressing it?

E. Close

Is there anything else that we haven't talked about, that you feel is important?

COMMUNITY INCLUSION RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS NEEDED

Are you a resident of one of the following communities?

Bridgeland | Capitol Hill
Chinook Park/Kelvin Grove/Eagle Ridge
Dover | Hawkwood | Martindale
McKenzie Towne | Mount Royal

Are you active in your community? Or do you feel isolated from community life?

We are looking for participants to interview about **participation** and **inclusion**.

Your responses and participation are **confidential**. Participants will receive a \$20 gift card in appreciation of their time and contribution. If you are interested in participating in an interview that will take about **one hour**, in person or by phone, please email nrcp@uleth.ca. Thank you!

This study is part of a larger Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council-funded project exploring Neighbourhood Change in Canada (<http://neighbourhoodchange.ca>).

This Neighbourhood Change Research Partnership Calgary study is being carried out by the following partners:



University of
Lethbridge



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CALGARY



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Social Sciences and Humanities
Research Council of Canada

Conseil de recherches en
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