Governing by Networks: the Policy Implications of Civil Society Participation in Decision Making

by

Carey Doberstein

A thesis submitted in conformity with the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy
Political Science
University of Toronto

© Copyright by Carey Doberstein 2014
Governing by networks: the policy implications of civil society participation in decision making

Carey Doberstein
Doctor of Philosophy
Political Science
University of Toronto
2014

Abstract

Why has Vancouver developed and implemented more effective homelessness policy in the last 20 years than Toronto, despite sharing similar homelessness challenges? Finding that none of the traditional theories for policy divergence—such as executive and council leadership, local political institutions or ideational paradigms—adequately explain the policy variation, this dissertation identifies one key difference in the two cities: the properties and dynamics of homelessness governance networks—where state and civil society actors jointly craft policy. Through empirical analysis involving archival research, interviews, extended participant observation, and quantitative decision making data, the study finds that highly institutionalized and inclusive governance networks in Vancouver are largely responsible for the superior policy innovation and coordination over the past twenty years. The research then breaks new theoretical terrain by specifying and modeling the causal mechanisms that link network governance to public policy outputs, establishing that ‘brokerage’ and ‘persuasion’ are the key emergent dynamics from governance networks as deliberative systems of policymaking. The theory-building bridges the metagovernance, network governance, and deliberative democracy bodies of literature to construct a generalized and falsifiable model linking network governance to policy outputs that can be applied across a number of policy domains.
Acknowledgements

What follows in these pages may be attributed to me, but is the culmination of the efforts and assistance from many.

David Wolfe, my supervisor, was the ideal scholarly mentor: responsive, challenging, at times stingingly critical, but always deeply committed to my success. Likewise, David’s approach to academic research as one that remains closely connected to real world problems of governance and public administration is a model for all of us in the field, and is an ethic I intend to replicate in my academic career.

I was fortunate to have Phil Triadafilopoulos and Neil Bradford, two scholars of highest order, serve as members of my committee. Phil demanded precision with arguments and clarity of purpose, all without dictating to me his preferred path, thus allowing me to carve out my own. Neil is an extraordinary mind whose previous scholarly work laid the groundwork for much of the conceptual development in this research.

I am grateful as well to the members of my extended committee. Graham White has not only been a valued mentor throughout my graduate studies, but also studiously critiqued this work under very short deadlines, gathering yet another chit to put towards his inevitable sainthood. Katherine Graham, despite having much larger responsibilities in the academy, engaged eagerly with this work and offered a supremely keen perspective. Others for whom thanks is required for their role in the advancement of this work include: Profs. Grace Skogstad, Linda White, Ed Schatz, Peter Loewen, David Rayside, Stephen Gaetz, and David Hulchanski.

I need to acknowledge all of the interview respondents as well as the leadership of the governance networks under investigation for allowing me to be an observer over extended periods. It can be unsettling to allow a researcher to poke around and these leaders displayed an extraordinary commitment to transparency. Truly, the contributions of this dissertation could not have been realized without their cooperation and
commitment to the advancement of research. Though gratitude is reserved for all of them, one in particular deserves special attention: Kingsley Okyere of the Greater Vancouver Regional Steering Committee on Homelessness showed a deep commitment very early on to this project, though tragically passed away before its completion. I am also grateful to Olivia Chow for agreeing to release to me Jack Layton’s private records as a Toronto city councillor, which was a critical set of unvarnished data for the Toronto-based research.

There are some very important colleagues and friends at UofT with whom I have shared this journey and from whom I have learned a great deal. Special recognition is reserved for: Jerry Sabin, with whom I lurched arm-in-arm through the sometimes-panicked moments of PhD training and, most importantly, became a dearest friend; Gabe Eidelman, whom I leaned on for his sage advice at every step along the way; Heather Millar, for her brilliant mind and our countless academic coffee dates; and Kyle Kirkup for our many scholarly strategy sessions and treasured friendship. There are a number of colleagues who were instrumental in specific ways, including to my preparation of this research to take on the academic job market: Matt Lesch, Adrienne Davidson, Nicola Hepburn, Andrew McDougall, and Gabriel Arsenault. I am grateful also for my sustained friendship with my cohort within the Canadian Politics field at UofT: Paul Thomas, Mike Morden, Alex Pelletier, and Nicola Hepburn—a fantastic group of people who have enriched my life.

Finally, my achievements are fundamentally derived from the support of my family. Jesse is not only a partner whose professional achievements are a source of inspiration to reach higher and higher, but also one who has read and critiqued every word I have published and provided comfort during moments of despair. Patricia and Colin Godwin have likewise offered immense support during my graduate studies, including housing me during my fieldwork in Vancouver. My brother Darcy has been my number one fan and cheerleader during my academic career thus far, but is much more of a source of inspiration than he will ever appreciate.
And most importantly, to my parents, to whom I dedicate this work and my achievements to date. To them, getting an education would be my ticket to a fulfilling career and life, and that as long as I worked hard, the possibilities were limitless. When I left Merritt, BC in 2001 for my first days at university, they told me I should consider becoming a doctor—they should have been more specific, but I know they are proud.

Carey Doberstein
Toronto, Canada
June 2014
# Table of Contents

Abstract ................................................................................................................................. ii
Acknowledgements ................................................................................................................ iii
Table of Contents .................................................................................................................. vi
Tables and Figures ................................................................................................................ vii

Chapter 1: Introduction ........................................................................................................ 1
Chapter 2: Theoretical Framework and Hypotheses ........................................................... 24
Chapter 3: Comparative Historical Policy Context, 1995-2012 ...................................... 52
Chapter 4: Metagovernance of networks in Vancouver and Toronto ............................... 70
Chapter 5: Policy Innovation and Governance Networks ................................................... 94
Chapter 6: Policy Sensitivity and Governance Networks .................................................... 119
Chapter 7: Policy Coordination and Governance Networks ............................................. 142
Chapter 8: Empirical counter-factual analysis of decision making ................................. 165
Chapter 9: Causal Mechanisms linking governance networks to policy outputs ............ 185
Chapter 10: Conclusion: Governance and Policy Implications ......................................... 213

Appendix A: Interview list and guide ................................................................................. 228
Appendix B: Multi-level historical policy development in Vancouver and Toronto from 1995-2012 .............................................................................................................................. 231

References ............................................................................................................................ 234
Tables and Figures

Table 1.1: Homelessness data from Vancouver and Toronto ........................................ 8

Figure 2.1: Embedded theoretical frameworks guiding the development of concepts and hypotheses......................................................... 36
Table 2.1: The six governance networks, ranked according to the degree of institutionalization................................................................. 44
Figure 2.2: Active network membership, size and diversity, averaged for 2012 ......... 46
Figure 2.3: Hypothesized linkages between governance network institutionalization and inclusivity and policy dimensions of interest ............................................................................................................. 47
Figure 2.4: The six governance networks, mapped according to degree of institutionalization and inclusivity ................................................. 48

Table 3.1: Shelter and service data for Vancouver and Toronto, pre-networks period (1995) .......................................................................................................................... 54
Table 3.2: Major policy gaps in Toronto and Vancouver, 1995 ................................ 58
Table 3.3: Comparative HPS investments, 2011-2014 in Vancouver and Toronto by area. .................................................................................................................. 66
Table 3.4: Summary of Vancouver and Toronto policy context in 2012, differentiated by policy dimensions of interest ................................................................................................................. 68

Figure 4.1: The mediating influence of the metagovernance context on policy outputs. 71
Table 4.1: Summary of the homelessness governance networks and their properties...... 73
Table 4.2: Metagovernance categories of theoretical consequence ............................. 88
Figure 4.2: Dynamic and straitjacket metagovernance, in theoretical terms .......... 91
Figure 4.3: Administrative and volatile metagovernance, in theoretical terms ......... 92

Figure 5.1: Hypothesized linkages between network institutionalization and inclusivity and policy dimensions of interest ................................................... 95
Table 5.2: the most relevant policy innovations, differentiated by sub-category of innovation, from each network .................................................. 97

Figure 6.1: Hypothesized linkages between network institutionalization and inclusivity and policy dimensions of interest ........................................... 121
Table 6.1: the most relevant examples of policy sensitivity differentiated by category, from each network ................................................................. 123

Figure 7.1: Hypothesized linkages between network institutionalization and inclusivity and policy dimensions of interest ........................................... 144
Table 7.1: the most relevant examples of policy coordination differentiated by category, from each governance network .................................................. 144
Figure 8.1: Average score difference between network members and bureaucrats for each proposed homelessness program ......................................................... 170
Table 8.1: Network member and bureaucratic staff differences in programs funded, based on initial evaluations .................................................. 173
Figure 8.2: Differences in network and bureaucratic funding allocations using counterfactual analysis................................................................. 174
Figure 8.3: Change in rank of programs after deliberations, all network teams........ 177
Table 8.2: Final decisions by VAN_{main} after deliberations........................................ 178

Table 9.1: Categories of metagovernance context relevant to the operability of causal mechanisms......................................................................................................................... 190
Figure 9.1: Conceptual map of causal mechanisms linking governance networks to policy outputs................................................................................................................................. 191
Figure 9.2: Pairwise comparison of VAN_{main} and TO_{main} by operative causal mechanisms and metagovernance context................................................................................................................................. 192
Figure 9.4: Pairwise comparison of VAN_{emerg} and TO_{emerg} by operative causal mechanisms and metagovernance context................................................................. 196
Figure 9.6: Abstracted conceptual map of causal mechanisms linking dependent and independent variables, mediated by the metagovernance context.............................. 211

Table 10.1: Revisions to the theoretical conceptions of governance network properties. ................................................................................................................................. 222
Figure 10.1: Governance networks and the production of causal mechanisms, mediated by governance context, and the influence on policy outputs................................. 223
Chapter 1: Introduction

As one of the most economically prosperous nations on earth, Canada is a country with an enviable human rights record, including some of the social and economic rights (health care, education, old age security). But our public and private institutions are organized in such a manner that one of the now ‘normal’ outcomes is that a growing number of people are excluded from having an adequate and secure place to live. For some this is a temporary situation, for some an occasional situation, for others it is a long-term reality. Without a physical place to call ‘home’ in the social, psychological and emotional sense, the hour-to-hour struggle for physical survival replaces all other possible activities. Without an address it is virtually impossible to access some essential social services and it is very difficult to get a job. People with no place to live, those who have no physical and psychological place of their own to call home, are the most completely excluded group of people in society. On becoming homeless, people enter a different world from the rest of society. Survival is the main goal. It is a nightmare world completely apart from the normal day-to-day pattern of living.

—Homelessness ‘disaster’ declaration in Toronto (1998)

My earliest conceptualization of the issue of homelessness was a typically sheltered, middle class and abstract one: a vague sense of pity, yet also a clear sense it was inconceivable it could ever happen to me. Moving from a small town to Vancouver to attend UBC, homelessness became less of an abstraction when one was so completely surrounded by it. Like all urban citizens, I would come across panhandlers, hordes of people crowded around drop-in centres, and catch the sight of street sleepers in alcoves or alleys as I carried on with my day. And like many, I held dismissive and essentialized attitudes towards the homeless and how they arrived there, coupled with a fear of their actions and disgust with their presentation. Yet these sights and interactions, unnerving in the first months, eventually became part of the tapestry of urban life—or what some would call a disturbing normalization of homelessness in Canadian urban life.

For many years the normalization of homelessness was the lens through which I understood the issue—until very non-normal trends became visible to me when I moved out of the UBC nest to newly gentrifying Yaletown, a previously derelict industrial area in downtown Vancouver. The spectacular sights of the city, mountains and ocean from
my new downtown high-rise could not distract from what I became transfixed on at the street-level: cardboard assembled for shelter in alleys, shopping carts as mobile homes, and hardened women and young men working the streets before noon, most with visible signs of extensive drug use. Confronted by homelessness on a daily basis, over time it dawned on me how non-normal was this scene. There is nothing ‘normal’ about children being raised in homeless shelters. There is nothing ‘normal’ about line-ups extending several blocks when a charitable organization offers a free lunch. And there is nothing ‘normal’ in a civilized society about allowing untreated mental illness to destabilize every element of a person’s life. Even if they neatly absolved me from political action, the prevailing theories of homelessness as personal destruction by lazy and self-indulgent single adult males simply did not match with what I saw on the streets. Yet for the most part I approached the issue with benign neglect, not really engaging in political action that would reflect my reconceptualization of homelessness.

It turned out that the scenes on the streets below troubled my fellow high-rise dwellers as well. Though they had very different troubles than me about our new neighbourhood with ‘rough edges’. To many, the new urban life married the convenience and allure of downtown living with the suburban ethic of homogeneity and predictability. In short order began the re-engineering attempts of the neighbourhood consistent with new urban life aesthetics. My private discomfort with the seemingly legitimate and widespread ‘hobophobia’ reached a fever pitch in the mailroom of my new apartment building:

**PETITION**

From Concerned Residents of 501 Pacific St

*We the undersigned strongly oppose the expansion of the Covenant House youth shelter facility on the basis that it will upset the fabric of the neighbourhood by attracting more homeless and junkies, increasing threats to the safety and security of young children, women and the elderly in the neighbourhood.*

Three petitions in a matter of months were circulated by ‘concerned residents’ in this apartment building attempting to prevent the continued operation of a shelter for abused women, as well as the expansion of a youth homelessness shelter, and calling for more
police presence to sweep the streets of prostitutes and the indigent. The cold economics of ‘declining property values’ and phantom claims of ‘threats to personal safety’ were the basis of the appeals, with decidedly little concern for where women and youth fleeing violent and abusive situations would go if their political actions were successful. Provoked out of passivity, I wrote a caustic letter for display reminding residents that we were the new ones to the neighbourhood—not the prostitutes, homeless and other marginalized people—and that surely compassion and productive political action to help stabilize lives was a much more reasonable approach than simply sweeping the neighbourhood clean. Needless to say, my indelicate attempt to calm the young urban professionals of Yaletown and channel their fears into compassion was unsuccessful.¹

These patterns extended beyond my spooked neighbours to the next area ripe for gentrification in downtown Vancouver: Gastown, which is adjacent to and overlaps with the notorious Downtown Eastside. A ‘concerned resident’ named Mike Comrie was granted space in the editorial pages of the National Post to lament over how after moving into the poorest postal code in Canada, the surroundings were not idyllic enough for his young professional family, with language characteristic of common dismissive attitudes towards the homeless and marginalized:

We had found a condo that we could actually afford… gambling that the neighbourhood would improve significantly by the time our building was completed. It didn’t… although the area would improve, eventually. But first, we would spend a few years raising our children in what could generously be described as a disturbing new community…Junkies steal, they prostitute themselves, they leave needles and feces in the streets. The Downtown Eastside may be home to my city’s least fortunate, but it is also, in many cases, home to my city’s least sanitary, least responsible, and least polite…My wife and I had to quickly learn how to take it in stride when alarmingly filthy individuals, clearly intoxicated and probably insane, wanted to exchange baby talk with our little ones…It took a while, but we bet on gentrification, and – knock on wood – it’s happening. (National Post, April 12, 2012).

Such callous attitudes towards a vulnerable segment of society would be less troubling if they were not so widespread and legitimized in common discourses and media. Not only

¹ But I am happy to report that the residents were ultimately unsuccessful in all three of their petitions to the city—though other ‘concerned residents’ of X neighbourhood have no doubt been successful in other similar attempts.
were these experiences in Vancouver replicated with eerie precision in my Toronto apartment building, others have documented these dynamics in Canadian cities (Valverde, 2012), revealing a certain detached acceptance and ignorance of the plight of a permanent underclass in Canada. This brought into a frustratingly clear view for me a fundamental disconnect in Canadian society: an incredibly rich country, and amid the great wealth of many (and their corresponding aesthetic tastes), there are thousands of Canadians—150,000 by one federal government estimate in 2005 (Laird, 2007)—for whom ‘normal’ life now involves an inadequate and secure place to live. In Toronto, more than 5,000 live on the street or in homeless shelters on a given night, more than 2,500 in Vancouver, and over 3,000 in Calgary—and these data are widely considered to underestimate the scale of the problem (SNA, 2009; RSCH, 2012; CHF, 2012). Among the street homeless population, nearly 50% in Vancouver have lived on the street for more than a year, a figure that rises to 70% of the street population in Toronto (RSCH, 2008; SNA, 2009).

Homelessness is not merely an academic problem concerned with the distribution of resources in a society. Homelessness kills Canadians. During the worst period in Toronto, on average one homeless person died every week from 1996-2006 from being homeless (Layton, 2008). This is not the speculative conclusion of radical activists. In countless coroner’s inquests into the deaths of homeless individuals in Toronto, juries established that “homelessness” was the ultimate cause of death (Layton, 2008: 34), with the proximate causes ranging from freezing outside to persistent and untreated health conditions exacerbated by the pathologies of street life. Former Ontario Premier Mike Harris famously asked the rhetorical question “Isn’t it sad that these people just seem to want to be homeless?”—a skillful attempt to frame the issue as a matter of individual choice, not a structural or systematic societal failing. Yet real stories of homeless people tell a much different and more complicated story about pathways in and out of homelessness, few of which are the result of laziness or an inexplicable desire to live in miserable conditions.
The striking overrepresentation of Aboriginals among the homeless population—in Vancouver and Toronto, they represent 32% and 15% of the homeless respectively, despite constituting only 2% and 0.5% of their total populations—reveals that structural issues are key drivers of homelessness in Canada (GVRsch, 2011; CTSNA, 2009). Likewise, by some estimates youth comprise 20-30% of the homeless population in Canadian cities, and despite prevailing myths of their self-indulgent desire for early freedom, homeless youth “often run away from something awful, not toward something hopeful”, whether it is abusive, drug-dependent, mentally ill or homophobic families (Ryan and Kelly, 2012: 7). Research by the Covenant House Institute tracked youth accessing their services across North America, and found patterns of experience that challenge the common depiction of directionless youth: 40% had been in foster care, more than 25% had been hospitalized for depression, anxiety or other mental health issues, 30% had experienced physical abuse, and 40% of young women had been sexually abused as children (Ryan and Kelly, 2012: 4). Additionally, shelters in some cities report that LGBT youth account for up to 40% of their residents, often kicked out or subject to shame by homophobic parents. Thus there are real reasons why people become homeless through no fault of their own, even if we can point to some poor individual choices along the way.2

Yet, unfortunately, there have always been children growing up in challenging households under difficult personal circumstances, so this does not alone explain the rapid growth in homelessness in Canada and elsewhere since the 1990s. For the most marginalized in society, there used to be policy framework—a safety net that would allow those fleeing terrible home situations to afford independent housing, access social assistance, and receive counseling or institutionalized services for those suffering from mental illness—that would help them to stabilize their lives. To Jack Layton, an early political leader on the issue of homelessness in Canadian cities, “homelessness is not some mysterious affliction visited upon us by unseen forces. It is the tragic, but

---

2 Common individual-level behavioural explanations surrounding drug and alcohol addictions are in fact consequences of extreme poverty and a failure of government policy (particularly mental health services) to prevent people from slipping through the cracks, and are not themselves the explanations for the growth of homelessness in Canada.
inevitable, outcome of a series of policy decisions [at several levels of government]” (Layton, 2008: xxv).

In the homelessness policy community, the Paul Martin budgets beginning in 1993 are seen as the most devastating setbacks to housing affordability in Canada, with the federal government withdrawing nearly completely from affordable housing provision (and subsequent provincial downloading to cash-strapped municipalities). The impact was dramatic: in 1982, all levels of government funded over 20,000 units of social housing annually, while in 1995 only 1,000 new social housing units were constructed by all levels of government in Canada (Shapcott, 2008). Yet only three years earlier, in 1990, the Official Opposition critic for Housing and Urban Affairs wrote in a Task Force report that Canada “is presently confronted with a major housing crisis…and immediate action is necessary to correct the problem” (NLCTFH, 1990: 1). Hence the shock and disbelief in the homelessness policy community when that very same opposition critic—Paul Martin—came to power as Finance Minister and did the opposite of what his own Task Force Report recommended, which was soon followed by a massive spike in homelessness in Canadian cities by 2000.

Widespread and persistent homelessness in Canada is thus the result of policy decisions at several levels of government. Patterns of abuse, mental illness and personal tragedy will always dot Canadian society, but the question is whether the policy framework in place helps stabilize lives met with incredible challenges, many of which are involuntarily thrust upon them. To Layton, “just as homelessness can be created, so too can it be ended” (Layton, 2008: xxv). In the absence of a strong federal government role in the provision of affordable housing across Canada—which is still perhaps the most important need—Layton claimed that one of the most important lessons he learned in his life in politics “is that energy and ideas spring from the community—what social scientists sometimes call ‘civil society’…not from mandarins in Ottawa” (Layton, 2008: xxviii).
Quite a statement for someone who wanted to become Prime Minister! To Layton and others in the homelessness policy community (see also Gaetz, 2010), there is high premium placed on the ‘community’ as agents of change and policy ideas that should be brought into the policy process to challenge technocrats and elected officials “to help raise awareness and [advance] creative strategies and solutions” (Layton, 2008: 301). Politicians respond to the interests of ‘concerned residents’, and bureaucrats to arcane institutional incentives, leaving civil society actors—those on the ground working with the homeless population—as key agents driving innovative policy and programs in this domain. But is this true? If civil society actors—in this case, shelter and drop-in centre providers, affordable housing providers and activists, mental health and addiction professionals—are included in substantive policy planning and decision making, what is the effect on homelessness policy? This is the question this dissertation investigates.

**Homelessness and public policy in major Canadian cities**

Among large Canadian cities, Toronto and Vancouver are where homelessness and a lack of affordable housing are most acute (Laird, 2007), and the associated governments have responded to the issue with various approaches over the years, thus offering opportunities for comparative governance and public policy analysis. Comparing homeless populations across cities, even within the same country, is not without risk given the complex reasons for homelessness in specific locations, which include economic restructuring of the labour force, mental health and addiction, real estate market trends, and even the local climate. That said, it is important nonetheless to get a sense of some the fundamental features of homelessness in Vancouver and Toronto, and on the most important measures of homelessness—growth of total homelessness, growth of street homelessness, and average length of homelessness—Vancouver displays more positive trends than Toronto, as depicted in Table 1.1.
Table 1.1: Homelessness data from Vancouver and Toronto

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Metro Vancouver (pop. 2.31M)</th>
<th>City of Toronto (pop. 2.61M)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Homelessness count (street and shelters)</td>
<td>2,623</td>
<td>5,086</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Growth in total homelessness (3 year trend)</td>
<td>-1%</td>
<td>+3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Growth in street homelessness (3 year trend)</td>
<td>-54%</td>
<td>+24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Growth in Aboriginal homelessness (3 year trend)</td>
<td>-7%</td>
<td>+18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of street homeless being homeless for 1 year or more</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>65%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


There are some important differences in the way in which the two cities have addressed the problem from a policy perspective, and with varying effectiveness with respect to improving the lives of homeless persons. The homelessness literature identifies several policy dimensions linked to an effective response to homelessness and thus are key factors to track to explain the differences in policy outcome data across the cities, including: policy innovation, policy sensitivity to vulnerable subgroups, and policy and program coordination (Gaetz, 2010; Shapcott, 2007; Carter, 2001). This variation in homelessness outcomes cannot simply be explained by a dramatic difference in how much money is spent on housing and homelessness in each city: counting all levels of government, annual expenditures in recent years were remarkably similar: in Metro Vancouver $278M and in Toronto $297M (BC Housing, 2012; City of Toronto, 2013; City of Toronto, 2010).

On the dimensions of innovation, sensitivity and coordination, homelessness policy and programs in Vancouver generally outperform those found in Toronto. For example over the past decades, Vancouver pioneered low barrier shelters, harm reduction strategies, and inclusionary zoning, and is also host to important examples of policy coordination with the development of a Homeless Action Week, Extreme Weather Response
protocols, and more recently a Metro Vancouver Funder’s Table for public and private sector homelessness investment coordination. Toronto is also very active in the homelessness policy domain, with an extensive shelter and social housing system, though with the exception of the innovative Streets to Home (rapid re-housing) program, it displays fewer and less substantive examples of policy innovation, sensitivity to vulnerable subgroups, and policy coordination among public and private actors over the past decade. Promising efforts in Toronto of inclusive Aboriginal policy planning, as well as the ‘annual’ Report Card on Homelessness were notable, though short-lived.

The puzzle
The data and policy dimensions of homelessness in Vancouver and Toronto sketched out above set up the key puzzle under investigation in this study: Why does Vancouver have more innovative, sensitive and coordinated homelessness policy and programs than Toronto, despite sharing similar homelessness challenges? What explains this? Toronto and Vancouver share many demographic, economic and institutional features, yet there is a key difference among them that this dissertation will investigate that may account for these substantive policy differences: the properties and dynamics of homelessness governance networks in the two cases. Governance networks consist of government and civil society actors in institutionalized relationships of policy planning and decision making, and may serve as sites of deliberative problem solving and exchange among diverse policy actors. In Vancouver, there are several institutionalized governance networks that bring together all three levels of government and civil society on matters of policy with respect to homelessness in Vancouver, whereas in Toronto the governance networks are generally less institutionalized in the policy process and demonstrably less connected to each other. These cases present the opportunity to systematically test the claims of Layton and many others of the impact of civil society actors in the policy process.

This study thus investigates if the different governance networks that have formed in domain of homelessness in Vancouver and Toronto better explain the policy differences exhibited between them than do other possible accounts. And to the extent that the
differences in governance network properties and dynamics explain the policy variation, the dissertation explores why such networks may matter by identifying the causal mechanisms that link governance networks to innovative, sensitive and coordinated public policy.

The relevance of this research extends beyond the empirical case of homelessness policy making in Vancouver and Toronto. There are broader empirical and theoretical implications. Empirically, there are an abundance of new and complex multi-level and network governance arrangements across many policy sectors in Canada, including immigrant settlement, health, economic development, neighbor revitalization, urban Aboriginals, and homelessness, where government and civil society actors jointly engage in institutionalized policy planning and decision making—and are largely uninvestigated by scholars in Canada, despite increasingly occupying a role in the policy process. The broader theoretical importance of this research is a contribution to the network governance literature that investigates not just how networks matter to the policy process, but also engages in theory-building for why, by articulating mechanisms that underlie the causal relationships.

**Research Design**

This study engages in a comparative case study approach using a ‘most similar’ system design, which is consistent with Lijphart’s (1971) advice for comparativists to focus on cases most similar with respect to factors that are not of crucial importance to the research problem. That is, by controlling a number of independent variables tangential to the key independent variables of interest, we can better isolate the potential causal relationships under investigation, thereby concluding that “the differences in the dependent variable are caused by different values on one of the independent variables” (Pierre, 2005: 455). The investigation of two cases necessarily raises concerns about small-N problems, which can detract from the generalizability of the results. One way to mitigate this problem is to increase the number of observations for each case by establishing several indicators for the dependent variable (King, Keohane and Verba, 1994). As such, this dissertation employs multiple indicators for the dependent
variable—policy development—by measuring three dimensions: policy innovation, policy sensitivity to vulnerable subgroups, and policy coordination—all of which, as articulated above, are linked to positive trends in homelessness policy outcomes (Gaetz, 2010).

Vancouver and Toronto are similarly situated in the constitutional framework, share demographic traits, and confront a similar magnitude of homelessness. They do, however, diverge on the variables of interest: namely the specific dimensions of homelessness policy and the design and structure of homelessness governance networks. With respect to the potential rival explanations for policy differences, Vancouver and Toronto vary as well. In terms of local political institutions, in Vancouver a considerable degree of homelessness and housing policy development is centralized in a single provincial agency (BC Housing), while in Toronto it completely devolved to the municipal level. Likewise the electoral systems in Metro Vancouver municipalities are ‘at-large’ (meaning the mayor and council are elected by the entire city), while in Toronto the councilors are elected to specific wards, which may have implications to for the ability of decision makers to implement services (re: NIMBYism). Finally, Vancouver has an integrated and functional regional government system, whereas Toronto does not (in the aftermath of amalgamation in 1998), which may have implications for the coordination of homelessness services in the broader urban area. In terms of political and civic leadership, by definition Vancouver and Toronto vary in this regard, as it is a ‘local’ concept in the sense that they have different political and civic leaders from across government and civil society who can mobilize stakeholders in support of a community-wide cause.

Homelessness being a complex issue that draws in multi-sectoral and intergovernmental policy players, there is not merely one homelessness governance network in each city. In fact, there are three in the respective cities, each with a near perfect equivalent in the

---

3 Metro Vancouver is studied rather than only the City of Vancouver for two reasons. First, to ensure comparable (though not equal) scale of analysis, since the current City of Toronto is amalgamation of former Metro Toronto municipalities. Second, this is the scale at which the federal government homelessness funding is managed in Vancouver.
other city in terms of functionality and purpose—the omission of any would fail to
capture the complexity of policy making for homelessness in each city. The three
governance networks examined in each of Vancouver and Toronto, which are briefly
introduced below, represent a comprehensive portrait of network governance activity in
each city, but also pair-wise comparison of equivalent networks across the cities⁴:
\( \text{VAN}_\text{main} - \text{TO}_\text{main} \), \( \text{VAN}_\text{Ab} - \text{TO}_\text{Ab} \), and \( \text{VAN}_\text{emerg} - \text{TO}_\text{emerg} \) to help isolate the features of
governance networks that shape policy development with controlled analysis. The
research design is therefore structured to allow for comparison between Vancouver and
Toronto, but also within the cases themselves, generating additional leverage to the
analysis.

**VANCOUVER**

\( \text{VAN}_\text{main} \)

The Metro Vancouver Regional Steering Committee on Homelessness (\( \text{VAN}_\text{main} \)) is a
governance network initially created under the auspices of the federal government’s
National Homelessness Initiative (NHI), launched in 2000, which required the formation
of a Community Advisory Board (CAB) consisting of civil society and government
members to create a community plan to address homelessness and to make funding
recommendations. \( \text{VAN}_\text{main} \) is thus the CAB for Vancouver as it relates to the federal
NHI (now named Homelessness Partnering Strategy, or HPS). The membership of
\( \text{VAN}_\text{main} \) is diverse and inclusive of the policy community and includes nearly forty
active members. Membership⁵ includes: local, regional, provincial and federal
government administrators, health authorities, charitable groups and foundations,
Aboriginal groups, service providers, advocacy groups, as well as representatives from
other networks, like \( \text{VAN}_\text{Ab} \) and \( \text{VAN}_\text{emerg} \) (both detailed below). There are no elected
officials actively involved in the governance network.

---

⁴ I have changed their names in the study to allow for easy comparison throughout the text.
⁵ Membership is by invitation or request, and is regulated by the network itself according to established criteria, which
include representation of sectors or groups with respect to homelessness, and is maintained as long as members
participate on one subcommittee and attend general meetings regularly, which tend to occur about ten times per year
(RSCH, 2001).
While this group was not initially formally attached to the Metro Vancouver regional government—it is, as of 2010—it was historic cooperation among regional actors on other issues that made such an institutional design feasible and desirable. \(VAN_{\text{main}}\) was established based on the recognition that homelessness exists in the broader metropolitan area (not just the City of Vancouver) and that a regional, coordinated approach is required to make effective policy interventions (RSCH, 2007). Additional operating principles that inform the work of the governance network are inclusiveness, collaboration, as well as attention to comprehensive, preventative and long-term solutions. It operated under a ‘shared delivery model’ rather than the ‘community entity’ model of the NHI\(^6\), which for legal reasons was viewed as more appropriate because it is a coalition of local government officials and community representatives, to which ascribing legal and financial liability is difficult. In 2010 \(VAN_{\text{main}}\) decided to move to the community entity model, whereby the Metro Vancouver regional government would be the community entity for the purpose of the federal program—meaning it, rather than the federal government, served as the primary metagovernor of the network. There is a team of four bureaucratic staff members at the Metro Vancouver regional government to support the activity of \(VAN_{\text{main}}\).

\(VAN_{\text{Ab}}\)

The Aboriginal Homelessness Steering Committee (\(VAN_{\text{Ab}}\)), like \(VAN_{\text{main}}\), was created in 2000 in conjunction with the National Homelessness Initiative (NHI) from the Government of Canada, which mandated the creation of governance networks (called Community Advisory Boards) of Aboriginal civil society actors to develop and implement a local strategy for Aboriginal homelessness in Metro Vancouver. An Aboriginal-specific governance network is particularly relevant in the homelessness domain, as Aboriginals constitute a disproportionate share of the street homeless population across Canada. Further, many argue, and the Government of Canada acknowledged as much with the creation of the NHI, that the most effective means to

---

\(^6\) Communities were given the choice by the federal government of two models to execute the NHI: shared delivery, in which the federal department of Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (HRSDC) would retain legal liability for policy plans and decisions, and the community entity model, where by agreement the federal government would devolve legal liability to the local level (usually a local government). This early decision on the administrative model, as we will see later, had interesting governance implications.
reduce and prevent Aboriginal homelessness is through Aboriginal best practices and culturally appropriate policy and programs. As such, Aboriginal governance networks were established to create a community plan and to allocate Government of Canada funds consistent with the locally developed strategy.

Similar to VAN\textsubscript{main}, the membership of VAN\textsubscript{Ab} consists of shelter providers, housing organizations, youth advocates, and other service providers that primarily serve the homeless Aboriginal population in the all municipalities in Metro Vancouver. One significant difference from VAN\textsubscript{main} is that VAN\textsubscript{Ab} does not include government (bureaucratic) members—all voting members of VAN\textsubscript{Ab} are from the community (the same is true for TO\textsubscript{Ab}, described below). VAN\textsubscript{Ab} is also much smaller in membership than VAN\textsubscript{main}, with twenty active members, but this is also commensurate with the much smaller envelope of money it has to allocate. VAN\textsubscript{Ab} is the CAB for the NHI of the Government of Canada, and drafts and revises the Aboriginal community plan to address homelessness, issues calls for programs for funding, decides how to prioritize funds, and engages in broader policy development work with VAN\textsubscript{main}. VAN\textsubscript{Ab} has one staff member to support its activity, as well as one Government of Canada representative to assist with administration as needed. VAN\textsubscript{Ab} and VAN\textsubscript{main} have representatives on each of the respective networks, yet have gone through periods of cooperative, as well as strained, relations.

\textit{VAN}_{\text{emerg}}

In 1998, in response to unmet need of shelter in winter months, homeless shelter providers formed a regional network to develop and implement a continuum of accessible shelter services. The principal tasks in the early years of the network were to increase communication and coordination between shelter providers to ensure that services were accessible to the target population during inclement weather. The creation of the network was driven from the community level, not the result of a government program like VAN\textsubscript{main} and VAN\textsubscript{Ab}, though provincial government departments have provided in-kind secretarial support and local governments have provided research and coordination funds to assist in the operations of the network. In contrast to both VAN\textsubscript{main} and VAN\textsubscript{Ab}, it is
less of a policy-focused network and more of a coordination network. Over the years, VAN_{emerg} has expanded its mandate and role in the region. The need to strategize and coordinate during cold and wet weather remains a priority, but the mandate of the network now extends to the more general planning and coordination of shelter services (year-round), systematic service tracking, and promoting the sharing of resources and expertise among shelter providers.

Membership consists of nearly thirty organizations actively involved in meeting emergency shelter needs, whether it is providing, funding, or otherwise associating with shelter services. As such, members include local, provincial and federal government administrators, health authorities, shelter providers, charities, as well as representatives from other networks, like VAN_{main} and VAN_{Ab}. Like VAN_{main} and VAN_{Ab}, there are no elected officials actively involved in the network. The network, which meets every two months, works in accordance with operating principles that include collaboration among service providers, funders and communities, representation of diverse perspectives and interests, and consensus decision making. Unlike the other two governance networks in Vancouver, VAN_{emerg} does not have full time staff support, though it does receive limited administrative assistance from BC Housing. VAN_{emerg} has produced annual reports of its activities since its creation, making explicit links between inputs, activities and outputs, as well as identifying ongoing service and funding gaps.

**TORONTO**

*TO_{main}*  
The Community Reference Group (TO_{main}) is analogous to VAN_{main} in terms of being created in response to the Government of Canada’s NHI in 2000. It serves as the Community Advisory Board, as mandated by HRSDC, with the task of devising a community plan to identify and articulate key priorities for investment of funds, though it plays no role in the allocation of homelessness funding. Unlike the case of Vancouver, the City of Toronto serves as the ‘community entity’ that formally administers the program and assumes legal and financial liability (recall that Vancouver, until very recently, used a shared-delivery model in which HRSDC performed this function). The
City of Toronto selected this model of administration because it was already heavily involved in homelessness funding since this task had been devolved from the provincial government, and the city therefore had the capacity to administer the new federal program.

Membership on TO\textsubscript{main} is a diverse cross-section of fifteen members from the community, local government and private sector actors. It is important to note, however, that there is no provincial and federal government representation on TO\textsubscript{main}. This is a function of two institutional features: (i) the provincial government has devolved all homelessness and housing responsibility to local governments (though it does provide substantial unconditional grants), and (ii) the community entity model of program delivery means that the City of Toronto holds full governmental accountability, and therefore federal representation is not required (unlike Vancouver from 2000-2010). As such, members include city bureaucrats, service providers, charities, and non-profit housing corporations, as well as members of other city-level advisory committees. In contrast to VAN\textsubscript{main}, however, TO\textsubscript{main} meets only once or twice per year and has little public profile. A small team of City of Toronto bureaucrats conducts most of the policy and administrative work of TO\textsubscript{main}. Additionally, whereas the VAN\textsubscript{main} has a website and numerous publications of its activity, TO\textsubscript{main} in Toronto is only referenced in relation to its activity with respect to the development of the community plan for the federal homelessness program. TO\textsubscript{main} therefore has not expanded its mandate to become the primary community-driven voice for homelessness in Toronto like VAN\textsubscript{main} has in Vancouver—it remains a narrowly defined community advisory board (CAB) for the purposes of the federal homelessness program.

\textit{TO\textsubscript{Ab}}

The Urban Aboriginal Homelessness Review Committee (TO\textsubscript{Ab}), like TO\textsubscript{main}, was created in response to the Government of Canada’s NHI launched in 2000. The program incentivized Aboriginal community groups to form a Community Advisory Board (CAB) of diverse group of actors to consult with the wider community and to create a community plan that would set the priorities and identify service gaps with respect to
homeless Aboriginals in Toronto. The governance network, like its equivalent in Vancouver, is responsible for setting policy priorities, reviewing homeless program proposals and allocating funds in the community. The membership of TO\textsubscript{Ab} consists of representatives from seven Aboriginal organizations, each of which covers a demographic or service segment of the Aboriginal homeless community (UAHRC TOR, 2010). TO\textsubscript{Ab} meets once every two months and like VAN\textsubscript{Ab} has one full time staff to support its work, as well as a Government of Canada official, as needed.

In addition to a role in the setting of strategic policy priorities for urban Aboriginal homelessness in Toronto and funding specific projects consistent with the priorities, TO\textsubscript{Ab} also functions as a site for networking, communication, and information sharing with respect to issues of mutual interest. Unlike its equivalent in Vancouver, TO\textsubscript{Ab} does not have a formal or informal connection to TO\textsubscript{main} at the City of Toronto. Despite an explicitly declared desire for membership on TO\textsubscript{main}, the City of Toronto has never extended an invitation. This is noteworthy, as TO\textsubscript{main} and the City of Toronto mandate 20% of their homelessness expenditures towards Aboriginal homelessness (given the disproportionate levels of homelessness among Aboriginals), yet there is no formal representation on TO\textsubscript{main} for Aboriginals, which has caused some consternation among Aboriginal community groups (confidential interviews).

\textit{TO\textsubscript{emerg}}

The Advisory Committee on Homeless and Socially Isolated Persons (TO\textsubscript{emerg}) was created in 1996 to provide advice to city decision makers, to identify emerging issues facing homeless and marginalized persons in Toronto, and to promote long-term solutions to homelessness (City of Toronto, 2004). It was created in the context of an exploding homelessness crisis in Toronto, which was marked by an increasing number of deaths of homeless individuals on the streets in the mid 1990s. Like the other governance networks under investigation, TO\textsubscript{emerg} was comprised of approximately twenty key civil society actors in Toronto—including shelter and housing providers, mental health advocates, homeless activists, and academics—together with four bureaucrats from the City of Toronto’s Shelter, Support and Housing Administration (SSHA). One unique
feature of this governance network in comparison to the others under study is that it was co-chaired by an elected official: a city councillor. This was a key institutional feature of the design of the governance network that not only elevated the legitimacy of its work, but also provided a mechanism through which the work could be advanced on the city council agenda. The first Co-chair was Councillor Jack Layton, and upon his resignation from council, councillors Jane Pitfield and Sylvia Watson took the helm of TO\textsubscript{emerg}.

TO\textsubscript{emerg} was initially housed at the Metro level in 1996, as this was prior to amalgamation, and remained active and institutionalized in the transition new City of Toronto in 1998. During its tenure, TO\textsubscript{emerg} was responsible for numerous and substantive policy innovations, including developing emergency shelter protocols, police sensitivity training, and transit policy changes, in addition to pushing debates around homelessness onto the council agenda. Yet there was a shift in tone and culture of collaboration when Jack Layton left as co-chair and was replaced by other councillors, as well as a growing divide between some community members and city officials, particularly on new policies and programs, like the 2005 Streets to Homes (rapid re-housing) Plan, for example. The activity of TO\textsubscript{emerg} then became particularly strained when Co-chair Councillor Jane Pitfield advanced an anti-panhandling by-law despite the strong opposition from many community members at TO\textsubscript{emerg}, who subsequently held a (symbolic) vote to remove Pitfield as chair of the committee. TO\textsubscript{emerg} subsequently disbanded in 2006 and no similar governance network, with councillor leadership and community involvement, has been created since.

The brief introduction to the governance networks above reveals that while each of the equivalent governance networks in Vancouver and Toronto share similar origins, there are important differences in their institutional role, membership, and activities, which will allow us to isolate the impact of governance network dynamics on the development and implementation of policy. Given the latitude with which the governance networks were permitted to take shape and evolve, this presents an opportunity to track a natural experiment in governance and public policy over an extended period of time.
Data collection and methods

This study compiles data from a wide range of sources to make sense of why, on the whole, Vancouver has more innovative, sensitive and coordinated homelessness policy than Toronto—and to what extent the properties and dynamics of governance networks explain the variation. Tracking the development and implementation of policy requires an historical, process tracing approach, and thus archival materials constitute a major source of data in this study. Archival documents include: meeting minutes and policy documents from all of the governance networks, special task force reports, city and regional council documents, as well as provincial and federal government policy plans and reports. Complete sets of meeting minutes for all six governance networks under investigation, for their entire lifetimes, were obtained by formal requests to the respective leadership. Recognizing that all that is important is not always recorded in meeting minutes or presented in government reports, forty-two interviews with key government and civil society actors were conducted in Vancouver and Toronto to gain perspectives of internal policy debates and dynamics within the governance network and government bureaucracies. An interview list and guide is provided in Appendix A. This study also utilizes program expenditure data from the governance networks and municipal governments to conduct comparative analysis of policy priorities.

Yet investigating network governance requires the researcher to engage in more ground-level data collection methods than archival research and elite interviews. As such, this study engages in participant observation of one governance network in each of Vancouver and Toronto over an extended period of time. This involved receiving permission from the leadership to be embedded as an observer of the governance network during their meetings, subcommittee work, and occasions of deliberative decision making regarding program investments. In Vancouver, I was embedded for an intensive five weeks in Winter 2012, as well as several shorter follow up observational visits, and in

---

7 Interview respondents include those currently and formerly involved in the governance networks under investigation, selected from membership records and snowball sampling. There were six additional government and civil society actors who were invited but declined to participate in the study.
Toronto I attended bi-monthly network meetings over two years from 2011-2013. Viewing the governance network in action is essential to capture the emergent properties of network governance that are purported to have an effect on policy development. Wedel et al. (2005) suggest that participant observation is essential to understanding how state policies and government processes are experienced and interpreted by people in networks, whether they are government, interest group, or other private actors. Immersion via participant observation is the critical differentiating aspect from traditional methods: by experiencing the policy network as policy actors do, the researcher can construct an understanding of institutional structures, norms and policy processes, and how actors mediate such forces (Kubik, 2009).

The methods through which the collected archival, interview and participant observation data are analyzed are driven by the nature of the research question. Tracking policy development in the homelessness policy domain demands comparative historical policy analysis. Importantly, this includes the governance and policy context before the networks were created. Additionally, demonstrating that governance networks matter to policy choices also demands that we engage in empirically-grounded counter-factual analysis: would decisions be made differently if the governance networks did not exist? Combining both of these methods of data analysis provides analytical leverage to the question of how and why governance networks may matter to policy development, and are briefly outlined below.

**Comparative historical policy analysis**

The ability to make causal inferences regarding the influence of governance network dynamics on dimensions of policy development requires a temporal dimension for the analysis. That is, we must consider the policy context before the governance networks existed, document the observable consequences shortly after the network is established, as well as document any major changes in the structure or activity of the network over time, and explore the links to any observed changes in policy over this period. This approach is therefore historical, not only in terms of research design and a longitudinal perspective, but also with respect to assumptions regarding the importance of history in
relation to the phenomenon under investigation, consistent with classic historical institutionalist works by Skocpol (1979), Hall (1986) and Pierson (2004).

Historical institutionalists claim that the sequencing of events and historical timing is significant to policy development. For many in the literature, this has implied ‘path dependence’: that preceding steps in a particular direction induce further movement in the same direction, and that some courses of action become extremely difficult to reverse (Pierson, 2004). At the core of the path dependence argument is the assumption that early, contingent events can have a significant impact on a political development (or institution) and that the probability of further steps along a path increases with each move down that path, even if that path is a suboptimal direction.

To support or reject the causal claim that governance networks matter to certain dimensions of policy development and implementation, we must isolate important moments in the network creation and evolution and look for corresponding effect on policy. Thus one of the first steps in comparative historical analysis is periodization: “the dissection of the historical chronology of places into analytically useful periods” (Lieberman, 2001). Periods are generally marked by variation in a potentially important explanatory variable, whether the one we seek to prove as meaningful (e.g. network structure) or rival explanations (e.g. local institutions, socially constructed ideas, or leadership of particular actors or organizations).

Applying an institutional origins strategy of periodization is the most important first step in this study, as we are testing claims that governance network dynamics have direct or indirect effects on policy development and implementation. As such, the dissertation contains two distinct periods: before the governance networks were created (pre-1995) and after they were created (1995-2012). During the period before 1995, none of the six governance networks was in existence, and thus it is important to establish a policy baseline during this period. From 1995-2012, the governance networks began to appear, with the TO$_{emerg}$ and VAN$_{emerg}$ in 1996 and 1998 respectively, followed by the other four networks in 2000, for which contemporary policy and programs can be assessed against
the pre-network period.

Just as the periods relating to the key independent variable—network structure and dynamics—are important, periods and junctures relating to rival explanations are essential to document. Leadership variables are among the most important: did a particular mayor or premier take a lead role in homelessness policy development that better explains the political phenomena under investigation than governance network activity? Likewise do local institutional changes, like amalgamation in Toronto or the expanding policy role of the Metro Vancouver regional government play an important role in homelessness policy development? The influence of these features over time must be documented in order to isolate which among them is influential in terms of policy development.

**Looking forward – the plan for the dissertation**

In the next chapter, I present the theoretical underpinnings of network governance research, drawing upon the first waves of ‘policy network’ research, the critiques of which ushered in the so-called second generation of policy network research, in which this study is situated. I also draw on concepts developed in the ‘metagovernance’ and normative deliberative democracy bodies of literature to craft a more comprehensive explanatory framework for policy development vis-à-vis governance networks. The third chapter presents the evolution of homelessness policy in Vancouver and Toronto in the two periods under investigation: a pre-network period, up to 1995, which sets the baseline homelessness policy context, and then the period from 1995-2012 in which the governance networks were created and evolved.

The fourth chapter ‘zooms out’ in terms of analysis of the six governance networks by applying the lens of metagovernance—in recognition that how the state manages governance networks has an important mediating influence on the policy outputs of a network—to create a typology of ‘styles of metagovernance’ with theoretical implications for policy outputs. Chapters five through seven present the primary empirics for the study, testing hypotheses with respect to governance networks and policy
innovation, sensitivity, and coordination, respectively. The eighth chapter then ‘zooms in’ to the most institutionalized and inclusive of the governance networks—VAN_{main}—and engages in empirical counter-factual analysis of real decision making data and directly tests claims that governance network actors make different decisions than bureaucrats (who represent a hypothetical scenario in which the governance network did not exist).

The ninth chapter leverages the key empirical findings to conceptualize the causal mechanisms that explain the link between governance networks and policy development. Using inductive empirical analysis, the chapter presents a theoretical model that explains the findings among the institutionalized governance networks, bridging macro-level patterns of metagovernance and the micro-level patterns from decision making settings. The final chapter summarizes the theoretical, as well as governance and policy implications of the research, and concludes with a research agenda that builds on the findings advanced from the study.
Chapter 2: Theoretical Framework and Hypotheses

Introduction
Why do we care if governance networks matter to policy development? Why study homelessness through this lens? And what is the theoretical significance of network governance in the broader policy process? This chapter will answer these questions in two parts. Part one begins with an empirical argument that new forms of governance—particularly via networks in formalized and institutionalized roles—exist and are increasingly drawing attention from scholars in Canada, given their often significant role in the policy process. The chapter proceeds by reviewing the mostly unconnected literatures of network governance, metagovernance, and deliberative democracy theory, all of which have staked normative and empirical claims about transformation of traditional decision making institutions and the role of civil society actors in decision making. The chapter draws on concepts developed in each of the bodies of literature that explain how and why governance networks may matter to policy development, including deliberation, resource exchange, policy learning and trust building among disparate policy actors.

The second part of the chapter briefly reviews theoretical arguments from the political science and comparative public policy literature that serve to contradict the claims of network governance scholars—that some other configuration of variables matters more to policy development than the properties and dynamics of governance networks. Three broad theoretical traditions constitute the competing explanations for policy development: institutional configurations (in the Canadian context this centers on federalism—legal-administrative and fiscal), ideational social constructions, and the leadership of political or policy actors. We will be able to conclude that governance networks matter to the extent that the cases of Toronto and Vancouver demonstrate that governance network properties and dynamics primarily drive the policy variation with respect to homelessness, and not the local political-institutional context, ideas, or the leadership of policy entrepreneurs.
Theorizing policy development in new forms of governance

It is uncontroversial to suggest that the practice of government has changed in the past thirty years from a context in which the state was the dominant unitary actor setting policy, to one in which power and influence are more horizontally distributed among state and civil society agents. To be sure, this is a misrepresentation in both directions: non-state actors have always had considerable influence on government policy (Pross, 1975) and the empirical reality of horizontal governance patterns in a Canadian context is by no means universal across policy domains. There are, however, a number of policy domains in Canada characterized by linked governance not only among levels of government, but also in close policy deliberation with civil society representatives. The concepts developed by scholars to describe such governance patterns are varied—‘multi-level governance’ (Bache and Flinders, 2004; Weiss, 1998; Young and Horak, 2012), ‘partnerships’ (Pierre, 1998), ‘polycentric governance’ (Ostrom, Bish and Ostrom, 1998), and ‘network governance’ (Sorenson and Torfing, 2007)—but they all share a focus on studying the relationships between interdependent public and private actors as they work to address public policy issues.8

What are the drivers of these changes? The changes in political reality from a context in which a sovereign state governs society through top-down central planning towards one characterized more by pluricentric governance based upon the interdependence and exchange among state and non-state actors is the result of several concurrent forces: organized society, sectoralization or fragmentation of the state, and the complexity of social and political affairs. In terms of the emergence of organized society, we have witnessed an explosion in the last thirty years not only in the number and importance of collective societal actors and organizations, but also in their sophistication as it relates to organization and advocacy (Kenis and Schneider, 1991). With the expansion of the state into more aspects of society, there has been a resultant fragmentation or ‘sectoralization’

---

8 I draw upon the policy and governance network literature more substantively than the others because network scholars have devoted more attention to explicitly linking network structure to policy development.
of the state whereby bureaucracies, policies and programs are increasingly defined in functionally differentiated terms (Wildavsky, 1974).

Social and political affairs have become increasingly complex with the rise of globalization, the shifting demographics of Canadian society, the expectations of citizens on their governments, and the emergence of ‘new’ problems—like homelessness—that have multifaceted origins. To the state, the inclusion of relevant and affected groups and organizations in governance networks may help to overcome problems of societal fragmentation, requirements of technical information, and resistance to policy change (Sorensen and Torfing, 2007). Finally, the increased complexity of social and political affairs contributes to the increased importance of information to the state in order to make effective policy. Non-state actors are thus critical sources of information—from technical expertise to an understanding of causal social mechanisms—to the state as it navigates through a brave new world.

From ‘policy networks’ to ‘network governance’

The role of non-state actors in the development of policy has historically been marginalized in Canadian political science research, with the vast majority of scholars favouring explanations centering on institutional and political-economic forces that structure the decision making of elected and bureaucratic elites. Presthus (1971) and Pross (1975), however, drew attention to the various relationships between interest groups and the state. Coleman, Atkinson and Skogstad would later contribute to one school of thought within a growing international body of work on ‘policy networks’ by conceptualizing and popularizing a typology of state-society relations in Canada: pressure pluralist, concertation, corporatist, and state-directed policy networks (Coleman and Skogstad, 1990). The policy network is thus a meso-level concept to describe interest intermediation across nations and policy domains. This research strand led to the development of many typologies of policy networks (Marsh and Rhodes, 1992; van Waarden, 1992; Coleman and Skogstad, 1990; Atkinson and Coleman, 1989) as an analytical tool for examining exchange relations among state and non-state actors, with a working assumption that these patterns are consequential to policy outcomes.
The other school of policy network research conceptualized ‘networks as new governance arrangements’, distinct from state hierarchy and markets, and is associated with the work of Marin and Mayntz (1991), Kooiman (1993), and other, mainly European, scholars. To these scholars, understanding governance requires investigating the evolving relationship between state and society (Pierre and Peters, 2005). At the core of this research is the observation that there has been a shift in the role and authority of the state in the past thirty years, and that in many policy domains there is a mutual dependency among state and non-state actors such that cooperation and negotiation are emerging as a new governing norm. There is a normative dimension to much of this literature: that the state is increasingly incapable of command and control of society, that non-state actors have some responsibility for economic and social problems and their resolution, and that governance by networks are superior to state hierarchy and markets (Borzel, 1998).

The claim that networks matter to policy development has been challenged by a number of scholars. Dowding (1995) offered the most prominent critique of the utility of the policy network concept, suggesting that despite many years of inquiry all that has been provided is a non-rigorous, descriptive account of networks in political life. Further, theoretical building and hypothesis testing that links networks themselves to policy outputs or development was marginal and inconsistent. According to Dowding (1995), the links to policy outputs are not to the networks themselves, but instead the properties of network participants. Likewise, Borzel (1998) argues that the development of typologies of network types and what causes them to take the shape they do, while interesting, has little explanatory power. For Thatcher (1998), in order to develop a better theoretical understanding for why networks form, how actor behaviour is enabled and constrained within them, and how it relates to policy change, scholars must apply outside theory (e.g. rational choice, sociological institutionalism, etc.).

---

9 It is important to note, however, that this literature is not celebrating the demise of the state (like the related, but distinct new public management literature), but rather is interested in understanding its transformation as a result of increasingly complex social and political affairs, the expectations of citizens on their governments, and the emergence of "new" public problems.
Hay (1995), rather than critiquing the lack of explicit links between network structure and policy development, argues against what he views to be a structural bias to network studies. While some scholars stress the interpersonal aspects of networks (Marin and Mayntz, 1991), the dominant approach among early network scholars was structural in orientation (Marsh and Rhodes, 1992; Coleman and Skogstad, 1990; Atkinson and Coleman, 1989). The structural approach involves mapping the contours of the network structure (closed/open, tight/diffuse, clustered/non-clustered, etc.) rather than focusing on the process and practice of networking. To Hay (1995) this is problematic because networks then tend to be viewed as a static and invariant structure rather than a relational concept or a process that has emergent properties.

The respective critiques launched by Hay (1995), Dowding (1995) and Thatcher (1998) prompted a second generation of network scholarship to develop and test more explicit hypotheses connecting networks to policy. Establishing the link between policy network structure and the likelihood or type of policy change was a goal of network scholars before Dowding’s (1995) critique. Marsh and Rhodes (1992) found that tight and closed policy communities tend to produce stable policy outcomes, while loose networks are usually associated with unstable policy outcomes.\(^\text{10}\) Howlett (2002) likewise found a link between network structure and types of policy change: those sectors with non-insulated networks and a low symmetry between interest and discourse networks are more open to new actors and ideas, and thus are more likely to show changes in policy goals and programs. And Adam and Kriesi (2007) link the types of networks (concentration, fragmentation) to the type of policy change (rapid, incremental, status quo) by way of the type of interaction (conflict, bargaining, cooperation); they use brief empirical examples to suggest that the distribution of power is expected to determine the potential for change, and the type of interaction determines the form of change.

\(^\text{10}\) Likewise, Coleman, Skogstad and Atkinson (1997) investigated how the policy network, combined with the character of policy feedback, influences whether paradigm shifts occur as rapid and politically explosive (as per Hall, 1993) or as a slow and tightly managed process. They found that that corporatist policy networks are associated with an iterative, deliberative, problem-solving trajectory to paradigm change whereas state directed or pressure pluralist networks are more likely to be associated with politically explosive, rapid policy change.
Sandstrom and Carlsson (2008) link network closure and heterogeneity to the ‘performance of networks’, finding that highly dense and centralized networks enhance the process of prioritization and thus efficiency of decision making, and that a higher diversity of actors within the network (and therefore more cross-boundary interactions) enhances the process of resource mobilization and thus improves policy innovation. Network studies like these are representative of the second-generation of network research, which is characterized by an attempt to assess the performance of institutionalized governance networks across normative criteria ranging from equity, democracy, goal attainment, productivity, stability, conflict resolution, to learning capacity (for example, Head, 2008; Sorenson and Torfing, 2007; Klijn and Skelcher 2007; Benz and Papadopoulos 2006; Leach 2006). Thus the more recent agenda for research in the governance network literature has been to link ‘governance networks’ (not ‘policy networks’ broadly defined) to the effectiveness of policy, efficiency of decision making, and potential for policy innovation—and it is in this vein this dissertation aims to make a contribution.

The metagovernance framework
Yet despite all of the literature detailing the changing nature of the state and the increasing role of civil society actors in the policy process, particularly from European scholars, there has been very little empirical and theoretical contribution with respect to governance networks in the Canadian context. To many scholars in Canada there is a perception of a distinct lack of ‘pure’ network governance examples given Westminster traditions of accountability and legitimacy, as well as our liberal-democratic orientation (Hall and Soskice, 2001). The governance landscape in Canada, they argue, looks nothing like the continental European experience with institutionalized networks. The closest we get in Canada is with the Quebec model of corporatism, and thus the network governance literature does not speak to Canada (Haddow and Klaasen, 2006). Scholars who arrived at this conclusion about Canada looked primarily at the central and provincial governments and saw limited evidence of network governance, but if they had proceeded to the (often-forgotten) local or regional levels of government, they would have found an abundance of new and complex multi-level and network governance arrangements across
many policy sectors, including immigrant settlement, health, economic development, neighbor revitalization, urban Aboriginals, and homelessness, where government and civil society actors jointly engage in institutionalized policy planning and decision making (Andrew and Doroleux, 2010; Horak, 2010; Bradford, 2012; Wolfe, 2009; Doberstein, 2013, 2011).

The claims by some scholars of lack of ‘pure’ network governance in Canada obscures the fact that no multi-level and network governance arrangements exist in a vacuum, separated from liberal democratic institutions. Governance networks with substantive public decision making power in Canada (and elsewhere) are never very far from government and the traditional Westminster systems of accountability and legitimacy. That is, they do not simply appear fully formed and take over the policymaking tasks of elected officials and bureaucratic actors. In fact, their mandate, structure, membership, and accountability mechanisms are always managed and legitimized by elected officials or public servants. The concept of ‘metagovernance’ captures the relationship and tension between the willingness of the state to engage with civil society on policy development and implementation, while maintaining some degree of control over the activity of such governance networks to be consistent with traditional notions of democratic accountability (Jessop, 1997; Heritier and Rhodes, 2011; Sorenson and Torfing, 2007). And since the metagovernance concept captures how governance networks are designed and evolve, it follows that we expect these features to be part of the explanation for how governance networks matter to policy development.

The scholars in Canada who are attentive to such less hierarchical and more collaborative governance arrangements at the local level have typically analysed their cases through the multi-level governance (MLG) framework (see for example, Horak and Young, 2012; Young and Leuprecht, 2006; Peters, 2012), and not as cases of ‘network governance’ with metagovernance dimensions—a theoretical lens which I contend would allow them to make some more concrete claims about when and why these new forms of governance matter to policy development, which is the central critique of the multi-level governance literature (Peters and Pierre, 2004). Yet there are instructive lessons from Canadian scholarship on
multi-level governance that are relevant to the operationalization of the metagovernance concept in relation to governance networks.

Multi-level governance research in Canada represents an outgrowth of federalism and intergovernmental relations literature, providing an important correction to a research agenda that has tended to privilege the intergovernmental relations between the federal and provincial governments, largely ignoring municipal governments. Most of the cases studied in the collaborative project ‘Multi-level Governance and Public Policy in Canadian Municipalities’ (2005-2012), led by Robert Young, document the various methods by which the federal government has injected itself into municipal affairs on issues like immigrant settlement, emergency preparedness, and urban Aboriginal governance. While there is some attention given to the role of civil society actors in the policy process, the principal finding of the research agenda is that the institutional structure and inclusivity of multi-level governance in Canadian cities is quite variable, depending on issue and jurisdiction (Horak, 2012).

Despite the wide variation the researchers discovered, a common element in many of the cases is that multi-level governance institutions in Canada, while premised on more horizontal relations and collaborative planning by multiple levels of government and civil society actors, tend to remain rather hierarchical in practice, depending on which level of government provided the most significant resources (Horak, 2012). For example, Leo (2009) examines immigrant settlement in Vancouver, and similarly finds that the ideological proclivities of key government actors can strongly influence the design of multi-level, collaborative governance mechanisms, often starving them of their purported benefits. Magnusson and Kataoka (2009) studied the same case as Leo (2009) and likewise concluded that while it is often marketed as multi-level and collaborative, immigrant settlement policymaking in BC is mostly siloed, hierarchical and led by senior governments.

Not all Canadian scholarship on multi-level governance comes to such a dispirited conclusion, however. Bradford (2004) argues that since many urban policy issues transcend jurisdictional compartments, they require place-sensitive, holistic approaches
that are delivered through networked relations of governments and civil society. Bradford (2008) offers the example of Urban Development Agreements (UDA) in Canada as promising examples of multi-level urban governance that aims to tackle complex policy problems. Gertler and Wolfe (2004) examine the relationship between institutional structures at multiple levels of governance influence the type and scope of local action with respect to regional foresight exercises in several North American cities. While they do not universally applaud instances of multi-level, collaborative-type governance in Canada, the authors find an encouraging example in Ottawa of “institutions of collaboration” that allow for a meaningful exchange among state and non-state actors. 11

Most of the above scholarship is conducted within the multi-level governance framework, yet the findings from their cases powerfully reinforce the importance of the related, but distinct, theoretical concept of metagovernance. Metagovernance emphasizes that governance institutions or networks do not exist in a vacuum, and even while they may represent a shift from traditional hierarchical structures, they are always attached to and shaped by the state. Whereas the multi-level governance framework represents an analytical framework to guide descriptive inquiry, the metagovernance concept has explanatory ambitions—specifically, to understand and theorize how state management of the governance of complex policy files shapes its performance. This study therefore leverages the key findings from the extensive research on multi-level governance in Canadian municipalities to emphasize the importance of metagovernance as an explanatory concept with respect to governance network performance and policy outputs. The metagovernance concept captures similar dimensions of inquiry as the multi-level governance framework, but offers clearer theoretical direction to formulate and test hypotheses with respect to how the design and structure of governance networks shapes its policy outputs—a key theoretical goal of this dissertation.

**Governance networks as ‘deliberative systems’**

11 Katherine Graham and Susan Phillips (1998) also presented an edited volume of participatory urban governance in Canada, concluding that substantive citizen engagement in policymaking can make a policy difference. Who is invited to participate and how it is structured are critical variables in producing positive and effective participatory processes.
Recall from the brief review of the network governance literature that the central critique of the theoretical and empirical contributions to date is that understanding precisely how networks matter to policy remains elusive, and one of the chief reasons is inadequate theorization (and testing) of *why* network governance may matter to policy development. Beyond predicting when policy change is more likely (for example, Howlett, 2002), scholars who have studied network governance have generated few hypotheses about the relationship between governance networks and dimensions of policy, like innovation and coordination. Part of the problem is that governance network scholars are often too singularly focused on the structure of the network which, while important, has often ignored what actually goes on inside of governance networks: deliberations, exchanges, and learning among disparate policy actors—*in other words, agency-driven* explanations for why network governance shapes policy. As such, governance network scholars need to draw upon the contributions of contemporary deliberative democracy theory, a call echoed by leading deliberative democracy theorists eager to operationalize their theoretical concepts in sites of network governance (Dryzek, 2010).

Deliberative models of democracy and governance, like the network governance literature, problematize the aggregation of citizen interests and preferences in the traditional liberal model of representative democracy, suggesting that the atomization of citizenship and preferences reinforces conflict in the polity, a battleground that systematically privileges some actors over others, resulting in patterns of unjust policy (Chambers, 2003; Young, 2000; Mansbridge, 1993). There are several ideals within the deliberative model likewise relevant to network governance research, chief among them are principles of *inclusion*—decisions are only legitimate if all those affected by it are included in consultation and decision making—and substantive *political equality*—that all those affected should have equal right and effective opportunity to influence the decision.

Deliberative democracy theorist Iris Marion Young (2000) argued that in deliberative arenas (of which governance networks are an example), the activity becomes not about expressing interests or preferences, but about transforming them through learning or
revealing ignorance. Likewise, proponents of citizen involvement in the development of policy argue that, if representative democracy were supplemented with public deliberation, individuals might be more likely to revise their opinions in the light of discussion with others (Chambers, 2003). For scholars like Young (2000), the deliberative model also holds the promise of creating more just policy decisions and outcomes for historically marginalized groups, whose economical marginalization contributes to their political marginalization under representative models of democracy—thus making this normative theoretical model particularly appropriate to explore in an examination of homelessness governance networks. Scholars like Fung and Wright (2003) likewise claim that for issues that involve complex problems associated with poverty, such ‘empowered participatory governance’, whereby community and civil society groups share a role in decision making, can result in a more responsive, fair and innovative policy (see also Fung, 2006).

Second generation governance network scholars make strikingly similar claims to those made by deliberative democracy theorists, but do not engage deeply with their various concepts of persuasion, learning, and trust building in deliberative sites—which I argue is key to understanding when and why governance networks matter to policy. To network governance scholars, governments typically create or harness governance networks as vehicles to pool resources, resolve knowledge deficiencies, and improve the implementation of programs and services (Agranoff, 2006). Governance networks are seen as advantageous in some policy domains because they bring together a wide range of expertise, knowledge and resources that not only enables new thinking about complex issues, but also lends itself to more successful implementation of policy (Head, 2008). The inclusion of civil society actors, who are generally more connected to the issues on the ground than public servants, offers a diversity of lived experience and therefore information, interpretations, priorities and perspectives about what works and is worthwhile in terms of policy (Head, 2008; Edelenbos and Klijn, 2006). These are important normative claims to test from network governance scholarship, and by establishing connections to the deliberative democracy literature we can better theorize when and why governance networks matter to policy development, test hypotheses with comparative empirical research, and generate new theoretical claims about the causal
mechanisms in operation that link networks to policy.

Figure 2.1 below presents the superimposition of theoretical frameworks introduced above and as applied in the dissertation to guide the selection of variables, development of concepts, and the construction of hypotheses (introduced in the next section). Metagovernance is the macro-level framework that sets the context under which governance networks are designed and evolve. While the metagovernance concept captures the multi-level governance dimensions of complex policy files like homelessness, it marks an analytical transition towards specifying the way in which the state may provide some decision making autonomy to governance networks, while maintaining a ‘shadow of hierarchy’ to ensure traditional mechanisms of accountability and democratic legitimacy are retained. Embedded in the overarching metagovernance framework is network governance theory, which serves as the principal guiding theoretical lens for the dissertation, the most important of which is to conceptualize networks both in terms of structural and relational (agency) dimensions as key determinants of policy development. Finally, embedded within network governance theory is deliberative democracy theory, serving as a guide to the micro-level dimensions of network activity. Deliberative democracy theory helps address a key weakness in network governance theory: the under-conceptualization and measurement of the ‘practice’ of governance network activity, bringing concepts of learning, persuasion, brokerage among actors, and trust-building. Networks are fundamentally about people and their relationships, and thus need to be central to the theoretical model.
Figure 2.1: Embedded theoretical frameworks guiding the development of concepts and hypotheses.

What if governance networks do not matter?

Even if we allow in principle that governance networks may matter to some dimensions of policy development and implementation, they will not explain everything about the policy process; not only is the political world is too complex to make such a claim, but we also must acknowledge that governance networks are embedded within a larger political and economic context—and of course one in which elected officials outside of governance networks make many important public policy decisions. Thus while we are interested in testing when and why governance networks may matter to policy, we must also be attentive to theoretical arguments in the broader political science and public policy literatures that make claims that other factors like formal institutions and divisions of powers, the social construction of ideas, and the influence of policy entrepreneurs exert a much more powerful influence on the development and implementation of policy than do governance networks (where present).
The consideration of alternative explanations is necessary to confirm or reject theory and hypotheses of governance networks, but this should not be interpreted as a zero-sum, either-or proposition. The dissertation seeks to identify relative causal influence of governance networks to explain policy development in various contexts and across time periods. The following paragraphs introduce relevant competing explanations for the development of policy. The goal is to explicitly track these features in the homelessness policy domain to be clear on precisely how they influence policy development, and to isolate the effect of governance networks on policy while acknowledging the larger policy making dynamics.

*Formal institutions and the division of powers*

That political institutions matter to the policy process is widely held position by comparative political scientists (Weaver and Rockman, 1993; Hall and Taylor, 1993). The dominant theoretical lens through which most Canadian political scientists have historically viewed politics and policy development in Canada is institutional, and specifically federalism (Smiley, 1976, Simeon, 1972, McRoberts, 1993, Watts, 1996). Such scholars would certainly acknowledge that developments in any policy area are contingent on a number of factors, of which federalism is only one, “though it may be the most important” (Bakvis and Skogstad, 2008: 13). Federalism scholars have attached considerable explanatory weight to how the division of powers within the state affects public policy development, whether decentralization produces healthy competition among governments (Young, 2003) or a less positive ‘race-to the bottom’ (Harrison, 2005) depends on the theoretical perspective and the nature of the policy and politics involved. The effect of federalism on public policy, according to McRoberts (1993), is also likely to depend on the prevailing model of federalism: unilateralism, competitive or collaborative.

The attention towards how authority is divided between the central and provincial governments and their patterns of conflict or cooperation has tended, however, to exclude both the role of local governments and civil society groups in policy development, thus painting an incomplete portrait. Horak and Young (2012), Leo and Enns, (2009), Young and Leuprecht (2006) and Bradford (2003, 2004) working in a multi-level governance framework make important contributions that correct for the federal-provincial relations
bias of the federalism literature. However, urban governance is not best understood by taking theories of the nation-state and applying them on a smaller scale; local governments are distinct political entities whose dynamics are shaped by their constitutional constraints and political traditions (Graham et al., 1998).

The relationship among municipal governments, as well as with senior levels of government, is widely acknowledged to be consequential to the governance of urban policy matters (Young and Leuprecht, 2006; Graham et al., 1998). With respect to urban governance, the relationship between adjacent municipalities is a critical piece of the discussion, as evidenced by the extensive literature on metropolitan governance and the debates surrounding fragmentation versus amalgamation (Sanction, 2005). For example, whether an urban area is characterized by a unitary government or a two-tiered system—and how decision making is structured in both—is theorized to influence how issues arise on the agenda and how benefits and costs of policy are distributed (Sancton, 2001). For Winnipeg and Toronto, which were amalgamated with their inner suburban cities, it becomes clear that municipal politics became dominated by suburban interests given the distribution of seats on the amalgamated councils (Sancton, 2001). Finally, the municipal-provincial and municipal-federal government relationships powerfully influence local policy priorities, given the financial and regulatory leverage the senior level governments possess over municipal government (Bradford, 2008; 2003).

**Social construction of ideas**

Ideational theoretical frameworks offer a somewhat less tangible, though nonetheless powerful, explanation for policy development. To ideational theorists, ideas play a critical role in understanding the policy process, as they are the foundation upon which policy rests. For Goldstein and Keohane (1993) ideas provide the roadmaps for actors trying to interpret the complexity of the political world. Lindvall (2009) likewise claims that ideas are the intellectual tools that decision makers use to predict the effects of the policy alternatives they consider. Ideas can both create change and reinforce the status quo; Blyth (2001) reminds us that just as ideas can be used as weapons to reconstruct existing
arrangements, they can be used as cognitive locks contributing to policy stability, as they are embedded in institutions.

Ideational theories are not helpful in the abstract; the manner in which we apply such theories is specific to the problem under examination. Thus the dominant and counter-veiling ideas that are potentially relevant to the domain of homelessness must be identified. What are citizen expectations of local government regarding homelessness, housing, and redistribution? What are the ‘appropriate’ methods of intervention? Is homelessness conceived as a public or private problem? Is there a unique social construction of homelessness in the locality, and how does this relate to who is labeled as ‘deserving’ of benefits (Wright et al., 1998)? How much homelessness—and what kinds (street, shelter, couch-surfing)—is accepted as a normal part of modern life? The answers to such questions indicate the prevailing ideas in a given political context, which may help explain how governments respond (or do not) to homelessness issues and the interventions deemed within the scope of appropriateness.

*Leadership and policy entrepreneurs*

Institutions and ideas offer a potentially compelling competing explanation to governance networks as it relates to homelessness policy development, but such theoretical frameworks are missing a critically important component: actors. ‘Structures’ themselves do not implement anything, exercise power, or make decisions; actors do, and this fact needs to be conceptualized. Similarly, ideas do not achieve political prominence on their own but must be championed by carriers or entrepreneurs, individuals or groups capable of persuading others to reconsider the ways they think (Berman, 2001). Mintrom and Vergari (1996) theorize the importance of policy entrepreneurs—policy actors who promote ideas—as key factors at the micro level who push new ideas and marshal coalitions of actors to change policy.

Public policy scholars like Doern (as articulated by Pal, 2010) likewise put great emphasis on political actors (namely elected officials) as the key explanatory factor with respect to policy on the ‘big issues’. Scholars in this vein direct our attention to the way
policy actors (state and non-state) package their ideas, build coalitions in support of those ideas, and use political opportunities and institutions to implement their policy preferences. As such, we must be careful to isolate the effect that influential political or civic actors and organizations have on homelessness policy development. For example, mayors can be particularly influential if the issue is a personal priority, certain civil society actors can be especially effective in mobilizing coalitions to lobby for specific policies, and civic entrepreneurs can build bridges across disparate groups to advance policy change. For Wolfe and Nelles (2008), civic entrepreneurs can emerge from any sector of society (government, civil society, business, academia), and are characterized by visionary leadership, charismatic personalities, and a commitment to innovative governance solutions.

**Theoretical contributions**

This dissertation does not seek to construct or test a general theory of the policy process. Instead, the contribution of the dissertation is to test the influence of an institutional configuration—an institutionalized governance network—on homelessness policy development for the purpose of building and refining middle range theoretical claims with respect to governance networks. The preceding map of the literature sets up the key elements to investigate when explaining homelessness policy development in Toronto and Vancouver from 1995-2012.

The argument I develop is that the properties and dynamics of homelessness governance networks in Toronto and Vancouver drive key features of policy development left unexplained by the most prominent theoretical constructs in the political science and public policy bodies of literature. And to the extent that governance networks matter to policy development, this study will contemplate and present plausible causal mechanisms that link governance networks to policy, responding to a key shortcoming of the public policy literature, which according to Howlett and Ramesh (2010) “can focus too much on policy outputs, saying very little about the policy processes that led to the creation of those outputs, which leaves causal pathways under-specified” (10).
With the theoretical framework of metagovernance (macro), network governance (meso) and deliberative democracy concepts (micro) outlined—as well as potential rival theory-based explanations—the next section proceeds by setting out the concepts and measures for the dependent and independent variables under investigation, as well as the hypotheses to be tested.

**Dependent variable**
To test claims that governance networks matter to policy development—the dependent variable—we must credibly link governance network activities to dimensions of policy that are not only consequential in terms an effective response to homelessness, but also features of policy framework that are relevant to those in the policy community. The three dimensions of policy conceptualized and analyzed in this study are policy innovation, policy sensitivity (to vulnerable subpopulations), and policy and program coordination, selected on the basis of their linkages to an effective policy response in this domain. That is, innovative approaches, sensitive to the unique needs of homeless subpopulations and coordinated across the sector, will most effectively reduce the extent and severity of homelessness (Gaetz, 2010; Hulchanski, 2002).

*Policy innovation* is defined as a willingness for a jurisdiction to experiment and pilot-test policies imported from other jurisdictions, to innovate on its own, or otherwise try unconventional approaches. Funding more shelter spaces, coordinating food banks and clean socks programs are not ‘innovative’, while homeless outreach pilot projects, safe-injection sites, and Homeless Emergency Action Teams (HEAT) are ‘innovative’ because they break from the conventional response by government and civil society, shifting from ‘managing’ homelessness to reducing it. Policy innovations across the two cities under investigation will be identified and linked to the governance networks, provided they meet one of the following criteria: the governance network introduced new policy at the local level; drove policy innovation at a senior government level; funded innovative homeless programs; or initiated new ways of governance and organizing the sector.

---

12 There are certainly other dimensions of policy that could be examined, ranging from macro-level dimensions like total homelessness expenditures, to more narrow ones like the number of outreach workers per capita, but innovation, sensitivity and coordination collectively capture the most relevant dimensions in the homelessness policy community.
Policy innovations not linked to the governance network—meaning introduced by a premier, mayor or bureaucracy—will also be identified to ensure that we have a comprehensive picture of homelessness policy activity during the period under investigation.

Policy sensitivity is defined as policies or programs that take into account the unique needs of the groups within homeless population who are among the most vulnerable and marginalized, including Aboriginals, women, youth and LGBT individuals. These subpopulations are unique because they often suffer from discrimination in society and on the streets, and are significantly less likely to access services that are not sensitive (or worse, are dismissive) to their needs (NAEH, 2009; Ward Report, 2008). Urban homelessness affects all ethnic groups, but its occurrence is disproportionate among Aboriginals in Canada. Aboriginal stakeholders insist that it is different being Aboriginal and homeless, for several reasons beyond severity of low-income and addiction levels, including: that they experience considerably more discrimination, traditional cultural support being important to them, and non-Aboriginal agencies tend to provide services that lack real meaning to homeless Aboriginals (Ward Report, 2008). As such, policy sensitivity to this particular group is viewed as essential to an effective response to homelessness in Canadian cities (Ward Report, 2008; Anderson, 2003).

Activists and service providers for women, youth and LGBT individuals on the street echo this argument that policy needs to be mindful of the unique needs of the most vulnerable. As such, ‘policy sensitive to the unique needs of most vulnerable’ will be identified from each governance network if it meets one of the following criteria: policies and programs explicitly linked one of these four groups, or governance processes that include the voices of one of these four groups. Policy sensitivity originating from outside of network governance institutions will be likewise presented.

Policy and program coordination is defined as a policy framework that covers the spectrum of needs of the target population—in a service and geographic sense—as well

---

13 Recall that Aboriginal Canadians constitute a strikingly disproportionate share of the homeless population in both Metro Vancouver and Toronto—32% and 15%, respectively—despite constituting only 2% and 0.5% of their total populations (GVHC, 2011; CTSNA, 2009).
as policies that work in a cohesive fashion (i.e. do not work at cross purposes). An example of two policies working at cross-purposes would be (i) an aggressive outreach program to link street homeless persons to services and (ii) a bylaw that criminalizes sleeping in public squares and parks. They work at cross-purposes because the bylaw will drive street homeless into the shadows (places they will not be discovered) and thus further away from accessing services. Coordination is therefore characterized by the major players in government and the community working in concert and leveraging relationships to generate effective responses to homelessness. Policy and program coordination will be identified in each governance network if it meets one of the following criteria: policy coordination (are policies cohesive?), program coordination (does the package of services make sense?), or if strategic planning is integrated across the region and sector.

The dependent variable in this study—policy outputs—therefore has three dimensions that serve to capture an effective response to homelessness: policy innovation, policy sensitivity (to vulnerable subgroups) and policy coordination. The independent variable of theoretical interest—network governance—is introduced below, followed by the hypotheses to be tested in the study.

**Independent variable (theoretical)**

Demonstrating the extent to which network governance properties and dynamics drive policy innovation, sensitivity or coordination is the principal task of this study. Through controlled comparison of the six governance networks, we can identify the extent to which the governance network, its characteristics, and dynamics are responsible for the most effective policy responses. The sample of governance networks under investigation exhibit variation in theoretically relevant ways that are key to isolating the effect of governance network properties and activities on policy: the degree of institutionalization and the degree of inclusiveness of the governance network.
Network institutionalization

A key structural feature of a governance network is its degree of institutionalization, which captures not only its role in the policy process, but how frequently it meets and how integrated it is with relevant players in the policy community. Theory suggests that a highly institutionalized network is more likely to be consequential to policy development than a weakly institutionalized one (Sorsenson and Torfing, 2007). Five criteria are advanced to establish the degree of institutionalization of a governance network, according to whether it has: (i) a decision making function, (ii) a strategic planning function, (iii) regular meeting intervals (defined as six times per year), (iv) membership from all levels of government, and (v) elected official leadership.

Table 2.1 presents the six governance networks in ranked order according to the degree of institutionalization. VAN$_{\text{main}}$ is the most institutionalized, since it meets regularly with membership from all levels of government and importantly, has real decision making functions in addition to strategic planning. By contrast, TO$_{\text{main}}$ is the least institutionalized, with only a strategic planning function, and suffers from limited government membership, decision making autonomy, and regular meeting intervals. TO$_{\text{main}}$, in contrast to all of the other networks, is more of a consultative governance network, the activities of which are heavily constrained by the City of Toronto bureaucracy. All of the networks under investigation have at least one bureaucratic staff member to support the administrative demands of governance.

Table 2.1: The six governance networks on the degree of institutionalization.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NETWORK</th>
<th>Decision making function</th>
<th>Strategic planning function</th>
<th>Regular meetings (6 times/year)</th>
<th>Membership from all levels of government</th>
<th>Elected official leadership</th>
<th>Institutionalization Ranking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>VAN$_{\text{main}}$</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>highest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VAN$_{\text{Ab}}$</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>high</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TO$_{\text{Ab}}$</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>high</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TO$_{\text{emerg}}$</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VAN$_{\text{emerg}}$</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TO$_{\text{main}}$</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>lowest</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Network inclusiveness

The second key feature of a governance network is its degree of inclusiveness of diverse actors and organizations, government and civil society, capturing an essential relational (agency) aspect of governance. A key claim in the network governance literature is that networks provide an institutionalized arena for diverse perspectives to share knowledge, experiences, and deliberate over policy solutions (Dryzek, 2007). As such, differentiating the six governance networks in the study according to the size and inclusivity of their membership is an important feature to measure. The size of the network matters because the more relevant government and civil society players at the table, the more likely the governance network is tapped into all of the moving pieces of the policy domain. To generate a measure of network size and inclusivity, I have taken a sample of all of the governance network gatherings in 2012\(^4\), and using meeting minutes attendance records (to ascertain active members), I have counted and averaged the network membership over the year and coded members into seven organizational categories: government, service provider, other networks, women, Aboriginal, youth, and LGBT. Figure 2.2 shows there is a clear correlation between the size of the network and its diversity. VAN\(_{\text{main}}\) is the largest and most diverse governance network with nearly fourty active members, followed by VAN\(_{\text{emerg}}\) and TO\(_{\text{emerg}}\), whereas TO\(_{\text{main}}\) and TO\(_{\text{Ab}}\) are smaller and less diverse governance networks, with fifteen and eight active members, respectively.

\(^{14}\) The exception is the TO\(_{\text{emerg}}\), which ceased to exist in 2006, so that year is used for the TO\(_{\text{emerg}}\).
Hypotheses

The key structural and relational features of governance networks, institutionalization and inclusivity respectively, can be brought together on a two-dimensional axis to generate the specific hypotheses for the study, first in the abstract and then with the six governance networks under investigation. Figure 2.3 places inclusivity on the x-axis and institutionalization on the y-axis, and specifies in which quadrants we expect to see high policy innovation, sensitivity, and coordination. The first hypothesis is that more institutionalized and more inclusive governance networks will generate or contribute to more innovative policy. We expect this because if the governance network is more inclusive, diverse perspectives and identification of emerging trends will be advanced, and if it is more institutionalized, it will be more integrated into decision structures that can implement innovative policies and programs.\textsuperscript{15} The second hypothesis is that more

\textsuperscript{15} On the other hand, however, we must be mindful that there is also the possibility that really high institutionalization could also lead to bureaucratization, lack of imagination and risk aversion.
inclusive governance networks will generate or contribute to more sensitive policy or programs targeted to vulnerable sub-populations. We expect this to occur because if representatives of the vulnerable sub-populations are active members of the governance network, irrespective of institutionalization, their issues will at the very least be given some attention, more so than if they were absent from the governance network. The third hypothesis is that more institutionalized governance networks will generate or contribute to more coordinated policy and programs. We expect this to occur because, irrespective of inclusivity, governance networks that are connected to key sites of decision making, integrated with other networks, and are relatively active should be able to smooth over service gaps and coordinate the homelessness response more effectively.

Figure 2.3: Hypothesized linkages between governance network institutionalization and inclusivity and policy dimensions of interest.

From the analysis above, we can put the six governance networks on a matrix of both institutionalization and inclusivity. This is represented in Figure 2.4, and helps us generate specific hypotheses for testing within and across the cases.
Mapping the six governance networks according to their degree of institutionalization and inclusivity allows us to put forward very specific (and thus falsifiable) hypotheses regarding their relationship to policy innovation, sensitivity, and coordination. As such, the three key hypotheses under investigation in this section are the following:

More institutionalized and more inclusive networks will generate or contribute to more innovative policy:

- $\text{VAN}_{\text{main}} > \text{TO}_{\text{main}}$
- $\text{VAN}_{\text{Ab}} > \text{TO}_{\text{Ab}}$
- $\text{TO}_{\text{emerg}} > \text{VAN}_{\text{emerg}}$
More inclusive networks will generate or contribute to more sensitive policy or programs targeted to vulnerable sub-populations:
\[ VAN_{\text{main}} > TO_{\text{main}} \]
\[ VAN_{\text{Ab}} > TO_{\text{Ab}} \]
\[ VAN_{\text{emerg}} > TO_{\text{emerg}} \]

More institutionalized networks will generate or contribute to more coordinated policy and programs:
\[ VAN_{\text{main}} > TO_{\text{main}} \]
\[ VAN_{\text{Ab}} = TO_{\text{Ab}} \]
\[ TO_{\text{emerg}} > VAN_{\text{emerg}} \]

**Alternative hypotheses**
While there is some evidence in the literature that governance networks matter to policy development, they will not, and cannot, provide the complete explanation for homelessness policy development in Toronto and Vancouver during the period under investigation—political life and the policy process are far too complex. The competing explanations for homelessness policy development across the dimensions studied in this dissertation are political-administrative institutions, ideational forces, and political and civic leadership; the hypotheses for each are briefly outlined below.

Federalism and comparative urban governance research finds that *political-administrative institutions* can matter greatly to policy development (Young, 2003; Harrison, 2005; Brunet-Jailly, 2011; Verma, 2007; Bradford, 2002). Important institutional questions include: does one provincial ministry or city department possess the critical levers of power or is it shared among several (Gurwitt, 1999)? How are regional government politics structured? How are local politicians elected (by wards or at-large)? Institutional scholars would argue that these features structure the sites of decision making, powerfully influencing the resultant policy outputs.
Research into the effects of ideas on policy development focuses on how ideas structure that which is possible and desirable with respect to policy in the local context. Is homelessness viewed as predominantly a private failure or public problem? How much homelessness—and what kinds (street, shelter, couch-surfing)—is accepted as a normal part of modern life? Blyth (2001) reminds us that just as ideas can be used as cognitive locks contributing to policy stability when they become embedded in institutions, they can likewise by used as weapons to reconstruct existing arrangements, driving policy innovation and change.

Research focused on political and civic leadership is concerned with agency in the policy process: to isolate the effect that influential political or civic actors and organizations have on policy development. Was a mayor particularly influential in initiating, blocking or repealing a specific policy (Hemphill et al., 2006)? Did one organization (government or civic society)—a policy entrepreneur—provide virtually all of resources or direction to a specific policy initiative (Schneider and Teske, 1992)? If so, the policy development did not occur primarily through governance networks.

**Conclusion**
This chapter introduced the theoretical framework for this study, drawing upon network governance, metagovernance and deliberative democracy concepts to help guide the investigation for how governance networks may matter to policy development and implementation. The dependent variable was specified, and split into three dimensions of particular importance to effective homelessness policy: policy innovation, sensitivity (to vulnerable subpopulations), and coordination. The independent variable of theoretical interest—governance network structure—was specified and explicit hypotheses were generated on the basis of two dimensions of the independent variable: institutionalization and inclusiveness. In recognition of the major competing explanations for policy development, alternative hypotheses were generated, based on political-administrative institutions, ideational-political cultural forces, and political and civic leadership variables. With the theoretical framework in place, the next chapter begins the
comparative empirical story of homelessness policy development in Toronto and Vancouver, taking us back to 1995.
Chapter 3: Comparative Historical Policy Context, 1995-2012

Introduction
This chapter represents the first empirical piece of the study by tracing the historical policy development and institutional context of homelessness in the period prior to the formation of the governance networks, to provide the baseline from which to measure policy innovations and other policy dimensions of interest. The chapter begins by presenting the pre-governance network policy and institutional context in Toronto and Vancouver in 1995, highlighting key similarities and differences. Following that, policy and institutional changes from 1995-2012 are presented, drawing out the most important policy and programmatic changes in each city over the period of study. This chapter thus presents the evolving policy context in Toronto and Vancouver that provides the empirical foundation for the three subsequent chapters that explicitly link governance networks to policy development.

Establishing a baseline: pre-governance network policy context, 1995
In order to test the relationship between governance networks and policy development, we need to track the policy development and implementation patterns in Vancouver and Toronto over the lifetime of the governance networks—as early as 1996 up until present day—and separate out that for which the governance network is responsible and that for which it is not. But first, a baseline needs to be established in each city in policy terms. That is, what was the pre-governance networks policy context in each of the cities? In Vancouver and Toronto, we have the benefit of drawing upon systematically gathered data and policy documents that paint a comprehensive picture of the policy and service framework in the mid-1990s.

Important to understand first is the broader context of homelessness in Canada during the 1990s, which was characterized by fiscal austerity at the federal government and a corresponding reaction by the provinces, but also growing poverty and rising housing
costs. The Golden Report\textsuperscript{16} in Toronto, which also surveyed the situations in other Canadian cities including Vancouver, identified trends across Canadian cities with respect to homelessness, including heightened emergency shelter needs in winter months. It also demonstrated that the demographics of those using shelters was changing from a preponderance of single adult males to increasing numbers of youth and Aboriginals. All cities were affected by the federal government withdrawal from the provision of affordable housing in the mid-1990s—which is cited widely as the primary reason for homelessness growth in Canadian cities—as well as the deinstitutionalization movement in mental health and the lack of support services in community (Golden Report, 1999).

Table 3.1 below provides homeless shelter and service data for Vancouver and Toronto to capture the policy and service context in the mid-1990s prior to the formation of the six governance networks. The general picture in both cities in the 1990s is similarly stark: a concentration of services in the downtown core, an emergency bias in services, a lack of coordination of services, and little to no data of the homeless population in order to engage in strategic planning. In both cases it is a story of a disjointed and incrementally expanding patchwork of services and programs with no mechanisms to coordinate funding from different sources.

There are, however some important differences to note and to track as we proceed to the subsequent period of analysis. In Vancouver, there were not many emergency shelter beds, and those that existed were primarily in the downtown core of the City of Vancouver. This pattern was true more generally in terms of homelessness services, with the City of Vancouver as the only active municipality in the Metro Vancouver region on this issue. Though there are no hard data from that time, homelessness in the City of Vancouver exploded in the 1990s in a very visible manner, concentrated in the Downtown Eastside. Toronto, by contrast, had many more emergency shelter spaces in the 1990s than Vancouver, at 4,000 on any given night, likely due to the inclement weather conditions in Toronto compared to Vancouver. Toronto had an incredibly long

\textsuperscript{16} In Toronto, Mayor Mel Lastman in 1998 commissioned a Homelessness Action Task Force chaired by Dr. Anne Golden (Golden Report), which in addition to presenting hundreds of policy recommendations, was a comprehensive research document on the state of homelessness and policy in Toronto and Canada in the mid-1990s period.
waitlist for social housing, with 100,000 people on the centralized waitlist for rent-g geared-to-income units.

Table 3.1: Shelter and service data for Vancouver and Toronto, pre-networks period (1995)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Metro Vancouver (1.83M)</th>
<th>Metro Toronto (2.39M)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Year-round shelter beds</td>
<td>528 (85% in City of Vancouver)</td>
<td>4,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supportive housing units</td>
<td>2,200 (74% in CoV)</td>
<td>5,964</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social housing units</td>
<td>40,000</td>
<td>74,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social housing waitlist</td>
<td>9,000</td>
<td>100,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drop-in centres</td>
<td>24 (71% in CoV)</td>
<td>27 (66% in TO East End)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of street homeless persons</td>
<td>No data</td>
<td>No data</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Institutional context, 1995

Homelessness policy not only cuts across multiple levels of government, but also within levels of government, given that homelessness as an issue involves a complex interplay among social, economic and political factors (O’Reilly Fleming, 1993; Blau, 1992). Homelessness has social assistance, mental health, drug policy, affordable housing, criminal justice and victimization, and neighbourhood dimensions, which makes the issue relevant to all levels of government in Canada, and within many government departments and ministries. While the Constitution Act, 1982 fails to provide a clear demarcation of legal jurisdiction regarding homelessness, many of the constituent elements of the issue are divided among the federal and provincial (and by extension, local) governments. For example, the federal government possesses unilateral power to legislate on criminal activity and drug policy, the provincial governments legislate on social assistance and mental health policy, and the local governments legislate the neighbourhood dimensions of homelessness, like zoning and provision of housing, shelter and community services. The inter-related nature of many of the constituent elements of the homelessness issue makes it such that the various governments have many long-established policy and fiscal relationships. The relevant federal, provincial and local government institutional and policy context in Vancouver and Toronto in 1995 is introduced in the paragraphs below.
The most significant dimensions of policy derived from the federal government relate to affordable housing and homelessness funding programs. In terms of affordable housing, the federal government took an increasingly active role in its provision in the post-war period, ramping up what was a small program in 1964 to the National Housing Act (NHA) that would produce 200,000 units in 10 years (Hulchanski, 2002). Amendments in 1973 to the NHA introduced a role for the non-profit sector as the principal vehicle through which affordable housing stock was (and continues to be) provided. Provinces began to play a role in housing in the 1970s, first with respect to delivery and management, but increasingly on policy as well (Carter and Polevychok, 2004). The broad interventionist strategies of the 1960s and 70s were challenged, however, in the 1980s, which marked the beginning of a period of transition in the federal and provincial role in affordable housing policy that would result in a dramatic policy retreat by the mid 1990s.

Budget deficits and rising concerns over national debt in the 1980s, coupled with increased attention to neoliberal ideas surrounding the role of government, resulted in a gradually reduced federal role in affordable housing provision (Carter, 1997). The federal retreat was complete in 1993 when the Paul Martin Liberal budget withdrew funding for all new social housing development (with a few exceptions for women fleeing violence and on-reserve housing). The policy change was dramatic: from an annual provision of 25,000 new social housing units in 1983 to zero in 1993 (Hulchanski, 2002). The time period of analysis for this study begins in 1995—a context of full federal retreat from social housing provision and a broader context of less interventionist government.

Despite co-existing in a similar federal policy context with respect to affordable housing and homelessness funding programs, the governments of Ontario and British Columbia in fact demonstrate rather different institutional and policy approaches to the issue of homelessness over time. The Government of Ontario’s policy response to housing and homelessness in the mid 1990s can best be described as laissez-faire. The role of government in addressing these matters was downplayed and the private market privileged—all new social housing was canceled by the Harris Conservatives in 1995,
including projects that were already under construction (Hackworth and Moriah, 2006). The Tenant Protection Act was modified heavily in favour of landlords, some scholars argue, in 1998 as a purported mechanism to stimulate new rental construction (Shapcott, 2001). Additionally, the Harris government, immediately upon taking office, reduced social assistance rates by 21.6%, including the portion of social assistance provided for housing. The Harris Conservatives believed that with some tax incentives and regulatory changes, the private market would most efficiently provide housing to satisfy all market demand (Hackworth and Moriah, 2006). This did not materialize, since it does not take account loss of rental housing due to demolition or conversion, and in fact there was a net loss in rental units from 1995-2001 (Shapcott, 2001). The years between 1995 and 2000 marked the most extended period without government funding for new affordable housing in fifty years—virtually no non-profit housing was developed in Ontario in this period (ONPHA, 2007). Maintenance of existing social housing was subject to cuts in spending and subsequently downloaded to municipalities (Shapcott, 2001).

The Government of British Columba’s involvement in homelessness and housing policy in the mid-1990s, by contrast, was much more significant than Ontario. The province was led by an NDP government more committed to an interventionist role for government in social policy—though it adopted similar welfare reform and social assistance eligibility tightening that was characteristic of centre-right parties in other jurisdictions. The BC response to the federal government withdrawal from affordable housing was to maintain construction of affordable housing by contributing more provincial funds. Under the Homes BC program, launched in 1994, 4,733 units were constructed over a five-year period. It was an umbrella program that included non-profit, co-operative, and supportive (for seniors) housing and was expanded in 1999 to supply an additional 2,400 units of affordable housing for low-income and disabled persons (Eberle, 2001; BC Housing Annual Report 1996/97).

In 1995, the City of Toronto, like all other municipalities in Ontario, was subject to the

---

17 Quebec and BC were the only provinces to respond in this fashion, and Ontario, as stated above, cancelled all planned contributions to affordable housing.
successive downloading of responsibility and funding for affordable housing and homelessness as part of the Harris agenda. With respect to homelessness policy, in 1995 the city jointly funded hostels, shelters and drop-ins with the province on a 20:80 basis (Golden, 1999). This amounted to 46 shelters with occupancy of approximately 4,000 beds, the majority of which were community-run.\(^\text{18}\) What is clear about the 1990s context was that there was an ‘emergency bias’ to the policy and programming offered by governments and community organizations in Toronto (Golden, 1999). Another institutional player was Metro Toronto, a senior local government covering the municipalities of Toronto, Scarborough, York, East York, and Etobicoke.\(^\text{19}\) It was not heavily involved in homelessness in 1995, though it was responsible for the Metro Toronto Housing Corporation (MTHC), an affordable housing agency.

A regional government structure likewise existed (then and now) in the Vancouver urban area called the Greater Vancouver Regional District or more commonly referred to as ‘Metro Vancouver’ today. Like Metro Toronto, Metro Vancouver is responsible for a regional affordable housing agency and was not active with respect to homelessness in 1995. The City of Vancouver is the largest city in the twenty-one-city Metro Vancouver and historically most active in the homelessness policy domain. The city has for a long time used its zoning and regulatory powers over land use to assist in the development of affordable housing. In 1988, for example, the city introduced the 20% social housing requirement, which required major re-zonings of lands to multi-unit residential use to include 20% social housing (in unit development or the equivalent in cash to the city fund)—a policy called ‘inclusionary zoning’. The city estimates that this policy has created 1,360 units, although this is much lower than that which would have been possible (3,450 units) if the city did not allow developers exemptions from this policy if the 20% requirement would make the project economically infeasible (City of Vancouver, 2010). Though the provincial government makes by far the largest

\(^{18}\) Additionally, there was a network of churches and other faith groups providing overnight shelter, drop-in services, and meals for homeless and socially isolated people in the cold winter months. There were also outreach services to connect homeless persons to social services, some of which were provided by funded organizations and other volunteer-based.

\(^{19}\) Metro Toronto would later be abolished when its constituent municipalities were amalgamated into the new City of Toronto in 1998.
expenditures on housing and homelessness, in 1995 the City of Vancouver directly funded some community centres and drop-in sites servicing the homeless.

Major policy gaps in Toronto and Vancouver, 1995
The brief presentation of the federal, provincial and local institutional and policy context in Toronto and Vancouver in 1995 demonstrates that among the distinct responses, there was a basic level of services across the housing affordability spectrum, ranging from emergency shelters, to transitional and supportive housing, to independent social housing, to rental assistance in the private market, to the private rental market. Yet given the explosion of homelessness during this period, there were significant policy gaps in 1995 in both cities. There are important similarities and differences between Toronto and Vancouver in terms of policy gaps. Table 3.2 presents the major homelessness and housing policy gaps in Toronto and Vancouver in 1995 as articulated by comprehensive task forces and reports surveying the respective policy landscape in the late 1990s.

Table 3.2: Major policy gaps in Toronto and Vancouver, 1995

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Housing and shelter</th>
<th>Policy gaps in Toronto, 1995</th>
<th>Policy gaps in Vancouver, 1995</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- no comprehensive provincial or city housing or homelessness plans</td>
<td>- no comprehensive regional or city housing or homelessness plans</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- no distinct strategy for Aboriginal homelessness; only one Aboriginal shelter (not year-round)</td>
<td>- no distinct strategy for Aboriginal homelessness</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- no inclusionary zoning capability or policy</td>
<td>- insufficient and restrictive emergency shelter spaces; lack of shelter spaces for subgroups (youth, women, Aboriginals)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- rapid rooming house stock loss due to redevelopment</td>
<td>- rapid rooming house stock loss due to redevelopment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- emergency bias in policies</td>
<td>- lack of service coordination and integration</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- lack of service coordination and integration</td>
<td>- few effective discharge protocols and resources at correctional and health institutions for those with no fixed address</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- few effective discharge protocols and resources at correctional and health institutions for those with no fixed address</td>
<td>- insufficient addictions treatment programs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Perhaps most important among the policy and service gaps is that in 1995 both Toronto and Vancouver had no comprehensive regional or local housing or homelessness policies or plans. They are likewise both characterized by a lack of service coordination, services unresponsive to unique needs of subgroups like youth, women, and Aboriginals, and services concentrated in downtown core areas (Golden, 1999; Eberle, 2001). In 1995, both cities were experiencing a rapid loss of single-room occupancy (SRO) and rooming houses due to redevelopment pressures, and to the extent that they were active on these files, were engaging in reactive, rather than preventative policy making (Golden, 1999; Eberle, 2001). And finally, decision makers in both cities and provinces had very little data about the homeless population that could help them craft policy responses with the benefit of demographic and situational data over time. While there were some differences in the respective approaches, the essential point from this analysis is that Toronto and Vancouver in 1995 were in a similar place in terms of policy and programs. This would soon change.

**Institutional and policy changes in Toronto and Vancouver, 1995-2012**

Homelessness policy has seen considerable growth and refinement since the 1990s. While few activists would claim any sort of victory in the domain—in fact, some primary aspects of the problem, like long-term and stable affordable housing provision across the country, remain stubbornly elusive—there is a much more significant policy role for government in virtually all Canadian cities in 2012 than in 1995. This section highlights the most significant legislative and policy changes in Toronto and Vancouver over the period under investigation across all levels of government. The central task of this study is to identify the extent to which governance networks in these cities explain these
important policy developments. Tracing the legislative and policy changes in a multi-
level policy domain such as homelessness over two decades is overwhelming, but it is
helpful to get a comprehensive view of the major governmental activities in each of
Toronto and Vancouver, which can then be paired down for analysis along the policy
dimensions of interest in this study. This section will discuss in detail only the most
relevant legislation and policies for the purposes of this study—a more comprehensive
graphical representation can be found in Appendix B.

Federal and provincial government policy changes, 1995-2012
The most important policy changes at the Government of Canada in the period from
1995-2012 were the introduction of the National Homelessness Initiative (NHI) in 2000
and the Affordable Housing Initiative (AHI) in 2001, representing a limited reentry by
the federal government into affordable housing provision. In 1999 the federal
government announced the National Homelessness Initiative (NHI) to “help ensure
community access to programs, services and support for alleviating homelessness in
communities in all provinces and territories” (HRSDC, 2008: i). There was recognition
that homelessness has complex origins and requires partnerships between governments
and community organizations at the local level. The federal outlay per year averaged
$184 million.

Most notable within this program is that it mandated the creation of Community
Advisory Boards in each city to gain access to the envelope of funds; they constitute four
of the six governance networks under investigation in this study (VANmain, TOmain,
VANAb, TOAb). The federal government renewed its role in the homelessness policy
domain in 2007 under the new title of Homelessness Partnering Strategy (HPS), at a
slightly reduced $135 million/year, and the major elements of the NHI were continued
(HRSDC, 2008). The Government of Canada’s HPS is currently funded until 2018.

In 2001 the federal government introduced the Affordable Housing Initiative (AHI),
resulting in bilateral agreements between the federal government and each province. The
bilateral Canada-Ontario Affordable Housing Agreement was signed in 2002 by the Eves
Conservative government in Ontario, consisting of $245 million in federal contributions to be matched by provincial and municipal funding sources. Meantime, in BC in 2001 the respective governments signed the Canada-BC Affordable Housing Agreements. The contributions of others amounted to $148 million, resulting in total expenditure on the program projected to be $237 million over four years (Canada-BC AHA, 2001).

Toronto and Vancouver were thus both beneficiaries of the two new federal housing and homelessness programs, yet at the provincial level the institutional frameworks to execute homelessness policy are distinct. The most important institutional difference between Toronto and Vancouver is that in Ontario housing and homelessness policy and administration is largely downloaded to the municipalities (with substantial transfers from the provincial government), whereas in BC housing and homelessness policy is largely retained by the provincial government via BC Housing—a Crown agency—with municipalities acting as smaller partners (though within BC, Vancouver is a considerably more active policy player than other cities). As such, BC represents a significantly more centralized model of social housing provision at the provincial government, while Ontario is comparatively decentralized in terms of administration to municipalities; both institutional configurations are briefly described below.

The Social Housing Reform Act (2000) was passed by the Ontario legislature with several policy goals in mind, chief among them devolving administration of existing shared federal-provincially owned housing stock to municipal level service managers, as well as individually owned housing portfolios to non-profit corporations (Hackworth and Moriah, 2006). In 1998 a Provincial Task Force on Homelessness labeled municipalities as the lead government in the homelessness policy domain, though with considerable federal and provincial support. The Harris Conservatives accepted a recommendation that the province should assume funding responsibility for all domiciliary hostels and continue to provide 80% of funding for all emergency hostels and assume funding 100% of supportive housing, totaling $88 million per year (PTFH, 1998). In terms of homelessness policy, the subsequent McGuinty government invested more than the Harris government, though it was still patchwork and small in scale. Municipalities
administer the Consolidated Homelessness Prevention Initiative, CHPI, funded 100% by the province, which aims to improve access to the system of community services, to help homeless persons obtain and keep longer-term housing, and to assist those at risk of homelessness to retain their housing.

The Government of BC’s involvement in homelessness and housing policy in the mid-1990s was more significant than in Ontario. The most critical government institution as it relates to homelessness and housing in BC is not a ministry or department, but a Crown agency called BC Housing (established in 1967), whose mandate is to fulfill the provincial government’s commitment to the development, management and administration of subsidized housing which it set out in the strategic policy document *Housing Matters BC* (BC Housing Annual Report 2009/10). BC Housing provides subsidized housing options across the housing continuum, from emergency shelters, transitional supportive housing, independent social housing to rent assistance in the private market (BC Housing Annual Report 2009/10). In short, BC Housing controls the vast majority of housing and homelessness expenditures in BC (and Vancouver). The election of the Campbell Liberal government in 2001, which replaced the NDP government, did not result in the dramatic housing and homelessness policy shift witnessed in Ontario in the Rae to Harris transition. The government-wide Core Services Review did not substantially alter the mandate or expenditures of BC Housing. More influential on housing and homelessness policy was the Premier’s Task Force on Homelessness, Mental Health and Addictions in 2004, which resulted in the Provincial Homelessness Initiative (PHI). Provincial policy was rearticulated to form the comprehensive Housing Matters BC program in 2006, with strategies covering the spectrum from street homelessness to lack of housing affordability, representing a shift to the ‘housing first model’ (BC Ministry of Housing and Social Development, 2009).

---

20 An approach to homelessness that contends that securing shelter or housing is the most important first step to stabilize individual’s lives. This is contrast to the prevailing historical model across North America that required individuals to stabilize their lives (addictions, mental health issues, or employability) prior to receiving subsidized housing.
Local government policy changes, 1995-2012

Though the federal and provincial governments both dwarf the respective local
governments in terms of expenditures on housing and homelessness (via transfers), it is at
the local government level where the most substantial growth in homelessness policy
activity is found since 1995. In 1995, neither Vancouver nor Toronto at the municipal or
regional level had any comprehensive housing or homelessness policy planning
documents. The first homelessness plan in Vancouver was the regional homelessness
plan produced by VANmain in 2001 in conjunction with the federal NHI, followed by an
affordable housing plan by the City of Vancouver in 2005 and a comprehensive housing
and homelessness plan in 2010. Likewise in Toronto, TOmain produced a homelessness
plan in conjunction with the federal NHI in 2001, though it was not as comprehensive as
the regional plan in Vancouver, instead used it as a policy guide for merely the federal
government investments. The city subsequently introduced the Streets to Homes plan in
2005, an aggressive ‘Housing First’ program to link the street homeless to housing and
supports. The city also continues to fund and administer emergency hostels and shelters.

Beyond comprehensive strategic plans and policy documents, both Vancouver and
Toronto have implemented (solo or partnered with provinces or civil society groups)
specific funding programs for shelter and housing, outreach and other supports. For
example, Vancouver has been a pioneer in harm reduction policies—turning conventional
treatment and enforcement of risky and illegal behaviours upside down—which are
directly connected to homelessness issues (City of Vancouver, 2001). In 1997, the City
of Vancouver developed the Four Pillars Drug Strategy (prevention, treatment,
enforcement, and harm reduction), a coordinated, comprehensive approach that balances
public order and public health to address the open drug use in the Downtown Eastside
and related social and economic problems (City of Vancouver, 2001). This framework
introduced the idea of a safe injection site in Vancouver, which was subsequently piloted
in 2003 (and continues to operate). Current Vancouver Mayor Gregor Robertson, who
made ending homelessness a high priority in both of his election campaigns, took
immediate steps to get street homeless persons off the street and into secure shelter
during the winter months (City of Vancouver Administrative Report, 2009). The result
was that community and government owned buildings were made available and costs shared among the city and provincial governments. A related initiative was the Interim Housing Plan to Reduce Homelessness, which was a strategic partnership between the city, province and private sector to get street homeless shelter in the period during which new social housing units are completed (City of Vancouver, 2009).

In 1995, the City of Toronto, like all other municipalities in Ontario, was subject to the successive downloading of responsibility and funding for affordable housing and homelessness. The policies and program shifts occurring in the 2000s suggests prevention and long-term solutions gained increasing salience for policymakers, shifting from the ‘emergency bias’ in the 1990s. The Golden Report in 1999 (the Mayor’s Homelessness Action Task Force) was a critical pivot point for housing and homelessness policy in Toronto, though many recommendations were not implemented (Layton, 2008). In terms of affordable housing, the City of Toronto’s ‘Let’s Build’ program (2000) combined municipal resources with the federal NHI dollars and provincial rent supplements (Toronto Report Card, 2003). This is in addition to the flagship Streets to Home program, which is an aggressive ‘Housing First’ policy targeting homeless on the street linking them first to housing and support services.

Another significant change in the homelessness policy context in Vancouver and Toronto since 1995 was the emphasis on collecting data on the homeless population to inform the policy response. In the 1990s, little was known about the homeless populations in Canadian cities, from the sheer magnitude of the problem to the more nuanced demographic information that could help decision makers craft effective policy responses. Metro Vancouver was among the earliest Canadian urban areas to conduct a comprehensive homeless count in 2002, and Toronto followed in 2006. Activists are often divided on the value of homeless counts—since they undoubtedly underestimate the problem, but can also be used to identify a growing need for additional government intervention.²¹ In any case, Metro Vancouver now has comparative data from triennial

²¹ Many activists in Toronto also feared that the homeless count, since it is such a dramatic under-estimate, would allow politicians to justify cutting homelessness funding (Layton, 2008).
homeless counts in 2002, 2005, 2008, 2011 and 2014 and Toronto has counts from 2006, 2009 and 2013 to analyze changing demographics, geographies, and service needs of the homeless. In 2010 the City of Vancouver has also started to do its own count in between the triennial regional homeless count.

Another trend in homelessness policy in the two cities over the past two decades, but in Metro Vancouver in particular, has been the growth in housing and homelessness services outside of the core of the downtown cores. In 1995, for example, 85% of the shelter beds in Metro Vancouver were in the City of Vancouver, as were 71% of the drop-in centres (Eberle, 2001). While the City of Vancouver is the largest constituent municipality in Metro Vancouver, City officials soon recognized that they were serving as a magnet for homelessness the whole region (C. Maboules, personal interview, January 6, 2012; Garrison, Personal interview, January 6, 2012). By 2012, shelter spaces in Metro Vancouver tripled from 1995 (528 to 1,599), and City of Vancouver dropped to 75% of shelter spaces, with considerable growth in shelter spaces in Surrey and other outer suburban municipalities (GVSS, 2012). In Toronto in 2011, which includes the former municipalities of Toronto, Scarborough, North York, East York and Etobicoke, the area that was the old City of Toronto still hosts 85% of the homeless shelters (SSHA, 2012), though it only hosts 66% of the street population. So whereas in Metro Vancouver we have seen a growth in homelessness policy response and programs outside of the downtown core, in Toronto homelessness remains conceived and funded as a ‘downtown core’ issue.

If we compare investments through the federal HPS program, administered at the local level, we see that spending in Toronto remains disproportionately focused on the core of the old City of Toronto, whereas in Metro Vancouver, the City of Vancouver actually receives significantly less than one might expect given the distribution of the homeless population in the region—demonstrating the trend away from focusing services merely in the downtown core of the city.
Table 3.3: Comparative HPS investments, 2011-2014 in Vancouver and Toronto by area.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>HPS investments, 2011-2014 (% share)</th>
<th>Share of homeless population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vancouver</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surrey</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Westminster</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maple Ridge</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>other (n=7)</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toronto</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North York</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scarborough</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Etobicoke</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: generated by author; RSCH (approved applications), 2012; SSHA, 2012; RSCH, 2011; SNA, 2009

**Policy innovation, sensitivity and coordination from 1995-2012**

The preceding discussion reveals that Vancouver and Toronto (and their community partners) provide at least a basic level of services across the housing affordability spectrum, ranging from emergency shelters, to transitional housing, to independent social housing, and to rental assistance in the private market. Yet the comparative historical policy context in Vancouver and Toronto also reveals that they share important policy differences with regard to homelessness from 1995-2012. Recall for the purposes of this study, we are interested in three particular dimensions of policy that are linked to an effective response to homelessness: policy innovation, policy sensitivity and policy coordination. So the question becomes which policies and programs among those presented above in Vancouver and Toronto are innovative, sensitive (to vulnerable subgroups) and coordinated? A chapter will be devoted to examining each of these policy dimensions more closely, but the trends are briefly introduced below.

The major policy innovations in Vancouver include a regionally crafted homelessness response, a tri-annual homeless count, low barrier shelters, and a Metro Vancouver Funder’s Table. Notably, Vancouver is the first (and only) jurisdiction in North America to operate a supervised injection site, and is also experimenting with property tax relief measures to encourage new private market affordable housing, and implement widespread use of low-barrier shelters to encourage those who would otherwise choose to sleep on street to use shelters. In Toronto, major innovations include the rapid-response
Streets to Home program, a homeless count, transit pilot programs, and a (now defunct) homelessness educational project for councillors called the Councillor Liaison Project (CLP).

A policy or program is considered to be ‘sensitive’ to vulnerable subgroups if there are special provisions accounting for unique individual or group experiences and needs. Vancouver displays a number of sensitivity-oriented policies, particularly with regard to Aboriginal homelessness, including an Aboriginal homelessness plan with funding resources (via the federal NHI/HPS), as well as inclusive decision making practices in the allocation of homelessness funds in Metro Vancouver. Toronto likewise has an Aboriginal specific homelessness plan with funding resources, and has carved out 20% of its total funding to be dedicated towards Aboriginal projects, though is not as inclusive as Vancouver with respect to involving Aboriginals in decision making processes.

Finally, a policy or program is considered ‘coordinated’ if it meets one of the following criteria: it is a policy or program that is consistent with strategic policy frameworks, does not work at cross-purposes with other policies, or fills gaps in the service framework among service providers and government funders. In this regard, policy in Vancouver is highly coordinated, despite a fragmented political and institutional framework, with Community Housing Tables organized throughout the region and integrated into larger policy processes, Extreme Weather Response protocols, and shelter coordination and standards, in addition to the homeless count and Homeless Action Week, which also represent a highly coordinated policy system. Toronto also has coordinated shelter standards and extreme weather protocols, though is less coordinated across the sector compared to what we see in Metro Vancouver, despite a centralized institutional framework.
Table 3.4: Summary of Vancouver and Toronto policy context in 2012, differentiated by policy dimensions of interest

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Policy dimension</th>
<th>Vancouver</th>
<th>Toronto</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Policy innovation</td>
<td>• Region-wide homelessness strategy</td>
<td>• Streets to Homes Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Homelessness Action Week</td>
<td>• Councillor Liaison Project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Low barrier shelters</td>
<td>• TTC On the Move program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Four Pillars Drug Strategy</td>
<td>• Rental housing incentives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Inclusionary zoning</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Metro Vancouver Funder’s Table</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Political Action Toolkit</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Rental housing incentives</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Streets to Homes Program</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Councillor Liaison Project</td>
<td>• TTC On the Move program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Rental housing incentives</td>
<td>• Rental housing incentives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policy sensitivity</td>
<td>• Aboriginal homelessness plan</td>
<td>• Aboriginal homelessness plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Aboriginal and youth policy planning and decision making in mainstream institutions</td>
<td>• 20% of homelessness funding mandated for Aboriginals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• 10% of regional homelessness funding for Aboriginals</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policy coordination</td>
<td>• Extreme Weather Response coordination</td>
<td>• Standardized shelter system</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Metro Vancouver Funder’s Table</td>
<td>• City as centralized system of planning for homelessness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Regional homelessness plan replicated in local areas</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Community Housing Tables</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Standardized shelter system</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The comparative historical policy context from 1995-2012 indicates that Vancouver exhibits more numerous and substantive homelessness policies and programs that are innovative, exhibit better sensitivity to unique Aboriginal homelessness and housing needs, and are more coordinated in terms of services to the homeless population than Toronto. None of this is to say that the policy context in Toronto is hopelessly backward.
and ineffectual because it has fewer examples of policy innovation, sensitivity and coordination—indeed, as mentioned in terms of service alignment and broad level policy coverage, Toronto and Vancouver share many similarities. But lined up against each other Vancouver appears to outperform Toronto, and we are interested in understanding what explains these patterns of policy difference.

Recall that a critical institutional difference is that since 2000 Metro Vancouver has had three institutionalized sites of intergovernmental and civil society deliberation and collaboration relating to homelessness: VAN\textsubscript{main}, VAN\textsubscript{Ab} and VAN\textsubscript{emerg}. These institutionalized sites of interaction among diverse state and non-state actors are not simply sites for ‘talk’, but rather for deliberation and decision making regarding investments and policy direction for the region. Toronto, though it hosts several analogous governance networks, has never had sustained governance networks for deliberation and decision making as institutionalized and inclusive as those found in Vancouver. Is there a causal relationship between the more institutionalized and inclusive governance networks in Vancouver and the pattern of homelessness policy and services that are more innovative, exhibit better sensitivity to unique Aboriginal homelessness and housing needs, and are more coordinated in terms of services to the homeless?

Yet it is critical to recognize that governance networks do not exist in a vacuum—they are products of existing (and shifting) institutional and political environments. The local institutional context influences how governance networks are formed, resourced and structured, which can powerfully enable or constrain their impact on policy. Why is Vancouver characterized by comparatively higher institutionalized and inclusive governance networks than Toronto? How did this come to be? The next chapter introduces the six governance networks under investigation through the lens of ‘metagovernance’, a concept that captures how the state, as the pre-eminent public authority, steers and manages governance networks, revealing that institutional and policy histories in each city uniquely shape the creation and evolution of the governance networks—and therefore their role in public policy development.
Chapter 4: Metagovernance of networks in Vancouver and Toronto

Introduction

Though the governance networks are conceptualized in this study as an independent variable, examined for their relationship to innovative, sensitive and coordinated homelessness policy and programs, a governance network clearly does not exist in a vacuum. In fact, existing (and evolving) institutional and power structures shape the mandate, structure, membership, and accountability mechanisms of governance networks and bureaucratic or elected officials closely supervise their activities. The multi-level governance framework demands that we be attentive to the intergovernmental, as well as civil society, dimensions that shape governance patterns, but is inadequate as an analytical tool to understand the relationship to policy development. How the governance network was created, the tasks with which it is charged, and to whom it is accountable, places it in a particular space in the policy process. In the governance literature, this is referred to as the ‘metagovernance’ context (Bell and Hindmoor, 2009).

The concept of metagovernance captures the relationship and tension between the willingness of the state to engage with civil society on policy development and implementation, while maintaining some degree of control over the activity of such governance networks to be consistent with traditional notions of liberal-democratic accountability. It is fundamentally about how much autonomy is granted to the governance network and balancing it with expectations around bureaucratic accountability and control, in strategic ways that harnesses the knowledge and contributions of civil society actors. And since the ‘metagovernance’ concept captures how governance networks are designed and evolve, it follows that we expect these features to be part of the explanation for how networks matter to policy choices (Sorenson and Torfing, 2007; Mueleman 2008; Heritier and Rhodes 2011). That is, the metagovernance context has a critical mediating influence on the relationship between governance networks and policy outputs, as depicted in Figure 4.1. A particular
metagovernance context, depending on its characteristics, may foster policy innovation, sensitivity and coordination, or alternatively may stifle these policy dimensions, as represented by the divergent arrows in the figure.

Figure 4.1: The mediating influence of the metagovernance context on policy outputs.

This chapter begins by introducing the metagovernance literature vis-à-vis network governance, drawing on conceptualizations for how the state manages less hierarchical public decision making. The chapter describes how the six governance networks under investigation formed and took shape in the unique ways they did through the lens of the metagovernance concept. The six governance networks examined in this study exhibit variation in metagovernance features, providing leverage to the analysis that follows in subsequent chapters for how and why the properties and dynamics of governance networks matters to public policy outputs.

**Metagovernance concept**

The metagovernance concept helps reconcile dueling claims that (i) societal changes mean that government increasingly needs to govern via networks to generate effective and efficient policy responses and (ii) that Canadian governments do not govern primarily via networks (like some European comparators), by capturing an increasing willingness by the state to engage with civil society partners on policy development and
implementation, while maintaining traditional Westminster systems of accountability and
democratic legitimacy (Bell and Hindmoor, 2009). ‘Metagovernance’ is thus the
“governance of governance”, and helps us understand how government crafts or manages
non-traditional hierarchical public decision making (Heritier and Rhodes, 2011; Sorenson
and Torfing, 2007). That is, while there are few, if any, examples of ‘pure’ network
governance in Canada, there are a variety of ways through which the Canadian state has
devolved some decision making to governance networks consisting of public and private
actors, while maintaining a ‘shadow of hierarchy’ to ensure traditional mechanisms of
accountability and democratic legitimacy are retained (Doberstein, 2013). Such
governance networks are always on some sort of “leash”—the type and length of which
may vary—in recognition that the state remains the principal public authority.

Jessop (1997) is one of the first scholars to offer the term ‘metagovernance’ to capture
how political authorities organize and manage such network governance structures (see
Bradford, 2012 for its introduction into the Canadian context). Though in many ways
dependent on civil society actors—for their expertise, representative legitimacy, capacity
for implementation, etc.—the state is nonetheless the only actor with the authority and
legitimacy to set the ground rules for network structures, resolve disputes, rebalance
representation and power differentials, and assume political responsibility in the event of
governance failure (Jessop, 1997). Bell and Hindmoor (2009) describe the core
elements of metagovernance of networks—the functions that government tends to
perform to structure network governance arrangements: steering, resourcing, and
accountability. The steering function captures how the state designs the governance
network mandate, sets the ground rules for network activity, organizes and coordinates
the interactions and, if necessary or desired, rebalances power differentials (Jessop 1997).
The provision of resources to bring disparate actors together is typically the task of
government given the depth of its resources and access to large professional bureaucracy,
and has both enabling and constraining effects on network governance. With respect to

---

22 Meaning a complete delegation of public decision making authority to a network consisting of non-state actors.
23 The metagovernance concept is especially useful because it captures the now generally accepted weaknesses of pure
network governance arrangements: unstable constructions, inefficient decision making capacity in the absence of any
hierarchy, the marginalization of elected officials, joint-decision traps, lowest common denominator policy outputs, and
its potential to reinforce power hierarchies (Heritier and Rhodes, 2011; Mueleman, 2008; Sorenson and Torfing, 2007).
accountability, despite the horizontal nature of decision making in governance networks, government is ultimately held accountable for public policy by the electorate and, as such, is empowered and motivated to hold others within the network under varying degrees of control by using accountability mechanisms that include direct supervision, performance agreements, and contracts (Mulgan 2006; Bell and Hindmoor 2009).

The foregoing core elements of metagovernance represent the lens through which the six governance networks in Vancouver and Toronto are analyzed to understand how the state design and regulation of the governance networks shapes the possibilities and limitations of policy development. The following section proceeds with a structured, pair-wise analysis of the six homelessness governance networks in Toronto and Vancouver, summarized in Table 4.1, for the purpose of identifying patterns of network institutional designs across several dimensions, including its path to formation, network mandate, enabling investments, and accountability.

Table 4.1: Summary of the homelessness governance networks and their properties

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Network name</th>
<th>STEERING</th>
<th>RESOURCING</th>
<th>ACCOUNTABILITY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Path to formation</td>
<td>Policy development</td>
<td>Mandate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mainstream networks</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VAN&lt;sub&gt;main&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
<td>top-down framework; local priorities</td>
<td>constrained decision-making</td>
<td>contribution agreements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TO&lt;sub&gt;main&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
<td>top-down framework; local priorities</td>
<td>advisory</td>
<td>contribution agreements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Aboriginal networks</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VAN&lt;sub&gt;Ab&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
<td>top-down framework; local priorities</td>
<td>constrained decision-making</td>
<td>contribution agreements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TO&lt;sub&gt;Ab&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
<td>top-down framework; local priorities</td>
<td>constrained decision-making</td>
<td>contribution agreements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Emergency/shelter networks</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VAN&lt;sub&gt;emerg&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
<td>local</td>
<td>bottom-up, civil society driven</td>
<td>coordination, advisory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TO&lt;sub&gt;emerg&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
<td>local</td>
<td>bottom-up, civil society driven</td>
<td>advisory, coordination</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<sup>24</sup> Cells highlighted to differentiate patterns of similarity and difference in metagovernance features across the governance networks.
First paired comparison: VAN\textsubscript{main} and TO\textsubscript{main} – mainstream homelessness
governance networks

VAN\textsubscript{main} and TO\textsubscript{main} are governance networks initially created under the auspices of the
Government of Canada’s (GoC) National Homelessness Initiative (NHI), launched in 2000, which required the formation of a local governance network consisting of civil society and government members to create a community plan to address homelessness, to set policy priorities, and to allocate federal funds. The design of the NHI was heavily influenced by the newly appointed “Minister responsible for Homelessness”, Claudette Bradshaw, who travelled the country and heard from homelessness advocates, service providers, and local government, that communities should play a key role in crafting the homelessness response, with the federal government serving as a funder and capacity enhancer (Smith, 2004). As a result, Bradshaw developed the NHI such that the role of civil society actors would be institutionalized via local governance networks that would prioritize and allocate federal government dollars (rather than a direct transfer to municipalities). Access to this money required communities to perform several actions, which illustrate the several critical features of metagovernance as it relates to the networks.

First, the local area had to form a governance network consisting of diverse civil society actors—ranging from shelter and affordable housing providers, to mental health organizations, to advocacy groups—to exchange ideas on policy responses to end homelessness in the specific locality. Thus the existence of the governance network of itself is a function of metagovernor mandates. Second, the governance network is required to develop, after extensive community consultation, a ‘Community Plan’ to address homelessness, to set out the strategic priorities and serve as a framework to determine funding allocations to specific programs and services.\textsuperscript{25} Third, the governance network is required to produce reports for the GoC (the metagovernor) outlining how the funding allocations are consistent with the priorities identified by the broader community and demonstrating the incremental impact of the program on homelessness in the locality.

\textsuperscript{25} The governance network solicits proposals from non-profits and service providers to carry out the programs or services on the ground, which could for example include opening a new shelter, providing drop-in or addiction treatment services, or building new supportive housing.
All three of these requirements are subject to the approval of the Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (HRSDC).

Notwithstanding the above Government of Canada (GoC) requirements, the NHI/HPS framework has considerable flexibility in terms of how the governance networks are designed and the activities in which they engage. For example, the GoC does not dictate who within the community and civil society need to be involved in the governance network, and likewise accepts the unique governance context and policy priorities identified in each locality. Most importantly from a metagovernance perspective, cities are afforded flexibility in the design of the governance network institutions—as mentioned, they could form a ‘community entity’ (usually via a prominent community group or the local government itself) and assume full decision making autonomy as well as full legal and financial liability for homelessness investments, or they could adopt the partnership or ‘shared delivery’ model, whereby HRSDC would receive recommendations from the governance network and formally vet and approve programs and services.

Vancouver and Toronto chose different models, and these early decisions around governance patterns reflect policy legacies of the provincial governments, and would shape how power was exercised within the governance network vis-à-vis the associated municipal government. In contrast to most other large cities in Canada that defined the boundaries of the “community” as the municipality (Toronto included), the approach in Vancouver is unique because of its regional scope. That is, federal funds allocated to ‘Vancouver’ are distributed throughout Metro Vancouver (which includes 21 municipalities), rather than the single municipality, as is the case for the City of Toronto. Thus rather than the City of Vancouver conducting the NHI/HPS policy planning and implementation within its boundaries, a newly created group of regional and municipal government and civil society actors, named here VAN_{main}, was formed as required by the GoC metagovernor. VAN_{main} was established based on the recognition that homelessness exists in the broader metropolitan area and that a regional, coordinated approach is required to make effective policy interventions (GVRSCCH 2003). From 2000-2011, VAN_{main} operated under the “shared delivery” model rather than the “community entity”
model—the only practical consequence for our purposes is that the GoC held final decision making authority in Vancouver, whereas in Toronto that authority was transferred by administrative agreement to the City of Toronto.

The City of Toronto chose the other governance model, establishing itself as the ‘community entity’ (CE) with the responsibility to implement a Community Plan and administer funding allocations— the practical effect being that the City (rather than the GoC in the case of Vancouver) is the actual metagovernor of the network. The existing local governance context in Toronto, just as with Vancouver, uniquely shaped decisions on how to structure and manage the newly mandated homelessness governance network. Toronto, in contrast to Vancouver, is effectively a municipal government with regional scope (given the amalgamation agenda from Premier Harris in the late 1990s), and this shaped what was perceived to be the appropriate approach at the municipal level. And whereas in BC provincially funded homelessness policy and administration is centralized in a Crown agency, BC Housing, in Ontario the policy and administration for homelessness is entirely devolved to ‘municipal service managers’. As a result, City of Toronto officials were already administering major homelessness programs funded by the provincial government, and the city believed it could more efficiently coordinate homelessness programs and project funding by acting as the metagovernor of the local governance network under the GoC NHI program (Carter and Polevychok 2004; City of Toronto 2003). TO was thus created as the governance network required by the GoC, consisting of civil society groups and the private sector (e.g. major landlords), to provide ongoing advice and to identify funding priorities for the federal government investments.

The metagovernance picture in Toronto is thus distinct from Vancouver for these two governance networks: whereas the Minister of HRSDC is the final decision maker with respect to policy priorities and investment decisions at VAN, it is the Toronto City Council that plays this role in Toronto for TO. The most important consequence is that the TO policy priorities and allocations had to be consistent with those of Toronto.

26 The shared delivery model for legal reasons was viewed as more appropriate because VAN is a coalition of local government officials and community representatives to which it is difficult to ascribe legal and financial liability—in 2000 the Metro Vancouver regional government was not prepared to take on the role as the legal ‘community entity’, so HRSDC performed these functions for VAN under the program (Metro Vancouver has since become the community entity for the HPS program, as of 2011).
City Council as it relates to homelessness, whereas this was not a similar pressure in the case of Vancouver, where the City of Vancouver was one of approximately thirty government and civil society members on VAN\textsubscript{main}. The metagovernance context thus results in pressure to conform to City Council policy in Toronto and helps to explain certain policy choices and governance patterns of TO\textsubscript{main}—effectively a ‘municipalization’ of the NHI program in Toronto—compared to the metagovernance context that affords more autonomy to the VAN\textsubscript{main} governance network from the city administration in the Vancouver context.

One of the core elements of the metagovernance of networks are the ‘enabling resources’, in which governments use their spending power or bureaucratic resources as a means to encourage actions they wish to promote. Such investments thus have both enabling and constraining effects: the resources offered by the metagovernor are the principal reason why the governance network exists and is relevant to the community, yet also has a constraining effect on the other activities of network participants, both government and civil society. At VAN\textsubscript{main}, for example, some network members reported that they feel constrained on speaking out against government actions for fear their role and funding may be in jeopardy or will be cut because of their advocacy (GVRSCH, 2007). The enabling and constraining dynamics of resources in TO\textsubscript{main} are distinct, however, because of the local structures in which the governance network resides. While the GoC envelope of funds available to Toronto are significant (approximately $20 million annually), they are a “drop in the bucket” compared to what the City of Toronto spends or administers (from its own tax base or on behalf of the provincial government) on homelessness and housing in Toronto (confidential, Personal Interview, July 23, 2012). As such, TO\textsubscript{main} is designed purposefully by the City to be a governance network that has a very narrowly defined role—merely to satisfy the NHI mandate from the GoC requiring some sort of community-based network—and not something that determines or necessarily influences broader city council priorities with respect to homelessness.

Therefore one significant structural difference shaped by the metagovernance context is that TO\textsubscript{main} has historically been more constrained in its policy space than VAN\textsubscript{main}. VAN\textsubscript{main} essentially operated in an empty policy space at the regional level and could
carve out its own identity and role, whereas TO\textsubscript{main} was inserted into a pre-existing and active policy space in Toronto. In addition, a high-level City of Toronto bureaucrat chairs TO\textsubscript{main} (City of Toronto, 2003), who several respondents called a “super-bureaucrat” to signal his influence, such that the network functions as a “rubber stamp” for the bureaucracy’s homelessness agenda (Crowe and German, Personal Interview, April 10, 2012). Thus the approach by the City of Toronto metagovernor of TO\textsubscript{main} is fundamentally more about ordering relations in the broader homelessness community than drawing on diverse expertise in governance. This is significant because the NHI/HPS framework was conceptualized as a community-driven, participatory model of governance—not a municipal government program (Smith, 2004). City of Toronto bureaucrats maintain, however, that they use TO\textsubscript{main} as an important consultative body to the broader work council faces with respect to homelessness.

**Second paired comparison: VAN\textsubscript{Ab} and TO\textsubscript{Ab}—Aboriginal homelessness governance networks**

Given the disproportionate share of homeless individuals with Aboriginal identity, a parallel stream within the GoC NHI program was established in recognition of the unique needs of this population and is consistent with the principles of self-governance in an urban context. The historical relationship between the GoC and Aboriginal Canadians means that the dimension of metagovernance—how the Aboriginal governance networks are created, structured and held accountable by the state—is especially important to conceptualize.

While the local Aboriginal homelessness governance networks were created as a result of the GoC NHI framework that also created TO\textsubscript{main} and VAN\textsubscript{main}, the metagovernor (GoC) designed them differently. Concerned that local Aboriginal community organizations would not have the capacity to organize, strategize and implement homelessness policies and programs without an existing institutional base (like a municipal government), the GoC simply attached the Aboriginal homelessness component of the NHI to an existing
GoC labour market-focused program called the Urban Aboriginal Strategy (UAS)\textsuperscript{27}—thus serving as an enhancement to the existing UAS governance networks in selected cities.

This choice by the metagovernor (the GoC) to funnel the Aboriginal homelessness funding through existing delivery structures with a labour market focus—not homelessness—proved to severely and inappropriately constrain the activities of local Aboriginal decision makers (HRSDC, 2003). Basic rules and operating procedures set forth by the metagovernor had large consequences. For example, since the Aboriginal homelessness funding flowed through the administrative institutions and rules designed for labour market programs, the local Aboriginal governance networks for NHI were only able to set policy and allocate funds to homelessness services and programs with a \textit{labour market dimension} and were restricted from allocating money to housing projects or programs! The result: across Canada, only 20\% of Aboriginal-dedicated funds in the NHI was allocated by July 2002, compared to 85\% with TO\textsubscript{main} and VAN\textsubscript{main}-type governance networks in Canadian cities (HRSDC, 2003). Thus there was a fundamental disconnect between what Aboriginal organizations on the ground proposed within local governance networks as relevant services and programs to address Aboriginal homelessness and that which the governance network was permitted to prioritize and invest by the metagovernor.

To the credit of the metagovernor, when GoC bureaucrats learned of this disconnect and the dysfunction (that they created) with Aboriginal homelessness funding being situated within an Aboriginal labour market program, they changed the administrative framework to be similar to that of the mainstream homelessness governance networks in the NHI (Smith, 2004). Yet vestiges of the previous metagovernance framework remained even under the new terms and conditions of the Aboriginal homelessness funding stream, bringing new complications. Unlike the main homelessness governance networks in cities, there was no requirement to develop a Community Plan that would guide

\textsuperscript{27}The UAS was created in 1998 to bring together the various GoC departments with urban Aboriginal mandates to ensure that their programs more effectively serve the target population, but was similarly structured in terms of requiring the formation local civil society actors to jointly draft strategies and policy priorities (HRSDC, 2003).
investments and track progress, and there was no dedicated funding for Aboriginal communities early on to conduct the planning and research to make informed choices, although some did both by channeling program funds for this purpose (HRSDC, 2009; HRSDC, 2003). After the first renewal of the NHI in 2003, the GoC formally separated the governance networks from the UAS program and henceforth provided dedicated planning funds similar to the main homelessness governance networks (HRSDC, 2009; Leo and August, 2009; 2006).

The Aboriginal homelessness governance network in Vancouver is VAN_{Ab}, which formed initially by interested Aboriginal stakeholders in the Greater Vancouver area (AHCC, 2000). VAN_{Ab} would meet monthly (and even more frequently in the early years), marshaling together upwards of thirty Aboriginal community representatives at a given meeting—an impressively diverse number of Aboriginal community members working on issues related to homelessness. And while this high participation waned in subsequent years, later averaging about fifteen active members, VAN_{Ab} demonstrated a commitment to the process, including producing and updating an Aboriginal community plan to address homelessness when it is was not required by the metagovernor.

TO_{Ab} has undergone significant transitions since the beginning of the NHI/HPS program in 2000. Like with VAN_{Ab} and the other Aboriginal homelessness governance networks across Canada that were created by the program, the initial UAS framework was constraining as it related to homelessness programming, but there were larger problems with TO_{Ab}. For a number of years, there were concerns within and outside of the Aboriginal community that the governance network was not sufficiently representative, transparent and accountable to the broader community—in contrast to VAN_{Ab}, the governance network had few members and met very infrequently. This was increasingly viewed as problematic by GoC metagovernors who expected that the community plan and funding allocations would represent the collective ideas of the broader Aboriginal community in Toronto. In addition, a number of Aboriginal organizations asked the GoC metagovernor to step in to construct a more transparent process with clear lines of
accountability (confidential, Personal Interview, July 10, 2012). This process was thus driven by the GoC metagovernor at the request of some in the Aboriginal community in Toronto and the current governance network is designed more transparently, meets regularly, and operates with more accountability to both the Aboriginal community and the GoC (confidential, Personal Interview, July 10, 2012).

Like VAN \textsubscript{main} and TO \textsubscript{main} under the NHI, the Aboriginal homelessness governance networks are principally metagoverned by bureaucrats and administrative mechanisms rather than by elected officials. A recurring theme with the Aboriginal governance networks vis-à-vis the metagovernor is the difficulty they encounter navigating through the bureaucratic channels efficiently and effectively. In Vancouver, the relationship between VAN \textsubscript{Ab} and HRSDC bureaucrats has been strained over the years. The tensions are the result of VAN \textsubscript{Ab} and TO \textsubscript{Ab} wanting to seize the decision making autonomy that the NHI is designed to provide, and HRSDC bureaucrats needing to ensure that the process, as defined by the metagovernor, is respected. After the initial UAS conflict, the next major conflict arose when local HRSDC bureaucrats became concerned that a truly community-wide process of governance and decision making was not occurring at VAN \textsubscript{Ab}, and threatened to intervene to reconstitute the membership and governance structures. VAN \textsubscript{Ab} membership disagreed with this view and the heavy-handed approach from the GoC (AHSC, 2002). The conflict was eventually smoothed over after months of crisis meetings, but left a lasting distrust and resentment, particularly from VAN \textsubscript{Ab} members who felt the metagovernor did not respect their autonomy to set policy priorities and make investments (AHSC, 2002).

The metagovernance relationship between HRSDC and TO \textsubscript{Ab} has likewise been strained over the years, which has had an impact on the governance of the network. The most significant problem was that the relationship became volatile and tense from what several TO \textsubscript{Ab} members claimed were “culturally insensitive” metagovernors, who spoke down to

\footnotesize{28 There were no allegations or evidence of biased decision making or corruption under the previous regime, but rather that it was an insufficiently publicized and transparent process, and all relevant Aboriginal community organizations agreed that they should introduce more diversity into the decision making (Abbott, Personal Interview, July 15, 2012; Sanderson, Personal Interview, May 28, 2012; confidential, Personal Interview, July 10, 2012).}
Aboriginal community members and were inflexible in the supervision and management of the network (Abbott, Personal Interview, July 15, 2012; Sanderson, Personal Interview, May 28, 2012). The conflict and tension reached a ‘breaking point’ and “almost needed a mediator at one point when firm lines were drawn in the sand” by both sides (Sanderson). To the credit of GoC metagovernors, there was a breakthrough in the relationship with they “offered an olive branch by abandoning the rigid box” they had placed TOAb inside and instead “started to bend the box”, referring to the policy space in which TOAb could set priorities and allocate funds (Sanderson, Personal Interview, May 28, 2012).

Though most TOAb members claim that the relationship to the metagovernor is much better in recent years than in the past, there are several remaining issues they cite that hold them back from achieving their task of reducing Aboriginal homelessness in Toronto. First, many TOAb members are aggrieved that the City of Toronto (via TOmain) allocates 20% of their NHI/HPS funding stream towards Aboriginal programs and services, similar to VANmain, yet they have no role in the decision making regarding their Aboriginal priorities or allocations. The City of Toronto officials argue that other Aboriginal groups in Toronto participate in their priority setting, but many TOAb members contend that an exclusively Aboriginal group like theirs should be making decisions for Aboriginals in Toronto, as they do in Hamilton and most recently at VANmain in Vancouver (Abbott, Personal Interview, July 15, 2012; Sanderson, Personal Interview, May 28, 2012; Teekens, Personal Interview, June 25, 2012). A second grievance regarding the metagovernance of their activity is that when HRSDC sends an emissary to participate in TOAb meetings to provide information and advice, it sends junior officials “with no real power” (Sanderson, Personal Interview, May 28, 2012). All of the TOAb members are Executive Directors of their organizations who can make key decisions on behalf of their organizations at network meetings, yet the junior HRSDC representatives acting as metagovernors often do not have definite answers to community questions or are not in a position to give tentative approval to proposed TOAb activities.
**Third paired comparison: TO\textsubscript{emerg} and VAN\textsubscript{emerg} – bottom-up community-driven governance networks**

The final paired comparison of governance networks is concerned with the two governance networks that are rather distinct from the other four—and from themselves—but are united by their path to formation: from the bottom-up, by civil society, which has unique implications from a metagovernance perspective and important consequences for the governance of the network and its influence on public policy.

\textit{TO}\textsubscript{emerg}

\textit{TO}\textsubscript{emerg} was a governance network that formed in a bottom-up fashion, but formally linked into City Council decision structures, and was active from 1996 to 2006. \textit{TO}\textsubscript{emerg} originated from a group of community service providers and activists who, mobilized after a series of homeless deaths on the streets, demanded that the Metro Toronto Council issue emergency funds to stem the crisis on the streets (Crowe and German, Personal Interview, April 10, 2012). Metro Council was persuaded and formally established \textit{TO}\textsubscript{emerg}, to be co-chaired by a councillor and a community leader, to advise the Metro Council on how to allocate $600,000 of emergency funds. Shortly after its creation and more deaths on the street, the \textit{TO}\textsubscript{emerg} mandate expanded from advising staff and council on emergency issues to include prevention and long-term homelessness issues (ACHSIP, 2002). Metro Toronto Council, and then later Toronto City Council after amalgamation, institutionalized the governance network by inserting it in a reporting and decision making structure that fed into council subcommittees and then the full City Council. It was also equipped with policy analysts from the Metro and later city bureaucracy to conduct research, produce reports and to manage the network on a day-to-day basis (Emmanuel, Personal Interview, May 8, 2012).

The mandate of \textit{TO}\textsubscript{emerg} expanded over time from an emergency shelter focus to a broader advisory status on all issues related to homelessness in Toronto. It was tasked with advising staff and council on policies, programs, strategies and actions related to homelessness, and specifically review existing services, work to improve collaboration amongst community agencies, and promote long-term and prevention-oriented solutions
A key activity of TO\textsubscript{emerg} was to identify emerging issues members encountered ‘on the ground’ and to deliberate and present solutions to key bureaucratic and political decision makers. Much of this activity was taken seriously because it was linked into the council committee system, a key metagovernance feature that added credibility to the work of the network. TO\textsubscript{emerg} harnessed this legitimacy to gain audiences with councillors and high-level bureaucrats to push for their issues and educate them on the gaps in the system. TO\textsubscript{emerg} was as much an advocacy force to keep the community engaged and to help awareness spread by politicizing issues, as it was a policy-oriented network (Barry, Personal Interview, April 4, 2012; Emmanuel, Personal Interview, May 8, 2012).

In addition to a role in allocating funds, that an elected city councillor was the co-chair of TO\textsubscript{emerg} was also an enabling resource that brought many to the table, as it elevated the stature of the network and increased the perception that policy changes could be made (Kellen, Personal Interview, April 23, 2012; Crowe and German, Personal Interview, April 10, 2012; Barry, Personal Interview, April 4, 2012). An elected official leading the governance network had both practical and strategic benefits. The practical benefit was that issues and policies TO\textsubscript{emerg} wanted to advance could be brought to council and media with amplified attention (ACHSIP, 1998). Additionally, councillor leadership of TO\textsubscript{emerg} also legitimized the activity and advice of the network to such an extent that senior bureaucrats would routinely appear in front of them to explain proposed policy changes and seek advice and endorsement (ACHSIP, 1998, 1999, 2002, 2003). According, to one former member, TO\textsubscript{emerg} “would have done nothing of consequence without the councillor co-chair”, in part because of the skillful leadership of councillors, as well as its place as a committee of council, providing it an institutional basis (Barry, Personal Interview, April 4, 2012). This dimension of metagovernance that stresses agency is the defining feature for most former members of TO\textsubscript{emerg} and powerfully explains both its surprising level of influence on homelessness policy, as well as its demise.

Jack Layton was the councillor co-chair of TO\textsubscript{emerg} from 1996 until his resignation from City Council in 2002. Former members recall that Layton was masterful in this
metagovernance role: he had immense trust in the community (and most importantly among the radical elements), yet also learned over the years how to most effectively gain unlikely allies (Barry, Personal Interview, April 4, 2012). The importance of the councillor co-chair from the perspective of metagovernance comes into even clearer view when Jack Layton left council in 2002 and was replaced by Councillor Jane Pitfield, a conservative councillor with a distinct vision with respect to homelessness issues and solutions. Pitfield did not enjoy the trust of the majority of the community members of TO\textsubscript{emerg} from the beginning given her positions on the issues, but also lost whatever goodwill she enjoyed by how she metagoverned the network. Trust began to unravel when Pitfield would lose policy debates within the governance network, and then refuse to bring forward the majority position to council (Kellen, Personal Interview, April 23, 2012; Crowe and German, Personal Interview, April 10, 2012; confidential, Personal interview, December 2, 2011). Conflict reached a breaking point when Councillor Pitfield advanced an anti-panhandling by-law at council, which was so offensive and counter-productive to many community members of TO\textsubscript{emerg} that they marshaled together 28 of 32 members to declare no confidence in her (ACHSIP, 2006). This had no effect because the metagovernor was put in place by Council, not TO\textsubscript{emerg}, at which point many of the community members resigned in protest and never returned, and the governance network was disbanded.

\textit{VAN\textsubscript{emerg}}

VAN\textsubscript{emerg}—formally called the Greater Vancouver Shelter Strategy—is a regional network of community service providers and local and provincial government representatives in Metro Vancouver working together to develop and implement a continuum of accessible shelter services in response to local needs. Its work initially focused on periods of inclement weather, but over time expanded the mandate to shelter issues more broadly (GVSS, 2010). In contrast to all of the other networks under investigation, it does not directly allocate funds, but rather is a policy planning and

\footnote{One illustrative example: Mayor Lastman famously declared that there were absolutely no homeless people in North York, thus precluding the need for investment. Layton knew this to be false, but rather than castigate him in public, in private he presented him the evidence, convinced him he made a mistake, and that he could make the controversy go away by seriously getting behind the work of TO\textsubscript{emerg} (Barry, Personal Interview, April 4, 2012).}
coordination network of civil society and government actors. VAN\textsubscript{emerg} meets from 8-12 times per year, and more frequently in subcommittees and engages in policy planning and service coordination for the shelter system as a whole, periods of extreme weather, and the evaluation of services (GVSS, 2011). A key coordination task of VAN\textsubscript{emerg} has been to assist local governments in Metro Vancouver plan and implement Extreme Weather Response (EWR) protocols by bringing together shelter providers and government officials covering fourteen municipalities, a key achievement given that the City of Vancouver was the only municipality in Metro Vancouver with protocols prior to VAN\textsubscript{emerg} formation.

While not an allocator of funds, VAN\textsubscript{emerg} nonetheless requires metagovernance resources to bring the various actors together, to marshal data, to issue reports, and to coordinate the activities of the several dozen shelter providers in Metro Vancouver. Historically, the provincial government via the BC Housing Crown agency has been a core source of funding for VAN\textsubscript{emerg}, providing both funds to operationalize the network, as well as in-kind contributions in the form of administrative tasks, meeting space, and the production and analysis of statistics for VAN\textsubscript{emerg} and shelter sector.\footnote{VAN\textsubscript{emerg} also obtains funds to assist with its planning and coordinating functions from local governments in Metro Vancouver, charitable foundations like the Vancouver Foundation, United Way, and Central City Mission Foundation.} The effective metagovernor for VAN\textsubscript{emerg} therefore is BC Housing (BCH) because it is responsible for the policy issues that motivate the activity of VAN\textsubscript{emerg} and is a critical member of VAN\textsubscript{emerg} that allows it to be effective. There are two principal means through which VAN\textsubscript{emerg} influences policy vis-à-vis the metagovernor: (i) responding to, and implementing, BCH policy, and (ii) shaping BCH policy development.

Though BCH does not in a formal sense ‘control’ VAN\textsubscript{emerg} activity, it is able to steer some of its activity by virtue of their keystone role in the shelter sector, as well as its portion of funding of VAN\textsubscript{emerg} activity. BCH as metagovernor is a key member of the network, involved in all VAN\textsubscript{emerg} meetings and important subcommittees, effectively steering the network from the inside. Steering is done informally compared to the other networks which also have bureaucrats involved in the network, but also with
administrative structures like contribution agreements\(^{31}\) and other contracts to keep the network activity in a space controllable by the metagovernor. The metagovernance relationship is enhanced with VAN\(_{\text{emerg}}\) and BCH because high-level BCH bureaucrats who serve as metagovernors were previously employed by agencies associated with VAN\(_{\text{emerg}}\), and thus understand the internal dynamics and have high trust relations with VAN\(_{\text{emerg}}\) members (Anhorn, Personal Interview, January 24, 2012; Graves, Personal Interview, January 10, 2012).

**Metagovernance lessons**

The analysis of the six homelessness governance networks in this chapter through the lens of metagovernance has identified several key lessons about the metagovernance of networks and specifically how its origins and evolution shape its governance and policy potential. Two dimensions of metagovernance in particular stand out as important mediating variables with respect to shaping the stability and performance of a governance network, and are captured in Table 4.2 below: (i) the institutional policy space—or autonomy—of the network and (ii) the metagovernor leadership—whether the agents of metagovernance engage in cooperative or contentious politics. With respect to institutional policy space, the governance network can be given relatively open policy space, operating in a relatively unconstrained manner allowing it to fill such space—or alternatively can be given a constrained mandate within limited policy space. The metagovernor leadership dimension captures how *the agency* of those metagoverning and their methods of steering can powerfully structure network activities to productive ends if they are cooperative, or alternatively can result in serious disruption and conflict if they are contentious. The metagovernance context therefore has both structure and agency dimensions that shape the performance and stability of the governance network.

---

31 Contribution agreements are legal documents that set out the terms and expectations between the Crown and the receiving agency or party for the use of state funds for a defined purpose. As the typical purveyor of funds, the Crown has leverage to shape the behavior of agencies.
Table 4.2: Metagovernance categories of theoretical consequence.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Metagovernor leadership (agency)</th>
<th>Institutional policy space (structure)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>narrow</td>
<td>expansive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cooperative</td>
<td><em>Administrative</em> metagovernance (e.g. TO$_{main}$)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>contentious</td>
<td><em>Straitjacket</em> metagovernance (e.g. TO$<em>{Abs}$, VAN$</em>{Ab}$)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Dynamic</em> metagovernance (e.g. VAN$<em>{main}$, VAN$</em>{emerg}$, TO$_{emerg}$—Layton)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Volatile</em> metagovernance (e.g. TO$_{emerg}$—Pitfield)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.2 places the six governance networks into four inductively generated categories that capture the critical dimensions of the metagovernance context under which the governance networks operate. The typology created is descriptive in terms of differentiating the six governance networks under investigation, but also has theoretical implications for network governance theory. The first category—*administrative metagovernance*—is a governance network that operates within a constrained or narrow mandate and the metagovernance leadership is cooperative and pragmatic, which is the metagovernance context under which TO$_{main}$ operates. TO$_{main}$ does not have much scope of decision making and has limited autonomy from its metagovernor, the City of Toronto. And the metagovernance leadership specified in formal and practical terms facilitates a stable network in terms of function and productivity.

The second category—*dynamic metagovernance*—is a governance network that is afforded a relatively unconstrained mandate in terms of what activities it is permitted to engage in by the metagovernor, and with which there is a cooperative relationship among metagovernor leadership and governance network members. VAN$_{main}$ and VAN$_{emerg}$ exist in a metagovernance context that best resembles this category. While the metagovernor retains a steering function, it allows the network to paddle as strongly or leisurely as it chooses, which shapes the ultimate destination. The accountability structures in this context serve to monitor activity, but do not suffocate the network activity. The result is a metagovernance context in which the governance network is
permitted policy space within which to explore new terrain, but not drive off a cliff, figuratively speaking.

The third category—*straitjacket metagovernance*—is a governance network that is given a constrained or narrow mandate and is characterized by a contentious metagovernance leadership (vis-à-vis network actors), which is the context of both of the Aboriginal homelessness governance networks. Both have existed in a metagovernance context that highly constrained their activities and engendered profound conflict. $\text{TO}_{\text{Ab}}$ and $\text{VAN}_{\text{Ab}}$ governance networks, by virtue of their design by their metagovernor, exist in a relatively narrow policy space such that the scope of their activity is highly constrained. And coupled with strained personal relationships between the metagovernor and network over how it is managed, the result in that these governance networks, by virtue of their metagovernance context, seem to hobble along rather than thrive.

The final category—*volatile metagovernance*—is a governance network afforded a relatively unconstrained mandate, but is characterized by contentious metagovernance leadership, which is the context of $\text{TO}_{\text{emerg}}$ in the Pitfield years. This governance network operated in an expansive policy space granted by the City. Yet $\text{TO}_{\text{emerg}}$ provides perhaps the clearest evidence of the power of metagovernance leadership in stabilizing or destabilizing network activities. Not only did Jack Layton, serving as metagovernor, help carve out policy space for the network within city decision making structures, but also skillfully brokered the demands of very diverse civil society and government actors and channeled them to productive ends, making the metagovernance context more akin to *dynamic metagovernance* from 1996-2003. Yet when the metagovernance context unraveled with a change in leadership from Layton to Jane Pitfield—who did not command a similar respect and authority from many network members and the broader policy community—$\text{TO}_{\text{emerg}}$ rapidly devolved into chaos before dissolving entirely. Thus what was once a thriving and influential governance network descended into disarray as a direct result of the changing metagovernance leadership patterns.
Why are these descriptive categories important in terms of theory? As established in this chapter, a governance network does not exist in a vacuum—its path to formation, mandate, structure, membership, and accountability mechanisms are always shaped by existing (and evolving) institutional structures and metagovernor actors which can have a substantial impact on the policy outputs of a governance network. That is, two similar governance networks that differ only in their metagovernance context can have a profound effect on their ability to drive policy innovation, sensitivity and coordination. It is not simply the internal features of the governance network that shape its potential to drive policy innovation, for example, but also its metagovernance context, which is rarely explicitly articulated in network governance research. This is critical to understand and conceptualize as we proceed to investigate with empirics the relationship between network structure and dynamics with policy innovation, sensitivity and coordination over time.

Figure 4.2 captures in the clearest sense the potential for the metagovernance context to shape the policy outputs in governance networks. Holding the internal properties of the network constant—its institutionalization and inclusiveness—I contend that dynamic metagovernance will contribute to high policy innovation, sensitivity and coordination, given the wide policy space granted and the cooperative metagovernor leadership patterns. Yet if we placed that same governance network in a straitjacket metagovernance context, policy innovation, sensitivity and coordination outputs would be dramatically reduced, as the governance network would be heavily constrained and contentious.
Yet if we consider the other two types of metagovernance context possible under this scheme in Figure 4.3, we see that the effect on policy output is less credibility theorized in such uniform terms. *Administrative metagovernance* is characterized by a narrow mandate or policy space under which the governance network operates, so we might expect that policy innovation would be stifled, but the cooperative metagovernance leadership dimension would contribute to policy coordination by effectively steering the network to coherent policy outputs. But it could just as well contribute to policy innovation in the narrow space within which it operates. Imagining that same governance network in a *volatile metagovernance* context, however, may change the policy output trajectory, though in similarly contingent terms. Part of what makes a metagovernance context ‘volatile’ is the expansive policy space granted to the network, which is more likely to contribute to policy innovation since the network is not confined to a narrow policy space. But the governance network could also be so saddled with contentious metagovernance leadership that it is in such disarray that policy innovations are stifled.
As such, administrative and volatile metagovernance are more contingent theoretical categories, the causal effect of which needs more empirical examination.

Figure 4.3: Administrative and volatile metagovernance, in theoretical terms.

Conclusion
This chapter has drawn on the metagovernance concept to illustrate how the governance networks were created, the tasks to which they are charged, and to whom they are accountable places them in a particular space in the policy process. Indeed the metagovernance context of a governance network can tell us something about the possibilities and limitations of its role in the policy process—and thus its potential to drive policy innovation, sensitivity and coordination. The empirics and conceptual development presented in this chapter demonstrate that the six homelessness governance networks differ in terms of metagovernance in theoretically interesting ways. The evidence from this chapter suggests that the congruence of the metagovernor leadership
patterns vis-à-vis network membership has an important effect on the stability of the governance network and thus its ability to shape policy development. Equally importantly, the network mandate sets critical limits of the activities of the governance networks.

With the historical development of the six governance networks presented through the lens of the metagovernance concept, we are now in a position to examine the relationship between the properties and dynamics of the governance networks and policy development—specifically policy innovation, sensitivity, and coordination—in the next three chapters, respectively.
Chapter 5: Policy Innovation and Governance Networks

Introduction
This chapter represents the first of three in which I explore the relationship between the properties of governance networks and policy development, beginning with policy innovation. Policy innovation is defined as the creation or importation of experimental policies that break from conventional approaches to addressing a policy problem. The connection between governance networks and policy innovation rests on the theoretical premise that the inclusion of new and diverse actors in an institutionalized space in the policy process can reset conventional thinking and practices on a policy issue (Considine et al., 2009; Borins, 2008). An early meta-analysis of studies on policy innovation by Damanpour (1991) found that innovation was stifled by a high degree of centralization in the decision making process (see also Crouch et al., 2004, Lundvall, 1992). Yet others have warned us of the perils of joint-decision traps and lowest common denominator decision making when many actors are involved (Klijn and Koopenjan, 2004; Scarpf, 1997).

This study seeks to make empirical contributions and theoretical refinements to this disputed area of public policy and administration research. Policy innovation is also a key criterion for an effective response to homelessness (Gaetz, 2010; Shapcott, 2001). Funding more shelter spaces, coordinating food banks and clean socks programs are not ‘innovative’ (though they are clearly needed), while mobile homeless outreach, safe-injection sites, and low-barrier shelters are ‘innovative’ because they break from the conventional policy response, shifting from ‘managing’ homelessness to reducing it, which is the trend we see in Vancouver.

Recall from Chapter 2 that the first hypothesis investigated in this study is that more institutionalized and more inclusive governance networks will generate or contribute to more innovative policy, reproduced in Figure 5.1 below. We expect this because if the network is more inclusive, diverse perspectives and identification of emerging trends will
be advanced, and if it is more institutionalized, it will be more integrated into decision structures that have levers to implement innovative policies and programs.

**Figure 5.1: Hypothesized linkages between network institutionalization and inclusivity and policy dimensions of interest.**

Through pair-wise analysis the following hypothesis is tested: more institutionalized and more inclusive governance networks will generate more innovative policy:

\[
\text{VAN}_{\text{main}} > \text{TO}_{\text{main}}
\]

\[
\text{VAN}_{\text{Ab}} > \text{TO}_{\text{Ab}}
\]

\[
\text{TO}_{\text{emerg}} > \text{VAN}_{\text{emerg}}
\]

How we track policy innovation must on one hand be standardized to allow for meaningful comparative assessment, but it must also be acknowledged that policy change occurs in various ways—it can mean changes in legislation, regulations or funding priorities, and ways of organizing the collective response to homelessness. Thus policy innovation can be both output- and process-oriented (Considine et al., 2009)—innovations in the organization of the sector and modes of decision making are as relevant as legislative and regulatory policy outputs. We must also identify innovative policy that did not occur primarily because of governance network activity, but rather by traditional bureaucratic and elected official channels, in order to establish the appropriate scope of empirical claims. Policy innovations were identified by triangulating legislation, policy statements, meeting archives, and interviews with key stakeholders at all levels of government and civil society.
Evidence from Vancouver and Toronto demonstrates that governance networks contribute substantially to policy innovation, compared to city bureaucracies and elected officials—even though there are certainly innovations from the latter. To clear: this is not an either or proposition that governance networks generate innovative policy and traditional decision making structures do not—clearly policy innovations are possible through traditional decision making structures, but the task is to isolate the extent to which governance networks drive innovation in policy. The chapter proceeds with comparative pair-wise analysis\(^{32}\) of the six governance networks and their contributions to policy innovation, summarized in Table 5.2. The analysis demonstrates that more institutionalized and inclusive networks have generated more substantive and numerous innovative policies and approaches to homelessness.

---

\(^{32}\) As articulated in Chapter 1, the six network governance cases were selected to allow for controlled comparison not only between Vancouver and Toronto writ-large, but also within the homelessness policy community in each city. That is, each governance network studied in Vancouver is analyzed in relation its analogue in Toronto, which is determined by shared mandates. The pair-wise comparison—VAN\(_{\text{main}}\)→TO\(_{\text{main}}\), VAN\(_{\text{Ab}}\)→TO\(_{\text{Ab}}\), VAN\(_{\text{emerg}}\)→TO\(_{\text{emerg}}\)—allows us to control for variation in mandates, expenditures, and policy space, while isolating network structure variation as the key theoretical variable of interest as we track policy and program differences in the respective cities.
Policy innovation: $\text{VAN}_{\text{main}}$ and $\text{TO}_{\text{main}}$

As depicted in Table 5.2, when compared against each other, $\text{VAN}_{\text{main}}$ exhibits more numerous and substantive policy innovations in the past 15 years than $\text{TO}_{\text{main}}$. Policy innovation in the form of new governance approaches or ways of organizing the sector is profound with regard to $\text{VAN}_{\text{main}}$. The major innovation was the reconceptualization of the homelessness problem in Vancouver in regional terms, manifested in the region-wide homelessness policy plan. That is, “homelessness was not just a [City of] Vancouver problem” or even more narrowly as a Downtown Eastside (DTES) problem, which was the dominant frame prior to this reconceptualization (C. Maboules, Personal Interview, January 6, 2012). Many $\text{VAN}_{\text{main}}$ members when interviewed point to this...
reconceptualization as one of the earliest and most powerful innovations of VAN\textsubscript{main} (Semotuk, Personal Interview, October 12, 2011; Sundberg, Personal Interview, October 13, 2011; O’Shannacery, Personal Interview, October 12, 2011; C. Maboules, Personal Interview, January 6, 2012). The regional reconceptualization “is actually an innovation…because the region was otherwise quite fragmented institutionally” (Greenwell, Personal Interview, January 23, 2012) where “no (other) local government was willing to admit the magnitude of the problem in the Lower Mainland” (Okyere, Personal Interview, October 11, 2011).

Not only was the problem no longer simply a DTES issue, but the “regional dimension and organization brought [even more] community people to the table because its scope was big and the potential to create change was big” (O’Shannacery, Personal Interview, October 12, 2011). The most concrete manifestation on a policy level of this new governance innovation was that prior to the VAN\textsubscript{main}, no municipalities had homelessness plans, whereas by 2012 nearly all municipalities had an explicit strategy—“few deny homelessness in their Metro Vancouver community; that’s a radical change that I really do believe [VAN\textsubscript{main}] has driven, which means they have raised awareness at both the staff levels and the political levels in the municipalities” (Anhorn, Personal Interview, January 24, 2012). This policy innovation is directly related to the positive homelessness outcome trends we see in Metro Vancouver—over time we have seen services and programs shift from a downtown, emergency bias towards a balanced regional coverage of services that avoids pulling individuals out of their home communities into the DTES (Okyere, Personal Interview, October 11, 2011).

Another governance innovation with policy implications at VAN\textsubscript{main} is the formation of the Metro Vancouver Funder’s Table. This idea was the result of learning from Calgary’s experience—the Calgary Homeless Foundation is similar to VAN\textsubscript{main} in terms of institutionalization and inclusivity, but also brings together government and charitable funders in the city to better leverage the money spent in the homelessness sector. Led by

33 Until this point, it was only the City of Vancouver that took homelessness seriously at the local government level, while the other twenty municipalities in Metro Vancouver had no official policy and offered few, if any, services.
VAN\textsubscript{main}, the major funding players in the region, including VAN\textsubscript{main}, Vancity Community Foundation, the Streetohome Foundation, Surrey Homelessness and Housing Fund, BC Housing, and Service Canada (GoC) meet four times per year to coordinate their homelessness response. The purported benefit of the Metro Vancouver Funder’s Table is not only be a more centralized site to more strategically align homelessness funding, but also to work together “to generate supplementary resources to address homelessness” (RSCH, 2012).

TO\textsubscript{main}, a much less institutionalized and inclusive network, by contrast has not contributed to new governance approaches or ways of organizing the sector in Toronto. Whereas in Metro Vancouver there was a vacuum of governance and policy activity and thus an opening to grab policy space, in Toronto city bureaucrats quickly placed TO\textsubscript{main} into a relatively narrow policy-planning box. As such, the fairest comparison to VAN\textsubscript{main} in this context is the City of Toronto bureaucracy (in terms of generating policy innovations), since it controls the important governance levers and TO\textsubscript{main} is in practice more of a consultative network than a governance network. One TO\textsubscript{main} member confirms that in terms of policy development, they “are basically presented with a fait accompli [from the bureaucracy], with some opportunity to comment, but the important decisions have already been made” (confidential, Personal Interview, December 12, 2011).\textsuperscript{34} TO\textsubscript{main} is thus distinct from most other local homelessness governance networks in the country created by the NHI by having its wings clipped so early in the process, and as a result has not had an identifiable influence on governance approaches or ways of organizing the sector in Toronto. Though it formally advises the City of Toronto on the approximately $18 million per year of funds it receives from the federal government (but does not make decisions), it has a low profile in the community and has not contributed governance innovations in terms of how the sector is organized like we see in Vancouver.

\textsuperscript{34} City of Toronto bureaucrats defend these actions by claiming that much community consultation had been done by the time TO\textsubscript{main} was mandated to be created by the federal government to access the NHI/HPS dollars, through the Golden Task Force and the numerous service planning reference groups at the City (confidential, Personal Interview, July 23, 2012).
In terms of policy innovations that are characterized by new or pioneering policies or regulations being introduced, there are once again differences between VAN\textsubscript{main} and TO\textsubscript{main} (and the City of Toronto bureaucracy). One of the earliest policy choices made by VAN\textsubscript{main} was to introduce a ‘Homeless Count’ across the region every three years in order to better understand the scale of the problem demographically and regionally to assist with policy planning and program evaluation. The first Homeless Count in 2002 was one of the first counts in Canada, and has since been replicated in cities throughout the country. The Homeless Count is a one-night snapshot capturing the number of homeless in the region by sending hundreds of volunteers out into the streets and shelters to count and collect demographic and situational data from homeless individuals.\textsuperscript{35} The count is important not just for smart planning purposes—where to direct funds—but also in terms of generating awareness in municipalities outside of the City of Vancouver that homeless people do exist in their area and thus citizens and political actors become less able to credibly deny a policy problem. That nearly 30\% of the street homeless population was situated in the suburb of Surrey in the 2005 Homeless Count sent a powerful message to the surrounding municipalities that this was not in fact just a problem in the DTES of Vancouver. Following the 2005 count, homelessness suddenly became the number one issue to municipal voters in the region, and has remained as such in the 2008 and 2011 local elections (Anhorn, Personal Interview, January 24, 2012).

The City of Toronto followed the lead of Vancouver and other North American cities with its own systematic homeless count in 2006, called a “Street Needs Assessment” (SNA) and has been replicated every three or so years. Unlike Metro Vancouver where it is entirely conceptualized and executed by VAN\textsubscript{main}, the Toronto SNA was not driven by TO\textsubscript{main}, but rather by the City of Toronto bureaucracy in consultation with a select number of civil society representatives (SNA, 2009). This example reveals a common theme with respect to homelessness governance networks in Toronto. The City bureaucracy controls all streams of government funding towards homelessness in a consolidated department—Shelter, Supports and Housing Administration (SSHA)—

\textsuperscript{35} It is widely accepted that these counts systematically under-estimate the homeless population, but nonetheless help decision makers understand key trend lines and demographic information about the target population.
which is willing to consult with the community, but retains the authoritative role in centrally planning and executing homelessness policy and programs. TO\textsubscript{main} is not sufficiently institutionalized (by design) to yield any substantial impact on policy or the allocation of resources. The difference between consultation and network governance is subtle, but real. Consultative networks like TO\textsubscript{main} allow for diverse perspectives to be communicated to government decision makers, whereas governance networks like VAN\textsubscript{main} embody a diverse and more collective process of problem definition, deliberations on appropriate solutions, and a creative collaboration and exchange of ideas for new approaches to create change in the sector.

Additional policy innovations from VAN\textsubscript{main} reinforce this difference in governance network institutionalization between VAN\textsubscript{main} and TO\textsubscript{main}. An innovation for which many VAN\textsubscript{main} members point to is their creation and execution of an annual Homelessness Action Week (HAW) in 2006. HAW is an event requiring months of planning at VAN\textsubscript{main} and engagement from the broader policy and service community, and involves creating media events and information sessions throughout Metro Vancouver to raise awareness of the issue of homelessness, in addition to a massive mobilization of pop-up service tents across the region. In the early years the principal goals were to obtain municipal proclamations of HAW to generate local government policy momentum, but now it has grown into a much more ambitious endeavor.\footnote{For example, they have organized or supported documentaries of homelessness experiences, advertising campaigns, educational video games for high schools, and engagement with Business Improvement Associations (BIAs).} The scale of this operation is one-of-a-kind in Canada and has had several tangible policy implications. First, HAW in Metro Vancouver led the premier to adopt HAW province-wide in 2007 and every year thereafter. Second, a new permanent drop-in centre was launched in Burnaby (historically a difficult suburb to gain traction on homelessness issues) directly as a result of the 2006 HAW (RSCH, 2006). Third, in the 2008 HAW introduced an innovation from San Francisco called Project Connect, a pop-up service that offers homeless persons a one-stop shop to access to services needed—hundreds were served in the first year of Project Connect in Vancouver.\footnote{Project Connect is about direct and rapid service provision, not simply referrals, and VAN\textsubscript{main} created a manual and support to community agencies wanting to create a Project Connect event.}
Policy innovation can also be measured according to the investments made by the governance networks in terms of services offered to persons homeless or at-risk of homelessness. In Toronto, this is where we find the central policy innovation during the period under study: the much-lauded Streets to Home (S2H) program was piloted in 2005 (and expanded in 2008). The S2H program is ‘housing-first’ model emphasizing outreach to get the street homeless into housing as a first stabilizing step, at which point supportive services are offered (the traditional model was the reverse: people need to be stabilized before being put into permanent housing). It is difficult to overstate how important was this innovation, initially piloted in New York City, since it turned on its head the dominant philosophy on how to address homelessness: individuals should first be rapidly re-housed as the best way to stabilize their lives, rather than meet behavioral or other standards in order to be placed in housing. The main mechanism to rapidly rehouse homeless individuals is through mobile multi-disciplinary outreach teams to locate and connect with the chronically homeless and provide them with rent subsidies to find housing in the private rental market with cooperation from landlords.\(^3^8\)

The S2H program was effective in its goal to reduce the number of chronically homeless individuals on the street, reducing the number by 50% in just three years, though in subsequent years the numbers returned to 2006 highs (SNA, 2009; SNA, 2013). Yet TO\(_{\text{main}}\) in Toronto is connected to the S2H innovation only in a tangential sense: the federal government funds for which TO\(_{\text{main}}\) formally advises the City of Toronto on first supported the pilot program and now funds a considerable share of the expanded program (City of Toronto, 2010). The City of Toronto bureaucracy really drove this policy innovation based on evaluations from NYC (confidential, Personal Interview, July 23, 2012) and in fact was controversial within parts of the community, namely due to the fact that a rent subsidies model to house individuals will necessarily pull individuals outside.

\(^3^8\) It should also be noted that a policy innovation in one city might not be appropriate for another, depending the economic features of the city. For example, S2H would be much less effective in Vancouver because it uses a rental subsidy model, which is most effective in a context of relatively high rental vacancy rate in the private rental housing market. The private market rental vacancy rate in Toronto was 4.3% in 2005 when the program was launched, whereas in Metro Vancouver it was 1.4%, and 0.7% in the City of Vancouver, making a S2H model much less attractive (Falvo, 2010; CHMC, 2011).
of the downtown core where housing is cheaper, but where there are few services that will help them stabilize their lives.

In terms of innovations in the investments made by VAN\textsubscript{main}, there are two general categories of new homeless services that are directly traceable to its activities: a willingness to fund ‘risky’ programs or services and the first to fund Extreme Weather Response (EWR) in the region. In terms of a willingness to fund ‘riskier’ programs, several VAN\textsubscript{main} members who have served on the decision teams for funding allocations have suggested that VAN\textsubscript{main} has been willing to take a chance on less proven service models and organizations that a bureaucracy would be unwilling to do (Ninow, Personal Interview, January 4, 2012).\footnote{I interpret these claims to be credible because they were made by bureaucrats who know the analogous decision processes at their home government.} Additionally, a BC Housing bureaucrat was even more direct, suggesting that VAN\textsubscript{main} was able to pilot initiatives that were seen as far too risky for BCH to fund, and after the risky projects were executed, it “shaped BC Housing’s thinking—it just lessened the risks, and made it more [feasible] for us to go in [to expand such service models]” (Anhorn, Personal Interview, January 24, 2012).\footnote{An illustrative example of this type of innovation from VAN\textsubscript{main} is that they were the first to fund Extreme Weather Response (EWR) planning in the region, a policy first conceptualized by VAN\textsubscript{emerg} (Anhorn, Personal Interview, January 24, 2012). The EWR was a policy innovation from VAN\textsubscript{emerg} designed to get Metro Vancouver municipalities to create community plans and protocols for occasions of extreme (cold) weather, which would typically mean the provision of additional emergency shelter space for street homeless to shield them from inclement weather. This was made possible in part by the aforementioned willingness of VAN\textsubscript{main} membership to fund innovative projects and programs, but also because VAN\textsubscript{main} and VAN\textsubscript{emerg} have a close working relationship, each with envoys at the respective network. That VAN\textsubscript{main} was the first to fund EWR in the region may seem unremarkable in a narrow sense, but bureaucrats at BCH confirm that prior to this, like the other innovations, EWR was not feasible in the BCH as an untested mechanism, but then its piloting by VAN\textsubscript{main} (with VAN\textsubscript{emerg} driving it) allowed BCH to later pick it up and fund it more substantially (Anhorn, Personal Interview, January 24, 2012).} This pattern was not evident in the Toronto case, as interview respondents claimed that the city bureaucracy was impenetrable and risk-averse. The different variable in VAN\textsubscript{main} versus traditional bureaucratic-driven decision making in the TO\textsubscript{main} context, for example, is that the decision makers are a diverse set of community and government actors, and community members tend to be much less risk-averse than government bureaucrats in these settings.
Policy innovation: \( \text{VAN}_{\text{Ab}} \) and \( \text{TO}_{\text{Ab}} \)

The Aboriginal homelessness governance networks in Vancouver and Toronto are especially important to track in terms of policy, given the principle of Aboriginal self-governance, but also because of the claims that the unique needs of the Aboriginal homeless population will not be understood adequately by non-Aboriginal bureaucrats and elected officials (Ward, 2008). Both \( \text{VAN}_{\text{Ab}} \) and \( \text{TO}_{\text{Ab}} \) were created as mandated under the federal NHI program, and like \( \text{VAN}_{\text{main}} \) and \( \text{TO}_{\text{main}} \), they are responsible for determining the homelessness policy priorities in the community and allocating expenditures. \( \text{VAN}_{\text{Ab}} \) and \( \text{TO}_{\text{Ab}} \) thus share a similar origin and mandate, yet \( \text{VAN}_{\text{Ab}} \) has a much larger membership than \( \text{TO}_{\text{Ab}} \).

\( \text{VAN}_{\text{Ab}} \) has several innovative features with respect to new governance approaches or ways of organizing the sector. First, like \( \text{VAN}_{\text{main}} \), \( \text{VAN}_{\text{Ab}} \) is regional in scope, which at the time of creation was a new conceptualization of homelessness in Metro Vancouver. Though City of Vancouver-focused Aboriginal community representatives dominate \( \text{VAN}_{\text{Ab}} \), it has framed its policy work and administered allocations in regional terms. Second, \( \text{VAN}_{\text{Ab}} \) created the first ever Aboriginal community plan to address homelessness in Metro Vancouver, despite not being required to by the Government of Canada under the NHI program. This is new, but perhaps not innovative; the real innovation comes in terms of how the community plan was conceptualized and presented to the public. The Community Plan (to address homelessness) templates offered by the GoC to communities was considered inappropriate to \( \text{VAN}_{\text{Ab}} \) members, many of whom thought it was too technocratic, sterile and inaccessible to their constituents (Stewart, personal interview, January 12, 2012). As such, \( \text{VAN}_{\text{Ab}} \) crafted a Community Plan in narrative form, telling a story about how homelessness has affected the community and articulating the policy priorities \( \text{VAN}_{\text{Ab}} \) identified as most important. At ten pages, it is concise, clear and powerful—in distinct contrast to the impenetrable GoC community plan templates and forms that extend far beyond one hundred pages with several appendices.\(^{41}\)

\(^{41}\) This is important to the extent that one can imagine an overburdened Aboriginal service provider reading and engaging with the community plan, which conversely is difficult to imagine with the non-Aboriginal community plans to end homelessness.
The other governance-based innovation with clear policy implications by VAN\textsubscript{Ab} is the flexibility with which the governance network solicits homelessness program proposals from Aboriginal community agencies. VAN\textsubscript{Ab} recognizes that many Aboriginal community agencies are very small and lack capacity to generate sophisticated program proposals that would be deemed impressive to policy professionals, and as a result they have changed their process to be more accessible to Aboriginal community service providers. One major innovation is that they invite Aboriginal agencies that submitted homelessness program proposals to VAN\textsubscript{Ab} to an informal interview with VAN\textsubscript{Ab} governance network members, which allows them to orally communicate their arguments for the need for the proposed program and humanize the process by having a discussion among program proponents and decision makers. VAN\textsubscript{Ab} leadership feels that these modifications are more consistent with Aboriginal oral traditions, and also serve to help Aboriginal organizations with a lower capacity to generate professional program proposals, allowing VAN\textsubscript{Ab} members to assess the programs more clearly on the potential benefit to the Aboriginal homeless population (rather than an organizational capacity to produce a sophisticated program proposal).

TO\textsubscript{Ab} has not engaged in radical process-oriented governance innovations like the introduction of interviews of service agencies proposing programs, but it has adopted a much more flexible policy with regard to funding Aboriginal homelessness programs in Toronto. It should be noted that when assessing the Aboriginal governance networks, the most valuable comparison is not so much each other (VAN\textsubscript{Ab} vs. TO\textsubscript{Ab}), but rather a comparison to a situation in which none of these Aboriginal governance networks existed with all Aboriginal homelessness policies prioritized and programs funded through city bureaucracies. In this regard, TO\textsubscript{Ab} is a much more lean and flexible decision making structure than that of the city (or any bureaucracy). TO\textsubscript{Ab} will, for example, accept program proposals on an on-going basis from Aboriginal community agencies, not just during a funding cycle characteristic of bureaucracies. Not only does this policy recognize that community organizations ideas and needs do not always align with funding patterns suitable for government, but it also means that it can very quickly turn
around a decision on a program proposal. According to one long-time TO\textsubscript{Ab} member, it can cut right through the proposal and that conversely,

The problem with the City, [is that] they don't know [the Aboriginal housing and services agencies] and they don't know our capacity to deliver a program. We do know our capacity. And so, when [Aboriginal agencies] bring the proposal, it is usually two or three pages, that's it. (Sanderson, Personal Interview, May 28, 2012)

In terms of innovations that are new policies to the jurisdiction, VAN\textsubscript{Ab} in Vancouver shares credit with VAN\textsubscript{main} (and VAN\textsubscript{emerg}) for contributing to innovations brought forth from the Homeless Count in Metro Vancouver and the Homeless Action Week (HAW). All three governance networks work in partnership to make these now-institutionalized policies as comprehensive and influential as they are. The VAN\textsubscript{Ab} contribution is particularly helpful in the Homeless Count, which is formally a product of VAN\textsubscript{main}, but it provides advice and operational assistance to the coordinators who execute the count in ways sensitive to Aboriginal experiences. VAN\textsubscript{Ab} is also a central part of the dissemination and articulation of the results. VAN\textsubscript{Ab} also has developed a strong presence at HAW events in recent years, including an innovative Project Connect event that involved pop-up one-stop service provision, but also more generally in ensuring that that Aboriginal homelessness experience was prominent in the week’s events.

TO\textsubscript{Ab} does not have a formal role in the production of the Toronto homeless count, called the Street Needs Assessment (SNA). There is also no equivalent to a HAW in Toronto to which TO\textsubscript{Ab} could contribute. Yet TO\textsubscript{Ab} has been innovative within its own (albeit narrow) policy space. Just as with VAN\textsubscript{main} and to a lesser extent VAN\textsubscript{Ab}, there is evidence that TO\textsubscript{Ab} allocates resources to Aboriginal organizations and homelessness program models that would be considered “too risky” by bureaucrats because the organization does not have the perceived capacity or experience to effectively execute the program, or that their program proposal was not sophisticated enough to be competitive with organizations that have professional grant writers (e.g. United Way, Salvation Army, etc.). This is manifested not only in how TO\textsubscript{Ab} members appear to conceptualize the problem of homelessness and the appropriate solutions, but also in the very tangible sense of how they allocate expenditures.
As an observer in nearly a dozen TO_{Ab} meetings during the 2011-2013 period, it is clear that in both respects there are clear differences between TO_{Ab} members and bureaucrats. There are numerous examples of programs funded by TO_{Ab} which one would not expect (and TO_{Ab} members confirmed) that city bureaucrats would never conceive as related to homelessness, like daycare services for at-risk single mothers, cultural programming for at-risk Aboriginal youth, and programs for Aboriginal youth discharged from foster care. Why is there a difference between TO_{Ab} members and bureaucrats? One TO_{Ab} member offers his take: “I really relate to why they ended up where they are and I know with a lot of bureaucrats it seems like a big mystery to them as to why people end up on the streets.” (Teekens, Personal Interview, June 25, 2012). This sentiment is echoed by other TO_{Ab} members, for whom homelessness is not simply an economic issue of poverty and unaffordable housing, but rather an alienation from culture and a lack of self-esteem and self-worth. The Chair of TO_{Ab} confirmed in a qualitative sense that many Aboriginal homelessness programs have been funded by TO_{Ab} that they know would not receive money under City of Toronto procedures, but TO_{Ab} is willing to work with Aboriginal agencies to develop service models and accountability mechanisms to get the program off the ground (Teekens, Personal Interview, June 25, 2012).

**Policy innovation: VAN_{emerg} and TO_{emerg}**

VAN_{emerg} and TO_{emerg} are unique among the homelessness governance networks examined thus far because unlike the others, which were created in a top-down fashion by government and given clear mandates, they were created bottom-up at the community level and had to fight for policy space or to be influential to policy development. Recall that they have significant institutional differences, with TO_{emerg} being formally linked into the City Council committee system and with city councillor leadership, whereas VAN_{emerg} has never been formally integrated into key sites of decision making, yet has developed a close and mutually beneficial relationship at the bureaucratic level with the major decision makers in BC Housing, the most significant government player in homelessness and housing in Vancouver. And whereas VAN_{emerg} has developed close
working linkages with VAN_{main} and to a lesser extent VAN_{Ab}, there were no connections, formal or otherwise, between TO_{emerg} and TO_{main} or TO_{Ab}.

\(VAN_{emerg}\) has contributed to several innovative governance approaches or ways of organizing the sector since it was created in 1998. While VAN_{main} and VAN_{Ab} were innovative in the conceptualization of homelessness planning and policy development on a regional scale, it is \(VAN_{emerg}\) that in fact set the model in 1998 with its regional scope in emergency homeless shelter planning. It was the first to organize in this fashion, and while it was concerned with a much narrower issue than VAN_{main} or VAN_{Ab}, it was certainly the first among the first. In 1998 the shelter system was not only a patchwork and woefully undersupplied, but it was a disorganized and competitive system marred by bitter jealousies.\(^{42}\) \(VAN_{emerg}\) is chiefly responsible for helping to create shelter services outside of the DTES and the City of Vancouver, such that now shelters exist in nearly every Metro Vancouver municipality and “we have everything coordinated and planned from North Vancouver to Hope” (125km from the City of Vancouver), in part because it developed a training program for new shelter operators out in the regions (Graves, Personal Interview, January 10, 2012).

In addition to year-round shelter development, the other innovation from VAN_{emerg} in terms of organizing the sector has been to help organize and craft Extreme Weather Response (EWR) plans covering 15 Metro Vancouver municipalities. These are protocols for occasions of extreme cold weather, which would typically mean the provision of additional emergency shelter space for street homeless to shield them from inclement weather. To get some suburban municipalities to develop and implement an EWR required that they acknowledge they had street homeless persons in their jurisdiction, which in the late 1990s was indeed a tall order. According to a high level BC Housing bureaucrat, \(VAN_{emerg}\) getting municipalities to acknowledge a need for an EWR plan also paved the way for additional homelessness programming, needs that

\(^{42}\) The conveners of \(VAN_{emerg}\) (initially called the Cold and Wet Weather Strategy—CWWS) early goals were to dismantle the competitive nature of the system, and work together to coordinate and expand the system, particularly outside of the downtown core (CWWS, 2001).
previous municipal administrations would have never previously conceded (Anhorn Personal Interview, January 24, 2012). 43

TO_{emerg} is unique among the six governance networks examined in the dissertation, principally by the fact that it was led by an elected politician, a city councillor (on some occasions two city councillors co-chaired). TO_{emerg} was able to skillfully harness this institutional legitimacy in innovative ways. For example, as an advisory network of City Council, it was empowered to send motions to council subcommittees, which if passed would go to the full City Council. This was a powerful mechanism to get homelessness issues not only on the council agenda, but also into the broader public domain. One particularly innovative approach by TO_{emerg} was to use its capacity to advise council to initiate coroner’s inquests upon the death of a homeless person, typically due to inclement weather conditions. 44 This approach by TO_{emerg} was innovative because it found an institutionalized and legitimatized reporting pathway between the coroner and the city bureaucracy that it could exploit and publicize in the pursuit of enhanced services and shelters for the homeless population at a time when few programs existed.

In terms of innovations that are new policies in the jurisdiction, VAN_{emerg} shares credit with VAN_{main} (and to an extent VAN_{Ab}) for contributing the innovations brought forth from the triennial Homeless Count in Metro Vancouver and the annual Homeless Action Week (HAW). All three governance networks work in partnership to make these now-institutionalized policies as comprehensive and influential as they are. VAN_{emerg} was a key player in the development of the first Homeless Count in 2002 by helping to coordinate the response for those in shelters to make sure they are counted as homeless in addition to those on the street. VAN_{emerg} was also able to leverage its close relationship with the provincial government bureaucracy which funds shelters to engage and

43 And more recently, VAN_{emerg} is exploring the need for extreme (hot) weather spaces, not so much for sleeping at night, but for refuge during the day, and similarly this is not on the agenda of BCH, but it remains “open to the conversation” (GVSS, 2007).
44 The coroner’s inquests were an effective and legitimatized means through which to have other public authorities affirm that a lack of safe shelter and services were resulting in the deaths of homeless Torontonians. There were so many homeless deaths that TO_{emerg} created an Inquest response team to act as a consultative body to the city report in response to the recommendations to the city from the coroner.
cooperate fully with the count, which opens a channel to drive subsequent policy innovations at the regional scale.

Another key policy innovation initiated by VANemerg in the region was to improve data collection in all of the homeless shelters in the region to track service provision year-round. This was an enormous task, not the least because most shelter providers are so understaffed that collecting data on clients was virtually unfeasible. Yet VANemerg pushed shelters to develop policies of data collection that were standardized and therefore able to be aggregated to paint a comprehensive picture of shelter use patterns year-round and that could capture demographic shifts in the shelter population. To VANemerg this was essential for shelter planning in terms of locating services, but also making a case to local and provincial government decision makers in data-driven terms about the increasing demands on the shelter system. Over time, the policies that induced shelters to collect standardized data on use patterns were able to be rolled up on a monthly basis, a precondition to building a reliable real-time database for shelter use across the whole region. A similar system of shelter statistics compilation exists in Toronto, but the critical difference is that it is managed centrally by the city bureaucracy—not an independent organization like VANemerg—and some segments of the homelessness service community do not trust the statistics produced by the city, given the political incentives to undercount (Crowe and German, Personal Interview, April 10, 2012; Odette, Personal Interview, April 25, 2012).

In terms of innovations that are new policies in the jurisdiction, TOemerg was able to have an impact by virtue of its institutionalized advisory capacity that was linked into the council committee system. TOemerg had its own subcommittees related to evictions, transportation, shelters, police education, service needs, and mental health/addictions, and on several occasions its identification of emerging issues on the ground was fed into the council committee system to produce innovative pilot projects or new city policy. For example, on the issue of evictions, TOemerg was able to extract a rent bank pilot project in 1997 for women with children in danger of losing their housing (ACHSIP, 1997). Other examples include the co-production of a ‘homelessness policy’ for the Toronto Police
Department, which was subsequently approved and implemented by the Police Services Board, as well as supplemental emergency dollars to mend services gaps in an especially cold winter (ACHSIP, 1997). As Table 5.2 demonstrates, TO\textsubscript{emerg} was a major policy innovator during its tenure—far more of a presence and driver of change than TO\textsubscript{main}.

In terms of innovations in the investments made by VAN\textsubscript{emerg}, this is limited because its primary function is not as a funding allocator (like VAN\textsubscript{main}, TO\textsubscript{main}, VAN\textsubscript{Ab} and TO\textsubscript{Ab}), but rather as a policy development and coordination governance network. Yet by leveraging its relationship to VAN\textsubscript{main}, VAN\textsubscript{emerg} was able to get financial support in the early years for the regional Extreme Weather Response (EWR), and then a big victory when BC Housing eventually began to support the program in a comprehensive fashion. TO\textsubscript{emerg}, by contrast, was provided a small envelope of funds in its early years ($600,000) to allocate to emergency needs, but its principal mechanism to extract funds was in its capacity to advise council to create or expand homelessness services. One particularly noteworthy program innovation directly linked to TO\textsubscript{emerg} is the Toronto Transit Commission (TTC) On The Move pilot program, which began as a research project by TO\textsubscript{emerg} to understand the transportation needs of the homeless population, which reveal tremendous barriers to getting around and accessing services, trapping them in their current status.\textsuperscript{45} TO\textsubscript{emerg} pressed for a pilot program to provide transit tickets for distribution at agencies serving the homeless, which was accepted and then later approved on an ongoing basis.

Policy innovations can also occur at senior levels of government as a result of local governance network activities, and in this respect VAN\textsubscript{emerg} has been particularly successful. One of the key arguments VAN\textsubscript{emerg} has made, in addition to extreme weather shelter needs, is that year-round shelters need to something more than warehouses for homeless people at night. Instead shelters should be given the resources to be open 24 hours a day, have daytime staff to do programming to help people break the cycle of homelessness, and have meal provision capabilities. In the mid-2000s, the provincial

\textsuperscript{45} TTC driver discretion to allow homeless person to ride for free was explicitly taken away in 1997, and was not a sustainable solution at any rate.
government engaged in a shelter policy review, which a senior BC Housing (BCH) official claims that VanEmerg ideas and advocacy played a major role in bringing these issues to key decision makers, resulting in some dramatic changes to the way BCH funded shelters thereafter, including maximum length of stay policies and other inflexible rules that were more burdensome than effective, shifting instead to a ‘low barrier’ model for shelters (Anhorn, Personal Interview, January 24, 2012; O’Shannacery, Personal Interview, October 12, 2011). VanEmerg revealed through data collection and member experience that policies that put up barriers to shelter use were counter-productive to helping individual break the cycle and gradually brought nearly all shelters around to a low barrier model, such that now “everybody competes to have the lowest barrier. And that is really good.” (Graves, Personal Interview, January 10, 2012). Several VanEmerg members, including former BCH representatives, claimed that VanEmerg influence on provincial shelter policy development could not have been achieved without engagement at the network level where they would appreciate realities on the ground, and the ongoing dialogue and deliberation of solutions at the VanEmerg table (Graves, Personal Interview, January 10, 2012; Anhorn, Personal Interview, January 24, 2012).

Perhaps the most significant policy innovation in terms of effect on senior government policy development finds its origin at ToEmerg: the creation of the NHI by the federal government in 1999 (which created VanMain, ToMain, VanAb and ToAb). It began with key members of ToEmerg advocating for the declaration of a ‘disaster’ in Toronto regarding the rapidly rising number of deaths of the homeless on the street. ToEmerg members were initially hesitant to pursue the emergency declaration avenue, as they feared it could be manipulated into a police-driven response which would round-up homeless people, but were persuaded that the problem was reaching crisis levels. ToEmerg sent the disaster declaration through the city committee system, and was approved by City Council in late 1998, and subsequently by the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM). Big City Mayors were now actively lobbying the federal government, which resulted in prime minister Chretien appointing a Minister of responsible for Homelessness, Claudette Bradshaw, to engage in nation-wide consultations on how to address homelessness, which led to the announcement of the NHI in December 1999.
Policy innovations independent from governance networks

The foregoing documentation and analysis of policy innovations from the six homelessness governance networks do not, of course, constitute all of the policy activity during the period—mayors and council, for example, can play a substantial role in driving homelessness policy change. In order to put the empirical findings from the governance networks in context, it is essential to document policy innovations derived from outside of them.

In Vancouver, there are several notable non-network derived innovations. The most notable governance innovation was the Vancouver Agreement, a tripartite agreement between the federal, provincial and municipal governments in which a formal partnership, decision making structure and funding arrangements were created with the purpose of tackling complex and intersecting social and economic problems in an urban context (Doberstein, 2011). The Vancouver Agreement focused primarily on the Downtown Eastside (DTES), a neighborhood that faces health crises related to HIV and drug use, highly concentrated poverty, infrastructure decay, and crime.46 A key product of the Vancouver Agreement was Insite, the first supervised safe-injection site in North America, which required delicate maneuvering by all three levels of government, given the criminal, health and public safety dimensions. It is funded primarily by the provincial government, but advanced by key leaders at the City of Vancouver, most notably the mayor at the time, Phillip Owen. Insite is an innovative harm reduction program for those with drug addictions to draw them in from the streets to encourage them to inject in a safe and clean environment, where there are also detox and counseling services.47

On the housing dimension, in response to Vancouver’s very low vacancy rate for rental housing units, the City of Vancouver initiated a 2-year pilot project in 2009, the Short-term Incentives for Rental Program (STIR), to encourage private sector development of

46 Thus from an administrative standpoint, an agreement by the three levels of government to share information and resources and jointly negotiate and implement strategic policy was viewed as the only way to make progress with respect to the problems facing the area (Carrigg, 2009).

47 Harm reduction is one of the ‘four pillars’ of the Four Pillar Strategy (the others are prevention, treatment, and enforcement) adopted by the City of Vancouver in 2001 (MacPherson, 2001).
rental housing in Vancouver and increase the supply of affordable rental housing over
time. The incentives include: reduced property taxes, development cost charge waivers,
reduced parking requirements, and density increases (City of Vancouver, 2010). This has
since been expanded into the Rental 100: Secured Market Rental Housing Policy to
encourage development projects where 100% of the units are residential rentals with the
goal to create 5,000 new affordable rental units in Vancouver by 2021, though if
historical patterns are any indication, the number of actual units constructed will be much
lower. The City of Toronto also uses tax credits or refunds as policy instruments to
encourage the development of private affordable rental housing, but as with Vancouver,
these tools are not consistently invoked (Hulchanski and Shapcott, 2005).

Though private charitable foundations like the United Way and the Salvation Army have
existed for many years in both Vancouver and Toronto and provide funds and critical
services to the homeless population, Vancouver also has other innovative private
foundations with explicit mandates to address homelessness, namely the Streetohome
Foundation. The Streetohome Foundation is a partnership between the Vancouver
Foundation, the Province of British Columbia, and the City of Vancouver which created a
10-year plan focusing marshaling resources to build permanent affordable housing (rather
than shelters). It is particularly innovative because it leverages expertise and funds from
the private sector as a part of the solution to solving homelessness—as of 2013, they have
raised more than $25M dollars from the private sector towards building supportive
housing.

Like in Vancouver, there are a number of innovations in Toronto during the period 1995-
2013 that are not attributable to the governance networks under investigation. Perhaps
the most consequential innovation was the 1999 Mayor’s Homelessness Action Task
Force, led by then-CEO of the United Way, Dr. Anne Golden. The Golden Report in
1999 is arguably a pivot point for housing and homelessness awareness in Toronto and
Canada more generally, given the substantial media attention it received. Task forces
themselves are not particularly innovative, but this one drove policy innovations for
several reasons. It was initiated by Mel Lastman, a conservative mayor of Canada’s
largest city, and was provided the resources to commission research and produce a comprehensive set of recommendations at the city, provincial and federal level which would provide an important launching point for other jurisdictions. While many of the top line recommendations were never implemented by the City of Toronto, including a Facilitator for Action on Homelessness (a high-profile point person to push and implement the agenda), and several innovations like the Annual Report Card on Homelessness were quickly phased out, the Golden task force report had substantial and direct influence on senior levels of government. Some credit this task force, as well as FCM lobbying, with applying the needed pressure to the Chretien government to launch the National Homelessness Initiative (NHI) in late 1999 (Layton, 2008).

The most recent policy innovation in Toronto not attributable to the governance networks investigated in this study is the Toronto Housing Charter—Opportunity for All, a key plank of the Housing Opportunities Toronto Action Plan 2010-2020, and the first of its kind in Canada when adopted in 2009. The charter is designed to guide the City Council and bureaucracy in the provision of services and programs, and contains several policy statements related to right for all to safe and affordable housing, in all neighbourhoods, and free from discrimination (Toronto Housing Charter, 2009). While the charter does not constitute a legal obligation on the part of the City of Toronto to provide safe and affordable housing for all its residents, it represents an aspirational framework to enhance housing and services for the homeless in Toronto.

The purpose of the foregoing section is to highlight important policy innovations in Vancouver and Toronto that are not attributable to the governance networks under investigation to provide a comparative measure of scope of the policy influence of the networks. Key elected and bureaucratic leaders within the respective cities, championing new paradigmatic ideas of ‘harm reduction’ in the case of Vancouver drug policy and ‘housing first’ in the case of Toronto Streets to Homes strategy, drove these innovations. It is clear in each city that political and civil society leadership has in different periods been able to drive the issue onto the public agenda with great policy consequence. Yet we can also see from Table 5.2 above that policy innovations derived from the highly
institutionalized and inclusive governance networks (in particular VAN_{main} and TO_{emerg}) are more numerous and in many cases more substantive in terms of producing improved outcomes for homeless individuals.

**Analysis: network governance and policy innovation**

Theory put forward at the onset of this chapter suggests that more institutionalized and more inclusive governance networks would generate or contribute to more innovative policy. The foregoing data and policy analysis from the six homelessness governance networks lends evidence to this relationship, and is consistent with the divergent homelessness outcome trends in the two cities. VAN_{main}, with the most numerous and inclusive membership, as well as highest institutionalization, has generated the most substantive and numerous policy innovations since its creation. VAN_{main} has successfully reconceptualized the policy issue and reorganized the sector in regional terms, as well as pioneered new policies, supported new funding approaches and programs, and has driven innovations at other levels of government. At the other end of the spectrum, the weakly institutionalized and less diverse TO_{main} has contributed to policy innovation only in the most marginal sense. Even when comparing VAN_{main} to the City of Toronto bureaucracy, which sidelined TO_{main} in favour of itself, the policy innovations from the institutionalized and inclusive governance network of VAN_{main} surpass those from Toronto, notwithstanding a couple of notable policy innovations that have emerged from the city bureaucracy.

**Predicted from theory:**

\[
\begin{align*}
VAN_{main} &> TO_{main} \\
VAN_{Ab} &> TO_{Ab} \\
TO_{emerg} &> VAN_{emerg}
\end{align*}
\]

**Actual from empirics:**

\[
\begin{align*}
VAN_{main} &> TO_{main} \\
VAN_{Ab} &> TO_{Ab} \\
VAN_{emerg} & = TO_{emerg}
\end{align*}
\]

The pair-wise analysis of the governance networks confirms the direction of the hypothesis set forth at the beginning of the chapter: that the more institutionalized and inclusive a governance network, the more likely it is to drive or contribute to policy innovation. Network governance can drive policy innovation principally because of the
diversity of the actors at the policy formulation and decision making table can reset conventional thinking on an issue (Considine et al., 2009; Borins, 2008). The identification of emerging issues and potential responses, in particular, are the key contribution brought forth from civil society in governance networks for which government is historically weak and slow to react, according to a top BC Housing bureaucrat:

It’s way too easy as a government bureaucrat to sit in our office and look at stats and think you know what's happening [on the streets] is because of ‘this or that’. And, in part, that is because your statistics will only tell you what you measure, whereas service providers are in it day-to-day and they will recognize trends that are happening before the statistics can identify them (Anhorn Personal Interview, January 24, 2012).

And while public servants tend to possess valuable research and analysis skills, including cost-benefit and risk analysis, that are essential to support decision making, they may often have little experience with the issue at hand and may not be in a good position to assess the effectiveness or suitability of proposed policy or program, particularly if it is an unconventional idea. For example, involving youth with lived experience of homelessness in VAN\textsubscript{main} policy planning and decision making created administrative challenges, but many respondents claimed it solved a major information gap among decision makers. According to one long-time VAN\textsubscript{main} member,

We got really great, positive input on [policy directions] that we were not sure about. We were thinking, ‘well this is kind of strange as an idea…but would that really can work?’ And then the youth would say ‘Oh yeah that program [or model of service] works great. So I think that without that link to the actual consumers [of services], we just don’t have the same level of understanding of the actual experiences (Sundberg Personal Interview, October 13, 2011).

Governance network members across the cases suggested that civil society actors were significantly less risk-averse and asked tough questions about the status quo policy framework (Ninow, Personal Interview, January 4, 2012; O'Shannacery, Personal Interview, October 12, 2011). And it is not simply a matter of throwing diverse policy actors into a room to vent about their pet issues, but rather the deliberative ethic that is reinforced, such that diverse actors come to learn, exchange, debate, and problem-solve.
The agency of governance network actors is thus a key driving force behind policy innovations.

Institutionalization is also an important structural feature for policy innovation because the governance network needs to be connected into the policy process in order to successfully implement innovations. A highly inclusive network is clearly less likely to contribute to policy innovation if it is situated in an activist’s basement, not connected to actual levers of public decision making. The least institutionalized network in the study, TO\textsubscript{main}, even if it were to have a highly inclusive roster of civil society and government actors, would be unlikely to drive policy innovations because it is mostly severed from city decision making. Contrast that to TO\textsubscript{emerg} (when it existed), which was highly institutionalized by virtue of its advisory relationship to City Council and councillor leadership, and was able to push major policy innovations from a position of influence. A former VAN\textsubscript{main} member echoes this sentiment, claiming that the role of the network “wasn’t so much developing the innovation as it was pushing through the adoption of those innovations once they were developed” (Garrison, Personal Interview, January 6, 2012).

**Conclusion**

Theory put forward was that more institutionalized and more inclusive networks would generate or contribute to more innovative policy. The foregoing analysis lends evidence to this theory. Network governance drives policy innovation because the inclusion of new and diverse actors in an institutionalized space in the policy process can reset conventional thinking and practices on a policy issue by structuring debate, exchange and brokerage among diverse policy actors, lending key pieces of evidence to the claims of Considine et al. (2009) and Borins (2008). Policy innovation is an important dimension of policy in any field, though especially relevant in homelessness, a vexing social and economic problem in dire need of new approaches that reduce homelessness rather than simply manage it. Policy sensitivity is likewise a critical dimension of policy, particularly for public policy issues involving marginalized or excluded populations, and is the focus of the next chapter.
Chapter 6: Policy Sensitivity and Governance Networks

Introduction
This chapter represents the second of three in which I explore the relationship between the properties of governance networks and policy development, with policy sensitivity as the focus of inquiry. Recall that policy sensitivity is defined as policies or programs that take into account the unique needs of the groups within the target population—in the domain of homelessness this means those who are among the most vulnerable and marginalized, including Aboriginals, women, youth and LGBT people. These subpopulations are unique because they often suffer from acute discrimination in society and on the streets, and are significantly less likely to access services that are not sensitive to (or worse, dismissive of) their needs (NAEH, 2009; Ward, 2008; Abramovich, 2012). A governance and policy framework that does not account for the specific needs of the most vulnerable subpopulations thus threatens to reinforce and compound their victimization and marginality if they do not feel comfortable accessing services (Sakamato et al., 2008; Stout and Kipling, 1998).

One sub-group within the homeless population of particular concern is urban Aboriginals, who constitute a strikingly disproportionate share of the homeless population, are among the most vulnerable since they are more likely to be chronically homeless, and claim distinct cultural norms and practices that warrant unique policy responses (McCallum and Issac, 2011; Ward, 2008). The experience of homelessness is disproportionate among Aboriginals in both Metro Vancouver and Toronto—constituting 32% and 15% of the homeless population respectively—despite constituting only 2% and 0.5% of their total populations (GVRSCCH, 2011; CTSNA, 2009). Aboriginal stakeholders insist that they experience considerably more discrimination (housing, employment, etc.) and that non-Aboriginal agencies tend to provide services that lack cultural meaning to homeless Aboriginals (Ward, 2008). Evidence from homeless counts suggests that a higher share of Aboriginals stay outside on the street than those who access shelters, suggesting that shelters and services are not sufficiently catered to this subpopulation, thus prolonging their homelessness (GVRSCCH, 2002).
Activists and service providers for women, youth and LGBT individuals on the street echo this argument that policy needs to be mindful of the unique needs of the most vulnerable (Gattis, 2009; Hunter, 2008; Stout and Kipling, 1998). As with Aboriginals, homeless counts reveal that a much higher percentage of homeless women, youth and LGBT subpopulations were unsheltered than sheltered (GVRSCH, 2002). This measure is particularly important because it signals that more of these vulnerable populations are risking staying outside at night than entering shelters (which may be dangerous) and accessing services (which may lack efficacy). Likewise a policy framework not sensitive to the unique needs of youth, women, and LGBT homelessness populations only compounds the marginalization when they choose not to access the shelter system and other mainstream services because they encounter discrimination, insensitivity and, in some cases, abuse (Abramovich, 2012; Gaetz and Scott, 2012; Hunter, 2008).48

Theory suggests that governance networks have the potential to infuse policy sensitivity if they are inclusive to the voices of the vulnerable subpopulations, such that they can help decision makers understand emerging trends on the ground, the services and programs that are working and those that are not, as well as identify the cracks through which these groups are slipping. If we conceive of governance networks as deliberative systems, we find in deliberative democratic theory reasons for believing that inclusion of diverse and marginalized voices has important policy implications. For scholars like Young (2000), the deliberative model also holds the promise of creating more just policy decisions and outcomes for historically marginalized groups, whose economic and social marginalization contributes to their political marginalization under representative models of democracy. Fung and Wright (2003) likewise claim that for issues that involve complex problems associated with poverty, such ‘empowered participatory governance’, whereby community and civil society groups share a role in decision making, can result

48 An example of ‘mainstream’ policy frameworks inappropriately placed in the homeless youth context is transitional housing: regulations typically put a limit of one year for stay in transitional housing, but for a youth, that could mean that he or she is forced to leave transitional housing at age seventeen, and is thrust into the private market with many of the remaining barriers to income, housing, and supports still present.
in a more responsive, fair and innovative policy (Fung, 2006).

Recall from Chapter 2 that the second hypothesis investigated in this study is that more inclusive governance networks will generate or contribute to more sensitive policy or programs targeted to vulnerable sub-populations. We expect this to occur because if representatives of the vulnerable sub-populations are active members of the governance network, irrespective of institutionalization, their issues will at the very least be given some attention and legitimimized space, more so than if they were absent from decision making.

Figure 6.1: Hypothesized linkages between network institutionalization and inclusivity and policy dimensions of interest.

Through pair-wise analysis of the six governance networks, the following hypothesis is tested in this section: more inclusive governance networks will generate or contribute to more sensitive policy:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{VAN}_{\text{main}} &> \text{TO}_{\text{main}} \\
\text{VAN}_{\text{Ab}} &> \text{TO}_{\text{Ab}} \\
\text{VAN}_{\text{emerg}} &= \text{TO}_{\text{emerg}}
\end{align*}
\]

\footnote{Of course inclusivity in a governance network also in essence means a large one, which may threaten the ability for network actors to come to agreement and craft effective policy responses (Scarpf, 1999).}
The chapter proceeds with comparative pair-wise analysis of the six governance networks and their contributions to policy sensitivity from 1995-2012. We must also identify innovative policy that did not occur primarily because of governance network activity, but rather by traditional bureaucratic and elected official channels, in order to establish the appropriate scope of empirical claims.\textsuperscript{50}

Table 6.1 presents the most relevant outputs of policy sensitivity in Vancouver and Toronto from 1995-2013. Examples of policy sensitivity were identified by triangulating legislation, policy statements, meeting archives, and interviews with key stakeholders at all levels of government and civil society, and are subcategorized as follows: policies and programs explicitly linked to one of the four target groups (Aboriginals, women, youth and LGBT people), or governance processes that include the voices of the four target groups. Evidence from both Vancouver and Toronto demonstrates that inclusive governance networks contribute substantially to policy sensitivity compared to city bureaucracies and elected officials—even though there are such examples from the latter. Policy sensitivity as a dimension of policy is most directly related to homelessness outcome measures such as the average length of homelessness, which is declining in Vancouver and rising in Toronto (GVRSCH, 2011; SNA, 2013).

\textsuperscript{50} As with the policy innovation chapter, to be clear: this is not an either or proposition, that governance networks create sensitive policy and traditional decision making structures do not—clearly sensitive policy is possible through traditional decision making structures, but the task is to isolate the extent to which governance networks drive sensitivity in relative terms.
Table 6.1: the most relevant examples of policy sensitivity differentiated by category, from each network.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Governance processes to infuse policy sensitivity</th>
<th>VAN_{main}</th>
<th>TO_{main}</th>
<th>VAN_{Ab}</th>
<th>TO_{Ab}</th>
<th>VAN_{merg}</th>
<th>TO_{merg}</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aboriginal dominated decision making for envelope</td>
<td>Self-governing Aboriginal network</td>
<td>Interview-based Call for Proposal process</td>
<td>Youth representation at network</td>
<td>Self-governing Aboriginal network</td>
<td>Aboriginal Extreme Weather Response</td>
<td>Youth subcommittee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth working group integrated to network</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Women’s Caucus (subcmte)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Services and programs funded</td>
<td>10% Aboriginal envelope</td>
<td>20% Aboriginal envelope (2007-)</td>
<td>Culturally appropriate services funded</td>
<td>Culturally appropriate services funded</td>
<td>Support sub-group shelters: women, trans, youth, Aboriginal</td>
<td>25% youth allocation in Emergency Funding Program</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Predicted RANK from theory: 1 2 1 2 1* 1*  
Actual RANK from empirics: 1 2 1 2 1 2

The following sections identify and analyze the examples of policy sensitivity resulting from the six governance networks in Vancouver and Toronto, beginning with VAN_{main}-TO_{main} pair-wise comparative analysis.

**Policy sensitivity: VAN_{main} and TO_{main}**

As depicted in Table 6.1, when compared against each other, VAN_{main} exhibits more numerous and substantive examples of policy sensitivity in the past 15 years than TO_{main}. VAN_{main}, by virtue of its expansive and diverse membership, constitutes a governance network in which the perspectives of many subgroups within the homeless population, including Aboriginals and youth, are influential in policy planning and decision making. Diversity of perspectives is in a sense baked into the process of VAN_{main}, according to one member:

You get three levels of government, shelter providers, community [members], really working together from such different perspectives and I think that is one of the strengths of [VAN_{main}] is that you get people who are very connected to the issues [on the ground] and people very connected to the policy side… working together. And working in very much a complex way, coming from different perspectives…exploring the issues very intensely and really examining cause and
effect of policy in a unique way, which I think is really important (Hurford, Personal Interview, January 20, 2012).

Accommodating this diversity in a policy planning and decision making venue is never an easy task, which many respondents emphasized, but no VAN$_{\text{main}}$ member interviewed claimed it was not worth the time and effort to work through these issues en route to solving homelessness in the region (including former members who hold critical assessments of VAN$_{\text{main}}$). To VAN$_{\text{main}}$ members, it is not about checking off a demographic box to project diversity, but “having all those sectors participate leads to better decisions and choices. It is harder, but always leads to better policy outputs” (Papadionissou, Personal Interview, October 13, 2011). Homelessness as a policy issue is so complex that an institutionalized space to develop relationships between governments and civil society is viewed by some as essential: “you need that discussion and deliberation, that knowledge exchange among diverse actors because there are so many moving parts to consider in these decisions” (Jimenez, Personal Interview, January 23, 2012).

On the matter of Aboriginal and youth perspectives being infused in the governance processes of VAN$_{\text{main}}$, members placed even more emphasis on the policy implications of their involvement. One of the past co-chairs said flatly: “you would be crazy not to include these groups in decision making and planning” (Papadionissou, Personal Interview, October 13, 2011). There is broad acceptance at VAN$_{\text{main}}$ that largely non-Aboriginal, professional bureaucrats are less likely to know the emerging issues on the ground for Aboriginals and youth, and that policy planning and decision making must take into account these perspectives. Referencing Aboriginals, one high-level BC Housing bureaucrat with a long history of work with VAN$_{\text{main}}$ explains: “I think anytime we can get a better sense of other people that we coexist with and how they see the world, how they experience the world, what their histories are, the better we understand the context we are [operating] in and I think that makes for better decisions” (Anhorn, Personal Interview, January 24, 2012).
There are several self-governance policies of VAN\textsubscript{main} that have attempted to institutionalize the voice of Aboriginals. First, early on VAN\textsubscript{main} reserved a permanent spot on the network for a representative from VAN\textsubscript{Ab}, and likewise sent an envoy to VAN\textsubscript{Ab} to establish a working relationship between the governance networks. Additionally, VAN\textsubscript{main} recently institutionalized Aboriginal involvement in the VAN\textsubscript{main} decision making and allocation of funds process, such that a reserved envelope of funds is decided exclusively by an Aboriginal-dominated community review team for targeted Aboriginal homelessness services.

The efforts by VAN\textsubscript{main} to create meaningful opportunities for Aboriginal representatives to influence policy planning and decision making are not without difficulties over the years. There is a deeply entrenched mistrust among Aboriginals of all levels of governments in Canada, and while VAN\textsubscript{main} is a community-dominated governance network, Aboriginals interviewed still conceptualize it as ‘government’ for several reasons, including the expansive government membership, that Metro Vancouver bureaucrats manage the network, and that they prioritize and allocate federal government expenditures. VAN\textsubscript{Ab} members report that relations deteriorate when VAN\textsubscript{main} behaves like a traditional government entity, presenting fait accompli, being inflexible, and listening to Aboriginal perspectives but not appearing to incorporate them (Stewart and Lavalee, Personal Interview, January 12, 2012). To explain the periods of weak relations, some VAN\textsubscript{main} members appear resentful that VAN\textsubscript{Ab} members seem to be most active during periods of funding allocations, not in the more difficult regular VAN\textsubscript{main} work of long-term planning and advocacy (confidential interviews).

In terms of youth perspectives in the governance process, VAN\textsubscript{main} has experimented over the years with a number of models of engagement, some more successful than others. In the early years, VAN\textsubscript{main} relied mainly on organizations serving homeless or at-risk youth as representatives on the network. Though these members provide valuable contributions, VAN\textsubscript{main} subsequently sought to bring in currently homeless youth to serve on the network and formed a working group involved in policy planning and decision making regarding homeless programs targeted towards youth. Was this demographic
box-checking or did it have a real effect on policy discussions and outcomes? To one former VAN\textsubscript{main} member, “the youth that we had at the table over the years when I was involved really opened eyes to people about what it was like to be a youth on the street” (Anhorn). The youth working group existed for several years, and while it struggled to retain members, it did critical work, including taking an inventory of youth services (determining which were popular and which were not) and also created an inventory of LGBT-friendly youth services to reveal gaps, which were then prioritized in subsequent funding decisions (Okyere, Personal Interview, October 11, 2011). From 2007 onward, rather than engage youth in an ongoing fashion with expectations of active membership—which was very challenging given the age group—VAN\textsubscript{main} brings in youth to speak to emerging issues through targeted consultations with the assistance of a consultant with experience in youth engagement.

TO\textsubscript{main}, in contrast to VAN\textsubscript{main}, has limited membership and is considerably less diverse with respect to Aboriginal and youth representation. While there one or two active representatives from organizations serving youth, there are none from Aboriginal organizations at TO\textsubscript{main}. Diversity of membership that TO\textsubscript{main} retains that VAN\textsubscript{main} does not is from the private sector. For example, representatives from the Royal Bank of Canada and private landlords are members of TO\textsubscript{main} (CRG, 2003). The gaps in Aboriginal representation at TO\textsubscript{main} have policy consequence. In the early years the city bureaucracy—which tightly controls TO\textsubscript{main}—claimed that its policy planning and decision making “will be coordinated with \[TO\textsubscript{Ab}\] in Toronto”, as in Vancouver with the VAN\textsubscript{main}–VAN\textsubscript{Ab} relationship (CRG, 2003). The city also claimed that it “will use the [TO\textsubscript{Ab} homelessness] plan to ensure that federal government spending on Aboriginal homelessness projects in Toronto is coordinated and complements the objectives of both the City’s plan and that of the Aboriginal community” (CRG CP, 2003: 5). When asked if this happened, formally or otherwise, TO\textsubscript{Ab} members largely disputed the claim that the city has engaged with them in even a cosmetic sense.

City officials in Toronto strongly dispute these claims, suggesting that they effectively use their own Aboriginal Affairs Committee to advise them on priorities and programs
and that they informally track the investments of TO\textsubscript{Ab} (confidential, Personal Interview, July 23, 2012).\textsuperscript{51} They also point to an institutional policy change in 2007 that set aside 20\% of their total NHI funding envelope for Aboriginal homelessness programs, based on the homeless count showing a disproportionate share of Aboriginals among the street homeless. Notably, this is a much higher share of funds than VAN\textsubscript{main} tends to allocate for Aboriginal programs and services (which is typically around 10\%), and needs to be acknowledged as a powerful step to addressing the unique needs of homeless Aboriginals in Toronto. Yet it is not followed by any meaningful influence by Aboriginals over the policy priorities or allocation of those funds. The allocation of funds to homelessness programs is a closed and professionalized process restricted largely to City of Toronto bureaucrats.

The other dimension of policy sensitivity is whether different policy priorities and decisions are made as a direct result of inclusive decision making processes. While it is intuitively appealing to claim that decisions more sensitive to subgroups will be made if they are afforded meaningful opportunities to participate, this needs to be demonstrated rather than assumed. The vast majority of VAN\textsubscript{main} members interviewed believe that decision making involving diverse community and government members results in different homelessness services and programs being funded than would otherwise occur if bureaucrats simply made these decisions. In response to this question, one local government member previously associated with VAN\textsubscript{main} was emphatic: “Absolutely. I learned everything I know about homelessness from community members” (Garrison, Personal Interview, January 6, 2012). To others, it is not just knowledge that community actors bring, but the institutional incentives in bureaucracies. One bureaucrat conceded, “[w]e have a checklist, an excel cell to fill out and enumerate and that's the basis of the decision and there are a lot of outside, external, gray things that should also be considered and I don't think that there is a cell in the excel score card to account for that” (Jimenez, Personal Interview, January 23, 2012).

\textsuperscript{51} Some TO\textsubscript{Ab} members push back on this claim, suggesting that the Aboriginal Affairs Committee is not a productive venue because it is not specifically concerned with homelessness issues, and that it is not TO\textsubscript{Ab}, with whom it could coordinate funding streams and priorities, like many other cities in Canada (Sanderson, Personal Interview, May 28, 2012; Abbott, Personal Interview, July 15, 2012).
As mentioned above, a key governance feature of VAN\textsubscript{main} is that it has institutionalized Aboriginal involvement in the decision making and allocation of funds by devoting an envelope of funds to be decided by Aboriginal-dominated decision teams and without threat of the broader VAN\textsubscript{main} vetoing decisions. Several long-time VAN\textsubscript{main} members emphasized the importance of this decision making space, with the Metro Vancouver bureaucratic manager of VAN\textsubscript{main} stressing “I don’t think any policy maker in his right mind would say ‘I can make a decision about dealing with this segment of the population without a contribution from them’” (Okyere, Personal Interview, October 11, 2011). But the key question is: do these Aboriginal decision makers make different decisions than the non-Aboriginal decision makers would have, or than local government bureaucrats would have?

Anecdotally, there are indications that there would be differences, and Chapter 8 tackles this question more systematically.\textsuperscript{52} First, before the protected Aboriginal envelope and Aboriginal-dominated teams, VAN\textsubscript{main} rejected an Aboriginal homelessness program that all Aboriginal members at the governance network strongly supported (Stewart and Lavalee, Personal Interview, January 12, 2012). Second, when asking current and former VAN\textsubscript{main} members whether the much smaller and low capacity Aboriginal organizations seeking funding would be able to compete with other mainstream/non-Aboriginal organizations with professional grant writers, one respondent summed up the sentiment flatly: “definitely not” (Anhorn, Personal Interview, January 24, 2012). The new process of institutionalized and Aboriginal-dominated decision teams is important because they would handle all of the decisions for targeted Aboriginal programs, allowing for fair comparison of program objectives (Anhorn, Personal Interview, January 24, 2012).

The benefits of diversity in policy planning and decision making in governance networks comes into clear view when comparing the inclusive governance mechanisms at VAN\textsubscript{main}

\textsuperscript{52} Chapter 8, which more systematically examines this decision making process, demonstrates that the impact on policy choices and homelessness programs funded is clear: Aboriginal team funded projects that staff would not have, and also likely not what other non-Aboriginal network members would have (by extrapolation and based on how they reviewed other projects, punishing low capacity Aboriginal service organizations).
to those at \( TO_{\text{main}} \). As mentioned, \( TO_{\text{main}} \) is significantly less diverse, with no Aboriginal representation, and the city administration restricts \( TO_{\text{main}} \) to a consultative role in the strategic planning, and no role in the decisions regarding the allocation of funds towards homelessness services and programs.\(^{53}\) Without Aboriginal perspectives at \( TO_{\text{main}} \) and no formal or informal relationship with \( TO_{\text{Ab}} \), the policy priorities from \( TO_{\text{main}} \) display little sensitivity to unique Aboriginal needs, as evidenced by the 2007 Community Plan to address homelessness from \( TO_{\text{main}} \) suggesting without further explanation that it is “anticipated that the priorities and [programs] that come forward for the Aboriginal allocation will fall into the six broad objectives outlined in the City’s [mainstream homelessness] Plan” (CRG, 2007). Recall that \( TO_{\text{main}} \) has notably carved out 20% of its total NHI funding allocation to Aboriginal homelessness services and programs, but there are no procedures to include these perspectives in actual decision making within the City of Toronto. The evidence in Chapter 8 demonstrates that when Aboriginals are included in decision making, they make very different decisions than when local government bureaucrats make decisions, which is the case with \( TO_{\text{main}} \).

**Policy sensitivity: VAN\(_{Ab}\) and \( TO_{\text{Ab}} \)**

The implications for policy sensitivity in the case of \( VAN_{Ab} \) and \( TO_{Ab} \), purposefully created Aboriginal homelessness governance networks in recognition of the unique needs of homeless Aboriginals, at first glance may appear tautological. But the real test for policy sensitivity is whether different policy decisions would be made in the absence of these Aboriginal governance networks. That is, if instead of creating a parallel stream of funding in the NHI for homeless Aboriginals in Canadian cities, they lumped that money in with the mainstream funding (that \( VAN_{\text{main}} \) and \( TO_{\text{main}} \) prioritizes and administers)—what would be the effect? Further, we can also compare the Aboriginal governance networks against each other in terms of size and inclusiveness and their contributions to policy sensitivity.

\(^{53}\) There is some disagreement between city officials and Aboriginal community members on why there is no \( TO_{\text{Ab}} \) representation on \( TO_{\text{main}} \). A city official claims that they have been invited but declined, whereas \( TO_{\text{Ab}} \) members deny this and indicate a strong desire to be involved in City decision making regarding Aboriginal homelessness programs.
That the federal government created a dedicated envelope of dollars to be devoted to self-governing urban Aboriginal homelessness networks implicitly acknowledges that neither the federal government nor local governments know what is best for Aboriginal people. To one VAN\textsubscript{Ab} member, the existence of the network has tremendous symbolic importance, signaling that urban Aboriginals not only have the right to self-govern their affairs and help their people, but also has a practical effect that raises their capacity to engage with and to heal the community (Seymour, Personal Interview, September 10, 2012). Though the symbolic importance of Aboriginal homelessness governance networks should not be downplayed, it is in measuring the practical importance where the bulk of the analysis must focus. VAN\textsubscript{Ab} is considerably larger in terms of membership than TO\textsubscript{Ab} in Toronto, with about 20 active members compared to about 8 in TO\textsubscript{Ab} (all of whom identify as Aboriginal, in both cases), suggesting that VAN\textsubscript{Ab} is more inclusive within the Aboriginal community, and thus we predict it will produce policy more sensitive to the unique needs of homeless Aboriginals. One intervening factor to the comparative analysis of VAN\textsubscript{Ab} and TO\textsubscript{Ab} is that VAN\textsubscript{Ab} has an ongoing policy and investment relationship with VAN\textsubscript{main}, whereas TO\textsubscript{Ab} does not with TO\textsubscript{main}. The important consequence is that VAN\textsubscript{Ab} has additional institutional pathways to carve out sensitive policy for homeless Aboriginals.

In terms of governance mechanisms that are more culturally appropriate for Aboriginals, VAN\textsubscript{Ab} has implemented a unique process for evaluating Aboriginal homelessness programs to fund in the community. It invites the Aboriginal organizations proposing the programs to speak directly to the governance network decision makers via interviews. This unique institutional mechanism attempts to correct for the lack of capacity among smaller Aboriginal agencies to produce polished written grant proposals to operate homelessness programs and services. VAN\textsubscript{Ab} members report that Aboriginal organizations are much more comfortable with this process than preparing a written submission in a standardized template (as is typical in bureaucratic-driven grant processes).

One interesting anecdote from VAN\textsubscript{Ab} group interview process that demonstrates how
policy and process sensitivity is critically important to Aboriginals: even VAN_{Ab} did not get this process quite to the satisfaction of some Aboriginal community members and was scolded by an elder about the process, which it intends to revise in the future (Stewart and Lavalee, Personal Interview, January 12, 2012). VAN_{Ab} also surveyed Aboriginal agencies regarding their perceptions of the activity of the governance network and found that the vast majority of respondents felt that the distinguishing feature of VAN_{Ab} (compared to other similar regional governance networks) was that it is “accessible to Aboriginal people” (Lavalee, Personal Interview, January 12, 2012). Aboriginal organizations concerned with homelessness thus feel more comfortable engaging with VAN_{Ab} than VAN_{main}, which is viewed as bureaucratic, ‘official’ and intimidating (Stewart, Personal Interview, January 12, 2012). It is clear that without VAN_{Ab}, many Aboriginal organizations would be significantly less engaged with policy planning and decision making.

Though the unique governance mechanisms employed to foster policy sensitivity are important to document, we also care about the actual policies and programs funded when trying to identify if there is a difference between Aboriginal governance networks and traditional bureaucracies. That is, do these governance networks set priorities and allocate resources in more culturally sensitive and culturally appropriate ways than non-Aboriginal, professional bureaucrats would? While TO_{Ab} does not display the same unique governance methods^{54} of VAN_{Ab}, one can more easily identify distinct and culturally appropriate programs funded under their leadership compared to the City of Toronto. When asked whether different programs would be funded if city bureaucrats rather than TO_{Ab} were the decision makers, several TO_{Ab} members unequivocally said yes. One long-term TO_{Ab} member emphasized that bureaucrats are generally good people, but “many of the [programs] that we fund are not ones that the city would have or the federal government or the provincial – they would not have because they don't know. They never look past the top layer” (Sanderson, Personal Interview, May 28, 2012). By ‘top layer’ this TO_{Ab} member was referring to how they conceptualize the issue of

^{54} Interestingly, in recent years TO_{Ab} has brought in outside non-Aboriginal assistance to systematically evaluate the Aboriginal services it funds since the group is so small and some members are in receipt of the funds they make decisions on.
homelessness, in particular its causes and solutions, which is rather narrowly defined in bureaucracies and expansively defined among many Aboriginals.

An example of homelessness programs $TO_{Ab}$ has funded will illustrate. An Aboriginal organization approached $TO_{Ab}$ to fund daycare services, to which it agreed, on the basis of rising numbers of homeless or at-risk Aboriginal women and children. Based on the initially tepid response from the GoC metagovernor of the network, and historical City of Toronto investment patterns, the city would be very unlikely to support this as a response to homelessness. Yet Aboriginals appear to conceive of homelessness in much broader and systemic terms, recognizing the positive impact of Aboriginal daycare services for both the homeless mother and child. In fact, this broader ‘systems’ approach to addressing homelessness is increasingly being adopted by non-Aboriginal leaders in the academic homelessness research (Gaetz, 2012). There are several other examples of programs funded by $TO_{Ab}$ which one would not expect (and $TO_{Ab}$ members confirmed) that city bureaucrats would conceive as related to homelessness, such as cultural programming for at-risk Aboriginal youth and programs for Aboriginal youth discharged from foster care (Sanderson, Personal Interview, May 28, 2012; Teekens, Personal Interview, June 25, 2012; Pitt, Personal Interview, November 6, 2012).

With $VAN_{Ab}$, it is slightly more difficult to determine, in concrete terms, that less culturally appropriate services would be funded if they were not the decision makers. Over the years it has funded Aboriginal drop-in programs that feed homeless persons and offer services for women trying to get children back, homeless women fleeing abuse, workplace training, as well as temporary shelters, including for those with substance abuse problems. Yet it is conceivable that that a city bureaucracy might also fund such programs. However, there are indications that on the margins there may be differences in the way Aboriginals and bureaucrats think about these issues and allocate funds. In one memorable moment at the decision team information/practice session at $VAN_{main}$, all members were asked to review and score a sample project (it happened to be an Aboriginal program) and then discuss how each formed his or her evaluation. The two Aboriginal members rated the sample program high, whereas the bureaucrats and non-
Aboriginal community members rated it very low. One of the Aboriginal members later explained to me that he knew the program proposal was poorly written and presented, but tried to see through it and examine precisely what the program proposed to do in relation to addressing homelessness, whereas the bureaucrats mechanically rated the program according to the criteria on paper.\textsuperscript{55}

**Policy sensitivity: VAN\textsubscript{emerg} and TO\textsubscript{emerg}**

In terms of governance network size and inclusivity, VAN\textsubscript{emerg} and TO\textsubscript{emerg} are nearly equivalent, and thus we expect them to contribute similarly to policy sensitivity. Yet the emergency nature of VAN\textsubscript{emerg} work was such that the primary goal in the early days was simply to better understand shelter patterns and coordinate the system, not necessarily strive for group diversity. The patchwork homeless shelter system with such disparate service standards and policies made it such that fundamentals first needed to be addressed. One long-time VAN\textsubscript{emerg} member justifies the mainstream approach of the network in the first few years: “I think in the beginning we were so desperate to get anything for anybody that you weren't really looking at the specific populations. It’s only when you start being able to stabilize large numbers that you want to start on boutique populations” (Graves, Personal Interview, January 10, 2012).

In subsequent years, however, VAN\textsubscript{emerg} engaged more substantially on issues related to Aboriginal, women, youth and LGBT subpopulations in the shelter system. For example, VAN\textsubscript{emerg} produced a report in 2007 called “Homeless Voices”, in which it drew on the perspectives of homeless individuals to inform the work of the network and the government institutions with whom they interact (GVSS, 2007). This work had policy consequence: “Homeless Voices” explained how existing shelter policies governed by BC Housing and the lack of safety in shelters were keeping people away. These findings were channeled into priority areas for VAN\textsubscript{emerg} and BC Housing (GVSS, 2007). Also, as mentioned in an earlier chapter, VAN\textsubscript{emerg} was the chief driver of the Extreme Weather Response (EWR) plans for each municipality in the region, and likewise was a critical

\textsuperscript{55} The quantitative data analysis presented in Chapter 8 puts these claims to a more systematic test, and finds meaningful and systematic differences in the ways that Aboriginals and bureaucrats evaluate programs.
component in the development of the Aboriginal EWR in early 2000s. Just as with the municipalities developing EWRs, VANemerg was instrumental in assisting VANAb to develop their EWR plan and protocols. The VANemerg-VANAb connection is the least developed and integrated (compared to VANmain-VANAb and VANemerg-VANmain relationships), but on this issue the protocols were standardized where appropriate and coordinated in terms of communications, data collection and management (GVSS, 2004).

The relatively inconsistent membership of Aboriginals at VANemerg is not for lack of trying or desire by VANemerg leadership. A key VANemerg leader suggested that most Aboriginal shelter organizations or VANAb representatives cite a lack of time to devote to regular VANemerg meetings as well as schedule conflicts (O’Shannacery, Personal Interview, October 12, 2011). Yet VANemerg intends to keep trying to create the conditions for Aboriginal representation at the table because, as one non-Aboriginal VANemerg member suggests,

It’s a big problem. No, I see that is a huge problem, and we need somebody with really strong and possibly at times nasty advocacy voice, who can keep pulling it back and saying we are talking about 1/3 of your constituency! If you go to a shelter and ask ‘what are your policies [with regards to] Aboriginal people? And they will say, ‘we operate color blind here’. I’m not talking about colour blind, I’m taking about the culturally appropriate services. And [this issue] doesn’t get put on the shelter table’s [agenda]. So, the barriers are huge (Graves, Personal Interview, January 10, 2012).

Just as with Aboriginal representation and sensitivity, women and youth representation has gone through periods of high and low activity at VANemerg. For a brief period in 2005, a Women’s Caucus formed as a subcommittee of VANemerg for two principal reasons: (i) to study why women tend to access shelter service much less frequently than men, and (ii) to try make a case to Status of Women Canada for additional funding for women’s shelters and research. It was not ultimately successful in obtaining additional funds from this work, but it served to bring broader attention within the network to the unique needs of women in the shelter system (GVSS, 2005). One VANemerg member who represents women-only shelters and service programs suggest that while it is an ongoing struggle at VANemerg, she and others have educated other members of the unique needs of
marginalized women and that while, for example, co-ed shelters may have economies of scale, they create discomfort for many women and as such they avoid shelters entirely, which may put them at even greater risk (Moriarty, Personal Interview, January 13, 2012).

The unique needs of homeless transgender individuals have also been an issue for VAN_{emerg} to manage, typically by women’s representatives since there is no dedicated LGBT representative. But the issues are difficult and sensitive: homeless transgender individuals often share a fear with some women over co-ed shelters, yet are often not welcome in women-only shelters depending on their presentation (Moriarty, Personal Interview, January 13, 2012). The problem of how to best serve this extremely marginalized population remains, as does a standardized method of data collection to track their service patterns and needs (GVSS, 2010). VAN_{emerg} also has members who represent youth-serving organizations, who have been useful to help interpret emerging trends when VAN_{emerg} data suggests that the share of youth in the shelter system is increasing by 10% annually and why youth did not appear to use shelter beds during periods of extreme weather (GVSS, 2005).

TO_{emerg} is the third largest network in size and inclusiveness among the networks investigated, though the work of the network was largely divided into subcommittees with issue areas, rather than by demographics. TO_{emerg} had a diverse mix of government (bureaucrat and elected official) and community (service provider and activists), and homeless individuals who would occasionally come to meetings to share experiences of life on the street and were probed by network members for service needs and emerging issues. The exception to the issue-based subcommittee governance choice was a youth subcommittee to track emerging trends within the population and devise strategies to resist the closures of youth drop-ins in the late 1990s (ACHSIP, 1998). The Emergency Services Fund (ESF) that TO_{emerg} was tasked with prioritizing and allocating was influenced by the attention to youth issues at the network, such that 25% of the funding envelope was dedicated to youth services on the premise that youth are among the most vulnerable and would derive most benefit from a course correction (ACHSIP, 1997). The
youth subcommittee of TO\textsubscript{emerg} included former homeless youth as well as advocates to ensure that the needs of youth are being met and to devise strategies to alter the method of delivery of services to homeless youth (ACHSIP, 2005).

Aboriginals are one group that was not particularly well represented at TO\textsubscript{emerg} and their issues were strikingly absent in a review of meeting minutes from the ten-year life of the governance network from 1996-2006. The lack of Aboriginal representation would occasionally be referenced by members, but there were no signs of a serious effort to recruit and retain Aboriginal representatives, and the lack of substantive policy changes vis-à-vis homeless Aboriginals is a major gap in the policy history of TO\textsubscript{emerg}. Perhaps this lack of focus on sub-population inclusion is related to its explicit mandate to advise council on issue areas, like emergency services, prevention and long-term solutions, but the gap in representation and attention (and therefore tangible policy gains for various subpopulation’s unique needs) is nonetheless stark in comparison to the other networks under investigation. Thus whereas TO\textsubscript{emerg} demonstrated important policy innovations during its tenure as documented in the previous chapter, examples of policy sensitivity to vulnerable subpopulations are less numerous and significant.

**Policy sensitivity independent from the governance networks**

The foregoing documentation and analysis of examples of policy sensitivity from the six homelessness governance networks do not, of course, constitute all of the policy activity during the period—mayors and council, for example, can play a substantial role in generating policy sensitivity. In order to put the empirical findings from the governance networks in context, it is essential to document policy sensitivity derived from outside of them.

In Vancouver, there are several examples of non-governance network derived policy sensitivity. In terms of inclusive governance structures, the City of Vancouver has an Urban Aboriginal People’s Advisory Committee, created by the City Council, to provide advice and make recommendations to council on issues of concern to Vancouver urban Aboriginal communities. While ostensibly an important opportunity for urban
Aboriginals to influence municipal policy, it has lacked impact on homelessness policy for two reasons: (i) the mandate is very broad, with no focus on homelessness and therefore weak capacity to make an impact on the specific issue, and (ii) half of the meetings have been cancelled in the last two years due to lack of quorum (City of Vancouver, 2013). Lack of attendance from the Aboriginal community members is a sign that this advisory group lacks any institutional mandate or potential to meaningfully influence city policy. With respect to youth and LGBT populations, while the City of Vancouver and BC Housing indeed fund some youth-targeted homelessness services and shelters, there is no explicit youth or LGBT policy framework that guides investments—notably, the same is true in the Toronto case.

Like in Vancouver, Toronto City Council also has an advisory committee to council, called the Aboriginal Affairs Committee (AAC). The mandate of the AAC is to harness the “knowledge and expertise [of the Aboriginal community] to provide advice to City Council, through the standing committees of Council, and act as a liaison with external bodies on barriers to participation in public life and to the achievement of social, cultural and economic well-being of the city's residents” (City of Toronto, 2013). And just as with Vancouver, this ostensibly inclusive governance structure suffers from many cancelled meetings due to lack of quorum, a reflection of the very broad, yet weakly empowered mandate of the AAC. When asked about the AAC, several Aboriginal community members signaled a lack of interest since there is no meaningful opportunity to influence city policy on urban Aboriginals, so it is not worth their time (Sanderson, Abbott).

On the policy front, however, the City of Toronto has a policy to invest 20% of all homelessness and housing funds towards Aboriginal services and housing units. This policy change was in response to the 2006 Street Needs Assessment (homeless count), which revealed that Aboriginals constitute a disproportionate share of the homeless population, and thus require a correspondingly high level of targeted investment. This policy is indeed a positive example of sensitivity to a very vulnerable group among the homeless population, though it is criticized by some in the Aboriginal community
because few (if any) Aboriginals play a substantive role in setting priorities and deciding how those funds should be invested (Sanderson, Personal Interview, May 28, 2012; Abbott, Personal Interview, July 15, 2012; Teekens, Personal Interview, June 25, 2012).

**Analysis: network governance and policy sensitivity**

Theory put forward at the onset of the chapter was that more inclusive governance networks would generate or contribute to more sensitive policy. The foregoing data and policy analysis from the six homelessness governance networks lends evidence to this relationship. \(\text{VAN}_{\text{main}}\) is the largest and most inclusive governance network of the six under investigation, with upwards of forty active members who represent diverse parts of the policy sector as well as demographic groups, including youth, women, Aboriginals and seniors. \(\text{VAN}_{\text{main}}\) has created governance processes within the network to ensure that these voices have a meaningful ability to influence policy development and implementation, and this has directly resulted in policy choices that are sensitive to the unique needs of these populations. At the other end of the continuum of inclusiveness, \(\text{TO}_{\text{main}}\) is small and lacks diversity with respect to the most marginalized segments of the homeless population, most significantly no Aboriginal representation. And while the City of Toronto has committed to allocating 20% of homelessness expenditures towards Aboriginal housing and services, there is no meaningful opportunity for Aboriginals to shape how those expenditures are prioritized and allocated, unlike at \(\text{VAN}_{\text{main}}\).

**Predicted from theory:**
\[
\begin{align*}
\text{VAN}_{\text{main}} & > \text{TO}_{\text{main}} \\
\text{VAN}_{\text{Ab}} & > \text{TO}_{\text{Ab}} \\
\text{VAN}_{\text{emerg}} & = \text{TO}_{\text{emerg}}
\end{align*}
\]

**Actual from empirics:**
\[
\begin{align*}
\text{VAN}_{\text{main}} & > \text{TO}_{\text{main}} \\
\text{VAN}_{\text{Ab}} & > \text{TO}_{\text{Ab}} \\
\text{VAN}_{\text{emerg}} & > \text{TO}_{\text{emerg}}
\end{align*}
\]

The pair-wise comparative analysis of the governance networks lends evidence to theory set forth at the beginning of the chapter: that the more inclusive a governance network, the more likely it is to contribute to policy sensitivity, and is consistent with the outcome trends in the average length of homelessness in each city, which is declining in Vancouver and rising in Toronto (GVRSCH, 2012; SNA, 2013). The evidence presented
In this chapter provides evidence to the often-stated, though rarely tested, claims in the literature that unique populations require a unique policy response and that this is most effectively generated by including such voices in policy formation and implementation (Ward, 2008; Abramovich, 2012).

Inclusive network governance can drive policy sensitivity principally because the diversity of the actors at the table exposes traditional authorities and even others in civil society to new perspectives and experiences, and also operates under a deliberative ethic whereby persuasion is the primary path towards policy decisions, not coercion. Current and former members of the most inclusive governance networks in this study continually referenced how their own information and expertise gaps were filled by others at the table, as well as how their own assumptions about problems and solutions were challenged in such a deliberative system. To many governance network members, this is not only about creating a healthy dynamic of exchange and contestation, but it also inconceivable to them how effective policy for some of these subpopulations could otherwise be constructed. That is, the alternative of governing via traditional hierarchy flowing from elected officials through the bureaucracy, with perhaps some token community consultation, is inadequate for a complex issue like homelessness.

A number of bureaucrats acknowledged without prompting that few, if any, of their colleagues had ever been homeless or knew anyone homeless, and thus had little basis for making claims about services or housing models that would be effective and sensitive to the target populations (Anhorn, Personal Interview, January 24, 2012; Garrison, Personal Interview, January 6, 2012). To be clear, bureaucrats are essential actors in governance—they bring research, policy, and risk-analysis skills that are critical to efficient and accountable public decision making. It is the meeting of these very different policy actors in a regularized and deliberative setting that creates the conditions to devise and implement policy that is sensitive to the unique needs of the most vulnerable among the homeless population.
**Conclusion**

Theory put forward and tested in this chapter was that more inclusive networks will generate or contribute to more sensitive policy or programs targeted to vulnerable sub-populations. The foregoing lends evidence to this theory, though reveals interesting deviations as well. VAN\textsubscript{main}, with the most numerous and inclusive membership has demonstrated the most substantive policy sensitivity with respect to youth, women and Aboriginals. This is certainly due to VAN\textsubscript{main} explicitly carving out protected policy space for the groups, in particular Aboriginals and youth, who are given central roles in the policy prioritization and expenditures specific to their issue areas. TO\textsubscript{main} ranks higher than predicted on the basis of its (lack of) inclusiveness because the network, due to the fact that it, by way of the formal structures of the City of Toronto, formally carve out 20% of all homelessness funds to be dedicated to Aboriginal homelessness. Policy sensitivity is thus not exclusively driven by the relational dimensions of inclusiveness of the governance network, but also by its structural design. VAN\textsubscript{emerg} performed less well on this policy dimension than predicted because while it is a large governance network, it has long suffered from weak Aboriginal representation, as well as representation for the unique needs of women and youth. TO\textsubscript{emerg} performed the worst of the networks on this measure, contrary to theory, because although it was a large and seemingly inclusive network, its activities were organized strictly along functional-sectoral lines, not demographic ones, resulting in Aboriginal homelessness issues being mostly ignored during its tenure, and only minimal activity recognizing the unique needs of youth and women.

Generating sensitive policy is an essential component of a comprehensive policy response to end homelessness, and this chapter has demonstrated that network governance can play an important role in fostering such change, especially as measured against traditional policymaking in bureaucracies. Yet homelessness is not exclusively about responding to boutique populations; it is a complex policy field with many government actors at work, private charitable foundations, and an active civil society delivering services. Policy coordination—devising a ‘system-based’ response to homelessness, such that the moving parts are operating cohesively with reduced gaps in
the service and housing sector—and its relationship to network governance is thus the focus of the final pair-wise comparative analysis chapter.
Chapter 7: Policy Coordination and Governance Networks

Introduction
This chapter represents the third and final in which we explore the relationship between the properties of governance networks and policy development, with policy coordination as the focus of inquiry. Recall that policy coordination is defined as a policy framework that covers the spectrum of needs of the target population—in a service and geographic sense—as well as policies that work in a cohesive fashion (i.e., do not work at cross purposes). An example of two homelessness-related policies working at cross-purposes would be (i) an aggressive outreach program to link street homeless persons to services and (ii) a bylaw that criminalizes sleeping in public squares and parks. They work at cross-purposes because the bylaw will drive the street homeless into the shadows (places they will not be discovered) and thus further away from accessing services. Policy and program coordination will be identified in each governance network using the following criteria: policy coordination (are policies cohesive?) and program coordination (is the suite of services consistent with needs and is duplication avoided?).

Policy coordination is a feature of public policy that scholars and practitioners should care about not because of a desire to homogenize policy or reduce experimentation, but rather as a basic goal of competence and effectiveness in complex policy domains with many moving parts and institutional silos. Thus “coordination implies the bringing into a relationship other disparate activities and events” such that “disjunctures can be eliminated” (Thompson et al., 1991: 4). Coordination is thus about smoothing over potentially conflicting objectives and actions of agents and agencies in complex policy fields, not necessarily the imposition of a single policy instrument or philosophy. A further goal of policy and program coordination is to avoid service duplication or redundancy, particularly in a policy context of scarce resources. The public administration literature has long-engaged with the pathologies associated with institutional silos (Pierre, 1998; Aucoin, 1997), and homelessness is a policy issue with several levels of government, even more bureaucratic agencies and departments, as well a considerable role for the charitable sector and civil society. Policy coordination is directly
related to improved homelessness policy outcomes—to the extent that the complex policy field reduces its service gaps and incoherence that can disrupt a homeless individual’s path toward stability and supported- or self-sufficiency (Gaetz, 2010).

That governance networks can contribute positively to policy coordination in complex and multi-level domains is often a fundamental theoretical premise of the scholarship, though empirics have complicated the thinking in this regard. Reflecting on network governance, Peters (2007) contends that “while individual programs must be made to work well, so too must the assembly of programs in government as a whole. At a minimum the programs within a particular area of policy should work together effectively” (74). Thus for implementation scholars like Peters, policy coordination is one of the important tasks for governance networks. Complex and intersecting problems like homelessness are best characterized as ‘meta-problems’—sets of problems—rather than discrete problems and these “are beyond the capacity of a single organization to meet” (Trist, 1983: 269). Furthermore, looking to a governance network as a solution to coordinated policy development and implementation may not even be enough in some policy domains, as “much of the contemporary literature might be criticized for focusing on the ‘single lonely network’”, and thus how governance networks interact with each other is important to study in the context of policy coordination (Peters, 2007: 73).

Though most network scholars espouse the claim that governance networks can ‘solve’ coordination problems, others warn that network structure and design matters. To Thompson et al. (1991), “a possible disadvantage for networks is that very large-scale coordination via informal means becomes extremely difficult as the range of social actors expands” (15) (see also: Goldsmith and Eggers, 2001).

Recall from Chapter 2 that the third hypothesis in this study is that more institutionalized networks will generate or contribute to more coordinated policy and programs. We expect this to occur because, irrespective of inclusivity, governance networks that are connected to key sites of decision making, integrated with other networks, and engage frequently will be able to smooth over service gaps and coordinate the homelessness response more effectively.
Figure 7.1: Hypothesized linkages between network institutionalization and inclusivity and policy dimensions of interest.

Through pair-wise comparative analysis of the six governance networks, the following hypothesis is tested in this chapter: more institutionalized governance networks will generate or contribute to more coordinated policy and programs:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{VAN}_{\text{main}} & > \text{TO}_{\text{main}} \\
\text{VAN}_{\text{Ab}} & = \text{TO}_{\text{Ab}} \\
\text{TO}_{\text{emerg}} & > \text{VAN}_{\text{emerg}}
\end{align*}
\]

Examples of policy coordination were identified by triangulating legislation, policy statements, meeting archives, and interviews with key stakeholders at all levels of government and civil society, and are categorized as follows: policy coordination (are policies cohesive?) and program coordination (is the package of services consistent with needs and is duplication avoided?). This chapter presents homelessness policy coordination in Vancouver and Toronto from 1995-2013, and is summarized in Table 7.1. Evidence from Vancouver and Toronto demonstrates that inclusive governance networks contribute substantially to policy coordination, compared to city bureaucracies—even though there are such examples from the latter.
### Table 7.1: the most relevant examples of policy coordination differentiated by category, from each governance network.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Policy Coordination (across region)</th>
<th>VAN&lt;sub&gt;main&lt;/sub&gt;</th>
<th>TO&lt;sub&gt;main&lt;/sub&gt;</th>
<th>VAN&lt;sub&gt;Ab&lt;/sub&gt;</th>
<th>TO&lt;sub&gt;Ab&lt;/sub&gt;</th>
<th>VAN&lt;sub&gt;emerg&lt;/sub&gt;</th>
<th>TO&lt;sub&gt;emerg&lt;/sub&gt;</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Homeless Action Week (HAW)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homeless Count</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Plan replicated in regional municipalities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VAN&lt;sub&gt;main&lt;/sub&gt;-VAN&lt;sub&gt;Ab&lt;/sub&gt;-VAN&lt;sub&gt;emerg&lt;/sub&gt; joint planning and strategy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supports development of Community Housing Tables</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Created first ever Aboriginal homelessness plan in area</td>
<td>Homeless Action Week (HAW)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VAN&lt;sub&gt;main&lt;/sub&gt;-VAN&lt;sub&gt;Ab&lt;/sub&gt;-VAN&lt;sub&gt;emerg&lt;/sub&gt; joint planning and strategy</td>
<td>Created first ever Aboriginal homelessness plan in area</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standardized shelters and services</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shelter statistics compiled and released</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standardized shelters</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shelter stats compiled</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VAN&lt;sub&gt;main&lt;/sub&gt;-VAN&lt;sub&gt;Ab&lt;/sub&gt;-VAN&lt;sub&gt;emerg&lt;/sub&gt; joint planning and strategy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joint VAN&lt;sub&gt;main&lt;/sub&gt;-VAN&lt;sub&gt;Ab&lt;/sub&gt;-VAN&lt;sub&gt;emerg&lt;/sub&gt; funding allocations</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community information sharing of emerging issues</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community information sharing of emerging issues</td>
<td></td>
<td>Community information sharing of emerging issues</td>
<td>Community information sharing of emerging issues</td>
<td>Community information sharing of emerging issues</td>
<td>Community information sharing of emerging issues</td>
<td>Community information sharing of emerging issues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metro Vancouver Funders Table</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Municipal bureaucrats assist with allocation decisions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inclusion of private foundations in decision making</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TO&lt;sub&gt;main&lt;/sub&gt;-City shared allocations</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Predicted RANK from theory</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1*</td>
<td>1*</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Actual RANK from empirics</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The following sections identify and analyze the coordination of policy and programs resulting from the six governance networks in Vancouver and Toronto, beginning with VAN<sub>main</sub>-TO<sub>main</sub> pair-wise comparative analysis.

**Policy coordination: VAN<sub>main</sub> and TO<sub>main</sub>**

As depicted in Table 7.1, when compared, VAN<sub>main</sub> exhibits more numerous and substantive examples of policy coordination in the past 15 years than TO<sub>main</sub>. VAN<sub>main</sub> is expected to be the governance network that manifests the highest policy coordination by virtue of its high levels of institutionalization, characterized by expansive government and civil society involvement, clearly defined policy and decision making space, as well
as its close linkages to other governance networks in the region. A survey of policies and programs in the region linked to VAN\textsubscript{main} lends evidence to network governance theory and policy coordination. The aforementioned triennial Homeless Count and annual Homeless Action Week (HAW) are examples of policy coordination among major players in the region, and both were pioneered by VAN\textsubscript{main} in its unique capacity as the regional voice for homelessness in Metro Vancouver. The Homeless Count has grown into an institutionalized and powerful example of regionally coordinated activity among the Metro Vancouver municipalities and service providers. The Homeless Count organized at the regional level is viewed by those in the sector as critical not only for a comprehensive and standardized count methodology in Metro Vancouver, but also because “[suburban] municipalities are not going to do their own counts, so without [VAN\textsubscript{main}], I don't know how the municipalities have the capacity or political will to fund and conduct their own count. In that way, [VAN\textsubscript{main}] is a great coordinating centre” (C. Maboules, Personal Interview, January 6, 2012). Thus the region-wide homeless count as a policy choice made visible a policy problem not previously articulated or accepted, and has directly resulted in suburban mayors in Richmond, Coquitlam and Surrey, for example, accepting the argument that homelessness in their cities needs to be addressed with affordable housing and services (Okyere, Personal Interview, October 11, 2011).

Likewise, the annual Homeless Action Week (HAW) coordinates government and civil society action to raise awareness of homelessness and paths towards solutions in media-savvy ways. Pulling together all the major policy players once a year for a week of sustained advocacy and awareness-building is a major operation in Metro Vancouver and though more of these are popping up across Canada (e.g. Victoria, Calgary), has never existed or been proposed in Toronto. For some VAN\textsubscript{main} members, HAW is creating more change than the actual funds they allocate towards homeless programs because it is building toward change at both the local level and by senior governments. One former VAN\textsubscript{main} member claims that “it has really become something people know about, they understand it, there is a great communication strategy around it, lots of organizations are getting involved. We have way more connections with some of our neighborhoods that were less involved a couple of years ago” (C. Maboules, Personal Interview, January 6,
More recent HAWs have extended beyond advocacy and issue awareness, growing into direct and coordinated service provision, with pop-up services via Project Connect events, which attempt to establish linkages in the service system for homeless individuals.

The other major example of policy coordination for which VAN\textsubscript{main} is chiefly responsible is in goading local municipalities in Metro Vancouver to adopt the VAN\textsubscript{main} master policy planning document for the region, the Three Ways to Home (3WTH) Plan, as well as to develop their own localized homelessness plans using 3WTH as a model. By 2005, VAN\textsubscript{main} obtained the endorsement of the 3WTH plan by 17 of the 21 municipal councils in Metro Vancouver (RSCH bulletin, August 2005). In terms of shaping local municipal homelessness plans, VAN\textsubscript{main} has likewise been successful. For example, the City of Vancouver Homeless Action Plan (HAP) created in 2005 was designed using “the same framework as the regional plan” including prioritizing according to the three areas of income, housing and support services (City of Vancouver 2005: 2). Other municipal homelessness plans in the region are similarly consistent with the 3WTH plan—including Surrey, New Westminster, and the North Shore—largely the result of years of engagement with VAN\textsubscript{main} (Sundberg, Personal Interview, October 13, 2011; Okyere, Personal Interview, October 11, 2011).

The municipal homeless plans differ to the extent they have localized pressures with regard to homelessness, but they all exist within the overarching policy framework established by VAN\textsubscript{main}, such that the constituent municipalities are paddling in the same direction as VAN\textsubscript{main} and each other, and thus represents policy that is cohesive. In terms of taking credit for spurring the region’s municipalities to develop homelessness policies, some VAN\textsubscript{main} members identified clear causal links between their actions and those of the municipalities (Semotuk, Personal Interview, October 12, 2011; A. Maboules, Personal Interview, January 24, 2012). When asked hypothetically about outcomes if VAN\textsubscript{main} had never been created, all those interviewed strongly predicted a much less developed and coordinated homelessness response in the region, with one City of Vancouver bureaucrat suggesting “I think there would be much less activity around
homelessness in other parts of the region. I think that would be the biggest thing. There would be much more focus on [the City of] Vancouver, much more focus on the Downtown Eastside—that's been one of the key pieces of [VAN\textsubscript{main}] is helping people understand that homelessness isn't just a Downtown Eastside issue” (Garrison, Personal Interview, January 6, 2012).

TO\textsubscript{main} is predicted by theory to contribute the least to policy coordination, since it has no decision making function, limited intergovernmental and civil society membership, and is not formally connected to other governance networks in the city. Recall that TO\textsubscript{main} is effectively a consultation network for the City of Toronto bureaucracy, and thus does not have distance from the local government bureaucracy that VAN\textsubscript{main} is afforded. Yet policy at the city level is on one hand well coordinated in an administrative sense—yet strikingly uncoordinated in other areas, particularly with respect to Aboriginal homelessness. The policy activity of TO\textsubscript{main}, to the extent it exists, is fed into the city bureaucracy, which is the centralized planning authority for homelessness policy development in Toronto. All the funds from the federal, provincial and local governments flow through the city bureaucracy, unlike the case in Metro Vancouver, which remains contained within the respective local government’s authority, coupled with a major policy role for the provincial government via BC Housing. As a result, when the NHI was created in 2000, which required the creation of TO\textsubscript{main} to access federal government funds, rather than bring together various local government and community actors to develop from the ground up a community plan to address homelessness for the purpose of the administering federal funds, the city brought its already-established policy framework for homelessness, derived in previous years from the Golden Report and to be implemented by the city bureaucracy (City of Toronto, 2003).

City bureaucrats claim that Toronto already has extensive community-city consultations on the production of their homelessness priorities, so TO\textsubscript{main} was not needed in the same way it might be in other municipalities in Canada (confidential, Personal Interview, July 23, 2012; confidential, Personal Interview, December 8, 2011). The city was explicit in
that the priorities ‘approved’ by TO\textsubscript{main} arose from preexisting city policies and processes—not from deliberations among those in the community—and the then-new federal government funds from NHI will “enhance and complement various new initiatives” (City of Toronto, 2003). The counter to this argument, offered by some federal bureaucrats and community members, is that the NHI/HPS is supposed to be a community-driven program, not a municipal program (HRSDC, 2003).\footnote{It was not designed to be a supplemental fund for municipalities, but rather an incentive package for community actors and government to come together in a collaborative fashion to address homelessness. If the federal government wanted the city to simply spend the federal HPS funds according to its existing policy priorities, it would have transferred money directly to the municipalities or through the provinces, rather than through the complex administrative system that requires a community-based governance network to form to develop a policy plan and allocate funds.} That said, in terms of policy coordination—at least in terms of mainstream homelessness policies and programs—Toronto’s policy framework is coordinated by virtue of its administrative centralization in the city bureaucracy. The policy coordination in terms of Aboriginal homelessness is quite weak, however. This stems from the city failing to engage with TO\textsubscript{Ab} in aligning policy priorities and jointly planning investments for Aboriginals in Toronto. When asked to describe the relationship between the two networks with regard Aboriginal policy planning, a TO\textsubscript{Ab} member claims it is “next to non-existent” (confidential, Personal Interview, November 6, 2012).

Despite the lack of engagement from the City of Toronto bureaucracy with TO\textsubscript{Ab} on Aboriginal homelessness policy planning, the centralized nature of all homelessness funding flowing through the city allows for a built-in system of coordination of investments and homelessness programs (at least for non-Aboriginal investments)—though this comes at a cost, as several respondents in the community referred to it as an impenetrable bureaucratic force (Crowe and German, Personal Interview, April 10, 2012; confidential, Personal Interview, December 12, 2011). VAN\textsubscript{main}, by contrast, is not a central intake for homelessness funding in the region, yet it has built from the ground up informal mechanisms to achieve high levels of investment coordination. This is principally done by developing strong relationships with municipal bureaucrats who work on homelessness issues, placing them on decision teams for investment allocations alongside community actors, as well as other government funders (like BC Housing) and
private community foundations throughout the region. VAN\textsubscript{main} is a diverse mix of individuals, each bringing not only distinct perspectives on the issues, but also knowledge of what is occurring on the ground (in the community and on the streets) and what is coming down the policy pike (from government).

What may appear to be a recipe for endless debate and fractured decision making is actually reported to be an efficient context under which to make decisions that are coordinated, cohesive and void of duplications or gaps in services. A prominent community service provider in Metro Vancouver admits that “most of us individually do not know the package of services in all regions, so having all types of service providers, government, and other funders at the table can help us get an idea of what is coming down the pike” (O’Shannacery, Personal Interview, October 12, 2011). And likewise government is not always aware of what is working or emerging at the ground level, and thus the community role in decision making is viewed as essential to produce a package of coordinated and cohesive programs, with the bureaucratic manager of VAN\textsubscript{main} suggesting that the advantage of including community and service providers in decision making is that “they will know immediately as to whether there is a duplication or if it reinforces an existing project” (Okyere, Personal Interview, October 11, 2011). Likewise by including private foundations—like the Vancity Foundation, the Streettohome Foundation, the Vancouver Foundation, and United Way, which also fund many homelessness services in the region—in policy planning and decision making, VAN\textsubscript{main} can internalize funding trends to avoid duplications and service gaps.

VAN\textsubscript{main} therefore does not enjoy the structural advantage that exists in the City of Toronto in terms of a centralized institutional framework for homelessness policy and programs at the local level, but has managed to weave activities together in other formal and informal ways. Yet VAN\textsubscript{main} engages in further coordination within the region in areas TO\textsubscript{main} or the City of Toronto bureaucracy does not. This is with regard to engagement with the other major governance networks in jurisdiction, and in this vein Metro Vancouver is characterized by a significantly more coordinated policy and programmatic framework. As mentioned in earlier sections, VAN\textsubscript{main} and VAN\textsubscript{AB} have
integrated policy documents (TO\text{main} and TO\text{Ab} do not), and VAN\text{main} invites VAN\text{Ab} to help them make decisions on Aboriginal homelessness programs (an opportunity not provided to TO\text{Ab} by TO\text{main} or the City of Toronto). Additionally, there have been a number of joint planning sessions involving VAN\text{main}, VAN\text{Ab} and VAN\text{emerg} working in partnership to coordinate policy and advocacy (for example, the Joint Task Group on Shelter Service Planning in 2002). The more recent creation of the Metro Vancouver Funder’s Table by VAN\text{main} is likewise another example of further coordination of the investments by government and private foundations.

**Policy coordination: VAN\text{Ab} and TO\text{Ab}**

Among the Aboriginal governance networks, VAN\text{Ab} and TO\text{Ab} are similarly institutionalized and thus theory predicts that they would make similar scale of contributions to policy coordination. However, comparative analysis of the evidence from policy priorities, program investments and governance network activities demonstrates that VAN\text{Ab} contributes to significantly more policy coordination than TO\text{Ab}. This is chiefly explained by its relationship to the other governance networks in the region, not only its internal features of institutionalization, as theory predicts. VAN\text{Ab} involvement in the planning, coordination and dissemination of the triennial regional Homeless Count, as well as the annual HAW, is indicative of major collaborative activity that is in concert with the major policy players in the region.

Like VAN\text{main}, VAN\text{Ab} and TO\text{Ab} are tasked with both policy planning and the allocation of funds to homelessness programs, and the presence of community service providers assists both governance networks in avoiding duplication of services and major service gaps. After visiting each governance network to see them in action, one common feature that was immediately evident was the function that the governance network serves to keep communication channels open regarding services opening and closing in the community, allowing members to strategize how to fill gaps, redirect clients during disruptive periods, and shuffle resources to maintain a coordinated system of services. While governance network meetings take about a half a day from members every month—which is substantial for many over-burdened and understaffed civil society
organizations—most active members claim this is essential to understand the service system on behalf of their clients and to react to shifting dynamics on the ground. One VAN_{Ab} member confirms, “Yes, it takes away from our time, but at the same time I don’t have the time to go and visit and sit down with whoever in Surrey and learn what sort of homeless and housing programs [they offer]” (Seymour, Personal Interview, September 10, 2012). TO_{Ab} members echo this perceived benefit, with one arguing that bringing the major Aboriginal community service partners together on a regular basis “provides helpful information that can be used to refer existing and future clients”, and has reduced distrust in the community as stronger professional and personal relationships have formed as a result (Abbott, Personal Interview, July 15, 2012).

VAN_{Ab} performs this coordinative function better than TO_{Ab} because of its formal connections to the other governance networks and therefore there are more linkages made to the activities out in the community. Indeed, the major difference between the coordinative performance of VAN_{Ab} and TO_{Ab} are the greater linkages between VAN_{Ab} and other major players in the mainstream homelessness domain in the region, like VAN_{main} and VAN_{emerg}. This was not anticipated as a feature of institutionalization from governance network theory, though recently Peters (2007) has suggested that “networks of networks” may be required to coordinate complex policy files. As described earlier, VAN_{Ab} is invited to help determine not only the policy priorities of VAN_{main} with respect to Aboriginals, but is also an integral decision maker on the allocation of VAN_{main} funds towards Aboriginal homelessness programs. The lack of an analogous linkage in Toronto is not for a lack of trying by TO_{Ab}, however. TO_{main} allocates 20% of its total HPS funding envelope to Aboriginal homelessness—double the share than VAN_{main} parcels out—yet TO_{Ab} members are not invited to participate in the policy priority development and decision making regarding investments towards Aboriginal homelessness programs.

The result of this disconnect is that TO_{main} (in essence, the City of Toronto), flush with Aboriginal homelessness funds, allocates them according to priorities developed in-house, and TO_{Ab}, which has a significantly smaller funding envelope, is limited to funding small and more patchwork homelessness programs. There are not enough funds in the TO_{Ab} envelope to execute the development of a capital project like a supportive
housing building, so instead they have a service system bias to their decision making—reactive rather than preventative measures to address homelessness. Decisions around Aboriginal funds would be much more coordinated and cohesive if TO\textsubscript{main} and TO\textsubscript{Ab} developed a closer relationship in priority setting and decision making like VAN\textsubscript{main} and VAN\textsubscript{Ab}.

**Policy coordination: VAN\textsubscript{emerg} and TO\textsubscript{emerg}**

VAN\textsubscript{emerg} and TO\textsubscript{emerg} are distinctive among the six governance networks examined by their lack of any institutionalized decision making authority, whether through the allocation of funds or through policy space, and thus their inherent ability to coordinate government policy and programs is diminished. Yet both networks have made important contributions to coordinating the activities of the homelessness sector in their respective jurisdictions, with VAN\textsubscript{emerg} more successful by virtue of its connections to the major players in the region like VAN\textsubscript{main} and VAN\textsubscript{Ab}, a dynamic not predicted by theory. As described previously, VAN\textsubscript{emerg} is an integral piece to the development and execution of the triennial Homeless Count, in particular by coordinating the shelter system in Metro Vancouver, and is likewise a chief planner of the annual Homeless Action Week (HAW) in conjunction with VAN\textsubscript{main} and VAN\textsubscript{Ab} to generate a coherent and comprehensive argument for more attention to homelessness issues in the region. These coordination pieces would not be as successful and at their current scale without the collaboration of all three governance networks in Metro Vancouver (Okyere, Personal Interview, October 11, 2011; O'Shannacery, Personal Interview, October 12, 2011).

The most significant coordination successes that rest primarily on the work of the VAN\textsubscript{emerg} are with respect to creating and sustaining Extreme Weather Response (EWR) plans among the Metro Vancouver municipalities, as well as standardizing shelter services and data collection. The value of standardized and coordinated collection of data cannot be understated with respect to shelter services, as VAN\textsubscript{emerg} (with the assistance of BC Housing) is able to track emerging issues in the shelter system and react with much greater speed and effectiveness than in previous periods. The standardization of shelter services and coordinated collection of data is likewise a success of TO\textsubscript{emerg}, whose primary concern in the early years was pressing the city to resolve service patchworks
and to collect and share reliable data on shelter use patterns. The coordination between TO\textsubscript{emerg}, TO\textsubscript{main} and TO\textsubscript{Ab}, however, is limited compared to the VAN\textsubscript{main}-VAN\textsubscript{Ab}-VAN\textsubscript{emerg} triad, the actions of which have had considerable impact on the coordination of the sector in terms of policy and programs.

VAN\textsubscript{emerg} and TO\textsubscript{emerg} were both created in a bottom-up fashion primarily by community actors, in contrast to the other governance networks, and as a result, these networks focused primarily on the coordination of the community sector and services on the ground, rather than the policy of government (though they have advanced change in this area as well). But more so than the other networks under investigation, the members of these governance networks devoted considerable time engaging in community information sharing of emerging issues and devising informal (and immediate) strategies to address shifting service needs and gaps in the sector. One of the reasons VAN\textsubscript{emerg} was created was the lack of knowledge among shelter providers of each other’s work. An early VAN\textsubscript{emerg} convener explains,

There were numerous shelters and they are all working in isolation, [with different] shelter requirements and organizations turning away people, I mean none of that information was readily available. I mean, we didn’t even know how many shelter beds that actually existed around the region [prior to organizing] (O’Shannacery, Personal Interview, October 12, 2011).

This type of coordination is less tangible in policy terms, but is evident through their meeting records where community actors would share emerging patterns—more youth this year than last, more concurrent disordered individuals presenting, or fewer women accessing shelters—and VAN\textsubscript{emerg} would deliberate over theories of causes and often come to quick decisions regarding service referrals or in-house policy changes to address the new needs.

Likewise in Toronto one city staff member formerly involved with TO\textsubscript{emerg} suggested that this type of self-coordination among the community was a critical piece of effectively implementing policy, not only by reducing the competitive nature of the sector but also “by getting everyone to use the same language and think about things in similar ways” it allows those working on ground level to make a stronger case to decision makers because
the problem is framed in the same way, which is critical to issue mobilization (Barry, Personal Interview, April 4, 2012). And one cannot discount the disaffection and discouragement front-line community service providers begin to face every day trying to solve a big problem with such limited resources. Governance networks like VAN_emerg help, according to respondents to internal surveys, with one member claiming, “collaboration has helped all of us—it’s a sense of community. Often I find there’s nowhere else to share frustrations, and glean from others experience and expertise. I come out from these meetings and I feel encouraged.” (GVSS, 2008).

**Policy coordination independent from the governance networks**

The foregoing analysis of examples of policy coordination from the six homelessness governance networks do not, of course, constitute all of the policy activity during the period—mayors and council or local institutional configurations, for example, can play a substantial role in generating policy coordination. In order to put the empirical findings from the governance networks in context, it is essential to document policy coordination derived from outside of them.

There are several examples in both the Toronto and Vancouver contexts of attempts to reorganize and better coordinate the collective government response to homelessness that was not primarily done via the governance networks examined. Most prominent among these examples are major task forces created at the provincial and municipal levels that were tasked with studying the system-wide policy framework, documenting service gaps, and making recommendations for a more integrated and effective policy framework. In the Toronto context, the Provincial Task Force on Homelessness in 1998 and the (Toronto) Mayor’s Homelessness Action Task Force in 1999 were the most substantial, and in the Vancouver context the Premier’s Task Force on Homelessness, Mental Illness and Addictions in 2004 and the (Vancouver) Mayor’s Homelessness Emergency Action Team in 2009 were similarly focused on revealing coordination challenges on this complex policy file and made recommendations to the corresponding political actors. This is a very different approach from network governance—though these task forces did bring in diverse actors for consultations—because they were created for short periods of
time with very defined tasks, and they were dismantled after reporting recommendations. Therefore the policy planning coordination piece is present, though implementation and translation into action is dependent on the extent to which elected officials and bureaucrats faithfully implemented the plan and recommendations.

For example, the landmark (Toronto) Mayor’s Homelessness Action Task Force chaired by Anne Golden in 1999 revealed major coordination challenges and service gaps in the Toronto context, and the first recommendation was for the city to create a Facilitator for Action on Homelessness who would be the point person for integrating the system, yet council never created this position (Layton, 2008). Likewise the task force also recommended the creation of an annual ‘report card’, which would measure the progress of City actions on homelessness, yet this was discontinued after a couple of years. That said, the Mayor’s Task Force did constitute the broad framework under which City policy on homelessness was administered in subsequent years (City of Toronto, 2000). The (Ontario) Provincial Task Force on Homelessness also had an impact on homelessness policy coordination, as it recommended that the municipal level be exclusively in charge of administering services and programs relating to homelessness (though the province would still transfer funds), creating the Municipal Service Managers model (OPTFH, 1998). As such, in Toronto, homelessness policy development and implementation is highly centralized within the city bureaucracy—all federal, provincial and municipal dollars flow through the same city department. This has the advantage of having a ‘single window’ for all homelessness services and programs in Toronto, which may lend itself to policy coordination, though does not guarantee it.

In Vancouver, the coordinating effect of the task forces was similarly contingent. The Premier’s Task Force on Homelessness, Mental Health and Addictions was established in 2004 to identify integrated strategies to address homelessness throughout British Columbia, and led to the creation of the provincial strategy of Housing Matters BC, a comprehensive plan across the housing spectrum from shelters to independent private
market home ownership.\textsuperscript{57} Likewise the (Vancouver) Mayor’s Homeless Emergency Action Team (HEAT) was created in 2009 shortly after the election of Gregor Robertson, composed of 14 members including city councillors, city staff, housing stakeholders, and private sector representatives, and was given a 90-day period to come up with a coordinated plan to rapidly get the street homeless off the streets and into secure shelter over the winter and linked to more permanent housing. While this task force made important linkages across sectors, including shelters, health and police, it was limited to the City of Vancouver, one of twenty-one municipalities in Metro Vancouver, and thus cannot be considered a coordinated plan consistent with the reality of the policy problem in the region.

\textbf{Analysis: Network governance and policy coordination}

Theory put forward at the onset of the chapter was that more institutionalized governance networks would generate or contribute to more coordinated policy. The foregoing analysis generally lends evidence to theory, though there are instructive empirical deviations.

\begin{align*}
\text{Predicted from theory:} & \quad \text{Actual from empirics:} \\
VAN_{\text{main}} > TO_{\text{main}} & \quad VAN_{\text{main}} > TO_{\text{main}} \\
VAN_{\text{Ab}} = TO_{\text{Ab}} & \quad VAN_{\text{Ab}} > TO_{\text{Ab}} \\
TO_{\text{emerg}} > VAN_{\text{emerg}} & \quad VAN_{\text{emerg}} > TO_{\text{emerg}}
\end{align*}

The connection between governance networks and policy coordination rests on the theoretical premise that in complex policy fields, creating institutionalized space for diverse policy actors to exchange knowledge and resources will help eliminate disjunctures in the policy framework by placing the activity in system-wide terms (Thompson et al, 1991). $VAN_{\text{main}}$ is certainly the most institutionalized governance network, contributing to widespread policy and program coordination in a policy context.

\textsuperscript{57} Housing Matters BC also coincided with BC Housing becoming the centralized provincial agency for housing and homelessness, though a subsequent Auditor Generals report in 2009 concluded that the provincial homelessness response still suffered from coordination challenges due to a lack of an explicit \textit{homelessness policy strategy} (BC Auditor General, 2009).
that was fragmented and largely inactive prior to its creation. VAN_{main} has not only effectively encouraged suburban municipalities in the region to become more active on the policy issue, but also brings together key decision makers and funders together from throughout the region to orchestrate a highly coordinated response to homelessness.

Part of the reason why VAN_{main} enjoys success with regard to policy and program coordination is not just its own willingness to engage with key players, but also VAN_{emerg} and VAN_{Ab} working in concert with VAN_{main} in terms of policy planning and decision making on key investments and strategies, in ways not apparent in the Toronto context. The surprising finding showing that policy coordination in Metro Vancouver is owed chiefly to collaboration among the three governance networks lends credibility to Peters’ (2007) claim that policy coordination vis-à-vis network governance is not fostered within a “single, lonely network” but rather by relationships between networks (73). It should be noted that TO_{main} is highly coordinated within the city bureaucracy’s policy frameworks, which are substantial because the city is the dominant player, but policy and program coordination largely ends there. There is effectively no relationship between TO_{main} and TO_{Ab}, and TO_{emerg} dissolved in 2006 (and was not meaningfully engaged with either TO_{main} or TO_{Ab} from 2000-2006).

Thus the pair-wise comparative analysis of the governance networks, which allows us to control the analysis for their mandates and policy focus, in fact underestimates the influence of the institutionalized and inclusive governance networks on policy innovation, sensitivity and coordination. By examining policy development and implementation by looking at how the networks interact with each other reveals how the VAN_{main}-VAN_{Ab}-VAN_{emerg} triad in Metro Vancouver has collaborated to drive many of the most important policy developments during the period of inquiry. What is lost in the pairwise analysis is the synergy developed within VAN_{main}-VAN_{emerg}-VAN_{Ab} triad, represented in Figure 7.2, with an active and integrated network of networks in which community actors take their policy roles seriously and their activities build towards policy change and issue awareness much larger than their relatively narrow individual network mandates would otherwise portend. Figure 7.2 shows how stark the differences
are between Toronto and Vancouver in this regard, with virtually no shared policy developments among the governance networks in Toronto, and a number of important policy achievements that would not be possible at a similar scale and impact without joint work from the governance networks (Okyere, Personal Interview, October 11, 2011).

Figure 7.2: Toronto and Vancouver governance networks interrelationships, by policy dimension
Conclusion

The foregoing comparative analysis in the last three chapters of homelessness policy development in Toronto and Vancouver over a nearly 20 year period vis-à-vis the three major homelessness governance networks in each jurisdiction lends evidence to key dimensions of network governance theory. That is, more institutionalized and more inclusive governance networks will contribute to more innovative policy and programs; more inclusive governance networks will contribute to policy that is tailored to unique needs of subpopulations; and more institutionalized governance networks will contribute to more coordinated policy and programs in the jurisdiction. \( \text{VAN}_{\text{main}} \), the most institutionalized and inclusive of the governance networks conformed to the predictions of theory. Likewise, \( \text{TO}_{\text{main}} \), measured as the least institutionalized and inclusive of the
governance networks performed at the lower end of all of the policy dimensions, as predicted by theory.\textsuperscript{58} And importantly, these findings are consistent with the divergent homelessness outcome trends in Vancouver and Toronto. It is in the mid-range (of institutionalization and inclusivity) of governance networks where the theory had less predictive power with respect to the policy dimensions. Yet the deviations from the predictions based on the theory are also interesting contributions from the governance and policy analysis, as they allow us to build on and refine network governance theory.

For instance, VAN\textsubscript{emerg} generated more numerous and substantive policy innovations than the theory predicted based on its mid-range institutionalization. VAN\textsubscript{emerg} has no formally institutionalized public decision making power, unlike several of the other governance networks, yet has managed to drive both local and senior government policy innovation over its lifetime. What the theory did not predict was that VAN\textsubscript{emerg}, in lieu of an institutionalized planning and decision making role, incrementally built informal and mutually beneficial ties to the major policy players in the region—BC Housing and VAN\textsubscript{main}. That is, the relational elements of governance institutionalization appear more powerful that originally conceived. The commitment by VAN\textsubscript{emerg} members to base their policy work on hard data and a determined commitment to working bureaucratic channels (with public protest as a rare and last option) established them as serious players to key decision makers, particularly at BC Housing. Thus a governance network can be ‘institutionalized’ within the policy community without many visible markings of it in terms of authoritative decision making space. Likewise, VAN\textsubscript{emerg}–VAN\textsubscript{main} connections represent a powerfully leveraged relationship with a number of notable policy innovations and coordinated action that would suffer without the involvement of each.

There were also empirical deviations from the theory at the mid-range level with respect to governance network structure and policy sensitivity. For example, TO\textsubscript{emerg} was a mid-size and diverse network, and was predicted to result in moderate contributions to policy

\textsuperscript{58} Recall that since TO\textsubscript{main} was placed in a very narrow space by its metagovernor, the City of Toronto bureaucracy, in the foregoing chapters we devoted special attention to the policy development emerging from the City of Toronto as well to compare against VAN\textsubscript{main}. Along the dimensions of policy measured in this study, institutionalized and inclusive governance networks generally outperformed bureaucracies, particularly with respect to generating policy innovation and policy sensitivity.
sensitive to the unique needs of subpopulations, but in fact ranked the lowest of the governance networks. $TO_{\text{emerg}}$ failed in this regard for two key reasons: (i) it was a nominally diverse network, but not effectively diverse—it suffered from tokenism—and (ii) was organized along functional-sectoral lines (ie. shelter system, police issues, transportation, etc.), not along the lines of demographic special needs (which most of the other governance networks did). The important takeaway is that policy sensitivity does not mechanically stem from diverse membership, but the right balance of membership, and the institutional framework to channel activity towards these ends. $VAN_{\text{emerg}}$ is likewise a large and diverse governance network, but suffers from tokenism with respect to unique sub-populations, which evidence from the other governance networks suggest has held back its contributions from a policy sensitivity perspective.

Lastly, a word about $TO_{\text{main}}$—the most consistently under-performing governance network of the six from a policy perspective. It is important to emphasize just how narrowly circumscribed $TO_{\text{main}}$ is in terms of authority and policy planning: it is more a consultative network than a governance network like the others under investigation which have delegated authority and play a major role in policy planning and decision making. It exists mostly on paper, only meeting from time to time, truly only created by the City of Toronto to satisfy the federal government HPS program requirements to have a ‘community advisory board’ to devise the policy priorities that guide investments.\textsuperscript{59} Thus in some ways it makes perfect sense why it had underperformed against the other homelessness governance networks, particularly $VAN_{\text{main}}$. It is a valuable comparison, however, because it has precisely the same origins as $VAN_{\text{main}}$ (NHI), and therefore represents a natural experiment in the consequence of institutional design.

These arguments are understandable from an efficiency perspective, but the existing institutional framework that further centralizes bureaucratic power and marginalizes

\textsuperscript{59} The city defends this by arguing that Toronto is different from other cities: it is a very big city that manages hundreds of millions of dollars of homelessness investments annually, and thus there are existing bureaucratic frameworks to craft policy and administer programs. It also claims that there are a handful of sectoral ‘advisory groups’ at the city consisting of homelessness civil society groups that advise it, and therefore creating $TO_{\text{main}}$ like $VAN_{\text{main}}$ would be a redundant layer of bureaucracy and community involvement in policy planning.
governance networks comes at a great cost in terms of missed opportunities. The evidence gathered in this study demonstrates this clearly. Missed opportunities to build strong connections in the community to harness their experience to drive further innovations, as well as the build a movement in Toronto that raises awareness and builds momentum among the broader public and elected officials. Toronto’s own Jack Layton, surely referencing his own experiences working on homelessness issues at the City claimed that “no massive central bureaucracy is going to do the job well” (Layton, 2008: 305). That is, internal bureaucratic coordination in Toronto has its limits, as insularity from a meaningful role for civil society actors in policy planning and decision making does not generate community investment in the process and towards change. Homelessness has not been high on the agenda of the public or elected officials in Toronto for nearly a decade, and there are no serious and comprehensive institutions like the governance networks we see in Metro Vancouver to push officials in Toronto in that direction.

Yet it is also clear from the historical policy development analysis that governance networks are not the exclusive purveyors of policy innovation, sensitivity and coordination—the contingent meeting of local political institutional design, ideas, and leadership from elected and bureaucratic actors are also responsible for important policy developments during this period. Recall that ‘housing first’ and ‘harm reduction’ ideas were key policy innovations in Toronto and Vancouver respectively, not the result of governance network activity, but rather by the highly effective leadership of public officials championing experimental ideas. Important examples of policy coordination in Toronto and Vancouver, particularly in the form of major task forces to study and conceptualize the collective homelessness response, were chiefly driven by elected officials. Though the leadership of elected and bureaucratic actors is perhaps the strongest alternative explanation for innovative and coordinated policy development to the activity of governance networks, a significant apparent drawback is that in several cases individual leadership is often ephemeral, and we see that an advantage of network governance vis-à-vis policy development is the sustained pressure for change and reform over the long-term.
The analysis of the previous three chapters has accumulated evidence that lends credibility to the relationship between governance networks and policy development, as well as to the divergent homelessness outcome trends in Vancouver and Toronto. For the most part thus far, however, we have been presented with qualitative evidence of variation in policy plans, regulations and programs in Toronto and Vancouver as a result of the six governance networks under investigation. Yet an important policy dimension has not yet been systematically analyzed: actual expenditures on homelessness services. A common refrain in bureaucracies is that ‘great plans without resources are fantasies’, which implies that often the most substantive proxy measure for policy is in how governments spend. Budgets are, indeed, policy statements. How governance networks have allocated funds—compared to bureaucracies—may tell us a great deal about their unique contribution to policy innovation, sensitivity and coordination that the previous qualitative analysis via archival records, interviews, and participant observation cannot capture.

Are there patterns in homelessness expenditures from highly institutionalized and inclusive governance networks (VANS) and weakly institutionalized and inclusive ones (TOplanes)? Do Aboriginal governance networks set priorities and allocate resources differently from what non-Aboriginal governance networks or bureaucracies would? We can answer these questions with a combination of expenditure analysis, counter-factual analysis and drawing on a natural experiment isolating the differences between governance network versus bureaucratic decision making. The answers to these questions are critical to our answering of whether networks matter to policy outputs (and outcomes), and is the focus of the final empirical chapter.
Chapter 8: Empirical counter-factual analysis of decision making

Introduction

The earlier empirical chapters focused on the relationship between the properties of governance networks and the policy dimensions of innovation, sensitivity and coordination, relying primarily on qualitative historical policy analysis and interviews with key policy actors in Toronto and Vancouver. The foregoing chapters identified policy plans, regulations, and innovative ways of organizing the sector, but an additional measure on any policy issue is how resources are allocated, and this is the focus of this final empirical chapter. A common maxim in bureaucracies is that ‘budgets are policy’, implying that budgets are an essential measure of policy because they signal very clearly the manifestation of policy priorities.

How a governance network allocates expenditures may tell us a great deal about its unique contribution to policy innovation, sensitivity and coordination that the previous qualitative analysis cannot capture. This chapter begins by briefly reintroducing the theoretical basis for differences in decision making between governance networks and traditional hierarchical bureaucracies. Following that, I present the results of a unique empirical counter-factual analysis of decision making conducted at one of the homelessness governance networks under investigation, testing whether network actors and bureaucrats, when analyzing the same homelessness program proposals, evaluate and favour different policy priorities with their investment decisions. This occurred during a period in which I was embedded as an observer within VANmain and it was tasked with setting policy priorities and directing expenditures.

This unique empirical counter-factual analysis provides an opportunity to examine the micro-level processes of network governance: would decisions be made differently if bureaucrats (traditional decision makers), rather than governance network actors, made the policy and expenditure decisions? How does the deliberative nature of network governance influence policy development and investments? The quantitative and counter-factual analysis reveals some surprisingly striking differences in the behaviour of
network actors and bureaucrats, as well as the power of deliberations in shaping policy choices and program expenditures, supplementing the qualitative evidence from previous chapters.

Decision making in governance networks: theoretical premises

It is first helpful to recall why we might expect that governance networks might result in different decisions than bureaucracies. Governments typically create or harness networks as vehicles to pool resources, improve the implementation of programs and services, and resolve knowledge deficiencies (Agranoff, 2006). Governance networks are thus not created to satisfy a vague notion of inclusivity, but “to engage different ‘ways of knowing’ in the continuous processes of problem solving” (Feldman et al. 2006: 93). Indeed, some scholars argue that go-it-alone strategies and hierarchical policy processes often lead to poor or narrow solutions because one rationality or perception dominates the formulation of the policy and others are excluded (Klijn and Koppenjan, 2000). Given that it is precisely the rationale behind the creation of collaborative governance institutions on complex files, we might predict that public servants and civil society actors view policy problems and solutions differently and thus reach or produce different priorities and decisions.

The knowledge bases and perspectives of bureaucrats and civil society actors—as general categories—are claimed to be quite distinct by many public administration scholars. To some, civil society thinking is “inherently different from state thinking” (Hendricks 2006). Civil society actors, who are generally more connected to the issues on the ground than public servants, may offer a diversity of lived experience (tacit knowledge) and therefore information, interpretations, priorities and perspectives about what works and is worthwhile in terms of policy (Head 2008, Andrew 2013). Such actors thus may not only possess critical resources to realize policy goals and outcomes, but may also conceive of problems differently and have unique information and ideas on the most effective solutions (Agranoff, 2006, Edelenbos and Klijn 2006). Yet bureaucrats offer skills and knowledge to collaborative governance institutions that civil society may not possess, including understandings of the intergovernmental dimensions of policy, joint
funding opportunities and a managerial emphasis on value-for-money in service delivery (Head, 2008), but have few generative mechanisms for practical knowledge on the ground (Fung, 2006). Bureaucrats also face very different incentive structures than civil society actors, tending to operate in an institutional environment that breeds risk-aversion and rewards conventional interpretations of policy problems and solutions (Meierand and O’Toole 2006, Bozeman and Kingsley 1998; Wilson 1989).

Deliberative democracy theorist Iris Marion Young (2000) argued that in deliberative arenas, the activity becomes not about expressing interests or preferences, but about transforming them through learning or revealing ignorance. According to one public manager, well-designed governance networks are “transforming in the sense that you don’t leave the same way you came in. There’s some sort of change. Something new has been created. Something happens differently because of the process” (Thompson and Perry 2006, 20). When governance networks work, the various parties come to see issues differently (Gray, 1998). This is not a normative conceptualization that ignores ‘interests’ of actors, but rather allows for the fact that deliberation and exchange can change the way actors perceive their interests. Feldman et al. (2006) claim that “developing ‘new ways of knowing’ can provide people with new ways of fulfilling their interests” (91). The authors use an example of farmers and the question of pesticide use to demonstrate that one’s perception and understanding of their self-interest can change as a result of governance network processes.

Yet this all may sound a bit divorced from reality and conventional notions of self-interest, negotiation and power relations. Do deliberative actors really re-adjust their own positions when confronted with alternative arguments? There are skeptics in the literature who claim that civil society actors are unlikely to possess a deliberative ethic that is required to contribute positively to effective collaborative efforts, since many of are part of interest groups and social movements with a clear agenda (Young 2001 cited in Hendricks 2006). In the context of this debate, it would be helpful to draw on empirics in a systematic way to look for evidence for the following questions:
(i) Do purportedly inclusive governance networks actually bring together diverse perspectives from government and civil society?

(ii) Are these processes genuinely deliberative—do actors change their preferences and beliefs?

(iii) Are the policy choices of these deliberative institutions substantively different than those which would be made under traditional bureaucratic decision making?

**Empirical counter-factual analysis: VAN\textsubscript{main} decision making**

From December 2011 to February 2012, I was embedded as an observer in VAN\textsubscript{main} as it prioritized, deliberated, and allocated $11 million dollars towards homelessness programs in Vancouver area. The decision making process proceeded as follows. VAN\textsubscript{main} issued a call for program proposals to local homelessness and housing service providers to apply for funding of programs for up to two years, and received a total of 87 complete applications, amounting to nearly $30 million in program support requests. The proposed programs included providing outreach services, shelter and supports, transitional housing, mental health and addiction treatment, life skills programs, and youth safe houses, among others, across the Vancouver area. To review the proposed programs and decide which among them to fund, VAN\textsubscript{main} appointed governance network members to a special review committee. The review committee consisted of diverse civil society representatives from homelessness service providers, client group representatives (youth, Aboriginals, women), and community-based philanthropic organizations on four teams (each consisting of five to six members) to share the burden of reviewing them.\textsuperscript{60} Each network member individually reviewed and scored his or her group’s share of the proposed programs and then met collectively to deliberate as to which among them should be prioritized and funded.

\textsuperscript{60} One of the four teams was an exclusively Aboriginal network team, with members from Aboriginal homelessness organizations associated with VAN\textsubscript{main} to decide on Aboriginal program proposals (N=10) in the spirit of cultural sensitivity and unique knowledge bases for this population that experiences homelessness in Canada at disproportionate levels. The other three teams divided up the much more numerous non-Aboriginal program proposals (N=77).
Parallel to all of this activity was the work of bureaucratic staff from the Metro Vancouver regional government who individually reviewed, scored, and deliberated all 87 proposed programs in order to support the decision making at VANmain. The role of the bureaucratic staff was to assist civil society network members in their decision making by understanding each program proposal and to make sure the deliberations were structured to be effective, efficient, and transparent.

I was present for all VANmain meetings and the deliberations at which the final decisions were made. Extensive scoring data from civil society actors and bureaucrats, before and after deliberations, were also made available to me. This context resembles a naturally occurring experiment in decision making, offering a controlled environment in which to compare how bureaucrats (who represent traditional public administration decision making) and civil society actors in a governance network conceptualize policy problems and solutions. Civil society actors and bureaucrats (separately) evaluated and scored precisely the same homelessness program proposals, using the same fifteen criteria, and thus we can compare them to reveal similarities and differences, extrapolate to counterfactual scenarios of decision making, and track how deliberations affect policy choices in governance networks.61

**Data**

The data are presented in three parts: (i) exploring differences with how civil society actors in the governance network and assisting bureaucrats score proposed homelessness programs; (ii) comparing the expenditure choices of bureaucrats versus network actors by aggregating initial evaluations using counterfactual analysis; and (iii) tracking the changes in initially favored programs among network members to final decisions after deliberations.

---

61 This is rarely achieved even in the political experiment world, as it is very uncommon to get experimental and control groups to complete *precisely* the same tasks (Gerber and Green, 2012). As such, we can directly compare scoring and decision making without engaging in typical (speculative) counterfactual analysis—in this case, we have data for the counterfactual.
Governance network member and bureaucratic staff score differences for each proposed homelessness program

The first step to analyzing governance network decision making in this context is to establish that network members do indeed view policy and programs differently from bureaucratic actors. Figure 8.1 below presents the difference in scores for each of the 87 programs evaluated by the network teams and bureaucratic teams, calculated by subtracting the average bureaucratic staff score from the average network member score, in percentage terms. The average difference in scoring across all proposed homelessness programs is 8 percentage points, represented by the horizontal line in the graph.

Figure 8.1: Average score difference between network members and bureaucrats for each proposed homelessness program.

![Graph showing score differences between network members and bureaucrats for each proposed homelessness program.]

Figure 8.1 shows that for some proposed programs, civil society actors in the governance network had very distinct views from the group of bureaucrats reviewing precisely the same program proposal. For example, the program with the largest score difference received a score of 80% from bureaucrats and 47% from civil society actors—a clear difference in perspective on the value of that particular homeless program. And across the 87 proposed programs there are dozens with similarly large and systematic differences between the two groups.

---

62 These values are measured in absolute value terms because at this point we are most interested in identifying difference, not the direction of difference
An important measure to capture the practical effect of diversity within governance network is the difference in scoring *among* network actors compared to the differences *among* bureaucrats for each proposed program. Network governance theory leads us to expect network actors are more likely to disagree on the merits of a particular homelessness program than bureaucrats would disagree with each other, precisely because they come from very different perspectives and parts of the homelessness sector (e.g. shelter provider, mental health professional, person with lived experience, United Way funder, etc.), whereas bureaucrats are comparatively alike in terms of policy analysis and evaluation given professional norms (Head 2008, Fung 2006). If bureaucrats vary in scoring over the same program as much as network actors do, it would undermine the claim that the diversity of network actors has an effect on deliberations and policy choices.

A simple way to measure the degree of difference in scoring *among* network actors and *among* bureaucrats is to calculate the average standard deviation for each program, for each group. And with this we see evidence of diversity manifested: network actors display twice the standard deviation as bureaucrats (14% to 7%, respectively), meaning that network actors’ individual scores are much further away from their mean than individual bureaucratic staff scores are from their mean for each proposed program. This is powerful empirical evidence suggesting that network actors indeed bring diverse perspectives to their policy analysis compared to bureaucratic actors, and is a key component of generating what some scholars have called the ‘collaborative advantage’ of governance network institutions (Huxham, 2003).

*Counter-factual: would different programs be funded in different decision scenarios?* The average network-bureaucrat score difference of 8 percentage points and the disparity in standard deviation for the 87 proposed homelessness programs reveal that there are several important dimensions of difference between these two groups of policy actors. Yet are these differences in scoring and evaluation consequential from a policy perspective? Would different programs end up being funded if the bureaucrats, rather
than the civil society actors in the governance network, had full decision making authority? This can be estimated by comparing the *rankings of the programs* after initial scoring and aligning them against each other, and then adding them up until we reach the total expenditure of $11M.\(^{63}\)

Table 8.1 captures the highest ranked programs from network members and bureaucrats after the initial evaluation, along with the program budget, which are added until the funding envelope has been allocated (\$11 million)\(^{64}\). The highlighted portion in each column represents choices made by one group that would not have been be made by the other. Table 8.1 demonstrates that there would be significant differences in the programs funded based on the initial evaluations. For example, of the 31 programs that the network members would have funded, 13 (or 43\%) of those the bureaucrats would not. That is, \textit{nearly half the programs selected by the respective groups would not have been selected by the other.}

\(^{63}\) This is prior to deliberations among network members, which included technical assistance and advice from staff—thus it captures an unadulterated average network member choice, free from bureaucratic influence. Comparing the programs by their relative ranking captures which set of programs network and staff members felt were strongest.

\(^{64}\) This, of course, does not imply that these are the programs that either group would ultimately fund, since it is prior to deliberations, but it does provide an opportunity to directly compare whether the network and staff differences in scoring would have real effects on allocations in a hypothetical sense.
Table 8.1: Network member and bureaucratic staff differences in programs funded, based on initial evaluations (highlighted cells signify a program selected by one group but not the other).

So while we can be confident that civil society network member and bureaucratic actor differences in scoring based on initial reviews would result in different programs being funded, what is not clear yet is whether the funding differences would have policy implications. One interesting difference apparent from the counterfactual analysis is that
nearly half of the programs network members ranked highest were new programs and initiatives, whereas only about a third of programs bureaucrats ranked highest were new. This suggests that network members may have more potential to innovate policy than bureaucrats, lending further evidence to the theoretical claims tested regarding policy innovation in Chapter 5.

In terms of substantive policy implications, would different types of services, targeting different sub-populations, be funded? By looking more deeply into the policy and programmatic goals of each of the proposed homelessness programs (hypothetically) funded in these two scenarios, we can make such an assessment. Figure 8.2 below captures the differences in network and bureaucrat funding allocations, according to services funded and the target population.

**Figure 8.2: Differences in network and bureaucratic funding allocations using counterfactual analysis.**
The top two pie charts in Figure 8.2 show the differences, in percentage terms, of the expenditures devoted to various homelessness services between network and bureaucratic hypothetical decision scenarios. The most substantial differences among network and bureaucrat evaluations are with outreach, mental health and addiction, and employability services. Bureaucrats would allocate twice the resources to outreach services than network members, which amounts to almost $2 million in variation in allocations to this service. Network members, by contrast, would allocate twice as much in mental health and addiction services, amounting to nearly $1 million difference in investment, as well as $600,000 more in employability services (when staff would invest $0). With respect to the various subpopulations among the homeless, bureaucrats show a tendency to fund services that target the general homeless population—that is, services which all can access—allocating 12% ($1.3 million) more than network members, whereas network members would allocate 12% ($1.3 million) to Aboriginal-specific programs, at the expense of general services. Note that there is normative value attached or assumed to each allocation pattern, but rather these findings demonstrate that there are substantial differences between these groups of policy actors, which reflect value differences in goals and preferences, with corresponding implications for policy.
Tracking the effect of deliberations on policy choices

The foregoing analysis has demonstrated that not only do civil society members in governance networks and bureaucrats evaluate programs differently on an individual basis, but also that these differences have policy implications for the types of services funded and the sub-population targeted. Yet policy choices and expenditures in this network governance context are not made by simply averaging the scores of each individual reviewer for each proposed homelessness program. Rather, network actors come together after their initial individual evaluations to deliberate and make collective decisions on which programs to fund, with bureaucratic staff present to assist (administratively) with governance network decision making. Thus whereas the first two sections captured the fundamental differences between network and bureaucratic evaluators, this last section investigates the effect of deliberative activity in networks on decision making.

After all governance network members completed their individual evaluations of the program proposals assigned to their group, they met collectively to discuss each program, deliberated over their strengths and weaknesses before selecting those which would be funded. Each governance network group review session had all of the same bureaucratic staff members present to help structure the decision making, to manage all the information and data, as well as to provide technical advice when requested by network members. The demonstrated differences between network and staff members on preferred programs, analyzed in the previous section, thus become important to follow in this second stage of decision making.

The deliberations among network members clearly matter, as evidenced by Figure 8.3, which shows how the initial rankings based on the aggregation of individual scores by governance network groups changed quite substantially after deliberations among governance network members. For example, in Figure 8.3, the highest column among the Group A programs—labeled ‘15’—increased from an initial network rank of 18 (out of 26) to become the 3rd most preferred program for network Group A, a dramatic +15 shift in rank. Other substantial rank increases and decreases after network deliberations
are identifiable for each network team in the figure. Not all rank changes were as dramatic, but Figure 8.3 reveals that a significant amount of reordering of preferred programs occurred as a result of network team deliberations, and the longest bars denote the programs that were subject to the largest shifts.

Figure 8.3: Change in rank of programs after deliberations, all network teams.

Figure 8.3 shows how deliberations resulted in dramatic shifts in the initial assessment by governance network actors, and the final decisions by the governance network teams of VANmain provide interesting insights into the direction of those shifts. Table 8.2 shows that the final decisions achieved by consensus represent an interesting blend of homelessness programs that governance network members and bureaucrats both initially preferred, those that network actors initially preferred and bureaucrats did not (and vice-versa; coloured in yellow and green respectively), and perhaps surprisingly, homelessness programs that neither group initially favored (coloured in light blue). These results demonstrate that deliberations can indeed be dynamic processes where the ground can shift substantially when diverse actors are tasked with reaching consensus.
Table 8.2: Final decisions by VAN\textsubscript{main} after deliberations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program name</th>
<th>Budget</th>
<th>Program name</th>
<th>Budget</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Salsbury</td>
<td>$99,422</td>
<td>Hope for Freedom</td>
<td>$267,972</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sources</td>
<td>$496,480</td>
<td>UNYA</td>
<td>$150,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BC SS</td>
<td>$319,422</td>
<td>EMBERS</td>
<td>$221,290</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YWCA</td>
<td>$171,017</td>
<td>SA MR CWW</td>
<td>$275,185</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hollyburn Youth</td>
<td>$802,704</td>
<td>St. Paul's</td>
<td>$125,518</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alouette Youth</td>
<td>$769,223</td>
<td>CWENENGITEL</td>
<td>$186,878</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CFS Outreach</td>
<td>$123,360</td>
<td>Journey Home</td>
<td>$259,914</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aunt leah's</td>
<td>$313,800</td>
<td>E Fry HTF</td>
<td>$34,299</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Atira</td>
<td>$277,318</td>
<td>La Boussole</td>
<td>$254,212</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alouette Outreach</td>
<td>$186,069</td>
<td>Shiloh</td>
<td>$324,220</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RainCity</td>
<td>$530,320</td>
<td>Progressive</td>
<td>$320,134</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BC Coal. Dis.</td>
<td>$353,393</td>
<td>Community Builders</td>
<td>$219,506</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hollyburn Outreach</td>
<td>$120,000</td>
<td>WINGS</td>
<td>$121.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Howard</td>
<td>$270,044</td>
<td>Lookout Metro EWR</td>
<td>$68,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LU’MA</td>
<td>$90,000</td>
<td>Aboriginal Mother</td>
<td>$196,600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stepping Stone</td>
<td>$105,195</td>
<td>Aldergrove</td>
<td>$278,444</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Covenant house</td>
<td>$877,369</td>
<td>SA CWW</td>
<td>$247,444</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Legend
both groups initially agree
network favored
bureaucrat favored
neither initially favored

% agree initially 43% % disagree initially 57%

Table 8.2 shows that the final decisions reached by consensus after deliberations represent a blend of community priorities and bureaucratic priorities: in the end, network members and bureaucrats found common ground on homelessness programs that neither initially favored. This is evidence of what Huxham (2003) calls the collaborative advantage—namely, a final decision outcome unlikely to have been achieved without the collaboration of diverse policy actors (Huxham, 2003).

Analysis: how was consensus reached?
How did the process of achieving consensus unfold in this governance network involving diverse policy actors? By observing the governance network in real-time can we isolate
the process through which such networks and their deliberative activity matter. Observation of the deliberations yields one dominant explanation for the shifts in rankings: persuasion, which is conditioned by the credibility of actors and claims, as well as how the claims are transmitted. Features of credibility include how other actors interpret the position and experience of the actor, and transmission captures how arguments are presented, whether technical/scientific, politicized, or emotion-based means (see Triadafilopoulos, 1999 for theoretical bridging of rational and emotive persuasive rhetoric). New or reframed information and arguments are constantly being introduced and cycled into deliberative settings until actors arrive at the convergence position (Mansbridge et al., 2010).

Examples identified from participant observation can help demonstrate how arguments were accepted, transformed or ejected from deliberations. In the VAN\textsubscript{main} deliberations, with some of the most significant shifts in ranking of preferred programs, a governance network member introduced new data and the perception of the value of the proposed program changed among other network members. New data included knowledge about what was happening on the ground (e.g. a shelter in the area is about to close), correcting a misconception about the organization or proposed program, or that the program was currently funded (and would thus close down if VAN\textsubscript{main} did not fund it). In fact, almost all governance network members introduced at least one piece of information unknown or previously undervalued by other network members or bureaucratic staff during the deliberations and had an effect (good or bad) on the ranking of a particular program proposal.

On the dimension of the credibility of new information or arguments, some bureaucratic staff claims of the ineffectiveness of particular program proposals in reducing homelessness were strongly rebutted by governance network members with practical knowledge and experience of their potential. Bureaucrats certainly have credibility on the intergovernmental dimensions of policy, homelessness data, and the technical elements of budgeting, but less credibility to governance network decision makers on programmatic elements of proposals. Among network members, in certain scenarios one
individual would be afforded substantial credibility given his or her experience and position on an aspect of homelessness (youth, Aboriginal, shelters, etc.). The credibility stemming from position and experience was not mechanically granted, but also depended on a demonstrated analytical approach. For example, by virtue of one network actor’s professional position and expertise in the private sector, the consensus around an employability program—which was initially ranked very low by other network actors—shifted after this individual credibly articulated stories of programmatic successes. It was not merely the information presented by the actor that resulted in the ranking shift, but also their perceived legitimacy.

How governance network members and bureaucrats transmitted their arguments was likewise consequential to the deliberations. The vast majority of governance network members were systematic or analytical in their approach, and visibly appalled when others launched overtly emotional appeals to support a particular program. Those who might seem to be credible specialists by virtue of their position or experience were ineffectual on the few occasions when they exhibited an overt bias or non-analytical approach to their claims. Emotions were not absent, but only effective when complementary to a technical assessment of the merits of the proposal. Empty emotional appeals by individuals, and occasional threats of ‘extreme disappointment’ if the group did not decide in a certain direction, were universally unsuccessful in this deliberative setting. Arguments making links between generally accepted data and the objectives of the program proposal, transmitted in a passionate and bold manner, were most successful.

What actually makes this collaborative decision making institution work is not just the presence of debate and exchange among diverse policy actors, but also, perhaps counter-intuitively, by how it was designed to constrain and channel the debate among network actors by the metagovernor. The metagoverning bureaucrats set the rules as part of their responsibility to assist with decision making, and those who can set and enforce rules can use them to steer decision making (Mansbridge et al., 2010). Rules and procedures powerfully shaped the decision making, and the most relevant rules devised by the metagovernor include narrowing the parameters of decision making and the order of
speech. The institutional design of deliberations can thus focus deliberations or steer them from certain arguments, as examples from VAN\textsubscript{main} decision setting can clearly illustrate. The most critical administrative rule set by the metagovernor at the onset was a powerful motivator to deliberate with goodwill and to reach consensus: the defined envelope of funds would effectively be lost if consensus was not reached. Consensus is easier to reach when costs of failure are high for all involved.

In VAN\textsubscript{main} deliberations, governance network members held various positions on the desirability of specific homelessness programs to fund, as evidenced by the analysis in the previous paragraphs. Yet the additional rules set in place governing the deliberations influenced the persuasiveness of certain arguments for or against program proposals. Perhaps the most consequential rule in the deliberative process was that typically the bureaucrats were the first to speak for every program under consideration. This was surprising to see as an observer, given that this governance institution is premised on empowering civil society actors in a decision making context. This had the effect of setting the tone for the deliberations around specific programs, depending on whether the bureaucrats favored or disfavored the proposal. There were a number of programs which network members individually ranked high, but when bureaucrats spoke out against them, the particular network actor did not forcefully defend earlier scoring or mount a concerted challenge to the bureaucrats’ argument. This institutional rule thus served to quell some dissent, as it was evident that it is more difficult to shift the emerging tone than it is to build on it.

Other rules in place that influenced deliberations were with regard to the parameters of decision making, specifically rules about the eligibility of program proposals under this funding program. Network member arguments on the desirability of rent subsidies for housing loss prevention, for example, in a program proposal were persuasive to many, yet were argued to be ineligible by bureaucratic staff in this GoC funding program, and thus were dismissed on several occasions. Thus arguments can be persuasive to actors, yet suffer from institutional rules that marginalized them from consideration. Rules that set the parameters of decision making exist in all deliberative settings, and have the effect of
sidelining some arguments or perspectives in the process, no matter how much diverse network actors may agree.

The VAN$_{\text{main}}$ decision setting is designed to be highly bureaucratized, driven by data and policy analysis—and this is why the governance network works, perhaps counter-intuitively. The metagovernor established and facilitated at the onset a largely technocratic policy environment that marginalized emotion-based appeals. Emotions were not absent or forbidden, but were only employed effectively as passion linked to a technical assessment of the merits of the homelessness program proposal. In some cases, bureaucrat and governance network member disagreement was revealed and bureaucrats lobbied hard for (or against) a particular program, though it was always framed in terms of value-for-money, significant budget problems, or ineligibility (according to their interpretation of Government of Canada superstructure rules)—that is, on technical terms. The foregoing analysis thus emphasizes that while persuasion is a fundamental dynamic driving deliberations and decisions, the rules set by the metagovernor that govern the deliberations and set the parameters of the decision making are critical to channeling the diverse policy actors to productive ends in governance networks.

**Conclusion**

The real decision making data from VAN$_{\text{main}}$ demonstrates that civil society and bureaucratic actors not only bring diverse knowledge and perspectives to a policy issue, but that deliberations can be a genuine site of persuasion and transformation among policy actors. Theory predicted that bureaucrats and civil society actors in governance networks would score and deliberate over programs differently, largely the result of different tacit knowledge, experience, and incentive structures associated with their positions. The quantitative data analysis confirms that along a number of dimensions, bureaucrats and governance network members scoring differences were systematic, and the participant observation data suggests that this is largely explained by the on-the-ground knowledge and expertise network members possess that allow them to assess program proponent claims with more rigor.
Evidence gathered from participant observation suggests that there were patterns for why deliberations mattered: persuasion is the dominant mechanism explaining how and why decisions were made, as the diverse actors shared tacit knowledge or information not known to others, which at times, radically changed their assessment of the homelessness program proposal (usually around feasibility, local need, and organization’s history).

These findings lend evidence to the fundamental premise of collaborative governance institutions, which is very rarely tested given the empirical challenges associated with access, measurement and the counterfactual premise (Collaborative Democracy Network 2006; McGuire, 2006).

The broad narrative emerging out of this decision making context is one of an interactive relationship between network members and bureaucratic staff that harnesses the expertise and knowledge of community and local government actors, while making decisions with bureaucratic mechanisms that helped to maximize some degree of predictability, order and recognition of political constraints. The decisions represent a blend of community priorities and bureaucratic constraints: in the end, network members and bureaucrats found common ground on homelessness programs that neither initially favored. This governance network appears to achieve a balance between harnessing the benefits of a diverse set of government and civil society actors making collective decisions, while avoiding the often-problematic aspects such as fractured decision making and collaborative inertia.

For a governance literature with a strongly normative lens of the value of horizontality over hierarchy, inclusion over exclusion, and deliberation over coercion, these findings are perhaps surprising. Strategic use of hierarchy, coercive rules, and a dose of strong-armed steering by bureaucrats keeps the ship on course while extracting the benefits of network governance institutions. The evidence from VANmain is that governance networks and collaborative policymaking are indeed full of paradoxes (Huxham et al., 2006). The very traditions of dominance, single-mindedness and bureaucratic rules for which the governance literature challenges and seeks to replace, are in part central to its success. Within the network governance literature, there has been a recognition that
governance networks are not “self-administering enterprises…some kind of administrative structure must exist that moves from governance to action” (Thompson and Perry 2006, 25). A key lesson from this chapter is that governance networks, particularly those that chiefly involve civil society actors in a policy role, need to be metagoverned.

The evidence put forth in the foregoing four chapters identifies a clear relationship between highly institutionalized and inclusive governance networks and policy development. Yet existing network governance theory does not specify in theoretical terms the causal mechanisms that explain why this relationship exists. The next chapter engages in theory-building by leveraging the empirical findings to specify key causal mechanisms—bridging metagovernance, network governance and deliberative democracy concepts—to construct a general theoretical model to be applied in other policy domains.
Chapter 9: Causal Mechanisms linking governance networks to policy outputs

Introduction
The central goal of this study is to test and refine network governance theory, and more specifically, to better understand the extent to which governance network institutionalization and inclusiveness influence policy development and implementation. The existing literature has some tentative and broad correlations in this regard in a diverse number of policy domains. This dissertation provides evidence that a correlation exists between governance network properties and policy outputs, but building on network governance theory requires us to move beyond correlation and work towards explanation. That is why does governance network institutionalization and inclusiveness influence the policy dimensions under examination and under what contexts?

This chapter thus draws on the insights from previous chapters to build a theoretical model, leveraging the empirical analysis to refine network governance theory by specifying and modeling the causal mechanisms that link network governance properties to public policy outputs. Derived from extended participant observation in two of the six governance networks, the model put forth in this chapter contends that ‘brokerage’ and ‘persuasion’ are the key emergent dynamics from governance networks as deliberative systems of policymaking which, mediated by the type of metagovernance context, drive policy innovation, sensitivity and coordination. The theoretical model represents a generalized and falsifiable model linking network governance to policy outputs that can be applied across a number of policy domains.

Mechanistic theory
The burgeoning attention to causal mechanisms in the social science literature reflects a reaction against the behavioural revolution and the corresponding reliance on statistical correlations that too often erroneously imply causal relationships, or simply leave the causal explanation unexplored. In some cases, this critique is unfair because for many
studies, the causal ‘mechanism’ that links the independent and dependent variables is obvious and singular: for example, Hempel’s theory formed from studying the French Revolution claims that a revolution will tend to occur if there is growing discontent in a large part of the population (quoted in Gerring, 2010). But not every social scientific theory yields an implicit and singular mechanism—in fact, most do not. For example, in democratic peace theory, the correlation may be well established, yet there is intense disagreement on why democracy discourages conflict among nations. As such, the most interesting and valuable scholarship in governance network theory, like that of democratic peace, is specifying how things happen through causal mechanisms.

Scholarly use of the concept of ‘causal mechanisms’ is diverse, and at times contradictory. To many they are non-observable processes (George and Bennett, 2005; Bhaskar, 1979; Bunge, 1997), yet to others they are only observable, representing a movement ‘down’ from correlation to causation (Kittel, 2006; Mahoney, 2001). In addition, to some scholars causal mechanisms are deterministic (Little, 1991), yet to others probabilistic (Elster, 1999). For the purposes of this study, causal mechanisms are simply defined as the pathway or process by which an effect is produced (Gerring, 2008). It is critical to note that causal mechanisms are not intervening variables—they are relational concepts to help clarify what the theory is all about.

Earl (2008) specifies three critical criteria that must be met to produce a credible mechanistic account: (i) show variation in the variables of theoretical interest, (ii) show that a mechanism(s) was responsible for altering the relationship between variables, and (iii) show that the mechanism has portability in similar contexts. On the first criterion, Chapters 5 through 8 document the variation in the dependent variable (level of institutionalization and inclusiveness of the network) and variation in the independent variables of interest (policy innovation, sensitivity, and coordination). This chapter specifies the operative causal mechanisms in this context (criterion two) and makes a case for its more general application in governance networks (criterion three). Two key causal mechanisms explain the correlation discovered between governance network properties and policy outputs: brokerage and persuasion.
Brokerage as a causal mechanism produced from governance network activity provides the first part of the explanation for why governance networks matter to policy development and implementation in this setting, and can be defined as the forging of social connections between previously unlinked persons and sites (Burt, 2005). The theoretical assumptions of brokerage as a causal mechanism can be found in classical political works of John Stuart Mill (1859) who identified the benefit of contact and communication across lines of difference (cited in Mutz, 2002). For Benhabib (1992) interactions with those with differing views is “essential for us to comprehend and to come to appreciate the perspectives of others” (140). Yet Tilly (2003) has also contemplated associated causal mechanisms like ‘encounter’ that may cause social boundary change among actors in a wide variety of ‘social sites’, though he suggests that they can in fact make social boundaries even more pronounced. These seemingly inconsistent findings can be partially reconciled in experimental work by Mutz (2002) which finds that one’s ‘perspective-taking ability’ (a personal capacity to entertain others’ points of view) will shape whether the effects of exposure to differing views leads to a softening or hardening of boundaries or views on issues.

Brokerage relations lower the costs of communication and coordination between unconnected social sites, transforming them by establishing social, political, and economic ties (Lichbach, 2008). ‘Brokerage’ as a causal process thus captures both resource exchange and trust relations in governance network settings, and is a dynamic process because ‘brokerage’ may alter relations between policy actors, “allowing collective action to spread along the newly created network pathway” (McAdam et al, 2001). Brokerage as a causal mechanism therefore may deactivate the previously sharp boundary between policy actors, whether government or civil society, and allows actors in various silos to interpenetrate, which I will demonstrate drives policy innovation, sensitivity and coordination. And institutionalized and inclusive governance networks

65 Habermas (1989) likewise contends that exposure to dissimilar views in the public sphere will encourage intrapersonal reflection.
66 Tilly (2003), however, suggests that ‘conversation’ as a causal mechanism can lead to incremental boundary change in the case of routine interaction, such that a new ‘zone of shared representation’ is generated.
provide the venues for boundaries to be dismantled among disparate policy actors in government and civil society as actors develop relationships of exchange and trust.

Persuasion as an emergent dynamic of network activity provides the other part explanation for why networks matter for policy development and implementation in this decision setting, given that deliberative theory rests on a premise of the transformation of preferences among actors along the path to consensus (Young, 2000). Scholars suggest that governance network activity has policy consequence because various actors exposed to different experiences, new research and other jurisdictions will promote them within the network (Mintrom, 1997). Some employ the concept of ‘policy learning’ as a mechanism for understanding change in network or deliberative contexts (for example, May 1992, Sabatier and Jenkins-Smith, 1993), but this is in fact an indicator of the process of persuasion.

Highly institutionalized and inclusive governance networks create the venue as a precondition to the process of persuasion among policy actors with distinct perspectives and arguments about policy problems and solutions, which I will demonstrate can drive policy innovation, sensitivity, and coordination. Persuasive political speech rests neither in the exclusive domain of rational argumentation nor the domain of emotionally charged pleas, but rather some combination thereof (Triandafilopoulos, 1999). All policy actors have cognitive models mapping causes of policy problems and their best solutions informed from their education, professional and personal experience, which are subject to confrontation and challenge in deliberative sites like governance networks when diverse actors are tasked with collaborative decision making.

The basic argument in terms of causal mechanisms as the linkages between governance network and policy development is thus: ‘brokerage’ and ‘persuasion’ are emergent and dynamic properties of more institutionalized and inclusive networks that drive policy innovation, sensitivity, and coordination. The two mechanisms help to explain why governance networks matter to policy development.
Importance of context

Causal mechanisms can help to explain the relationship between sets of variables but they are not deterministic. Mechanisms alone do not cause outcomes, but rather causation “resides in the interaction between the [causal] mechanism and the context in which it operates” (Falleti and Lynch, 2009: 1145). Empirically backed accounts of the operation of social mechanisms thus require an articulation of the political context “since what the outcome of their operation turns out to be depends quite a lot on the relevant context” (Bengtsson and Ruonavaara, 2009: 13). Thus it is the interaction between mechanism(s) and context that influences the outcome—the same general mechanism operating in different contexts may lead to different outcomes.

The most important feature of political context as it relates to the activity of governance networks are the features of metagovernance. Recall from Chapter 4 that metagovernance is the “governance of governance” and it helps us understand how government crafts and manages non-traditional hierarchical public decision making—in this case, governance networks (Heritier and Rhodes, 2011; Sorenson and Torfing, 2007). There are several key lessons that emerge from metagovernance theory, confirmed by the empirical features of metagovernance among the six governance networks in Chapter 4, that help us understand how certain dimensions of metagovernance produce the context under which the specified causal mechanisms operate (or do not operate) to generate the policy outputs investigated.

The two key elements of metagovernance derived from theory are (i) the institutional policy space granted to the governance network—narrow or expansive—and (ii) the metagovernor leadership dynamics—cooperative or contentious. The evidence from Chapter 4 suggests that the metagovernor leadership dynamics can have a profound effect of the stability and productivity of a governance network, irrespective of the internal features of the network design examined in Chapters 5 through 7. These two metagovernance features form the relevant metagovernance context under which the causal mechanisms of brokerage and persuasion are operable and thus drive policy innovation, sensitivity and coordination. Table 9.1 places the six networks into four
analytical categories, derived in Chapter 4, that capture the metagovernance context that interact with the causal mechanisms articulated in this chapter.

Table 9.1: Categories of metagovernance context relevant to the operability of causal mechanisms.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Metagovernor leadership</th>
<th>Institutional policy space</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>narrow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cooperative</td>
<td>Administrative metagovernance (e.g. TO&lt;sub&gt;main&lt;/sub&gt;)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>contentious</td>
<td>Straitjacket metagovernance (e.g. TO&lt;sub&gt;Ab&lt;/sub&gt;, VAN&lt;sub&gt;Ab&lt;/sub&gt; (2000-03))</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These analytical categories of metagovernance form the relevant contextual differences under which the causal mechanisms, which emerge as a result of governance network activity, gain operability in terms of policy development and implementation. That is, all highly institutionalized and inclusive governance networks will produce the causal mechanisms of brokerage and persuasion, but the impact on policy of these emergent dynamics will depend on the metagovernance context of the governance network. The following section will demonstrate, using empirics from the six governance network cases, that a governance network may produce brokerage or persuasion, but it will not drive policy innovation, sensitivity or coordination if the governance network exists in particular metagovernance contexts.

Figure 9.1 presents an abstracted conceptual diagram of the causal mechanisms of brokerage and persuasion, which constitute the linkages between the dependent and independent variables under investigation. Beginning from the left of the diagram, the governance network is depicted and differentiated by two features, institutionalization and inclusiveness, which are the driving features of governance networks that produce
the causal mechanisms, brokerage and persuasion, respectively. As articulated above, more institutionalized governance networks will result in strong brokerage, as is likewise true with inclusiveness of the governance network and opportunities for persuasion. The production of the causal mechanisms occurs in a particular metagovernance context, which acts a filter influencing whether the causal mechanisms have policy consequence.

Figure 9.1: Conceptual map of causal mechanisms linking governance networks to policy outputs

![Conceptual map of causal mechanisms](image)

Figure 9.1 depicts precisely how the two causal mechanisms jointly produce the effect in terms of policy outputs. Policy innovation is the result of the joint production of brokerage and persuasion—both are needed to produce strong policy innovation. Policy sensitivity is primarily produced by persuasion, while brokerage functions as a secondary mechanism that can enhance its production. Finally, policy coordination is primarily produced by brokerage, and persuasion functions as an enhancing mechanism. The following paragraphs and figures leverage empirical data and analysis from previous chapters into the conceptual map of the causal mechanisms and metagovernance context.

Continuing the pair-wise comparative analysis of the six governance networks from previous chapters, Figure 9.2 presents \( \text{VAN}_{\text{main}} \) and \( \text{TO}_{\text{main}} \) in terms of the production of causal mechanisms and metagovernance context. \( \text{VAN}_{\text{main}} \) is the more institutionalized and inclusive governance network, and as a result it produces the most potential brokerage and persuasion, as depicted by the large arrows connecting the properties of
the governance network to the causal mechanisms. The metagovernance context mediates how powerfully the causal mechanisms will act on the dimensions of policy. VAN$_{\text{main}}$ is characterized by cooperative metagovernor leadership dynamics, but is also not heavily constrained by its managing metagovernor, Metro Vancouver, and thus is characterized by a *dynamic metagovernance* context. The result is that the causal mechanisms of brokerage and persuasion operate in a relatively open policy space, thus contributing to high policy innovation, sensitivity and coordination. TO$_{\text{main}}$, also shown in Figure 9.2, by contrast is the less institutionalized and inclusive governance network, which generates less opportunity for brokerage and persuasion to emerge (depicted by small arrows), coupled with an *administrative metagovernance* context that restricts its activity to rather a narrow policy role. As such, the causal mechanisms, however weak, are effectively blocked from operability by the restrictive metagovernance context, thereby inhibiting policy innovation, sensitivity and coordination.

**Figure 9.2: Pairwise comparison of VAN$_{\text{main}}$ and TO$_{\text{main}}$ by operative causal mechanisms and metagovernance context**

VAN$_{\text{main}}$

[Diagram of VAN$_{\text{main}}$ showing dynamic metagovernance context with high institutionalization and inclusiveness, leading to high policy innovation, sensitivity, and coordination through brokerage and persuasion.]
Figure 9.3 briefly departs from the pair-wise comparison of networks by depicting VAN\textsubscript{Ab} during two distinct periods—from 2000-2003 and 2003-present—to highlight how critical the metagovernance context is to the operability of the causal mechanisms. Recall from Chapter 4 that in the first period, the GoC metagovernor initially placed it in an inappropriate decision making box, which tied its hands and directly resulted in failed policy planning and implementation. The choice by the metagovernor to place the Aboriginal homelessness governance networks within an existing labour market-focused program—not homelessness—proved to severely and inappropriately constrain the activities of local Aboriginal decision makers (HRSDC, 2003). Basic rules and operating procedures set forth by the metagovernor had large consequences. For example, the local Aboriginal governance networks for NHI were only able to set policy and allocate funds to homelessness programs with a labour market dimension and were restricted from allocating money to capital projects (e.g. building supportive housing)! As such, the causal mechanisms produced by institutionalization and inclusiveness of the governance network, despite their strength, were rendered inoperable to contribute to policy innovation, sensitivity and coordination because the metagovernance context forbade the network from setting policy and allocating funds as they would have intended.

To the credit of the metagovernor, when GoC bureaucrats learned of this disconnect and the dysfunction they created within the Aboriginal homelessness governance networks,
they changed the rules to be similar to that of the mainstream governance networks (like VAN_{main}) in the NHI (Smith, 2004). The changes were fully implemented in the second phase of the NHI, beginning in 2003 and continued thereafter, which freed up VAN_{Ab} (and other Aboriginal homelessness governance networks across the country) to set policy and allocate funds in a less restrictive metagovernance context, as depicted below in Figure 9.3.

Figure 9.3: Pairwise comparison of VAN_{Ab}, t=2000-2003 and VAN_{Ab}, 2003-present by operative causal mechanisms and metagovernance context:

\[
\text{VAN}_{Ab}, \ t=2000-2003
\]

| Straitjacket metagovernance context: narrow policy space and contentious metagovernor leadership |
| GOVERNANCE NETWORK |
| Institutionalization: HIGH |
| Inclusiveness: MEDIUM |
| brokerage |

| Policy innovation |
| RANK = n/a |

| Policy sensitivity |
| RANK = n/a |

| Policy coordination |
| RANK = n/a |

\[
\text{VAN}_{Ab}, \ t = 2003\text{-present}
\]

| Dynamic metagovernance context: expansive policy space and cooperative metagovernor leadership |
| GOVERNANCE NETWORK |
| Institutionalization: HIGH |
| Inclusiveness: MEDIUM |
| brokerage |

| Policy innovation |
| RANK = 1/2 |

| Policy sensitivity |
| RANK = 1/2 |

| Policy coordination |
| RANK = 1/2 |

The final pairwise comparison is presented below in Figure 9.4, depicting the causal mechanisms and metagovernance context of VAN_{emerg} and TO_{emerg}—the two governance
networks created from the bottom-up largely by civil society actors principally concerned with emergency shelter issues. VAN\textsubscript{emerg} is a highly inclusive and moderately institutionalized network that exists within a \textit{dynamic metagovernance} context. By contrast, TO\textsubscript{emerg} was granted expansive institutional policy space, but was characterized at times by very contentious metagovernor leadership dynamics—a \textit{volatile metagovernance} context—which while allowing it to contribute to policy innovation, created internal struggles which hampered policy coordination across the sector in Toronto.

The case of TO\textsubscript{emerg} is particularly demonstrative of how governance networks may—though do not necessarily—produce brokerage relations that dismantle social boundaries and foster mutual learning and consensus building. Over time at TO\textsubscript{emerg}, boundaries hardened and the politics became contentious rather than consensus-oriented. This is in fact consistent with Mutz’s (2002) experimental data showing that exposure to differing perspectives on issues may harden those views if the individuals involved have low ‘perspective-taking ability’—meaning a personal capacity to entertain others’ points of view. In contrast to the other five governance networks, the civil society members of TO\textsubscript{emerg} tended to be more radical, with ties to activism and advocacy, rather than service provision, whose orientation was not accustomed to compromise.
The foregoing section established, in broad terms, the connections between governance network institutionalization and inclusiveness, the production of causal mechanisms of brokerage and persuasion, and their interplay with the metagovernance context to drive policy innovation, sensitivity and coordination. The critical points to take away from this initial conceptualization of causal relationships are the following: (i) it is the properties of the governance network, specifically institutionalization and inclusiveness, that independently determine the strength of the causal mechanisms of brokerage and persuasion, respectively; and (ii) the operability of the causal mechanisms on driving change in policy outputs is, however, contingent on the metagovernance context—that is,
a constrained and contentious metagovernance context can render strong causal mechanisms inoperable. The following sections present the empirical evidence to support these claims of causal mechanism production and operability, blending quantitative and qualitative data and analysis from all six governance networks.

Network governance and policy innovation

*We all learn from each other, which is the other beauty of the way the policy is actually developed is that it is done in an eclectic environment, with different ideas and perspectives coming in that we have to sift through.*

(Sundberg, Personal Interview, October 13, 2011)

Brokerage and persuasion are identified as the preeminent causal mechanisms linking governance networks to policy innovation by the considerable evidence of their presence in the most institutionalized and inclusive governance networks (VAN\textsubscript{main}, VAN\textsubscript{emerg}) and likewise by their absence in the least institutionalized and inclusive governance networks (TO\textsubscript{main}, TO\textsubscript{emerg}). Several empirical examples informed from interviews and participant observations provide evidence supporting these claims.

VAN\textsubscript{main} and VAN\textsubscript{emerg} are highly institutionalized governance networks providing meaningful opportunities for diverse government and civil society actors to engage in regularized exchanges, both instrumental and strategic. In terms of instrumental exchanges, civil society actors have used these venues to share informational and service-based resources skillfully. For civil society actors coming from the shelter, housing, mental health, addictions, youth sectors, the institutionalized ‘Round Table’ at each meeting of the networks provides a valuable opportunity for silos to be broken down to reveal gaps in services and policy blind spots. One example from a VAN\textsubscript{emerg} member illustrates the brokerage resulting from network activity, where VAN\textsubscript{emerg} rented a bus that took shelter providers on a tour of other shelters, because shelter providers “rarely get into anybody else's shelter. And we [had] developed a horrible mythology about everybody else. Yeah, ‘this shelter is crap, he turns everybody away’ or ‘their shelter is crap, they turn nobody away’. And it developed a huge appreciation for one another's work” (Graves, Personal Interview, January 10, 2012). The result was not simply an
intangible ‘appreciation of other’s work’, but over time has contributed to a real policy innovation among shelters such that they now (healthily) “compete to be the lowest barrier [shelters]” for clients (Graves, Personal Interview, January 10, 2012).

Institutionalized governance networks not only benefit civil society actors in instrumental ways through brokerage, but they also help government actors who hold additional decision making power outside of the governance network mandate. For example, BC Housing—the provincial government agency which dominates the housing and homelessness policy fields and expenditures in the region—is an active and critical member of both VAN\textsubscript{main} and VAN\textsubscript{emerg}. For BC Housing, active membership at VAN\textsubscript{emerg} “was really good for them to understand the pressures that the shelters were undergoing because they had no other way of getting that information” (O’Shannacery, Personal Interview, October 12, 2011). A governance network that institutionalizes relationships between civil society and government thus has mutually productive brokerage dynamics: “we are in the field, we know what’s happening, we can bring a different viewpoint” (O’Shannacery, Personal Interview, October 12, 2011) and government actors can speak to new programs, service closures, policy changes at the political level, as well as help civil society actors navigate the quirks of the bureaucracy at multiple levels of government. To a City of Vancouver bureaucrat previously involved in VAN\textsubscript{main}, it was “great to have that mix of government and then community folks to really talk about what the reality is out there…and it has helped to educate us on some of the issues and some of the challenges that are happening in other municipalities” (C. Mauboules, Personal Interview, January 6, 2012).

Beyond the instrumental day-to-day provision of services, the brokerage mechanism also has strategic policy consequence, driving policy innovation. Establishing cross-sectoral relationships in homelessness policy domain is critical to advancing policy innovations. There are a number of examples of policy innovations, particularly from VAN\textsubscript{main} and VAN\textsubscript{emerg}, in which members themselves point to the relational aspects of the governance network as causal determinants. For example, the provincial policy framework for homelessness shelters was transformed from one with archaic rules on eligibility of
access shelters and maximum to length of stay, to one of the most permissive and lowest barrier shelter systems in the country, and both shelter provider and BCH respondents identified the relationships and activities of $VAN_{\text{emerg}}$ as critical in driving these policy innovations (Graves, Personal Interview, January 10, 2012; Anhorn, Personal Interview, January 24, 2012). In fact, the joint activity of $VAN_{\text{emerg}}$ as an early advocate for low barrier shelters and $VAN_{\text{main}}$ as an early funder of such shelters, “took away the risk (of those policies) and shaped BCH’s thinking”, according to a top BCH official (Anhorn, Personal Interview, January 24, 2012). A long-term $VAN_{\text{emerg}}$ member reflecting on the subsequent high level and innovative policy changes by BCH for the shelter system, suggested that “I don't think that would have ever happened if BCH had not been listening to the ongoing dialogue in this group” (Graves, Personal Interview, January 10, 2012).

Brokerage thus emerges from institutionalized and inclusive governance networks, developing as a result of regularized interactions and exchanges. Policy actors from across sectors with little previous contact or knowledge of each other’s activities come together to exchange resources and information. This alone, however, does not drive policy innovation. Persuasion is the complementary causal mechanism that, in conjunction with brokerage, contributes to innovative policy development. Persuasion is an emergent property of governance network activity when diverse actors engage in deliberation and alter the perspectives of policy actors and decision makers. Among the most institutionalized and inclusive governance networks, members were clear that governance network activity was critical to understanding the sector, identifying emerging issues, and recognizing the intersections among social and economic dynamics.

For example, unsurprisingly, civil society actors often have their own biases with respect to the appropriate solutions to homelessness—usually aligned with their sector!—but several $VAN_{\text{main}}$ and $VAN_{\text{emerg}}$ members candidly revealed that governance network engagement had a powerful impact on reorienting their perspectives on homelessness issues, signaling that brokerage and persuasion mechanisms were at work. For example, one of the current co-chairs of $VAN_{\text{main}}$, with many years in a leadership role in the
affordable housing sector and confessed that she “came in with an attitude that it was really obvious to me what the real problem was and how to solve it”, yet like others who initially adhered to a singular solution like employment, shelter, or mental health services, “and obviously I was wrong, too because I thought that was all that was to it. I learned how complex it is.” (Sundberg, Personal Interview, October 13, 2011).

It is the institutionalization of governance networks that sets the brokerage and persuasion mechanisms into action, and the resulting deliberative activity is distinct from that of governance networks that are weakly institutionalized which is more like typical government ‘consultations’ (which is what TO_{main} most closely resembles). The deliberative arena in which the persuasion mechanism is activated is central to policy innovation. An institutionalized site in which every month there is information exchange among the central government and civil society actors in the region and deliberations around policy priorities, provides a regular space for government and civil society members to develop relationships and to deliberate emerging issues, resulting in meaningful opportunities to influence policy and allocations.

When asked in the abstract whether different decisions would be made if government exclusively made decisions on policy priorities and allocations in this field (rather than the network of government and civil society actors), government and civil society members of VAN_{main} nearly unanimously declared immediately and decisively: Yes. In fact, it was bureaucrats who were most emphatic that different decisions would be made, perhaps because they also participate in other internal decision making processes for homelessness and housing funding. Why would there be a difference? It is not merely the diversity of policy actors, but also the deliberative activity that is central to network governance. When it comes to network decision making at VAN_{main}, the membership “comes in with their own scores [for proposed programs] and then you talk about it and it’s a great way to learn new things”, remarked a City of Vancouver bureaucrat formerly involved in VAN_{main} (C. Maboules, Personal Interview, January 6, 2012); this is consistent with the empirical counter-factual analysis in Chapter 8. A senior BCH official was clear that if government controlled this process, “there would be
different decisions made, and my worry would be they would be made in isolation from the reality of what is happening on the ground” (Anhorn, Personal Interview, January 24, 2012). Officials at the City of Toronto, however, were much more circumspect about this question, perhaps because they do not involve TO\textsubscript{main} members in decision making with respect to funding allocations—it is controlled by City of Toronto bureaucrats (confidential, Personal Interview, July 23, 2012).

The governance networks with the most innovative policy are those most institutionalized and inclusive because of the emergent dynamics of network activity, namely brokerage and persuasion. VAN\textsubscript{main} and VAN\textsubscript{emerg} meet regularly, are populated by very diverse voices that have a privileged role in deliberations and decision making. It is likewise notable that the least innovative homelessness governance networks are also those less institutionalized and less inclusive. A governance network like TO\textsubscript{main} is weakly institutionalized and constrained by the metagovernor such that there is limited evidence of brokerage relations and few opportunities for meaningful learning and deliberation captured by the persuasion mechanism. Two current TO\textsubscript{main} members who wished to remain anonymous told of a governance network that was a mere shell, largely created to satisfy the federal mandate to create a ‘community advisory board’, but that all policy priorities and allocations were driven by the city bureaucracy and formally approved by council.

One TO\textsubscript{main} member claimed the network meets about once per year to inform members what the city had come up with, with no meaningful ability to deliberate or plot innovations: “[we were] pretty well presented with a fait accompli. I mean here is the [homelessness policy] plan, here are the allocations. I thought maybe it would be a little more open for discussion” (confidential, Personal Interview, December 11, 2011). When contacted to participate in this research, two other TO\textsubscript{main} members had forgotten they were part of the governance network, which certainly signals a lack of brokerage relations developing from the activity of TO\textsubscript{main}. Another TO\textsubscript{main} member claimed, “because [TO\textsubscript{main}] only meets once a year, it’s not able to be as effective on those kind of dialogues” (confidential, Personal Interview, December 11, 2011). Thus what is clear
from TO_{main} meeting minutes and speaking with current and former TO_{main} members is that the network is so weakly institutionalized that there are few opportunities to engage in the resource exchange, learning, and deliberative action—embodied in the mechanisms of brokerage and persuasion—that allow them to drive policy innovation.

Network governance and policy sensitivity

*Anytime we can get a better sense of other people that we coexist with and how they see the world, how they experience the world, what their histories are, the better we understand the context we are living in and I think that makes better decisions.* (Anhorn, Personal Interview, January 24, 2012)

The most inclusive governance network among the six, as defined by membership size and diversity, is VAN_{main} and it is likewise the governance network that exhibits the most sensitive policy and governance structures for target populations, particularly for Aboriginals and youth. The key causal link is that diverse policy actors grow to understand various sectoral, demographic and cultural perspectives over time as a result of network engagement, which brings previously marginalized voices of Aboriginals and youth to the forefront. Persuasion is thus the principal mechanism driving policy sensitivity, though brokerage is a secondary mechanism that serves to enhance the effect of persuasion. The causal weight of persuasion and brokerage in driving policy sensitivity is established by presenting interview and documentary evidence from the most inclusive and institutionalized governance networks (VAN_{main}, VAN_{Ab}, TO_{Ab}) and their relative absence in the least inclusive and institutionalized governance networks (TO_{main}, TO_{emerg}).

The perspectives of youth and Aboriginals are universally viewed as particularly valuable across the governance networks, given their vulnerabilities and disproportionate share among the homeless population. For those associated with VAN_{main}, respondents were clear that their efforts to include youth and Aboriginal perspectives were not simply to check off a demographic box or based on some vague desire for inclusion, but rather served a practical purpose to inform decision making. The vast majority of bureaucrats
have lives divorced from the experience of homeless youth and Aboriginals, and thus many of them readily acknowledge they need people closer to these experiences to colour the policy making process. One former bureaucratic manager of VAN\textsubscript{main} remarked on community actors, “I think they just have more direct contact with the issue and city staff…don't have the same level of contact with the issue” (Ninow, Personal Interview, January 4, 2012).

The relationship between the inclusion of diverse voices and policy sensitivity—through the causal mechanism of persuasion—can be illustrated with an example from VAN\textsubscript{main} and youth. In earlier years, VAN\textsubscript{main} created and supported a Youth Working Group (YWG) consisting of youth with lived experience of homelessness to help the larger network advance policy in this area. Though it was difficult to maintain membership and regular attendance, many VAN\textsubscript{main} members reflect positively on the substantive impact these youth had on persuading the broader membership to engage in certain areas and abandon others. On a general level, a bureaucrat formerly involved with VAN\textsubscript{main} remarked that the YWG “really opened eyes to people about what it was like to be a youth on the street…I mean first of all most [network members] sitting around the table were not homeless as youth” (Anhorn, Personal Interview, January 24, 2012). What may seem like a trite statement actually had a greater significance when probed: “we heard specific examples of what did work for individuals, which sometimes was very helpful and especially when it was contrary to the evidence [produced in bureaucracies]” (Anhorn, Personal Interview, January 24, 2012). The YWG in VAN\textsubscript{main} was afforded substantial power, such that the governance network “basically made decisions guided by those points and the questions that they raised” (Okyere, Personal Interview, October 11, 2011), which in one case caused a fracture in VAN\textsubscript{main} because the YWG advised the closure of a youth safe house in the North Shore on the basis that it was poorly run and substandard according to the youth. The membership of VAN\textsubscript{main} remains divided to this day on that specific policy decision, but one VAN\textsubscript{main} remember reflects that without youth involvement “everything [at the youth safe house] would have just continued on to the dissatisfaction of the youth without [decision makers] ever knowing” (Sundberg, Personal Interview, October 13, 2011).
In addition to youth perspectives, VAN\textsubscript{main} has always sought substantive Aboriginal representation at the network to reflect the disproportionate share of Aboriginals among the homeless population, as well as to help decision makers craft culturally appropriate policy that will encourage more homeless Aboriginals to access services and programs. Since their origins, VAN\textsubscript{main} and VAN\textsubscript{Ab} send envoys to their respective meetings not only for coordination purposes, but also to develop relationships and mutual understanding of the issues. For a former VAN\textsubscript{main} envoy to VAN\textsubscript{Ab}, it was important for him “to learn about what important from that table’s perspective—from the Aboriginal community’s perspective—and how that could influence all [areas] that we work with, not just Aboriginal” (Anhorn, Personal Interview, January 24, 2012). Most concretely, VAN\textsubscript{main} devotes 10% of its total homelessness expenditures to Aboriginal homelessness and carves out protected decision making space within its structures in which an exclusively Aboriginal team deliberates and makes decisions. This was the result of years of VAN\textsubscript{Ab} members making the case that Aboriginals have a unique perspective to share that is often discounted by mainstream decision makers, and thus they require protected decision making space to craft policy and programming that is culturally appropriate for their people.\textsuperscript{67}

The inclusion of diverse perspectives in policy planning and decision making is premised on the notion that these unique perspectives result in different decisions being made than would otherwise occur if they were not present. The anecdotal examples above with youth and Aboriginals lend evidence to this theoretical premise. As Chapter 8 demonstrates more systematically, different decisions would be made if bureaucrats, rather than network actors (as a whole), made decisions. But what about if Aboriginals, rather than bureaucrats or network actors (the vast majority of whom are non-Aboriginal), made decisions? Would their involvement result in policy and programs more sensitive to the needs of Aboriginals?

\textsuperscript{67} The protected space for Aboriginals at VAN\textsubscript{main} was largely viewed as a success by VAN\textsubscript{main} membership involved in the allocation of funds in the most recent cycle, with 73% indicating that it should be retained in future program proposal review processes (RSCH Survey, 2012).
This is difficult to establish empirically, though there are pieces of suggestive evidence for some grounded speculation. First, when interviewed, Aboriginals involved in the Aboriginal networks in Vancouver and Toronto contend that the cultural differences and the way they view the homelessness problem (holistically, spiritually) are so foreign and undervalued in bureaucracies that these ideas would never be reflected in policy (Sanderson, Personal Interview, May 28, 2012; Seymour, Personal Interview, September 10, 2012). Second, there is evidence from VAN\textsubscript{main} decision making process (Chapter 8) that bureaucrats systematically under-value proposed Aboriginal service programs, such that they would be significantly less likely to be prioritized and funded. Finally, there is evidence that TO\textsubscript{main} (which is in essence the City of Toronto bureaucracy) and TO\textsubscript{Ab} have divergent patterns of investment priorities, which is significant because TO\textsubscript{main} has no Aboriginal representation.

**Network governance and policy coordination**

> You get a set of relationships with an ongoing network that you don't get with just an open house type of thing or a onetime [consultation] where you come in and talk about something. You get an ongoing lineage of policy decisions and [an understanding for] why things came about and then when something else comes up, it's linked to all those pieces and it's integrated across sectors.  
>  
> (Hurford, Personal Interview, January 20, 2012)

The most institutionalized and inclusive governance networks are associated with more coordinated and cohesive policy and programs. The brokerage that results from active and integrated governance networks is chiefly responsible for the policy coordination, with persuasion acting as a secondary mechanism that enhances the effect. Governance networks provide a regularized and less hierarchical venue for government and civil society to develop constructive exchanges and can help resolve existing tensions that contribute to isolation in the sector. Policy silos in homelessness are particularly inefficient and ineffective because of the complexity of this social, economic, and often personal, problem—the vulnerable client can too easily slip through the cracks, and progress with the client lost, when the policy actors in the sector are compartmentalized in their own specialties (Golden, 1999). The governance networks that are most
institutionalized \( (\text{VAN}_{\text{main}}, \text{VAN}_{\text{emerg}}, \text{VAN}_{\text{Ab}}) \) are those that contribute most substantively to policy coordination, principally because of the brokerage relations that are developed. Likewise, the least institutionalized networks \( (\text{TO}_{\text{emerg}}, \text{TO}_{\text{main}}, \text{TO}_{\text{Ab}}) \) display weak policy coordination, explained by the absence of strong brokerage among government and civil society actors in the respective governance networks.

At a most basic level, an institutionalized network of diverse policy actors provides a regularized venue for government and civil society brokerage relations to take shape and manifest itself in policy coordination. Since their respective origins, \( \text{VAN}_{\text{main}}, \text{VAN}_{\text{emerg}} \) and \( \text{VAN}_{\text{Ab}} \) send envoys to each other, thus developing institutionalized relationships of exchange, both in terms of information and resources. These strong brokerage relations are manifested in \( \text{VAN}_{\text{main}}-\text{VAN}_{\text{emerg}} \) activities, like a recent joint housing policy forum, Homeless Action Week (HAW), the Triennial Homeless Count, as well as resource exchange and partnerships in smaller initiatives at each governance network. For current and former members of these highly institutionalized governance networks, it is the establishment of relationships (brokerage) that explains these collaborative efforts that produce policy coordination. According to one former \( \text{VAN}_{\text{main}} \) manager, “It is really easy for people to get separated and [service providers] have got such a big job and so few resources that you can really kind of get your head stuck in the sand. So [\( \text{VAN}_{\text{main}} \)] has really provided a venue for that kind of sharing of information and I think without [\( \text{VAN}_{\text{main}} \)] you wouldn't have had a kind of coordination” (Ninow, Personal Interview, January 4, 2012).

Recall how a service provider on \( \text{VAN}_{\text{Ab}} \) confirmed the value of the venue in establishing relationships and information exchanges in a resource-scarce environment: “Sure, it takes away from our time, but at the same time I don’t have the time to go visit and sit down [with an Aboriginal organization] in Surrey to ask them what they are up to” (Seymour, Personal Interview, September 10, 2012). The relationship building is not just for the benefit of civil society actors in the sector, but also for bureaucrats in the politically fragmented region of Metro Vancouver. From the more transactional benefits of learning of policy debates and directions at other local governments to the more intangible
relationship and trust-building aspect, government interviewees emphasized the value of the network venue: “not only the government partnerships, it's also the relationships that you build…from BC Housing [to] Vancouver Coastal Health or some service provider—you get to know them and you work together and so when you are dealing with issues, you can call that person up” (Celine) and it has “over time built incredible trust” (Graves, Personal Interview, January 10, 2012).

The brokerage relations also stimulate an engaged and productive civil society sector which coordinates itself a level below official government policy, the best example of which is from VANemerg. In the mid-1990s in Metro Vancouver, “there were numerous shelters and they are all working in isolation, [with different] shelter requirements. We didn’t even know how many shelters beds that are actually existed around the region. We didn’t know the rules and regulations, we didn’t even know the hours that shelters were operating.” (O’Shannacery, Personal Interview, October 12, 2011). One of the earliest tasks of VANemerg was thus to get a baseline understanding of service provision and learn about all of the shelter actors in the region in the name of service coordination. Tangible evidence of brokerage is detectable when you ask shelter providers about the sector now: “It’s sharing—not just official, ED [Executive Director] to ED. Staff [at different shelters] at night are talking to each other. It’s more of a community dealing with the issue” and “knowing what others are doing helps us do our own” (GVSS, 2007). Regarding increased collaboration and sharing of resources among shelter providers, one commented that: “It's easier to share resources or ask for help when we all know and trust each other.” (GVSS, 2007).

The final pattern in institutionalized governance networks that directly contributes to enhanced policy coordination is that strong brokerage relations can help resolve existing tensions in the sector. In the shelter sector, the governance network activity of VANemerg has helped soften—though not eliminate—some of the competitive nature and jealousies among shelter providers. Establishing relationships among shelter leaders at the governance network, followed by the aforementioned tour of the shelters by VANemerg membership, largely “dropp[ed] the infighting” (Graves, Personal Interview, January 10,
Policy coordination is achieved because these brokerage relations helped shelter providers “figure out what their colleagues are doing, what works for their agency and doesn't and adopt some of the things from other agencies. And it gave them faces to the names to call. That can't be underestimated” (Anhorn, Personal Interview, January 24, 2012). There are examples of this in the Toronto case as well, particularly in the Aboriginal network. Prior to governance network institutionalization, one TO\textsubscript{Ab} member recalls, “We didn't know how to take each other. We were very cautious. We were cautiously supportive of each other”, but since then “we sort of meshed together as a group. And I think that's been one of the positive things that has come from [the governance network]” (Sanderson, Personal Interview, May 28, 2012).

The power of brokerage relations that emerge out of institutionalized governance network activities is perhaps most clear when examining VAN\textsubscript{main}-VAN\textsubscript{Ab} interactions over time. The relationship between Aboriginal policy actors and government necessarily begins with the historical legacy of colonialism, some level of resentment from Aboriginals and typically some ignorance among non-Aboriginal government officials and civil society actors. This is all to say that there are considerable hurdles that need to be cleared before productive relations can be developed. Yet the institutionalized and inclusive governance networks of VAN\textsubscript{main} and VAN\textsubscript{Ab} have provided such a venue to engage in mutual learning and relationship building that can build towards policy coordination. The relationship between VAN\textsubscript{main} and VAN\textsubscript{Ab} members is not perfect, and in fact, has gone through long periods of strain. One key VAN\textsubscript{main} member reflects that a few years ago, “the relationship was frayed a little bit, likely due to a lot of misunderstanding over some minor issues. Sometimes it doesn’t take much. These are tough issues that we are dealing with and there are two different streams, different views about how things should be approached and sometimes there is no meeting of minds” (Okyere, Personal Interview, October 11, 2011).

Sometimes it is a matter of personality conflicts, and other times it is major policy differences, but the leadership of both VAN\textsubscript{main} and VAN\textsubscript{Ab} recognize that lines of communication and exchange are essential (Okyere, Personal Interview, October 11,
2011; Stewart, Personal Interview, January 12, 2012). The administrative manager of \(\text{VAN}_{\text{main}}\) declares “as far as I’m concerned the [\(\text{VAN}_{\text{main}}\)] without strong aboriginal representation is a weak [\(\text{VAN}_{\text{main}}\)]. So my commitment and vision is to keep the Aboriginal community as engaged as possible” (Okyere, Personal Interview, October 11, 2011). As of writing (2014), \(\text{VAN}_{\text{main}}\)-\(\text{VAN}_{\text{Ab}}\) relationship is in cooperative era: “we’ve made a conscious effort to engage them in conversations, we go to their meetings more often, we give presentations regarding the decisions of [\(\text{VAN}_{\text{main}}\)] has made or some of the plans for the future” (Okyere, Personal Interview, October 11, 2011). There will undoubtedly be tough periods in the future, but the positive personal and professional relations among the networks make it such that lines of communication remain open to resolve the conflicts.

\(\text{TO}_{\text{main}}\) is the least institutionalized and inclusive of the six governance networks under investigation, and the evidence suggests it produces the weakest brokerage and persuasion dynamics. These weakly formed causal processes are unable to substantially contribute to policy coordination, principally because the metagovernance context imposed by the City of Toronto bureaucracy seriously constrains the activity of \(\text{TO}_{\text{main}}\), with few meetings and a very narrow mandate. In contrast to the \(\text{VAN}_{\text{main}}\)-\(\text{VAN}_{\text{Ab}}\)-\(\text{VAN}_{\text{emerg}}\) nexus, there have been only marginal relations between \(\text{TO}_{\text{main}}\), \(\text{TO}_{\text{Ab}}\) and \(\text{TO}_{\text{emerg}}\). The closest relationship discovered between \(\text{TO}_{\text{main}}\) and \(\text{TO}_{\text{emerg}}\) upon surveying their respective meeting minutes and asking members is that \(\text{TO}_{\text{emerg}}\) was asked to comment on the draft 2003 Community Plan (ACHSIP, 2003). No envoys and no joint meetings, and as a result, there is no evidence of policy coordination between these networks.

Yet there is some amount of policy coordination within the City of Toronto bureaucracy because it is the centralized planning authority for homelessness policy development in Toronto. All the funds from the federal, provincial and local governments are directed through the city, unlike in Metro Vancouver, which remains contained within the respective local government’s authority. But this does not mean that the sector and civil society is coordinated; in fact, the evidence from the governance networks suggests
otherwise. Thus while the City of Toronto is able to coordinate government investments because it manages federal, provincial and municipal homelessness programs, there is a lost opportunity to harness the governance networks to organize the sector and civil society actors to produce the innovations and sector coordination seen in Metro Vancouver.

Likewise with TO\textsubscript{main} and TO\textsubscript{Ab}, two governance networks that engage in policy planning and funding allocations with regard to Aboriginal homelessness, there are no envoys, no joint meetings and no involvement of TO\textsubscript{Ab} members in TO\textsubscript{main} policy planning and decision making. The Aboriginal response to homelessness in Toronto is thus significantly less coordinated than in Metro Vancouver. When asked to describe the relationship between the two networks with regard to Aboriginal homelessness policy planning, the most charitable description from a TO\textsubscript{Ab} leader was “next to non-existent” (confidential interview). TO\textsubscript{main} via the City of Toronto allocates 20\% of its total HPS funding envelope to Aboriginal homelessness—more than VAN\textsubscript{main} does—yet TO\textsubscript{Ab} members are not invited to participate in either the policy priority development or decision making regarding investments towards Aboriginal homelessness programs. The result of this disconnect is that TO\textsubscript{main}, flush with Aboriginal funds, allocates funds according to priorities developed in-house, and TO\textsubscript{Ab}, which has a significantly smaller funding envelope, is limited to funding small and more patchwork homelessness programs. Decisions around Aboriginal funds would be much more coordinated and cohesive if TO\textsubscript{main} and TO\textsubscript{Ab} developed a close relationship in priority setting and decision making like VAN\textsubscript{main} and VAN\textsubscript{Ab}.

**Conclusion: Lessons and portability of mechanisms**

The foregoing analysis of the six homelessness governance networks has put forward an argument that brokerage and persuasion are the emergent dynamics of institutionalized and inclusive governance networks that, in conjunction with the metagovernance context, co-produce policy innovation, sensitivity and coordination. The critical point is that causal mechanisms are produced by the activities of the governance network and but it is in conjunction with the metagovernance context that determines whether they have more
or less effect on the dimensions of policy outputs. Beyond the immediate explanatory value of the theoretical model to explain the variation in homelessness policy development and implementation in Toronto and Vancouver from 1995-2012, what value do these conclusions offer to the field of network governance theory? I would argue that the causal mechanisms specified from the empirical work conducted on these six cases are portable to governance network arrangements in other sectors and policy domains and levels of government.

Figure 9.6: Abstracted conceptual map of causal mechanisms linking dependent and independent variables, mediated by the metagovernance context.

My central claim is that the emergent properties of governance networks, brokerage and persuasion as causal mechanisms, are likely to be produced in other network governance arrangements and have a measurable effect on policy innovation, sensitivity and coordination, in proportion to the institutionalization and inclusiveness of the governance network. I have also shown that these causal mechanisms are not deterministic, but depend critically on the metagovernance context of the governance network. Though not initially theorized, the case of TOemerg suggests that effect of the causal mechanisms may be shaped by sequencing, with persuasion dynamics as a precondition for brokerage dynamics to emerge, as evidenced by its governance breakdown when the deliberative ethic was undermined by key actors—including the metagovernor—which then poisoned the brokerage relations that had been developing among network actors. More empirical work beyond the scope of this study is required to more concretely conceptualize whether
a temporal dimension has a patterned relationship to the operation of the causal mechanisms of brokerage and persuasion. The task for others and my own future research is to apply and test these findings in additional homelessness governance networks, other policy domains and in other contexts, and perhaps identifying additional mechanisms not apparent from the empirics analyzed in these cases.
Chapter 10: Conclusion: Governance and Policy Implications

Introduction
Shortly before his death, Jack Layton released an updated edition of his first book, *Homelessness: the Making and Unmaking of a Crisis*, a signal that the issue that defined his tenure as a Toronto city councillor remained central to him in his pursuit to become prime minister. To him and many in the homelessness policy community, few actions short of a dramatic policy change from the federal government, including substantial affordable housing and homelessness investments, would turn the tide on this seemingly intractable policy problem. Yet as mentioned at the onset of this study, when reflecting on his time in politics and advocating for policy change, he also claimed that one of the most important lessons he learned “is that energy and ideas spring from the community…not from mandarins in Ottawa” (xxviii). This view is not at all controversial within the homelessness policy community, as well as in normative social science literature, especially among deliberative democracy, network governance, and critical policy studies scholars. They argue that it is critical to include the voices of the most marginalized, most of whom do not have strong political alliances with other interest groups or adequate representation resulting from the electoral system—Aboriginals in Canada would be a key example. Thus there is a high premium placed on the ‘community’ as agents of change and policy ideas that should be brought into the policy process to challenge technocrats and elected officials “to help raise awareness and [advance] creative strategies and solutions” (Layton, 2008: 301).

Despite its uncontroversial premise for some, the idea of including the voices of those most affected by policy in fact generates considerable resistance among others. Not only does this violate key principles of liberal democracy, but also threatens to undermine the legitimacy of our elected representatives—since ostensibly this is their principal duty. Yet Skogstad (2003) reminds us that there is a plurality of conceptions of legitimate political authority in Canada, including state-centered, expert, private (market), and popular authority. Indeed, the contemporary challenge for governing is how to reconcile demands for direct participation with traditional representative democracy, one path
forward for which is typified by homelessness governance networks examined in this study. Creating space for those most affected by a policy decision is, therefore, a legitimate part of the policy process, particularly at the municipal level, with community consultations institutionalized for virtually all issues and decisions. Yet to some observers, such consultations involving those most affected by decisions are often not democracy enhancing. Studies of the behaviour of neighbourhood associations show us that the most marginalized typically do not win when we open up the policy process via community consultations, but rather the most privileged are best equipped to win these battles. Valverde (2012) reflects on such community consultations in Toronto after observing them over ten years:

Public consultations about specific projects do sometimes promote democracy and help validate the Jane Jacobs scale of local experience. But at other times (especially when vulnerable populations that have no political power and few resources are involved), they do the opposite. Instead of educating people about the diversity of households and lifestyles that any large city contains, the public meetings I witnessed provided nothing but opportunities for local demagogues to fan the flames of the politics of local resentment (133).

Even though they follow the same principle that those most affected by decisions should be given a privileged voice, the governance networks examined in this study are distinct from public consultations and neighbourhood associations. They are institutional arrangements constructed for more than single decisions and are carefully managed to achieve a diverse membership, hosting professional, well-connected and skilled advocates for the homeless. The threats of upper-middle class neighbourhood warriors articulated by Valverde (2012) are less relevant, but the question still remains whether we want to construct a “democracy of the affected”, even if tightly controlled (Hansen, 2007; Eckersley, 2000). Do civil society actors—in this case, homelessness service providers, affordable housing providers and advocates, mental health professionals, and charitable organizations—bring something special (and positive) to the policy process, which cannot be obtained via traditional hierarchical bureaucracies? If they do, does it outweigh the potential threats of conflict of interest in policymaking and resource hoarding? Does it undermine the role of elected officials and (supposedly) objective bureaucrats?
This study has attempted to address the first of these questions—if we insert civil society actors into the policy process via institutionalized governance networks, in which they assist with policy planning and decision making, does it result in different and better decisions than traditional modes of policymaking and decision making? This chapter begins with a reflection on what has been presented and analyzed in this study in relation to theory advanced at the onset. Following that, unexpected and counter-intuitive findings are reviewed and used to contemplate the implications for network governance theory. The chapter, and study, concludes by placing the findings in the broader context of the literature, identifying questions unanswered and opportunities for further research.

**Dissertation objectives, findings, gaps**

This study sought to explain homelessness policy development in Vancouver and Toronto from the period 1995-2012, specifically testing the claim that the properties and dynamics of the governance networks that exist in each city explain why the policies and programs in Vancouver are generally more innovative, sensitive and coordinated than those in Toronto. While there are indeed examples of such policies in the Toronto case, a comprehensive look at the policy landscape over time reveals a relationship between governance patterns and policy outputs. Importantly, the findings are consistent with the trends in homelessness outcomes in Vancouver, where they are improving, and in Toronto, where they are not (GVRSCCH, 2011; SNA, 2013).

The study was guided by theoretical frameworks and concepts from the network governance, metagovernance and deliberative democracy literatures. Homelessness is often studied as an exclusively ‘urban’ issue, but this study has shown that policy actors at all levels of government—both inside and outside of the governance networks—have powerfully shaped homelessness policy in Canada over the last two decades. The metagovernance framework captures how the multi-level nature of governance in Canada may set unique governance and policy trajectories in jurisdictions depending on how institutions are structured. Embedded in the overarching metagovernance framework is network governance theory, which served as the principal guiding theoretical lens for this
study, the most important of which was to conceptualize governance networks both in terms of structural and relational dimensions as key determinants of policy development. The design, membership and linkages within governance networks play important roles in shaping the development of policy. Finally, embedded within network governance theory is deliberative democracy theory, serving as a guide to the micro-level dimensions of governance networks activity. Concepts articulated in deliberative democracy theory help address a key weakness in network governance theory: the under-conceptualization and measurement of the ‘practice’ of governance networks activity, bringing concepts of learning, persuasion, brokerage among actors, and trust-building.

In 1995, prior to the creation of any of the governance networks, the policy context in Vancouver and Toronto shared many similarities: no formal homelessness plans, a concentration of services in the downtown core, an emergency bias to policy, a lack of coordination of services, and little to no data of the homeless population in order to engage in long-term planning. Yet by 2012, while both cities had much more sophisticated plans and strategies to address homelessness, Vancouver and Toronto differ in important ways on all three policy dimensions of interest. This study has demonstrated that the more institutionalized and inclusive homelessness governance networks in Vancouver largely explain this variation. The pair-wise analysis of analogous governance networks in Vancouver and Toronto, which exhibited variation in terms of institutionalization and inclusiveness, demonstrated that the structure and dynamics of governance networks were responsible for the presence (and absence) of policy innovations, sensitivities and coordination in Vancouver and Toronto. That VAN_main adopted a more networked approach and TO_main a more municipalized, bureaucratic approach—despite their shared origins from the federal government NHI—allowed for fruitful comparative analysis of their policy outputs over an extended period. The evidence presented in this study also suggests that different decisions are made in governance networks than those that would be made in traditional hierarchical bureaucracies, as demonstrated by the natural experiment in Chapter 8 that was able to leverage real decision data to play out counter factual decision scenarios.
The study also examined policy development through the alternative lenses of local institutional structures, the social construction of ideas, and the leadership of policy actors. There are indeed a number of important policy innovations that were the result of elected official leadership and examples of policy coordination the result of local political-administrative (non-governance network) institutions. Clearly, elected official leadership is a critical source of policy change and momentum, whether by Toronto Mayor Mel Lastman in the late 1990s launching his Mayor’s Task Force to investigate and respond to the homelessness crisis, or then-councilor Jack Layton as leader of TOemerg, or more recently Mayor Gregor Robertson in Vancouver setting a high personal priority towards ending homelessness. Yet these examples do not contradict the claim that governance networks matter, since there are multiple pathways to policy development in complex and multi-level policy domains—it is not a zero sum scenario. Still, there are more numerous and arguably more substantive innovative, sensitive and coordinated policy and programs linked directly to institutionalized and inclusive governance networks over the extended period of inquiry.

But why do governance networks drive innovative, sensitive and coordinated policy? I have demonstrated with evidence from archival documents, interviews and participant observation that two causal processes are principally at work: brokerage relations and persuasion. Governance networks provide a key venue for the development and nurturing of brokerage relations, thus deactivating the previously sharp boundaries between policy actors. Highly institutionalized and inclusive governance networks provide regular venues for social boundaries to be dismantled among disparate policy actors in government and civil society as actors develop relationships of exchange and trust—provided the appropriate type of civil society actors are asked to participate—drawing on diverse perspectives in the policy process.

The second causal process linking governance networks to the dimensions of policy is persuasion. A key institutional feature of governance networks is deliberation, and a broader ethic of information exchange, horizontal relations, and argumentation, distinct from rules, procedures and hierarchy that are characteristic of bureaucracies. Persuasion
captures the process by which policy actors are exposed to distinct perspectives and arguments about policy problems and solutions, which are subject to confrontation and challenge in the decision making setting. While brokerage and persuasion are the causal mechanisms emergent from highly institutionalized and inclusive governance networks, their effect on policy is powerfully mediated by the metagovernance context: a strongly constrained or inappropriately structured metagovernance context can hamper the effect of the causal mechanisms on policy development and implementation.

**Unexpected and counter-intuitive findings**

Though this study lends evidence to theory that highly institutionalized and inclusive networks drive policy innovation, sensitivity and coordination, and weakly institutionalized and less diverse governance networks much less so—there were several unexpected and counter-intuitive findings in the middle of the spectrum, which is cause for reflection of existing network governance theoretical formulations. First, understanding the inclusiveness of a governance network requires more than basic measures of the total size of the network and the relevant demographic boxes checked. Nominally diverse networks are necessary though not sufficient for inclusive policy development—VAN_{emerg} and TO_{emerg} were ostensibly quite large and diverse, but not correspondingly high in terms of generating policy sensitivity. The production of sensitive policy seems to require not only diverse voices, but also a governance network structure that channels such issues onto the agenda. This was most successfully done by forming subcommittees organized along demographic lines (youth, Aboriginal, women, LGBT).

A second counter-intuitive finding in the study is that formal institutionalization of a governance network—policy space carved out, linked to elected officials, and autonomous decision making authority—does not necessarily imply a greater role or impact on policy development. Theory predicted that TO_{emerg}, which in addition to meeting regularly and performing a strategic planning function, had elected official leadership as an institutional anchor, would be set up to have a significant policy impact—which it did, despite its short tenure. According to former members, TO_{emerg}
would have achieved little without the elected councillor leadership, yet we see that its less formally institutionalized comparator network, VAN\textsubscript{emerg}, had much more lasting and substantial policy influence over the period of study. While this is in part because VAN\textsubscript{emerg} remains active, while TO\textsubscript{emerg} dissolved quite spectacularly in 2006 due to its volatile metagovernance, surprising lessons about institutionalization also explain some difference in policy impact. VAN\textsubscript{emerg} is among the least formally institutionalized networks studied, with no carved out policy space or official attachment to decision makers, but has powerfully influenced local, regional and provincial policy through informal channels. Trust is a key variable accounting for the difference between these two networks’ performance: some TO\textsubscript{emerg} members would be very quick to take policy disagreements between factions within the membership and the bureaucracy/elected officials to the streets (to protest), whereas VAN\textsubscript{emerg} membership has determinedly never taken this nuclear option. Several former TO\textsubscript{emerg} members and bureaucrats referenced the degradation of trust over time—“I didn’t trust them as far as I could throw them” (confidential, Personal Interview, December 15, 2011)—while VAN\textsubscript{emerg} members and BC Housing bureaucrats emphasized the trust that has developed from years of cooperative, yet challenging, collective problem solving (Anhorn, Personal Interview, January 24, 2012; O’Shannacery, Personal Interview, October 12, 2011).

A third counter-intuitive finding in this study is that over the long term, governance networks without elected official leadership seem to have the most significant influence on policy. This is unexpected, since elected officials have more levers of power than bureaucrats and civil society actors to get issues on the agenda, especially at the local level. A city councillor not only has opportunities and privileges in the council legislative system, but also lends legitimacy to the governance network. TO\textsubscript{emerg} is the only governance network among the six studied with an elected official among its membership, but it was also the most volatile and unstable. Though elected officials are a necessary and important legitimizing authority in public decision making, leading governance networks focused on policy may not be the ideal role for them. The hyper-politicized environment of TO\textsubscript{emerg} indeed brought some policy gains—e.g. a short-term emergency services fund—however elected official leadership turnover was very
disruptive to the basic functioning of the governance network. On the other hand, bureaucratic and civil society leadership, characteristic of the other five governance networks, resulted in much less volatility and generally more productive policy debates over the long term. In earlier years, VAN_{main} flirted with the idea of involving elected officials as members, but backed off concluding that the costs of the direct politicization of the network outweighed the potential benefits. Evidence from TO_{emerg} in this study—its complete unraveling over politics—suggests VAN_{main} made a wise choice, although this tentative lesson requires more research.

A final unexpected finding in the study—though not to those familiar with Aboriginal culture and worldview—is just how different Aboriginals and non-Aboriginal policy actors conceptualize the policy problem, set priorities and allocate resources. We certainly expect difference, given well-established arguments in the literature on self-governance, though not as systematic and substantive as were found in the data. Not only did the Aboriginal homelessness governance networks display very different homelessness priorities than the City of Toronto on Aboriginal homelessness programs and investments, but also there were dramatic differences in the ways bureaucrats and Aboriginal community members evaluate policy and make decisions in VAN_{main}-VAN_{Ab} cases in Vancouver, presented in the empirical counterfactual analysis in Chapter 8. Evidence from Vancouver suggests that in a traditional bureaucratic hierarchical setting, there will be systematic undervaluation of Aboriginal homelessness program proposals and thus expenditures towards this community. To be clear, this is not because of ignorant (non-Aboriginal) bureaucrats, but because new public management bureaucratic principles systematically punish low-capacity Aboriginal policy actors and service organizations when they seek funding from government. The analysis of the Aboriginal governance networks shows that a carved out policy space for Aboriginals to deliberate policy and make allocations can correct for this bias while preserving traditional accountability principles.
Theoretical framework revisited

What are the implications of the findings of this study for network governance, deliberative democracy, and metagovernance theoretical formulations? What does it tell us about public policy? The findings lend evidence to key precepts in network governance theory that network institutionalization and inclusivity matter to the development and implementation of policy at the extremes of governance network structure. The middle range deviations from theory are not, however, the result of flawed theory, but rather incomplete conceptualization of what it means to be ‘institutionalized’ and ‘inclusive’ in terms of network structure.

Five criteria were advanced at the onset to establish the degree of institutionalization of a governance network, according to whether is has: (i) a decision making function, (ii) a strategic planning function, (iii) regular meeting intervals (defined as six times per year), (iv) membership from all levels of government, and (v) elected official leadership. These measures of institutionalization are all structural in nature—how the governance network is inserted into the policy process—but the comparative policy analysis from the six governance networks suggests that there are also relational elements to institutionalization that influence policy development and implementation, as depicted in Table 10.1. Networks are only ‘networked’ because of the actors involved, and the relationships that develop within the governance network over time are a form of institutionalization in the same way a carved out policy space can be. VAN$_{\text{emerg}}$ shows that trust between disparate policy actors can form an invisible backbone of institutionalization—and TO$_{\text{emerg}}$ shows that the erosion of trust among them can destroy even a structurally institutionalized governance network.

Conversely, with respect to the inclusivity of a governance network, the measures used to establish the degree of inclusiveness were premised only on relational assumptions about how inclusivity in a network drives policy development: membership size and diversity. Theory predicted that large and diverse governance networks would expose disparate policy actors to foreign perspectives and result in policy that reflects the diversity of the inputs. This was confirmed at the extremes of inclusivity, yet again in the middle range
there are deviations. The comparative policy analysis of the six governance networks reveals that just as there are *relational* elements to institutionalization, there are *structural* elements to inclusivity, in ways not predicted at the onset. Diversity is in fact the essential ingredient to network performance, though tokenism or demographic box checking is not an effective approach, as it evidenced by big diverse networks like VAN\_emerg and TO\_emerg with weaker contributions to policy sensitivity. The missing structural dimension of inclusivity in a governance network is how activity is channeled in network structures, likewise represented in Table 10.1. Subcommittees or task groups with explicit objectives to target uniquely vulnerable subpopulations, rather than sectoral issues, contributed more to policy sensitivity, controlling for network size and diversity.

**Table 10.1: Revisions to the theoretical conceptions of governance network properties.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Network feature</th>
<th>Structural</th>
<th>Relational</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Institutionalization</td>
<td>Formal terms of reference (e.g. role in policy process; frequency of meetings)</td>
<td><strong>Trust-building and relationship management</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inclusiveness</td>
<td><strong>Organizational specialization</strong></td>
<td>Size and diversity of membership</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Thinking about governance networks as ‘deliberative systems’ has been characterized by Dryzek (2010) as an important next ‘frontier’ in deliberative democratic scholarship, and this study has provided an early contribution to this call. Governance networks are real-world examples of deliberative democracy providing the opportunity to put some meat on the bones of deliberative democracy concepts of inclusion, representation, persuasion, and consensus decision making. Likewise, these concepts are helpful to the network governance literature, which has struggled with conceptualizing and testing the linkages between the practice of governance networks and public policy. The empirical work in this study—specifically being embedded in two of the six governance networks for an extended period of time—revealed the causal processes at work in such real-world deliberative contexts. The causal processes of brokerage and persuasion are given more depth with the empirical contributions of this study. Linking these causal processes to network governance concepts of institutionalization and inclusivity, as well as the
metagovernance context, in driving policy innovation, sensitivity and coordination is perhaps the most important theoretical contribution of this research.

Figure 10.1: Governance networks and the production of causal mechanisms, mediated by governance context, and the influence on policy outputs.

The theoretical implications of the findings in this study also extend to the emerging metagovernance literature. This study has drawn on the metagovernance concept to illustrate how a governance network is created, the tasks with which it is charged, and to whom it is accountable places it in a particular space in the policy process. Indeed the metagovernance context of a governance network can tell us something about the possibilities and limitations of its role in the policy process—and thus its potential to drive policy innovation, sensitivity and coordination. The evidence from this study suggests that the congruency of the metagovernor leadership patterns vis-à-vis network membership has an important effect on the stability of the governance network and thus its ability to shape policy development. Equally importantly, the governance network mandate sets critical limits on its activities—indeed independent of the features of the governance network itself, like the diversity of the membership or internal decision making processes.

There is no ideal model of metagovernance to be applied in all governance contexts, despite the typology of metagovernance specifying some features that can disrupt that activity of governance networks. For example, what I have called volatile
**metagovernance**—when the governance network is given a very loose mandate and metagovernor-network relations are contentious—is a very unstable context. Contentious metagovernor-network relations likely need to be placed in a more controlled policy space to have productive and stable governance patterns. And, as articulated above as a counter-intuitive finding of this study, elected officials may not serve as the most effective metagovernors, given their inherent politicized nature, but also because of their comparative ephemeral presence in the policy system.

Finally, establishing clear linkages between the structure and dynamics of governance networks and policy development has implications for public policy and administration scholarship, particularly with respect to accountability and fiscal federalism. We may value diverse perspectives in policymaking—especially if they drive policy innovation and sensitivity, as demonstrated in this study—but is it legitimate for civil society actors to have such a privileged role in decision making? The broad narrative emerging out of the networks is one of an interactive relationship between civil society members and bureaucrats that harnesses the expertise and knowledge of community and local government actors, while generally making decisions within the comfort level of bureaucrats responding to various political constraints—consistent with the path forward specified by Skogstad (2003) to resolve contemporary governance challenges and political authority. For governance network critics, the findings should make clear that we should not be afraid that these governance networks are not sufficiently supervised or steered by government. And for network governance proponents, the evidence simultaneously demonstrates the value of having diverse perspectives in a less-hierarchical decision making structure—networks clearly matter to decision making.

**Unanswered questions and future research**

While this study has established clear linkages between governance networks and policy development, as well as conceptualization of the macro forces (metagovernance) and micro forces (emergent causal mechanisms of deliberative systems), there remain several unanswered questions of critical importance which warrant further research. First, for the purposes of theoretical advancement, it necessary to test the causal claims articulated and
confirmed in this study in other jurisdictions and policy domains. On one hand, homelessness governance networks serve a unique purpose by tackling a complex policy problem affecting a very marginalized population. Governance networks are arguably appropriate from a practical-administrative, as well as normative-democratic, perspective. It is not as obvious that governance networks are appropriate in nuclear policy, financial regulation, or military procurement, for example. Thinking about these issues in normative terms is important when considering whether these governance networks can and should be scaled up beyond the local level, where we typically find them.

Second, a question not directly addressed in this study relates to measuring the democratic virtues and vices of governance networks. How do we determine whether network governance arrangements are democracy enhancing? Some take this for granted, but Dryzek (2010) reminds us that “a network may be deliberative without necessarily being especially democratic” (125). Indeed, a central critique of network governance arrangements is their potential to be undemocratic and unaccountable, since they tend to include unelected civil society actors in a decision making role (Papadopolous, 2007). The exploration of the ‘metagovernance’ dimension in this study provides a credible, though incomplete, response, arguing that networks are typically steered and supervised by bureaucrats and their elected masters, thus completing the accountability circle. Yet this response is limited by its focus on top-down, output mechanisms of accountability and democratic legitimacy, leaving bottom-up, input mechanisms like representativeness, trust, and credibility among network actors under-theorized and without operationalization (Kohler-Koch, 2010). Future research to operationalize input legitimacy concepts would be helpful to develop more complete conceptualizations of accountability in new governance arrangements.

Third, while all but one of the governance networks featured in this study are currently active, there are significant theoretical and empirical gaps in understanding network governance failure, in contrast to highlighting their virtues with respect to policy innovation, sensitivity and coordination. Limited by the scope of the study, the (existential) governance failure of TO_emerg was not explored in detail. A key difference of
TO\textsubscript{emerg} in relation to the other governance networks studied is its elected official leadership. While it is plausible the politicized nature of this position contributed to its failure, there is not enough comparative evidence to confirm this. Are bureaucrats better metagovernors of networks than elected officials, in order to establish a longer lineage of structure? Governance failure with respect to network governance is not just along existential lines, but also in terms of conflict, resource hoarding, and closure to some groups. To governance network scholars like Sorenson and Torfing (2007), governance network failure can be seen as a result of the failure “to balance openness and closure, consensus and conflict, and efficiency and legitimacy” and some imbalances can be “fatal” (110). These elements were not addressed in this study due to their expansive scope, but they are critical to tackle as network governance theory continues to be refined.

**Concluding thought**

Network governance and deliberative democracy bodies of literature are typically framed in democratic terms, with the benefits of increased representation as a normative objective. Yet the narrative emerging from this study is really a story about expertise and policy learning to create fairer and more effective policy. The longitudinal analysis in this study demonstrates that for too long homelessness policy made in the towers of bureaucracies was (and is) developed and implemented in contradiction to realities on the ground, and at times divorced from effectiveness. Anti-panhandling and anti-squeegee laws may satisfy a political constituency, but certainly do not represent a meaningful or effective homelessness or poverty policy—and in fact further alienate and marginalize struggling Canadians. Strict social assistance eligibility and outlays that fail to cover housing costs—let alone food, clothes and other expenses—can actually trap Canadians in vulnerable conditions, rather than giving them a helping hand. And spending many millions per year to help homeless individuals off the street is significantly less efficient than preventing that person from becoming homeless with a sensible and coordinated social and economic safety net.
That network governance has been shown to drive policy innovation, sensitivity, and coordination should not be extrapolated too far when thinking about homelessness issues. To be clear: governance networks alone will not solve the homelessness crisis in Canada. Substantial public sector investment is required to correct for the market failures, and societal and personal forces, that cause homelessness in this country and elsewhere. And in times of austerity, government spending on homelessness and housing are often the easiest to cut, given the political marginalization and diffuse distribution of very low income and needy Canadians. Yet governance networks can create a counter-balance to the inadequacies of the traditional liberal democratic institutions, which privilege certain constituencies over others. Governance networks not only infuse alternative perspectives into the policy process, but also, as we have seen, can generate issue momentum and political will to create lasting change towards ending homelessness. Network governance is more demanding on bureaucracies and civil society, is often frustrating for those involved, and requires careful design and management, but it is clear that traditional institutions of policymaking alone are simply not up to the task of ending homelessness.
### Appendix A: Interview list and guide

#### Vancouver case (N=21):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Title/Position</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Anhorn</td>
<td>former VAN&lt;sub&gt;main&lt;/sub&gt; staff/BC Housing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fedos</td>
<td>OPTIONS Surrey; former VAN&lt;sub&gt;main&lt;/sub&gt; member; VAN&lt;sub&gt;emerg&lt;/sub&gt; chair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Garrison</td>
<td>City of Vancouver/previous VAN&lt;sub&gt;main&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graves</td>
<td>City of Vancouver; VAN&lt;sub&gt;emerg&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greenwell</td>
<td>former VAN&lt;sub&gt;main&lt;/sub&gt; coordinator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hurford</td>
<td>former VAN&lt;sub&gt;main&lt;/sub&gt; staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jimenez</td>
<td>City of Vancouver; VAN&lt;sub&gt;main&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lavalee</td>
<td>Lu'ma Native Housing (CE); VAN&lt;sub&gt;Ab&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LeFranc</td>
<td>Vancity Community Foundation; VAN&lt;sub&gt;main&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mauboules</td>
<td>City of Vancouver; VAN&lt;sub&gt;main&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mauboules</td>
<td>District of North Vancouver; VAN&lt;sub&gt;main&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moriarty</td>
<td>Elizabeth Fry: VAN&lt;sub&gt;emerg&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nimow</td>
<td>former coordinator of VAN&lt;sub&gt;main&lt;/sub&gt; secretariat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O'Shannacery</td>
<td>Lookout Aid Society; VAN&lt;sub&gt;main&lt;/sub&gt;; VAN&lt;sub&gt;emerg&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Okyere</td>
<td>VAN&lt;sub&gt;main&lt;/sub&gt; Secretariat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Papadionissiou</td>
<td>VAN&lt;sub&gt;main&lt;/sub&gt; co-chair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pratt</td>
<td>Pratt Consulting; VAN&lt;sub&gt;emerg&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semotuk</td>
<td>former co-chair of VAN&lt;sub&gt;main&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seymour</td>
<td>VAN&lt;sub&gt;Ab&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stewart</td>
<td>Chair, VAN&lt;sub&gt;Ab&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sundberg</td>
<td>former VAN&lt;sub&gt;main&lt;/sub&gt; co-chair</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Toronto case (N=21):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Title/Position</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abbott</td>
<td>Mizewbke; TO&lt;sub&gt;Ab&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anonymous</td>
<td>CoT; TO&lt;sub&gt;main&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anonymous</td>
<td>CoT; TO&lt;sub&gt;main&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anonymous</td>
<td>Government of Canada</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anonymous</td>
<td>TO&lt;sub&gt;main&lt;/sub&gt; member</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anonymous</td>
<td>TO&lt;sub&gt;main&lt;/sub&gt; member</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anonymous</td>
<td>TO&lt;sub&gt;emerg&lt;/sub&gt; member</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anonymous</td>
<td>CoT; TO&lt;sub&gt;main&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crowe</td>
<td>Toronto Disaster Relief Committee; TO&lt;sub&gt;emerg&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emmanuel</td>
<td>CoT; TO&lt;sub&gt;main&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>German</td>
<td>Toronto Disaster Relief Committee; TO&lt;sub&gt;emerg&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hulchanski</td>
<td>UofT; TO&lt;sub&gt;emerg&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kellen</td>
<td>John Howard Society; TO&lt;sub&gt;emerg&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Melin</td>
<td>Native Women’s Resource Centre; TO&lt;sub&gt;Ab&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Odette</td>
<td>formerly Street Health; TO&lt;sub&gt;emerg&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pitt</td>
<td>Aboriginal Labour Force Development Corporation; TO&lt;sub&gt;Ab&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Richard</td>
<td>Native Child &amp; Family Services; TO&lt;sub&gt;Ab&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sanderson</td>
<td>Nishwabe Homes; TO&lt;sub&gt;Ab&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shephard</td>
<td>CoT; TO&lt;sub&gt;emerg&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staleri</td>
<td>CoT; TO&lt;sub&gt;main&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teekens</td>
<td>Na-Me-Res; TO&lt;sub&gt;Ab&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Interview Guide:**

1. when you were approached to join the network (or in your case were part of its formation), can you describe your thinking process regarding why you agreed to join (and in fact, lead the network in the first few years)?
   - prompt: what did you or do you perceive to be the benefits of your involvement?

2. when you think about the kaleidoscope of homelessness policy activity in the region, in what ways do you think the network has been most influential?

3. can you envision a hypothetical scenario in which the network did not exist—what do homelessness policy and programs look like?
   - prompt: can you think of specific policy or program that is entirely derived from the work of the network, or one the ctme was central to its formation?

4. when you think of new approaches or innovative policy or programs throughout the region, to what extent does the activity of the network account for it?
   - prompt: what are the most significant policy innovations in the region? Ex. safe injection site, services in shelters, low barrier shelters

5. how would you rate the success of the network in building partnerships across government and civil society that result in substantive change or new activity?
   - prompt: Streettohome Foundation could be an example of the type of collaborative partnership

6. when network allocates funds to programs in, say, the City of Vancouver/Toronto, are there mechanisms in place that coordinate this activity with independent programs and policies at the city level?
   - Prompt: are there measures to ensure that duplication is avoided and a wide spectrum of services are provided?

7. the network seems to make an effort to include representatives of groups disproportionately represented in the homeless population—for example Aboriginals and youth. Do you think there are substantive impacts to this inclusion?
   - prompt: can you think of specific example? Like a specific decision or general direction of the cmte that was changed because of their input?

8. how would characterize the relationship between the network and other networks?
   - prompt: collaborative? history of tension? nature of the tension?

9. how has the work of the network evolved over time? If at all?
   - prompt: more or less active in certain issues or areas?

10. if you could change one thing about the network, what would it be?
    - prompt: the way it is structured, who is included, how decisions are made, etc.
11. who do you think is the most influential person or organization in homelessness policy in Vancouver that is not part of the network?

12. what is the role of the provincial government in the NHI and HPS?  
   -prompt: do they negotiate the formula for funding, have to ‘approve’ of the federal government entering into financial arrangements with cities?

13. how is the 50% from other sources collected?  On a project-by-project basis? Or just totaling existing spending from province and/or municipality?

14. how constraining are the federal government priorities in each phase of the federal homelessness program?

15. if the federal homelessness program was discontinued in 2014, do you think the network would remain? Why or why not?  
   -prompt: is the federal funding the main reason why everyone continues to coordinate activity?
Figure B1: Historical policy context across levels of government: Vancouver housing and homelessness policy, 1995-2012

| federal government | National Homelessness Initiative (NHI) - HRSDC | Homelessness Partnering Strategy - HRSDC  |
| provincial government | Residential Rehabilitation Assistance Program (RRAP) - CHMC |  |
| | |  |
| | Vancouver Agreement - tripartite | Canada-BC Affordable Housing Agreement  |
| | |  |
| | BC Housing Health Services Prog. | BC Mental Health Plan  |
| | Emergency Shelter Program (Min. HR) | Emergency Shelter Prog. (Min. Soc Dev & Econ Sec)  |
| | | Housing Matters BC via BC Housing - consolidated strategy/programs  |
| | | Homes BC Program  |
| | |  |
| | Greater Vancouver Regional Plan to End Homelessness | Metro Vancouver Housing Corporation  |
| | Greater Vancouver Housing Corporation | Call to Action Plan  |
| | Metro Vancouver Regional Housing Strategy |  |
| | |  |
| | Triennial Regional Homeless Count | Extreme Weather Response (regional municipalities) - confirm start dates  |
| | | Low barrier emergency shelters  |
| | | Homeless Action Week (annual)  |
| | | Metro Van. Funder's Table  |
| | |  |
| | Affordable Housing Fund & Inclusionary Zoning (Vancouver) |  |
| | Carnegie Centre, Gathering Place, and other direct service provision (Vancouver) |  |
| | Four Pillars Drug Strategy & safe injection site (Vancouver) |  |
| | City of Vancouver Housing Plan | City of Vancouver Housing Plan  |
| | | Hous.&Homeless Strategy  |
| | | STIR pilot program (Vancouver)  |
| | | Rental 100  |
| | |  |
| | Surrey Homelessness and Housing Fund |  |
| | Surrey Housing Action Plan | Surrey Master Plan Homeless  |
| | |  |
| civil society | Community Housing Tables (confirm start date) |  |
| | Greater Vancouver Aboriginal Homelessness Plan | shelter coordination and standards  |
| | Independent shelter and service provision |  |
Figure B2: Historical policy context across levels of government: Toronto housing and homelessness policy, 1995-2012
References

Aboriginal Homelessness Caucus Committee (2000) “Minutes from the September 19, 2000 meeting”.

Aboriginal Homelessness Steering Committee (2011) “Minutes from the May 19, 2011 meeting”.

Aboriginal Homelessness Steering Committee (2002) “Minutes from the April 9, 2001 meeting”.


Advisory Committee on Homeless and Socially Isolated Persons (2006) “Minutes from the April 24, 2006 meeting”, Shelter, Support and Housing Administration, City of Toronto.

Advisory Committee on Homeless and Socially Isolated Persons (2003) “Minutes from the May 9, 2003 meeting”, Shelter, Support and Housing Administration, City of Toronto.

Advisory Committee on Homeless and Socially Isolated Persons (2002) “Minutes from the June 2, 2002 meeting”, Shelter, Support and Housing Administration, City of Toronto.


Advisory Committee on Homeless and Socially Isolated Persons (2000) “Minutes from the January 4, 2000 meeting”, Shelter, Support and Housing Administration, City of Toronto.

Advisory Committee on Homeless and Socially Isolated Persons (1999) “Minutes from the January 22, 1999 meeting”, Shelter, Support and Housing Administration, City of Toronto.


Greater Vancouver Regional Steering Committee on Homelessness (2012) “Minutes for the March 8, 2012 meeting”.

Greater Vancouver Regional Steering Committee on Homelessness (2011) “Minutes for the December 8, 2011 meeting”.

Greater Vancouver Regional Steering Committee on Homelessness (2011) “Metro Vancouver Homeless Count Report” Greater Vancouver Regional Steering Committee on Homelessness.


Greater Vancouver Regional Steering Committee on Homelessness (2006) “Minutes for the December 14, 2006 meeting”.

Greater Vancouver Regional Steering Committee on Homelessness (2006) “Minutes for the June 8, 2006 meeting”.


Greater Vancouver Regional Steering Committee on Homelessness (2003) “Minutes for the April 10, 2003 meeting”.


Greater Vancouver Regional Steering Committee on Homelessness (2002) “Minutes for the August 8, 2002 meeting”.


Greater Vancouver Shelter Strategy (2010) “Committee of the Whole Meeting Minutes”, May 27, 2010


Skocpol, Theda. 1979. States and Social Revolutions: A Comparative Analysis of France, Russia, and China. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.


