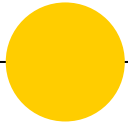


Young Children & Climate Change: **Cities as teachers**



Claire Stevenson-Blythe, MCIP RPP
Lessons to Learn:
From the Environment into the Early Years
June 1, 2022, Day 3

Urban Planning in Toronto rooted in the colonial agenda

Ordering and management of land done by early colonists coded space depending on value determined by the colonial agenda

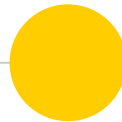
The Toronto Purchase, 1787

“Planning was a way for ideas, expectations, and cultures of Europe to be transported and modified” to Turtle Island

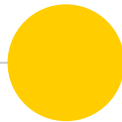
- Libby Porter, 2010



**children
climate change
cities**



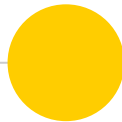
**For urban children,
cities are our first teachers**



children + climate change: an urgent relationship

Intragenerational justice: Between different people of the present generation

Intergenerational justice: Between people of different generations



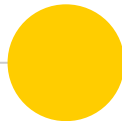
how to address climate change?

reduce carbon emissions

mitigation

- increase parks, naturalized areas
- walk, cycle, take transit
- increased urban forest

adaptation



How to design for children (and for climate change)



parks + open
spaces



15 - minute
neighbourhood



urban
forest

How to design for children (and for climate change)

parks + open
spaces

Children

- Play in shade
- Playgrounds
- Exercise, socialize, be outside
- Clean air
- Spaces of interest

Climate

- Sequester CO2 (trees)
- Rainwater absorption/ flood mitigation
- Habitat for biodiversity
- Reduce heat island effect



Dufferin Grove Park Playground, shaded by trees.
Source: Urbaneer.com

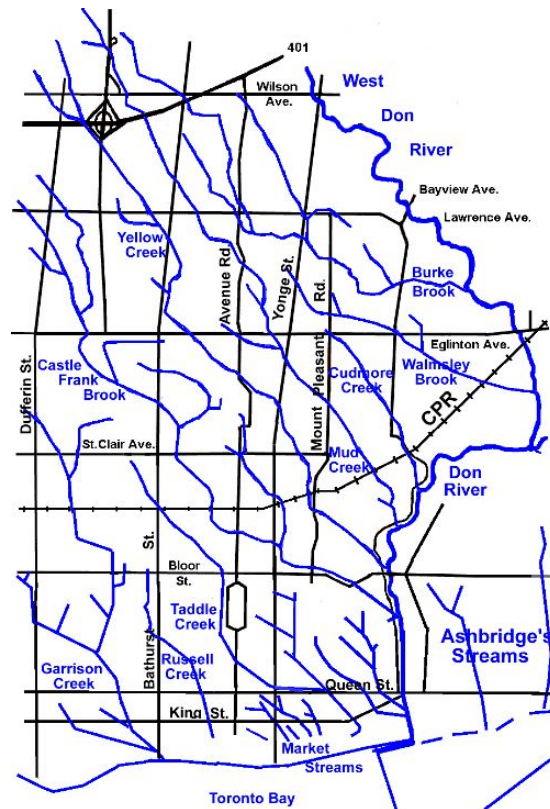
parks + open spaces



Evergreen Brickworks
Source: evergreen.ca



Humber River
Source: humberriver.ca



Toronto's buried rivers
Source: lostrivers.ca

How to design for children (and for climate change)

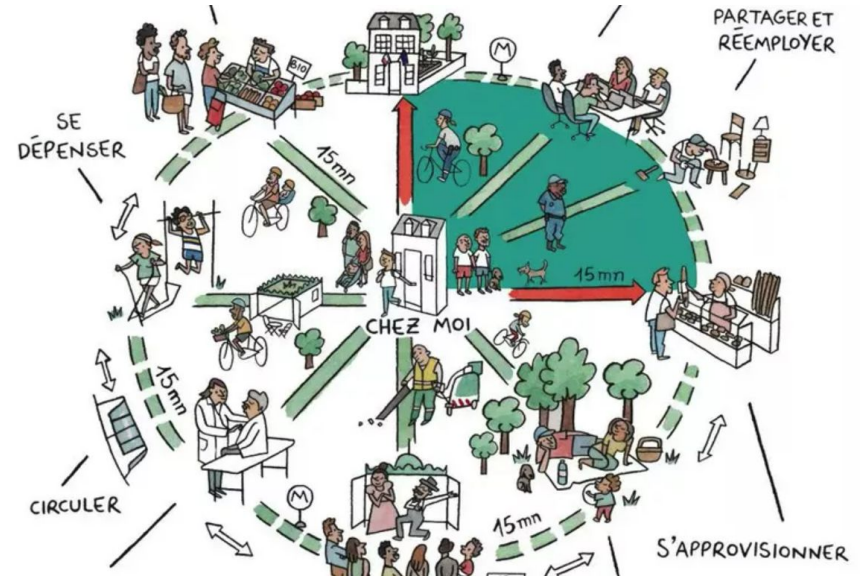
Children

- Can walk and bike to reach destinations
- Increased independence, experience diversity of people, cultures, foods
- Physical activity and mental stimulation

Climate

- Reduced automobile use, reduced CO2 emissions

15 - minute
neighbourhood



15-minute neighbourhood diagram.
Source: treehugger.com

How to design for children (and for climate change)

urban
forest

Children

- ◉ Shade for children to play, makes outdoors more pleasant
- ◉ Improved air quality
- ◉ Moderate temperatures

Climate

- ◉ Sequester CO₂
- ◉ Mitigate stormwater runoff
- ◉ Habitat for wildlife
- ◉ Reduce urban heat island effect
- ◉ Shade to reduce energy consumption in homes



Toronto's urban forest
Source: Redtea via Getty Images

Unequal distribution across Toronto



parks + open
spaces



15 - minute
neighbourhood



urban
forest



The 15-Minute City & Inequity within Toronto's Inner Suburbs

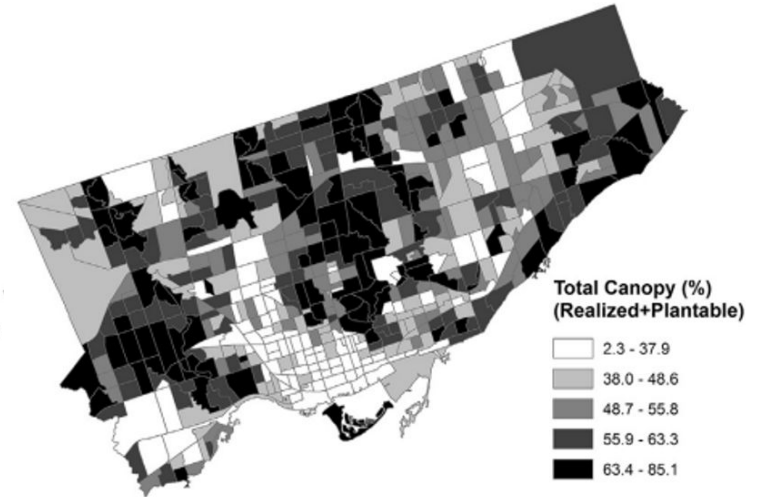
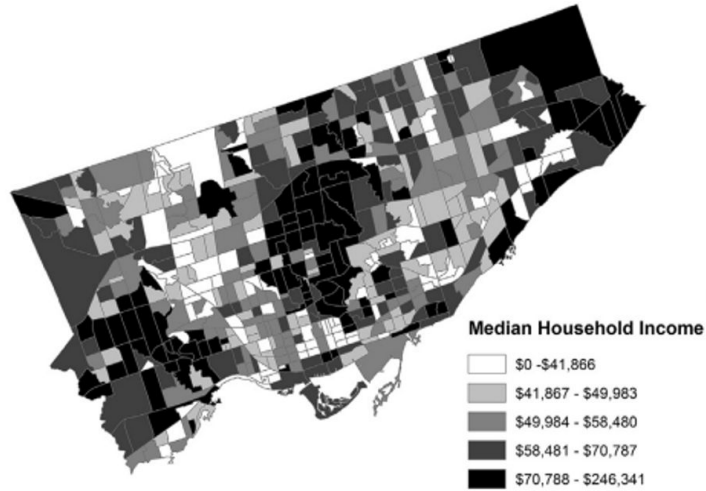
An Equity Assessment of the Feasibility of the 15-Minute City within Toronto's Post-War Inner Suburban Neighbourhoods

Sarah Burrell
December 15, 2020

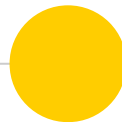


15 - minute
neighbourhood

urban
canopy

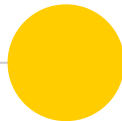


Greene, C.S., Robinson, P. J. & Millward, A. A. (2018). Canopy of advantage: Who benefits most from city trees?



**today, cities are planned through
policies**

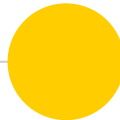
- **provincial policies**
- **official plans**
- **zoning by-laws**



how is Toronto **planning through policy** to mitigate the impacts of climate change?

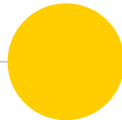
- Toronto Official Plan, c. 2021
- Toronto Green Standard, version 4, 2022
 - Growing Up Guidelines, 2020
- Green Streets Technical Guidelines, 2017

- TransformTO: Net Zero Strategy, 2021
- City of Toronto Parkland Strategy, 2019
 - Toronto Resilience Strategy, 2019
- Wild, Connected and Diverse: Toronto's Biodiversity Strategy, 2019
 - Toronto Ravine Strategy



beyond policy, what **programs and initiatives** is Toronto undertaking to mitigate the impacts of climate change?

- Toronto's Tree Canopy Target: 40% by 2050
 - Urban Forestry: Tree Equity Analysis
- Expanding Housing Options in Neighbourhoods Initiative
 - Toronto's Cycling Network Plan
 - Investments into TTC and GO Transit Network
- Initiatives to expand waterfront parks, such as naturalization of the Don River
 - Declaration of a climate emergency (October 2019)



policies and initiatives for children + climate change

parks + open spaces

- Wild, Connected and Diverse: Toronto's Biodiversity Strategy, 2019
- City of Toronto Parkland Strategy, 2019
- Toronto Ravine Strategy
- Initiatives to expand waterfront parks, such as naturalization of the Don & Humber River

15 - minute neighbourhood

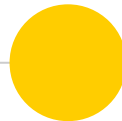
- Toronto's Cycling Network Plan
- Investments into TTC and GO Transit Network
- Expanding Housing Options in Neighbourhoods Initiative
- Green Streets Technical Guidelines, 2017

urban forest

- Toronto's Tree Canopy Target: 40% by 2050
- Urban Forestry: Tree Equity Analysis

Toronto is committing to taking action on climate change through action-oriented policies and initiatives and declaring a climate emergency.

Is it with enough urgency that is needed for the future of young children?



planning policy for children: **urgency and equity**



parks + open
spaces

Invest in
neighbourhoods
with low parkland
provision and low
income



15 - minute
neighbourhood

15-minute
neighbourhoods in
Toronto's inner
suburbs



urban
forest

tree-equity approach
across Toronto's
neighbourhoods

Young Children & Climate Change: Cities as teachers



CafeTO. [Source: City of Toronto Twitter](#)



Bike Lanes in Toronto. [Source: Centre for Active Transportation](#)



Humber River. [Source: Toronto Adventures](#)



High Park Children's Garden. [Source: Project for Public Spaces](#)



Grange Park in Toronto. [Source: Earthscape](#)



Roncesvalles, Toronto. [Source: Toronto Realty Boutique](#)



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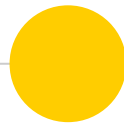
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Additional Slides



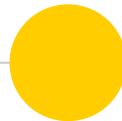
Duty to Consult

The duty to consult is a duty that the Crown has when it acts in a manner that may adversely affect aboriginal or treaty rights and is guaranteed by section 35 of the Constitution Act, 1982. While this duty has been a part of the constitution since it was made, it wasn't until the Supreme Court of Canada's companion decisions in 2004 and 2005 in Haida Nation and Mikisew Cree First Nation, which sided with the First Nations and found that reconciliation means is the Crown has a duty to consult and in some cases accommodate First Nations.

The result is that the Crown can't take actions or make decisions that might affect S. 35 rights without first consulting, and in some cases accommodating, the First Nations whose rights stand to be affected.

There is no legislation codifying exactly when or how the Crown must consult and accommodate First Nations before making a decision, and the absence of clear rules mean that planners have to exercise professional judgement, which can be problematic. Scholars such as Alexandra Flynn from UBC have written on this, and say that

While the duty to consult and accommodate has indeed been used to ground some decisions that are positive for First Nations, in the end it is an honour-based duty of the Crown, one that falls well short of the ideal of a nation-to-nation relationship.



Action from other Canadian Municipalities

- [This week](#), Calgary city administration released a \$87 billion climate plan to support becoming Net Zero by 2050. This plan would introduce building retrofits, renewable energy and zero emissions mobility, as well as other actions to reduce emissions
- [Last week](#), Vancouver city council passed a motion requiring all large commercial buildings to use only renewable energy by 2040 and setting limits on carbon pollution for existing buildings, making it the first Canadian city to do so.
- [644 Canadian municipalities](#) have declared a climate emergency.

