



Context Specific:
Immigrants' housing and
transportation choices

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Outline for the presentation

- Models/assumptions about housing and transportation choice and their effects on urban growth
- Immigration as a major source of population growth in Canada's three largest cities; immigrants as a demographic that is strongly affected by housing and transportation choice in the context of structural change
- Current research on immigrant housing choice, settlement patterns, transportation choice, and the housing-transportation link
- Gaps in the research, research questions, and preliminary methodology

Context

- Transportation and housing play significant roles in shaping the social and spatial geography of our cities, yet they are rarely studied together
- Our values towards transportation and housing shape our policies and programs, which in turn shape our cities; currently, many Canadian municipalities are attempting to plan for denser housing and more sustainable transportation modes
- There are a lot of models/assumptions in planning from previous eras that may no longer hold true, making it difficult to make planning decisions

Assumptions about housing choice in the literature

Assumption

Model

Housing in the outer suburbs is the most desirable

Concentric model
(Booth 1902, Burgess 1925)
Housing career model (FHA, CMHC)

Most people want to live in the suburbs and commute to work in the city

Concentric model
Housing career model
UTMS model
Location and land rent model (Alonso 1970)

There is affordable and rental housing in inner city neighbourhoods for workers and new immigrants

Concentric model
Housing career model
Postwar planning practice

Over time, new immigrants will spatially and socially assimilate into suburban neighbourhoods

Spatial assimilation model (Burgess 1925)
Housing career model

Assumptions about transportation choice in the literature

Assumption

Model

Most households have access to cars as the most efficient mode

US National Household Travel Survey
Aggregate models (eg. UTMS 1950s)
Postwar transportation planning practice

Most trips are to and from work (other travel purposes are less important)

Aggregate models
Postwar transportation planning practice

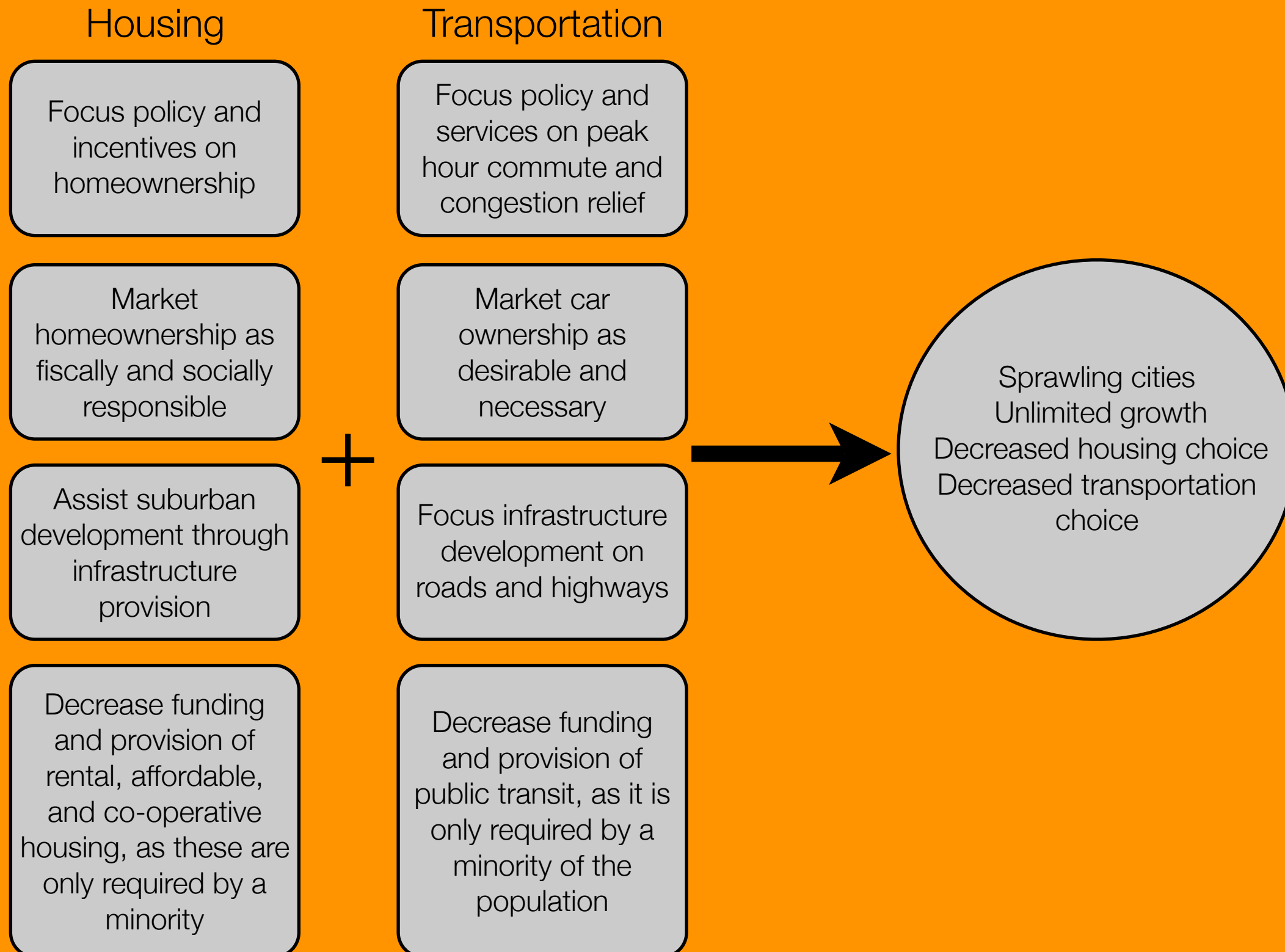
The minority of the population without a car is simply too poor to afford one

Postwar transportation planning practice

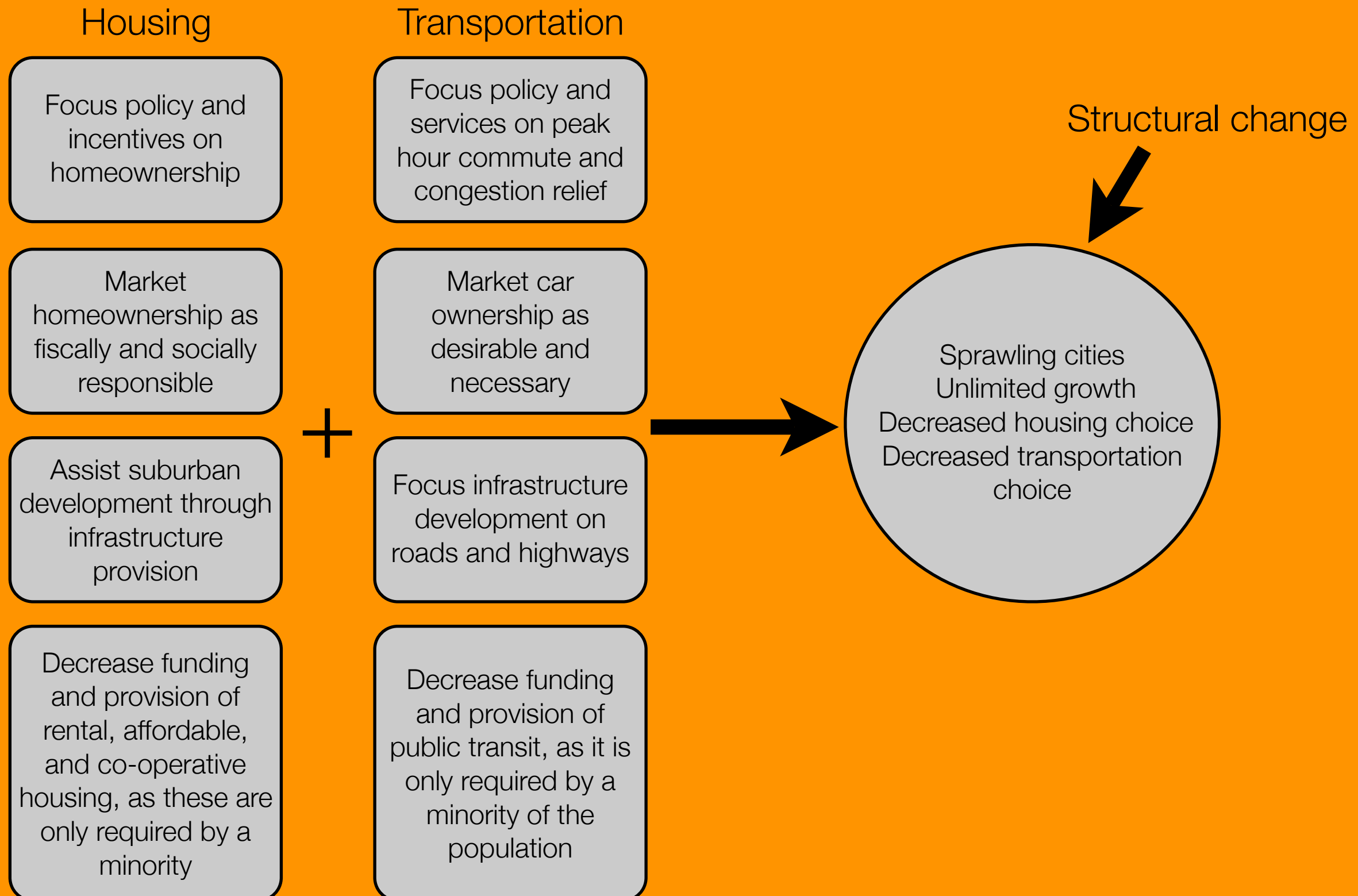
Those who rely on public transit are poor, live in segregated inner city neighbourhoods, and have decreased labour market opportunities

US National Household Travel Survey
Spatial mismatch model (Kain 1969)

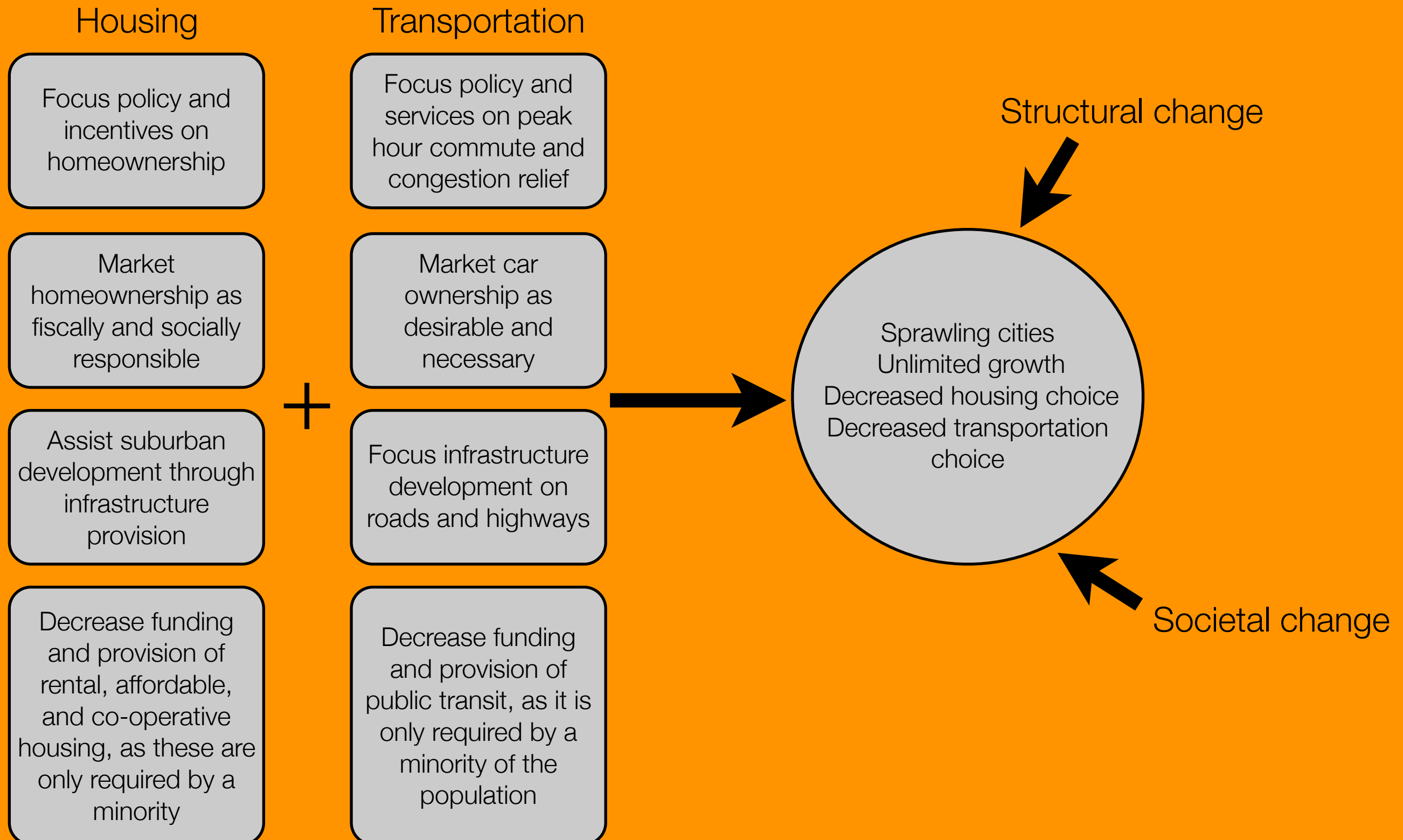
From models/theories to policy to urban form



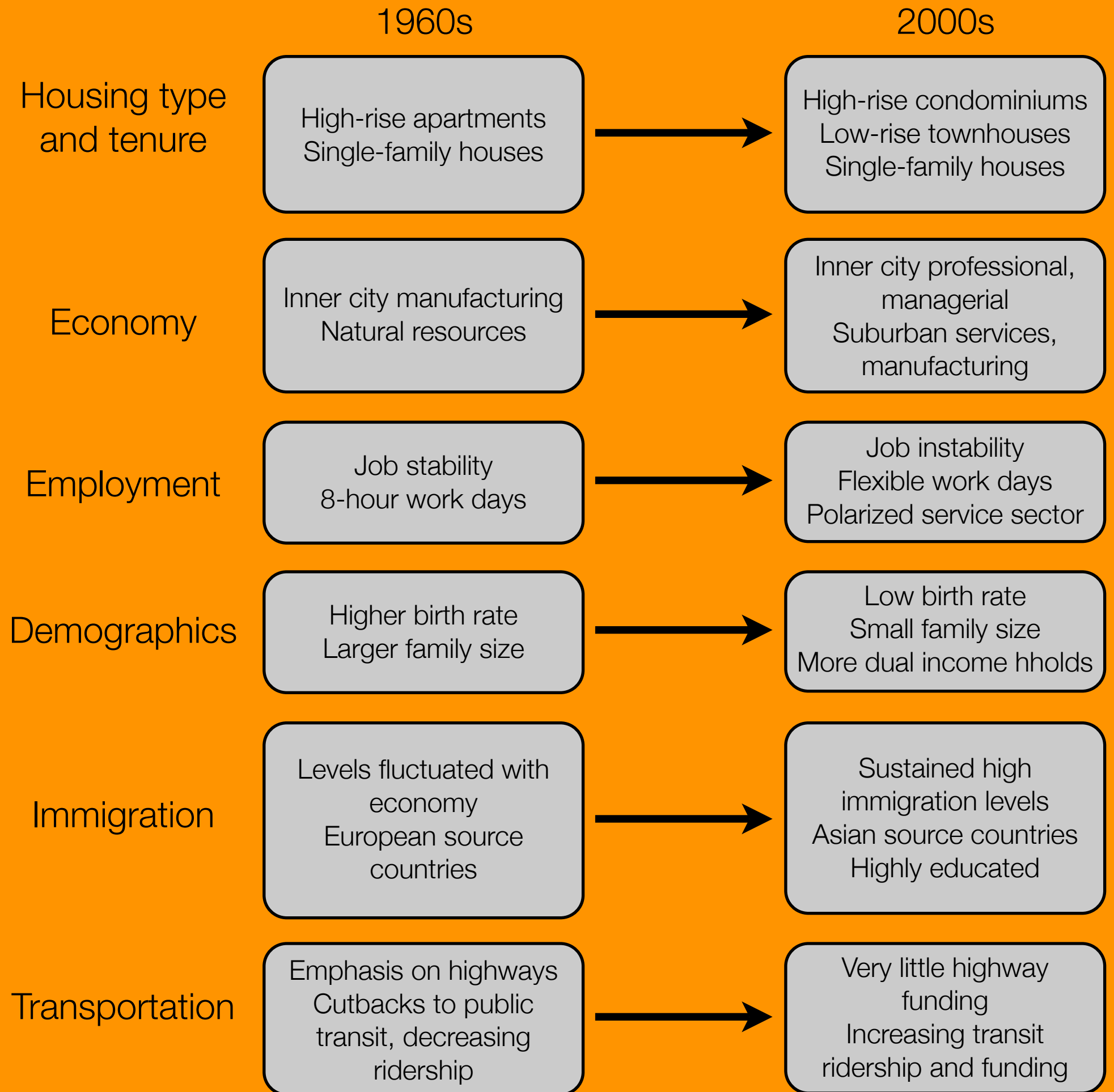
From models/theories to policy to urban form



From models/theories to policy to urban form



Structural change and urban growth in Canada's three largest cities



Focus on immigrants to Canadian cities: Toronto

Figure
Immigrant status and period of immigration

	Toronto (CMA)		
	Total	Male	Female
Total population ³⁶	5,072,075	2,469,080	2,602,990
Non-immigrants ³⁷	2,675,590	1,328,455	1,347,130
Immigrants ³⁸	2,320,165	1,103,350	1,216,810
Before 1991	1,152,045	548,410	603,635
1991 to 2000	720,185	342,345	377,840
2001 to 2006 ³⁹	447,925	212,595	235,335
Non-permanent residents ⁴⁰	76,320	37,275	39,045

Figure
Generation status

	Toronto (CMA)		
	Total	Male	Female
Total population 15 years and over ⁴³	4,122,820	1,981,070	2,141,750
1st generation ⁴⁴	2,263,575	1,072,315	1,191,255
2nd generation ⁴⁵	882,500	433,460	449,040
3rd generation or more ⁴⁶	976,750	475,295	501,455

Source: Statistics Canada 2006 Census: Community Profiles, Toronto CMA

Focus on immigrants to Canadian cities: Toronto CMA

Ethnic origin* of immigrants in Toronto CMA	Total
Total immigrant population	2035967
South Asian	312508
Chinese	302188
Italian	140785
Caribbean	124083
Filipino	90513
Portuguese	86271
West Asian	61686
Polish	57028
African	52628
Balkan	51756
Latin, C. and S. American	34264
Jewish	33187
Greek	32053
German	27283
Vietnamese	25568
Ukrainian	17845
Spanish	17610
Hungarian/Magyar	12855
Dutch	12699

* Single ethnic origin, self-reported, excluding Aboriginal and Canadian origins. Multiple ethnic origins are not shown.

Source: Statistics Canada 2001 Census PUMF
Individual Files: Toronto CMA

Large-scale studies

Hulchanski, 2007
Walks & Bourne, 2006
Hiebert, 2006
Haan, 2005
Hou & Picot, 2004
Ray & Bergeron, 2004
Hiebert & Ley, 2003
Balakrishnan and Hou, 1999
Balakrishnan and Wu, 1992
Murdie, 1969

Study purpose

Interest in housing disparities, segregation, inequities influencing housing choice

Methods

Index of Segregation
Index of Dissimilarity
Regression analysis
Data comparison
Factor analysis

Geographic focus

Focus on Toronto, Montreal, and Vancouver

Ethnocultural group

Focus on major census groups: East Asian, African, European, etc.

Small-scale studies

Bauder & Lusic, 2008
Ghosh, 2007
Walton-Roberts, 2007
Murdie, 2002
Osuwu, 1999
Texeira, 1995

Interest in immigrant settlement process, social networks as influencing housing choice

Interviewing
Data comparison
Surveys

Focus on Toronto and mid-sized cities in Ontario

Focus on specific language or ethnocultural groups: Bengali, Somali, etc.

Canadian research on immigrant housing choice

Immigrant housing choice: Canadian results

- Structural changes seem to be making housing and transportation choice more difficult and less predictable according to established models
- Immigrants have increasingly chosen to settle in the three largest cities, where homeownership is most difficult but social networks are dominant; in Toronto and Vancouver, the immigrant population is very suburbanized
- Some immigrant groups are spatially concentrated, others are dispersed
- Some have high homeownership rates, but many are concentrated in rental and social housing
- There is no ethnocultural group showing spatial segregation or housing market discrimination similar to African Americans in many US cities

Large-scale studies

Blumenberg & Smart, 2008
Blumenberg, 2008
Blumenberg & Shiki, 2006
Heisz & Schellenberg, 2004*
Pucher & Renne, 2003
Litman, 2003*
DOT, 2000

Study purpose

Interest in transportation disparities

Methods

Regression analysis, logit models

Geographic focus

National or statewide

Ethnocultural group

African Americans, Hispanic Americans, occasionally Asians (In Canada, immigrant groups)

Small-scale studies

Li, 2008
Liu, 2008
Sharma, 2004

Interest in labour market participation of a particular group

Regression analysis, logit models

Municipalities

Hispanic Americans, African Americans

US/Canadian research on immigrant/ethnic transportation choice

***Canadian studies**

Immigrant transportation choice: US/Can results

- African American and Hispanic American groups make up the vast majority of public transit users in American cities; these groups are often spatially segregated and face decreased labour market access, which creates a link between poverty and transit use in the literature
- There is little evidence of “spatial mismatch” in Canadian cities, where public transit users are quite diverse in income and ethnocultural group
- About 20% of Canadian households do not have a car, more than double the US rate (8.7%)
- Immigrants living in Toronto, Vancouver, and Montreal are much more likely to use public transit than those born in Canada, though this decreases with time

Gaps in the research

- No Canadian research linking housing and transportation choice despite the fact that municipal and regional planning documents have begun to consider housing and transportation growth together. There is some American research linking housing and transportation (economic geography, land use-transportation)
- Very little research on the influence of immigrants' housing history on their housing choices in Canada Murdie 2002
- No research on the barriers/incentives to using public transit or buying a car for immigrants
- Concentric, housing career, spatial mismatch, aggregate transportation models may not explain immigrants' housing or transportation choices in Canadian cities; are other models more applicable?

Research questions

- How do immigrants make housing and transportation choices in the Toronto CMA?
- How do the choices of one immigrant group fit into larger structural patterns of immigrant settlement, suburbanization, transportation infrastructure, and employment location in the Toronto CMA?
- Do established models of urban growth and change help explain immigrants' housing and transportation choices in Canadian cities? Are there other models that may be more applicable?

Preliminary methodology

- Examining housing and transportation choice in the context of structural change, emphasizing immigrants' housing and transportation choices and how they have changed over time
- A case study (using interviews, a survey, archival materials, factor analysis) of one immigrant group who has been immigrating to the Toronto CMA for a few decades: 1970s, 1980s, 1990s
- Research goals: to add to the literature linking housing and transportation (an understudied area, particularly in Canada); and to inform current planning policy and practice, which is beginning to consider housing and transportation together for sustainability, equity, affordability reasons

Conclusions

- There is a great deal of variation in housing and transportation choice across immigrant groups in Canada
- Some of this variation is likely due to preference and some to structural changes that have made these choices more difficult
- A case study in the Toronto CMA with one particular ethnocultural group will help answer some questions around how and why choices are made, link housing and transportation choice in a unique way, and highlight areas for policy improvement

Thank you

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