

Overcoming barriers: Learning from case studies in Canadian rental housing policy and implementation



Ren Thomas
Assistant Professor, Dalhousie University
July 2018

Overview

The use of case studies in planning

Project introduction, questions, and methods

Preliminary results from Phase I (policy analysis)

Anticipated contributions to planning literature and practice

Case Studies as Learning Tools for Planners

Practice Case Study

Examination of the policies on multiple-unit dwellings in Vancouver

Academic Case Study

Examination of the process of developing a key policy

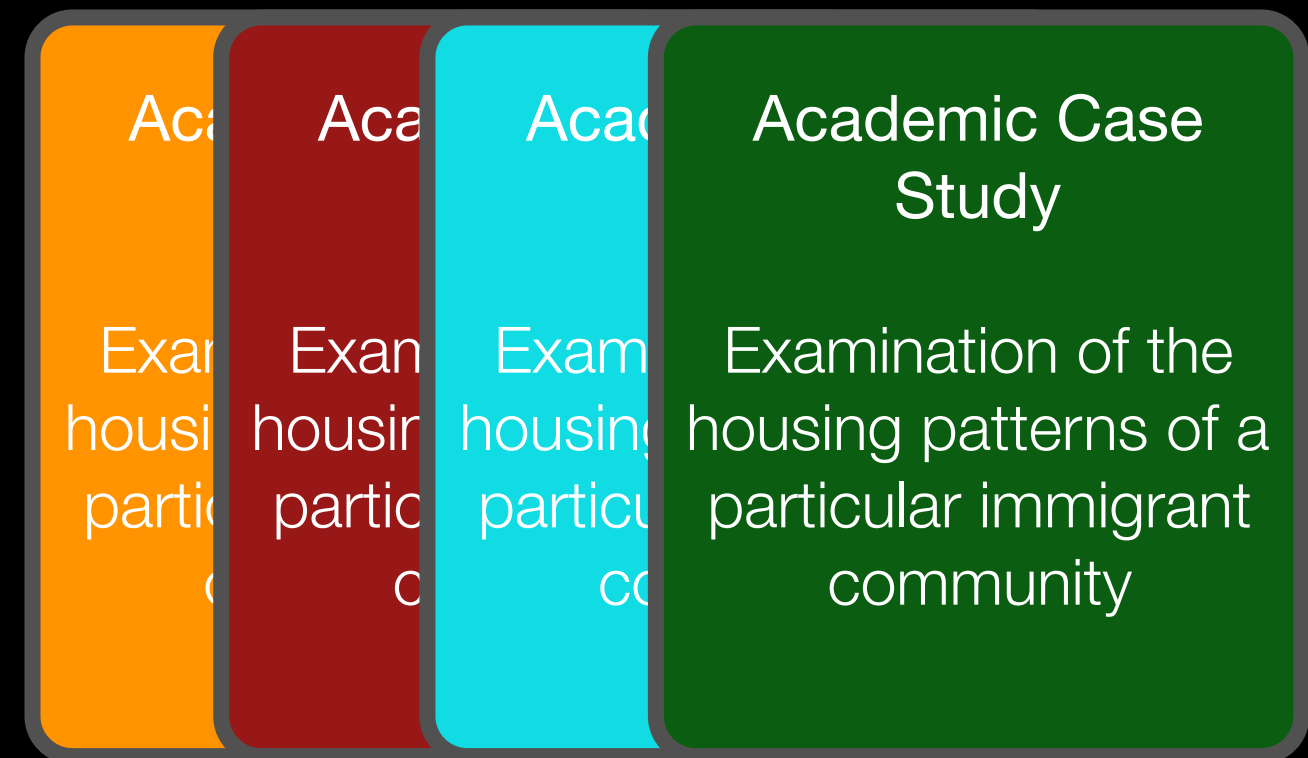
Findings often seen as specific to the case
Findings are not statistically generalizable
Difficult for policymakers to use

Case Studies in Theory Development

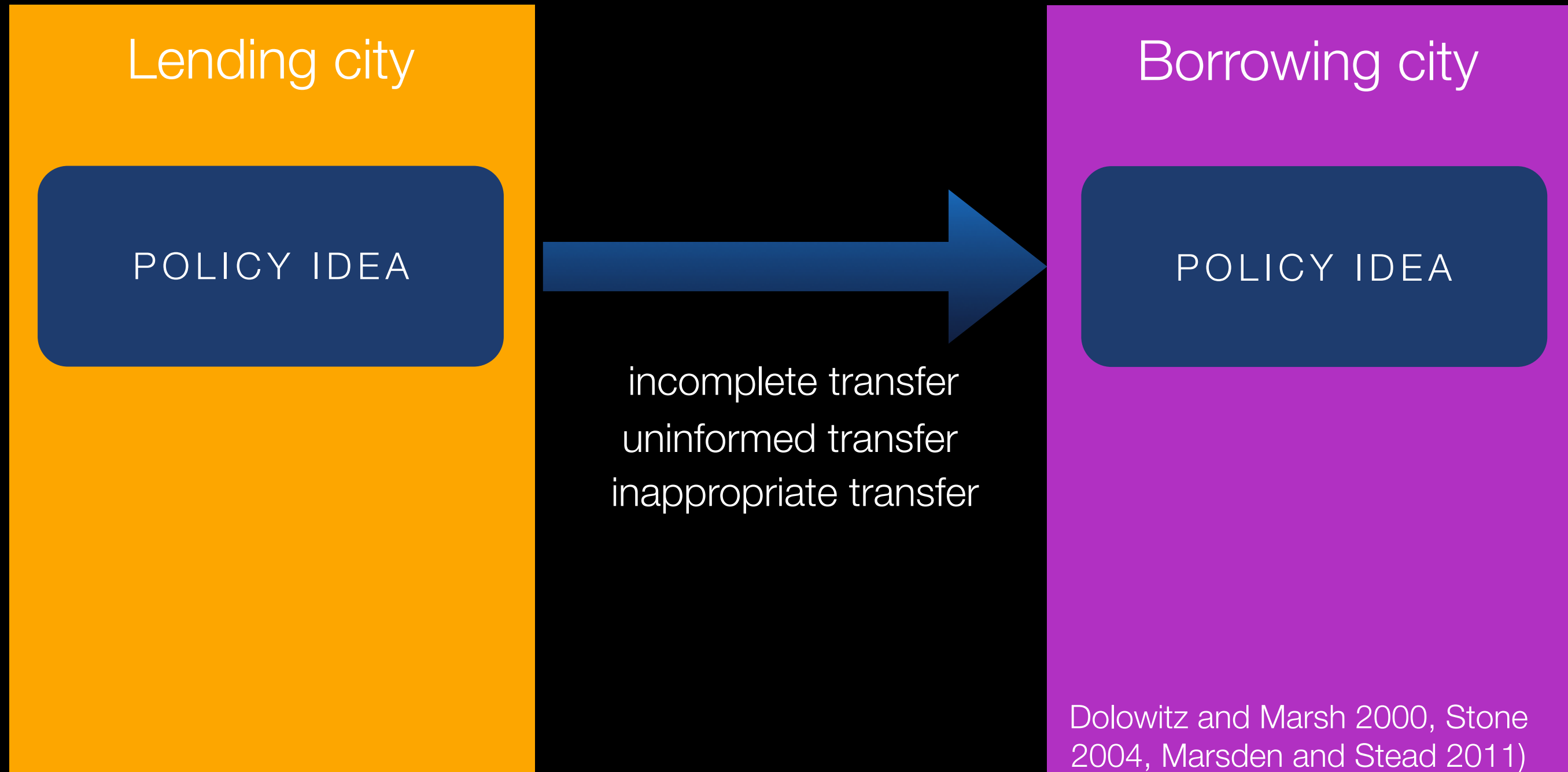
Multiple-case studies
(Yin 1994, Flyvberg 2001)

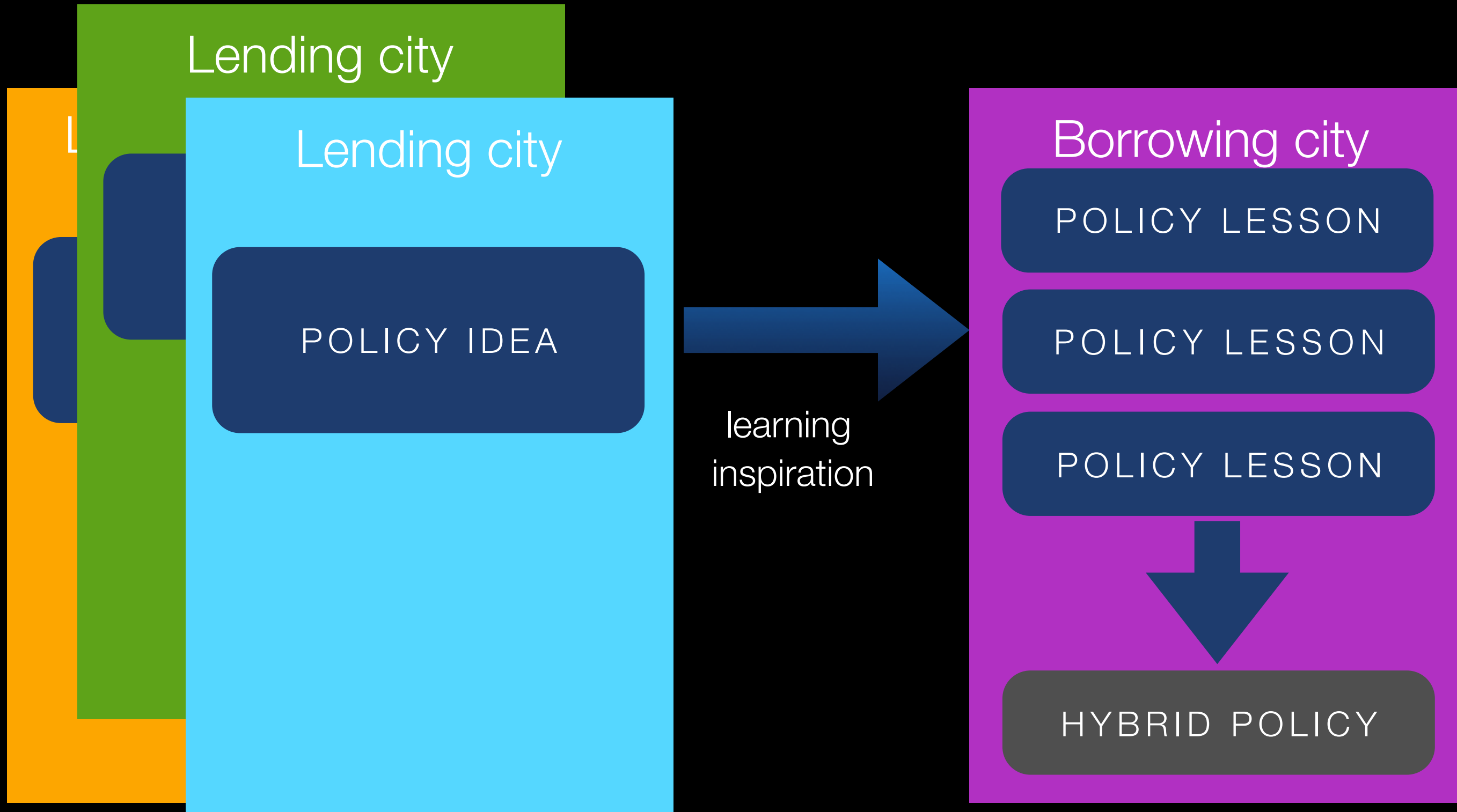


Case comparison/synthesis
(Miles and Huberman 1994)



Policy Transfer Processes in Planning





Rental Housing in Canadian Cities: Barriers and Solutions to Implementation

Research study funded through SSHRC Research Development Fund Grant (\$2,745) and SSHRC Insight Development Grant (\$37,124), 2017-2020

Goals:

- catalyze new municipal policies and programs in rental housing through policy learning

- synthesize knowledge from case study cities on barriers and solutions to rental housing protection and development through systematic case comparison (meta-analysis), a method that offers significant opportunities in knowledge development and analytic generalization

Research Questions

What are the barriers to implementation and protection of rental housing in Canadian cities?

How have municipal planners, housing providers, and developers overcome these barriers to implement solutions to the protection of existing and implementation of new rental housing?

What is the role of the new National Housing Strategy in supporting development or preservation of rental housing in municipalities?

Methodology

Phase 1 (September 2017-September 2018)

Phase 2 (September 2018-July 2019)

Policy Analysis

Examine the plans, policies, and strategies of 15 Canadian municipalities

Survey

Ask municipal planners, developers, housing organization staff about barriers and solutions in the 15 municipalities

Meta-Analysis

Determine the similarities/differences across the cases and the analytically generalizable trends and policy lessons

Policy Learning Workshop

Share the policy solutions with municipal planners, provincial planning staff, developers, and housing organization staff in Halifax

The Case Studies

The 15 cities were chosen for their population size and range of approaches to rental housing policy, plans, and programs. They range in population size from about 200,000 to 4.0 million

Small to mid-size (200,000-400,000): Victoria, Saskatoon, Regina, Windsor, Sherbrooke

Mid-size (400,000-1,000,000): Winnipeg, Waterloo, Hamilton, Mississauga, Halifax

Large (over 1,000,000): Vancouver, Calgary, Edmonton, Ottawa, Montreal

The 15 Case Studies

| | Victoria | Vancouver | Calgary | Edmonton | Saskatoon | Regina | Winnipeg | Windsor | Waterloo | Hamilton | Mississauga | Ottawa | Montreal | Sherbrooke | Halifax |
|-----------------------------------|----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|---------|----------|---------|----------|----------|-------------|-----------|-----------|------------|---------|
| Population | 367,770 | 2,463,431 | 1,392,609 | 1,321,426 | 295,095 | 236,481 | 778,489 | 329,144 | 535,154 | 747,545 | 721,599 | 1,323,783 | 4,098,927 | 212,105 | 403,390 |
| Households paying over 30% | 19.0 | 25.4 | 22.0 | 15.1 | 14.4 | 22.0 | 21.0 | 22.0 | 14.6 | 16.8 | 25.7 | 13.4 | 15.5 | 21.0 | 12.9 |
| Tenant households paying over 30% | 44.3 | 43.5 | 36.6 | 37.7 | 44.7 | 45.9 | 39.5 | 44.7 | 42.3 | 45.2 | 46.3 | 40.6 | 36 | 33.7 | 43.3 |
| % Rental | 37.3 | 36.2 | 27.0 | 30.0 | 30.0 | 30.0 | 33.0 | 28.0 | 31.0 | 30.0 | 25.0 | 33.0 | 66.0 | 44.0 | 40.0 |
| Market rental vacancy | 0.7 | 0.9 | 6.3 | 7.0 | 9.6 | 7.0 | 2.8 | 2.4 | 1.9 | 2.4 | 0.9 | 1.7 | 2.8 | 5.3 | 2.3 |

Note: All of the case studies are Census Metropolitan Areas (CMAs) except Mississauga and Waterloo, which are Census Subdivisions.

Date sources: Census of Canada (2016), CMHC Rental Market Reports (2017) (market rental vacancy).

Households paying over 30%: Vancouver, Mississauga are well over the median of 19%, Halifax and Saskatoon lower

Tenant households paying over 30%: range is much higher than for households in general

% rental: Sherbrooke, Halifax, Montreal, are higher than the median of 31%

Market rental vacancy: Sherbrooke, Calgary, Edmonton, Saskatoon, and Regina are well over the median of 2.4 percent

Preliminary Findings: Similarities Across Cases

All of the cities have rent supplement programs

Most cities have programs allowing renovations to affordable housing units

All the cities have Housing First approaches to homelessness, which include the creation of new affordable rental units

Most of the cities have condo conversion policies to stop the loss of rental units

Two-thirds of the cities sell municipal land for affordable housing

Preliminary Findings: Similarities Across Cases

Several cities have recently made secondary suites easier to develop

Several cities reduce or eliminate development fees for affordable housing projects

One-third of the cities offer capital grants for new rental units

Inclusionary zoning is allowed in just five of the cities

Preliminary Findings: Differences Across Cases

Only a few cities have municipal development corporations

Only a few cities have plans/strategies emphasizing building affordable housing near transit/services

Just three cities offer property tax forgiveness for non-profits

Just three cities have housing reserve funds that are used to develop affordable housing

Only Victoria and Saskatoon maintain municipal land banks

Preliminary Findings: Unique Approaches

City of Vancouver: Affordable Housing Choices Policy

City of Vancouver: Housing 100: Secured Market Rental Housing Policy

City of Vancouver: Foreign Buyers and Empty Homes Taxes

City of Vancouver: Rental Housing Protection Bylaw/Rental Stock Official Development Plan

City of Edmonton: Homeward Trust and Federation of Community League

Province of Saskatchewan / City of Saskatoon / City of Regina: Rental Housing Rebate Program

Province of Saskatchewan / City of Saskatoon / City of Regina: Rental Development Program

Province of Quebec / Ville de Sherbrooke / Ville de Montréal: AccèsLogis Program

Province of Manitoba / City of Winnipeg: Secondary Suites Program

Next Steps

Phase 1 (September 2017-September 2018)

Phase 2 (September 2018-July 2019)

Policy Analysis

Completed by July
2018

Survey

Completed by
August, data
analysis completed
by October 2018

Meta- Analysis

Completed by
October 2018

Policy Learning Workshop

Video completed by
December 2018,
workshop will be
held in February
2019

Anticipated Contributions to Planning Literature

Present paper on policy analysis at Association of European Schools of Planning (AESOP) conference (Stockholm July 2018), submit article to *Cities*

Present paper on survey results at American Collegiate Schools of Planning (ACSP) conference (Buffalo October 2018), submit article to *International Journal of Housing Policy*

Present paper at Canadian Institute of Planners conference (July 2019), submit articles to *Town Planning Review*, *Plan Canada*

Anticipated Contributions to Planning Practice

Policy transfer workshops held through MacEachen Institute of Policy and Governance will stimulate discussions among local stakeholders in Halifax on policy development

Sharing research at planning conferences including the National Housing Conference and the Canadian Institute of Planners

Planning in high school? Black Business Initiative partners with Dalhousie

Last Friday, May 18th, the Dalhousie School of Planning was thrilled to offer a workshop for African Nova Scotian high school students in partnership with the Black Business Initiative in Halifax. Eight students attended our workshop on planning and ten attended the workshop on architecture held by the School of Architecture on the same day. Architecture professor James Forren pursued this idea with BBI throughout the fall, and then recommended that the School of Planning get in touch so we could possibly hold a parallel workshop. We all felt that this was a great way to introduce high school students to our disciplines, which most of them don't know about until well into their undergrad degrees; BBI aims to introduce students to non-traditional careers. Our sponsors were all thrilled about the event, including our main funder the Dalhousie President's Office, who paid for both students. BBI representatives Laurissa Manning (Community Relations) and Tracey Williams (Business Coordinator), some of the parents, and a few of the



Using videos in planning education

Planning education reaches far beyond the classroom. As practicing planners, we need to make sure that residents, business leaders, and city councillors understand planning concepts such as the need for increased density in urban corridors, growth management strategies and travel demand management. In this post, I'm going to introduce some videos that introduce people to planning concepts and issues.

Planning Discipline

Our amazing Dalhousie School of Planning alumni, Byung-Jun Kang and Uytay Lee, produced this video in partnership with the Licensed Professional Planners Association of Nova Scotia. It gives beginners a brief glimpse into the field of planning, and might be useful for conversations and presentations to the general public. We also use it on our School of Planning website to help potential students understand what kinds of work they will do when they graduate from our programs.



Subscribe

RSS Feed

Tags

- academic research affordability
- Amsterdam attitudes BC **Canada**
- cities** city council cycling federal
- government governance Halifax
- homeownership **Housing**
- Immigration infrastructure
- municipalities** municipal
- planning PhD planning
- planning practice planning
- processes planning theory
- policies provincial government
- provincial planning regional planning
- renting research Social geography
- Toronto transit
- Transportation

www.renthomas.ca

ren.thomas@dal.ca

- academic research affordability
- Amsterdam attitudes BC **Canada**
- cities** city council cycling federal
- government governance Halifax
- homeownership **Housing**
- Immigration infrastructure
- municipalities** municipal
- planning PhD planning
- planning practice planning
- processes planning theory
- policies provincial government
- provincial planning regional planning
- renting research Social geography
- Toronto transit
- Transportation Urban design
- urban development urban growth
- urban planning US
- Vancouver** walking