Tambayan ["a place for hanging out"]:
Public Spaces in Suburbia from Filipino–Canadian Perspectives

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ABSTRACT

Suburban public spaces are important resources that allow people to exercise, partake in recreational activities, and socialize. However, research has shown that public park design is heavily influenced by European culture. Thus, can sometimes alienate users who may come from other cultural and ethnic backgrounds. Moreover, in suburban Canada, research suggests ethnic populations are excluded from planning decisions, resulting in tensions stemming from incompatible uses and space usage that attracts municipal opposition. This research aimed to understand how immigrants from one of Canada's largest ethnic minorities, Filipinos, use and appreciate public spaces in Suburban Canada through a focus group and key informant interviews. The focus group and interviews revealed how public spaces played an important role in how they adjusted to life in Canada. This research uncovered an important finding that Filipino immigrants' perspectives on public spaces are shaped by culture and social norms. Among the Filipinos interviewed, personal connections to a specific space play an important role in determining the 'publicness' of spaces.

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I wrote this research project as a student of the University of Manitoba whose campuses are located on original lands of Anishinaabeg, Cree, Oji-Cree, Dakota and Dene peoples, and on the homeland of the Métis Nation.

As part of the University of Manitoba, we respect the Treaties that were made on these territories, we acknowledge the harms and mistakes of the past, and we dedicate ourselves to move forward in partnership with Indigenous communities in a spirit of reconciliation and collaboration.

CONTENTS

What is a public space? As this research discusses, what makes a space 'public' is influenced and shaped by cultural practices and lived experiences. For one ethnic group in particular, defining public spaces in Canada is complex. This research revealed how public spaces play an important role in helping Filipinos socialize, adapt to new life and cope with the challenges associated with migration. For Filipinos, the idea of what makes a space public is closely tied to the concept of a *tambayan.*

1.1 What is a Tambayan?

Tambayan /tam.ˈba.jan/ is a Filipino word that means 'a place for hanging out.' Its root word '*tambay*' can take on multiple meanings. In its noun form, tambay means a person who is hanging out in a *tambayan*. *Tambay* is also an infinitive verb that means 'to hang out' or 'to loiter.'

1.2 Research Purpose

As one of Canada's largest and fastest-growing visible minorities, the Filipino community has grown significantly in the last two decades. The number of Filipinos in Canada almost doubled from 2006 to 2016. It is estimated that there are more than 800,000 Canadians who identify as Filipino or as having Filipino origins in the country (Statistics Canada, 2021). Like other immigrant groups, Filipino immigrants often bypass the urban centres and settle directly into suburbs (Vezina and Houle, 2017). However, as Zhuang (2021) argues, immigrants in the suburbs are often excluded from planning decisions, resulting in tensions stemming from incompatible uses and space usage that attracts municipal opposition.

The objective of this project was to gain a better understanding of how the Filipino immigrant community in Winnipeg and Toronto's suburbs appreciate and use public spaces. Through a focus group in Winnipeg and key informant interviews in Toronto, I attempted to understand how Filipinos use and appreciate public spaces in the suburbs. Understanding how Filipinos appreciate and use public spaces sets the foundation for the study's next step, which established how these places and spaces helped facilitate integration with broader Canadian society and promote socialization with other ethnic groups. The conversations with Filipinos in both cities are intended to lend a voice to one of the largest ethnic minorities in Canada. This research aims to be the starting point of tangible and actionable solutions on how to address persistent problems in suburban Canada.

1.3 Research Questions

The Following research questions provided guidance and direction to this research:

1. Why are Filipino immigrants selecting suburban neighbourhoods over urban centres?

2. What are the places Filipinos consider as public spaces? How are these spaces used by Filipinos and what improvements, if any, can they suggest to better suit their needs?

3. What are the findings learned from this study that can make diverse neighbourhoods become more inclusive?

1.4 Overview of the Research Project

This research report is organized into the following sections:

Chapter 1 introduces the research project, the main subject of the research—*tambayan*, is also defined in this chapter. In addition, the research problem, research questions, and the project's objective are presented in this chapter.

Chapter 2. This chapter provides an overview of the academic research conducted which informed this research. The first part of this chapter defines the intersection of immigration, multiculturalism, and the sense of belonging in Canada. Next, I discuss relevant Filipiniana texts and the gaps in this growing discipline. Particular attention is also given to Filipiniana texts written in the Canadian context. Finally, I discuss the literature on how suburbs have become more diverse in Canada in recent years.

Chapter 3. This section discusses the ethnographic context of modern Filipino families in Canada and the Philippines. I discuss how modern Filipino families are transnational in nature and how many families continue to function across continents despite having family members working in separate places of the world. Next, I discuss how Filipino immigrants' economic and social outcomes are affected by their immigration status on entry. I discuss how a person's immigration status on entry has long-term effects on an immigrant's social life, labour market participation, and financial security at old age. The next section will discuss how Canada's official policies on multiculturalism and immigration shape the lives of Filipino immigrants and their families. Finally, this section concludes with a discussion on how public spaces play a key role in helping Filipino immigrants cope with the challenges of migration.

Chapter 4. The main research methods—key informant interviews and a focus group is discussed in this section. I also examine the unforeseen challenges that I encountered during the recruitment process. Finally, the limitations of the study is outlined in this chapter.

Chapter 5. This section provides a detailed analysis of the selected study sites: the Maples in Winnipeg and Lawrence Heights in Toronto. This section provides a detailed analysis of the community and public spaces in both neighbourhoods. Maps and images supplement these discussions. The future plans in both neighbourhoods are examined in this section.

Chapter 6. The results from the focus group in Winnipeg and the key informant interviews in Toronto is provided in this section. A key component of this section is the analysis of their thoughts on the challenges of migration and how *tambayans* affect their ability to socialize and interact with the broader Canadian society. This section focused on the key discussion points shared by the research participants. I also drew parallels and contrasts between the conversations in Winnipeg and Toronto, which are detailed in this section.

Chapter 7. Using the findings and discussions from the previous chapter, I will address the research questions outlined in Chapter 1. Then, based on the findings in Chapter 6, I discuss how Filipino perspectives on *tambayans* offer an alternative understanding to public spaces in Canada. Given these alternative perspectives, I discuss how public spaces affect the lives of Filipino immigrants in Canada. Finally, I conclude the research by providing a short discussion on opportunities for future research based on the topics that have emerged from this research.

Chapter 2. Literature Review

This chapter provides an overview of relevant literature to this research project. The literature review chapter is divided into four sub-sections. The first section discusses the literature on immigration, multiculturalism, and the sense of belonging of immigrants to Canada. The next section talks about the relevant Filipiniana literature in the Canadian context. The third section covers literature pertaining to the transnationality of Filipino families. Finally, the last section of this chapter ties the previous sub-sections into the border planning conversation about the issues and concerns about suburbs in Canada for Filipino families.

2.1 Immigration, Multiculturalism, and the Sense of Belonging

Settlement patterns of immigrants to the cities of Toronto, Montreal, and Vancouver and their respective suburbs or peripheral municipalities are examined in the work of Vezina & Houle (2017). This publication outlines recent trends in the settlement patterns of immigrant populations to these cities and outlying areas. Their work has also informed several recent immigrant-focused planning literature. Several articles which helped form this research (Allen, et al., 2021; Zhuang, 2021; Zhuang, Edge, & Dean, 2021) are informed by Vezina & Houle's (2017) findings.

This study also looked at works on multiculturalism and immigration in Canada and how this fits the urban environment. The literature selected were all underpinned by themes of assimilation, a sense of belonging, and a sense of community. Wang & Du's (2013) work deals with the conflict that stems from the acceptance of Asian immigrants into the broader Canadian society. Their work presented some of the significant contributions of Asian immigrants to Canada. Yet, they point out that these contributions are not always understood and appreciated and have caused discomfort among some Canadians.

In contrast to Wang & Du's (2013) work, Ho (2013) looked at the discomfort felt by immigrants and what factors led them to leave Canada. Ho's (2013) work provided an insight into how some of Canada's official policies on immigration. These policies have inadvertently created segregation, discrimination, and marginalization. One of the unintended effects of these policies is the deskilling of immigrants. Cultural differences contribute to tangible outcomes on the lives and livelihood of recent immigrants. Employers are often reluctant to recognize foreign credentials, and the insistence of having prior Canadian experience, which new immigrants are unlikely to possess, leads to them taking on menial jobs (Ho, 2013). Creese & Wiebe (2012, p. 70) call instances where labour market decisions are made based on Canadian experience, Canadian accents, and Canadian credentials as "everyday racism". These experiences "…result in social distancing between ethnic groups that further legitimize

unequal treatment of toward migrants." (Ho, 2013, p. 167). Ho's study found these factors contribute to decisions to leave Canada for a new start elsewhere despite earlier immigration. On speaking about the paradox of multiculturalism and acceptance into mainstream Canadian society, Ho (2013, p. 163) argues:

> "…even though Canadians may demonstrate openness to cultural diversity, one can argue that there are unspoken rules expecting immigrants to bridge cultural differences by conforming to Canadian society in order to be deemed acceptable by Canadians."

The intersection of immigration, sense of belonging, and mental wellbeing has been well studied in Canada from urban and rural settings. Agyekum and Newbold (2018), and Agyekum, Siakwah, and Boateng (2021) sought to understand immigrants' concept of sense of community belonging in Hamilton, Ontario. Similarly, Caxaj & Gill's (2017) research looked at how the notion of "tight-knitedness" (p.1119) in a rural British Columbia town is both a community strength and a source of conflict and alienation among Indian immigrants.

Some works pertain to how the built environment affects ethnic minorities' sense of belonging. For example, Salazar Miranda (2020) used machine learning and shape metrics to study whether the configuration of buildings and open areas in Barcelona is associated with the residential segregation of immigrants—a proxy for social interaction. Rishbeth's (2001) research investigated how the public park design in Britain reflect northern European culture and is therefore alienating to users who may come from other cultural and ethnic backgrounds. An evident gap in the body of literature pertains to how urban form affects or is affected by immigration and ethnic minorities' sense of belonging in the Canadian context.

2.2 The Filipino Experience

This section provides an overview of relevant Filipiniana literature. Filipiniana is defined as "…materials about the Philippines, produced in or outside the Philippines, by Filipinos or non-Filipinos, in any of the Philippine languages or dialects or in a foreign language." (Ubay, et al., 2013, p.2) Lusis (2005) argued the literature on Filipino-Canadians has tended to focus on two cities, Toronto and Vancouver, with the former receiving the most attention. In addition to Filpiniana texts being concentrated in two cities, the following broad topics are reoccurring themes in Filipino-Canadian literature: 1) labour market integration; 2) gender studies; 3) social networks; and 4) transnationalism in the form of economic and social remittances. While they are separate themes covering different subject matters, they commonly intersect in Filipiniana literature.

Polvorosa's (2012) work illustrates how these themes are often difficult to disentangle. His examination of Filipino businesses in Toronto shows how these places become quasi-extensions of the Philippines in that business practices, and traditional customs are imported to Canada. Filipino businesses also play dual roles because they have also taken the place of traditional places of gathering. In the rural Philippines, the church is at the village centre, and the plaza across it becomes the focal point of social interactions after religious occasions. After Sunday mass, many Filipino churchgoers continue this tradition by gathering in Filipino restaurants in Canada. However, this is not exclusive to restaurants.

His work also details how Filipino businesses such as groceries and remittance centres function as informal gathering places and become ad-hoc hubs for socializing. As the following subsection will discuss, understanding what public places are for Filipinos is complicated. To understand why the lines between public spaces and commercial spaces are blurred for some Filipinos, one must first look at a type of neighbourhood store typical in the Filipino built environment, the *sari-sari store* (neighbourhood variety store)*.

2.2.1 The *Sari-Sari* Store: Sometimes a Canteen, Sometimes a Bar, Always a Store

The *sari-sari* store is a commercial establishment, but over the generations, it has come to play a crucial role in shaping community life in towns and cities across the country (Chen, 1997; Matejowsky, 2007). It is estimated that about 60% of the country's fast-moving consumer goods trade occurs through *sari-sari* stores (Matejowsky, 2007). Because of their modest capitalization, *sari-sari* stores tend to be unassuming in appearance and are minimally adorned save for sponsored signage which large corporations typically give as marketing collateral. Although these stores act as micro groceries, customers rarely go inside to shop. Instead, they purchase goods through a make-shift service window cut out of the façade. Small tables and benches can be commonly found outside the service window to encourage snacks and drinks for on-site consumption. In the evenings, sari-sari stores serve as a gathering spot where drinking and petty gambling commonly occur. Other larger sari-sari stores double as *carinderias* (canteens), where home-cooked meals can be purchased and consumed on-site or purchased for take-away (Matejowsky, 2007).

Their flexibility illustrates the significance of *sari-sari* stores to the community in adjusting work hours and lines of informal credit they extend to customers. *Sari-sari* stores often have no fixed work schedule, and store owners are known to adjust operating hours to suit the community's needs. Whether it is remaining open to serve alcohol late into the night or opening early to sell eggs and canned goods for breakfast, *sari-sari* store operators are

Figure 1. A typical *sari-sari* store (Evans, 2016)

often attuned to the circumstances in their communities (Matejowsky, 2007). Most sales are typically made on credit, and credit limit is highly dependent on a customer's *palabra de honor* (word of honour) (Chen, 1997). Chen's (1997) research shows that about 72% of the sari-sari stores are clustered in front of or beside formal establishments, most of which are homes. Members of the owner's immediate

Figure 2. A 7-Eleven store in the Philippines. The image shows the how space is reserved for indoor seating where patrons can eat and drink food and beverages purchased from the store. (Yummy.ph, 2020)

family often serve as the store's staff. Chen (1997) and Metejowsky (2007) illustrate the importance of *sari-sari* stores in the urban fabric of Philippine neighbourhoods and the social lives of Filipinos. Matejowsky (2007, p. 257) writes, "In many respects, sari-sari stores can be viewed as a kind of indigenous precursor to modern c-stores (convenience stores)." Convenience stores operate on a scale similar to that of sari-sari stores. These two types of retail outlets have similar product lines, but more importantly, they have overlapping retail and social functions (Chen, 1997; Matejowsky, 2007). Unlike their North American counterparts, convenience stores in the Philippines often serve as gathering spaces. Early attempts to bring convenience store to the Philippines in the 1990s were rocky at best. Matejowsky's (2007) research indicates one of the reasons why an early attempt at opening a convenience store in 1997 failed was because it "…does not offer much as a local hangout." (p. 266)

> *"The transformation of global elements to better suit local conditions has emerged as a central feature of Philippines modernity thanks in part to the diverse global experiences of over-seas Filipinos and their kin and the spread of advanced communications and technologies at the community level. As cultural and capital in-flows from abroad work to reshape the contours of everyday life, many of their essential qualities are reconfigured so that they gradually share less in common with their non-Filipino roots." Matejowsky (2007, pp. 247-248)*

To illustrate the importance of sari-sari stores in the country, 7-Eleven brands itself in the Philippines as "the modern sari-sari store" (Philippine Star, Quoted in Matejowsky, 2007, p. 249). 7-Eleven, an American brand, changed how its stores are designed to become attractive in a market with very different consumer preferences and habits. While convenience stores had a shaky start in the Philippines, they gradually carved their place in the urban landscape of the country's towns and cities by mimicking some of the design elements of *sari-sari* stores.

The line between a commercial space and a public space is sometimes blurred in the Filipino subconscious because of the roles the *sari-sari* store and the convenience store play in everyday life. Since integrating a mixed-use design concept taken from *sari-sari* stores, modern convenience stores in the Philippines have continued to grow successfully. In 2021, 7-Eleven opened its 3000th store in the country and is planning to increase its footprint by 200 stores despite unclear COVID-19 restrictions (Esmael, 2021).

2.3 Filipino Transnationality

The transnationality of Filipinos comes from their deep and continuing connection with their home country, even if they have been away for many years. They are tethered to their home communities, usually by a familial obligation to remit money or send parcels. Lusis and Kelly's (2006) work finds that substantial social and cultural capital of Filipino-Canadians comes from the "…economic capital derived from even low-status work in Toronto" (p. 844). Their research notes, an individual's economic standing is irrelevant because the fact that a Filipino can secure employment abroad constitutes social capital in and of itself. The other side of this coin is that many elderly Filipinos continue to fulfill familial obligations in Canada and the Philippines despite limited financial means. Coloma & Pino's (2016) research looks into the economic insecurity and poverty incidence among elderly Filipinos in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA). While many elderly Filipinos live in multigenerational households with working adults, the elderly continue to provide financial support for their children, grandchildren, and other relatives in Canada and the Philippines. The elderly members of the household contribute money to help defray collective expenses such as mortgage or rent, utilities, groceries, and transportation. Ultimately, Coloma & Pino (2016) argue that the financial circumstances of elderly Filipinos in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) are shaped by class, race, gender, and immigration. Furthermore, their economic insecurity is closely related to the deskilling of immigrants in Canada (ibid).

While it is convenient to use the experience of Filipino immigrants in Toronto and Vancouver as a proxy for the entire Filipino population in Canada as a whole, there are important nuances in lived experiences of Filipinos in other, less-studied areas in Canada. Despite writing in 2005, some of the gaps in the literature mentioned by Lusis still hold. The selection of academic texts in the Canadian context on Filipinos is quite limited. By and large, Filipiniana texts still deal with the four reoccurring themes mentioned by Lusis (2005). Filipiniana in the Canadian context has grown since Lusis' time of publication. There has also been an improvement in the geographic variety of texts. For example, Bonifacio's *Pinay on the Prairies* (2013) documents the lived experiences of Filipina women, and by extension, Filipino families in Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba. Tungohan's (2017) work looks at the experiences of Filipino Temporary Foreign Workers (TFWs) with public perceptions and instances of xenophobia in Alberta. Malek's (2019) work shares the history of the Filipino community in Winnipeg.

Despite these recent developments in the expansion of Filipiniana literature, Malek (2019, p. 19) writes that the literature on Filipinos in Canada is underdeveloped and unbalanced towards the social sciences." Additionally, if studies are available, they are likely to be written from the American perspective as "…much of the literature on the Filipino diaspora has focused on Filipino American experiences." (ibid, p. 192). However, since Filipinos are transnational, and their cultural identity is still continually shaped by affairs from their home country. Many unique parallels which are characteristically overseas-Filipino that may not have been written from the Canadian perspective but are still relevant to Filipino-Canadian populations. For instance, *balikbayan* (homecoming) boxes are parcels that often contain food, clothing, and other consumer goods as a way of expressing intimacy from afar (Patzer,

2018). Regardless of the point of origin, whether boxes are from Filipinos in Hong Kong (Camposano, 2012) or the United States (Alburo, et al., 2005; Patzer, 2018), balikbayan boxes speak of the lengths Filipinos go through to express their affection, intimacy, and the fulfilment of familial obligations.

2.4 The Importance of Public Spaces for Filipinos

The use of public spaces plays a central role in the lives of Filipino migrants, especially caregivers. Palmer (2010) detailed how Filipina LCP (Live-in Caregiver Program) migrants' practice of congregating in public spaces, particularly at playgrounds and schoolyards, is a coping mechanism that creates communities of affirmation, care, and belonging. Palmer (2010) argues this coping mechanism was developed in response to the "…effects of structural exclusion that they encounter in city spaces across Toronto." (p. 7). In addition, public spaces offer a short period of respite from the complicated lives of caregivers.

Tungohan's (2017) research looks at the important and diverse role public spaces play in the lives of Filipino TFWs in Alberta. Her work suggests that TFWs in Edmonton feel unwelcome in certain spaces associated with xenophobia markers. For example, in 2014 and 2015, a heated political debate against the Temporary Foreign Worker Program (TFWP) led to public rallies held by groups against TFWs. They were accused, among others, of stealing jobs. These rallies in Edmonton were held at Winston Churchill Square downtown, and some foreign workers felt that certain spaces downtown were not theirs. Instead of these public places, Tungohan (2017) notes, immigrants preferred going to establishments within ethnic enclaves such as convenience stores and restaurants owned by immigrants of the same racial background. Her research also indicates how churches played an important role in the lives of TFWs in Alberta. She (Tungohan, 2017) comments, while most of the workers she met were religious, she suggests that church attendance was also due to the feeling of "wanting to be saved" (p. 22), not in a spiritual sense, but in terms of a reprieve from their everyday struggle.

> *"A temporary foreign worker told me that for her, even the act of getting ready to go to church every Sunday was a cause for celebration because she could wear nice clothes and not have to wear her workplace uniform. The public performance of going to church in her finery helps her escape the monotony of work, even for a while." (Tungohan, 2017, p. 22)*

Francis, et al. (2012, p. 406) write, "… public space quality is an equally, if not more important, correlate of sense of community than public space size and number." They argue the size and number of public spaces are not significantly associated with social interaction, even near residential buildings. The key to social interaction in public spaces is the quality of public space provided. Roberts, et al. (2019) highlight the association between exposure to green space and improvement in mental and physical health outcomes. Furthermore, green spaces also contribute to creating healthier cities because they "…encourage physical activity, improve air quality, reduce stress and encourage social interaction" (ibid, p. 1). However, research suggests that public open spaces, particularly urban parks, are underutilized by ethnic minorities (Rishbeth, 2001; Roberts, et al., 2019; Xiao, et al., 2018).

Ethnic backgrounds may influence an individual or group's perceptions of an ideal park. An in-depth study of park usage by Loukaitou-Sideris (1995, in Rishbeth, 2001) in Los Angeles compared park use patterns by Whites, Hispanics, African-Americans, and Chinese Americans. The research revealed some distinct differences in patterns of use. Hispanics used the park frequently, often in large groups and usually involved food. African-Americans respondents reported a high preference for socializing and relaxing; however, they are more likely to engage in sport than the other groups.

In contrast with the previous groups, Whites are more likely to use the park on their own for walking or jogging. Individuals of Chinese background are the least likely to use the park. Although rare, Chinese park users tended to be elderly males who socialize and practice Tai Chi. When asked why they used the park infrequently, some respondents attributed the reason to a difference in the perception of an ideal park. One Chinese park user shared that their idea of an ideal park is not "an expanse of green space for active recreation, sports, and picnicking" (Rishbeth, 2001, p. 356).

2.5 Multicultural Suburbs

Several books on redesigning neighbourhoods have included extensive discussions about building more efficient, inclusive, sustainable, and walkable suburbs (Duany, Plater-Zyberk & Speck, 2000; Dunham-Jones & Williamson, 2009, 2021; Tachieva, 2010; Talen, 2008). A common theme these works share is that they are taking an urban design approach to address the conflicts arising from a failure to understand the changing ethnic composition of suburbs. A broad spectrum of texts deals with different issues immigrants face in suburban settings outside of design-focused work. Sandercock and Attili's (2009) book describes how a community organization played a key role in helping immigrants integrate into a Vancouver neighbourhood. The work of Preston, et al. (2009) deals with how recent immigrants in Canadian suburbs are more at risk of becoming homeless than other populations. Allen, et al. (2021) investigate transit accessibility and transit use of immigrants in Sydney, Australia and Toronto and their respective suburbs. However, when it comes to the subject matter of ethnic populations in suburbia, the most common theme in the literature deals with identities and assimilation. Against the backdrop of suburban New Jersey, Matsumoto's (2019) work takes a deep dive into the nuances of Asian-American identities and argues that "…regional conditions can shape regional racial order and identities of residents." (p. 78). Her findings suggest that race plays an important role in how East Asians have selected their place in the United States. Being in proximity to other Asians is important even if they may not be of the same ethnicity.

According to Zhuang (2021, p. 114), "Conventional suburbs are typically characterized by 'desolate placelessness.' They are often anonymous and lack spatial distinctiveness." Ethnic communities can bring diverse social, cultural, and economic practices that can help reinvent the sense of place and community (ibid). However, as Zhuang (2021) points out, the transformation of suburban neighbourhoods by ethnic communities has resulted in municipal conflicts related to land use, built form, traffic and parking control, economic development, place-making and community engagement. The issues show the varying degrees of municipalities' uncertainty and unpreparedness in addressing ethnocultural diversity and differences, resulting at times in "… reactive and ad-hoc planning responses" (Zhuang, 2021, p. 114).

Common suburban planning issues related to the growing ethno-cultural diversity are also reflected in the following examples in Toronto's suburbs (Zhuang, 2021, p. 116):

1. Immigrants and racialized people being excluded from planning decisions
2. Lacking social infrastructure that is ethnic-oriented
3. Tensions with segregated and incompatible land uses
4. Using space in ways that attract municipal opposition
5. Expressing cultural identity within a planning context that does not always consider cultural values

> *"The growing diversity challenges suburban governance, policy, and spatial organization that conventionally lacks the supportive social, spatial, and physical infrastructure to build social cohesion among diverse community members as evidenced by Toronto's inner suburbs that are characterized by poverty, ageing high-rise rental apartments, racial and spatial segregation, and insufficient public services." (Zhuang, 2021, p.116)*

Zhuang (2021) argues ethnic communities themselves should initiate place-making rather than the city. A senior planner at the City of Brampton (quoted in Zhuang, 2021, p. 123) shared: "So really [we are] looking at planning like a tool to kind of support the community. But if it's us [planners] coming in and governing what place-making is or what sense of place is, that's a total failure from my perspective. I don't think that works because we are not from that community so you can't really speak on that behalf."

Toronto's diverse population does not necessarily mean inclusive integration, especially when it comes to how immigrants integrate and experience cities and neighbourhoods. While ethnic suburban communities have grown to have a high degree of institutional completeness, the way they function and organize spaces with mixed uses, social infrastructure, and cultural expressions is considerably different from conventional suburban neighbourhoods (Zhuang, 2021). Ethnic communities' demands for cultural goods, services, and spaces to facilitate cultural practices, ethnic bonding, and social interactions run contrary to the urban form of conventional suburbs, which are typified by segregated land uses, an auto-oriented built environment, and homogenous landscapes.

A critical discussion on how the sense of place, or lack thereof, affects the mental wellbeing of immigrants in Canada is discussed by Agyekum, Siakwah, & Boateng (2021). Their work examines how significant resettlement stressors create mental health challenges for immigrants. They argue that mental well-being and health is associated with a positive sense of community. Their study also illustrates how immigrants derive a sense of community from multiple sources: "a chance for family reunification, others derive satisfaction from belonging, from perception of inclusion, equality and non-discriminatory tendencies." (Agyekum, Siakwah, & Boateng, 2021, p. 232). While their research examined the correlation between an immigrant's sense of place with economic and social indicators such as income, education, marital status, length of stay in Canada, they noted that further research must be done to examine how neighbourhood form and design can influence a person's sense of place. Furthermore, "Given that neighbourhoods' physical characteristics influence perceptions of place, provision of such [recreational, parks, and other social networking] facilities may help reduce the greater feelings of isolation and related mental and physical health issues." (ibid, p. 199).

Taking cues from Dunham-Jones & Williamson's (2009) work, Zhuang & Chen (2017) presented three cases studies that speak to the role ethnic malls play in retrofitting suburbia. The cases outlined how once-declining suburban malls were readapted and retrofitted by Chinese businesses in the GTA. Zhuang's (2021) work on suburban planning for diversity underscores some of the cultural misunderstandings that render traditional suburban planning incompatible with the changing demographics of suburban Canada. Long-standing retail establishments serve as important social infrastructure in their neighbourhoods. Diana Martinez (2020), a professor of art and architecture at Tufts University, shares how malls have deep cultural significance to Filipinos abroad. Malls act as spatial and cultural anchors for Filipino workers across the globe. In the absence of social interaction with people other than their employers and co-workers, Filipino workers overseas often flock to malls as temporary relief from homesickness (Martinez, 2020).

In Talen's (2008 book *Design for Diversity),* she explores the intersections of ethnicity and inequality with the built environment. Because the subject neighbourhoods in both study areas are suburban, I have selected Dunham-Jones & Williamson (2021 & 2009), Tachieva (2010), and Talen (2008) as the resources because of their focus on suburbs. Talen (2008) defines diverse neighbourhoods as:

> *"A diverse neighborhood may have teenagers and elderly; married couples and singles; empty nesters and large families; waiters and teachers as well as professionals; affluent people and people on fixed incomes; and people of varying racial, ethnic and cultural backgrounds. In short, they are places that harbor a full range of human complexity."*
> *(Talen, 2008, p. 24)*

Talen (2008, p. 111) writes: "…the design of cities is called upon to provide 'a physically humane setting for a social existence.'" Talen (2008) adds, "Often design is directed at the need to foster social interaction." (p. 112) The role of the built environment in fostering social interaction is echoed by Sandercock and Attilli (2009, p. 201), "… we don't need to share cultural traditions with our neighbors in order to live alongside them, but we do need to be able to talk to them, while also accepting that they are and may remain strangers."

2.6 Summary

The research on immigration and multiculturalism revealed some of the unintended consequences of immigration policies on the everyday lives of immigrants. This chapter also provided insights on how an immigrant's sense of belonging is related to their ability to participate in the labour market, however there are structural challenges such as deskilling through non-recognition of credentials and experience that make this problematic. The literature review also revealed how, despite being one of the largest ethnic groups in Canada, the literature on the Filipino-Canadian experience tends to focus only on two cities—Toronto and Vancouver. The scope of Filipino-Canadian literature was also shown to be limited. Finally, the last section of this chapter provided a theoretical framework to support how suburbs in Canada are becoming more diverse and discussed what challenges these changes bring.

3.1 The Modern Filipino Family

It is estimated that there are 10.23 million permanent, temporary, and illegal Filipino migrants worldwide (Tingga, 2015). One of the social changes this phenomenon has brought is the restructuring of millions of Filipino families into transnational families. Transnational families are "families that live some or most of the time separated from each other, yet hold together and create something that can be seen as a feeling of collective welfare and unity, namely "familyhood", even across national borders" (Bruceson and Vuorela, 2002, quoted in Schmalzbauer, 2008, p. 331). One of the reasons for the prevalence of transnational family arrangements is due to the nature of strict migrant policies in receiving countries that make it difficult for families to migrate together. (Mazzucato & Schans, 2011).

Strict migrant policies have led to the uneven distribution of Filipino labour leaving the country. For instance, many individuals who migrate through the Live-in Caregiver Program (LCP) are women (Brickner & Straehle, 2010). The ripple effects of this unbalanced migration have challenged the ideology of female domesticity in an otherwise predominantly patriarchal society in the Philippines. Childrearing is the traditional responsibility of Filipinas, and the distance has changed the way they fulfill this role. A common method for mothers to compensate for their absence and deal with the emotional strains of separation is what Bonifacio (2013, p. 214) calls the "commodification of love." This experience is not unique to Filipino transnational families. For example, transnational Honduran families overcome the challenges of family separation through a mix of intimacy through regular phone calls and the flow of economic remittances. Regularly communicating, coupled with the expression of affection through remittances, have allowed families to maintain a sense of familyhood across borders (Schmalzbauer, 2008).

3.2 Filipino-Canadians: A Tale of Two Cohorts

Filipino migration to North America has a long and storied history. Under Spanish colonial rule, Filipino seafarers crossed the Pacific through the Manila-Acapulco trade as early as the sixteenth century. A number of these seafarers opted to stay in Nueva España, which includes parts of the modern-day western United States, instead of sailing back to the Philippines (Guevarra, 2011; Malek, 2019). Following the capture of the Philippines and subsequent colonization by the United States at the end of the Spanish-American War in 1898, Filipinos became American subjects, allowing them to bypass anti-Asian immigration laws in place. While it is not clear how Filipino migrants settled in Canada's western frontier, it is suggested they likely followed the movement of Chinese and Japanese migrants north from the United States to British Columbia (Malek, 2019). Evidence shows Filipinos have been in Canada as early as the mid-nineteenth century. According to census records (Library and Archives Canada, n.d.),

Benjamin Flores, who is regarded by the Filipino community as the first Filipino immigrant to Canada, migrated to Bowen Island, British Columbia, in 1861. While there is evidence of a small number of Filipino migrants entering Canada in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, by and large, Canada's exclusionary immigration policies kept many people of Asian heritage from entering Canada. It was not until Canada needed to fill post-war labour shortages in the 1950s that previously banned immigrant groups such as Filipinos could enter in larger numbers (Malek, 2019). Labour shortages in the garment industry drove the Government of Manitoba to recruit workers from the Philippines, and in 1968 the first wave of Filipina garment workers came to Winnipeg. The stream of garment workers from the Philippines will continue to account for a significant proportion of immigrants into the city until the 1980s. Healthcare workers continue to constitute a substantial proportion of immigrants to Canada. In 2015, more than 10% of all immigrant workers in nursing and healthcare support occupations nationwide were from the Philippines (Cornelissen, 2021). The stream of Filipino healthcare workers migrating to Canada dates to as early as the 1950s. Nurses and medical doctors were among the first wave of Filipino professionals to migrate to Winnipeg in 1959 (Malek, 2019). Changes to immigration policies have allowed thousands of Filipinos to call Canada their home; however, these same policies can inadvertently affect their outcomes in Canada from the moment they step into the country.

Coloma & Pino's (2016) research suggests that the economic outcome of elderly Filipinos in the GTA is strongly correlated to their specific migration program and age of arrival to Canada. Eric's (2012) research supports this. In studying the outcomes of two immigrant cohorts, Eric (2012) finds that immigrants who have a sense of belonging in Canada and have positive interactions with people of various racial backgrounds have several factors in common. They are most likely to be characterized by the following:

> *"(1) they arrived with landed immigrant status; (2) their education and professional background were recognized and commensurate with their employment (3) they enjoyed strong family relations, since many immigrated with their families or were able to immediately sponsor their families; and (4) they held strong feelings of belonging in Canada." (Eric, 2012, p. 129)*

On the other hand, the second cohort of Filipino migrants generally lived through a very different experience than the first cohort. The members of the second cohort often work several jobs to support their families in the Philippines. When they get reunited with their families in Canada, they continue to work several jobs and provide for them, making spending quality time with their family difficult. Moreover, the jobs these Filipinos take are often paid subsistence wages. The contrasting experiences of these two cohorts, as Coloma & Pino (2016) suggest, strongly affect their financial stability in the later years of their lives. These factors often characterize their difference from the first cohort:

> *"(1) their international work experiences prior to coming to Canada; (2) the increasing role of private recruitment agencies as migration and labour gatekeepers; (3) their temporary entry status in Canada; (4) their employment in positions that are not commensurate with their educational and professional backgrounds; (5) the extended separation from their families in the Philippines for five years or longer; and (6) finally, their experiences of discrimination and feeling of non-belonging in Canada" (Eric, 2012, p. 131)*

Berry, Hou, & Drapeau's (2016) research, like Coloma & Pino (2016), show immigration class upon entry to Canada is correlated with an immigrant's long-term health and economic outcomes. Additionally, they (Berry, Hou, & Drapeau, 2016) argue, economic immigrants are more likely to be more motivated to improve their quality of life and integrate into the receiving country because they voluntarily left their home country. However, "tied" immigrants, family members and dependents (ibid, 2016, p. 255) who accompany the primary migrant, tend to face more difficulties with social integration and labour market participation.

3.3 An Examination of Migration Patterns to Canada

Historically, immigrants settled near and within cities creating ethnic enclaves (Abramson, et al. 2006; Allen, et al., 2021). Bonikowska, Hou, & Picot (2015) argue the geographic concentration of immigrants in major metropolitan areas in the 1970s and 1980s reflected the tendency of immigrants to gravitate to city centres because there was more demand for workers there. However, they also note labour market conditions and changes in regional economic performance are unlikely the only reasons for the dispersion of immigrant destinations. Their (Bonikowska, Hou, & Picot, 2015) research reveal Canada's contemporary immigrant selection programs have also influenced the dispersion of immigrants. Provincial Nominee Programs (PNPs) could be understood as a federal-provincial joint program wherein provincial governments select and nominate immigrants to meet their population growth and economic development needs. According to Bonikowska, Hou, & Picot's (2015) research, PNPs accounted for significant increases in immigrant inflows to Manitoba, Prince Edward Island, and New Brunswick. Immigrants who enter Canada through the PNP stream are also more likely than other economic immigrants to stay in the province of their initial destination. Winnipeg received the highest concentration of immigrants who entered Canada through the PNP stream in 2010. More than 70% of immigrants aged 18 to 54 who migrated to Winnipeg in 2010 entered through the PNP stream (ibid). Malek's (2019) research suggests that many Filipinos immigrate through the Live-in Caregiver Program (LCP) in cities like Toronto and Vancouver.

In contrast to previous generations of immigrants, today's immigrants are increasingly settling into suburban areas rather than in urban centres (Zhuang, 2017). In the past decades, immigrant settlement patterns have shifted towards the suburbs. Dunham-Jones and Williamson (2011, p. 19) write, "new immigrants…are far more likely to bypass gentrifying cities and head directly to suburban areas." Data from the National Household Survey and Censuses are consistent with this statement. They show that the number of recent immigrants who have chosen to live in suburban areas since 2001 exceeds the number of immigrants moving into city centres (Vezina & Houle, 2017). However, these demographic changes are shining a light on the unpreparedness of local governments' ability to appropriately.

3.4 Multiculturalism and its Discontents

Research suggests Canadians' anxiety about cultural integration is inconsistent with their outward expression of being proud to be members of a multicultural society (Ho, 2013). At the heart of Canada's immigration policy is the understanding that, unlike the United States' "melting pot," Canada's society is better represented by a "mosaic." (ibid, p. 163). Being Canadian partly means immigrants have the right to retain one's culture as part of this mosaic. However, despite making great strides in multiculturalism, Canada is still acknowledged as primarily an Anglo-European society (ibid).

The mosaic approach to multiculturalism, which is at the heart of Canada's official immigration policies, encourages plural identities and the preservation of cultural communities; however, this approach inadvertently results in segregation and social distance (Ho, 2013). Similarly, Bonifacio (2013) is also critical of Canada's approach to "celebratory" (p.75) multiculturalism, which celebrates diversity through activities and festivities, but fails to effectively address racism and racialism in social institutions. Tungohan (2017) calls the celebration and emphasis on "folkoric" (p.15) aspects of multiculturalism without addressing pressing issues, such as equal employment opportunities, housing, education, and access to social services as "performative multiculturalism" (p. 15). Tungohan (2017, pp. 15-16) continues by pointing out the paradoxical nature of Canadian multiculturalism: "It [the Canadian government] sponsors heritage festivals and events that use migrants' public performances of their cultures as a way to show Canadian diversity while ignoring the continued existence of systemic forms of racism in the country."

One of the unintended effects of the 'mosaic' approach is the tendency for immigrants to keep to themselves. These seemingly benign inward feelings may nonetheless result in immigrants experiencing a sense of exclusion (ibid). Ho (2013, p. 165) expounds on this by arguing that this creates "chicken-and-egg" (ibid) issues that result in employment concerns for immigrants. First, the lack of social interaction with locals makes it difficult for immigrants to practice English and social skills. Second, educational and professional credentials from foreign (non-western) countries are devalued by employers in Canada, thus leading to deskilling (Ho, 2013).

Among Filipino immigrants, deskilling is a persistent problem which affects their future outcomes in Canada. Bonifacio (2013, p. 79) writes: "…employment gatekeepers of disregard educational qualifications obtained in developing countries like the Philippines…" have led to the deskilling of highly trained individuals. Policies on temporary foreign workers disproportionately affect Filipinos. In the last 20 years, TFWs from the Philippines have constituted a significant part of this population. Figure 3 below shows that from 2004 to 2015, almost 40% of all temporary workers in Canada were from the Philippines (IRCC, 2020). Despite the sharp drop in proportion starting 2015, more than 1 in 10 TFWs in Canada are Filipino.

The LCP is a unique TFW program that grants work visas who live with and are employed by Canadian families to provide child and eldercare. LCP is a unique TFW program in that it gives foreign workers the opportunity to apply for permanent residency after working for two years. This program

allows a change in residency status for low-skilled temporary workers (Brickner & Straehle, 2010). Carlos & Wilson (2018) reveal this is precisely why Filipinas chose to migrate to Canada. LCP workers chose Canada specifically because individuals can apply for permanent residency after the program. Their research also shows that LCP workers choose Canada to avoid poor working conditions as caregivers in other countries.

About 90% of workers who enter and work in Canada through the LCP program are Filipino (Kelly, et al., 2012). LCP participants are only required to have the equivalent of a grade 12 education in addition to domestic service training to qualify. However, many of the participants of the LCP program have university-level education and training as registered nurses. The tasks caregivers perform regularly do not rely on their skills and training as nurses. Deskilling also affects their socio-economic status, despite their training and level of education. Caregiving labour in Canada is often poorly remunerated, and caregivers are often at risk of falling below the poverty line. One reason for the low compensation rates for caregivers is that they are employed in an economic sector that is considered unskilled (Brickner & Straehle, 2010). According to Pratt (1997), the stereotypes surrounding the skills of Filipina women as natural nannies affect their access to better jobs, work conditions, and wages. Stereotypes also provide employers with a means of keeping caregivers in check. Filipina caregivers who demand higher wages are framed as greedy, dissuading wage increases demands.

Temporary Foreign Worker Program (TFWP) and International Mobility Program (IMP) Work Permit Holders
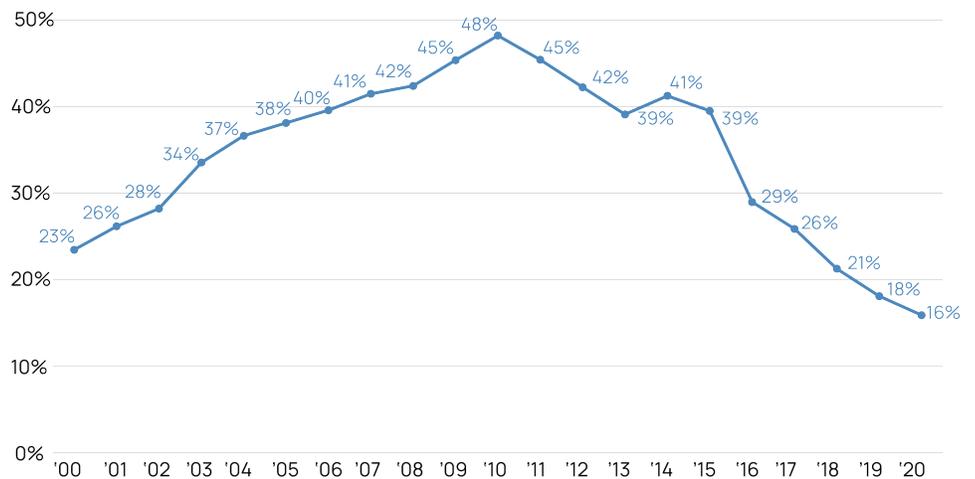Country of Citizenship - Philippines (2000 - 2020)

Figure 2. Percentage of TFWs from the Philippines (2000 - 2020)
Source: IRCC, 2020

> *"Filipina nannies are represented as prospective immigrants who should be grateful because they are able to use domestic service as a point of entry into Canada; and even as domestic workers their Canadian wages exceeded those they could earn in the Philippines."* (Pratt, 1997, pp. 166-167)

Given a choice between working 'higher earning' Canadian jobs and going back to the Philippines, many caregivers often choose to stay despite the difficult working conditions. Despite these challenges, many Filipino caregivers mention that the chance to get Canadian citizenship and the fact that "the majority of Canadians treat [them] nicely" (Brickner & Straehle, 2010, p. 316) helps make the situation more bearable.

Many Filipino workers face deskilling even in skilled professions such as nursing and health care support occupations. For example, in 2015, Filipinos accounted for more than 10% of all immigrant workers in nursing and health care support occupations (Cornelissen, 2021). This research also finds that the highest overqualification rate was observed among those who completed their bachelor's degree outside of Canada. In addition, this study notes that these rates vary by country of origin. For example, graduates from the Philippines had the highest rates of overqualification at 67%.

Among Filipino immigrants in Canada, this is a trend that is more pronounced in Toronto, where a combination of professional deskilling and a lack of financial resources have blocked Filipino immigrants from "educational upgrading" (Kelly, 2009 in Bonifacio, 2013, p. 80), leading to them settling for "survival jobs." (ibid) This is not an experience unique to Filipino immigrants. Creese & Wiebe (2009) point out that racially charged assumptions underlying Canadian immigration policies raise questions about job-skills mismatches in the Canadian economy. They (ibid, 2009, p.70) ask, "…if the Canadian economy has unmet demand for low-skilled workers, and not for highly skilled workers, why to place recruitment emphasis on educated workers who will not have a chance to use their skills in Canada?" They (ibid) argue, recruiting highly skilled immigrants on the promise their skills will help them resettle and not addressing the systemic problems that bar them from applying these skills in the first place wastes valuable human capital. The effect of the non-recognition of non-Canadian work experience limits the possibility for advancement. This affects their earning capability and their mental health as well (Bonifacio, 2013).

> *"To have both their education and work experience reduced to nothing on arrival in Canada shakes the fundamental self-worth of many Filipino women" (Bonifacio, 2013, p.80)*

Carlos & Wilson's (2018) study investigates the effect of working as live-in caregivers on Filipina workers' physical and mental health. Living-in was also reported as a factor that negatively affects the physical health of workers. The strain on the mental well-being of caregivers was also documented in the study. Living-in puts workers in a position that leads to lack of privacy and freedom. More than 60% of participants reported that separation from family in the Philippines has negatively impacted their mental health.

3.5 Summary

This chapter explored the malleability of what Filipinos conceive to be public spaces. The experience and stories of LCP workers revealed through the works of Tungohan (2017), Palmer (2010), and Bonifacio (2013) write about how the form of public spaces did not matter if they were safe spaces for LCP workers. This demonstrates the idea that public space is related to the company around them and not necessarily to the place itself. As discussed in Chapter 2, flexible spaces in Filipino consciousness are closely tied with how *sari-sari* stores and convenience stores fulfill multiple roles in the Philippines.

Bonikowska, Hou, & Picot's (2015) research revealed how the distribution of immigrants by immigration class is affected by federal and provincial immigration programs. Cities like Winnipeg have higher concentrations of immigrants who enter Canada as permanent residents because of PNP programs. Under their immigration status on arrival, caregivers are at a significant disadvantage compared to their peers who enter Canada as permanent residents. As Brickner & Straehle (2010) note, the LCP program is the only national program that provides a direct pathway to permanent residence. Therefore unlike other foreign workers, LCP workers have a desire to live in Canada permanently and integrate into society. This is supported by Carlos & Wilson (2018) who reported that LCPs chose Canada because they wanted to live here permanently and become Canadians. So, it is reasonable to think that temporary workers, particularly LCPs who intend to stay in Canada permanently to work and contribute to the economy, must also enjoy the full benefits and social protections offered by permanent residency. In 2014, several reforms to the LCP program were announced. One of the major changes in legislation scrappedscrapped the requirement for caregivers to live-in with their employers. (CUPE, 2015). However, despite these changes, as pointed out by the Canadian Union of Public Employees (ibid), granting permanent residence upon arrival is an essential tool to address the issues faced by LCP workers because these issues are rooted in their precarious immigration status. However, they also point out that a change of this magnitude is unlikely. Therefore, in the absence of a significant change in Canadian immigration policy, changes that can be made at the community level, which can alleviate some of the pressure on the daily lives of the Filipino caregivers, will be a welcome benefit.

4.1 Research Methods Used

The research initially proposed three focus groups in select neighbourhoods in Winnipeg, Toronto, and Vancouver. However, as discussed in this section, several adjustments were made to ensure that the project would continue as intended due to changing circumstances. As a result, I used two primary research methods to gather data for this project. A focus group was conducted for the Maples (Winnipeg) study, while two key informant interviews were conducted for the Lawrence Heights (Toronto) study.

4.1.1 Focus Group

Focus groups are group interviews where interactions and discussions centre around a topic specified by the researcher. The focus group is intended to produce insights that would have been difficult to obtain through individual interviews. (Umaña -Taylor and Bamaca, 2004). According to Morgan (1996), focus groups as a research technique has three essential components. First, it must be clearly stated that focus groups are a research method devoted to data collection. Unlike other group discussions where objectives could be therapy, decision making, or education, the sole purpose of a focus group is research. Second, interaction within the group discussion is an important source of data. Finally, the researcher's active role in creating the group discussion must be acknowledged. Focus groups are inquisitive in nature. When it comes to conducting focus groups where participants are members of visible minorities, Umaña-Taylor and Bamanca (2004, p. 270) "…believe that the researchers should disclose their ethnic backgrounds as a means of providing the reader with insight concerning the lens through which the data were analyzed."

The weaknesses of focus groups are linked to the process of producing focused interactions. The role of the moderator sometimes played a detrimental role in the process. A moderator's efforts to guide the group discussion may be counterproductive and disrupt the interaction, which is the point of a focus group (Morgan, 1996). However, as Morgan (ibid) notes, weaknesses associated with focus groups tend to be based on intuition rather than data.

An advantage of conducting focus groups over other qualitative research methods such as interviews and surveys is that participants can query each other and explain themselves to each other (Morgan, 1996). This makes focus groups more useful than other research methods in investigating complex behaviours and motivations. Another advantage is that the researcher can ask the participants for comparisons among their experiences instead of aggregating data and drawing conclusions from it (ibid, 1996). In addition, the continued use of focus groups with visible minorities and marginalized groups speaks to their effectiveness (ibid). Umaña-Taylor and Bamanca (2004) echo these sentiments.

They argue that members of ethnic minorities may be uncomfortable sharing their experiences unless they are in a setting where they feel that they are not alone. Focus groups are also helpful when "there is a power differential between participants and decision makers." (ibid, p. 261). Umaña-Taylor and Bamanca (2004) argue by its very nature, there is an implied role reversal in that respondents feel that they are the experts and the researcher seeks to learn from them.

For this reason, holding a focus group was selected as as a research method. Finally, Umaña-Taylor and Bamanca (2004) assert that focus groups help obtain in-depth information in relatively new or unstudied areas. This methodology was selected because Filipino urbanism in Canada is a relatively unstudied area.

4.1.1 Key Informant Interviews

Key informant interviews were initially developed for use in anthropological field research. Tremblay's (1957) work details how key informants provide a relatively complete ethnographical description of social and cultural patterns. Marshall (1996, p. 92) defines a key informant as "an expert source of information." One of the key advantages of this method is that rich, varied, textured data and, generally, high-quality data can be obtained in a relatively short period of time (Marshall, 1996; Elmendorf & Luloff, 2006). Marshall (1996) argues, obtaining the same quality and depth of data from interviews with other community members can be prohibitively time-consuming and expensive.

One advantage of key informant interviews is the discovery of new participants. Tremblay's (1957) paper recounts his findings using key informant interviews. An important consideration he described was the deviation of the project from the preliminary design. Among the factors that caused a departure from the original plan, which yielded positive outcomes, was discovering new informants. Tremblay (1957) reports that while interviewing participants in prominent social roles, some suggested people they considered well qualified as informants. He notes that relevant data was collected in several cases where new participants were referred.

While using key informants in research was initially developed for cultural anthropology, this research method has yielded positive results in the planning field. Elmendorf & Luloff (2006) used key informant interviews as their primary research method to understand open space conservation in developing a Pennsylvania watershed. They used this method because key informants are uniquely positioned to share more profound knowledge about a particular topic. They found that this method helped researchers gather localized, culturally appropriate information. More importantly, the interviews can also "…build local collaborative support for further research and planning efforts…" (ibid, p. 54)

4.2 Recruitment of Participants

As proposed to the Research Ethics Board of the University of Manitoba, I intended to conduct focus groups in three neighbourhoods across Canada. Based on pre-determined criteria, neighbourhoods in Winnipeg, Vancouver, and Toronto were selected. Neighbourhoods were selected

based on demographics and physical characteristics. At least 10% of the neighbourhood's residents had to be of Filipino background. In addition, neighbourhoods had to be predominantly residential and outside the city centre.

Residents were likewise selected based on pre-determined selection criteria. People above the age of 18, of Filipino immigrant background, and have lived or worked in the subject neighbourhoods. The study used the definition of "immigrant background" as described in a report published by Statistics Canada: "The population with an immigrant background consists of recent immigrants, established immigrants and the second generation" (Vezina and Houle, 2017).

The participants were given the option to respond in Filipino or English. This was done to ensure that participants could accurately express their thoughts. For instance, as discussed in Chapter 1, words such as *tamabayan* may be translated into English as 'a place for hanging out.' The translation may not faithfully convey the same message as when a respondent says a particular place is their *tambayan*. Participants were informed (in the consent form and verbally before each focus group) that the focus group would be conducted in English. However, they were given the option to respond and share in Filipino if it makes them feel more comfortable and if they feel that their thoughts are better expressed and captured in Filipino.

The recruitment process started in early December. Invitations were sent out to Filipino organizations, including offices in or around the study areas. Specialized Filipino organizations or groups were also sent invitations which include an artist collective and youth groups. Invitations were sent to four groups in Winnipeg and three groups in Toronto and Vancouver. Only one of the groups sent a response. However, it was received two months after it was sent, and the data gathering phase had already concluded. Prominent Filipino-Canadians were also sent invites through emails or word of mouth. I also sought the help of my Filipino contacts, most of whom have sizeable social media footprints, to advertise the call for participants. Finally, I reached out to personal contacts, including friends and family in the three cities. Of all the recruitment methods, reaching out to potential participants through personal contacts was the most effective. All participants were direct referrals from my contacts, most of whom heard about the project through word of mouth.

The outcome of the recruitment process yielded mixed results. Not surprisingly, the most successful recruitment of participants was for the Winnipeg focus group where I am based. I received several positive responses from personal connections in Toronto. However, some of the individuals who signified interest in participating had to be turned down since they had no experience living or working in the subject neighbourhoods. A focus group could not be arranged for Lawrence Heights. The first successful recruit from Lawrence Heights was a referral from a personal contact. However, similar to the situation described by Tremblay (1957), the key informant was able to refer another key informant who was interviewed a few weeks after the first interview.

The recruitment process for Sunset, Vancouver, was the least successful among the study areas. The planned focus group had to be cancelled due to a lack of interested participants. Only one

response was received through a referral from my personal network. Unfortunately, the participant had to be turned down as they were not of Filipino immigrant background. Given more time and a more opportunistic timing (i.e., not over the Christmas holiday), I firmly believe that I would have had a different recruitment outcome. Research (Hicks, et al., 2021) shows that scheduling with seasonal national holidays in mind is critical for the successful preparation and scheduling of interviews. While positive responses to invitations were received during the holidays. Most participants held off on committing to a time and date until the first week of January. Considering that all the participants were recruited through word-of-mouth, having more time to comb through extended networks by reaching out to friends' acquaintances of personal contacts will likely yield positive results in terms of participants. In total, five participants were recruited to participate in the research project. Three participants were recruited to participate in the Maples (Winnipeg) focus group, and two key informants were interviewed separately from Lawrence Heights (Toronto).

4.3 Data Gathering

The focus group and the interviews were conducted through the University of Manitoba's licensed Zoom account. Interested participants were sent consent forms (Appendix A) which contained a brief description of the project, benefits and risks associated with the project, and how the confidentiality of the participants will be ensured. The participants were also informed that the sessions would be recorded and briefed on how the data would be securely stored and the data disposal protocols in place.

4.4 Limitations

The small sample size (three focus group participants and two interviewees) inhibits this research from making generalized statements about Filipino immigrants' experiences in Canada. The objective of this research is not to have a pan-Canadian understanding of the lived experience of Filipinos with open spaces. Instead, this research aims to critically examine public space design in suburban Canada by understanding them from the perspective of a specific visible minority group. This study aims to spark a broader conversation on inclusivity in public spaces within Canada's broader BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, Persons of Colour) population.

As mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, several adjustments were made to ensure this project would push through. A significant roadblock I encountered during the implementation of the project was the stoppage of work at the University due to the University of Manitoba Faculty Association's strike. As a result, the recruitment period was reduced from two months to one month. As initially planned, the recruitment period was expected to start in early or mid-November, subject to the date of approval of the research by the Human Ethics Office. However, the strike caused a delay in the approval process. The compressed timeline likely affected the outcome of the recruitment process. Considering that recruitment through word of mouth was the most successful recruitment method, spending more time to connect with potential participants may have yielded more positive responses. There is also reason to suspect that the timing of the recruitment process may have affected the outcome.

4.5 Profile of Respondents

To ensure the confidentiality of the research participants, they were given the option to be identified in the research by their occupation or by a generic term such as "Resident 1." The table below presents the code each participant selected and their respective neighbourhoods.

Neighbourhood	Respondent code	Immigrant generation	Languages Spoken
The Maples, Winnipeg	Resident 1 (W)	First (moved as a child)	English, Filipino
	Resident 2 (W)	First (moved as an adult)	English, Filipino
	Resident 3 (W)	First (moved as a child)	English, Filipino
Lawrence Heights, Toronto	Caseworker 1 (T)	First (moved as a child)	English, Filipino
	Caseworker 2 (T)	First (moved as an adult)	English, Filipino, Hiligaynon, Bisaya

Table 1. Coding of Research participants

4.5.1 Winnipeg

The focus group comprised three participants who were former residents of the Maples. Resident 3 (W) lived in the neighbourhood for about 13 years, Resident 1 said she lived there for about 16 years, and Resident 2 lived there for 3. Two participants indicated that they moved to Canada as minors, and one participant said they moved to Winnipeg as an adult. When first asked what the *tambayans* were in the area, they all mentioned the community centre, the basketball court, and Maples Collegiate

Although none of them explained in detail why they moved out of the neighbourhood, they mentioned that they moved for personal reasons. They did not choose to live in the Maples since their parents decided to live there. According to them, they shared that they were still living with their parents when they moved to the Maples, and they played no part in the decision-making process. Resident 2 (W) shared his parents likely moved to the area because of the presence of the Filipino community.

4.5.2 Toronto

Caseworkers 1 (T) and 2 (T) have never lived in Lawrence Heights, but they worked closely with youth immigrants and their families. In addition, organizing recreational activities in the public spaces in Lawrence Heights was one of their jobs as youth settlement workers. As a result, both caseworkers were able to observe how Filipino immigrant youth interacted with public spaces and how these spaces affected their ability to adjust to Canadian life.

Caseworker 1 (T) was a youth settlement worker who helped Filipino immigrant teenagers settle in and adjust to life in Lawrence Heights. Caseworker 2 (T), referred by Caseworker 1 (T) is currently a youth settlement worker. Although both settlement workers are of Filipino background and speak fluent Filipino, Caseworker 2 (T) speaks two other Filipino languages from the Visayas islands. They shared that being able to communicate fluently in Filipino, and other languages, in the case of Caseworker 2 (T), allows them to have more intimate conversations with the youth they work with. In addition, Caseworker 2 (T) shared that many residents choose to live in Lawrence Heights because it is near their respective places of work.

4.6 Summary

As discussed in this chapter, the recruitment phase of the project was affected by external events. Especially for the Toronto study where there were not enought participants to conduct a focus group despite initially receiving positive responses. However, this does not necessarily mean that the project's outcome was negatively impacted. The shift to conducting separate key informant interviews rather than spending more time to attempt recruiting enough people for focus groups benefited the research significantly. As discussed in the works of Tremblay (1957), Marshall (1996) and Elmendorf & Luloff (2006), key informants are the most suitable to examine complex ethnographies of certain populations by nature of their occupations or place in society. This was helpful in understanding the complex experiences of the immigrant youth in Lawrence Heights. The key informants were able to share a rich, textured, and detailed testimony of the experiences of the immigrant youth in Toronto. In Winnipeg, data gathering through a focus group, participants shared different experiences on public spaces in their neighbourhood. These variations showed how different interests and preferences for activities informed their decision-making process to determine what public spaces are *tambayans* for the participants.

5.1 Site Selection

Neighbourhoods in Toronto and Winnipeg were selected based on each neighbourhood's demographic profile and physical characteristics. The neighbourhoods selected were the Maples in Winnipeg and Lawrence Heights in Toronto. Both neighbourhoods have a high concentration of Filipino residents, many of whom are first-generation immigrants. These neighbourhoods, as indicated in Table 2 below, have Filipino populations above their respective city's averages. The neighbourhoods are also predominantly residential and are outside the city centre. While the two sites are can be characterized as suburbs, they represent two different types of suburbs. Lawrence Heights in Toronto is a first-ring or inner-ring suburb, which is defined as a post-war residential community built between 1945 to around 1965 with a characteristically homogenous, automobile-dependent neighbourhood adjacent to or near central cities (Lee & Leigh, 2007).

In contrast, the Maples is an outer-ring suburb whose urban form is characterized by streets organized in a dendric pattern with dead-ends and cul-de-sacs. This form is likewise automobile-dependent, commercial structures often feature large surface parking lots (Dunham-Jones & Williamson, 2009).

The table below presents the percentage of Filipinos in the selected study sites. It is important to note that data from the City of Toronto (2011a) for Lawrence Heights only shows residents whose mother tongue is Filipino. Therefore, it is reasonable to assume that this number only represents first-generation immigrants in the neighbourhood and may not reflect the actual population size of Filipinos in Lawrence Heights. Therefore, this number can be considered a conservative estimate of the number of Filipinos in the neighbourhood.

	Lawrence Heights (2011)	Toronto (2011)	The Maples (2016)	Winnipeg (2016)
Percentage of Filipinos	10.5%	8.4%	32.9%	10.6%

Table 2: Percentage of Filipinos in the selected study sites and their respective cities.

Note. The data for Lawrence Heights is from the City of Toronto (2011a). The data for the City of Toronto is from the Government of Ontario (n.d.). The data for the Maples and the City of Winnipeg are from the City of Winnipeg (2016).
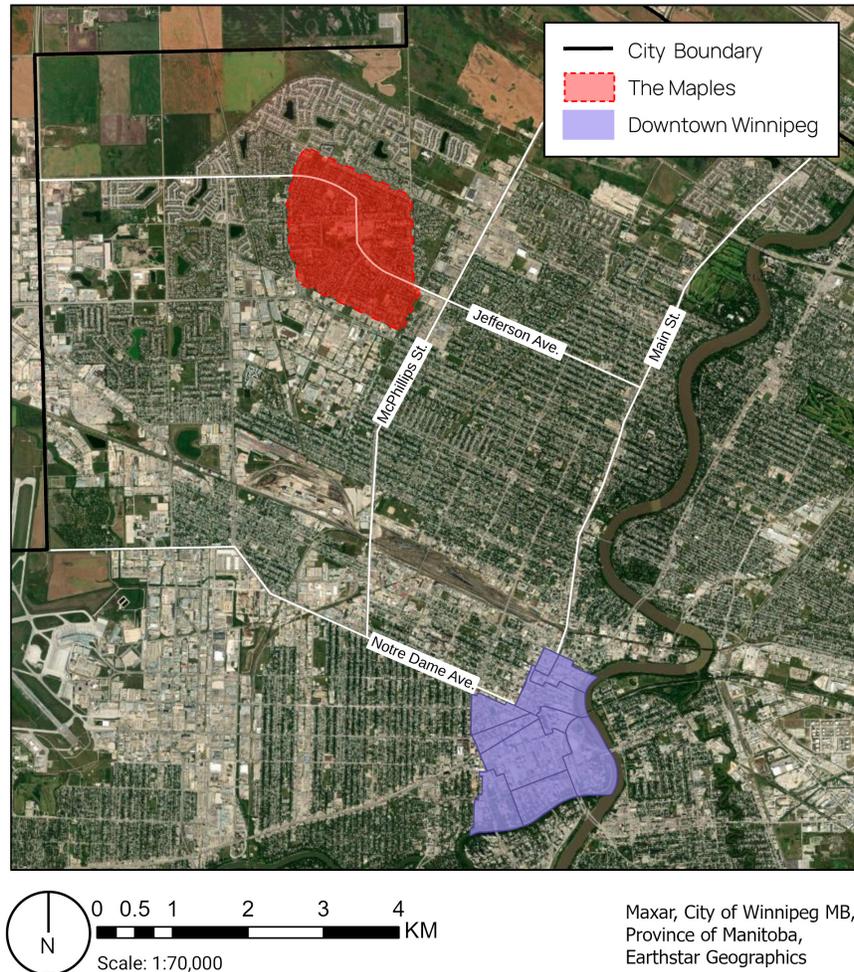
5.2 Study Area 1: The Maples, Winnipeg

Figure 4. The Maples and downtown Winnipeg

The Maples is a neighbourhood in North Winnipeg. Figure 4 above shows the location of the Maples in relation to downtown Winnipeg.

The Maples is a diverse neighbourhood home to many first-generation immigrants of different backgrounds, many of whom are recent immigrants to Canada. More than half (54.8%) of the visible minorities in the neighbourhood identify as of Filipino descent. In terms of immigration, half (50%) of the residents in the neighbourhood were born in the Philippines, 41% of whom arrived in Canada between 2011 and 2016 (City of Winnipeg, 2016). The neighbourhood was selected for the level of concentration of Filipinos and their relatively new immigrant status. As presented in Figure 5, most housing in the neighbourhood comprises single-family homes. However, there are several multi-family homes near the periphery of the neighbourhood and along Jefferson Ave. Additionally, a new condo described as having a "…high-end finish with a below-market rent" (Fergus, quoted in Sellar, 2021) is currently under construction as an infill development in the strip mall along Jefferson Avenue.
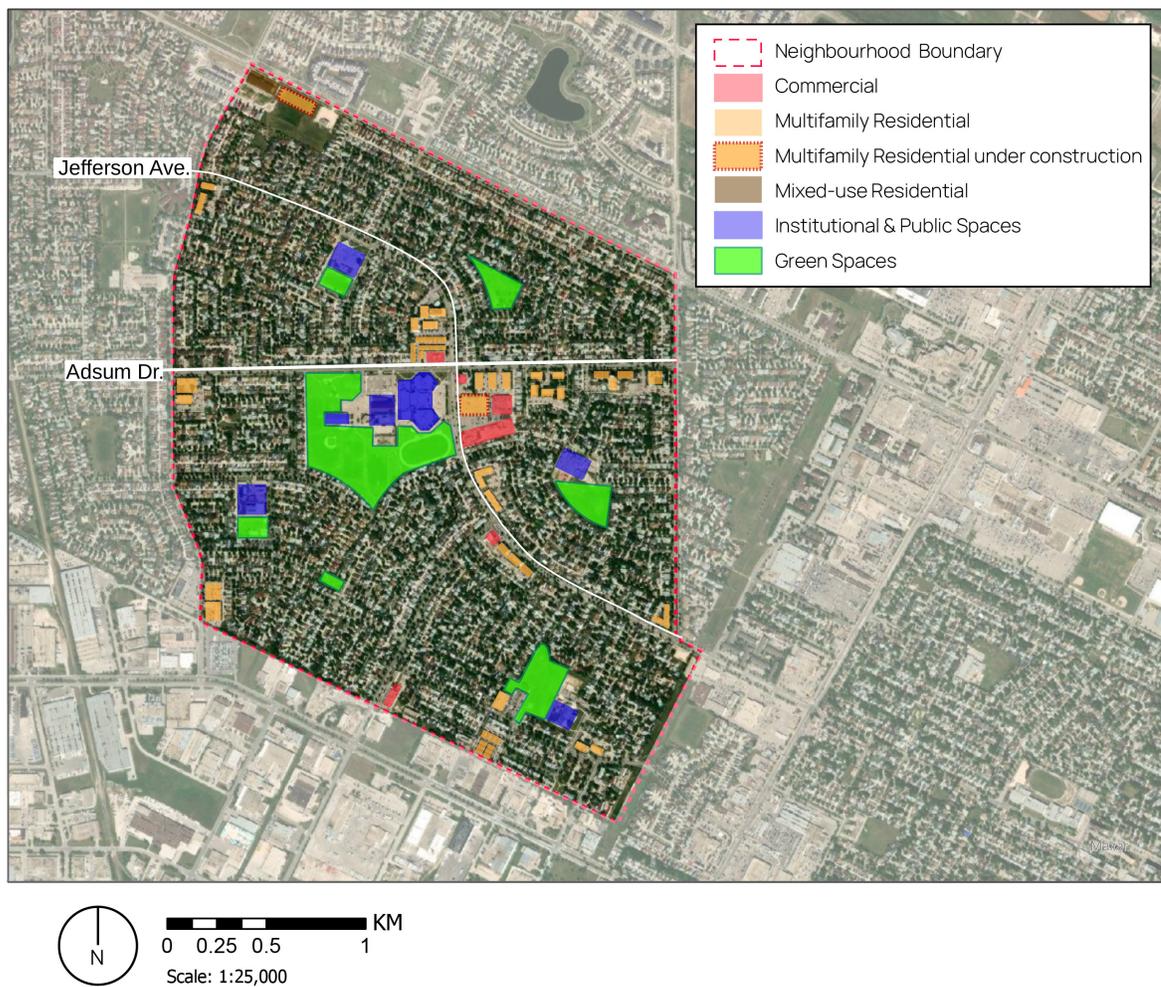
Figure 5. A map of the Maples showing the land use and public spaces

Jefferson Avenue is a four-lane separated boulevard that bisects the neighbourhood from the southeast to the north west corners. Jefferson Avenue increase the diversity of buildings in the neighbourhood. It is home to several multifamily homes, schools, and strip malls. One of the major strip malls in the area is the Maples Marketplace, located across Maples Collegiate on the corner of Jefferson Avenue and Adsum Drive. Maples Marketplace is anchored by Lucky Supermarket, an Asian grocery chain, and it is home to ethnic independent businesses such as The Supreme Ice Cream Shop, a Filipino ice cream shop.

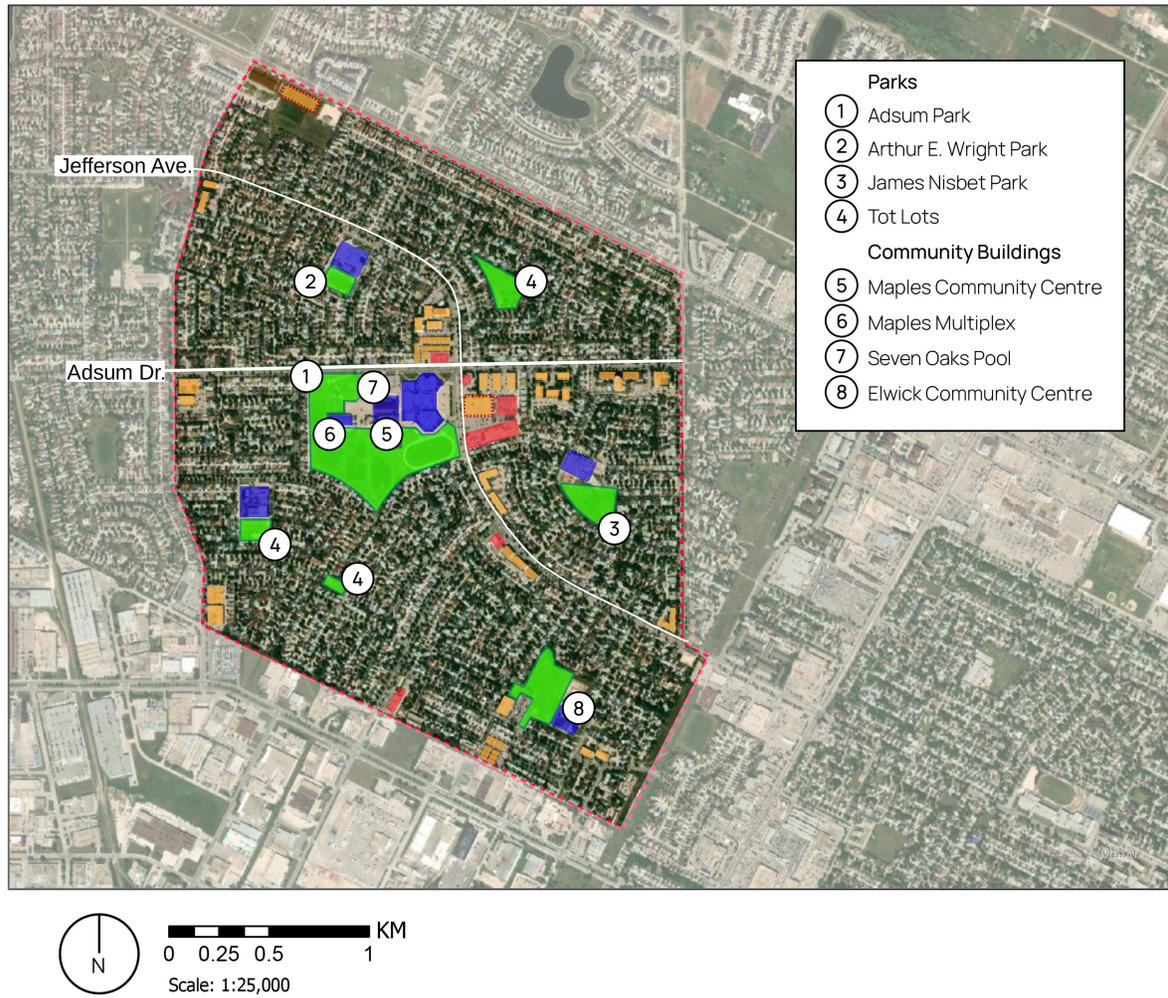## 5.2.1 Public and Community Spaces in the Maples

Figure 6. Public and community spaces in the Maples

5.2.2 Parks

Adsum park. Located in the centre of the neighbourhood along Jefferson Avenue, it sits behind Maples Collegiate, Seven Oaks pool, and the Maples Multiplex Arena.

The park has walking paths that connect the park from entrances located at the northern and southern ends of the park. The park has a baseball diamond, and there are a few places to sit in the form of benches along the walking path and a covered gazebo. As shown in Figure 7, the footprints indicate that the gazebo is used even during the winter months. Unfortunately, there is no plowed path to the gazebo (Figure 7), making this challenging to reach for people who have accessibility needs.

Arthur E. Wright Park. Located a few blocks north of Adsum park along Jefferson Avenue, this park is behind the Arthur E. Wright Community School. The park has several amenities, including an outdoor basketball court, a soccer field, a playground, and an all-season Active Green Living Space featuring a bike trail and outdoor classroom spaces completed in 2020 (Urban Systems, 2020). The Active Green Living Space appears

Figure 8. The bike trail (Urban Systems, 2020)

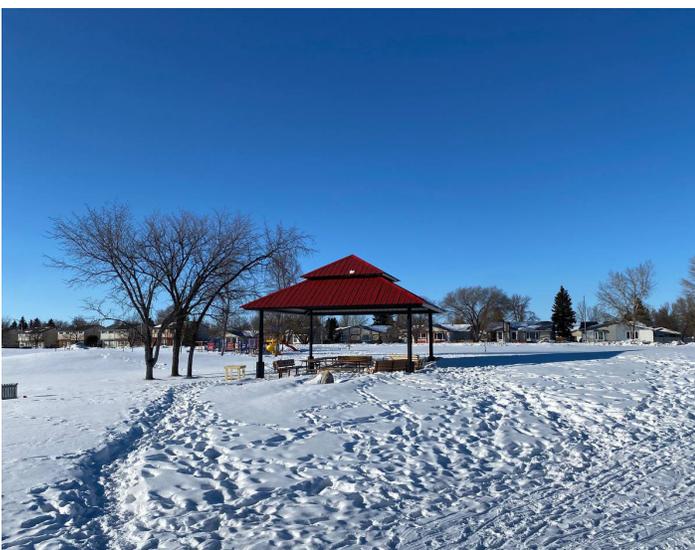Figure 9. The Active Green Living Centre during winter

Figure 7. The gazebo in Adsum Park

Figure 10. The Active Green Living Centre's play structure during winter

to be well used during the winter, as indicated by the footprints and the deep indentations under the swing set (Figure 10). The park also has no plowed entrances, and people with accessibility needs may find the park difficult to access and use.

James Nisbet Park. Located a few blocks east of Adsum park, this park is located behind James Nisbet community school. It has several amenities for outdoor sports, such as a soccer field and a baseball diamond.

Tot Lots. There are six tot lots located across the neighbourhood, and most lots can be found in between areas with a concentration of single-family homes. Tot lots have playgrounds and short walking trails that double as alternative pedestrian walkways that can help make walking trips through the meandering suburban streets shorter. However, as shown in Figure 11, accessing Councilor Bay Tot Lot may be challenging for people with accessibility needs. Figure 12 shows a snow-covered bench that, unlike the gazebo in Adsum park, seems to be unused by the community. Additionally, I did not observe the same signs of use around the play structures, indicating that the tot lot is only used as a shortcut to reach the opposite side of the lot.

5.2.3 Community Buildings

The Maples has three community centres: The Maples Community Centre, Elwick Community Centre, and James Nisbet Community School. The Maples Community Centre gym houses the indoor sporting facilities of the neighbourhood. It is also available to be rented out for social events. The site houses two basketball courts, two indoor rinks, a children's jungle gym, a baseball diamond and other outdoor playing fields. The Maples Multiplex Arena is a league-sized skating rink from September to March and is available for indoor sports and events in the

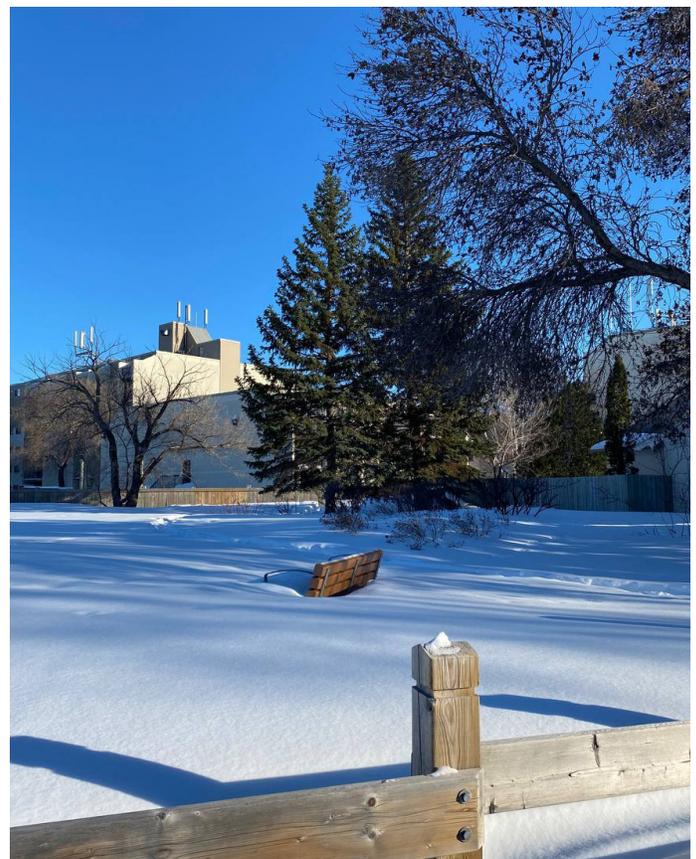Figure 11. The entrance to Councilor Bay Tot Lot

Figure 12. A snow-covered bench in the tot lot

summer months (Maples Community Centre, n.d.). The Elwick Community Centre is in the southwest corner of the Maples between Jefferson Avenue and Inkster Boulevard. The community centre sits behind the Elwick Community school. There is also a park behind the centre with a baseball diamond and a soccer field. A cricket field and an outdoor seasonal rink are also on site. Apart from being a hub for sports, the community centre holds essential community activities. In 2008, a public art program called "WITH ART" brought together Elwick Community School and Maples Collegiate students and staff along with their family members, other community volunteers, children, and seniors for a collaborative art project with a professional artist to refresh the exterior of the community centre (Winnipeg Arts Council, n.d.). The neighbourhood's nursery can be found in the James Nisbet community school.

5.2.4 Community Plans

Several developments are under construction or are newly built along Leila Avenue to the north. Pointe North Station is a four-storey mixed-use, commercial and residential development with the ground floor reserved for commercial spaces and the second to fourth floors as residential spaces. Although technically just outside the boundary of the Maples, Mandalay North Plaza is a similar commercial mixed-use building across Pointe North Station, which is currently being constructed. Figures 13 and 14 show that The Jefferson, a multifamily infill development, is currently underway inside the Maples Marketplace strip mall. Figure 13 below shows the approximate size and location of The Jefferson infill development. Figure 14 shows the construction site as of March 2022. In terms of public space improvement, renovations to improve the southeast pitch and the addition of a multi-use field with bleachers are underway (Maples Community Centre, n.d.).
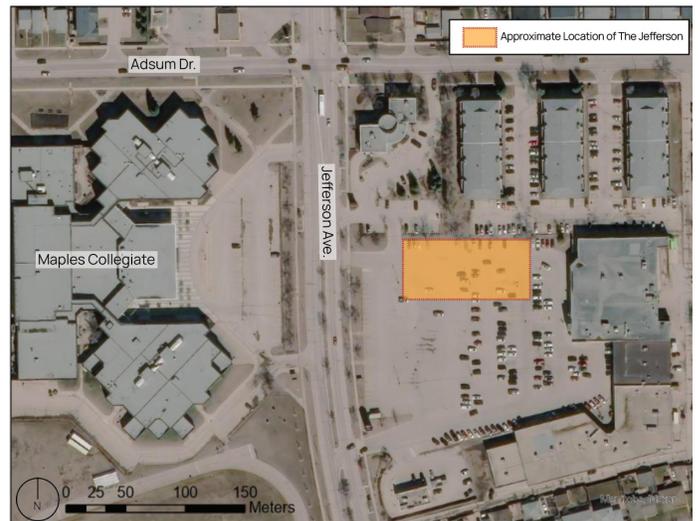

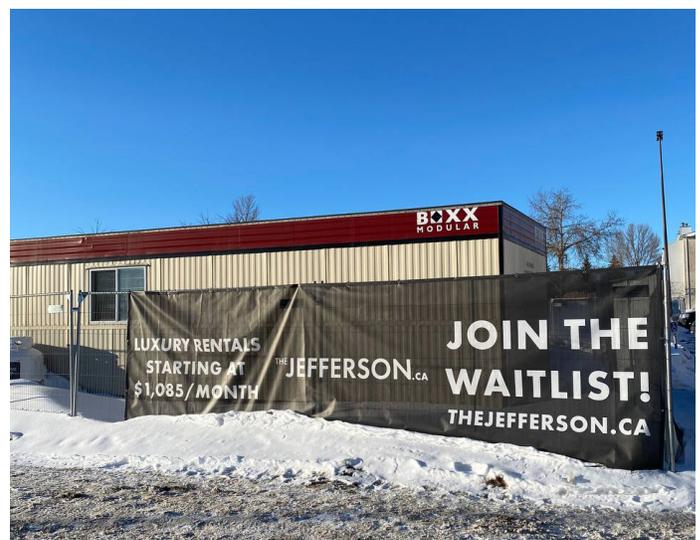Figure 13. Approximate location of The Jefferson

Figure 14. The construction site of The Jefferson with an advertisement showing their "high-end finish with a below-market rent" strategy (Fergus, quoted in Sellar, 2021)

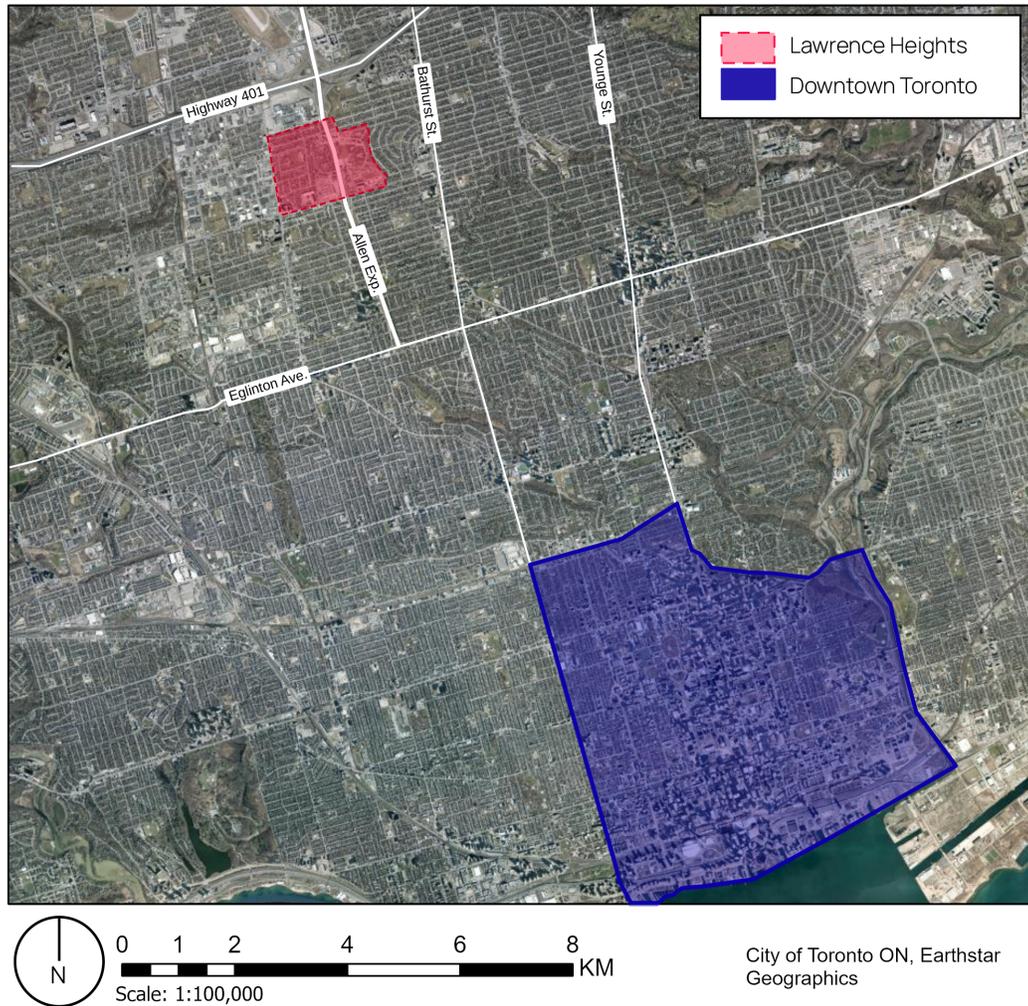## 5.3 Study Area 2: Lawrence Heights, Toronto

Figure 15. Lawrence Heights and downtown Toronto

As shown in Figure 15, Lawrence Heights is located northwest of downtown Toronto. The neighbourhood where Lawrence Heights is located started to be converted from farmland in the 1930s and were primarily built in the post-war era as a suburban community on the outskirts of Toronto (City of Toronto, 2011b). Lawrence Heights is a 100-acre community planned in the 1950s and is the first large-scale social housing project outside the former city boundaries. The original development consisted of 1,208 Rent-Geared-to-Income (RGI) social housing units owned by Toronto Community Housing Corporation (TCHC) (City of Toronto, 2011b; 2021). As a result, the community did not have the opportunity to grow into a complete and connected community.

In 1964 the Allen expressway was completed, and it resulted in bisecting the neighbourhood in half (Figure 16). The expressway acts as a barrier that isolates the eastern and western sides (City of Toronto, 2012). A significant challenge the city is trying to address in the neighbourhood is that the area is attached to negative stereotypes, either perceived or real, segregate the community from the rest of

the city. The negative perceptions of the neighbourhood is in part created by the current design of the neighbourhood, which creates areas that are hidden from public view (ibid). Another factor related to the neighbourhood's design is that the existing TCHC lands are surrounded by fences, walls, and other barriers that isolate the community from the rest of Toronto (ibid). The problems of Lawrence Heights are exacerbated by the lack of investment in the neighbourhood since its construction (City of Toronto, 2011b).

More than 10% of Lawrence Heights residents are of Filipino origin (City of Toronto, 2011a). This is higher than Toronto's average, where about 8% of all residents are of Filipino origin (Government of Ontario, n.d). Additionally, among the various immigrant groups that live in the neighbourhood, Filipinos account for the highest number of recent immigrants. More than half of the Filipino residents in Lawrence Heights immigrated between 2006 and 2011 (City of Toronto, 2011a). Since 2016, the old Lawrence Heights neighbourhood has been separated and consolidated with other neighbourhoods to form the Yorkdale-Glen Park and Englemount-Lawrence neighbourhoods. For purposes of this study, the neighbourhood "Lawrence Heights" will refer to the geographic area as described in the 2011 Lawrence Heights Neighbourhood Improvement Snapshot (City of Toronto, 2011a). The choice to keep the boundary of Lawrence Heights consistent with the 2011 document is because current plans such as the Lawrence Heights Revitalization Plans uses the older borders, despite the consolidation of neighbourhoods (Toronto Community Housing, n.d.).

5.3.1 Public and Community Spaces in Lawrence Heights

Figure 16. A map of the Lawrence Heights showing the different land uses and public spaces

5.3.2 Parks

Yorkdale park sits south of Yorkdale mall along Allen Expressway and has entrances on Ranee Avenue to the south and Yorkdale Road to the north. Just south of Yorkdale park are two more parks on either side of the Allen Expressway. On the western side of the expressway, Amaranth park has a basketball court and a playground, while Flemington park has a splash pad and walking paths to the east. South of Flemington park on Flemington road is a small park in between multifamily residential structures with a playground. On the west side of Allen Expressway are several parkettes located along Dane Avenue, Conlands Avenue, and Ranee Avenue. In addition, Lawrence Heights middle school has a sizable green space with a soccer field and basketball courts.

Figure 17. An outdoor basketball court in Lawrence Heights

5.3.3 Community Buildings

The Lawrence Heights community centre is on the east side of the Allen Expressway on Repelin Road. The centre is designated as a free centre, and youth-specific programs are offered. The community centre has the following facilities: a weight room, a gymnasium, a kitchen, a lounge, nine multipurpose rooms, an outdoor pool, a preschool, and a skateboard area. Community facilities are rated by the City of Toronto based on set criteria with "premium" as the highest rating followed by "A"," B", and "C". Except for the gymnasium, the kitchen, and one of the multipurpose rooms, which are rated "B", all facilities have a "C" rating (City of Toronto, n.d.-b). Lawrence Heights skate park is located on the corner of Lawrence Avenue and Varna Drive. It is a neighbourhood scale modular skatepark with ledges, rails, banks, quarter pipes and a mini halfpipe on asphalt. The facility is free to use (Toronto Skateboarding, n.d.). In 2021, video game developer 2K, Toronto-based non-profit HXOUSE,

Figure 18. The recently refurbished basketball court. (TSN, 2021)

and the artists The Weeknd and NAV partnered to refurbish the Lawrence Heights Community Centre's basketball court (TSN, 2021). It is not yet clear if the City of Toronto has upgraded the facility rating for the basketball court after the renovation.

There are three publicly-funded schools in Lawrence Heights. Flemington Public school and John Polanyi Collegiate Institute are east of the Allen Expressway, and Lawrence Heights Middle School is on the western side. There are also two private schools in the neighbourhood. Vega Academy is a private secondary school located in the Lawrence Allen Centre. ABM College is a private tertiary institution located along Lawrence Avenue West.

5.3.4 Neighbourhood Plans

The Lawrence-Allen secondary plan (City of Toronto, 2011b) outlines the city's plan to revitalize the parkland in the area. Currently, parks are "… awkwardly configured and poorly connected to pedestrian pathways, sidewalks, buildings and the broader parks network." (p. 41). Housing revitalization aims to build on the tradition of providing affordable housing in Lawrence Heights. However, unlike in the past, social housing will not be isolated in separate neighbourhoods. A mix of accessible building types, tenures and unit sizes will ensure a diversity in residents and family sizes can live in the neighbourhood (City of Toronto, 2011b). In total, the city plans to replace 1,208 community housing units and build over 4,000 new private market units. The city also plans to create new parks, retail spaces, and roads. A new linear park and public art installations are also planned along the Allen Expressway. Phase 1 (Figure 19), which is anticipated to be completed by 2023, aims to replace 255 TCHC rental units and add 845 private market units (Toronto Community Housing, n.d.). In line with the secondary plan, the city is currently in the design phase of a yet-to-be-named park called the Lawrence Heights Triangular Park

(Figure 20). This park is expected to be completed by 2024, and it will include a playground, walkways, planting, and public art installations (City of Toronto, n.d.-c).

Figure 19. Lawrence Heights Redevelopment Master Plan. (Overlay image: Toronto Community Housing, n.d.)

Figure 20. Lawrence Heights Triangular Park Conceptual Plan. (City of Toronto, n.d.-c)

Phase 2 of the Lawrence Heights revitalization project features a community hub that will house the new Community Recreation Centre with a pool and childcare centre. Phase 2 is planned to be completed by 2026 (City of Toronto, 2021). The secondary plan (City of Toronto, 2011b) also mentioned the St. Lawrence Community Centre in downtown Toronto as a precedent for encouraging mixed-use buildings in the area. The community centre, public schools, and residential apartments are all located within one mixed-use building, making it easier for family members of different ages and needs to access services and facilities.

5.4 Summary

The Maples and Lawrence Heights are ethnically diverse suburbs outside the city centre. They are home to a significant Filipino population, most of whom are recent immigrants. Broadly speaking, the predominant housing typology in both areas differ. The Maples is predominantly made up of single-family homes; however, some higher density homes along Jefferson Avenue and new mixed-use condos are being developed north of the Maples. Housing in Lawrence Heights is denser, particularly along the Allen Expressway; however, there are still many single-family homes on the neighbourhood's western side.

Both have a good mix of parks, sporting facilities like swimming pools, soccer fields, and basketball courts in public spaces. The areas also have unique recreational facilities like the skatepark in Lawrence Heights and the cycling trail in the Maples. Both areas also have parkettes or tot lots spread across the neighbourhood.

Both areas are near commercial complexes as well. The Lawrence Allen Centre is at the southern end of Lawrence Heights, while the Yorkdale shopping centre is just outside the area to the north. The Maples also has commercial areas in and around the neighbourhood. In addition, a strip mall along Jefferson Avenue and North Gate shopping centre caters to the community's shopping needs.

Lawrence Heights and the Maples are both continuing to develop. Phase 1 of the Lawrence Heights Revitalization is well underway, and many of the aging public housing buildings will be replaced by new mixed-use buildings, and more green space will be added to the area. In the Maples, one new mixed-use condo and a multifamily development currently under construction. The latter being an infill housing project inside the Maples Market Place strip mall. The next section will discuss how Filipinos in these areas interact with and use the public spaces in their neighbourhoods and any suggestions for making these spaces more usable.

6.1 Focus Group and Interview Results

As described in Chapter 4, external factors outside my control led to several deviations in the project implementation as initially designed. However, as this section will show, the adjustment to conduct two key informant interviews helps shed light on the complexities of being a Filipino immigrant in Lawrence Heights. The sub-section "Filipino-Canadians: A Tale of Two Cohorts" discussed how being a Filipino immigrant in Canada is highly nuanced, and their immigration class upon entry affects significant facets of their lives (Eric, 2012; Coloma & Pino, 2016). Responses from both cities were similar in the way they viewed different tambayans in their neighbourhoods. They all identified malls and commercial spaces, schools, community centres, and parks as *tambayans*. However, a key difference between the cities I found being a Filipino immigrant in Lawrence Heights is more multi-layered and multi-faceted than being a Filipino immigrant in Winnipeg. One of the reasons why there is a notable difference in how they perceive public spaces is because they have very different immigration experiences, as discussed in this section. This finding supports the argument of Eric (2012), where Filipino migrants, by virtue of their immigration status on arrival, have different experiences.

6.2 Winnipeg Focus Group

The key theme that the group discussed was how *tambayans* helped each of them adjust to life in Canada. Unlike the Philippines, where anything and everything could be a *tambayan*, *tambayans* in Canada were often associated with an activity that implies the importance of facilities, furniture, and leisure infrastructure. Over the focus group discussion, the participants identified several tambayans that varied in typology; community facilities, commercial spaces, institutional spaces, and others. Figure 21 shows the *tambayans* that were identified by the focus group participants.
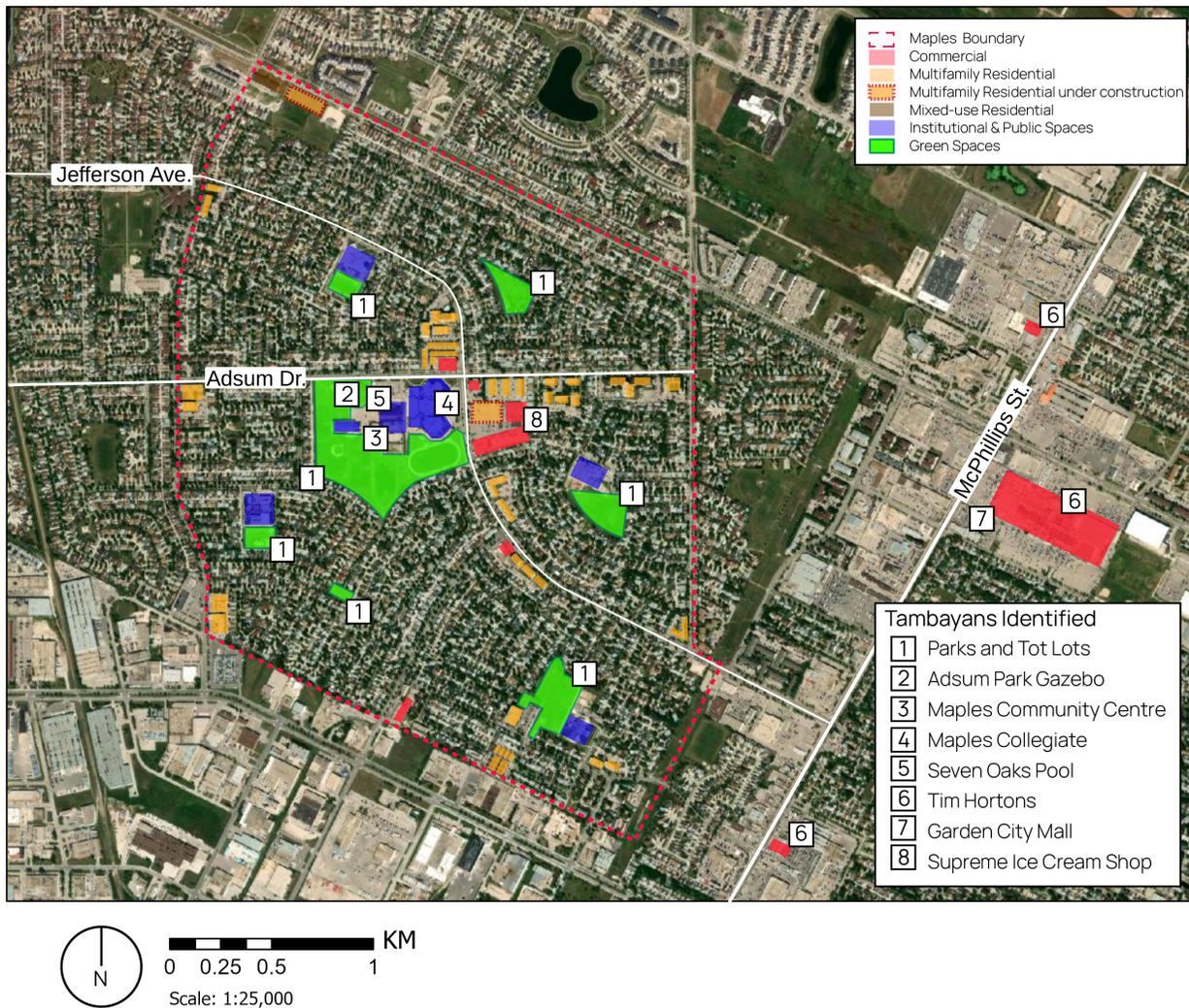
Figure 21. *Tambayans* identified by the participants in the Maples

6.2.1 Leisure and Activity-based *Tambay*

What participants considered as *tambayans* are closely related to their ideal leisure activities. For Residents 2 and 3 (W), their *tambayans* was the community centre. They mentioned these places because they were interested in active leisure like playing basketball and doing outdoor workouts. For Residents 2 and 3 (W), the basketball courts helped facilitate making new friends. The Maples community centre was a topic that was discussed with enthusiasm by both Residents 2 and 3 (W). Resident 3 (W) mentioned that talking about the community centre "brought back fond memories." Resident 2 shared that playing basketball at the community centre helped him make friends in the area and agrees that it was a "fun time" and playing basketball helped facilitate making new friends.

Since she did not play basketball for Resident 1 (W), she made friends through clubs and school activities. She also mentioned, while the basketball court was not her personal *tambayan*, she understands its importance as a *tambayan* for others. Resident 1 (W) shared that her *tambayans* varied. Her *tambay* was "*tambay* with a purpose". When asked what she meant by it, she said that for her, *tambay* was associated with letting time pass between school and work obligations. The reason

40

why *tambayans* varied because it depended on her schedule and obligations, so she would hang out where it was most convenient. Whether it was in her club or organization's room or somewhere on campus, what was important was that she was with passing time.

6.2.2 Fluidity of *Tambayans*

An important finding that will also be discussed in the Lawrence Heights findings section is how *tambayans* are not associated with any land-use type. The participants also shared *tambayans* that they observed in the neighbourhood. Resident 3 (W) mentioned Garden City Mall and the Tim Hortons branches around the area as *tambayans* that some seniors frequent. Although none of the participants mentioned that Garden City or the Tim Hortons branches in the area were their *tambayans,* they recognize and understand them as important *tambayans* for some Filipinos in the community. Resident 3 (W) also notes that he feels that seating around the mall could be improved to make it a more attractive destination for other residents looking for a way to beat the cold winter. Their statements speak to how the concept of *tambayans* is fluid and what is considered to be a *tambayan* for one person may not be a *tambayan* for another.

Tambayans are also flexible in the temporal sense. Resident 2 (W) shared how *tambayans* can temporarily bring mundane spaces to life. He gave the example of the Filipino Street Food Festival that took place in the Maples Community Centre parking lot a few years ago as a great way to transform spaces into areas full of life, albeit temporarily. For him, activities like pop-ups help cement the neighbourhood's sense of community.

The respondents shared how they recognize Garden City Mall as a *tambayan* even if they do not personally frequent the place. They mentioned that teenagers and seniors are tambays of the mall, but they remarked that it was not tambay-friendly because there hardly any places to sit. Resident 3 mentioned that the Supreme Ice Cream Shop in the strip mall on Jefferson Avenue is also a common *tambayan* for the Filipinos in the area particularly because of its proximity to the Maples Collegiate.

6.2.3 Suggestions for improving the Maples' *tambayans*

When asked what improvements can be done to make *tambayans* better, the participants agreed that accessibility can be an issue during the winter months. As presented in the previous chapter, photos of the parks and public spaces during winter show that they could be difficult to use for people who have accessibility needs. Resident 1 (W) said that apart from the benches and the gazebo, "there's nothing much going on" in Adsum Park. According to her, adding benches and places for people rest or hang out would be beneficial for everyone, especially for seniors. Problems associated with winter were discussed by Residents 1 and 3 (W). Resident 3 (W) shared stories about how seniors would cram themselves in the community centre and sit and hang out along the hallways because there was no where else to hang out since it is too cold to sit outside, and the gazebo is hard to get to during snowy days. Resident 3 (W) suggested adding indoor seating can help make hanging out in the community centre more comfortable. Resident 1 (W) stressed how aging in place is an important concern in the neighbourhood. She shared that it is normal for Filipino families to be in multigenerational households.

It is common for grandparents and other older adults to live with their children and grandchildren. Therefore, she shares, it is important to ensure that *tambayans* were clear and accessible during winter so that they have places to hang out. Finally, Resident 2 (W) shared how parks do not have facilities like outdoor gyms. He thinks it would help encourage more people to enjoy an active lifestyle outdoors.

6.3 Toronto Key Informant Interviews

As youth settlement caseworkers, the key informants shared their experience with teenage Filipino immigrant youth in Lawrence Heights. The nature of their occupation allowed them to have intimate relationships with the youth they work with. This puts them in a position to be fitting key informants. An important distinction between the Toronto and Winnipeg interviews is in how the residents saw the role of *tambayans* played in how they adjusted to Canadian life. In Toronto, the caseworkers share how in some cases, the immigrant youth's *tambayans* and how they use these spaces reflect being homesick and having difficulty in adjusting to life in Canada.

While Caseworkers 1 and 2 (T) have never lived in Lawrence Heights, they were asked why they thought Filipinos would choose the neighbourhood over others. They both shared how Lawrence Heights is near the homes that employ the careworkers and the growing Filipino community is an attractive draw for would-be residents.
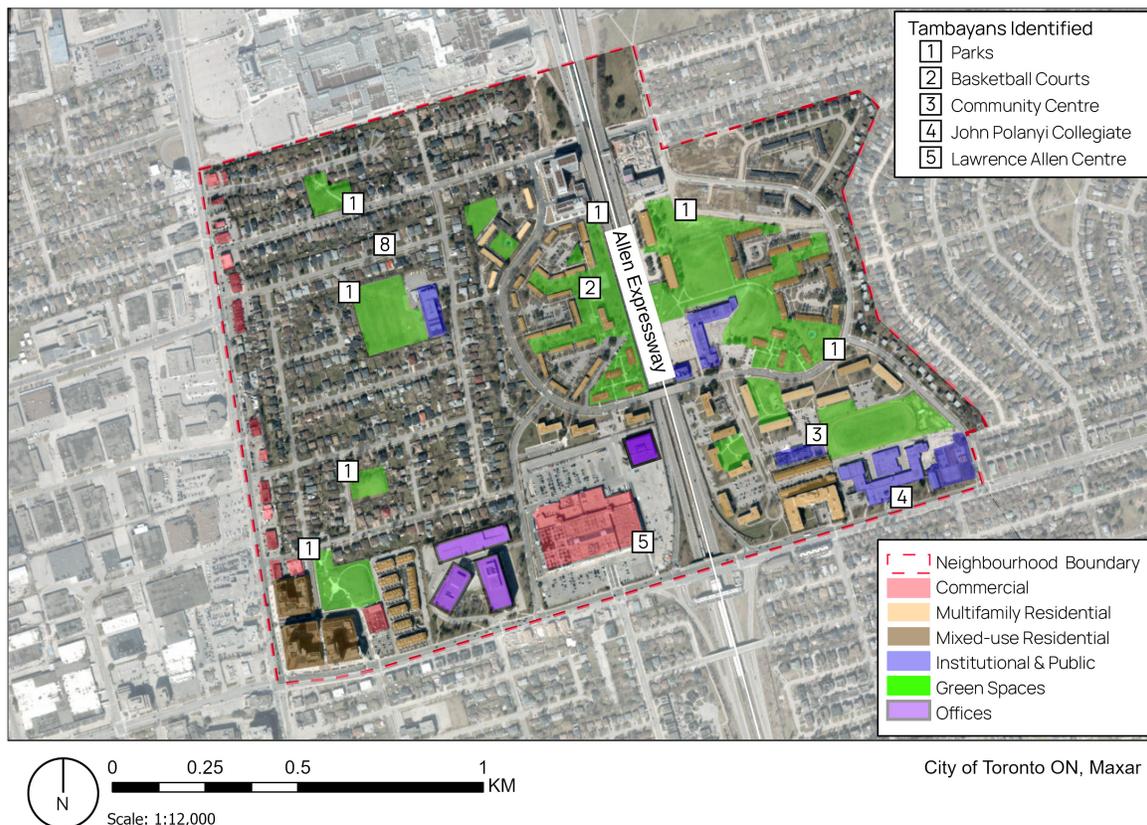

Figure 22. *Tambayans* identified by the participants in Lawrence Heights

6.3.1 *Tambayans* as extensions of life in the Philippines

According to Caseworker 1 (T), a common phrase she heard from the youth was *"parang Pinas lang"* (just like the Philippines). For her, this phrase speaks volumes about how some of the teenagers continue to look fondly at their life in the Philippines as their happy place. I asked her when this saying is commonly said. She responded by saying that this phrase is often heard during sports camps or organized activities where only Filipino youth immigrants participate. Additionally, Caseworker 1 (T) shared how the youth often tell her that they feel like they have been "transported back home for a few hours," and they are very thankful and happy.

Schools were identified as *tambayans* in Winnipeg and Toronto. Residents 1 and 3 shared how school played an important role in their social lives. In Toronto, Caseworker 1 (T) reported how the school was an important *tambayan* for the youth. She shared that ESL (English as a Second Language) classrooms often doubled as social safe spaces since most students are Filipino immigrants. One student even asked her if it was worth it to fail the final exam on purpose because passing means getting upgraded to regular English classes. According to her, one of the reasons they thought the class was a safe space was because it felt like they were in a classroom in the Philippines. Outside of ESL class, she shared students would often stay late and hang out around campus until they were asked to leave because the school would be locked for the day.

Caseworker 2 (T) shared stories about how kids would pass the time and go "malling". Malling is a Filipino colloquial term meaning going to the mall to walk around, hang out and pass the time with shopping as a secondary activity. According to Caseworker 2 (T), the teenagers felt like the Lawrence Allen Centre was their safe space because hanging out there reminded them of how they used to hang out in malls in the Philippines. Caseworker 2 (T) also talked about how there is a lack of "human interaction." When asked what he meant by this, he expanded by saying how he finds the mall to be rigid. He drew comparisons to *sari-sari* stores and shared a story about how the *sari-sari* store in his neighbourhood would stay open late into the night for him and his friends. While he does not expect for malls to stay open at the whim of shoppers, he was expressing how he thinks spaces like malls are more than just shopping areas. Even if the mall is busy, he compares the mall to a vending machine where everything is transactional and impersonal.

6.3.2 *Tambayans* as safe spaces

Both Caseworkers 1 and 2 (T) shared that *tambayans* represented somewhat of refuge from the realities of everyday life for the youth they worked with. As well, *tambayans* help the youth forge kinship ties with other teenagers in the same situation. When asked why he thought the youth saw *tambayans* as safe spaces, Caseworker 2 (T) said it was because they felt distant from their parents and their friends who shared their *tambayans* understood their situation. Caseworker 2 (T) added, it was not uncommon for Filipino parents to work three jobs. Two full-time jobs back-to-back and one part-time job during weekends. He said he knew Filipinos who would work from midnight to 8 a.m. without resting head to their 9 to 5. As a result, there is little time spent on leisure and bonding with family.

This situation is common amongst Filipino immigrant youth in Lawrence Heights, according to both Caseworkers 1 and 2 (T). As children, they grow up with an idealized image of life in Canada created by the illusion of material wealth in the form of cash remittances and consumer goods sent through balikbayan boxes. On the ground, this expectation of being "spoiled," as Caseworker 1 (T) shares, creates conflicts between parents and children. They do not understand that some of their parents have to work two jobs and study to upgrade their credentials because they have been deskilled. As a result, the kids do not want to return to empty homes after school. She believes that the years lost to not bringing their children to Canada as caregivers is one of the causes for the children to feel like they have lost kinship. Caseworker 2 (T) shared how moving is an overwhelming experience and is much more for teenagers. Having worked as a caseworker during the COVID-19 pandemic, he saw how online life deprived the youth of the opportunity to connect with the community. They offer what they can in terms of social support but being remote makes it difficult. Workshops and social activities have migrated online, but he says nothing beats hanging out in a *tambayan*, especially when you're in an unfamiliar and lonely place.

Caseworker 2 (T) shared he felt concern about some of the ageing residents in the neighbourhood. According to him, retirees often choose to stay at home because their social circles have diminished over time. In his opinion, Filipino parents are overburdened by the need to provide for their family in the Philippines, so they dedicate their lives to working. This made him realize how important his *tambayans* (the basketball court and the soccer field) are in making sure that he can decompress and relax. While he is not a resident of Lawrence Heights, as a TFW in Toronto, he emphasized the importance of *tambayans* in helping him meet non-Filipino friends and adjust to Canadian life.

The Winnipeg focus group touched on subjects related to being homesick and adjusting to life in Canada but did not express as much difficulty as the Toronto informants. Caseworkers 1 and 2 (T) both describe *tambayans* as safe spaces. These spaces could be anything—a basketball court, an ESL classroom, a food court. As Caseworker 2 (T) describes it, "it's not the place, it's the people around you." It is important to note that Caseworker 2 (T) entered Canada as a personal care worker, and like many others on a temporary work permit, he said: "work was my world." He worked two jobs to provide for his family in the Philippines, and his way of decompressing and relaxing was playing basketball and soccer on his free days. He described his *tambayans* as places where he would lose himself to fun and leisure, even if for a few hours. Similarly, he understands how important *tambayans* for families in Lawrence Heights because parents often work multiple jobs like he used to, which makes hanging out in *tambayans* more meaningful.

The food court in that in the Lawrence Allen Centre is a common *tambayan* for the youth, according to Caseworker 1(T). But they shared that they did not feel welcome. Dining "family-style," as it is colloquially known in the Philippines means ordering portions of food and placing them in the middle of the table for sharing. According to Caseworker 1 (T), the youth not being able to do this with friends is a frustration commonly shared with her. The seating configuration of the food court made it awkward to gather in large groups. Most tables are configured to seat a party of four, and most people who eat

come in parties of four or less. According to Caseworker 1 (T), the teenagers often found it awkward to dine there in large groups, and they would often catch the attention of people at the food court. The teenagers felt dining as large groups felt out of place. They felt and implied pressure to leave, they felt that people stared, and security wandered around where they ate. Caseworker 2 (T) shared similar sentiments. His concern is that malls do not have a lot of sitting space. One of the reasons he thinks Filipinos gravitate to the mall is why they did so in the Philippines. He mentioned: *"Sa pilipinas mainit, dito malamig"* (In the Philippines it's hot, here it's cold), going to the mall offers a reprieve from the heat in the Philippines and the same habit carries over to Canada.

6.3.3 Reality Check: Limitations of Public and Quasi-Public Spaces

Indeed, Filipino immigrants make the most of the spaces available to them, and in their own way, these spaces are transformed into something they are personally invested in. However, limiting factors make these places challenging to transform into *tambayans.* Caseworker 1 (T) shared how teenagers often fight feelings of anxiety and unease when they hang out in malls as the physical space made it difficult to congregate as big groups. The youth she worked with often complained that the tables could not be moved around so they had to separate into two or three groups, thus defeating the purpose of hanging out as a group. They also reported that hanging out for extended periods of time was uncomfortable. Short of being directly confronted, mall security would uncomfortably pace around their immediate area, making them feel pressured to leave.

Graduating from ESL class is also a reality check for immigrant youth. As mentioned earlier, some teenagers were hesitant to leave their 'safe space.' Similarly, Caseworker 1 (T) shared how students stayed long after school hours, sometimes until the custodians have to ask them to leave. She shares that this is partly because some students have felt safe and comfortable in school indicating that they have already made personal connections to the space. But, unfortunately, the school cannot stay open for their use.

6.3.4 Suggestions for Improving Lawrence Heights *Tambayans*

When asked about parks in Lawrence Heights, Caseworker 1 (T) shared that "kids aren't used to hanging out in the park, much like in the Philippines." She added that the youth were not used to parks that did not have amenities like basketball courts. Caseworker 2 (T) said that adding diversity in terms of stores and hanging out spots could improve malls in terms of making them more *tambay*-friendly. He shared that having spaces for pop-ups, stalls, and small businesses would make malls more alive.

6.4 Summary: From Mundane Places to Safe/Happy Spaces

What is conventionally understood as public areas such as parks were hardly mentioned in the discussions unless they talked about the amenities. Commercial spaces featured more prominently in the conversations in Toronto and Winnipeg. It was revealed that malls act as quasi-public spaces for Filipinos. Caseworker 1 (T) emphasized the importance malls played in the daily lives of the teens she worked with.

Despite covering different thematic topics, a recurring theme that came out in the conversations about *tambayans* in Winnipeg and Toronto was the transformative qualities of these spaces. In Winnipeg, focus group participants shared stories of how their *tambayans* helped them adjust to life in Canada. For some respondents like Residents 2 and 3 (W), the basketball courts helped them make new friends and meet people from outside their immediate circle of friends. In the eyes of Filipino immigrants, mundane spaces are turned into important places. Former residents of the Maples have spaces they look back on as happy places, and teenage immigrants in Toronto have safe spaces they can run to. The Filipino immigrant teenagers of Lawrence Heights still made the food court their *tambayan* even though they said food courts had inadequate seating and hanging out as a big group felt awkward. In Winnipeg, Resident 1 (W) found a way to make *tambayans* on the go in between school and work obligations. Even if the amenities or the environment made tambay difficult, the respondents found a way to make these places their *tambayans*. It is worth pointing out that in Winnipeg, proximity to other Filipinos was an important consideration for choosing to live in the Maples. Social contact is important for Filipino immigrants. It played an important role in adjusting to life in Canada for the Maples focus group respondents, and the company that came with the *tambayan* provided a 'safe space' for the immigrant youth in Lawrence Heights. This indicates that living in proximity to other Filipinos play an important role in selecting the location of their residence. The findings also indicate that the experiential nature of a space is the most important consideration for Filipinos.

Conversations about parks in both the Winnipeg focus group and Toronto interviews were brief, and none of the participants explicitly mentioned that the park was a *tambayan* for them. As discussed later, seating, or lack thereof, was an important consideration for making parks more "*tambay*-friendly," according to Resident 1 (W). It is not surprising that the conversation about parks in Winnipeg focused on what was missing from parks. They probably did not experience the park the same way people of other backgrounds did. Residents 2 and 3 (W) said they had fond memories of playing basketball in the community centre, but not the centre itself. For the youth in Toronto, being around Filipinos in ESL class or sharing a family-style meal at the mall transforms these banal spaces into their own 'safe spaces'. Caseworker 2 (T) shares that "it's not the place, it's the people around you."

These conversations revealed how complicated defining public spaces can be. A *tambayan* can be anything from a park to an ice cream shop. It represents a deep personal connection of a person to a place. It is a *tambayan* if a person or group makes it into their *tambayan*. A *tambayan* can often hold different, sometimes opposing meanings to Filipino migrants. For some, like the youth in Lawrence Heights, it represents a connection to their homeland where the youth get together and recreate pieces of their lives in Canada. For others, like the Winnipeg respondents and Caseworker 2 (T), *tambayans* helped them adjust to life in Canada and meet new friends.

"For others [tambay] is meaningless, to you it's meaningful"
(Resident 2, Winnipeg)

7.1 Redefining Public Spaces

The distinction between public and private spaces in Canada has been a point of contention in urban spaces. For example, Portage Place Mall, a mall in downtown Winnipeg has been likened to a town square (Sinclair, 2019) and is described to have "blurred the lines between profit and public space" (DeGurse, 2019). Like *tambayans* in Lawrence Heights, Portage Place mall is also described as a "sanctuary" (ibid, para. 4).

> *"This sanctuary was much valued by Indigenous people who gather downtown, by new immigrants who rent cheap accommodation in the blocks north of the mall, by people working downtown, by bored teenagers who go downtown looking for adventure, by pushers of illegal drugs, by homeless people who need protection from harsh weather and by anyone who needed a public washroom in a downtown where this essential amenity is scarce." (DeGurse, 2019, para. 4)*

In this research, I explored how Filipinos see pubic spaces differently. I listened to the voices of Filipino immigrants about how perception plays a key role in whether they see a space as a "public" space or not. Resident 1's (W) statement about Adsum park where "there's nothing going on there" echoes Rishbeth's (2001, p. 356) findings where Asian park users said their ideal park was not an "expanse of green space for active recreation, sports, and picnicking." Based on the focus and length of the conversations with all participants, they do not seem to consider parks as important public spaces. Interestingly, every time parks were brought up, the conversations were about the amenities like basketball courts in Lawrence Heights or the lack of seating areas in the Maples.

This research presented the complexities around how public spaces and quasi-public spaces are defined. For Filipinos, public spaces transcend the confines of the public and private realms. Polvorosa's (2012) work on Filipino businesses' multiple roles and Matejowsky's (2007) work on *sari-sari* stores supports the argument that commercial spaces also fulfill important community roles for Filipinos in the Philippines and abroad. Commercial spaces can be just commercial spaces, but sometimes they can mean much more. There is an underlying sense of community in the way the Winnipeg respondents addressed the question of what would make public spaces better. Residents 1 and 3 (W) shared their thoughts on accessibility and aging in place. Their responses reflected what they thought would make the public spaces better in the Maples for seniors and others rather than for themselves. Even if the basketball courts meant a lot to Resident 1 and 3 (W), they mentioned the needs of others first before theirs. Similarly, Resident 1 (W) also mentioned what would benefit seniors the most, rather than herself.

In Toronto, Caseworker 2 (T) expressed concern for lonely seniors in Lawrence Heights. All activities in a tambayan shared by the research participants involved other people. In other words, the act of *tambay* can be understood as a group activity which creates a deep sense of bonding among those who participate. In a way, the *tambayan* is special for the participants and their peers. As discussed in the section "From Mundane Places to Safe Spaces" instances where teenagers continue to make the most of the food court in Toronto or how Resident 1 (W) has flexibility when it comes to selecting *tambayans* to fit her schedule her obligations to speak to Filipino immigrants' placemaking ability.

7.2 Not a Monolith: the Filipino Immigrant Experience

The differences between the conversations in Winnipeg and Toronto revealed several key differences that were apparent in how they saw their respective neighbourhood public spaces. The key informants in Toronto reported that the teenagers they worked with saw *tambayans* as both a place of gathering and, more importantly, a temporary escape from reality. On the other hand, two of the three participants in Winnipeg remembered the basketball court and community centre as a "happy place," and the conversation "brought back fun memories" (Resident 3, W). However, they did not mention that they saw the public spaces as an escape.

Lusis and Kelly (2006) write that migration has conventionally been studied as two separate sets of processes—departure and arrival. Migrants' departure process is often conducted in economic deprivation, political upheaval, or cultural maginalization. In contrast, their arrival process is characterized by questions of assimilation and settlement, labour-market integration, and community participation. They (ibid, 2006) argue that it is assumed that once migrants have crossed from departure to arrival and are establishing new lives in their adopted homelands, the "… baggage of a former life is cast off and abandoned" (p. 832). In reality, migrants' lives have always been more complicated, as Lusis and Kelly (2006, p. 832) put it, "…migrants are 'here' and 'there'…". For migrants, forging new relationships and sustaining old ones creates multistranded social relations that link their societies of origin with their societies of settlement (ibid). Their (Lusis and Kelly, 2006) work sheds light on why *tambayans* also act as extensions of life in the Philippines.

As discussed in the subsection, "The Modern Filipino Family" in Chapter 2, the mass migration of Filipinos seeking employment abroad has reshaped the dynamics of millions of families. As much as technology, regular remittances, and sending *balikbayan* boxes sending have made long-distance family relations easier, Schmalzbauer (2008) argues frequent communication does not necessarily lead to a deep understanding of each other's realities. For example, migrant parents in the United States rarely revealed the details of their lives to their children in Honduras. While some parents reported wanting to be honest with their families, they simply do not believe them if they say life in the United States is challenging. This misconception is blamed on TV shows their children are exposed to and returning migrants who flaunt their clothes and jewelry (ibid).

Caseworker 1 (T) reported that immigrant teenagers are often "stunned" when they arrive in Canada because their expectations of an affluent life are shattered. This stark realization is explained by Lusis and Kelly (2006, p. 844) "The economic capital derived from even low-status work in Toronto, for example, can be converted into substantial cultural and social capital back in the Philippines. Indeed, the very fact of being in Toronto, of being 'abroad', constitutes cultural capital in itself." They explain that this has a lot to do with the value society attaches to consumer goods that are considered attainable in Canada are construed as trappings of an elite lifestyle in some areas of the Philippines. The distortion between imagined life in Canada and reality can partly be explained by youth's perception of wealth derived from the social capital built on preconceptions about 'being in Toronto.' (Lusis & Kelly, 2006)

Examining the experiences of Filipino immigrants from areas with high concentrations of those who have immigrated through the PNP, and the LCP may seem insignificant. However, as Coloma and Pino's (2016) research suggests, the economic outcome of elderly Filipinos is strongly correlated to their specific migration program and age of arrival to Canada. The findings from this research support Coloma and Pino's (2016) and Eric's (2012) works. Generally speaking, Eric (2012) argued that the two cohorts comprise Filipino immigrants to Canada have contrasting lived experiences in Canada. These findings show what the conversations topics were discussed in Toronto and Winnipeg. For example, in the Maples, where immigrants are more likely to have landed immigrant status through the PNP, respondents hardly mentioned feelings of homesickness and they referred to their *tambayans* as 'a happy place.' In contrast, Caseworkers 1 and 2 (T) reported that the youth see *tambayans* as 'safe spaces' which implies that the immigrant youth feel uneasy and uncomfortable in places that are not their tambayans.

Caseworkers 1 and 2 (T) reported how they observed that the youth in Toronto continue to actively make connections to their homeland, which may actually be a positive thing. Indeed, as Ho (2013) argues, inward feelings create 'chicken-and-egg' issues, resulting in immigrants' employment concerns. However, there is no reason for Filipino immigrants to cease doing what made them happy in the Philippines after moving to Canada. After all, the whole point of the Canadian mosaic is for different cultures to celebrate their uniqueness. That is not to say that some impediments make it difficult to express their being Filipino in public spaces in Canada. In the previous section, I discussed some of the concerns of Filipino immigrants when it comes to public spaces and the roles these places play in their lives. Despite these challenges, Filipino immigrants have found ways to make mundane spaces *special* by turning them into their own *tambayans.*

7.3 Opportunities for Future Research

Several avenues of future research have opened throughout this project. This project illustrated that the story of Filipino migration to Canada represents two cohorts. The lived experience of immigrants in Canada is diverse, complex, and highly textured, making a case for investigating more inclusive engagement methods. Finally, this project was proof that ideas from BIPOC communities can help address some of the problems afflicting Canadian suburbs. For instance, the Winnipeg focus group revealed insights into the needs of a diverse suburb such as amenities for the ageing-in-place population.

While several works (Brickner & Straehle, 2010; Eric, 2012; Tungohan, 2017; and Carlos & Wilson, 2018) deal with Filipino temporary foreign workers in Canada and their migration experience, work has yet to be done regarding the children of Filipino immigrants and their relationship with the built environment. This research work revealed how nuanced the migration experience of migration is. One of the findings that could be investigated in further detail is the experience of tied migrants, as introduced by Berry, Hou, & Drapeau (2016) and their relationship with the built environment. Their (ibid) work indicates how tied migrants often face more difficulties with social integration and labour market participation. This makes the situation of migrant children more precarious as their parents themselves are already marginalized.

In this project, I looked at how the built environment, particularly public spaces, affects a Filipino immigrant's ability to assimilate and participate in the broader Canadian society. In addition, Canada's population is continuing to be more diverse. Therefore, there is a case to be made that expanding a similar study to include other ethnic backgrounds can help inform planning decisions in cities and towns across Canada. Finally, the revitalization of Lawrence Heights is currently being undertaken, and there is a plan to add more mixed-income housing. Upon completion of the revitalization project, it will be interesting to look at this project as a case for or against mixed-income housing in diverse neighbourhoods, whatever the case may be.

7.4 Conclusion

The works of Rishbeth (2001), Xiao et al. (2018), and Roberts et al. (2019) illustrate how ethnic minorities underutilize urban parks, in part, because their design does not reflect the cultural needs of non-Western populations. In particular, Rishbeth's (2001) work highlights how parks fail to meet the needs of certain ethnic populations. However, as the literature indicates, the relationship between public spaces and the needs of minorities is quite paradoxical. Moreover, as Zhuang (2021) points out, immigrants and racialized people are often excluded from planning decisions. So how could racialized populations express what they want in planning interventions if they are excluded from the decision-making process in the first place?

This research project gives a platform to one of the largest visible minority groups in Canada, to help start an important conversation that recognizes their cultural identities and values. This research revealed the complexity of the lived experiences of Filipinos in Canada. Coloma & Pino's (2016) and Eric's (2012) works show how immigration policies have long term effects on the lives of Filipinos in Canada. Eric (2012) discusses how the Filipino community in Canada can be broadly characterized into two cohorts based on their immigration status on arrival. The findings in this study support Eric's (2012) arguments. In Lawrence Heights, where the youth were more likely to be children of LCP migrants, *tambayans* were analogous to being safe spaces, implying feelings of discomfort in other public spaces.

On the other hand, none of the Maples focus group participants associated *tambayans* as a safe place or as an escape. Residents 2 and 3 (W) associated *tambayans* with recreation and sports, while Resident 1 (W) associated *tambayans* with places where you hang out between school, work, and other obligations. However, despite having more mundane definitions of *tambayans*, the Maples focus group still considers *tambayans* as having an important role in helping them adjust to life in Canada.

This research illustrated how it can be difficult to define what public spaces are in Canada neatly. So much of what makes a space public in the eyes of Filipinos is shaped by culture and traditions. The humble *sari-sari* store and its modern evolution—convenience stores reflect how the lines among commercial, public, and residential (in the case of the *sari-sari* store owner) uses are often blurred in Filipino culture. As Polvorosa (2012) notes, these beliefs and understandings influence how Filipino-owned businesses in the GTA often double as gathering spots for Filipinos. Similarly, this research illustrated how spaces that may not necessarily be considered public spaces are public spaces for Filipinos. Resident 3 (W) shared how he thought of hallways in the Maples community centre as a *tambayan* because seniors would frequently hang out there during the winter. In Toronto, ESL classrooms were seen as safe spaces first, classrooms second. Caseworker 1's (T) story about how students would ask in jest if they could fail exams on purpose so they can stay in the ESL class speaks about the anxiety to leave the confines of their *tambayan.* This shows how feeling safe is more important that upgrading their skills. This tendency to keep to themselves supports the arguments of Ho (2013), wherein the seemingly benign inward feelings may result in immigrants experiencing a sense of exclusion.

One of the surprising findings in this research is how some of the most unexpected places like classrooms or food courts can mean so much to students. This research revealed how difficult it is to define public spaces. Dunham-Jones & Williamson (2021) advocate the reemergence of civic commons. "Parks as green space are not always the answer to what public space should be" (Woodner and Weisz, quoted in Dunham-Jones & Williamson, 2021, p. 54). They urge that people's understanding of public spaces be reimagined by inviting new forms and uses for these spaces. Adding parks as default public spaces in areas with populations with different understanding and appreciation of public spaces may not be the best and most practical use of that space. The conversations with Filipino immigrants in Winnipeg and caseworkers in Toronto shed light on the importance and complexity of public spaces for immigrants. Without actually having ownership of these spaces, the youth in Toronto and the respondents in Winnipeg were still able to carve spaces in a foreign land as their own by making a personal connection to these spaces. The personal connections they make with their personal *tambayans* support by Francis et al.'s (2012) suggestion that the quality of public spaces far outweighs their quantity.

> *"Sometimes the public space is a square, sometimes a park, sometimes a boulevard, sometimes a few square meters around a fountain or in front of a library or a museum, sometimes an outdoor café colonizing the sidewalk. In all instances what matters is the spontaneity of uses, the density of the interaction, the freedom of expression, the mul-tifunctionality of space, and the multiculturalism of street life." (Castells, 2005, p. 61)*

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FIGURES AND IMAGES

All figures and images courtesy of the author, unless otherwise indicated

Figure 1: Evans, B. via Flickr, posted in the Philippine Primer (2016, July 30) *A typical sari-sari store* [image]. https://primer.com.ph/tips-guides/2016/07/30/expat-guide-sari-sari-stores/

Figure 2: 7-Eleven Philippines, posted in Yummy.ph (2020, December 26) *7-Eleven store exterior* [image]. http://yummy.ph/news-trends/7-eleven-philippines-mini-supermarket-a00260-20201226?ref=feed_1

Figure 8. Urban Systems. (2020, November 4). *Active Green Living Space* [image]. Urban Systems. https://urbansystems.ca/community-two-wheels/

Figure 14. Sellar, C. (2021, November 12). *Jefferson Avenue development breaks ground* [image]. Winnipeg Free Press. *https://www.winnipegfreepress.com/our-communities/times/Jefferson-Avenue-development-breaks-ground-575727621.html*

Figure 17. Neighbourhoodguide.com (n.d.). Lawrence Heights photo gallery [image]. Neighbourhood Guide. https://www.neighbourhoodguide.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Toronto-Neighbourhood-Guide-Lawrence-Heights4.jpeg

Figure 18. TSN. (2021, July 7*). NBA 2K launches new basketball court in Toronto's Lawrence Heights community* [image]. TSN The Shift. *https://www.tsn.ca/the-shift/nba-2k-launches-new-basketball-court-in-toronto-s-lawrence-heights-community-1.1664949*

Figure 19: Toronto Community Housing. (n.d.) *Lawrence Heights Phase 1 Revitalization* [image]. Toronto Community Housing. https://www.torontohousing.ca/capital-initiatives/revitalization/PublishingImages/MasterPlan-ViewA01_LR03%20(2).jpg

Figure 20: City of Toronto (n.d.). *Lawrence Heights Triangular Park Conceptual Plan* [image]. City of Toronto. https://www.toronto.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/8e70-2020-01-23-Lawrence-Heights-Triangular-Park-1024x723.jpg

CONSENT FORM

Tambayan ["a place where people hang out"]: **Public Spaces in Suburbia from Filipino-Canadian Perspectives**

Researcher:
John Flaminiano, Graduate Student
Department of City Planning
umflami2@umanitoba.ca

This consent form, a copy of which will be left with you for your records and reference, is only part of the process of informed consent. It should give you the basic idea of what the research is about and what your participation will involve. If you would like more detail about something mentioned here, or information not included here, you should feel free to ask. Please take the time to read this carefully and to understand any accompanying information.

Description of Research Project
As the third-largest group in terms of population size amongst all Asian groups, the Filipino community in Canada has grown significantly in the last two decades. Like other immigrant groups, Filipino immigrants bypass the urban centres and settle directly into suburbs.

This study intends to look at the changes happening in Canadian suburbs through the perspective of one of the largest immigrant groups—the Filipino community. Through focus groups, this study intends to learn about how members of the Filipino community in the area use public spaces and how Filipinos' understanding of public spaces may differ from are conventionally considered public spaces in Canadian cities. The research findings may help inform the development of planning policies in cities with growing immigrant populations.

Focus Groups
Focus groups will be held through a video conference call using a licensed version of Zoom. The session will take no more than one hour.

Benefits and Risks
The research project aims to generate useful research that may be of interest to municipal planners and neighbourhood organizations, who in turn may use it to improve services to immigrant populations. As residents of the neighbourhood, direct benefits may include the opportunity for residents to share their insights on how open spaces may be better designed to suit their needs. The researcher is interested in hearing about your perspective on community involvement, especially with other people in your neighbourhood. Indirect benefits are that the final research products will contribute to knowledge generation and dissemination and may result in more effective strategies for planners and community organizations who seek to create more inclusive communities.

There is minimal risk associated with this research. It is expected that the risk of participating in the focus

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group is no greater than risks encountered in everyday life. There is also a very low risk that others will have access to the primary data. This research does not intend to criticize, condemn, or denigrate the decisions of local people, organizations, or governments.

Although the nature of a focus group is such that confidentiality cannot be guaranteed, participants will be reminded not to repeat what is said in the focus group to others, nor are they to share the identities of those participating in the group with others.

Use of Data, Secure Storage and Destruction of Research Data

Confidentiality

Your name or any other personal information will not be included in the presentation or report materials arising from the study. To ensure the confidentiality during the session, participants will be asked to change their display name to their assigned code of choice.

Where information occurs within a session transcript that will be included in the final project report or presentation, identifying personal information will be omitted. All research data will be encrypted and stored on my password-protected computer. Backup copies of encrypted files will be securely stored on the University of Manitoba Individual File Storage system OneDrive under my personal University account in a private, password-protected folder. Transcripts will be deleted at the end of the project in May 2022. Any handwritten notes taken by the researcher during the focus group will be securely kept in a locked cabinet and will be destroyed by the end of the project in May 2022. Direct quotes may be used in the Capstone report and/or summary and/or poster but will be kept anonymous by attributing quotes using a coded naming convention which only identifies their neighbourhood. Copies of the consent form will be securely kept on file by the Course Instructor (for information purposes only) for two years following course completion and then destroyed, in accordance with University ethics policies.

Recording

The focus groups will be recorded, however participants may choose to keep their videos turned off for the duration of session. This is to ensure that the discussions are accurately captured. You will be ineligible to participate if you do not consent to being recorded. The information you share during the session will be kept completely confidential. Recordings will be destroyed once they have been transcribed. Because focus groups will likely be held in both English and Filipino (Tagalog), the researcher will not use a transcription service to transcribe the sessions. The researcher will manually transcribe the sessions. All data will be kept in an encrypted file on a password-protected computer and back-up files will be securely stored on the University of Manitoba Individual File Storage system OneDrive under my personal University account in a private, password-protected folder. Only the research team will have access to the reconstituted data. No information that will directly or indirectly identify you will be in the final report without your express permission.

Dissemination

Information collected from participants will be used as part of the "*Tambayan:* Public Spaces in Suburbia from Filipino-Canadian Perspectives" research project. It will result in publication of a capstone project. In addition, the results of the research may be disseminated in policy documents; academic publications (including but not limited to books, book chapters and journal articles), op-eds, conference presentations, pamphlets on best practices for community organizations, and public workshops. It is anticipated that a

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copy of the Capstone report and/or summary and/or poster will be made publicly available through the University of Manitoba website (https://umanitoba.ca/architecture/department-city-planning).

Withdrawing from the research

Participation in this project is voluntary and you may decline to answer any question or withdraw from the study, including after the focus group, at any time until January 15, 2022 or within three weeks of the focus group date (whichever is later), without any negative consequences. If you wish to withdraw from the study, please contact John Flaminiano (see contact information above).

Your signature on this form indicates that you have understood to your satisfaction the information regarding participation in the research project and agree to participate as a subject. In no way does this waive your legal rights nor release the researchers, sponsors, or involved institutions from their legal and professional responsibilities. You are free to withdraw from the focus group at any time by informing the moderator, and /or refrain from answering any questions you prefer to omit, without prejudice or consequence. Your continued participation should be as informed as your initial consent, so you should feel free to ask for clarification or new information throughout your participation. You may withdraw from the study at any time prior to January 15th, 2022 or within three weeks of the focus group date (whichever is later), by emailing umflami2@myumanitoba.ca

The University of Manitoba may look at your research records to see that the research is being done in a safe and proper way.

This research has been approved by the Research Ethics Board at the University of Manitoba, Fort Garry campus. If you have any concerns or complaints about this project, you may contact any of the above-named persons or the Human Ethics Officer at 204-474-7122 or HumanEthics@umanitoba.ca. A copy of this consent form has been given to you to keep for your records and reference.

Thank you for participating in this project. Your cooperation and insights are very valuable and are greatly appreciated!

I agree to be audio and video recorded.   Yes ☐   No ☐

I give permission for my comments to be referenced as a resident of my neighbourhood.
          Yes ☐   No ☐

I give permission for my comments to be referenced back to:
          ☐ my job type (e.g., executive director, housing director, chair, case worker, etc.)
          ☐ a more generic term (e.g., neighbourhood resident, etc.)

I, _____ (print name), agree to participate in this study.

_____   _____
Signature of Participant   Date

I would like to receive a summary of the results from this project (expected to be available in May 2022). If yes, please provide your email address or mailing address below.
          Yes ☐   Contact information: _____   No ☐

Focus Group Guide

Title of Project: *Tambayan* ["a place where people hang out"]: Public Spaces in Suburbia from Filipino-Canadian Perspectives.

Name of Moderator/Researcher:

- John Flaminiano, Graduate Student, Department of City Planning, University of Manitoba

[Prior to the focus group beginning, the moderator/researcher will explain the project, review the consent form, and make sure the participants are comfortable with the process, aware of their right to withdraw at any time during the discussion, and can withdraw from the study. The researcher will also ask the research participant to not make any references to information that would identify specific individuals or households, but to speak in general terms about their experiences.]

The recording disclaimer will be read by the moderator prior to starting the focus group:

> *As mentioned in the recruitment email, this session will be recorded, however you may choose to turn your videos off. I would like to remind the participants that the recording and transcripts will be securely stored. These files and any handwritten notes that I will take will be deleted shortly after the end the of the project, which is expected to be in May 2022. Rest assured that none of the focus group participants will be identified by name in the transcripts and the report. If you do not wish to be recorded, I'm afraid that you may not be able to participate in the study. I appreciate your taking the time to join us today.*

> *Before we begin, I would like to remind everyone that although the nature of a focus group is such that confidentiality cannot be guaranteed, participants are reminded not to repeat what is said in the focus group to others, nor are they to share the identities of those participating in the group with others.*

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Preliminary Questions:

1. Please introduce yourselves and briefly share how long you've been a resident of **[Neighbourhood]**
2. Why did you choose to live in the area?

Main questions:

3. Do you have a *tambayan* (Tagalog for a place for hanging out) in your neighbourhood where you see spend time with friends or family?
4. What are the important places in the neighbourhood for you?
5. Please share why you consider these places to be important to you.
6. Are there other important public places outside of your neighbourhood?
7. Public spaces are commonly defined as an open space which serves external or outdoor recreational needs of the local community. What are your thoughts on this definition?

Concluding Questions:

8. Thinking back to your experience with public spaces, in your opinion, what would make these places better?
9. Does anyone have anything they would like to add to what we have discussed today?