Condocracy: The con-dos and con-don’ts of condo community

by

William Nicholas Turman

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Authors declaration

I hereby declare that I am the sole author of this thesis. This is a true copy of the thesis, including any required final revisions, as accepted by my examiners.

I understand that my thesis may be made electronically available to the public.

Abstract

Condo development, as a form of housing, currently comprises almost half of all housing starts in Ontario. This type of development is aided by policy directives (Lehrer and Wieditz, 2009), and it is what Rosen and Walks (2014) are identifying as a transformation of social, cultural, and political life, what they call 'condo-ism'. This thesis aims to explore this transformation in the framework of Harvey's conception of the right to the city (2012), exploring resident experiences of life in and around a condo in four ways: how the condo provides a sense of home and ontological security, how the condo supports a sense of community identity and entitativity, how the physical design of the condo facilitates the two previous concepts, and how the formal community, expressed in its rules and regulations, impacts residents' ability to control their environment. The research involved seven semi-structured interviews with renters, resident owners, non-resident owners, a condo board member, and the condo manager for a single condo in a mid-sized city in Ontario. It was found that the physical design and the formal rules of the condo disempower residents. However, the identity of the condo and the area in which it stands reinforced residents' identities. Notably, there was no connection between the residents of this condo and an adjacent condo. Dogs and dog ownership were found to be an unexpected source of social connections within and beyond the condo, and online social media groups were important, but controversial, sources of information.

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1.0 Introduction

Where I live in Southern Ontario, and likely many other places in North America, most new developments are met with a familiar groan of exasperation: not another condo! This new and highly visible form of development feels like an imposition on the city (hence the exasperation), yet it is now the dominant form of new housing in most Ontario cities. In Ontario, over half of all housing starts in 2018 were condominiums ('condos', for short), and even more in cities (OHBA, 2018). Although urban towers are condos' most visible manifestation, condos are not an architectural form but a form of legal tenure: a form of collective ownership and shared governance. Rosen and Walks (2014) describe condo development and the neoliberal ideology and perspective that condos come with as a transformation of urban space, what they call "condo-ism". This system of transformation stretches from governmental policies that promote homeownership, densification of urban areas, and a mix of land-uses, to the movement of people, equity, and the way we relate to urban space. Originally seen as a way to democratize landownership, condo tenure lays out rules for collectively governing property and the people who occupy it. However, the promise of improving democracy, equity, and accessibility for all urban dwellers does not always meet the mark, which should cause planners and policy writers to pause before encouraging condos as a central tool for meeting city-building targets.

Condos are a relatively new form of tenure, which was originally intended to fill gaps and democratize homeownership. The legislation borrowed heavily from the United States when it was first enacted in Ontario in 1967, and the condo was framed as a co-operative but with the financial risk shifted to the individual (Lippert, 2012). Later review in 1977 of the Condo Act explicitly highlighted that "community life is an integral part of condominium living. Since the condominium concept is based on common property ownership, it involves owners in the problems as well as rewards inherent in community life" (Ontario 1977, in Lippert, 2019). In

Toronto, condos were built in the 1960s and 1970s to ease an affordable housing crisis, and with the expectation that empty-nesters would move into condos to free up single-detached homes for new families (Lippert, 2019).

In the current wave of condo development, which started in the late 1990s following the neoliberal Harris provincial government, the province and municipalities like Toronto shifted their policies to become more involved in redeveloping inner cities and attracting a demographic with economic power: the "creative class" (Lehrer and Wieditz, 2009). Today's policies, like Ontario's *Growth Plan* (Ontario, 2019), the *Provincial Policy Statement* (Ontario, 2020), and various municipal official plans provide a perfect environment to encourage condo development. On the one hand, Federal and Provincial governments withdrew financial support for producing rental housing, making condo construction more feasible (August and Walks, 2018). On the other, development and planning policies focus growth into concentrated areas around service provision, especially transit, and away from ecologically important areas. These densification policies seem to be a direct response to suburban sprawl and single-use zoning, itself a means of segregation by class. The intention of these new policies is for growth areas to be "complete communities", defined in the *Growth Plan* (Ontario, 2019) as "places such as mixed-use neighbourhoods or other areas within cities, towns, and *settlement areas* that offer and support opportunities for people of all ages and abilities to conveniently access most of the necessities for daily living".

Yet the goals of supporting people of all ages and abilities are not met. The opportunities that condo development encourages are skewed towards the gentrifying upper class (Lehrer and Wieditz, 2009), professionals (Lippert and Steckle, 2016), and as a gendered form of urbanism (Kern, 2010). According to an analysis of condos in Toronto, almost 80% of new condo units are bought by investors (Rosen and Walks, 2014), shifting the focus from "community life" to individual private property. A 2012 survey pegged nearly 45% of condo units in downtown

Toronto as rentals (Rosen and Walks, 2014) a division by class and a tenure that explicitly has fewer rights to govern the condo's spaces than owners. There is a preconceived notion that condo living is for the independent and childless. This suggests that condos, rather than support complete communities, create classist and segregated communities.

There is a gap here between the professional justification and motivation for condos and their perception by urban dwellers—the sense of exasperation that comes through in conversations and media. It's not exasperation at the architecture, because condos can be tall towers, or mid-rises, or townhomes, and rental apartments can have a similar architecture. Neither is it that people don't want condos, because lots of people buy condos and live in them, and just as many will rent in a condo. Perhaps the exasperation with condo development comes from the neoliberal motivations for condos and their governance. Condos create a private club (Rosen and Walks, 2014) or vertical gated community (Graham, 2015) that is built without the interests of the local community in mind. The policy justification for local growth is narrowed on hyper local provision of services and public spaces, yet the demand for condos in these areas comes from outside of these areas, a type of gentrification. The interests of the condo and its owners can seem to be set up in opposition to neighbouring residents; the interests of resident-owners and renters can be in opposition to the interests of non-resident owners and investors.

In the rush to build cities that have "complete communities" as a corrective for sprawling suburbs, we have failed to consider the effects of condos—an important method for meeting those goals—on the existing community and the community that they intend to produce. Condos are not necessarily meeting these goals, and they are potentially changing the very nature of life in cities. This study is an exploration of the people who reside in and around condos to understand how they meet the needs of community. Where previous scholars have focused on the meanings of condos to individuals and professionals, I intend to explore them through the perspective of the community. In effect, this is an exploration of one aspect of condo-ism: the

interrelations of people and their collective power to shape their communities within and around the condo, how these conceptions of community might compare to previous conceptions of community life, how shared spaces compare to public spaces, if there are barriers to community in condos, and if condos increase or decrease civic engagement, not just within the condo but within the broader public realm.

Unlike conventional gated communities, rental apartment buildings, and freehold housing, condos divide the rights to the property, together called the bundle of rights, among different classes and tenures. Owners have the right to participate in the governance and rules enforcement of the condo board, even if they don't live there. Renters do not have this right, and only have the right to occupy the space, but they can be neighbours in the same hall to owners. Owners have the right to engage in the community whether they live in the building, down the street, or have never even seen the building. To facilitate this, the bundle of rights in a condo is different from other housing, creating the condo board as an elected group of owners to govern shared spaces and manage the affairs of the condo. Since tenants have little to no access to the condo board, the onus is on landlords to communicate rights and obligations to them. Neighbouring tenants likely have different landlords and different lease agreements, further confusing what rights residents have to the space. In addition, every condo has the potential to have a different set of rules and division of the bundle of rights. With the fracturing of the rights to space and unfamiliar boundaries of condo commons, how does a condo fit into a city? Can owners have a sense of solidarity with tenants, especially as condos are used as a form of investment for middle-class people in addition to foreign investors? Is there a sense of community in a condo? Are condos a good way to make "complete communities"?

Rosen and Walks (2013, 2014) deconstruct how condo development in cities is a new system of urban space, a transformation of everyday life. They describe the current trend of condominium development as not only a new building typology and a different form of tenure,

but as being what Harvey would call a "structured coherence" (2014). What they mean is that this type of development relies on several factors—political, socio-cultural, and economic—coming together to form an entirely new pattern of development. This pattern, which they call 'condo-ism', is described because they see it as reproducing itself and *transforming social, cultural, and political life in cities*. Condo-ism promotes private ownership and pushes against public regulation according to neoliberal ideology, and it is tied to current policies that promote densification in urban centres, a reduced (and reducing) influence of governments to build public infrastructure and changing preferences of residents. Rosen and Walks (2013, 2014) point to condo-ism as both beneficiary and cause of these shifts, which they imply could alter the way people relate to urban space and to each other. In short, condo-ism, like the suburban shift to homeownership in the 1960s, is a reinvention of urban space with a potential impact on people's right to the city.

The concept of the right to the city can be traced back to Henri Lefebvre (2003). Building on Marxist discourse, he described space as a social product, produced by people who inhabit it. Not only is this product exploited by the bourgeoisie, landlords, and politicians, he argued that those who produce space have a right to control it, and he called it the "right to the city" (2013). Marxist Geographer and proponent of the right to the city, David Harvey, extended this right to include the right to create one's own identity (2012). He directly connected the identities that we form to the places we inhabit: not only do we shape urban spaces, collectively, they in turn shape us. He argued that "the freedom to make and remake ourselves and our cities is… one of the most precious yet most neglected of our human rights" (2012). Therefore, if condo-ism is a transformation of urban spaces, it is also a transformation of the people who inhabit those spaces. Condos are a problem, which, on the surface, suggests more tools for individuals to control their spaces through ownership and collective governance. However, as Rosen and Walks (2014) claimed, condo-ism is a reimagining of urban spaces for the benefit of neoliberal property ownership—it is taking away control of everyday life to exploit it for profit.

Using the concept of condo-ism as a starting point, this research draws on the work of other scholars who have linked condo development to broad changes in urban culture. Lehrer and Wieditz (2009) coined the term 'condo-fication' to describe the new process of gentrification through condo development. Condo-fication is tied to policy and planning regimes in Ontario and Canada that encourage high-density homeownership, and therefore favour development of condos over rental forms of housing. These are policies like Ontario's *Growth Plan* (Ontario, 2019), which restricts and focuses development into built up areas; various local policies that support Richard Florida's focus on the moderately wealthy and urban 'Creative Class'; section 37 of the *Planning Act,* which allows developers exceed zoning limits in exchange for "community benefits"; easy mortgages for private home-owners; and a public disinvestment in social housing, leaving public housing providers continually underfunded. The result is large development pressures in urban areas that can be most easily be met by large developers and the dispersed ownership of condo towers. This, in turn, displaces existing residents, businesses, and spaces of everyday life.

From a different angle, Lippert (2019) explored how the complex regulatory and rule-based tenure of condo ownership gives more power to 'experts' and 'professionals' rather than residents. His term, 'cond-isation', described how forms of governance within condos are too complicated, limiting those who can participate to those who profit from it. Lawyers, real-estate agents, and condo managers have important 'knowledges' that are used to govern the condo and the people within it. Condo governance obscures the paths and knowledges of governance that might be easily seen in a rental apartment by spreading ownership and responsibility across many owners and professionals. Responsibility for good management of the condo is transferred, in part, to every owner, and every owner can in turn be a landlord. Lippert framed this as another form of gentrification where the affluent have an outsized influence over the everyday life of people in the city.

Condo-ism paints condo development as the new frontier of urban renewal. The process of condo-ism is a continual and neoliberal process of claiming real and imaginary property for private and individual profit. While the condo is a different form of ownership tenure, "the condominium is much more than a form of tenure, but instead is a potential vehicle for the restructuring of city life, and of the mechanisms governing evolving urban class relations" (Rosen & Walks, 2013, p. 170). Without referring to the right to the city, they reflected Harvey's justification for it: that urban space shapes who we are as people as much as we shape urban space. A transformation of space through condo-ism also speaks to Park's warning: "indirectly, and without any clear sense of the nature of his task, in making the city man has remade himself (Park in Harvey, 2012).

This thesis is an exploration of this reinvention from the perspective renters, residents, and owners. Where others, like Rosen and Walks (2013, 2014), have described the development and governance sides of condos (Lippert, 2012; Lippert and Treffers, 2016a; Lippert and Steckle, 2016b; Lippert, 2019; Lehrer and Wieditz, 2009), and the gendered nature of condos (Kern, 2008, 2010, 2012), here, I explore the social, cultural, and political life of condos and how it interfaces with the city. I have several broad and overlapping objectives with this research: (1) To describe how community in a condo functions, (2) To understand the roles and perceptions of shared spaces in the condo for the community, (3) To identify systemic barriers to community in condos, and (4) To ask whether condos empower residents and owners have control over their own space. In other words: do the social and political ecosystems of condos facilitate or hinder the right to the city?

To answer these questions, I have organized my research into four broad themes. First of these is that of the "sense of home", or ontological security, concepts that relate to how people feel empowered and in control within their own spaces. The second theme is the "sense of community", or entitativity, concepts that relate to how people identify with and feel included in

a group or community. The third theme was about how the physical design and allocation of space interacts with the unique legal division of rights in a condo. The design and physical features are not what make condos unique. Rather, it is the legal framework of condos that makes them unique, and this framework can impact the way residents and owners perceive and interact with each other in those spaces. The final theme is that of the formal rules of the community. Condos are known for having impenetrable rules governing everyday life that directly impact how people exist in their own homes and how they interact with other people.

This thesis unfolds in nine chapters, beginning with Chapter 2, the literature review. This review focuses on four key concepts, which are also used to frame my empirical findings. First, I look at Giddens' (1990) concept of **ontological security**, followed by an exploration of sense of community, neighbourliness, and the concept of '**entitativity'** – defined as the feeling that a group of people identify as a single entity. Following that, I ground the current **design** typology and motivation for the neighbourhood model in urbanist literature and practice. The last of the literatures explores the challenges and opportunities of communities with **formal structures**, including collectively owned properties, gated communities, and other studies on condos.

With a grounding in literature in-hand, I then describe, in Chapter 3, the methods for gaining an empirical understanding of community in condos. While the literature was broad, this study is aided by narrowing the field of inquiry to a single case study, using snowball sampling method to interview six stakeholders from all tenures and the property manager. I present the results and discussion in four separate sections (Chapters 4 - 7) that align with the four key concepts in my literature review.

Chapter 4 explores how participants perceived the condo as a space of home and how it contributed to their sense of ontological security. This revealed that there are two conflicting ways in which people gain ontological security from the condo: residential security and financial security. Financial security of the owner was requisite on the insecurity of the tenant. However,

the identity of the building as tied to the tech industry and its reinforcement by the city, supported both residents' and non-resident owner's ontological security.

Chapter 5 explores the sense of community through the framing of entitativity. Specifically, it examines how people perceive the boundaries in and around the condo and how that impacts their interactions with people. Despite sharing the whole condo in common, participants saw only those nearest them in the hall as their neighbours. As for those outside of the condo, an adjacent condo building was seen to be "another world", and the ever-present homeless population was a divisive issue. Dogs, however, were important in creating connections within and beyond the condo.

Chapter 6 explores how people interacted with spaces and the people in them in and around the condo. The hallways and lobbies were found to discourage interactions and encourage mobility, much like modern roadways. Other shared spaces like the terrace and the party room were both infrequently used, or they were misunderstood, but have both hosted important formal and informal events that fostered connections. Facebook was the most important source of community news and connections but was hugely divisive.

Chapter 7 explores how people interacted with the formal aspects of the condo, such as the condo board, the condo manager, and the condo's rules and regulations. The condo board members were perceived and perceived themselves as administrators rather than community leaders. Instead of holding the board accountable, much of the responsibility was given to the condo manager, who many participants antagonized as a result. Most participants were unfamiliar with the rules of the condo, which, even though they were seen to be bad or unenforceable, nobody had the will or ability to change them.

In the final chapter, Chapter 8, I conclude that the condo was not supportive of community development and in many ways obfuscates it. The shared spaces of the condo are not perceived to be spaces of home, nor are they entirely public spaces. The physical design of the

condo physically disconnects residences from shared space, making it difficult for people to place themselves in relation to others. In addition, the complicated structure of power and responsibility divides and disempowers collective action. It is because of this that I playfully propose the term 'condocracy' to describe this kind of community . Interactions and governance are mediated through the offices of property managers and landlords, and the structure of ownership and governance perpetuates this by keeping residents divided: the community is a bureaucracy.

2.0 Literature Review

Understanding how condos affect communities is an ambitious task. In this thesis, it is impossible to delve into every aspect of community. Common terms, like 'community' and 'neighbourhood', are contested, and the right to the city is inherently interdisciplinary. In addition, while the right to the city is a pre-eminently practical concern, dealing with everyday life, the literature on practical concerns are often not grounded in the right to the city. Therefore, I have grounded this (admittedly incomplete) exploration in several different literatures that I see as having a bearing on people's ability to exercise their right to the city. These literatures often depart from conventional planning scholarship. I first look at how people perceive their home as an expression of self, and at how people perceive the distinction between common and private space. Then, I turn to theoretical discussion about what is sense of community and neighbouring, followed by a grounding in urbanist conceptions of design as a tool for positive community outcomes. Finally, I explore literature on the impacts of formalized communities that are comparable to condos.

2.1 Sense of Home and Self: Ontological Security

Condo tenure exists at an intersection of shared and individual property and space. Condo tenure is a legal framework for having private property within a matrix of communal, but still private, property. Blandy et al. (2006) discuss the management of multi-owned properties like condos as a bundle of rights that can be separated, such as the right to occupy and the right to sell. Blomley (2008) frames rights to space emerging when they are even used or occupied, even if there is no legal title to it. He calls spaces that are used by many people as the commons, even if they aren't public and owned by the state. Condos have the right to exclude, enclosing the commons. This raises questions of where the boundaries between the commons and private spaces, and if spaces can have several different types of commons in a condo. Some refer to

these communal private spaces in condos as a “club-realm” (Rosen and Walks, 2013; Webster 2002; Warner, 2011). While the legal understanding of what rights people have over these spaces may be very clear, it is less clear how people claim those spaces, and if they see them as commons, or as inhospitable. This is less about physical rights to space, but social relations and perception of space

Some in other disciplines have described the spaces of the commons and private spaces as existing in tension with each other. For instance, Sennett (1977) described how the changes in the way people behaved and perceived themselves in public also changed the way they behaved and perceived themselves in private. During the Victorian era, people came to understand their character through interactions with others in public for it to be revealed in the home. Sennett argued that this pattern has been inverted: individuals now seek to understand themselves through inward reflection in private, and public spaces are to be feared because it is in public where we might reveal our true inner character. Public space, in this reading, is perceived as inhospitable because it exposes our inner life. It is against this hostile perception of public spaces that Harvey (2013) asserted the right to the city. A dangerous public realm is contrary to one that shapes our identities. Withdrawing from participating in public space means abandoning the collective right to shape ourselves.

Public and private spaces are intrinsically connected, and both are tied to a sense of self. However, we perceive private spaces differently in relation to the self than public spaces. Here, the concept of ‘home’ helps distinguish the different roles of public and private space. ‘Home’ can be thought of as a significant space that extends beyond the walls of the ‘house’, which ties social and physical worlds together (Easthope, 2004). The home can also be seen as a site for forming and maintaining personal identity (Dupuis and Thorns, 1998). Dupuis and Thorns (1998) evaluate how the home relates to identity using Giddens’ (1990) concept of ontological security, which defined simply is “the confidence that most human beings have in the continuity

of their self-identity and in the constancy of their social and material environments" (Dupuis and Thorns, 1998: 27). They assert that the home is the central site for maintaining the sense of ontological security and it provides a "secure base around which identities are constructed". Other works support this by showing that a sense of home acts as a buffer against threats to the self (Yang et al., 2020).

The argument that a sense of home can define identity has been supported by other scholars, some of whom suggest that this effect extends beyond the house. Phenomenologically, familiarity of things, places, and people is central to the sense-of-homeness, and this familiarity provides a basis for the self (Koster, 2020). Cuba and Hummon (1993) suggest that a sense of home or a place identity can be attributed to a dwelling, a community, or a region. Of interest is that these different scales of identity may contradict one another. For instance, they found that engaging with people in one's wider community contributes to a sense of common identity with the community but reduces identification with a dwelling. Others have found the construction of a sense of home was related strongly to within the dwelling and the neighbourhood (Hamzah and Adnan, 2016).

Sense of home and ontological security are also related to the rights conferred by tenure and legislation. In their New Zealand study on ontological security, Dupuis and Thorns (1998) found that homeownership contributed to the four aspects of ontological security:

(1.) site of constancy in social and material environment;

(2.) spatial context of routine human existence;

(3.) site where people feel most in control of their lives, free from surveillance; and

(4.) a secure base around which identities are constructed.

Their caveat was that the differences in local social context would make it difficult to compare to other countries or cultures. However, this difference may not be so severe as to make

comparison impossible, or it may be that the differences between sites are more related to legislative and policy differences – as other studies have shown.

In a similar study of ontological security and rental tenure, Easthope (2014) compared Australian and German rental policy and societal norms and found that strong tenant protections in Germany contributed to several aspects of ontological security, while the Australian context made rental tenancy ontologically insecure. In addition to weaker tenant protections in Australia, there was a perceived moral hierarchy of tenure, with high-density housing and rental tenure perceived as morally inferior to homeownership (Easthope, 2014; Kerr et al., 2020). Weak tenant protections can lead to increasing costs for renters, and an increase in precarity. Another study of sense of home found that the concept in Malaysia mostly lined up with that found in western literature (Hamzah and Adnan, 2016). Rather than being incomparable, there are commonalities that show policy and legislation across cultures have an important effect on tenure security.

Therefore, differences in tenure likely have more impact on the ontological security of residents than cultural differences. Many Western societies have been promoting a neoliberal approach to housing that favours ownership over other forms of tenure. Hamzah and Adnan (2016) briefly noted that strata ownership, another name for condo tenure, confers less control over the home and its surrounding than other ownership tenures. After homeownership and rental tenure, there are many other forms of tenure. DeFilippis (2004) suggested that collective ownership models such as limited equity co-operatives, Mutual Housing Associations, and Community Land Trusts have the possibility to return some control and security back to residents away from other, globalized financial investment. These other forms of tenure are much less common, some are recent developments, and many are applied in unique circumstances.

The home, as it has been described here, is a special place where people and things are familiar. The sense of familiarity and continuity help to constitute a sense of identity for a resident and this extends beyond the walls of the house. While some models of tenure are socially and politically valued in our culture and seem to increase ontological security, such as single-detached and owner-occupied housing, other tenures have just as much potential to produce a sense of home. What often limits their ability to provide ontological security for residents is weak legislation and government protections for them. Condos are a unique form of housing tenure that contain several kinds of members: renters, owner-occupiers, and non-resident owners. Additionally, they are defined by having common elements—spaces that are not public, but also not individually owned. What then, is the sense of home like in a condo? Is it limited to the unit, or does it include common elements? Does the sense of familiarity with people and place extend beyond the common walls of the building into neighbouring condo buildings and the public streets?

2.2 Sense of Community: Entitativity

The concepts of sense of home and ontological overlaps with 'community', another widely used and contested term, because they are partly derived from connections outside the home. The term, 'sense of community', can be defined as a feeling of belonging, shared faith in needs being met, and a feeling of being important in a group (McMillan & Chavis, 1986, in Francis et al., 2012). However, the literature on community is diverse and sometimes conflicting, and in addition, this narrow definition for 'sense of community' might not capture the people's experiences of connection to place. Most often, 'community' is an empty word. Within the literature, however, there are several other terms that signify a similar meaning relating to how people connect to people and form social networks. These include studies on neighbours and neighbourhood and social capital, and how interactions can induce social

connections. The term that is most useful in this present study is *entitativity*, defined as "the 'thingness' or 'groupness' of a group" (Whitham, 2019).

The terms 'neighbour' and 'neighbourhood' are vernacular for talking about the people who live closest to us and the area in which we live, and our connection to them. The amount that people feel safe in their neighbourhood has an impact on their own satisfaction and their neighbouring (Sharp, 2018). Additionally, a sense of community and social connectedness mediates relationship between neighbourhood stability and resident well-being (Farrell et al, 2004). However, this effect of stability is not consistent. For residents of poor neighbourhoods, stability was perceived as a negative, and for those in wealthier neighbourhoods', stability was a good thing (Ross et al., 2006). This is probably because stability in the poor neighbourhood means that residents are not able to get out of their current situation.

There are, of course, different ways people can interact with neighbours that result in different types of connections. Mann (1954) suggested that latent forms of neighbourliness, as opposed to manifest (visible) relations between neighbours, might result in an increased sense of neighbourly solidarity. Similarly, Granovetter (1973) suggested that communities that have many "weak ties", or many casual acquaintances as opposed to predominantly strong relationships, are more likely to show strong cohesion because weak ties facilitate sharing information more broadly and across cliques. The "strength of weak ties" is that they bridge social groups to create a more cohesive community. This is like social capital, a concept that describes mutual connectedness, and how social connections can lead to life improvements. Granovetter's types of 'ties' correspond with several varieties of social capital – including 'bridging' social capital, which connects people with opportunity, and 'bonding' social capital – which provides support but not opportunity. Researchers have found a relationship between homeownership and bonding social capital in a Canadian context, but no clear connection to

bridging social capital (Leviten-Reid and Matthew, 2018). Important factors for social capital, regardless of tenure, include having kids and being in a minority group.

Some would suggest that instead of the inclusive connections between members being important, it is the creation of boundaries that make a community (Shaw, 2007). A boundary, either physical or social, can influence with whom people make ties. This is of interest in contexts where there are social and physical boundaries, like residence in a neighbourhood association. Even though proximity may form natural physical boundaries around a community, there are questions as to whether physical boundaries can foster social connections across diverse groups within (Warr and Robson, 2013). In neighbourhoods with neighbourhood associations, Ruef and Kwon (2016) found a discrepancy in social capital between non-homeowners and homeowners: non-owners benefited, homeowners did not.

The social cohesion and ability to pursue a common goal, such as governing an apartment building or multi-owned property, requires appropriate avenues for engagement, particularly in the context of increasing diversity within apartment buildings (Liu et al., (2018). Liu et al. (2018) found a distinct lack of research on creating cohesive communities among diverse apartment buildings. The research that has been done relates to cultural diversity in urban density, and everyday encounters and associational engagement within buildings. This draws heavily on the contact hypothesis, which states that tolerance will increase as the majority group are exposed to minority groups. Varshney (in Liu et al, 2018), distinguished between everyday and associational forms of cross-cultural engagement. They suggest that associational contact, the kind that builds on shared interests, is needed just as much as everyday contact.

The network of neighbourly and weak connections, shared interests, social solidarity, and social and physical boundaries can help to define communities as a specific “thing”. This is a social psychological concept called “entitativity” and it is a property of a group of people “that differentiates a coherent social group from an aggregate of atomized individuals (Whitham,

2019: 897). The amount that a community can be identified as a "thing", or its entitativity, is related to several components. These include boundaries, interaction, shared history, shared goals, proximity, similarity, and common fate (Whitham, 2019). What has been found is that increases in community entitativity for rural communities are related to increases in civic engagement, like voluntary citizen participation (Whitham, 2019). A group of people who exercise their collective right to the city would also be expressing a strong entitativity. Communities with entitativity are seen as more important to members, potentially more fulfilling, and more important to their social identity (2019).

Discussions on community are slippery and wide ranging with many different approaches to trying to understand it. The pursuit of 'community' itself is problematic and ideological (Shaw, 2007). Scholarly discussions on community, and the concepts related to it, centre on two themes: the ideas of social ties, and of boundaries. The concept of entitativity acknowledges the importance of both and is practical to use in an exploration of condos.

2.3 Design and Community

While condos do not have a unique physical design, these spaces interact with and have an impact on the unique distribution of legal rights in condos and how people perceive themselves and their neighbours in relation to space. Boundaries are an important aspect of entitativity, and physical design of neighbourhoods, communities, and their boundaries has been an important force in urbanism for a hundred years. Most strikingly is the concept of the neighbourhood unit, which has roots in urbanists like Ebenezer Howard and Le Corbusier, and still has a hold on urban design today. the neighbourhood unit and previous designs, like the Garden City, is predicated on the presumption that dividing the city into smaller units and creating spaces where people can interact will result in people creating fulfilling communities. Even critics, like Jane Jacobs, attacked the veracity of those presumptions by pointing to

instances where physical form resulted in different behaviours and interpersonal relationships. Current urban models like the Congress of the New Urbanism, respond to these types of criticisms by having a more fine-grained urban design, but still fall to the same shortcomings: they presume a certain type of behaviour. It may be straightforward to dismiss environmental determinism in the creation of community, but it has been seen empirically that physical design of urban spaces has an impact on community, just not always what was predicted (Pendola and Gen, 2008; Wilkerson et al., 2012; Fried, 1982; Nasar and Julian, 1995).

Urbanists, since the early 20th century, have emphasized physical design in the formation of communities. In addition, physical boundaries are used as tools to define communities. Ebenezer Howard's vision of the garden city, although not directly aimed at creating community, exhibits many of the features of community and entitativity: a restricted population of around 32,000, self-sufficiency, and public spaces. These features create the borders and common goals that characterize sense of community. The 'neighbourhood' concept was conceptualized in the 1920s. Clarence Stein and Henry Wright, in the design of Radburn New Jersey, envisioned neighbourhoods of fixed size, with a hierarchy of streets and a definite boundary and centre (Patricios, 2002). Clarence Perry's concept from around the same time shared many characteristics: the hierarchy of streets which would discourage outsiders, central public space, and a limited total population (Patricios, 2002). Perry's intentions were to expose residents to each other to develop social relations as a remedy to dehumanizing cities (Patricios, 2002). Le Corbusier designed his 'towers in the park' model around creating borders around interior spaces for community in his *unites d'habitation*. They resembled "vertical garden cities", with internal communal spaces, much like a condo has today.

These models, though old, are still influential in the design of urban and suburban spaces. A quick tour of maps and satellite images will show that even the newest subdivisions are built in similar forms to the neighbourhood unit, likely because it is manageable from

development perspective (Patricios, 2002). The recent model of neighbourhood building, New Urbanism, calls for neighbourhood designs to reflect more traditional forms and designs. Design elements like public spaces, architecture, and housing styles, are central in promoting shared use of space and social interactions (Congress for the New Urbanism, n.d.). The idea is that having place-based designs can help foster place-based identity and help define neighbourhoods' community boundaries and characteristics. The goal is also to encourage people to stay within their neighbourhoods for services and other things. In the places where this has been done to its fullest extent, it closely resembles the neighbourhood unit, or conventional suburban design conventions.

These types of models of urban space-making align with environmental determinism. The garden city and neighbourhood unit models see social problems in the existing urban form and assume that rearranged urban space will fix them. New Urbanism, similarly, sees social problems in the repetitive sprawl of suburban space and rearranges urban spaces into fine grain details to improve social interactions. Urban design has been used as a tool for social planning, though very rarely are these social remedies backed up by empirical data or justification. For New Urbanism in particular, their approach to creating social interactions through design has been criticized for being rooted in anecdotal and not empirical evidence: "theoretical and empirical support for the notion that sense of community (particularly its affective dimensions) can be created via physical design factors is ambiguous at best" (Talen, 1999, p. 1374).

However, some research has drawn a connection between physical environment and sense of community. As it relates to the design of public spaces like roads and parks, the *quality* of the space was found to be more important to sense of community than proximity to public space or number of public spaces, though proximity remained important (Francis et al., 2012). Similarly, streets that exhibit characteristics of a 'main-street town' are associated with higher sense of community than neighbourhoods with other design characteristics (Pendola and Gen,

2008). More generally, positive changes to neighbourhood environment, such as porches, continuous and accessible sidewalks, and low-speed traffic, have been found to be associated with higher levels of neighbourliness (Wilkerson et al., 2012). In addition, objective environmental attributes, such as access to nature and public open spaces and privacy, have been seen to be correlated to residential satisfaction and community satisfaction (Fried, 1982). Nasar and Julian (1995) found that, in neighbouring apartment buildings, one with an interior courtyard and one without, the residents of the apartment with an interior courtyard had a higher sense of community.

These results, while they are not conclusive that design produces sense of community, they do suggest that there is a connection between design and sense of community, however affected it may be by other factors. Nasar and Julian (1995) qualified their earlier findings by suggesting that the increased sense of community (in an apartment with a courtyard) may be due to more community-minded residents in that building. They also found that the sense of community was related to the mix of uses, and in married couples with children. Talen (1999) suggests that there may be an association between increased sense of community in New Urbanist neighbourhoods and physical design, but that the physical form might only be credited with increasing the probability of the formation of community.

This connection between design and sense of community may also work in the opposite. The physical barriers of gated communities can weaken the ties between residents within the gated community with residents of surrounding neighbourhoods (Mantey, 2017). This effect was also deepened by internal public spaces within the gated community. Presence of internal public spaces was associated with residents not noticing the social division between residents of the gated community and those outside of it (2017). The boundary-making of gated communities has negative impacts on relations with the wider community (Blandy and Lister, 2005).

Other models for designing neighbourhoods and community blend physical design and community intention, such as co-housing, which is a form of shared ownership and self-development. A case study of co-housing reveals that "the design of the private unit influences social interaction" (Williams, 2005: 217). Cohousing, unlike other forms of neighbourhoods, has community and social interaction as an explicit goal, with common involvement in decisions empowering residents and increasing their interest in the community (Williams, 2005). Cohousing, as a form of neighbourhood design, is an interesting case because it incorporates formal rules of society into the neighbourhood along with a specific intention to form a community. Other forms of housing incorporate formal community rules for residents of a specific area, like gated communities. While the legal framework for decision making in gated communities may enable residents some control over their environment and suggest improved social cohesion, there is evidence to the contrary. A lack of foreknowledge of the legal framework means that many are not aware of the impacts of collective management, and legalized neighbour relations makes it logical to refer to law to resolve conflicts (Blandy and Lister, 2005).

The neighbourhood model of urban design espoused by Clarence Parry broadly fails in acknowledging residents' social understandings of neighbourhoods. Patricios (2002) says that the neighbourhood model is pre-eminently manageable, but it does so by disregarding residents' social understanding of neighbourhoods, which are more significant to their perceived evaluations of neighbourhood than environment. Administrative divisions like census tracts and wards, used to allocate resources and regulate urban space, do not match perceptions of space, which likely has an impact on the environments and residents within them (Haynes et al., 2007). It has been seen that residents' perceptions of their neighbourhood vary significantly from each other, and from official census tract definitions (Coulton et al., 2013; Coulton et al., 2001).

The other side of this argument also agrees that physical design of space as important to foster social interaction and connection, but that it is more important that the space be created by the people who use it rather than by professionals. This is more in line with Harvey's conception of the right to the city. Jane Jacobs' idea of urban space was imagined around public spaces and these public spaces were not complete or truly urban spaces unless they were filled with people. What she called the sidewalk ballet was this network of how people interacted with each other and the urban space (2011). Physical place often creates the perfect boundaries for inclusion or exclusion into a community, and the places themselves can also lead to activities for community members.

Urbanists' utopic visions of environmental determinism often fall to neighbourhood effects: the idea that people adopt the traits of the neighbourhood in which they live. Support for neighbourhood effects are unclear. Some evidence suggests that residents of gated communities are more likely to vote conservative in Canada, though this may also be a result of self-selection (Walks, 2010). Even though neighbourhood effects are contested, many forms of urban renewal are predicated on their efficacy. Places like Regent Park in Toronto are built with tenure mix with the expectation that the wealth and social graces of the wealthy will rub off on the poor (Kelly, 2013). Positive neighbourhood effects through tenure mix has rightly been criticized as paternalistic (Kelly, 2013) and misguided because it disregards how people do not form ties across social groups (Lees, 2008). In the case of condos, Graham (2015) argued that condo spaces are often an elitist, "simulated urbanity" that draw strict boundaries around social class. Even the perceptions of an area as open for certain groups can disrupt the day-to-day activities of social life in the neighbourhood can become coopted and force the activities of regular residents out, reducing their capacity to maintain those relationships (Kern 2016).

The 'quasi public' spaces within condo buildings are a space in which people can create community connections (Kern, 2008). However, Kern (2008) also criticized them as being

insular and as a way for people to preselect their community. The urban setting of condos allows residents to reclaim the inner city for the middle-classes, but with a neoliberal framing: accessible to those with money and "remaking it as a site of spectacle and elite leisure activities" (p. 674). Furthermore, in redefining a resident's relationship to urban space as one of consumer and client, the city "is no longer obligated to be a provider of social services, a promoter of difference, or an engineer of social justice" (2008, p. 676). While the quasi-public spaces of private condos are accessible only to who live and own in the condo, Pannacci (in Graham, 2015) suggested that Jane Jacobs' sense of urbanity in the streets and shops must also be extended into the corridors, elevators, and lobbies of condos. Graham pointed to condo's proliferation in Vancouver being repetitive versions of suburban housing, empty half the time as the property is first a good place to park investment: there is nobody to produce urban space.

2.4 Formalized Community

Many urban spaces and communities, including condos, only function because of the formalized rules that govern how people interact with each other and with the space. In the case of condos, rules that were originally intended to empower people with collective ownership are now so complex that they serve the opposite function and empower professionals. Lippert (2012, 2016, 2016, 2019) calls the process condoization. Although the intention of condo living could potentially be noble and community oriented, condoization has led to a situation in which 'community' interests play a backseat role. Complex legal knowledges take away power from residents and owners, which becomes mediated by professionals and investors with a vested interest in maintaining monetary value. The result is a community that is checked out and allow the mechanisms of condo law to manage conflict and the community in their interests and allow for financial interests to take priority as a common and quantifiable common goal. While Lippert looked specifically at formalized communities in condos, similar effects can be seen in

other contexts for property ownership, sometimes generalized as multi-owned housing (MOH) (Yau,2014; Leshinsky and Mouat, 2015).

The structure of the formal community of a condo is predicated on property laws. In the formation of certain kinds of community, property law can either support, or inhibit it—what Lehavi calls "legal headwinds" (2009). What this means is that legal structures can shape communities to develop in certain ways. In the case of condos, the type of community that condo law supports is a formal one centred around ownership, similar to the community organized in gated communities with homeowners' associations. Thinking about how multi-owned residential developments legally define owners' rights, it may be useful to consider the theoretical framework laid out by Blandy et al. (2006). They consider the rights to property owned in common as a bundle of rights. This conceptualization allows for different rights associated with the property to be distributed to different parties rather than treated as an indivisible whole.

In a condo, the distribution of the bundle of rights is complicated, which can reduce people's ability to engage with them. The condo board has the right to manage the shared property, set rules for behaving in shared spaces, and depending on the condo, regulate changes in units. The legal headwinds in Ontario for condos promote strong professional involvement in the work around the condo. The *Ontario Condo Management Services Act* (2005) requires that a hired property manager and management company must be properly licensed, and others require condo board members must receive official training. The condo board is liable for injury on the shared property, which encourages boards to give the rights to professional managers and contractors. The property manager for condos in Ontario is often tasked with mediating and interpreting provincial legislation for condo boards, and thus has a privileged position when it comes to governing the condo itself (Lippert, 2019). Blandy et al. (2006) found that the complicated property rights of condos confused owners and caused them to give more power to

the managers. Additionally, they found that developers continued to exert influence over the management of the property after it had been sold to private owners. In similar findings in Hong Kong ownership associations (like condos), the organizational structures confused owners and residents, hindering collective action and the democratic process, and resulting in a reduced ability of owners to practice control over their own dwellings (Yip and Forrest, 2002). Perceptions of efficacy as an individual and collectively in managing a shared property were directly related to people's engagement and participation in management (Yau, 2014).

Many of the challenges associated with shared ownership tenures arise from its management. Even beyond interpreting legislation for the condo board, there is evidence that the property management's role includes mediating internal conflicts and keeping outsiders away (Yiu et al. 2006). The authors of this study suggest that property management companies are not just managing property, but they govern property rights, enforcing how rights to the property are exercised (2006). Chen and Webster (2005) similarly concluded that the efficiency of multi-owned properties in Taiwan arises from privatizing bureaucracy—giving the responsibility over civic goods to privately held property management companies. Darcy and Rogers (2014) found that professional community builders obviate self-organizing of tenants, reducing their ability to exercise their own collective control over their space and community.

This would put property managers in a tricky position in the community as the gatekeepers for community members and the commonly held property. Indeed, many studies of multi-owned properties around the world have noted the challenging position of the property manager in the community. In a study of Australian condos, four areas of concern were identified, and these mostly were centred on management and the authorities (Fisher and McPhail, 2014). However, formal communities mediated by rules and paid staff may be just another form of community development. Kenna and Stevenson (2013) found that residents' experiences of community in a gated community were associated less with social interaction and

more with the formal rules and requirements of the gated community. In fact, the central figure in their community seemed to be the security personnel at the gate, an individual who is only present because the rules of the community association required them.

Formalized community can benefit the democratic process and empower people to engage in the process, like in governments. However, when it comes to formal communities based around real estate, the formal community is oriented more closely around money, and this can make it more difficult for people to engage with their neighbours.

2.5 Literature Summary

While policies encourage condo development in "complete communities", literature suggests that there are many factors that impact how people relate to their spaces and social and material environments. More must be considered for how urban spaces can be improved for people than just a concentration of uses and people. The formal rules that govern spaces and communities can either empower or disempower people from making decisions about it, and the way in which property rights are divided plays an important role in that. The design of the spaces themselves can alter how people relate to them and each other. Spaces designed to mix classes and promote social capital can produce the opposite effect (Kelly, 2013). A useful framework for understanding how people identify with and connect in groups is the concept of entitativity, which looks at features of communities like boundaries, interactions, and shared goals. The connections that each individual member has with the community and the space contributes to their own sense of home and their confidence in the "continuity of their self-identity and in the constancy of their social and material environments" (Dupuis and Thorns, 1998, p. 27), the concept of ontological security. Both entitativity and ontological security are useful concepts in understanding daily life in condos.

3.0 Methods

In this section, I describe the methods for conducting the research. Since the questions posed in this study are broad and open ended, the study is an open ended and qualitative case study of a single condo drawing from semi-structured interviews with renters, resident owners, and non-resident owners of the condo. This follows a similar approach to other scholars who have been critical of condos as a neoliberal form of urban development. Lippert (2019) did a wide range of semi structured interviews of a broad range of stakeholders of condos in Toronto and New York City to support their concept of condo-ization. They included interviews with owners and the professionals who are involved in condos. Rosen and Walks (2014) similarly conducted semi-structured interviews with Toronto's major condo developers, planners, politicians, residents, and other key stakeholders. They incorporated statistical analysis of housing development information to develop their concept of condo-ism, (Rosen and Walks, 2013). Kern (2010, 2008a, 2008b, 2010, 2012) focused more on interviewing women who dwelled in condos in Toronto as a whole. None of these scholars have done an in-depth case study of a single condo to understand the social dynamics therein, instead they drew their data from many different communities. In addition, their samples did not attempt to draw from across the entire community of renters and owners in a condo.

Since I am more interested in the community aspect, the facets of everyday life within the condo, an exploratory case study of a condo community that might be paradigmatic of condo communities is an appropriate way to structure this study (Flyvbjerg, 2006). I have restricted my interviews to the people who might be part of the condo "entity". That is, they might be associated with the identity of the condo as it is described by the concept of 'entitativity'. The different stakeholders I identified as being important are resident-owners, non-resident owners, board members, and renting tenants, as these would be the people most likely interested in investing in or maintaining a sense of community, who have a personal investment. This does

not include foreign investors because they are not seen to be interested in the everyday life of the condo. In addition, property managers for individual landlords were not considered either.

3.1 Case Study and Context

Since the objectives of this study are to explore a new facet of condos, community, an exploratory case study is an ideal approach to learning about it. A single case study is suitable for this work because it can provide very rich and detailed information, which may provide new leads or questions (Brewerton and Millward, 2001). A single case study provides descriptions that are complex and holistic, and the hypothesis is subordinate to understanding of the case (Stake, 1978). This is what Ridder (2017) might call a 'no theory first' case study, meaning that it is exploratory with a research question stemming from a gap in understanding. This approach is expansionist rather than reductionist, and its best use, according to Stake, (1978) is to add to "humanistic understanding". In addition, a case study allows the researcher to study the subject within its context, and in the case of condo community, it is unclear what the boundaries are between the community and the context are (Yin, 1981). The lack of knowledge of what to expect makes comparing case studies more difficult in a multiple case study.

A single case study has benefits and drawbacks when it comes to answering questions about community in condos. A single case-study can be very detailed and go in depth, and they can provide rich information, which may provide new leads or questions However, a single case study can often get caught up in the details and lose impartiality. The wide range of qualitative information might make it difficult to analyze the data, and a single case might not be generalizable to other cases (Brewerton and Millward, 2011). Care must be taken to select a case that is similar to other cases. A single case study can be used to generalize about that type of case under certain conditions. Since efforts have been done to select a case that might be representative of many features of condos, the presence of some feature of the community

suggests that it might also be present in other condo communities that have similar features. By limiting the case study to a single unit, it can also make the study more easily comparable to others with similar features (Gerring, 2004).

Condos come in all different shapes and sizes: some have over 500 units in downtown, and others have less than a dozen in the suburbs. Additionally, older condos were set up with different legislative and development conditions. Sampling from across different condos might obscure patterns from the most recent wave of condo development. Understanding this, I chose a condo that would be representative of condo developments that are encouraged by urban intensification.

This case study takes place in Waterloo Region, a mid-sized region with a population of just over 600,000 that contains several urban centres, Waterloo, Kitchener, and Cambridge. Formerly, the region was highly industrialized, with a high concentration of factories in all the urban areas. However, this has changed in the past 20 years as industry has left the region, making an especially significant mark on the downtown areas. Downtown Kitchener, in the 1970s, was also the target of a similar and failed urban renewal seen by major cities, like Toronto. Ambitious plans to remodel the downtown area left the area with two empty malls and in decline.

In the early 2000s, a plan was put in motion to revitalize Kitchener's downtown. Through an ambitious plan to build Light Rail Transit, invest municipal funds in a tech incubator, invite branch campuses of several nearby universities to build in the area, and subsidize development charges for new builds in downtown, this revitalization has met some success. By the time the LRT opened in 2019, the Region estimated that around $3 billion had been invested in developments along its route through Kitchener and Waterloo.

In selecting an appropriate condo for the case study, I decided the type of condo that would be most illustrative of the type of community that is being developed now would have to

resemble the condos that are being commonly built, and it would have to be of an age where the community could develop and residents have had time to establish themselves. This would be a condo that was built at least seven or more years ago but have been formed since the most recent change in development trends. In Kitchener Waterloo, that would be since the late 1990s, early 2000s. In addition, a condo in this context resembles many other municipalities in southern Ontario, where investment in higher order transit is being met with rapid development. What makes Kitchener Waterloo illustrative is that it is one of the first municipalities outside of Toronto that has built higher order transit.

The condo I selected for this study, which I will call the Alpha Lofts here, is an adaptive reuse of an old factory in Kitchener's downtown. It was established as a condo in the early 2000s, and it is in an area of the city experiencing rapid development thanks in part to municipal subsidies and investment in services and transit. The Alpha Lofts are unique in that the one structure houses two separate condo corporations, both with between 150 and 200 units. In addition, it is nearby to some other large condo developments, which will mean residents can answer questions about how they connect with residents of other condos.

3.2 Research Methods

3.3.2 Semi-structured Interviews

The participants were chosen through purposive and snowball selection through existing connections of the researcher. I asked participants and known residents of the condo to ask other residents or stakeholders if they were interested in participating and to distribute a recruitment sheet with my details. I also asked them to post an advertisement in a public space in the condo. Participants would contact me directly. The goal was to interview individuals from each of four groups: renters, resident owners, non-resident owners, and a condo board member. Seven interviews were conducted, ranging from one to three hours. Of the participants, two were

renters, three are non-resident owners, one is a resident owner, and one is with the property manager. One of the non-resident owners was also a member of the condo board at the time.

During interviews, I did not refer to other participants or identifying information about them. In this thesis, participants are referred to by pseudonym, and any blatantly identifying information is omitted. All participants received the consent form beforehand and returned it to me signed during the interview. Within one week of the interview, I sent out an appreciation letter detailing their rights, their expectation for confidentiality, and how they might withdraw at any point up until this thesis was published.

Table 1: Interview Participants

Participant Pseudonym	**Relationship with the Condo**	**Description**
Alfred	Resident Owner	Young urban professional who recently purchased their first home here
Bob	Renter	Young urban professional with a foreign landlord
Charles	Non-resident owner	Young urban professional who purchased and lived in the unit before moving into a single detached dwelling
Doug	Non-resident owner, Board Member	Professional and empty nester nearing retirement age who purchased a unit to move into for retirement
Elizabeth	Non-resident owner	Young urban professional who purchased and lived in the unit before moving into a single-detached dwelling
Francine	Renter	Young Urban Professional who has rented the same unit for seven years

Semi-structured interviews were used, which I recorded the audio and during which I took notes. Semi-structured interviews give more control over the questions with the expectation that responses are open-ended (Ayres, 2012). This type of interview allows the researcher to learn new things about the case study and allows the researcher to increase their understanding of the subject with more interviews. My interview guide had four rough sections,

starting with basic questions about the participant, then discussing their personal experiences of the condo. The next section asked questions about their experience with the community, and the last section asked about their experiences with the condo board and the formal aspects of the condo. Following the interviews, I transcribed them with the intent of capturing the meaning and allow easier analysis (Gibson and Brown, 2011).

3.3.3 Analysis

Analysis of the data was done through open coding, generally following the deductive findings of the literature review. The codes were: Home and security, boundaries, spaces of community, and rules, formal community, and communication. These codes classified experiences and stories that relate to ontological security (home and security), entitativity (boundaries), physical space (spaces of community), and formalized community (rules, formal community, and communication). During coding, other more minor themes or shared anecdotes emerged, such as use of the Facebook pages, concern over the parking lot, and ongoing litigation involving the condo. This process was deductive and based in the literature, but results from the interviews called for some iteration and refinement of the literature. Open coding allows the researcher to uncover ideas and meanings and break down data into segments for easier interpretation (Benaquista, 2012). The benefits of this method are that it can be flexible, is an iterative process that can evolve with the interviews, and can capture many themes and ideas (Benaquista, 2012). The drawbacks of this approach are that it may be unduly influenced by the researcher, and that it is broad and time-consuming (Benaquista, 2012).

3.3 Limitations

The methods for this research were impaired by several things. First, research began immediately before the Covid-19 Pandemic. This presented a challenge for recruiting new

participants, it also changed the types of responses people might give and presented other difficulties in research and for the researcher. Second, I intended to observe one of the Facebook groups for the condo for insights. Nearly every interview mentioned the Facebook groups in some way. After updating my ethics procedure, I contacted the moderators for the two Facebook groups, both of which have over 200 members. One of the moderators took my request to the group, which had mixed feelings. They gave me permission to join the group with the expectation that I introduce myself and my research to the group. I did so, posting my recruitment page and information letter. Following this, a member of the group expressed concerns and I immediately removed myself from the group. Fortunately, many participants spoke directly about their experiences of the Facebook groups, allowing me to learn about the role of this new forum for community engagement without having to directly observe the group.

4.0 Sense of home and Ontological Security

How does one interrogate the factors that may or may not contribute to ontological security and sense of home? For this study, I identified three main questions to explore residents' sense of home and ontological security: why did people choose here, how does the condo fit into their life, and how does the condo impact their feelings of safety and security. For all these aspects, I found the condo to be a transitional and situational space. Those who live and buy there did not see the condo as a home for all stages of life, and many live there as a step to another place, or to access temporary external resources, like school or work. In addition, ontological security was perceived differently by renters, resident owners, and non-resident owners, and there is a strong differentiation between those who gain ontological security from the condo as a home and those who gain security through its financial stability. In all cases, the identity of the condo and the surrounding area were important factors.

4.1 Why here?

One of the questions I probed about was what drew people to live or buy a condo in the Alpha Lofts. This would reveal how people perceived the community or identity of the condo before they were part of it. Not surprisingly, a big factor was location. And location was tied to more than just proximity to stores, work, and transportation. The confluence of the type of work and who worked there contributed to the identity of the condo and those who lived in it. Proximity to these things also affirmed how they saw themselves in the city and allowed them to live out a lifestyle they identified with. The Alpha Lofts are in the centre of the burgeoning tech district, in municipal plans called "the innovation district". Even before people move in, the promotional material for both rental and ownership identifies the building as "within walking distance" of numerous internationally recognized offices. Most participants saw it the same way.

The proximity of the tech industry offered several benefits. Several participants chose the Alpha Lofts because living close to their work was important to them. As Alfred put it: "the location is perfect for me because its super close to work… We like living downtown". The condo also gave them an accessible social group and network of professionals, and its downtown location enabled residents to participate actively in the downtown lifestyle. Participants actively sought out experiences in the downtown, such as festivals and events, and the location of the condo allowed them to live a car-free lifestyle. Both the connection to tech and an urban lifestyle are part of the municipal government's plan. Secondary plans by the city label the area as the "innovation district", and the city has invested time and money into creating and promoting a range of events in the downtown area, as well as huge investments in Light Rail Transit. Being geographically inside these areas means that the identity of residents, both as a tech professional and a "city person" is supported by the city and by the tech industry.

On the other hand, for non-resident owners, the location provides access to a lucrative market renting to high-income tech professionals. This is also a motivation for first time-buyers, knowing they can rent it in the future for continuing income. Charles stated: "that is why I think we can get the $1500, whereas when you compare it to square footage it's quite expensive, but when you factor in the loft and the cool factor and the great location, I had people lining up to rent it out". The tech industry provides a sense of security to residents and owners by providing a group of like-minded and similar people surrounding the Alpha Lofts and providing support and affirmation for their identity as young professionals. The inherent wealth of those in the tech industry provides security for investment. In some ways, the security of the investment in property reflects Walks' (2010) findings that gated communities lean more conservative in federal politics. The security of the investment affirms conservative beliefs and neoliberal ideologies. The expectation of financial stability also creates a semi-permeable boundary that restricts who can be in those spaces: only those with money belong in this area. This provides a buffer against people who have a different identity, and who may challenge this and their beliefs.

Residents and owners appreciated the history of the building itself and can incorporate the former identity of the building into their own narrative. The Alpha Lofts is an adaptive reuse of an old shoe factory and, from the outside, the building looks almost unchanged. Many elements are retained that pay tribute to this former identity: the party room is the former board room complete with historical photos, unique unit layouts, and very tall ceilings. For participants, this history lent some cultural cachet to living there. It also allowed residents to tie that history in with their own, to create a narrative about where they live:

> My dad's father was a shoe buyer for Sears. He bought the women's shoes in huge quantity and he distributed them to all the Sears stores and they'd get sold. So… going to the _________ building is something he would have done in his lifetime to see the shoes being made, to make sure the shoes are up to spec with what he ordered.

The industrialist history of the condo aligns directly with the industrialist narrative of the city and the tech industry. For residents of the Alpha Lofts, this might serve as a bridge between a sense of home in the condo, and sense of home out in the city or region. This raises a question of how residents of brand-new condos would identify with their building, which may have very few identifying features to distinguish it from any other condo. Residents of the Alpha Lofts can learn about the history of their building in the regional museum and see old pictures of it in a city that looked very different. The heritage identity solidly places the condo, and its residents, into the city. An identity that has been around for 100 years may feel more solid and stable into the future than one that is new.

4.2 Condo life cycle

Based on conversations with residents and owners, the Alpha Lofts appear to fill a different role in providing housing stability than is typically discussed in urban literature.

Rather than providing a stable home in the long-term for residents and owners, residency in the Alpha Lofts was almost always seen as a temporary step on the way to something else. People related buying their unit for two main reasons: as a first home, and as a home for retirement, which reflects what Skaburskis (1988) predicted about how condos could satisfy housing markets. There was little evidence of families with children, or households that fall outside the nuclear family, and some cases where residents had unrelated roommates. However, where Skaburskis assumed that residency would be tied to ownership, the pattern observed in the Alpha Lofts was that ownership and residency were completely untethered, which means that evaluations of the ontological security of the condo must be taken from both perspectives.

The population of people who reside in the Alpha Lofts is roughly two thirds renters, which means that two thirds of units are owned by people who live elsewhere. Of the interviews conducted for this study, half of them were non-resident owners, and three patterns were seen in this group: people who had purchased the condo as a starter home and held onto it when they purchased another house, empty nesters who purchased a condo in expectation of moving into it at a future date, and local and foreign investors who purchase condos as purely financial holdings. No interviews were conducted with this third group of strictly investors.

Of those interviewed, owners often discussed purchasing a condo as part of a journey of home-ownership: in relation to owning other homes or properties. Two of the non-resident owners had purchased their unit at a reasonable cost as a first home and were residents thereof for several years before purchasing a second, larger house. Even for the resident owner, purchasing the condo was framed as a starter home. Doug, a non-resident owner and condo board member had purchased the condo as a second property to move into once they retire, because it made financial sense to buy it in advance and watch it appreciate. In nearly every case, the rental income was enough to cover the costs of the mortgage and condo fees.

Why do people feel so confident about owning a second property and having so much equity sunk into an asset? The Alpha Lofts are a good investment. The values of the condo are not expected to decrease. Charles, a non-resident owner, even used the equity in the condo to make other purchases, remortgaging the condo. Condos, however, are not cheap and many owners commented about rapidly increasing condo fees and unforeseen condo assessments. With stable, long-term renters, the costs of the mortgage and condo fees would outstrip the income from rent, as legislation restricts the amount it can increase for remaining tenants. Charles related their financial stress when their monthly costs exceeded their rental income, and their following relief when a new tenant's rent made up the difference. These owners are not big corporations, and financial stress, in this owner's case, was less than $100 a month in the negative.

High levels of turnover enable rental income to keep pace with costs. Owners can set the rent at any rate for new tenants. Renters who have remained for longer observe that their rent is lower than most other units. Therefore, like Lippert (2019) observes, condo ownership depends on a strong rental market. But the high turnover supercharges ownership: higher rents facilitate higher mortgages, and higher mortgages call for higher rents. This enables people with modest incomes to accrue liquid equity at the expense of the renter. The cost of rent is pegged to the costs of ownership.

Condos fill two different roles in providing ontological security for people: security that comes form physical shelter, and financial security. These two types of security, however, can be at odds in the condo, and this contrast is clear between owners and renters. For the tenants interviewed, the security in the space was the cost. Both tenants interviewed had full-time employment, and one had lived in the same condo for seven years. Both said that they originally moved into the condo because of a reasonable price. However, Bob expressed concern of being pushed out by rising rent in the downtown area:

> I think if anything it's gonna be continuing to push them out. So yes, I would say even for myself, if I didn't have the price I have for the unit I'm in, I wouldn't be living where I am. I would say the average is closer to [$1400 or $1500 per month] which is unaffordable even for me, someone who has a full time, relatively decent full-time job as a single person.

Renters are protected from large rent increases by strong provincial protections for tenants, an affordable rent may reduce the financial security of the owner. If non-resident owners have modest financial means to begin with, even small shortfalls can be dangerous for them. In this condo, there have been several recent large assessments for facilities maintenance and upgrades. Owners were offered the choice to finance the payments of the assessment, and others payed it in cash. While owners are subject to fluctuating property markets, increasing condo fees, and unexpected costs, tenants are insulated from this. Owners can accommodate increases in costs by getting a new tenant. It is important to note that Ontario legislation allows owners to evict tenants if they intend to use it for personal use—a rule that makes it easier for small-time landlords to evict tenants than corporate landlords.

The condos, as objects of finance, do not give residents increased sense of ontological security. One tenant noted that, because their landlord is a foreign investor, the owner was apathetic to many of the issues they experienced in the home. For tenants, they are always at the mercy of when the owner wishes to sell, or otherwise dispose of the property. For people who retain a unit in the Alpha Lofts as a second property, there is a risk they could sell at any time without consideration for the tenant. This risk is also compounded by themselves being financially fragile, and the potential for unforeseen extra costs in the condo. This is also related to property assessments that may be too much for the owner to afford and necessitate selling the unit. For both the young new home owners and the empty nesting demographics, eviction protections are powerless when the owner can easily say they want to use it for themselves. For

empty nesters, their ownership is explicitly tied to temporary renters. No investors who were not engaged in the community were interviewed in the course of this study. For the non-resident owners, they still felt a need to be participants in the governance of the building, but they did not have the time, and many were less active than they wanted to be.

A tool landowners can use to increase their financial security and extract higher rents is the reno-viction, or eviction by renovation (Mancini and Common, 2019, Dec 30). Renovictions have been seen in the financialization of large-scale apartment buildings, owned by REITs (Real Estate Investment Trust). Far less obvious though, are small scale reno-victions by small landlords. In the case of a condo where rental units comprise the majority, reno-viction would appear far less systematic, and far more difficult to detect. And, due to having many separate landlords, tenant organizing would be more difficult.

People choose the Alpha lofts for different reasons, depending on their tenure. Owners choose to buy there because it is a sound financial investment with stability into the future for new families and empty nesters. This financial stability relies on renters who choose to live here because it allows them to live the urban lifestyle and reaffirm their identities as urbanites and part of the tech community. A lower cost of rent would not make it as safe an investment, and likely fewer owners would invest in a condo there. These two groups' sense of home in the condo is, in a way, pitted against each other.

4.3 Security

Feeling safe and secure in the condo contributes to people's sense of ontological security because it provides a stable base to build their self-identity, allows them to form routines of everyday life, and it creates a space where people can feel in control. Participants discussed where and how they felt secure in the condo. Rather than having the same feelings uniformly throughout the building, residents associated different spaces with different feelings of safety,

with the private units feeling the most secure, and less security outside their doors. In addition, the feelings of security were seen to be influenced by knowledge of who else can use a given space space, and the level of trust that residents have in the people who do have access to it. Financial considerations also factor into ontological security, because the condo is accessed through rental and mortgage payments. Without being able to pay the costs of being there, people are unable to construct their identity around the place.

Alpha Lofts, like many other condos, has security cameras in the halls, the lobbies, and around the exterior of the building, which most participants did not discuss as contributing to their sense of security, nor in resolving any disputes. However, this condo has no concierge.

Inside individual units, most participants felt very safe. Even though the Alpha Lofts are near several liquor establishments, several participants reported that these never made them feel unsafe in their units. No participants reported any stories of break-ins, or theft from inside the units. There were no external threats while in the units. However, Charles, a tenant with a foreign landlord, discussed how chronic maintenance and sewage overflow problems in their unit were internal threats and felt like "a ticking time bomb". They also saw a threat from a lack of access to their landlord who dwells in China, the property manager, and the confusion over what aspects of maintenance are the responsibility of the condo and the landlord. Without quick and easy access to resolving serious issues, they might have to leave their unit, or their things might get damaged. This experience was not universal: the other tenant interviewed had been living in the same unit for seven years.

Once outside of the individual unit, the sense of security quickly diminished. Many participants were familiar with stories of packages being stolen from out of the hallway. They related that the threat might be due to another resident in the building or delivery people. Delivery people also have easy access to the building and many residents expect them to get in to deliver mail or food by ringing up to the resident, or waiting for someone to enter or leave and

allow them in. Shared spaces, like the rooftop terrace, were seen as safe, but in the sense that a park feels safe: you wouldn't leave your things there unattended.

Another case where common space was not perceived as secure is the bike storage. Several participants noted that they do not use the bike storage because they don't perceive it as safe, recalling a friend who had their bike stolen from the bike locker. The condo board member interviewed also would not expect anyone to store an expensive bike there. In those cases, residents prefer, and are expected to bring bicycles into their own units in contravention of the rules of the condo. This either implies that these shared spaces are not secure from people who don't belong in them, or the people who share these spaces are not trustworthy. In both cases, having one's possessions stolen in a space would not lead to trusting the stability of the space, and indeed, the private unit is in fact used to store private effects. Residents felt anxious having their bicycle unsecured and one expressed that they "would much rather be able to have it in my own unit and not have to think about it".

When asked about security, participants would often refer to the resident homeless in the downtown area. Discussion around homelessness was not always negative, but it did involve anecdotes of other residents vocally complaining about them. There is a recognized population of homeless people who have several services in the vicinity of the condo and are frequently seen crossing the surface parking lot of the condo or sleeping in the vestibule. Participants did not feel threatened by them in their own units and were unbothered when they slept in the vestibule. This raises an interesting point about how the vestibule is used by community members and deserves some discussion. In this case, not only do the homeless see the vestibule as a place of refuge in dangerous and cold weather, but residents and owners of the condo, to a certain extent, permit them to use it this way. The condo manager also mentioned that they probably wouldn't bother taking action against them unless they were causing a problem, or if a resident complained loudly enough. This is one of the few instances where people from outside the condo

seem to find any refuge or use of the condo itself. Not only would it be surprising to find someone using the vestibule of an occupied and detached house for refuge, they would likely be quickly removed from the space by police or the owner. The shared nature of the condo seems to distance responsibility and ownership of the vestibule from individuals and allow for people to not be bothered by it. The occupation of the vestibule is not perceived by either the resident or the occupant as an invasion of the private space of the home. Another factor contributing to this is that there are several entrances to the condo, which one resident said made it easier to avoid them if they wanted to.

This is likely not the case with every condo. The Alpha Lofts does not have a doorman, but it does have cameras and a live-in superintendent. I would imagine that part of the reason homeless people shelter there is because of the location of the condo nearby so many services, not being directly adjacent to other buildings, and having several entrances that are not directly next to the street. It also implies that condo residents do not feel as though the vestibule is directly a part of their private space. They may not perceive all the privately-owned spaces of the condo to be private, but rather see it as at least partly public. The same is also partially the case for the above-ground parking-lot. Some residents felt threatened by people crossing over the parking lot, while others saw it as acceptable.

Financially, the power in this dynamic is weighted heavily towards the property owners. Although tenants do have strong protections from Ontario Legislation, the structure of the condo disperses them. The ownership structure and management of the condo privilege the financial security of owners first and foremost, leaving tenants' housing security as a by-product of this. As will be discussed more in depth in a further section, the condo administration sees efforts to improve the quality of life in the condo for residents as an opportunity to increase the property values and the ability to extract rents from tenants. Interestingly, while tenants have financial stability as long as they stay, owners are much more vulnerable to financial changes.

However, the inability to pay for the unit, from either the renter *or the owner*, is catastrophic for the renter.

5.0 Sense of Community and Entitativity

The concept of entitativity is one way to frame and model the community within the condo. The central idea of entitativity is cohesiveness to a group (Whitham, 2019). In the context of this study, there may be strong reason to support that there is a strong cohesiveness within the condo itself because there is shared ownership and decision making, as well as shared spaces, in which residents have a shared stake. This same model may also be used to gauge community entitativity at different scales. For instance, there may be cohesiveness among a subset of residents of the condo, or community cohesiveness might apply beyond the condo and into the city.

Many components have been proposed for community entitativity, including: boundaries, interaction, shared history, shared goals, proximity, similarity, and common fate (Whitham, 2019). While all these components can help describe this case study, it can become quite difficult: they are all interconnected and overlapping. Some of these aspects may appear evident here, but I will not expound on them. For instance, the finding of the previous chapter that the adaptive reuse may contribute to a shared history would be interesting to interrogate further, however, that is outside the scope of this study. So, like Whitham, (2019), this exploration of the condo will limit itself primarily to the discussion of boundaries, interactions, and the shared goals.

Here, I have sought to understand and draw the physical and social boundaries in and around the condo. While it is impossible to draw a complete network of strong and weak ties with everyone and what contributes to them, this is an attempt to identify the major fault lines in developing community. This was done by asking about who felt like a neighbour in the condo, how they interacted with people in and around the condo, and what contributed to connecting with other residents of the condo. Major themes found here include: boundaries within the

condo, boundaries between condos, connection to homeless neighbours, and the bridging social capital of dogs.

5.1 Boundaries and neighbours

The concept of boundaries in community entitativity is flexible and might be applied in many ways in the condo community. It essentially serves to denote one group from another: the people who are in and the people who are out. Whitham (2019) describes it as being both a geographic boundary and a social one, but both types are related. Social boundaries can be considered like membership into a group, or social cliques, distinguishing between strong and weak ties, and where there are no ties at all. The framing question here is, for the people involved in this study, who is a neighbour and to whom are they responsible as members of the community?

Additionally, understanding how these boundaries function can be seen through how people interact with others within those boundaries. The way in which participants interact with people at different scales may also indicate how strong the boundary is, or what that boundary means. The language used when discussing this with participants was that of neighbours and neighbourhood.

For participants, the perception of who counted as neighbours was quite limited. Most considered only the units closest to them in the hall as their neighbours, Alfred described this sentiment: “when I talk about neighbours I mainly thinking of the people on my floor, in particular the units closest to mine, the ones on either side across the hall and down the hall a little ways”. This boundary is quite clear, and many other participants mirrored this perception, with differences in degree: some only considered the unit across the hall, others the entire hall. On further discussion of what constitutes a neighbour, some participants further broadened

their thinking that everyone in the condo was a neighbour, based on having shared access to spaces, but these were neighbours in concept rather than in experience.

Within the geographic boundaries of the hallway, people interacted with people in different ways. Some would say hello to those they passed in the hall, and some would not. Elizabeth recalled a neighbour in the hall who helped them carry cans of paint from the elevator to their unit:

> I think there is a great community there. I was carrying loads of paint. I had four or five cans of paint I was trying to carry, and I was in the elevator and the other person came in the elevator helped me carry it back to me cause I was carrying so many of them. So that was really nice. And people in the halls always say hi. Or chat with you briefly.

This sort of interaction can contribute to general familiarity with people in the hall, like Mann's latent neighbourliness (1954), or Granovetter's weak ties (1973). While people in the halls may say hello and have general familiarity, this might not entail enough social cohesion to enable people to make direct requests of their neighbours. Interactions mostly rely on coincidental encounters rather than intention, and these coincidental interactions may not be the kind that tie people to their private unit.

Several non-resident owners in this study compared the condo to their current single-detached residence and neighbourhood. On a residential street, their neighbours are marked exclusively by proximity: the eight or so houses closest to them. When they compared it to the condo, however, they were less clear about who the neighbour was—whether it was those in their hall or everyone who lived in the same building and could access the same space. This distinction might come down to how people identify people with a location and opportunities for social interactions. Anyone you see in the condo is likely to live there. Their access to the space is a badge of membership and acknowledges their proximity. Whereas a person on a public

residential street could be anyone passing through. For people who drive, the condo's shared parking lot and shared entrance may enable chance encounters when they walk between their vehicle and their unit, whereas drivers who park directly in front of their homes, or in a private garage, have little opportunity to bump into neighbours. Additional moments of shared interaction came at the nearby transit stop, where residents acknowledge neighbours they saw.

On the other hand, the familiarity with neighbours was not strong enough to foster what Mann might have called "latent neighbourliness". A familiar face was not always enough to tie a neighbour to a specific unit or make requests of them. One participant who was being noisy recalled that the neighbour in the adjacent unit banged on the wall to voice their displeasure rather then ask them face to face. They still have not seen them in person, even after living there for several months. In another incident where the participant was the noise offender, their neighbour texted the onsite super, who in turn texted them to stop making noise. Part of this unfamiliarity with neighbours might result from the design of the space, which makes it "hard to cross paths organically in that building." As Charles explained, "You'd have to basically make appointments to see each other".

The strongest feelings of neighbourliness were the units directly adjacent to their own. Charles, who was a resident for several years, said that "the only person that we had a relationship with that we could call a neighbour, that we knew, was the guy that was across the hall from us". This raises a question about the quality of relationships in a condo. Since Charles was also an owner, and they attended condo board meetings even after they moved out, they were almost certainly familiar with more people than just the neighbour across the hall. However, since many of the familiar faces might potentially be non-resident owners, that familiarity might not be identified with proximity in the building. In addition, familiarity with others in the building might not be related to physical proximity in the building, even if there is physical proximity. Since the only moment where people identify with their unit and are

available to interactions are when they enter or exit their unit, the chance that residents see their neighbours in relation to their unit is very small, making it difficult to identify familiar faces in the building in relation to the sense of home. This may also be exacerbated by the featurelessness of the halls and the front doors of units: unless you read the unit number or can place it in relation to one's own private unit, one door is much like any other door. A familiar face in the lobby or elevator could be anyone in the building. A familiar face can't be tied directly to a unit, but it can be tied to the condo as a whole. This might explain the dual feelings of a limited group of neighbours, and a feeling that everyone in the building is a neighbour.

Francine, a tenant of seven years, related feeling a lack of community in the condo. Compared to living in a fourplex apartment they "got to be really good friends with my neighbours, and that's something (they) miss here". Like the condo, they had communal space, but they had created stronger ties in the fourplex. The sense of community and familiarity might relate to the size of the community. In a condo building with 150 neighbours, it is easy to become anonymous, while fewer is more manageable. Intentional neighbourhood communities, Cohousing, specifically identify a certain size for strong communities (McCamant and Durrett, 2011). A community with too few people, less than 8 households, means that people know each other but disagreements or personal antagonisms can cause major friction. A community with too many households, over 50, makes it easier to find people you get along with, but it becomes impersonal and it is more difficult to know everyone and identify with shared goals. The right size of community has enough people to give people personal space, but not too many to become impersonal, as seems to be the case in the Alpha Lofts.

Many of the participants, however, did have relationships with other residents of the building that were formed in other contexts. This was sometimes due to coincidence: someone would move into the building after the other. People moved into the same building as someone they know from some other context. In other cases, people know colleagues from work. Whether

these previous relationships influenced their decisions to live there is not known. One professional claimed they knew almost half a dozen others in their field who live in the building, several of whom worked in the same office. They shared that they would often commute together on transit. Others related a more general familiarity with people who worked in the same industry, like the tech industry. Although not clearly stated, there was a general sentiment that people in tech were familiar in and with the Alpha Lofts.

In a building with many exits and minimal opportunities for residents in different floors to interact, identifying people they know who live in the same building would require conversations outside of the building. This implies that conversations about where they live point directly to the Alpha Lofts rather than a more general geographic area, like “downtown”, or a major intersection. People do talk about where they live with increasing resolution with people who are more familiar with the area (it’s why anyone in southwest Ontario tells people when they are abroad that they live near Toronto), the fact that the resolution gets down to the building for a range of conversations implies that the Alpha Lofts is easily identifiable by a broad range of people. In addition, it implies that residents are proud, to a certain degree, to share that they are part of the Alpha Lofts. There is a certain amount of social cachet with being associated with the Alpha lofts in a way that many condos from the 1960s and 1970s would lack, as well as new condos that are relatively featureless.

In discussing how the condo provides spaces exclusively for residents, two participants compared the condo to gated communities. Neither liked the comparison. Doug immediately backpedalled:

> the gated community thing bothers me at a gut level just because when I’ve seen it, typically it’s in places where you’ve got a lot of wealth and by contrast, a fair bit of poverty outside of the walls, and it’s that that bothers me about the gated community. But I don’t see that contrast so much here. There are some homeless

> people outside but there are everywhere. And there's more money across the street in [the other condo], a higher economic status. But there isn't that great divide that, when I think gated community, I think a different thing. Just, it was when we had the discussion, I put them together and said well it is similar in that we're saying we wall us off and we now have a park, it's park area but it's only available for residents.

The comparison to gated communities is interesting because of the clear geographic boundaries of the condo. Doug felt uncomfortable with it because that physical boundary suggested keeping in wealth and keeping out poverty—the physical boundary is accompanied by a social boundary. This led to an interesting discussion about the inherent boundaries of the condo. They went on to suggest that boundaries are important for communities, to know who is in and who is out. They perceived the social boundary around the condo to be less distinct than that around gated communities. There is some similarity with those outside the condo not found in typical gated communities. The people living in the same area as the condo share "the interest in being in the area and probably working downtown, and maybe, and having a lifestyle that is not very car dependant... So there's a bunch of things that are gonna be common about any of the buildings that are down there if you're a resident there. There may be some things that are a little different".

5.2 Same building, different communities

The condo is unique in that it is two distinct condo corporations inside one building. According to Bob, residents of one condo "cannot access one [from] the other. If I was to visit my friend on the [other] side, I would have to physically go out of the building, around and then to the other side just to even access it. It doesn't allow for much interaction between the two". Each condo has separate entrances, independent condo boards and contracts with staff and

management. Other condos in the area are comprised of visually separate towers that share common areas and a board. However, the Alpha Lofts is one visually cohesive structure with two communities. This unique circumstance has resulted in residents feeling some connection to the other condo, but also completely alienated from them.

For residents, the two sides of the building "feel like the same building. (They) would consider it one building". Residents and outsiders recognize the building as sharing the same identity, which means that the physical and social boundaries of the community are at odds. This mistaken collective identity is revealed when there are "people who deliver things to the wrong building". Residents may also be unable to recognize the social boundaries between the two condos because the Facebook groups, where residents and members bring up concerns and events, include both condos. Membership in both Facebook groups is open to residents and owners from either side of the building. In interviews, participants had a whole slew of anecdotes from the condo that originate from these groups with *no easy way to tell which condo they relate to*. For participants, the issues for one condo were the same as for theirs, and if they weren't, like a specific plumbing problem, the buildings were so similar they could probably expect a similar thing on their own side. Still, many participants would see the other side of the building as a separate neighbourhood:

> we share a Facebook group, so we see people on the [other] side complaining that their heat isn't working good enough, but I don't know those people really at all. So I wouldn't feel like a neighbourhood connection and I would feel more of a neighbourhood connection with the people on my side of the building.

There were negative feelings attached to the two sides being separate, particularly in terms of the shared amenities. Although both sides have the same number of amenities, the amenities on one side are slightly larger or nicer, and some had a preference for the other. In addition, at least one participant perceived the demographics of the other side to be more

affluent, and others noted that the demographics might be different. The same dissatisfaction, animosity, was not expressed in regard to other nearby condos that have more and nicer amenities.

While these distinctions may not matter ultimately in terms of how they use their own amenities, it does serve to create social boundaries between the two condos that are different from those between the Alpha Lofts and other condos. It is unclear what causes this negative comparison to the other side of the condo, but it may be because of the group's social and physical proximity and similarity. Not only do they see the issues that are occurring in both sides, but the issues and spaces are easily comparable. It could also be a feeling of possessiveness or privilege: as a resident of the Alpha Lofts as a single entity, they have a right to access all the amenities and the division between the two is an arbitrary division of their rights.

One thing that brings these two condos closer together is that they share the same property manager, and even one of the condo board members sits on both boards. Although it hasn't been confirmed, the fact that it is the same manager means it is likely that the same contractors and staff are used for both sides of the condo. Additionally, both have similar challenges with the original development of the condo, which have resulted in mechanical problems and costly upgrades. Both are pursuing legal action against the developer. The condo boards continue to have separate meetings. There had been an attempt in the past to do joint condo board meetings, but they proved to be too difficult. The condo boards had to keep certain information confidential. So, while there are hard physical and legal boundaries between these condos, these boundaries are perceived as blurred and inconsistent by residents.

5.3 Condo across the street

The Alpha Lofts has another condo directly across the street, which was built after the Alpha Lofts. I asked residents how they would consider residents of this building, and if they

would consider them neighbours. The consensus was that residents in the other condo are not neighbours: "unless there's some sort of connecting thing that you just live downtown somewhere, that's another world, another building. You don't have anything to do with it." Another participant mirrored this by saying they "recognize the people within (my) building who I see going in and out on a regular basis, but I would have no idea about the condos across the street".

The boundaries, both physical and social, between this condo and its neighbour are very distinct. Even with extreme proximity, residents are not familiar with residents from the other. The buildings have separate secure entrances, and their lobbies do not face each other. There is little possibility that a chance encounter with residents of the other would allow them to identify the other as being a resident of the condo. The feeling that the condo membership is unknowable reinforces the perception of condos as gated communities. Interestingly, the participant that shied away from describing the Alpha Lofts as a gated community, had fewer qualms about describing the one across the street that way. Their distinction was that the other condos are more expensive and 'ostentatious'. Yet, based on online searches, the costs of both condos are roughly comparable. The other condo is also less easily identifiable, with a weaker sense of identity. This raises the question that the social boundaries of condos may be seen as one-way glass: from inside the condo, the boundaries disappear, but from outside they are as impermeable as their walls of glass and concrete. Although I did not interview anyone from outside Alpha Lofts, they might perceive the Alpha Lofts as an ostentatious gated community.

Planners zone for higher density in cities and in urban growth areas. The expectation is that more people in a smaller area can make the city more vibrant by increasing opportunities and animating public spaces. Condos are one common way to meet density targets. But how successful can attempts at making vibrant urban spaces when residents from across the street cannot identify with each other? The findings that there is no social connection between condos

supports Blandy and Lister's (2005) conclusions that gated communities may worsen social and physical barriers with residents inside and outside the condo. However, an important distinction is that where Blandy and Lister look at a single gated community in an established community, two condos might be more similar to two adjacent gated communities. It might be the case that the negative effects of social and physical barriers between the condo and the wider community are even worse when both communities are 'gated'.

5.4 Homeless neighbours

People living in the Alpha Lofts also live in proximity and share many of the same spaces as lower-income and homeless people. Do residents of the condo identify with people who use the spaces around the condo? This was a group that came up frequently in conversations, mostly in regard to conflicting uses of space. The Alpha Lofts are in an area that has many important services for homeless people, and bottle recycling. For the most part, residents of the condo weren't concerned about this group while inside the condo, even though they are frequently seen nearby the condo, in the vestibule of the condo, and crossing the parking lot.

However, many participants related fierce negativity to this group of people on the Facebook group. Residents would complain about homeless people crossing the parking lot, or even feeling threatened in the parking lot. Francine described their feelings towards these reactions and their feelings to the nearby homeless as well:

> I'm seeing more antagonism towards the homeless people or the people who look like they could be homeless around. To me, that's a problem because there are some buildings like halfway houses in our neighbourhood where those people live. They have every right to walk through our parking lot as we have to walk through theirs, which we do… I'm seeing a lot, for sure, from the people in the Facebook group, of concern about the number of homeless people, or people who look like they could

> be homeless. And again, I know that a lot of people have homes, they live here too. They are our neighbours, so we need to figure out a path forward here that's not, in my mind, that's not full-time security, like chasing people off the property and asking them to leave, cause I mean they're just walking by, it's fine.

Some residents clearly see the nearby homeless as neighbours and requiring their help. The vitriol against the homeless has caused some division in the community of the Alpha Lofts. Alfred said that what they see on Facebook turns them off from the community in the condo: "I find the way some people talk about our homeless neighbours in the community to be kind of offensive. The language they use. I actually have been very upset by the way people will characterize the homeless people in our community. That bothers me a lot from time to time". Alfred later said that they wanted to counter this negativity by organizing a group through the Facebook group to volunteer at a nearby soup kitchen. Being in proximity with poverty like the Alpha Lofts motivated some to do more in support of their homeless neighbours, while for others it caused them to lash out at them. On the one hand, this has strengthened some connections to neighbours outside the condo, but at the expense of connections within the condo. And for those whom do not like the nearby homeless, their connections are made worse by being in proximity.

These stark contrasting opinions about who belongs and who does not may make stark boundaries within the condo community as well. It creates conflict between those who think that homeless people have no right to be there, and those who think they do have the right to be there. One potential explanation for this is that the parking lot itself is private property but appears as public. For some residents, there is no distinction, it is described as a public space. But for those who are opposed to people walking in the lot, a breach into any part of the private space is an invasion of space. Their sense of 'inside' includes the parking lot. In addition, their idea of who belongs in their spaces do not include those who look homeless.

5.5 Dogs

Whereas Nasar and Julian (1995) found that children had community-generating effects, pets in the Alpha Lofts were found to be a stand-in for the same effects. Pets, and dogs in particular, came up frequently as a way in which residents became aware of and familiar with each other, made connections with people in the area around the condo, and even define the boundaries of their neighbourhood. Dogs were also related strongly to the lifestyle of the condo. For Bob, a resident without a dog:

> the dog community in the building is pretty strong. I don't own a dog, but it's very visible. Normally people outside are walking their dogs, hanging around the entryway and they'll talk for a while and it's pretty obvious that they know each other because their dogs hanging out. I would say being able to have a dog within the building allows people to interact more.

Walking the dog is one way that people can have repeated interactions with people in the building. The connections made between dogs was like the dog was a child:

> there's a lot of people who would let our dogs play on leashes and chat outside. It's kinda sad cause like I said, [Rover's] mad at me because he can't see his friends anymore (due to the pandemic), but he had some best dog friends, like other puppies who are around the same age and we would always let them romp around on their leashes outside.

Dogs can act to introduce people to one another and create connections, and the repetition of walking can reinforce that familiarity and extend the boundaries of place. For a participant dog owner, this also was the case when their dog did not get along with a neighbour's dog: they had to be particularly mindful of their comings and goings: "we chatted a few times now because

now that I have [Rover] we try and avoid each other in the hallways. They're a little bit leash reactive, so we are just a little bit aware of each other coming and going".

This effect of introducing neighbours and reinforcing that relationship was even found for people who don't have dogs. Bob is familiar only with the people in their hall who have dogs: "The one's got two French bulldogs. My other friend who doesn't live in the building likes French bulldogs, so whenever she comes to visit we try to run into the guy with French bulldogs". One participant even spoke of her relationship with the condo's cleaning lady: "she wants me to like her so badly because the first time we saw her she was vacuuming, and he (the dog) was afraid of her, so she tried really hard". This was even the case for other pets. Elizabeth told a story of a fellow who let his cat wander in the hallway: "There was somebody down the hall from us in the hall that would sometimes let his cat go out in the hall and you say hi and have a little bit of a conversation".

Not only does owning a dog enable interpersonal interactions, it also helped one resident define their neighbourhood and space within the city as a whole. They "spend a lot of time walking my dog, so I would say that the areas that I would walk my dog are in my neighbourhood, is how I think about it". Dog ownership and the responsibility of walking the dog requires people to go out into the surrounding area even though they might not otherwise. In a sense, the distance they would walk with the dog helps define where they live and the people they might interact with: "I've gotten to know a lot of the homeless people and some of the people who, and a lot of them are really lovely. And you know, I know their dogs they're excited about mine. I keep extra granola bars in my bag. I consider a lot of those my neighbours too, not just the people who live in my building".

Since dog owners let their dogs say hello to other dogs, it may also enable interactions with dog owners outside of the condo as well. In a way, dog ownership may strengthen and widen the boundaries of the condo residents. This effect, at first glance, is similar to how

children can broaden a community boundary and enable interactions and familiarity with neighbours. As one resident puts it, the condo community seems like a community of dog-owners, perhaps the dogs are a stand-in for children in a residential area that is not designed for children.

Condos are not constructed with children in mind, and in fact were originally intended for new families without children and empty nesters. As a result, most condos have units that are too small for families with children, including the Alpha Lofts. The association of the community with dogs does follow a pattern in Ontario of increasing dog ownership. The number of dogs has been increasing in Canada (CAHI, 2019) and the increase is even more pronounced in cities, like Toronto, which increased from around 36,000 dogs in 2004 (Toronto Star, 2008) to about 230,000 in 2020 (City of Toronto, n.d.).

It is not clear what the extent of the impact of dogs in communities is, and there is little scholarship on the issue—what exists is narrowly interested in dogs. In older adults, dog ownership and walking the dog may be associated with better health and sense of community (Toohey et al., 2013). However, tenants who own dogs have more difficulty finding accommodation (Graham et al., 2018), which makes access to dogs, housing, and community an issue of equity. Otherwise, dogs are well-liked animals in urban spaces, who are also associated with problems (Bjerke and Ostdahl, 2004). Good statistics for pet ownership are also uncommon. The Canadian census does not ask questions about pet ownership.

It is not known what portion of people who live in the Alpha Lofts own dogs, or how it compares to other residential areas. However, some participants perceive that the identity of the condo is associated with dog ownership, and it is clear that dog ownership is an important aspect to creating community connections. It is unclear whether the people who like dogs self-select to live in condos, or if something about the condo encourages dog ownership. Especially

when young adults are waiting longer to have children and urban spaces are designed without children in mind. Particularly in urban spaces dominated by condos with units too small or expensive for families with children. Future research should be done to investigate the role of dogs in creating social capital.

6.0 Spaces of Community

While many of the spaces discussed here are not exclusive to condos, the way in which they are governed and perceived as spaces of shared ownership and responsibility is different. Understanding how members of the community with different legal rights interact with the space and with each other in them can reveal their affect on the ontological security and entitativity of the group. For instance, an important distinction between a condo tower with amenities and a luxury apartment tower is that condo owners are responsible for maintaining and regulating these spaces. Rather than a single landlord who deals with issues in a centralized way, condo owners have a stake in these spaces, and they have a dispersed responsibility to inform renters of their rights and responsibilities. Unlike rental apartments, non-resident owners of a condo may also retain rights to use shared amenities of the condo. In condos with other physical designs, similar concerns about the dispersal of rights to space, communicating those rights, and their perception and use by members of the community would likely apply.

Many condos have several common elements and amenities. In the area around the Alpha Lofts, it is common for condos to include a party room, a patio, a lobby, and a gym, though it can be much more. Some condos have pools and tennis courts, and some have bowling alleys and euchre halls, and condos in the development pipeline have saunas, private cabanas, and shared workspaces. These are the private “club realms” (Rosen and Walks, 2014) that are governed by those who have the privilege of being an owner of the condo. The club realms are an exclusive and shared space. They are part of what defines the boundary of who belongs in the condo and who does not belong, accessible to residents and non-resident owners. It is through using these spaces that people can become familiar with each other. According to the idea of right to the city, producing space is a collective action. How are the common spaces in the condo expressions of collectivism, and how does that impact the people who live there?

Unlike many condos in the area, the Alpha Lofts only has a lobby, party room, and a terrace—relatively few amenities and common spaces. Some condos are developed with certain demographics in mind, and the amenities are tailored to meet the needs of that community. For instance, a condo for retired residents can have a shuffle board hall, a quilting room, and a wood shop. While for a condo designed for young professionals or students might include a coworking space. Both of these condos exist in Kitchener. The amenities of the Alpha Lofts do not target a specific demographic.

6.1 Hallways and lobbies

Of the common and shared spaces in the condo, the hallways are most universally used, and also a common feature in many rental apartment buildings. They are the streets and sidewalks of the building. Just like public roadways designed for suburbs and cars, the halls in the Alpha Lofts are designed for mobility. There is no space to stop and chat, and no way to casually observe the space. According to residents and non-resident owners, "the hallways are pretty beige, dull, narrow and when you're coming from the stairs to the elevator you're going straight to your unit. You're not hanging around in the hallways waiting to talk with people. It's pretty dull". The hallway repels residents from occupying it longer than they need to get to and from their unit. Additionally, condo rules prohibit putting anything up in the halls and enforce the characterless quality. Even doors to private units are not allowed to be decorated because the outside of the door is a common element of the condo.

The halls are also intermediate spaces between people's units. For most units, the halls are the only way to see or hear neighbouring units. Most of the windows face outwards and away from the building, they do not have a view of neighbouring units in the Alpha Lofts. There are also no windows into the halls. Several participants said they could not hear any noise of their neighbours from inside their unit, but they could in the halls, likely due to the adapted concrete

construction of the building. Additionally, from the outside, there is nothing to distinguish the interior walls of units. The building is a mass of windows with white curtains. The halls then, are one of the only spaces that acknowledge that there are units, and one of the only areas where you can hear and see evidence of neighbours.

Despite the important role of the halls in being the public roads in the building, the hallways lack Jacobs' "eyes on the street". Charles, a non-resident owner describes this feeling in the halls while visiting as a landlord:

> You could be accosted in that hallway and there would be really no one around because of the nature of condos and like sort of that idea of this is my little world and I don't interact, neighbours don't really know each other, and you don't sit on your front porch. It's not the same thing. You're basically in no man's land in the hallway. No one looks out for each other in the hallways, there's no sense of neighbourly protection in these hallways. I don't know if women think this, but it could be if you had previous experience of that, I could imagine that could be quite frightening to walk down a hall and see this man coming. You can't cross the street to get away.

This description of the halls is one of a back alley. The front doors of other people's homes are not porous and do not provide community surveillance. It describes the halls as a space of danger and isolation. Without a feeling of 'eyes on the street', it becomes easier to understand why formal security through doormen and cameras are so important. There is no passive sense of security offered by the presence of people and neighbours who could be watching. Without passive security, regulating who can access the space becomes another way to gain the sense of security. But outsourcing surveillance also takes away control over community safety, having an impact on a resident's sense of ontological security because there is no way to know who is watching or where.

New Urbanism pursues the passive surveillance of eyes on the street by creating active streetscapes, porches, small setbacks, and soft edges to recreate an older urban form. However, with aesthetics being foregrounded in the approach, the old-timey aesthetic can be co-opted by designs that do not acknowledge the benefits of passive surveillance. In Kitchener, it is common for other new condos, built like houses, to have private units with doors that front onto the public street, but the front door to the unit is in the back. Condo apartments, as well, are built with front doors and porches near the public sidewalk that are enclosed by a fence without a gate, obscuring the useful entrance in the private space of the halls. The halls of tall condo towers are similarly obscured. The entrance to the condo fronts onto the street, but the entrance to private units is obscured. There is no direct link between the public space and a private unit.

Despite the hallways encouraging people to not linger, they were often the site of neighbourly interactions. Residents used the halls for other purposes than mobility. Some participants have very few interactions in the halls, while others say hello to many people they see there. Examples from participants include helping neighbours carry paint from the elevator to their unit and waiting for a neighbour with dogs to go for a walk to say hello. An illustrative example is a gentleman who let his cat into the hall. Elizabeth remembered them going in the hall with the cat, explaining: “they’re not allowed in the hall, but he would be out there with it, just letting it explore”. In this case, the rules of the condo actively discourage the use of the hall for use aside from mobility. Residents ignore the intentions of the hallway to use it how they see fit and negotiated the rules with their neighbours.

According to one participant, one side of the condo has a lobby and the other has more of a vestibule with a mail room beside it. Other participants did not bring up these spaces at any length, even though the lobbies have small seating areas. This participant did note that the mail room has a cork board on which is posted announcements and ads. They had used the cork

board to ask if anyone was interested in joining a team and got in contact with someone through it.

6.2 Terrace

Both sides of the Alpha Lofts have a terrace which, according to the participants, is generally considered the only communal space or amenity. Most participants expressed very good feelings about this space. The space also serves many units as their only access to private outdoor space. The majority of units in the Alpha Lofts do not have balconies. For residents, it's an important way to host guests and have barbecues. The barbecue was one of the ways participants talked about interacting with other residents, either through helping them to use it, or give warnings about leaving their food on the grill.

> I consider the roof our only amenity, that is what I consider our amenities. I love it up there, mostly because it's often empty. I also like the barbecue. I do like that a lot of people don't know how to use the barbecue. Last summer I was up there and, I was by myself reading, these three guys came up and started struggling with it. I said, "do you need help lighting the barbecue", "Oh, we got it". So I watched them struggle for like 10 minutes and I just went over and the gas line is on the wall not on the barbecue, so I just went over and turned on the gas and they were fine, but I did watch them struggle probably 15 minutes all told. It was solid. That was my entertainment for the day.

However, the impression of the patio is that people would have liked to use it more. For residents, "it takes a bit of commitment to get up to the rooftop to have a meal. Cause you gotta basically pack a picnic. All your cutlery, all your plates, all your food. So, we didn't use it that much to be honest". For units on the lower floors, the terrace is out of the way. Additionally, the way participants spoke of the terrace, it wasn't as a place to see people or people watch. Usually

it was to host the guests of a resident, or to enjoy some quiet time to read. One resident captures the feeling of privacy on the terrace perfectly: "Well there's no real gathering place here. We don't have a lounge or anything like that, so there's no, there isn't really communal space except for the roof and the roof is small. And I'm hoping people forget it's up there because really it is very empty a lot of the time. Please don't tell them."

In contrast to apartment buildings, some resident or owners did feel ownership over the space of the terrace. Several participants mentioned a garden that was maintained on the terrace by an owner. This is one way that people in the condo can claim control of the shared spaces of the condo. However, participants knew very little about the garden or who took care of it, suggesting that that this control over the space was limited by a lack of communication about the space.

The terrace, as a free to use space accessible to all residents and owners, has been the site of several informal events. One participant recalled an informal barbecue organized by someone close to the board many years ago, but these have stopped. More recently, the space was used to host a meet and greet with a local progressive candidate. At least thirty people in the condo attended this event and had the opportunity to meet neighbours who may have had similar political views to their own.

6.3 Party Room

The party room was not well used and participants' views on the party room were mostly negative. Some participants thought the party room was too small to be useful. Others weren't aware that they had one but were aware of the party room on the other side of the building. There was generally a misunderstanding of what the party room included—a fully equipped kitchen and bathroom—and, in addition, an apprehension of using it because of a requirement to book the space. It is unclear, based on conversations with participants, whether there is a fee

to use this space. If true, this would be a big deterrent from using the space informally, or to casually interact with or meet other residents.

However, the party room is used for both formal and informal events that brought together residents, non-resident owners, and members of the community from outside the condo. During the time of this study, the condo board organized an informal meet and greet to facilitate getting to know the condo board and build a sense of community outside the formal condo board meetings. According to the condo board member, over 30 people showed up, including tenants, resident owners, and non-resident owners. According to the condo board member, several people who attended this event "highlighted that not only was it good to meet the board, but also meet their neighbours. When we set this up, the timing was good because there were a number of people that felt 'I've lived here for three years but I don't know anybody in the building and it would be nice of there was more of a sense of community'". This was strictly an event for people within the condo community. However, the other uses of this space were explicitly for the broader community. During an annual event, doors-open Ontario, the party room, the preserved board room of the original factory, was on display to the public and being showcased by volunteers from the Regional Heritage Committee. The space is also used as a polling station during federal elections.

The uses of this space and the question of cost raise questions about who the space belongs to and who can use it. If this were a rental apartment, the rules governing who has rights to use this space would be clear. On the one hand, its use by more than just the residents of the building suggest that the condo is more than just a gated community. The amenities built in the condo have a definite additive element to the urban fabric of the city, however small that might be. On the other hand, the way they are designed and administered discourages residents from using these spaces informally, or even at all. There are several explanations for this. One might be that the space is not designed to meet the needs of residents. A "party room" that looks

like a board room has a limited range of function: suitable for condo board meetings and big meals, but not good for relaxing in or sharing the space with strangers. Another is that these spaces are not convenient enough for residents. They are not located in central locations within the condo to be visible. Finally, the booking requirement and fee are barriers to using the space. However, booking and fee requirements may also make the space an amenity for the broader community. Regardless of what the rules governing the use of this space, confusion about who the space belongs to and how to access it are a barrier that prevents residents from accessing it.

The election was one of the few examples recounted by participants of the spaces of the condo being used for the wider community. The party room was used as a polling station for the condo and the nearby area. Hosting a polling station is a huge convenience for residents of the condo, who can vote easily without needing to leave the building. It also brings residents from outside the condo into the space of the condo. However, many residents did express displeasure at allowing the campaign into the building. Condos do have the potential to facilitate civil discourse for local groups, and to residents from outside the condo with the spaces inside the condo. However, owners and residents resist it. This may be because of the design, or the feelings of privacy being broached in a way that knocking on doors in residential streets is not.

6.4 Facebook

Online spaces were initially not part of this study, but they came up in nearly every interview. When participants spoke about the issues common in Alpha Lofts, or the attitudes of the other residents, their perspective was almost entirely informed by what they had seen in the Facebook groups. There are two private groups (membership must be approved by the group's administrator) whose members are from both sides of the condo, even though they are separate condo corporations. Neither group distinguishes between owners, tenants, or residents, and neither is formally organized by the condo. These groups have the potential to define very strong

boundaries of membership in the Alpha Lofts community and increase interactions and shared goals. However, the interviews with participants were mixed.

On the one hand, the Facebook groups are an important source of information about what is happening in the condo. It came up in nearly every conversation as a place where information was shared, and anecdotes were told from the Facebook group. Several conversations went on at length about the community and when asked how they knew this they said from Facebook. It is also a way to organize against being exploited by management. One resident owner recalled a recent assessment for improvements to the building. The manager may have overcharged residents:

> people were doing the math that wasn't adding up. They said that the total cost for our building was 245,000 dollars exactly, but we had been given a list of each unit how much they were supposed to pay, and it added up to 265,000 dollars and some change. So, people said you are collecting $20,000 more than you said you were collecting. I think people were very sceptical of that. And the rumour on the street is that they're baking their own fees into that number and that's why it's a round number.

The Facebook group was discussed mostly in the sense of it being for complaints. One resident called it a "complaint society". These complaints ranged from legitimate concerns of broken heating and cooling systems (which were found to be completely insufficient for the size of the building). Other complaints were seen by participants as gross over-exaggerations, and bring the veracity of the information on the group into question:

> She's the kind of person saying, 'my unit is 40 degrees warm,' or whatever. She'll say stuff like 'the hallways are 35 degrees Celsius,' and I walked in the hallways and I know its not 35 degrees, its maybe 26. So, I know that she's not a reliable source of information and she's posting these extreme stories. She posted saying 'I was

> out walking my dog and there were these street people hanging around the parking lot. It looked like they were looking at people's cars thinking about breaking in. So, I called the cops. I called the police to come and arrest them and they heard that I was calling the cops and one of them threw a bottle at me and I was within of inches of losing my life,' or whatever. It's a very exaggerated story.

Stories like this one and the held beliefs expressed on the Facebook group were a turn-off for being involved in the community for some participants. After seeing how some people respond to certain people or situations, it made them dislike the community. According to one participant: "Joining the Alpha Lofts Facebook Group made me feel less excited about some of the people who live in our building. Haha. And It made me feel slightly less neighbourly because I realized that. … It's been disillusioning".

When asked who Facebook group commenters are complaining to, it was unclear. One participant suggested they were complaining to property management and the condo board. The member of the condo board specifically stated that they avoid being a member of the Facebook group to avoid confrontation, but they do hear about what is said from friends who are on it. The condo board member I spoke with specifically expressed that they do not want to be part of it. For them, they were concerned about being targeted.

The fact that the two condos share the same virtual spaces is also interesting in defining the boundaries of the group. Tenants, resident owners and non-resident owners are all participants in the groups. There is no way to determine the relation of a poster in the group to the condo. In this way it could be quite egalitarian. However, this is speculative about the nature of this Facebook group. Other virtual spaces could easily distinguish between members by their tenure and stake in the community and provide a similar division of the rights to engage in those virtual spaces as are present in the physical spaces of the condo.

Having a Facebook group is also a contrast to most other kinds of neighbourhoods. Both owners and tenants complained about common issues that are unique to the building. Their target is frequently the condo manager, who is seen as being responsible for dealing with issues. In a way, it creates a sense of unity through opposition to the manager, and might, to a degree, create some sense of common knowledge about the property. The complaints can be a unifier for members of the group, giving credibility and strength to calls for changing things. However, this is in some ways a false class struggle, because owners are the prime beneficiaries of resolving these issues. Tenants remain more precariously housed, and in fact, many tenants will have their own property management company and/or landlord to deal with as an intermediary with the condo management. The Facebook group may create a sense of identity, but it can also reduce the identity people have with the people in their own group or class. For members of this community, both residents and non-resident owners, a virtual meeting space like this could play an important role in defining it.

7.0 Formal Community

Many aspects of the condo community are highly codified and formalized. The power of the condo board is so strong that it is colloquially known as a fourth level of government because the condo board is an elected body, and because they have the power to set and collect taxes in the form of condo fees. The condo board and management, in following with provincial legislation, can set the rules, change the rules, and enforce them. They even have the authority to evict renters *and owners* who do not follow them.

In his conception of the production of space, Lefebvre understood the role of formal rules as being in tension and opposition with the everyday experiences and symbolic interpretations of space (1991). To exercise the collective right to produce urban space, people resist official regulations and prescriptions. The formal structures of community and rules that govern space and behaviour in condos are in a similar relationship to community in that they can prescribe how the community ought to behave. Formalized community even has the potential to supplant genuine relationships with paid employees (Kenna and Stevenson, 2013).

In this condo, the formal systems of governance that were relevant to participants were the condo board, the property manager, and the formal rules of the condo. Lippert (2019) coined the term 'condo-isation' to describe how this formal structure takes power away from people in their everyday life. Here, I investigate to what degree people experience this. As Lefebvre (1991) conceived of it, the formal conception of space is in tension with how people actually use it. How do people associated with the condo relate to these formal systems of collective governance, and how are they shaped by, and shaping, the people who are subject to them?

7.1 The Condo Board

The Alpha Lofts has two separate condos with separate condo boards, each with three members. These boards are comprised of people who own units in the condo corporation who are elected by other owners at an annual general meeting. Each board member serves for three years, and an election is held every year to elect new board members on a rotating basis so that there is only ever one new member of the board at a time. At the time of this study, none of the three members of one of the boards was a resident of the Alpha Lofts. One of the board members was retired, and another was on the board of the other side Alpha Lofts as well as at least one other condo in the area. It is important to note that renters are not able to participate in the condo board, unless they are acting as a proxy for an owner. This means that they are not directly invited to annual general meetings, they are not able to vote on issues, and they are not expected to be in contact with the condo board.

The way that the board organizes its voting powers is based on ownership of units, in keeping with provincial legislation. Each unit in the condo represents one vote. If a single person owned two units, they would have two votes. This applies to the majority and quorum of the condo board. If a certain motion requires 50% support, that would mean that if one person owned 50% of the units in the condo voted in that way, the motion would pass. According to the condo manager, this has the interesting side-effect that the mortgager, who technically owns the unit, can assert their rights to vote on condo board issues unilaterally. It also means that the structure of the board is set up by default to favour community members with more wealth stored in the condo. This is contrary to the ideals of equal representation: instead of one voice one vote, it is however many votes you can afford to buy.

Many of the owners interviewed had a positive view of the condo board members. Despite all the complaints that residents and owners make, the board "is doing the best they can. It's a thankless job". In addition, it is seen as a huge commitment. Doug, the board

member, described it as being almost a half-time job, as a volunteer with a huge amount of responsibility:

> One of the challenges of boards is you are overseeing, in our case, close to a million dollar budget that involves running a large building which has all these systems and heating, air conditioning, and all electrical stuff, and it involves managing a place where probably 300 or 400 people live and snow clearing and staff and maintenance, so, I mean these are things that if I applied for a job like that, my resume would not even get me an interview and most board members resume would not even get an interview.

Most participants felt that the only reason someone would volunteer for the position is if they had a certain issue they wanted addressed, like the garden or fixing the air system. For participants, there was no middle ground between being a board member and being completely disengaged from the formal side of the condo community. If there was nothing pressing, or no individual interest in accomplishing something, it was enough to attend the annual general meetings. There was no other way for residents to engage directly in the formal civic life of the condo. Despite the lack of interest, the condo board member expressed that they still get a lot of flack from owners.

The condo board is quite aloof from the happenings of the condo itself. None of the condo board members were currently residing in the condo, and seemed opposed to the idea, relishing the ability to separate private and public roles at the condo, like a job. The same sentiment applied to the Facebook groups. They are not members by choice, instead getting knowledge and posting second-hand through friends. The concern there is of being constantly bothered about issues. When asked about organizing events and things, the condo board member said that is not their responsibility. They would prefer to be behind the scenes and want to encourage committees. However, there are not presently any dedicated committees.

There is some hesitancy on the part of the condo board to engage with the community. This might be because there are no straightforward avenues of communication where these things can be expressed and talked about collegially. Until recently, the only space for that was the annual general meetings, which several participants attend as information sessions. During this study, the board organized an informal meet and greet for owners to meet the condo board and suggest better ways to communicate. The condo board member reported that this was well met by everyone and there were some productive conversations about how to improve things.

The lack of engagement might be owing to the condo board's understanding of their responsibilities. Doug described these in two senses. The first is the legal responsibility to manage the finances of the condo corporation and checking off the boxes of what the law requires. The other sense of their mandate is "a.) they give a shit about the building and b.) they're not entirely happy with something about how it's being run". Neither of these two senses call the condo board to be responsive to the other owners or residents of the condo aside from their own personal interest and the desire to be re-elected to the board, which may not be strong if the board was able to address their concern in their three-year term. They do have an interest in the community, but this is framed through the value that owners can gain from it:

> Currently our thinking is that if we're a little bit more involved we can essentially raise the level of how attractive a place this is to live and although it's not direct, it indirectly benefits everybody involved because, if it's a more attractive place to live, if you're an owner that doesn't live there, you can charge more rent when people turn over and your place is gonna be worth more.

This shows some attention to tenants and the quality of life in the condo, but it ultimately makes it less affordable for tenants who make up roughly two thirds of the population of the condo. The interest in the tenants is really framed through the value they can give to the owners. It is

framed as what quality of life can do for appreciation of the investment, rather than what the investment can do for the community.

In terms of engaging residents and owners outside of the condo board, the Alpha Lofts had no committees or formalized roles outside of the three board members. The board member expressed that these might be a good option to get certain things done, but that this is not the responsibility of the board to oversee these committees, or to start them. They prefer that residents or owners come to them with the motivation to start a committee. One roadblock that came up with residents doing certain things around the building is the question of liability. Starting a committee to do work in and around the property on the common elements puts those individuals under the liability of the condo. Changing lightbulbs could present a liability risk, or even gardening, and therefore many of these activities are outsourced to contractors.

One other anecdote of the timidity of the condo board in making decisions to benefit the community relates to car shares. A condo owner who left the Alpha Lofts had allowed a car share to use her parking space, which meant the car share would no longer be available to Alpha Lofts residents or other people. The car share company contacted the board asking for the use of another spot. The condo board member noted that this would have benefitted people in the condo as well as people in the surrounding neighbourhood. However, they felt that a request from the board to owners would be interpreted as a demand and therefore an overreach of their authority. Instead, they allowed the carshare company to send an email to the owners of the condo, without acknowledging that they thought it would benefit the condo.

One of the only times when members participate in the condo board is by attending annual general meetings. However, participation in this way and addressing real issues may be suppressed by a 12-year lawsuit against the original developers of the condo. Every meeting is an update on the costs and stage of the litigation. For Charles, an owner who attends the meetings, “it was in the early stages when we had bought the place, so now it’s at a point where we, like, do

we cut our losses? The legal fees at this point, are we even gonna get back what we put in with legal fees?". Even if updates are minor items during the AGM, it is a central concern for owners, and it came up in almost every conversation. The costs and processes of the litigation are also made more complex because both sides of the building are part of the litigation process.

The condo board would appear to have very little to do with the actual community and identity of the condo community, and they contribute little to increasing the sense that residents and owners have of shared goals. For the condo board members, their responsibility is first and foremost to the legal requirements of the condo, and then to their own interest. In this condo, there is only the beginnings of the creation of active roles for members to contribute to these goals. In fact, one of the perceived requirements of owners to be on the board was an individual agenda rather than a collective one. This system leaves tenants behind in the formal organization of the community and creates stark boundaries between tenants and owners, whose goals and access to power are opposed to one another. In the words of one tenant: "I don't think that I have any power to affect change, as a renter".

7.2 Property Manager

The role of the property manager in the condo is multiple and is central to the functioning of the condo itself. The condo manager sees their main responsibility as ensuring residents and owners follow the rules, and the condo corporation abides by legislation. What this means in practice is informing and guiding the condo board in their operation, managing all the paperwork of the condo, managing the contractors and staff of the condo, and putting out fires from residents and owners. This sometimes leads them to be a mediator for conflicts between residents: if someone complains about noise, the manager is responsible for contacting the offender and telling them to stop.

The manager sees themselves as carrying out the decisions of the condo board. However, there is an imbalance in the power between these two that influences how and what decisions are made. The manager is the one that brings issues up to be addressed and determines, to some extent, what the condo board makes decisions on. Additionally, the manager is both the expert on the legislation and requirements of the condo board, and the one who responsible for executing them. While this might not be the case, the desire for the condo manager to take the path of least resistance might change how they bring up issues to be discussed by the board.

For instance, when owners or residents have facility problems, these are brought to the manager who must determine if the issue is the responsibility of the condo, or the individual property owner. In the case of the Alpha Lofts, there are some aspects that are not intuitive, so the manager must address these for owners and clarify what parts of the units are common elements of the condo and which are not.

Nearly all the feedback from participants about the manager was negative. Many participants were actively unhappy with the manager. Some arose from distrust at mismanaged accounts. Most, however, came down to a lack of communication. From my research, this communication was also made more confusing because of frequent changes to the method of communication with the manager and other changes around the building. One of the main tools of the manager is an online portal which gives different access to residents, owners, the board, contractors, and the manager. According to the condo board member, this is the preferred method to report work orders, rules violations (in some cases), elevator and room bookings, and the administration of the building. The condo has changed what portal service it uses several times in the memory of the participants, and this was ascribed to the condo manager. Where it becomes challenging is that not everyone is signed up to this portal, and not everyone can easily do that. Doug, the condo board member, described the situation for tenants:

> It puts the tenant in question in a real bind because it now means they cannot access the normal information that other people in the building can request to book an elevator if they've got some stuff being delivered. They could still email and phone the property manager, but technically the property manager isn't supposed to even acknowledge them because they haven't been registered.

For tenants, it is the responsibility of their landlord to get them signed up, and for tenants whose landlords are foreign investors, the condo board member expressed that this is almost a hopeless case. On top of that, tenants are supposed to only communicate with the condo manager through their landlord. Bob, a tenant who was in this position, said they had resolved an urgent plumbing malfunction by going directly to the offices of the condo management, which was located nearby. But recently, the condo management company had relocated in a remote and inaccessible part of the city.

Not just tenants were complaining about a lack of communication. Elizabeth recounted their experience of moving into the condo and learning what parts of the condo were their private property. They are entitled to a storage locker, but nobody had informed them of where it was or how to access it. When they finally found it, it was locked and being used by someone else. There was no 'orientation' to living in the condo building, which Elizabeth saw as being the responsibility of the condo manager. As there are parts of private ownership that are not intuitively found or identified, confusion about what is shared and what is private property is likely more common than just this individual.

Part of the problem here is that the responsibilities the manager is perceived to have within the condo are much greater than those the manager claims to have. Conversely, the condo manager in this case study was also responsible for half a dozen condos, of which the Alpha Lofts is just two. While the manager might take it upon themselves to do more than they

are required to do, there are limits to what they can feasibly do in their time. Additionally, this position is heavily taxing, as the manager recounted that they are essentially on-call 24/7.

Interestingly, unlike the structure of other directorial boards, the condo board has a limited number of positions who all have the same responsibility. Typically, organizational boards will have a chair, a vice chair, a treasurer, secretary, and perhaps a committee chair, as well as whatever specific positions the organization sees as important. The structure of the condo board puts the role of the treasurer and secretary into that of the condo manager, a contracted position, giving the condo board members the same formal roles and responsibilities. This not only gives a huge amount of power and responsibility to the manager, it also effectually takes away that power and responsibility from the board.

Since the manager has legal responsibilities to manage finances and contractors, these are powers that the condo board is not allowed to take on themselves. And, whereas in a typical board structure where different members have different roles and powers, this board has no distinction. For people who are only casually interested in the business of the condo, their perception is that to get involved, the only role they can take is the full weight of the condo board director, rather than tailoring a role that suits their strengths and interests. Another probable result of the condo manager having these responsibilities is that they are likely to propose similar solutions to all the condos they manage, whereas an independent condo board might come up with individual solutions tailored to their needs.

Knowing that most participants see the condo board members as having a tough job and allocating blame to the condo manager, it would be reasonable to assume that condo owners and residents don't see the condo board as having much agency. In their eyes, the condo board has a very narrow scope of what it can do and the people who fill that role are not entirely responsible for how they carry out the role, as it is so narrow. The actor in the condo board with the most agency and visibility is the condo manager, and they take all the heat.

This takes away from residents' and owners' ability to determine the functioning of their community because there is also a difficult process for removing a condo manager. This process requires seeking proposals from other management companies, including the current management company. The board evaluates them and chooses. However, this process reveals another imbalance in power, which makes it difficult for new managers to come in. In the case of the Alpha Lofts, there are many quirks about the building and the distinction between condo property and private property within the units themselves. The condo manager often relies on the same contractors for these jobs who have experience with these quirks and many participants see that as a benefit. The issue is that these contractors with expertise and familiarity with the condo are tied to the condo manager rather than the condo itself. The condo manager uses the same contractors across several condos. It is unclear whether a change in property manager would entail a turnover in contracted work, but it is likely it would mean a renegotiation of contracts. In this way, the condo board has far less power to control than the property manager, even though the property manager works under the authority of the condo board.

7.3 Rules and enforcement

What shapes the way the formal side of the condo behaves are the various rules. Some of these rules come from outside of the condo, like municipal bylaws and provincial legislation. Being part of the condo community means following several sets of rules unique to each condo, in addition to municipal and provincial regulations. In the condo itself, there are three levels of rules: the declaration, the bylaws, and the condo rules. These three tiers of rules are required by provincial legislation, which also puts them in a hierarchy. If a bylaw or rule contradicts the declaration, the declaration takes priority. In the same way, if any rule contradicts provincial legislation, the provincial legislation takes priority. Many of the residents of the condo are also

subjects to conditions on their lease agreement. In summary: there are lots of rules that apply to different people at different times and places with unclear enforcement.

Much like there is a lack of communication between the manager, condo board, and owners and residents, there is little communication about rules and enforcement. Participants often had different ideas about what the rules are and about steps to take to enforce them. In some cases, these differences were as diverse as contacting the condo manager and the municipal bylaw enforcement. There was also little interest in the rules. For residents and owners, many said "I've read it once when I signed on and haven't read it since". For Doug, understanding the rules was a huge part of becoming effective as a board member, about which the manager informed them.

The condo manager was often seen as the person who was responsible for enforcing rules and bylaws of the condo. This begins with ensuring the condo corporation follows provincial legislation, to the condo board following procedure and the declaration, and down to enforcing noise rules in the condo. However, according to the manager and Doug, rules were generally only enforced if there was a complaint. And there was an unwritten agreement that some rules were to be enforced more closely than others. For instance, carrying bicycles through the halls was not allowed in the bylaw, yet many participants spoke openly about doing this. Doug related that they wouldn't feel comfortable leaving a bike in the provided bike storage in the building and that moving bikes through the hall was reasonable and to be expected. "My legal role is to enforce those rules, but I'm not gonna go and essentially spend money and resources to try and identify people breaking rules that aren't a problem for anybody".

For rules that were frequently broken but seen as too difficult or costly to enforce, the condo board might choose to direct the manager not to enforce that particular rule. However, this means that many rules and enforcement is done informally and without concrete record. The formal process for making and enforcing rules is disregarded and the rules of the

community rely on convention or unwritten agreement. This can make it more difficult if the rules are not enforced evenly. Or if there is a change in the condo board or management. This reliance on precedent and a changing condo board means the condo manager has a lot of power to police the behaviours of the condo.

Other issues about enforcement from the condo manager are not great. If there was a serious breech of the condo rules, one of the paths to resolving it is to issue a legal notice through the lawyer through the condo corporation, whom the manager has on call. This legal proceeding means that the owner against whom the letter is given is paying for their defense and prosecution. Another revealing aspect from this is that the responsibility for enforcing the rules is also dispersed from the condo manager to the owners and independent landlords, who must all be aware of the distinct rules for their condo. For instance, there are different rules for pets in every condo, and sometimes stark contradictions between the condo rules and provincial regulations. The *Residential Tenancies Act* (2006) states that "no-pet provisions" in leases are void, and the *Human Rights Code* trumps condo rules regarding service animals. However, the condo board is allowed to ban pets on the premises, even for tenants. This puts the onus of responsibility onto owners for informing prospective tenants about the rules concerning pets. If the landlord has failed to do their due diligence, a tenant with a pet faces some hard decisions. This also puts more responsibility on renters to understand which condos they can rent with pets. Regardless of what the legal rights are, if an eviction or enforcement is begun, it still requires a lengthy proceeding to follow, which makes it more difficult for residents to claim their rights.

Seeing as many rules are unenforced or unenforceable, I asked many if they would ever pursue a change to the rules rather maintain rules that are unenforced. Most participants did not know or care about the process for that. Both the condo manager and the board member saw changing the rules as a nearly hopeless and fruitless task. The further up the hierarchy of the

rules, the more engagement from the owners it takes to change. For a change to the declaration, it would take 90% of all possible votes to support the change. In the case of the Alpha Lofts, which is almost two thirds rented out, getting everybody to agree to changes would be an exhausting task with no guarantee of benefits. Condo board members see the costs of changing rules as prohibitive and a poor use of condo fees, seeing as their first responsibility is to the financial wellbeing of the condo.

The way the rules are set up also sets up a divide between the owners and the tenants. Not only are tenants not entitled to speak or be present at condo board meetings, but many of the rules that determine their behaviour in the condo are governed and enforced by non-residents. In the Alpha Lofts, where all three condo board members are non-residents, it means that their interest in the rules of the community is decided mostly by their interest in the investment of the condo.

8.0 Conclusion

Development of vibrant urban communities and neighbourhoods in condos has been entrusted to developers and professionals (Rosen and Walks, 2014; Lippert, 2019; Lehrer and Wieditz, 2009). Condo-ism describes this methodology of building urban spaces as a transformation of social, political, and economic life in the city according to neoliberal ideology, which favours individualism and deregulation (Rosen and Walks, 2014). This has an important impact on the right to the city, which draws the connection between our right to create ourselves and have control over urban space, underlining that this right to urban space is not individual, but a collective right (Harvey, 2012). Urban planners have also shaped policy and encouraged development that they see as promoting community and equity for residents of the city. The objectives of this thesis were: (1) To describe how community in a condo functions, (2) To understand the roles and perceptions of shared spaces in the condo for the community, (3) To identify systemic barriers to community in condos, and (4) To ask whether condos empower residents and owners to have control over their own space. This thesis takes some steps towards meeting these objectives through literature and in-person interviews and has identified further areas to explore to answer them.

Taking direction from Rosen and Walks, as well as Harvey, it is necessary to approach urban space through an understanding of how people relate to their own spaces, identities, and how they relate to others, and other spaces. The literature presented two concepts that were flexible enough to capture the range of meanings present in the right to the city and condo-ism. Ontological security is useful to describe what features of space and relationships affect people's sense of home, and entitativity is useful in describing how people feel connected to space and others in that space. Both are useful to answer the questions posed in this thesis.

From interviews, the community of the Alpha Lofts appears to have a division between tenants and owners. However, neither group had very strong ties to the other people or the

shared spaces in the condo. The rights to participate in the condo board created a community and spaces for community for owners around the common investment. This focus did create common goals for owners, but they were centred on neoliberal rights to profit from the condo rather than the right to occupy the condo. Tenants had very little that connected them to the community in the condo. Tenants had different landlords and were unable to access the condo board, but they were also a group that exclusively lived in the condo while owners had different levels of involvement, either being residents, involved investors, or investors completely removed from the condo.

The condo has many features that support ontological security and entitativity. The identity of the building and condo, in conjunction with the municipal and commercial promotion of the area's identity, aligned with and strengthened participants' sense of self. Adaptive reuse of the condo allowed residents to connect the narrative of the building to their own narrative, and to the narrative of the urban space in which they live. It creates strong boundaries between in-groups and outsiders, which provided layers of security residents, both physically and socially. Renters in the Alpha Lofts are secure in their tenancy because their identities conform with the affluent identity of the condo, and because of Ontario's strong tenant protections. Owners are given financial security because of affluent renters, and the cachet carried by the identity of the condo.

However, the financial security for owners was pitted against the tenure security of renters. Many owners are small-scale, or new households who retained the condo as a second property, not big wealthy investment firms. This made it more difficult for renters to have a shared cause, and obfuscated lines of communication with the property manager. The reliance of investors on extracting increasing rent from tenants puts the security of owners against tenants. Small-time investors and landlords, like many of those for whom condos are a first home, may not have enough income or equity to weather rising or unexpected costs of condo

fees and special assessments, which can cause financial stress. Tenants' rents can cover mortgage payments and condo fees, but these costs increase faster than legislation allows landlords to increase rent. Owners, therefore, are incentivized to have a fast turnover in tenants or else they might experience financial stress. Renters' security also depends the owner's stability, but they have no power to influence any of the costs or rules of the condo.

The boundaries of the condo also proved detrimental to some interactions. Not only are residents of an adjacent condo completely unknowable, but many residents in the same building were also unknowable. In fact, the adjacent condo building was sometimes perceived as being far more affluent and exclusive than the Alpha Lofts, even though the prices of units are roughly the same. The hallways in between units were seen as public residential roads, and they followed Jane Jacobs' critique of eyes on the street. The line between public hallway and private household clearly defined and also impermeable, making it difficult for neighbours in the same hallway to become familiar or interact easily with each other. The private nature of the hallways also makes individual units completely anonymous from the street level. There is no connection between private space and public space, and the connection that residents have at their own front door, is obscured and hostile, like a street that is designed only for movement.

The shared spaces of the condo do not contribute strongly to encouraging interactions and are not seen as private. Additionally, the dispersed legal rights of condo ownership meant that the rights to these spaces were not clearly communicated to or understood by owners and renters, affecting how people perceived and used these spaces. To compare these shared spaces with public spaces, the main difference is that the condo space is accessible to fewer people. They are secure not because of trust in neighbours, but because there are fewer people who might use them. Shared spaces like the halls are designed to discourage people to loiter in them, and the amenities are out of the way, making coincidental interactions less likely. However,

there is potential for them to be used as event spaces that encourage community, both within the condo and beyond it.

In the Alpha Lofts, formal community, was found to disempower residents at the expense of financial interests – as was found in studies by Rosen and Walks (2013) and Lippert (2019). Only owners have the privilege of engaging in the condo board, and the condo board saw its role as administrative rather than as community leadership. This is also entrenched by Ontario legislative definitions of the responsibility of the condo manager, who has large authority and responsibility in the board. Condo boards rely on the property manager to operate as the secretary, the treasurer, as well as general administrator of day-to-day operations of the condo. The board members all have equal responsibility and roles. This is not an effective way to organize a board for any organization. The result is that the board is perceived as having a lot of work to do and little mandate from the owners of the condo to take on new initiatives. Even when those initiatives could benefit residents, the condo board does not feel it has the authority to even ask owners to start something.

The rules that the board and the condo manager have the power to change are mostly unknown and are mostly disregarded by residents and owners. New owners and residents do not have an 'orientation' to become familiarized with the condo's shared spaces and rules, and rules established at the beginning do not match the reality of living in the condo. The rules, however, are almost impossible to change, requiring a huge majority of owners, who may be foreign investors, to vote in support of the change. Rather than herd a huge majority of owners to change these rules, the condo board and the manager selectively enforce rules, or only enforce rules when residents or owners complain. The result is that the rules of the community do not lead to a shared or common cause in the condo, and depending on how they are enforced, might lead to unequal enforcement.

Interesting aspects of community were found in this study that were unexpected, like the use of virtual spaces like Facebook to create spatial community and identity, and the role of dogs to facilitate interactions. The Facebook groups allowed everyone, renters, resident owners, and non-resident owners to post events and complaints that concerned the condo. The identity of the building crossed the official boundary of the condo corporations and facilitated communication between the condos. However, the things posted in the groups were often perceived as untruthful or inflammatory, which several participants felt made them feel less connected to the people in the condo. Dog ownership was also a big factor in facilitating interactions between people. It served to get people out into the shared spaces regularly, in spaces where interactions are possible, and the dogs served as ice breakers for other dog owners and non-dog owners alike. Dogs in neighbourhoods might fill a similar role to children in creating community. Understanding this role in community could be an important area of future study, as many urban condos in Ontario become more focussed on small and childless households, and dog ownership increases there.

This study of community in a condo supports Rosen and Walks' conception that condos do connote a new structure of urban life. It also shows that this could have consequences for how people might come to identify themselves and with their neighbours and neighbourhood. In terms of the right to the city, the condo has the potential to strengthen collective action and solidarity through collective ownership, as was the original intention of cooperatives. However, administrative requirements that protect financial interests make collective decision-making difficult. Condo administration diverts actions to collective action, and explicitly answers to owners rather than residents. And the requirements for controlling the rules disincentivize understanding and changing them as well as discouraging residents from taking ownership over shared spaces. The burden of authority on owners to act as mediators between renters and the condo board or manager also diffuses responsibility and solidarity between residents. The division between owners and renters also creates a barrier for community. The spaces of the

condo are not designed to facilitate community interaction, and few residents felt any ownership over them. These spaces are instead treated like tools for selling real estate.

Feelings of empowerment to control and develop community were seen to be obscured by misunderstandings of who was responsible for space, and miscommunication of rules and norms. The experience of trying to get things done could feel overly bureaucratic: incomprehensible, and like screaming into the void. Even commonly owned spaces were governed by rules that people didn't understand or feel in control of. Thus, I call the experience of community in the condo a condocracy: even attempting to affect change is akin to screaming into the void.

However, not all condos are created equal. While neoliberal investment in cities through condos can create disempowerment through overly complex private regulation, condos can also be a tool to democratize ownership, foster community identity and personal investment in urban spaces. As was seen in this condo and in marketing used by real estate agents, condos can foster a strong sense of identity and place that is recognized by those outside the community as well. What are some "con-dos" that can improve urban spaces and empower people? Planners might seek to encourage alternative forms of condo development that puts control of the formation of the community aspects of the condo in the hands of the community, like that modelled by Cohousing, which has the community of future residents lead the development process and craft the rules of the community. Planners might also require condos to have more spaces that are accessible to those outside of the condo, either by separating the costs to access the space from the condo fees, or by asking for a community organization to have a space and an ownership stake in the condo. One last suggestion for ways to empower residents and improve the goals of complete community would be a provincial policy change that gives renters rights to participate in more aspects of the condo. Straightforwardly, this could be to allow renters to

participate in the condo board and its motions, and transfer rights from owners to residents, especially as it concerns changing the rules of everyday life in the condo.

8.1 Directions for future research

In the course of this research, several areas were revealed to be of particular interest for a 'complete community' in condos but were not explored in depth. Pets and dog-ownership were a consistent form of in-person interactions, and capable of extending the boundaries of the community. I found that the role dogs played in the community is comparable to that of children, which is of special interest as more people get pets and condos typically have fewer families with children. Research should be done to understand how condos and urban spaces can accommodate pets and dogs while minimizing conflicts. Another area of interest is the role of Facebook. This was an important resource for communication in the condo, but it was also a source for conflict. Future research can pursue the community-creating features of a place-based internet group.

Additional research can be done to explore the dichotomy between tenants and owners in a condo. Understanding how different tenure and right to property between owners and tenants in the same building, a form this case study was limited in the sample that it looked at. Future research might explore how different typologies, sizes, or configurations of condos impact community. Since condos were originally conceived of as like cooperative ownership, a comparative case study of a condo and a housing cooperative might reveal the impact of property rights on perceptions of shared and individual space.

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