Analysis of Media Discourse Surrounding Urban Planning Issues: A Case Study of *Transit City*

by

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AUTHOR'S 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

Contemporary urban planning emphasizes the need for practice to be collaborative and communicative. It stresses on the importance of public engagement and participation. To ensure informed participation, planners need to provide relevant information to the public. However, the relevance of that information depends on an understanding of the existing *discourse* about the issue of interest. My research examined *Transit City* as a case study to demonstrate how that understanding can be gained. The question that framed the research was: What are the characteristics of discourses surrounding urban planning issues? The research focused on examining media coverage to gain that understanding for two reasons. Firstly, the media are considered to be the main *purveyors* of public discourse. However, there are limitations in the way they represent issues as this research found. Secondly, the media play an informant role, however imperfectly, on topics that matter. In part, this role gives them their importance and influence. The research examined media discourse surrounding *Transit City* in 94 articles in *National Post*, the *Toronto Star*, *CUTA Forum*, and *Ontario Planning Journal* to answer the research question. *Discourse analysis* was used as a method to investigate the topic under the framework of *interpretive policy analysis*. The research found that four of the media outlets used discursive practices of representation that highlighted certain themes and excluded others. It also found that the discursive communities that were identified in the media discourse interpreted *Transit City* differently through their discursive frames that were informed by their interest and responsibility in regards to *Transit City* and their core belief systems. As such their "argumentative logic" highlighted some aspects of *Transit City* and excluded others in the debate that ensued. The understanding of such characteristics of discourse can help planners in two ways. First, it informs the planning and the tailoring of messages they relay to discursive communities of various relevance. It allows them to have a stronger participation in the shaping of media discourse and generation of informed debate in the public as well as the professional sphere. Second, it can help

planners in developing solutions to address points of controversy and bridge differences among stakeholders effectively in their role as mediators and consensus builders. Both benefits have positive implications in creating informed participation and making the planning process a collaborative and communicative effort.

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Dedication

This work is dedicated to my father, who is also my biggest fan.

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List of Abbreviations

BIA = Business Improvement Area

CDA = Critical discourse analysis

CUTA Forum = *Canadian Urban Transit Association Forum*

DA = Discourse analysis

IC = Interpretive community

IPA = Interpretive policy analysis

National Post = NP

OPJ = *Ontario Planning Journal*

The *Toronto Star* = TS

Transit City = TC

TTC = Toronto Transit Commission

TEA = Toronto Environmental Alliance

Chapter 1
Introduction

1.1 Motivation for Research

Contemporary urban planning emphasizes the need for planning to be a collaborative and communicative practice among all stakeholders. It stresses on the importance of public engagement and participation. The founder of America Speaks, Carolyn Lukensymeyer, says that participation has to be an informed one for democracy to work (Hajer, 2009). Similarly, van Dijk (1988b) cites Rosenblum (1981, P.223) as saying, "A democracy cannot function without an informed electorate" (P. 6). As a prospective urban planner, I uphold the same view. As such the motivation for my research was an interest in contributing in the development of ways of effective communication with the public so that people become well-informed participants in the urban planning process.

As Forrester (1981) pointed out, "Informed citizen action is vulnerable" (P. 11). Creating an informed participation requires providing quality information to the participants. Innes (1998) asks, "What can practitioners in communicative planning practice do to assure that planning is well informed?" (P.52).The provision of valuable information depends on the understanding of the existing *discourse* about the issues of interest. In order to understand the discourse, I chose to examine the media because as Yanow (2000) points out they are one way of accessing "local knowledge". Van Dijk (1988b) says, the media are "the central purveyors of public discourse" (P. 182). They are one way by which the public gets information. Kovach and Rosenstiel (2007) say that media's role in society includes informing people about what happens locally, regionally, nationally and globally so that they can make informed decisions about issues relevant to their lives. In addition, Hajer (2009) says this is an era "in which the media have become such a crucial dimension of the

political game" (P.9). Using the media in this research made sense for all the above reasons as the motivation for this research was about informed participation in the planning process.

Print media such as newspapers and trade magazines[1] and their electronic representations, which are the focus of this research, are one such outlet that plays the informant role in the context of urban planning and other municipal affairs. Some of them dedicate a section to the discussion of urban planning matters and create an information venue. Readers learn from newspapers about planning affairs and policies, how policies are going to affect them, what groups are interested in a given policy issue, what their interests and concerns are, and what the controversies are. By so doing the media reflect the discourse that is happening in the public sphere. Bengston and Fan (1999) found out in their research that the media mirrored public opinion. They also quote George Gallup as saying, "The newspapers and radio conduct the debate on national issues, presenting information and argument on both sides, just as the townsfolk did in person at the old town meeting" (p. 518). Trade magazines play a role in keeping their readers, mainly professionals and policymakers, informed and updated on relevant issues. Even though they are not as prevalent as newspapers are, according to Filion, Shipley, and Te (2007), planning journals serve planners and related professionals as sources of general knowledge on relevant topics. In effect, newspapers and trade magazines reflect the discourse happening in the public and professional spheres on issues ranging from the economic implication of urban sprawl to the latest NIMBY (not-in-my-backyard) protest to a transit plan a city has proposed.

Therefore, analyzing the discourse surrounding urban planning issues can inform planners on the characteristics of the discourse happening in the public and professional sphere. Understanding the characteristics of media discourse and the broader public discourse in which that coverage occurs

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[1] Surma (2005) describes professional discourse as having qualities of "information and persuasion" of "specialist and public" nature (P.15). The trade magazines examined for this research did not purvey public discourse. They just gave information about TC.

shows the different interpretations stakeholders (discursive communities) ascribe to planning issues. That understanding can help planners in two ways. First, it becomes a source in tailoring information they relay to the public at large and specific discursive communities through the media. I acknowledge that not everyone follows the media. As such the focus in this thesis is about engaging the segment of the public that reads newspapers, trade magazines, and related media. This helps limit the broad topic of public engagement to the manageable scope of this thesis. In addition, Putnam (2000) argues that those who read newspapers are more engaged[2] in their communities than those who do not. Therefore, communicating with them effectively by ensuring the provision of relevant and quality information will have an implication to public engagement. Second, understanding the different interpretation given to urban planning issues by different discursive communities helps planners in their role as mediators and facilitators. That understanding can be used in helping each community appreciate the others' interpretation of the same issue in the planning process. Both benefits have positive implications in creating and enabling informed participation and making the planning process a collaborative practice.

1.2 Purpose Statement and Research Question

The purpose of the research is to understand the characteristics of discourse surrounding urban planning issues in different media outlets by asking: What are the characteristics of the discourse surrounding urban planning issues? The research illustrates the importance of understanding the discourse; shows how the media can be used to gain that understanding to engage the public by providing quality information. The case studied examined here is media coverage of *Transit City*.

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[2] It is important to note that being engaged does not necessarily imply having quality information. Nor does reading newspapers imply having quality information. As Carolyn Lukensymeyer says "Democracy is not just participation… It needs to be informed participation. If you don't have the informed side of it, you don't have the core of democracy" Hajer (2009, P.90)

Transit City was a light rail transit system proposed by the city of Toronto in 2007. The thesis examined media coverage of the transit project to understand the characteristics of the discourse surrounding it. *Discourse analysis* was used to investigate the topic. The selected reference newspapers and trade magazines were the *Toronto Star*, *National Post*, *Canadian Urban Transit Association Forum,* and *Ontario Planning Journal*. The study covers a period of three years and nine months starting from the launch of TC in March 2007 until December, 2010, when the city announced that its mandate had been changed. Even though a different version of the LRT project continued and the media kept reporting on it, it was decided to end the study period in December 2010 to limit the data to a manageable scope.

The research analyzes media discourse surrounding TC, describes the different discursive communities and their respective "discursive frames", and discusses the characteristics of media practices. It then suggests recommendations based on the analysis of the findings. Such recommendations can be used in developing ways of engaging the public by using the media and in facilitations during the planning process. Such improvements in practice may allow planners to have a stronger participation in the shaping of media discourse and generation of informed debate. The recommendations also contribute in helping planners in their roles as mediators between different discursive communities.

The research also provides tactics and strategies that can be generalized and used as a framework for other studies on discourse surrounding other urban planning issues. As such, it will shed light on the under-explored relationship between urban planning and media discourse (Goodey (1973), Edey, Whitelaw, and Seasons (2006)) and on research methods that can be used for urban planning issues. The research will contribute to the limited literature on the topic and fill a knowledge gap.

1.3 Overview of Case Study – *Transit City*

Transit City was a transit plan proposed for the city of Toronto during the administration of David Miller. It was described in an online publication of the Toronto Transit Commission [TTC] of 2010 as "a proposed network of seven new light rail lines that would provide comfortable, efficient rapid transit throughout Toronto". Its purpose was to increase mobility by serving up to 175 million riders per year in a cost-effective, efficient and sustainable way. Estimated at $8 billion, *Transit City* was made public in March 2007 and endorsed by the province of Ontario and Metrolinx, the GTA Transportation Authority ("TTC Annual Report", 2010). It was made up of "120km network of dedicated and fully accessible streetcar[3] rapid transit lines" ("TTC Annual Report", 2007). The *Transit City Light Rail* Plan was derived from the city's official plan and was included by the province's *Move Ontario 2020* ("TTC Annual Report", 2007; "TTC Annual Report", 2008). *Transit City* ended in 2010; in October of that year, Rob Ford was elected as a mayor of Toronto and according to the Toronto Transit Commission, "the mandate of the new Mayor has been to implement underground transit initiatives and the *Transit City* Plans are currently under review" ("TTC Annual Report", 2010).

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[3] Even the TTC was using the term "streetcars" to describe the LRT vehicles.

Figure 1.1 *Transit City*[4] **Light Rail Plan**

Adopted from Transit City Light Rail Plan, City of Toronto, 2010

1.4 Limitations

There were a number of practical decisions that had to be made to manage the scope of the

research. Most of them were as a result of the limited time and resources available for this research.

They are discussed below.

1. The mass media are generally considered a credible public record (Filion, 1998), and "Central

   purveyors of public discourse" (van Dijk, 1988b, P. 182). However, they have limitations for

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[4] The TC LRT lines were: Sheppard East LRT, Eglinton Crosstown LRT, Finch West LRT, Scarborough LRT, Jane LRT, Don Mills LRT, Malvern LRT, Waterfront LRT

two reasons. As the literature highlights[5], the media do not give coverage to everyone equally and the media convey an incomplete picture of stakeholders' discourses. The fact that four publications were included for the study helps address that to a certain extent.

2. Media discourse is one way of understanding public discourse. A more complete picture of the discourse would have been possible if other methods, such as field work, had been included.

3. The research only looked at mainstream print media as a relatively reliable public record operating within journalistic standards of practice compared to social media or alternative media[6]. Broadcast media are also excluded from the research due to limited time and resources available for this research.

4. The purpose of the research is to understand the characteristics of media discourse surrounding urban planning issues through the exploration of a case study. As such the research is designed in such a way that the same method can be applied to other case studies as well. However, the result may not be necessarily be the same for other urban planning issues.

5. The reference data, which will be discussed in detail in Chapter Three, is constituted of 94 articles from the four publications over a period of almost four years. The data did not include the complete corpus.[7]

6. The motivation and ultimate goal of this research was to contribute to public engagement. There are several ways of contributing to that. However, the research was designed in such a

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[5] and as was proven in this research
[6] It is important to acknowledge, however, that social and alternative media have their own strength and that they are gaining prominence.
[7] As such the findings are specifically about the 94 articles. However, as Bednarek (2005) says such limited data is indicative of a pattern.

way that the focus of creating engagement is through the media and through mediation and facilitation in planning processes.

7. Four media outlets, NP, TS, CUTA Forum, OPJ, were the publications that were examined for the study to limit the scope of the study to a manageable task.

1.5 Organization of Thesis

The thesis' first chapter introduces the subject. The second chapter, literature review, is divided into two sections: substantive literature and literature on methods of research. The first section discusses the media and discourse in detail and summarizes the literature in the context of the research topic. The second section looks at interpretive research methods, with a focus on discourse analysis and interpretive policy analysis.

The third chapter, discusses the methods and procedures of inquiry used in conducting the primary research. Rationale for using the particular methods is given and data collection methods for newspapers and trade magazines and respective articles are discussed in detail. This chapter also discusses the validity strategies used.

The fourth chapter looks at the findings of the discourse analysis in detail by supporting the interpretation with examples. The fifth chapter presents analysis of the main findings by framing them in terms of their implications to planners. The last chapter summarizes the answer to the research question and suggests recommendations based on the answers. The thesis ends with a list of references used.

Chapter 2
Literature Review

The discussion in this chapter gives an overview of relevant literature on the concepts that informed the research, and that are discussed in the thesis. It also provides a detailed description of the research methods used. As such it creates a background for understanding the thesis. The discussion is categorized into two sections. The first section addresses the concept of contemporary planning, discourse, and the mass media in relevance to the research question. The second section reviews literature on the methods used i.e. interpretive methods in general, discourse analysis, and interpretive policy analysis.

2.1 Substantive Literature

2.1.1 Communicative Practice in Contemporary Planning

The motivation for the research was an interest in contributing to effective communication and engagement in the planning process. Innes (1998) says that the perspective firmly held prior to the last three decades what that as far as communication was concerned the planner's role was providing information to elected officials. She says that the shift in perspective in planning acknowledges planning as a communicative action. Allmendinger (2007) agrees: "One approach that has gained increasing theoretical popularity is to see planning as a communicative or collaborative process," (P.197). Innes (1998) expands on what communicative planning is about and hints at the discursive quality of the information involved:

> "[T]he new model argues that in communicative planning, information becomes gradually embedded in the understandings of the actors in the community, through processes in which participants, including planners, collectively create meanings. These participants, moreover, rely on many types of "information," and not primarily on formal analytic reports or quantitative measures". (P.53)
>   Huxley (2000) implies that there are two descriptions of communication: "ethnomethodoligical examination of how planners plan … or the interactions planners

engage in" (P. 374). This research is concerned with the later. The premise in this thesis is that planners can use the media as a platform for such interactions.

According to Huxley (2000), "In the communicative planning literature, the assumption appears to be that planning practice… with its structures for public participation, can and should act as a forum for discursive democracy" (P. 376). Where that forum needs to happen is a concept Healey (2003) discusses. She implies that one of the ways to ensure the inclusionary[8] democratic potential of planning is using "different arena" for "strategic discussion". She mentions radio phone-ins as one of such arenas. Other writers (e.g. Bengston & Fan, 1999 etc) say that the media in general are one such arena for public forum and a reflection of the public discourse that happens elsewhere.

2.1.2 Discourse

Various scholars give different definitions of discourse is. However, all definitions agree on a social constructivist view that there are varying interpretations of the social world, including the understanding of discourse itself. According to Schroder (2012), "Discourse constructs social reality, including discourse studies itself as a scholarly field. This means that different scholars in this field draw maps of the world of discourse studies that are to some extent different" (P.113). When it comes to text, which is a form of discourse, Fairclough (1995) argues that it is not purely representation. He says, "A useful working assumption is that any part of any text (from the media or from elsewhere) will be simultaneously representing, setting up identities, and setting up relations" (1998, P.5). Michel Foucault, who is credited for laying the groundwork for discourse analysis (Waitt, 2005), goes one step further than Fairclough. According to Hall (1997 "Discourse, Foucault argues, constructs the topic" (P. 72). The thesis assumes that the media coverage of TC wasn't purely representational. It also created what TC was and what it meant.

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[8] The researcher acknowledges that the press, which is the focus of the research, excludes certain publics in the sense that not all publics read newspapers.

Foucault explains the term 'discourse' as statements that affect the world and have common themes and effects on people even though it is also used more commonly to mean 'discussion' (Waitt, 2005). According to Hall (1992), "Foucault's use of 'discourse' … is an attempt to side-step what seems an unresolvable dilemma – deciding which social discourses are true or scientific, and which false or ideological" (P. 293).

Linguistic theorists such as Fairclough (1998) emphasize the linguistic aspect of discourses: "A discourse is the language used in representing a given social practice from a particular point of view. Discourses appertain broadly to knowledge and knowledge construction" (P. 56). Hall (1992) sees discourse as "production of knowledge through language" (P. 291). Hajer (2009) on the other hand explains discourse in terms of meanings given to phenomena when he describes it as "an ensemble of notions, ideas, concepts, and categorizations through which meaning is ascribed to social and physical phenomena, and that is produced in and reproduced in turn an identifiable set of practices" (P.60). Vand Dijk (1988a) hints at such identifiable patterns in news discourse. According to van Dijk (1988), "Media discourses in general, and news reports in particular, should also be accounted for in their own right , e.g., as particular types of language use or text and as specific kinds of sociocultural practice" (P. 2). Fairclough (1998) also says that the media need to be considered as discourse.

On the importance of media discourse Bednarke (2006) says, "[N]ewspaper discourse helps us to comprehend what is happening in the world in which we live" (P. 216). The research uses the media to understand the public discourse surrounding *Transit City* because as van Dijk (1988b) says that media are "the main form of public discourse that provides…the pervasively dominant knowledge and attitude structures" (P.182). Therefore, as he suggests:

"If powerful speakers [such as the media] or groups enact or otherwise 'exhibit' their power in discourse, we need to know exactly how this is done. And if they thus are able to persuade or

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otherwise influence their audiences, we also want to know which discursive structures and strategies[9] are involved in that process". (P. 303)

Even though he doesn't explain how, he adds, "[W]e … have to deal with relations between discourse and cognition, … discourse structures form the crucial mediating role" (van Dijk, 1988b, P. 303). Bell and Garret (1998) summarize van Dijk's description of discourse structures that they range from "lexical items and grammatical structures to macrostructures such as topics or themes expressed indirectly in larger stretches of text or whole discourses" (Bell & Garret, 1998, P. 7). They also say that these structures may have "ideological positions". The thesis discusses the structures of media discourse surrounding TC mainly on macro level by examining themes.

2.1.3 The Mass Media

After the 1960s, where public participation gained momentum, Goodey (1973) says, there emerged a need for communication between planners and the public that could only be achieved through the mass media. "Generally… it is press reports, radio commentaries and especially television and radical press reports that provide insights into the planning activity at the local level; though few would admit to the emergence of a balanced picture as a result" (Goodey, 1973, P.13). I believe this is still true today and it is this importance of the media - to planning and other issues - and their practices that this literature review explores. As Innes (1998) points out "[Planning] participants … rely on many types of 'information' and not primarily on formal analytic reports or quantitative measures" (P. 53). Even though Innes does not outline what types of "information" she specifically means, the assumption in this thesis is that mass media information can be one such type of information.

The mass media, McQuail (2010) says, "refer to the organized means of communicating openly, at a distance, and to many in a short space of time" (P.4). Gold and Revill (2004) go further in

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[9] This research has identified some in the media discourse.

specifying what it includes and what its various forms are: "Traditionally, 'media' meant the 'media of mass communication', by which technologically based systems transmitted content (or messages) through print, broadcasting, posters or film to remote and scattered audiences" (P. 37). It is important to note here that based on this definition, trade magazines are technically a form of mass media. However, in most of the discussions of the media in the existing literature the focus is on mainstream mass media. There was not a significant body of literature that discussed trade magazine as a genre of writing. Surma (2005) describes what trade magazines as follows:

> Professional discourses, now proliferating in the print and electronic media, regularly interweave a complex of languages – those of specialist and public or general knowledges, of information and persuasion, of public and community relations, of law and regulation, of citizenship and morality[10]. (P. 15).

2.1.3.1 The importance of media

The summary in this section highlights the importance of mass media in society, their informant role in the context of urban planning, their function as a platform of discussion, and their significance as evaluators of government performance on urban issues. McQuail (2010) says that regardless of the changes that are happening in the information technology, the mass media still are important to society. This section by discussing their importance indirectly legitimizes the usage of media discourse for the purpose of understanding public discourse.

Kovach and Rosenstiel (2007) say that while the main purpose of journalism is to provide information so that people can become sovereign, it also helps monitor the powerful and give voice to the unrepresented. According to them, throughout history, awareness of what is happening around them enabled people to be in control of their own lives and gave them a sense of safety. Therefore, they state that the importance of journalism, which they authors say is essentially a continuation of people's conversation, is determined by the significance news has in people's lives. Other authors

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[10] The above description was found to be true about the two trade magazines in the reference data.

have a different opinion of the media. Conboy (2008) says, "one of the comfortable myths associated with journalism is that it has, as a form of public writing, enabled an informed citizenship to emerge from the shackles of authoritarian modes of communication control" (P. 254). He presents Boyce's (1978) argument: "Boyce argues that journalism would understand itself and its place in society better if it was more candid about the nature of its integration within power structures" (P. 255).

Regarding what the media do for the public, George Gallup said, "The newspapers and radio conduct the debate on national issues, presenting information and argument on both sides, just as the townsfolk did in person at the old town meeting" (quoted in Bengston & Fan, 1999, p. 518). Iyenegar and Kinder (2010) argue that Americans form opinion about a variety of things without having a firsthand experience by relying on the information and analysis provided by the mass media.

According to Kovach and Rosenstiel (2007), in the 21st century, the mainstream media are not the only source of information. People can learn about things from social and new media. The authors say what separates the mass media is their ability to provide verified information; something the public may not have the time, money, or skill to deliver. The media are also said to portray a fuller picture of what is happening. As was observed in the Oak Ridge Moraine policy outcome, the *Toronto Star* played an important role in putting seemingly disparate things and creating a full view of the matter Edey, et al. (2006).

Jones (1975) explores the role of the mass media in urban policy and describes it as the "rough-and-readily-available measurer and evaluator" of the conditions of the metropolis and policy outcomes (P.360). According to him, the media inform the public about what is happening in the metropolitan area and about the government's efforts and policies to improve conditions. He also explains that public officials may learn things from social indicator reports but the public does through the media. Jones (1975) argues that if evaluations of the government's performance remain in privileged environments such as universities or government institutions, they will become a secret; "If

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the masses are to know (and thereby hopefully improve the intelligence of democracy), then the mass media must tell them" (p. 360).

The media also indirectly inform the public on important issues. Johnson and Graves (2011) observed that some reality TV shows unintentionally address urban planning issues; for example *Amazing Race* about public transportation, *Wife Swap* about suburban versus urban life. In fact, Johnson and Graves (2011) state that the use of television has positive results in creating interest in planning issues and engaging citizens.

Filion (1999) credits newspaper articles as comprehensive and better chroniclers of planning history than planning documents and statistical data: He says newspapers discuss issues ranging from proposals to urban development to planning process and outcomes. Bengston and Fan (1999) credit the media for their role as a setting of debates and discussion for their case study and observed discussion happened in the form of editorials, letters to the editors, and summaries of the debates happening elsewhere. They also comment that the discussion reflected public opinion.

2.1.3.2 Media's Influence on Opinion

Several authors agree on the influence of media even though their views on how it influences may vary. Talbot (2007) says, "Very few of us, if any, are unaffected by media discourse. The importance of the media in the modern world is incontrovertible" (P.3). Fan (1988) states that information has the power to influence public opinion and if the information comes mainly from the press, that makes the press a major effect on perceptions. He argues that government censorship on press proves the media's importance on public opinion. This section, by explaining media influence, highlights the reason why planners need to have more participation in shaping media discourse.

Iyengar and Kinder (2010) say that the media shape public opinion. In addition, Jones (1975) says that it is generally believed that media coverage influences upper level government officials even though he acknowledges that it is not a tested theory. Both authors (Fan, 1988; Jones, 1975) say

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media's effect is cumulative and happens over a long-term; i.e. each news story may not influence opinion over short-term. Regarding particularly planning issues, Edey, et al. (2006) concluded from their research on media coverage of the Oak Ridge Moraine that the media, specifically TS, have a significant influence on public opinion and can impact planning matters.

Bengston and Fan (1999) emphasized a slightly different nature of the media; in their case study research, they said the media mirrored public opinion just like opinion polls and surveys with the magnitude of coverage reflecting what was happening in the social realm. Cohen (1963) says, "The press is significantly more than a purveyor of information and opinion. It may not be successful much of the time in telling people what to think, but it is stunningly successful in telling its reader what to think about" (1963, P.13, Quoted in Iyengar & Kinder, 2010, P.2). This is similar to the constructivist view explored towards the beginning of this chapter. McQuail (2010) offers an opinion that addresses the various views above:

> While by now, there is much more knowledge and also scepticism about the direct 'power' of mass communication, there is no less reliance on mass media in the spheres of advertising, public relations and political campaigning. Politics is routinely conducted (and also reported) on the assumption that skilful media presentation is absolutely vital to success in all normal circumstances. (P.53)

Iyengar and Kinder (2010) say that there is research to support that the mass media only "strengthen or reinforce the public's existing believes and opinions". However, they say the above opinion is mistaken. According to them, TV news shapes American opinion. They argue that the Americans form opinion about a variety of things without having a firsthand experience by relying on the information and analysis provided by the mass media. Therefore, they say the media set the agenda as there is a tendency for people to take the stories that receive the major coverage as the most important one. Therefore, the authors state that this gives the media their power to shape public opinion.

Van Dijk (1988b) says the media's influence is beyond setting the agenda.

As the central purveyors of public discourse, the news media provide more than the agenda of public topics and discussions. … The influence of the media, therefore, is more indirect and more structural. News reports do not necessarily prescribe the concrete opinions of readers. Rather they are the main form of public discourse that provides the general outline of social, political, cultural, and economic models of societal events, as well as the pervasively dominant knowledge and attitude structures that make such models intelligible. (P.182)

This describes their power of influence.

2.1.3.3 Limitations of the Media[11]

The media are accused of unethical conduct such as partisanship and propaganda. According to Anderson (1997), "one of the most common charges is that news possesses a "political bias". Both right-wing and left-wing politicians accuse the news media of political partisanship" (P. 50). In fact, Hauptman (2011) says that the public does not have a lot of respect for journalists. According to the literature, some of the criticized practices of the media are deliberate while others are inadvertent. Fairclough (1998) explains, "[A]n account of communication in the mass media must consider the economics and politics of the mass media: the nature of the market which the mass media are operating within, and their relationship to the state, and so forth" (P.36). This section examines some of the realities of media practices that cause the limitations, intentional or otherwise, as discussed in the literature.

One of the media practices discussed that result in imperfections in media discourse is decision of what is newsworthy. Fairclough (1998) says, "In any representation, you have to decide what to include and what to exclude, and what to 'foreground' and what to 'background'" (P.4). There are others like Donsbach (2004) who say that decision is influenced by the audience, "Some of this influence is picked up by the institutional objectives to cater for audience taste …. But journalists have their own conceptions of the audience and its taste" (P. 145). Similarly, Kovach and Rosenstiel (2007) say that it is journalists who make the decision what story to run and how to frame it by

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[11] Even though the primary research doesn't deal with the reasons for the limitations in media discourse, it was decided to include this in the literature review to give a context to media practices that affect discourse.

speculating what interests the public. That has significant consequence according to Iyengar and Kinder (2010), "By calling attention to some matters while ignoring others, television news influences the standards by which governments, presidents, policies, and candidate for public office are judged" (P. 63). Iyengar and Kind (2010) say, "Our studies show specifically that television news powerfully influences which problems viewers regard as the nation's most serious" (P. 4).

Hauptman (2011) discusses the implication of time constraints on media message as most newspapers are daily. He says immediacy results in limitations: less editing and fact checking compared to books and academic journals and limited time to do a thorough research on a story. According to him, this makes the media unable to find out every side of the story and reach out to different participants in the story. Edey et al. (2006) also imply that what seems to be the media's favoring of a certain group may be because journalists are limited by their tight deadlines to explore more.

According to Richardson (2007), journalism is a business. However he says that this fact only needs to be "the starting point of analysis" (P.7). McQuail (2010) says, "Although the media have grown up in response to the social and cultural needs of individuals and societies, they are largely run as business enterprises" (P.217). Similarly, Fairclough (1995) says, "The press and commercial broadcasting are pre-eminently profit making organizations, they make their profits by selling audiences to advertisers, and they do this by achieving the highest possible readerships or listener/viewer ratings for the lowest possible financial outlay" (P.42). Even though the research doesn't explore these issues in the case study, it is important to give this as a background to understand media practices.

2.2 Literature on Research Methods

2.2.1 Interpretive Methods

The research used discourse analysis under the framework of interpretive policy analysis. Both DA and IPA are interpretive methods of research. Wetherell (2001) says, "Many discourse researchers would argue that analysis is indeed always an interpretation, that there can be no truly inductive work since the analyst always approaches the data with some theoretical preconceptions" (P.397). This section briefly summarizes Yanow's (2000) "interpretation" of interpretive methods.

The theoretical base of interpretive methods was developed against the positivist school of thought (Yanow, 1996). According to her, the premise for that was that there were various interpretations of the social world.

> In this world there are no "brute data" whose meaning is beyond dispute. Dispassionate rigorous science is possible – but not the neutral, objective science stipulated by traditional methods (as represented by the scientific method). As living requires sensemaking, and sensemaking entails interpretation.... (P.5)

In conducting analysis work on any issue, she says the analyst cannot remain neutral. Her assumption is that , "knowledge is acquired through interpretation, which is necessarily "subjective": it reflects the education, experience, and training, as well as the individual, familial, and communal background, of the "subject" making the analysis…" (P.6)[12].

2.2.2 Discourse Analysis

Discourse analysis was used to explore the media discourse surrounding TC. The rationale for using this method is discussed in-depth in the next chapter. This section summarizes the existing literature on discourse analysis and gives a brief depth of field.

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[12] My research, by using interpretive methods acknowledges that my analysis of the media discourse about TC is one of the possible interpretations and not the only one.

There are variations in the definition of discourse analysis (Jorgenson & Philips, 2002). As

Schroder (2012) says:

> It is a fact that thousands of scholars around the world engage in discourse studies and label their work 'discourse analysis,' but they do so from a variety of different ontological, epistemological, theoretical, methodological, and analytical perspectives, and they see themselves as metaphorically inhabiting different scientific continents, nations, and sub-national regions". (P.113)

According to Wetherell (2001), social policy researchers use Foucauldian theory in their discourse

analysis or use CDA.

The foundation work for DA was initially explored by Foucault (Waitt, 2005). Wetherell

(2001) summarizes the development of DA as follows:

> [D]discourse research is a new development. It is a style of research which emerged most strongly from the 1980s onwards while the precursors in languages studies appeared typically from the 1920s onwards. Despite this novelty … discourse research is beginning to settle down or cohere around particular nodes of research activity. Distinctive styles for doing discourse analysis are merging…. These traditions (not quite schools) typically include some epistemological claims, a set of concepts and procedures for substantive work and a clearly marked out theoretical domain. They also typically include a distinctive understanding of 'discourse'. (P. 382)

Discourse analysis examines text; so do linguistics methods. Mills (1997) explains the difference

between DA and linguistic methods of analysis:

> "Discourse analysis can be seen as a reaction to a more traditional form of linguistics (formal, structural linguistics) which is focused on the constituent units and structure of the sentence and which does not concern itself with an analysis of language in use. Discourse analysis, in contrast to formal linguistics, is concerned with translating the notion of structure from the level of the sentence, i.e., grammatical relations such as subject–verb–object, to the level of longer text. Since it is rare for anyone to communicate with others through single sentences alone, these discourse analysts are critical of the tendency for linguists to concentrate solely on sentence structure". (P.135)

There are also differing views on the purpose of discourse analysis as there are different

definitions. Some consider it as a theoretical perspective as well as a method of inquiry while others

use it mainly as a research method. The fundamental social constructionist view of discourse analysis

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outlined by Jorgenson and Philips (2002) is that people's communication doesn't reflect their neutral view of the world. The examination of discourse, such as the one proposed by this research, holds the same view. That makes discourse analysis my theoretical perspective as well as my method of research. However, the emphasis in the discussion of discourse analysis in this thesis is in its use as a method of inquiry.

According to Foucault, the aim of discourse analysis is to analyze text by examining attitudes and looking at how they are produced and communicated (Waitt, 2005).[13] Johnstone (2002) implies that discourse analysis deals with questions about human life and communication; therefore, any field that is concerned with that can use it.

Currently, there are different approaches to discourse analysis (Jorgenson & Philips, 2002). My research conducts the analysis of discourse surrounding TC under the framework of interpretive policy analysis for understanding the debate.

2.2.3 Interpretive Policy Analysis

Schroder (2012) cites literature that IPA is considered one of the "scholarly territories" of discourse analysis (P.114). Yanow (2000) one of the most prominent experts in IPA discusses the field in detail. Below is a summary of IPA as she outlined it.

IPA "maps the architecture" of a debate in relation to an issue of interest by identifying relevant interpretive communities[14] and their discourses, which she describes as "specific meanings being communicated" (Yanow, 2000, P.22). She says the ultimate question that an analyst needs to ask is that how the interpretive communities frame the issue of interest. These communities interpret the issue differently and she suggests identifying the points of conflicts or "the meanings that are in

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[13] The thesis conducts DA to examine how attitudes or meanings are communicated in media discourse about TC.

[14] Interpretive communities according to Yanow (2000) are groups of people around a policy issue "sharing thought, speech practice, and their meanings" (P.10).

conflict between or among groups". The points of conflicts have an underlying reason which she describes as "conceptual sources" (P. 20). Yanow (2000) suggests the analyst identifies them as they explain and show the different interpretation of an issue by ICs.

Her approach to IPA was found to be appropriate to my research. The rationale is discussed in the next chapter. The specific steps she follows in conducting IPA are adopted and explored in the methods section. So are the techniques of discourse analysis

Chapter 3
Research Methods

This chapter discusses in detail the research question, the method of inquiry used, the techniques of collecting data, and validity strategies applied.

3.1 Methods of Inquiry

The main question of this qualitative inquiry asks: What are the characteristics of media discourse surrounding urban planning issues? There are different definitions of qualitative research. For the purpose of the research Creswell's (2009) definition of qualitative research is used. According to him, "Qualitative research is a means of exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem" (2009, P. 4). In addition, Jankowski and Jensen (2002) say, "[Q]ualitative analysis focuses on the occurrence of its analytical objects in a particular context, as opposed to [quantitative research that focuses on] the recurrence of formally similar elements in different contexts" (P.4). The thesis addresses the research question, i.e. explores the meaning different groups ascribed to TC, the analytical object, by analyzing the "discourse" surrounding it. As Yanow (2000) implies discourse is "the specific meanings … communicated through specific artifacts and their entailment (in thought, speech, and act)" (P.22). Philips and Jorgensen (2002) also say, "A discourse is a particular way of representing the world (or parts of the world)" (P.143).

On a more fundamental level, I am interested in the "discourse" surrounding light rail transit, a transportation technology, and the social constructivist perspective that comes with it. As Potter and Wetherell (2001) point out, "Discourse analysts have responded to the all-encompassing functional/constructive nature of accounts by suspending the realistic approach [to model of language] and focusing on discourse as a topic in its own right" (P. 199). My interest was also inspired by Bijker (1995) who points out that the understanding of any technology is socially

constructed. The purpose of my research is to understand the meaning given to the light rail transit technology by the individuals and groups by examining the discourse. As Hall (1992) interprets Foucault's definition, discourse is "a way of representing the knowledge about – a particular topic at a particular historical moment" (P.291). My research explores media coverage to understand the representation of the technology. According to Hall (1992), "all practices have a discursive aspect" (P.291) and specifically Talbot (2007) says that Foucault's view of language is that it is discursive. The discursive nature of the discussion[15] surrounding Toronto's light rail transit is emphasized by using discourse analysis to examine media coverage. Waitt (2005) says that discourse analysis, unlike the other qualitative methods allows more understanding.

> How discourse analysis can be conceptualised as a break from previous qualitative methods is reliant upon its focus, to identify and to understand how particular ideas are privileged as 'truth'. According to Foucault, this requires careful investigation of discursive structures [sic]. These are the unwritten conventions that operate to produce some kind of authoritative account of the world, be it the physical environment, an economic process, or social difference. (P.168)

My research specifically uses a "descriptive" approach to discourse analysis. Johnstone (2002) says, "No matter what the overarching research question, all discourse analysis results in description: describing texts and how they work is a goal along the way" (Johnstone, 2002, P.27). However, this study used the descriptive approach for a number of reasons. The overarching goal of this research was to examine the discussion of a planning issue in different media outlets by using DA and to describe the status quo from the findings. Johnstone (2002) says descriptive works assume two things: "(1) that it is possible to describe the world ... (2) that the proper role of a scholar is to describe the status quo first, and only later, if at all, to apply scholarly findings in the solution of practical problems" (P. 27). Similarly, Gee (2011) says that the goal of descriptive approaches to

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[15] "It is important to distinguish discourse from 'discussion': … the analyst might trace different, competing discourses in a particular discussion" (Hajer, 2009, P.60).

discourse analysis is to describe "how language works in order to understand it" (P.9). According to Fairclough (1985), a descriptive approach to discourse analysis refers to work "whose goals are either non-explanatory, or explanatory within 'local' limits, in contrast to the 'global' explanatory goals of critical discourse analysis…" (P.753).The alternative to a descriptive goal in discourse analysis according to both Gee (2011) and Fariclough (1985) is critical discourse analysis which according to van Dijk (1993) is mainly concerned with "understanding the nature of social power and dominance" (P.254).

The purpose of my research was to understand the architecture of the discourse surrounding Toronto's light rail transit project for the purpose of using that knowledge for specific goal – for effective public engagement and communication in transit planning. I accept the position that power and dominance are reflected in discourse. As Hall (1992) says, "Discourses … always operate in relation to power – they are part of the way power circulates is contested" (P. 295). However, I limited my thesis to dealing with local concerns related to transit in the interest of the limited time for the research; hence the descriptive approach. As Carvalho (2008) says "CDA[critical discourse analysis] has set itself the goal of looking beyond texts and taking into account institutional and sociocultural contexts" (P.161) I found going beyond the limits of the reference data was outside the scope of this research.

Last but not least, this research doesn't focus on what Fairclough (1985) describes as "assymmetirical distribution of discoursal and pragmatic rights and obligations according to status" (P.757). The reason for this is the fact that most of the relevant interpretive communities identified in the reference data are powerful stakeholders, government agencies such as TTC and Metrolinx and different levels of government, the City of Toronto, the Province of Ontario, and the federal government, that have a reasonably comparative discoursal and pragmatic power. In other words, their relative pragmatic power did not create a difference in the representation of their discourses in

the media. Therefore, I found descriptive approach, which Fairclough (1985) says does not focus on the asymmetrical rights and obligations, more appropriate for this research.

3.2 Data Collection

To understand the discourse surrounding TC, the thesis examined media coverage of the project in four publications, *National Post,* the *Toronto Star, CUTA Forum*, and *Ontario Planning Journal* between March 2007 and December 2010. The coverage of TC in all of these publications demonstrated the importance of the topic to the public. Bednarek (2006) used a similar method to create comparable sets of data and to ensure the selection of a topic important to society. Different versions of the transit plan have been revived and the media continued covering it. However, this study focused on the period of time TC existed in its original form to limit the amount of data as mentioned in the introduction. This section details the criteria used to collect data for the research.

3.2.1 Newspapers

In selecting reference newspapers, the research used relevance and balance as criteria to create "reasonable comparability" between them. Jawroska and Krishanamurthy (2010, P.407) implied the need to create "reasonable comparability" between different corpora in their discourse analysis of media coverage. Initially, the *Toronto Star* and the *Toronto Sun* were selected. Both newspapers enjoy high readership. The *Toronto Star,* that has the highest readership in Canada, had a daily circulation average of 276,055 and *the Toronto Sun* 136,640 in 2011 ("Newspapers Canada", 2012). Both are local newspapers to the Toronto area and focus on local issues such as TC in detail. In addition, it was my assumption that these two newspapers have different discursive frames[16]; therefore, each newspaper would create for the other a "counter discourse" suggested by Waitt (2005).

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[16] A concept that will be explored later

However, *the Toronto Sun* was not available in the library system of Waterloo University's online database. It was only available at the Toronto Reference Library in the form of microfilm. Obtaining data from the microfilm was impractical time-wise. Two of the other possibilities were the two national newspapers: the *Globe and Mail* and *National Post*. The latter was chosen because of its different discursive frame from that of TS. Therefore, considering the criteria (locality, readership, and balance), I decided to use The *Toronto Star* and *National Post* as a reference newspaper.

3.2.1.1 Newspaper Articles

Keyword search of the term "*Transit City*" in the database *Factiva* produced 190 articles from *National Post* and 376 from *the Toronto Star.* Considering the limited time and resources available for this research, it was important to limit the number of articles. Initially, every article about TC that appeared on a specific day of the first week of the month was to be collected. I randomly chose Thursday. I found out quickly that this didn't collect enough data as TC was not covered every day, or every week. I decided to collect the first article about *Transit City* that appeared every month over the study period instead.

When the keyword search identified articles that were not about TC but made a passing comment about it, the following criteria were considered for the selection: the number of times the term "*Transit City*" was used in an article and the relevance of the information accompanying the term. Jaworska and Krishnamurthy (2012) used similar criteria to identify articles for discourse analysis they conducted. A total of 39 articles from NP and 42 from the TS were collected.

3.2.2 Trade Magazines

Two trade magazines were identified as part of the reference data. I used relevance to transit/urban planning issues and locality as criteria. I identified the *Canadian Urban Transit Association Forum and Ontario Planning Journal* as a result. The audiences for these two

publications are mainly planners, engineers, and other professionals in related fields. Filion et al.

(2009) identified that the *Ontario Planning Journal* that planners use it for general information.

3.2.2.1 Magazine Articles

The *Ontario Planning Journal* is a bi-monthly (every two months) journal. Initially, I used a

similar criterion used for collecting newspaper articles. However, the journal didn't have enough

coverage of the topic for the criterion to produce significant data. Therefore, a decision was made to

use all of the articles that appeared in the study period that had some relevance to TC. I conducted

manual search to identify them.[17] I read through the table of contents of each issue and scanned

manually the reports which had titles that looked relevant. Only four articles had some relevance to

TC. The *Canadian Urban Transit Association Forum* publishes five times a year. Similar steps to the

above were used to collect a total of eight articles for the study period.

3.3 Data Analysis Procedures

Several researchers stipulate different guidelines for doing discourse analysis. Wetherell

(2001) says:

> "The kind of discourse research which is favored for any particular project involves a complex balancing act between the type of data one wants to collect, the topic, the academic discipline in which one is working and the discourse tradition which seems most appropriate". (P. 381)

A decision was made to use a combination of strategies suggested by Carvalho (2008),Waitt (2005),

Philip and Jorgensen (2002) loosely to examine the discourse surrounding TC.

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[17] The journal is available online to members of the Ontario Planning Professionals. However, only feature articles were available in the online data. That was why I used manual search.

Table 3.1. A Checklist for Doing DA

Strategies to Scrutinize the Structure of Discourse
1 Suspend pre-existing categories: examine your texts with fresh eyes and ears.
2 Familiarisation: absorb yourself in your texts.
3 Coding: identify key themes to reveal how the producer is embedded within particular discursive structures.
4 Persuasion: investigate within your texts for effects of 'truth'.
5 Incoherence: take notice of inconsistencies within your texts.
6 Active presence of the invisible: look for mechanisms that silence.
7 Focus on details.

Note: Adapted from "Doing Discourse Analysis," by Gordon Waitt, 2005, *Qualitative Research in Human Geography*, p. 180.

The above strategies were used as a general frame for the analytical work. In analyzing data, Carvalho (2008) suggests starting the research "with an open-ended reading of texts without very specific questions or hypotheses constraining the analysis can produce interesting results since it allows for the identification of the most significant characteristics of the data, without the filter-effect of a tight research programme" (P. 166). I started the analysis by reading each of the 94 articles in the reference data thoroughly and leaving annotated notes that made references to visible patterns, repeated themes, silenced arguments/points of views and actors, and persuasion/discursive techniques[18]. I conducted a second round of reading after a period of break from the first reading to ensure fresh perspective. The second round of reading was conducted bearing in mind the four points Philip and Jorgensen (2002) outline in delineating discourses:

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[18] Since I am using interpretive methods, it is important to acknowledge that in identifying these features, my background in urban planning and my world outlook both had influence. I also would like to acknowledge that, my analysis and interpretation is one way and not the only way.

the aspects of the world to which the discourses ascribe meaning; the particular ways in which each of the discourse ascribes meaning; the points on which there is an open struggle between different representations; and any understandings naturalized in all of the discourse as common-sense. (P.145)[19]

The annotated notes from the first round of reading were revised and expanded.

In addition to the two approaches, steps Yanow (2000) outlines for interpretive policy analysis were also used. Tzfadia, Levy, and Oren (2010) used similar procedure in their case study research on relocating Israeli military bases. So did Craig, Hanlon, and Morrison (2009) to explore the contribution of primary care in mental health. In its emphasis on relevant interpretive communities in mapping the architecture of policy issues, I found Yanow's (2000) approach appropriate for my research. That is because the purpose of my research is to understand the characteristics of the discursive frames of stakeholders/interpretive communities surrounding urban transit planning in order to assist collaborative planning process through effective mediation and communication. This is in line with Hajer (2009) points out: "Illuminating discourse(s) allows for a better understanding of controversies, not in terms of rational-analytical argumentation but in terms of the particular argumentative logic that people bring to a discussion" (P.60).

Listed below are the steps followed, based on Yanow's (2000) in analyzing and sorting the data further:

1. As Bijker (1995) says, there are social groups around a technology. I identified a number interpretive communities/discursive communities/social groups/stakeholders around TC from the collected data. They were NP, TS, the City of Toronto, TTC, Metrolinx, the Province of Ontario, TEA, and Sheppard East BIA.

2. The data were grouped under corresponding IC. It is important to note that there were two sets of data for each IC; one collected from NP and another from TS.[20] The "significant

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[19] There are some overlaps with Yanow's (2000) procedures of IPA
[20] The trade magazines did not represent discursive communities

carriers of meaning" Yanow (2000) identified were grouped together into "clusters of

meaning" as Tzfadia et al. (2010) did based on themes. That was used to outline each IC's

discursive frame/s as represented in each newspaper.

3. As Creswell (2009) says in a qualitative study, the researcher makes "interpretations of

meaning of the data" (P.4). I analyzed the "significant carriers of meaning", including

recurrent themes in the discourse and recurrent discursive practices, regarding media

practices and the nature of the discourse itself. This helped identify the discursive techniques

used by the media and "points of conflict and their conceptual sources" Yanow (2000) in the

discourse. Hajer (2009) says, "Discourse analysis is the method of finding and illuminating

that pattern, its mechanisms and its political effects" (P.60).

By so doing the above steps provided answers to the research question which asked: What are the

characteristics of the discourse surrounding TC as represented in the media?

4. The last step in the process analyzed the characteristics of the discourse to suggest

"interventions/actions"[21] Yanow (2000, P.22) or to frame "action agenda" Creswell (2009, P.

174). The "interventions" for these actions are recommendations which will be discussed in

Chapter Six.

3.4 Validity Strategies

Validity refers, as Palrtridge (2006) outlines, "to the extent to which a piece of research

actually investigates what it says it will investigate" (P.217). This research applied an interpretive

method, i.e. discourse analysis, as a means of inquiry. Gee (2011) says, "A discourse analysis is itself

an interpretation, an interpretation of the interpretive work people have done in specific contexts. It is,

in that sense, an interpretation of an interpretation" (P.122). But he clarifies that that doesn't make

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[21] Yanow (2000) says the analysis can be used for policy advice. The focus of this research is using the result of
the analysis for effective communication and collaboration in the planning process.

discourse analysis "opinion" of the researcher. Similarly, Yanow (2000) points out that even though interpretive methods focus on subjective meaning they still are "systematic, rigorous, methodical" (P. ix). However, she adds that they are dependent on contextual variables and cannot be "set out in as discrete and regularized fashion" (P. ix). Philip and Jorgensen (2002) say that to satisfy academic standard requirements, results of a discourse analysis can be justified by checking its validity. The following validity strategies were used in collecting and analyzing data.

I triangulated a multiple of sources when collecting data as Creswell (2009) suggests. Reports from four different publications, two newspapers and two trade magazines were examined. The convergence of the themes identified demonstrated the validity of the findings. In addition, the data were collected over a long period of three years and nine months to ensure familiarity with the turns and twists, a validity strategy Creswell (2009) suggests. Clear criteria were outlined based on existing literature to identify and collect newspapers and magazines and the reports in them.

Jorgenson and Philips (2002) note that comparison of different texts on the same subject provides the opportunity to distance oneself (the analyst) from the material and minimize reliance on personal opinion; hence make the analysis valid. I compared the reference data on TC that were collected from four different publications. In addition, majority of the data came from two newspapers that have different discursive frames to strengthen the comparison.

Three guidelines (making the analysis solid, comprehensive, and transparent) suggested by Jorgenson and Philips (2002) were considered to check the validity of the analysis further. I made the analysis solid by examining different features in the text such as silenced arguments and voices, persuasive techniques, inconsistencies, key themes that reflect meaning, and points of conflict. The analysis was comprehensive in that it looked for the all relevant components in understanding the architecture of the discourse[22] in all the 94 articles examined. Two rounds of thorough reading and

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[22] meaning carriers, ICs, points of conflict, conceptual sources

additional selective re-reading of the documents were conducted to ensure consistency in the interpretation of the data. Transparency was achieved by providing detailed explanations and plenty of direct examples from the reference data to justify interpretations in the thesis.

Validity, as mentioned above, ensures the academic research standards of discourse analysis. In addition to that, experts in discourse analysis (Gee (2011), Philip and Jorgensen (2002), Wetherell (2001)) point out that the discourse analysts should consider reflexivity. Philip and Jorgensen (2002) imply that reflexivity is the application of the social constructionist view to the research itself. In conformity with the social constructionist assumptions I made in conducting the research, I acknowledge that the result of the research is one of the contending versions, and not the only one, in understanding the discourse surrounding Toronto's LRT project. As Yanow (1996) says, "Given human variety, creations of human activity may be interpreted differently by others. That means there is the possibility of multiple meanings, of varieties on interpretation" (P.7). Wetherell (2001) says that some researchers "argue that the identification of patterns [while doing analysis] always depends on theory and prior assumptions. It is never a neutral exercise" (P.396). This is similar to Yanow's (2000) view that interpretation is "subjective". Throughout the thesis, I have stated my personal assumptions in different aspects of the research and I have acknowledged the effect of my background in urban planning and my personal world view in influencing the analysis. I have also made a clear statement that the result of the thesis is one out of other possible interpretations. According to Yanow (2000), "Although interpretive analysis uses systematic, rigorous methods, these methods do not lead to universal, objective claims" (P. 18). The research methods applied in this study resulted in the "findings"[23] that are discussed in detail in the next chapter

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[23] "Here the analysts are not making any claims for the special epistemological status of their conclusions. Indeed findings is the wrong word. The results are not found they are *narrated* into being" (Wetherell, 2011, P.396)

Chapter 4
Findings

This chapter discusses in detail the findings from the analysis of the reference data. It is

organized in four parts under the four publications: *National Post,* the *Toronto Star, Canadian Urban*

Transit Association Forum, and *Ontario Planning Journal.*

Table 4.1. Title, Type, Frequency and Circulation of Publication

Publication Title	Type of Publication	Frequency	Circulation			
			2007	2008	2009	2010
National Post[24]	National broadsheet Newspaper	Daily	206,003	197,034	156,646	158,250
Toronto Star[25]	Local broadsheet newspaper	Daily	465,803	335,680	314,173	292,003
OPJ[26]	Trade magazine	Bi-monthly Six/year	3548	3775	3780	3817
CUTA Forum	Trade magazine	Five /year	-	-	-	-

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[24] (Newspapers Canada Annual Circulation Report[NCACR] 2007; NCACR, 2008; NCACR 2009; NCACR 2010)
[25] (Newspapers Canada Annual Circulation Report[NCACR] 2007; NCACR, 2008; NCACR 2009; NCACR 2010)
[26] (OPJ, 2009, p.18; OPJ, 2010, p.19) the information available is about OPPI (Ontario Professional Planners Institute) membership. The magazine is sent to every member. Therefore, in this thesis, membership is equated with potential readership.

Table 4.2. Number of Articles per Year

Publication Title	Number of Articles about TC in the Data[27]				
	2007	2008	2009	2010	Total
National Post	6	9	12	12	39
Toronto Star	9	11	12	11	43
OPJ	1	1	2	0	4
CUTA Forum	2	2	1	3	8

As can be seen in the tables, the highest number of articles in three of the publication was in 2010.

Fairclough (1995) says, "The analysis of any particular type of discourse, including media discourse, involves an alternation between twin, complementary focuses, both of which are essential: Communicative events, The order of discourse" (Fairclough, 1995, P.56). This chapter explores the findings in terms of communicative practices and discursive frames[28], with an emphasis on the latter. As Yanow (2000) says:

> Frames direct attention toward some elements while simultaneously diverting attention from other elements. They highlight and contain at the same time they exclude. That which is highlighted or included is often that which the framing group values. (P. 11)

The discussion below illustrates her point by exploring the discursive frames of each IC in detail.

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[27] The highest number of articles appeared in 2009 and 2010. This might have to do with the mayoral election and release of the funds by the provincial government.

[28] Discursive frames Yanow (2000) says include and exclude. As such they maintain the order of discourse. Mills (1997) says that Foucault's discussion of order of discourse addressed "the way that discursive structures map out what we can say and what we can consider as legitimate knowledge" (P. 63).

4.1 National Post

NP was considered in this thesis as a carrier of discourse as well as a discursive/interpretive community. This section discusses the findings in relation to the newspaper's discursive frame and the discursive frames of the other ICs as were represented in it.

The reference data from this newspaper is constituted of 39 articles. Most of the reports had a few bylines. Out of the 39 reports collected for this research, 22 of them were written by three journalists. There were two discursive frames in the newspaper; one in support of TC - and it was the dominant[29] of the two- and the less dominant/subaltern that was against it. Below is a detailed discussion of the various themes raised by both frames.

4.1.1 *National Post*'s Discursive Frames

Overall, the coverage in the newspaper was positive towards TC with some reports raising arguments against it. This was against prior assumptions that the coverage would mostly be against it. The positive bias[30] was reflected even in news reports that were expected to be "neutral". For example a news report on April 2, 2009 stated, "Transit City is the Toronto Transit Commission's vision for a network of eight rapid-transit light-rail lines reaching every corner of Toronto." The phrase "reaching every corner of Toronto" since it is not attributed to anyone, it is the writer's understanding of what TC is and portrays the project in a positive light. In the same report, TC is also described as serving the poor. Some of the coverage in NP was against the LRT. The reports that supported TC and those that did not agreed on the fact that there was a lack of detail in the project.

Transit City was described in a number of ways that reflected different interpretations. Most of the coverage described TC in relation with money. This acknowledged the expensiveness of the project in the reports that were in favor of TC while it was a reason for criticism for the reports which

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[29] Dominance by the virtue of recurrence
[30] Anderson (1997) implies that bias is the favoring of one interest over another

were against it. The recurrence of the price tag throughout the study period reflected the importance

of money to the project. Over the study period the budget increased from $6 billion to $10 billion.[31] In

addition, a number of adjectives such as ambitious, bold were used to describe TC. That perhaps had

to do with its price tag and the size of the project. The description also betrayed some degree of

wariness about its practicality. The term "utopia" was also used in reference to TC, although it was

followed by "doable".

NP demonstrated a better understanding of the project than TS. Even though some reports

represented TC as "fast streetcar line", overall, this newspaper referred to TC's lines in a way that

showed an understanding of its distinction from the existing streetcars lines. This description in a

report on September 9, 2010 is an example: "The city has already ordered a replacement streetcar

fleet and Metrolinx has also ordered the new LRVs that are supposed to run on the Transit City lines."

The subaltern discursive frame in this newspaper was against TC. Different arguments raised at

different times in the study period explained this position. In this frame, the private automobile and

not public transit was the equalizer; it provided transportation to those who did not have access to

public transit infrastructure. In this frame public transit did not serve everyone equally. Therefore,

investing in transit infrastructure such as TC was framed as prioritizing public transit at the expense

of private transportation. However, what this frame didn't acknowledge was the fact that TC was

planned to extend service to underserved areas, the suburbs.

In reference to the Sheppard Avenue line, a number of issues were raised in the subaltern

discursive frame. This frame said LRT on this avenue would cause more congestion. It also criticized

the fact that TTC's planners and engineers were working on plans on this particular line without TTC

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[31] (According to NP, the cost of TC was initially underestimated. That is a possible explanation as to why the price tag increased.)

securing money first. The subaltern frame speculated the ulterior motive for the rush was to help the then Mayor David Miller win votes in Scarborough for the coming election.[32]

TC was described in other discursive frames as relatively less expensive and faster to build. However, in the subaltern frame, the budget for the project and long construction period was a reason for disapproval. As far as the federal government's money pledge was concerned, one report suggested that the federal government and province should not give money to TTC without a good deal of consideration of its projects.

Another reason for the lack of support for TC in this subaltern discursive frame was its inability to solve the problems[33] of existing streetcars running on mixed- traffic. However, the dedicated lane for LRT was framed as taking away street lanes from private automobiles. This contradiction highlights the bias against LRT. It is important to note that this discursive frame favored subways over LRT.

In October 2008, Pan Am Games entered the discourse. It was mainly in the form of criticism against TTC in the subaltern frame. A report in the newspaper criticized TTC for offering more money to unions for a deal of no-strike while constructing LRT. The paper criticized the deal and silenced any possible advantages building TC in time for Pan Am Games might have. The argument stated that TTC was spending more money than it needed to build TC. The paper speculated that this was to buy votes for Giambrone, who was a potential mayoral candidate in 2010. Similarly, in December, 2009 NP criticized Giambrone as doing unions a favor to secure union votes at the expense of taxpayer money. What was not explored here was that the money given to unions could be less than the money that would be wasted due to disruptions. The other Pan Am Games reference

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[32] The Sheppard Avenue line extends to Scarborough.
[33] slowing down traffic

appeared in November 17, 2009 in the form of championing private sector involvement. "The private sector is poised to play a key role in Toronto's $10-billion transit expansion as pressure builds to improve transportation before the city hosts the 2015 Pan Am Games." The involvement of private sector was portrayed in a positive light – something that was going to assist the city to build TC in time for Pan Am Games. It is important to note that the subaltern discourse criticized the involvement of unions to build it fast and it is suggesting the private sectors involvement to build the line fast.

Discussion about change regarding ownership of TC entered the discourse in the summer of 2009. The paper speculated that there would be a power[34] struggle between Metrolinx and TTC. The following example illustrated the indicators of the change. "While Mayor David Miller was dependent on provincial funding to execute Transit City, and actually managed to secure it, more provincial control may have been the price." July 14, 2009. The term "price" indicated TTC's loss of some power.

Around February 2010 the mayoral election brought new themes that changed the focus of the discourse for the rest of the study period. The new mayor Rob Ford preferred subways to LRT. Discussions about scrapping TTC started appearing. Overall, the reference data from NP favored continuing with TC. One report stated, "So he[Ford] wants to tear up the provincially funded *Transit City* light rail plan" October 30, 2010. This showed the papers support for the transit plan to continue. The implication was in the term "tear up". The argument in support of keeping TC was that scrapping the plan would be very costly and would reflect lack of commitment to the already spent money and deals already made. At the same time, there was speculation that dismissing Mayor Rob Ford's subway plans would cost Premier McGuinty votes to the conservative contender.

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[34] The term power in this thesis assumes the discussion in (Haugaard, 2006): "power to" act with an understanding and acceptance of the social structure. Metrolinx and TTC had power to act but with the knowledge and acceptance of the other's power to act.

4.1.2 The City of Toronto's Discursive Frame as Represented in NP

The City of Toronto was one of the discursive communities that appeared in the discourse the most, from the beginning of the study period until the end. This is not surprising as the city came up with the idea of TC. In this thesis, the mayor represented the city's official discursive frame as the council or any other body from the city was not mentioned in any significant way in the reference discourse. The discursive frame of the city in regards to TC changed as the new mayor took over in 2010; it changed to favoring subway lines over LRT. The indicators of where the city stood in regards to TC are discussed below.

The media and other discursive communities used the term "ambitious" to describe TC. So did the then mayor, who came up with the idea of TC in the first place. Mayor David Miller's usage in the specific context reflected the importance of the plan and laid groundwork to justify his asking for money from the federal government and the province. It also was a way to frame his alternative source of revenue – tax increase. The mayor has a vested interest in making sure that TC was built; he promised it.

The City of Toronto came up with the idea of TC to improve transit infrastructure. It characterized the LRT as an infrastructure that was able to solve existing problems and to serve the future transit need. Some of the reasons why LRT was considered the best option were that there was not enough ridership/density to justify the construction of subway lines and that there was not enough money to build them. The city said it was a matter of affordability and appropriateness. However, there were two possibilities that were not explored in this discussion: the argument that subway lines brought density and the comparative long-term cost-effectiveness of subway lines compared to LRT.

The funding of this infrastructure was at the root of the conflict between the city and other levels of government. The city needed federal funding to start construction while the federal government insisted on giving the money after construction had began. The mayor criticized the

federal government's red tape for delaying the funds. He warned that in the absence of funds from the federal government and the province, the city would have to increase property tax to fund the project. Mayor Miller also blamed that the financial constraint the city was going through was due to government structure.

As the mayoral election approached, the debate on LRT versus subway reappeared. A new element was introduced in the form of whether or not to scrap TC. Transit became an election platform. In the data from this newspaper, the mayoral hopefuls' transit plan was discussed. The debate highlighted the difference in each candidate's view of TC. Rocco Rosi said that the St. Clair streetcar line should be taken as cautionary tale for TC. He commented that there was a need to pause and ask questions about the light rail transit plan. As far as transit funding was concerned, he disagreed with Rob Ford's proposal of raising money for transit by selling air rights. However, it was not clear in the article if he was referring to TC or just generally transit in Toronto. George Smitherman was against burying the LRT underground on Eglinton Avenue because of the cost involved. He approved continuing with what was started instead of scrapping TC and suffering the financial implication of cancelling contracts. He criticized Ford's subway plan as "pure fantasy" as the article on September 9, 2010 reported. According to the newspaper, Smitherman had been criticized for suggesting borrowing money to fund transit. Adam Giambrone, one of the mayoral candidates and the then TTC chair, supported TC. Joe Pantelone also supported TC. He criticized Ford's scrapping of TC as "spending more money to get less" as the report on the September 9, 2010 article said. Sarah Thompson preferred a subway line on Eglinton Avenue. According to her, rush-hour toll on Gardiner Expressway was a way to fund subway lines. As can be seen in the above discussion, money was an important dimension in the debate.

After October 2010, Mayor Ford, whose discursive frame now has become that of the city as was established in previous discussion, proposed to extend a subway line on Sheppard Avenue. This

hinted at a possible source of conflict with TTC, which preferred LRT. The mayor expressed his confidence that McGuinty would transfer money from TC's light rail line onto a subway line on this avenue.

4.1.3 TTC's Discursive Frame as Represented in NP

TTC was one of the discursive communities that received most of the coverage in the media discourse. In the beginning of the study period, TTC owned the project until Metrolinx took over the ownership. This discursive frame highlighted the importance of TC, the role of TTC in the project, and the issue of changing from LRT to subways when Rob Ford was elected as the mayor of Toronto.

TTC praised TC as a unique project; said it incorporated both new and previous plans. This was used by Adam Giambrone, the then TTC chair, to communicate that TC was a well-thought out project. Giambrone, like many others, described TC as ambitious. His particular usage implied the reference was due to the expense and the extended time to build it. TTC also made reference to TC as a way of emulating Europe; an inspiration to what Toronto could be.

For TTC, LRT was superior to subways for the TC project because of LRT's ability to boost neighborhoods, as was seen in other cities around the world. The commission also said LRT was more cost-effective than subways. It also made reference to underground LRT as being similar to subways as far as speed and traffic were concerned. This particular reference applied to the Eglinton Avenue line as part of it would be underground. In fact, underground LRT was described as "mini-subway"[35]. However, this framing didn't address the fact that this would compromise its ability to revitalize neighborhoods.

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[35] The usage of the term implied the need to explain new technology in terms of what is familiar. By the same token, LRT could be explained in terms of streetcar lines.

Any reference to streetcars in general or the St. Clair line in particular made by other discursive communities in regards to TC was either as a cautionary tale or TTC's failure at executing projects. However, TTC's reference to the St. Clair streetcar line was framed as a learning experience: "Councillor Joe Mihevc, vice-chair of the TTC, acknowledged that St. Clair was not perfect but 'it was a great project and we learned a lot from it.'" This was in an article on January 2010. "The actual TTC construction was done pretty quickly. It was those ancillary projects that added time and angst," he said. "The learning here, though, is let's identify those things right up front, rather than during the course of construction." By this, he also implied TTC's acknowledgement of the need to plan well ahead, which the commission was criticized for failing to do by the different ICs.

A weak point for TC was the fact that there was no funding secured for it for about two years after the project was announced. TTC acknowledged there was no money for it. It appealed to the province and the federal government to fund the project. TTC said it started work on TC without securing money first because there was a desire from the public to start construction. It also admitted to not having any backup plans if province refused to pay. The commission expressed confidence that the province would give money. The following quote from the commission was in the February 19, 2009 report. "There are no roadblocks except the money, but it's highly unlikely the funding won't come from the province."

The lack of its own funds might have been one of the reasons that cost TTC the ownership of TC. In 2009, Metrolinx became the owner of TC. References about it started appearing in the discourse. With that, there were indications that there was power dynamics happening.[36] TTC was still to have some authority over TC. According to TTC, the commission would operate TC and the vehicles that would run on TC lines would have TTC sign while Metrolinx would own them. Giambrone

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[36] References to this were made by the media.

highlighted Metrolinx's incapability as not having "project management or design experience". The dynamics was manifested in his argument that framed the matter in a way that showed TTC's strength.

Pan Am Games was one of the events that were discussed in relation to TTC. In a December 18, 2009 report TTC chair, Adam Giambrone, was quoted as saying, "We need the work to be done on time and on budget, and the agreement ensures there will be no delays or extra costs due to labour shortages or disruptions."[37] This showed TTC's resolve to build TC at any cost. The newspaper speculated, Giambrone might also have had an ulterior motive – to buy support of the unions for the upcoming mayoral election in which he was expected to run.

After the election of Rob Ford and his proposal to scrap TC, TTC's argument against changing LRT to subway was that new environmental assessment would cause delay. However, it was clear that the TTC had more reasons to protest the scrapping of TC.

4.1.4 Metrolinx's Discursive Frame as Represented in NP

Metrolinx received a significant coverage from NP. Most of the reports that made reference to it appeared in 2009 and 2010 as the agency's relevance to TC changed. NP described Metrolinx's interest in creating an integrated transit system for the Greater Toronto Area and Hamilton. This underlined what the provincial agency was about. Some of the themes discussed in reference to Metrolinx that were indicative of the points of agreement and conflict with TTC were ownership of TC, funding the project, finishing construction in time for Pan Am Games, and the future of TC after Rob Ford's election. They also highlighted different ways of seeing between Metrolinx and TTC.

In funding TC, Metrolinx considered involving the private sector; a partnership it said the TTC had avoided because of the high cost it incurred. According to Metrolinx, the efficiency that this

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[37] He was quoted in NP as telling the above to TS.

partnership would bring balanced the cost. The agency made a reference to a specific Vancouver transit line as successful example of private-public collaboration. Metrolinx stated that looking for other sources of revenue instead of using internal resources was "fiscally responsible". This delineated the difference between the commission and the agency, showed that Metrolinx was in charge, and undermined TTC. Another difference between the agency and the commission was on a transit mode on Eglinton Avenue. NP reported that Metrolinx said Eglinton Avenue might need a subway more than an LRT line.[38]

As far as finishing TC's Scarborough line for Pan Am Games was concerned, Metrolinx expressed uncertainty. This was indicative of a conflict with TTC. Finishing construction of TC in time for Pan Am Games was one of the goals TTC had.

The issue of ownership appeared in 2009. Metrolinx became the owner of TC while TTC would only have the operating role, running and maintaining TC lines. Metrolinx's view of this change was indicated in the following quote in a July 14, 2009 report. "We expect to enter agreements with the TTC for the TTC projects ... under which we would maintain ownership and control of the vehicles and the infrastructure, tracks and all of that, the land which we have to acquire, all of that," Even though the relationship between the two was playing out with TTC in a disadvantaged position, it was obvious the province and its agency would need to collaborate with TTC. This indicated the equivalence of the agency's and commissions respective power.

On April 13, 2010, NP reported that Metrolinx was trying to "quell fears the city's Transit City plan was dying a slow death with news that new light rail cars may be on the way." NP quoted Metrolinx as saying its negotiation with Bombardier [for LRVs] was its way of assuring commitment that TC would still be built. " 'We wouldn't be buying vehicles if we weren't confident they would build the lines,' Mr. Prichard said." April 13, 2010.

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[38] Eglinton Avenue was part of the LRT lines in TC.

When Rob Ford was elected as mayor of Toronto, the suggestion in NP was that Metrolinx was feeling powerless. According to a report in the newspaper, Metrolinx "hopes" for Ford to approve at least the Eglinton and Sheppard avenues lines.

4.1.5 The Province's Discursive Frame as Represented in NP

Similarly to Metrolinx, most of the coverage that made reference to the province appeared in 2009 and 2010. The provincial funding that was given for TC explained that; references to the province were related to funding. During the mayoral election and after, the reference shifted to the future of TC.

Regarding funding TC, Mayor Miller wanted the province to cover fifty percent of the operating cost. The province said it would not be able to do that but it mentioned that it was not closing the doors completely on that issue. In April 2009, the province gave the city the long-awaited money for the Eglinton Avenue LRT line. The Premier promised more money was coming.[39] NP also reported in its April 2, 2009 report, "Mr. Mc-Guinty said the transit investments are part of his economic stimulus package to create jobs and investment, while leaving an infrastructure legacy for cities."

After the election of Rob Ford as a mayor of Toronto, who was interested in building subway lines, the idea of scrapping TC appeared repeatedly in the discourse. There was the following reference to that in an October 30, 2010 report. "So he[Ford] wants to tear up the provincially funded Transit City light rail plan" Once Ford was in power, the province was considering accepting possible modification but it gave a precondition that the city would have to be responsible for some costs. This demonstrated the province leveraging its power. Metrolinx also said that change to TC would have to be approved by council. The Transportation Minister, Kathleen Wynne was quoted on December 1, 2010 report as saying, "My hope is that the future plan won't look that different from the current plan, but if they want to make significant changes then we'll have to have that conversation because this is

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[39] NP said the next batch was for the Sheppard Avenue line.

a collaborative endeavour." This statement indicated the province admitting its limited power regarding the future of TC. At the same time, the province was trying to leverage its power by mentioning that TC was a collaborative task and that it was not going to give money more than the amount committed already. This dynamics indicated the comparability of their pragmatic power. Its position regarding cancelling the contracts in the event TC was scrapped was clear: cancelling would cost money. The minister of transportation said the city had to either cover the cost or accept the loss.

4.1.6 The Sheppard East Village BIA's Discourse as Represented in NP

The major reference to this discursive community appeared in one report that discussed it extensively. This was a group of businesses and offices who would be affected by TC line running along Sheppard Avenue. Its discursive frame focused on TC's impact on the businesses and offices that are along the avenue.

The dominant voice of this group outlined that the group's reservation was the lack of clear plan and money for TC. The group said that TC had to secure funding and complete the plan before beginning construction. In a March 6, 2009 article in the paper, the group said, "We question why construction would be completed ... two years before required tram cars will be available." However, it didn't outline the impact of that on the businesses. That made the group's argument sound a little unconvincing. It was obvious that if construction was to stall in the middle because of shortage of funds, their businesses would suffer from an elongated construction season. The group's comparison of TC line on Sheppard Avenue with St. Clair streetcar line and referring to the latter as a warning signal was indicative of that. Construction delay or not there were also comments made by a member of this discursive community that TC was not a fast transit mode and that it would make parking difficult for their customers. This was indicative of their conflict with the TC line on Sheppard Avenue.

4.2 The *Toronto Star*

Similarly to NP, most of TS reports regarding TC had a few bylines. Out of the 42 reports collected for this research, 27 of them were written by three journalists. There were two distinctive discursive frames identified in the coverage; one in support of TC and the other against it. The pro-TC discursive frame was the more dominant of the two by the virtue of recurrence. The discussion below explores the discursive frames of NP and its point of agreement and conflict (with the TTC) represented through them.

4.2.1 The *Toronto Star*'s Discursive Frames

TC was portrayed in a positive light throughout the study period. Most of the articles were in favor of the transit plan, with some against it. Even most of the news articles, supposed to be "neutral", showed positive bias towards it. The following report on March 4, 2009 illustrated that. "Big decisions are being made with almost unprecedented speed, thanks to a shorter environmental assessment process and the province's stated commitment to public transit." The speed the writer refers to could be described as reckless rush[40]. However, this coverage portrayed it as a positive to the progress of the LRT project. In addition, it described the shortened environmental assessment as positive and sounded certain about the province's commitment to public transit.

Transit City was portrayed as an equalizer because it proposed to provide suburbanites with transit infrastructure that their downtown counterparts enjoyed. The newspaper showed this by making references to TC as a "down-town style" transit, "suburban light rail transit" and "suburban routes". In addition, according to TS, TC also would equalize those who did not own cars with those who do.

Almost all reference to TC mentioned the cost involved. As in NP, supporters and opponents of

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[40] It is described as so by other writers in this paper as well as in NP.

the project made reference to the expense. The references were framed in a way that reflected a sense

of importance of the project by the proponents and a squandering of funds by the opponents. The

reference to the amount is not surprising considering the fact that the issue of money was a theme that

appeared repeatedly throughout the study period. The money for the transit plan grew over the period

of the study.[41] This was attributed to the incompleteness of the initial plan by those didn't support TC.

In addition to the cost, a number of adjectives were used in relation to TC throughout the study

period. "Ambitious" and "fanciful" were some of them. These terms suggested the expansiveness and

expensiveness of the project.

In almost all of the coverage, with just some exceptions, TC's lines were equated with the

existing streetcar lines. Phrases like "supersized streetcars" and "*Transit City*'s streetcar lines"

demonstrated the level of appreciation of the difference. One of the rare accounts where a report made

a distinction appeared in a report on October 12, 2010. "Unlike downtown streetcars, Transit City

lines on avenues like Sheppard will operate in designated rights-of-way with signal priority. Because

the plan also involves minimizing left turns for motorists, streetcars carrying 200 riders won't be

sitting behind cars carrying a single driver waiting to cross an intersection." However, in the same

description, the report described light rail vehicles as streetcars.[42]

In a significant number of reports, especially by the journalist who wrote most of the articles, i.e.

the discourse leader, repeated reference was made to Europe. Several times, TC was described as

Euro-style transit. The framing of the usage portrayed TC in a positive light. The comparison in some

reports between European cities and Toronto depicted Toronto and its infrastructures as inferior. This

was presented as a justification for adopting "European-style" modes of transportation such as LRT.

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[41] One report took a note of that and reported in the summer of 2008 that the cost of TC increased by one third of the initial amount.

[42] It is important to note that in the report by TTC in 2010, TC was described "as a network of dedicated and fully accessible streetcar rapid transit lines". This is mentioned in section 1.3 of the thesis.

One of the themes through which the newspapers' dominant discursive frames showed its support of TC was the shortened environmental assessment. TS portrayed in a positive light the province's move to limit environmental assessment to six months. This discursive frame stated that the move would end environmental assessment being used as a reason for delaying the construction of TC[43]. The report mentioned a concern by some that this could put a limit on public input. However, this argument, which could have put the province's move in a negative light, was not explored well.

Another argument in support of TC was that light rail transit had a positive impact on revitalization and property value while subways have the opposite effect. Along with this, the suggestion was for the city to come up with a development land use plan to support TC.

In the fall of 2008, the newspaper started making references to the power dynamic between the province's Metrolinx and the city. Its presentation of the issue did not show any bias to either the agency or the commission. In its September 2008 article TS reported: "It is a competing vision of how to solve Toronto's growing gridlock crisis." The newspaper continued reporting about the relationship between the city and the province in October as well in the same way that did not show any bias towards any of them. "It is also increasingly obvious that the municipal politicians on the Metrolinx board will be faced with the tricky prospect of selling their constituents on the regional rather than the local benefits of their plan." October 25, 2008.[44] The relationship involved the change of ownership of TC from that of TTC to Metrolinx in 2008. The following is an example of the clear indicators of this new theme in the discourse. In its July 14, 2009 report, TS said, "The provincial agency has power and ownership over all new transit projects, including vehicles, in the Toronto region". In 2010, the references to ownership continued. "The first of seven mostly suburban rail lines that make up Metrolinx's TC plan" reported an article on February 18 of that year.

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[43] By both the government and those who opposed transit lines passing through their neighborhoods
[44] Some of the municipal politicians are Mayor David Miller and Councilor Adam Giambrone, who was also the chair of TTC.)

When the topic of Pan Am Games appeared in the discourse, it created yet another theme through which TS' dominant discursive frame showed its support for TC. TS mentioned the Pan Am Games in a report that discussed the fast-tracking of the construction of LRT lines in time for the games. The paper considered the fast-tracking as beneficial for Pan Am Games. But it didn't discuss the subject of how to fast-track the construction and concerns surrounding it. Since TS was pro-TC, it was not very surprising these aspects were silenced in the discussion. In comparison, there were arguments expressed against the involvement of unions in fast-tracking the construction.

The subaltern discourse in the newspaper raised several points that were against TC. The dedicated right-of-way lane for light rail vehicles was portrayed as a way of giving priority to transit over private automobiles. The report in one particular article framed the discussion as transit versus private automobiles by saying light rail lines take away lanes from private automobiles and space from car parking and bike lanes.[45]

Comparison with the St. Clair and Spadina streetcar lines didn't help the case for TC. In the subaltern discursive frame TC was equated with the St. Clair line to make a point that LRT didn't save travel time. In addition to equating TC with the St. Clair streetcar line, this comparison was used in framing raised right-of-way, which will be a requirement in the LRT lines, in a negative light. This discursive frame used the comparison to both lines to make a point that TC was not rapid transit project but an environmental initiative.

This subaltern frame raised the issue of affordability and funding in arguing against TC. It suggested that there was a need for a region-wide discussion regarding a way to fund transit without expecting the federal and provincial governments to give funds. It criticized the fact that the transit

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[45] NP's subaltern voice raised this issue as a point of criticism against TC. This demonstrated an overlap in the subaltern frames of both newspapers on this point.

project went ahead with design, planning, and environmental assessment without securing funding first. According to this discursive frame, lack of funds was the reason the city chose LRT over subways. Therefore, it suggested increasing tax and partnering with private sector to fund subway lines. It also presented an argument that improved service, i.e. subway lines, needed more tax money.

In support of subway lines, this discursive frame argued that the city needed to plan for intensification in land use to meet the required density to justify subway lines. It gave a possible explanation that TC created small increment in improving transit and suggested for a more drastic change which the subway offered. Even though it didn't communicate this suggestion in technical terms, this argument was proposing a rational comprehensive model for transit improvement.

The mayoral election appeared in the discourse in the summer of 2010. TC became an election platform. Before and during the mayoral election campaign, the initial debate on light rail against subway came back. A report by the discourse leader highlighted the pros and cons of light rail transit. The pros were: TC would be reliable and comfortable, more comfortable than buses. LRT was good for reliability more than it was for speed. The concerns against it were: LRT would cause congestion as it took lanes away from the rest of the traffic; and it would not improve the current condition of transportation in the city as there would be more people moving to the GTA. This particular report by the discourse leader was different in the sense that it mentioned a possible shortcoming of the LRT project.

In the collected reference data, the then mayoral candidate Rob Ford's intention for future transit was discussed in detail but not the other candidates'. There was a passing comment that Joe Pantelone's plan was similar to that of the then mayor, i.e. he supported TC.

4.2.2 The City of Toronto's Discursive Frame as Represented in TS

The City of Toronto got a significant coverage in TS as it did in NP. TC was the city's proposal for transit improvement. Its discursive frame highlighted the themes that portrayed the project in a positive light. There were common themes between NP and TS in their representation of the city's discursive frame, with slight differences. The social benefits of TC were more emphasized in TS than NP.

In rallying support for TC, the city said that the transit plan was the kind of plan that would get support from any political party. It described TC as an equalizer between those who had access to transportation and those who did not by providing infrastructure to underserved areas. It highlighted TC in its potential in creating jobs. It also gave environmental friendliness and facilitation of urban regeneration as a reason for its superiority. Reference to Europe in relation to TC implied that TC had more than utilitarian purpose as far as the City of Toronto was concerned; it was also about image[46]. The only drawback the city acknowledged was the inconvenience construction of the LRT lines might have on small retails along the transit lines.

Funding the project was a big concern for TTC. It had to rely on provincial and federal money. The city framed its asking for funds from the province in terms of returning favors for the financial responsibilities (on education) the city carried on behalf of the province. The city also asked the federal government for funding. The paper reported that the then mayor, David Miller, wrote to Prime Minister Harper asking for money. This indicated TTC's conflict with the province and the federal government.

With the funds from the provincial government came the involvement of Metrolinx. In 2008, modification of TC was being considered. As the newspaper made an indirect comment on this, this

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[46] The dominant discursive frame of TS also made similar references.

had to do with Metrolinx's regional priority overall local concerns. This was at the root of the agency's and the commission's conflict. Mayor Miller said that he would review Metrolinx's modification against the objectives the city outlined when developing TC. This reflected his concession, however unwillingly.

Another threat to TC came during the mayoral election in 2010. Rob Ford, one of the mayoral candidates, expressed his interest in building subway lines and scrapping TC and some existing streetcars lines. He framed this as a way of stopping the "war on cars". His argument in support of subway lines highlighted superiority in speed, comfort, and carrying capacity. Even though there was no clear funding plan, aside from his suggestion of private involvement through land use, he advocated for subway lines where cost allowed and buses otherwise. According to him, streetcars created traffic jam. Ford advocated scrapping TC but there was no reference to cancellation fees for the committed project in the data collected. After Rob Ford's election as the mayor of the Toronto, the future of TC looked uncertain. According to the newspaper, the Sheppard Avenue line was especially in danger as Ford preferred to extend a subway line along that avenue to Scarborough.

4.2.3 TTC's Discursive Frame as Represented in TS

TTC received one of the highest coverage in this newspaper. A number of issues were highlighted in this discursive frame. As the transit commission of the City of Toronto, it supported TC, highlighted TC's and the commission's importance.

TTC framed TC as an equalizer similarly to the City of Toronto and the dominant discursive frame of TS. It said TC would provide the suburbs the kind of high quality transit service downtown enjoyed. In support of LRT, TTC stated in a September 9, 2010 report, "Suburbanites also don't want the dense development subways attract.... Their understanding with Transit City is we're building it for ridership that actually exists; we're not asking you to devour more 40-storey buildings." In this frame, density was not a desirable condition and hence the approval of LRT, which only catered to

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lesser density than the subway did.

TTC claimed LRV's superiority in subtle ways and by clearly stating it. It tried to achieve that by making association with Europe in its subtle references. It also clearly stated that LRVs were "a far cry from streetcar". This, however, implied that LRVs were somewhat similar to streetcars or were essentially streetcars. The TTC also said, "Nobody should think for a minute that going to light rail would be a loss of capacity or lower quality than the RT, because the modern LRT vehicles are going to be spectacular compared to anything the city's seen." TTC was making an argument by assertion. What the commission did not do was explain why LRVs were spectacular.

On the technical aspect of LRT, there were issues TTC had to justify. One of them was the dedicated lane for the LRVs. The commission stated that the dedicated lane was to avoid stopping behind left-turning cars and avoid competing with traffic. It also clarified that for the money allocated to it, TC should not compete with the rest of traffic. On March, 2009 TS said, "Webster and Transit City program manager Sameh Ghaly say the reserved corridor is good for city building, good for transit and sends a powerful message to the public that the city is serious about moving commuters efficiently". According to this, dedicating lanes for the LRVs was not only about moving and transporting people fast but also about symbolic implications.

TTC's stance on public consultation was reflected in two incidents. TTC was working on design of TC at the same time carrying out public consultation. The commission said that it didn't make consultation less real. But this points to the nature of public consultation that existed – the public was not exactly a partner in planning this project. When the province limited the environmental assessment to six months, TTC framed the issue in a way that portrayed this in the interest of the public.

The Metrolinx - TTC relationship entered the discourse in September of 2008. TTC said Metrolinx had to approve for construction of TC to start. This showed TTC's limited power. This loss

of power for TTC came as a result of the provincial funding for the project. This dynamics of the relationship also was apparent in TTC wanting to keep Bombardier for the new LRVs and the replacement of the old streetcar fleet for the sake of efficiency but acknowledged it was possible that Metrolinx might find lower bids with other companies.[47] However, TTC didn't concede to that without a disclaimer that new bidders would delay construction and cost money. This dynamics between the agency and the commission also manifested itself in how they perceived their different priorities. In a September 2008 report, Giambrone was quoted as saying, "'what I can tell you is the city is very committed to implementing Transit City as is,' he said. 'We want to help accommodate longer distance travel but it can't be at the expense of local travel'." This highlights their point of conflict with each other.

TTC's stance regarding scrapping TC, a theme that came up with the mayoral election and Rob Ford's election, was that cancelling contracts was a waste of money. Even though the city and TTC have had similar interest as far as TC was concerned, that changed after the election of Rob Ford as mayor; he preferred subways to LRT.

4.2.4 Metrolinx's Discursive Frame as Represented in TS

Metrolinx received significant coverage in TS. The references that pointed to the point of agreement and conflict for Metrolinx were related to environmental assessment, the power dynamics between the agency and the city, and the possibility of change to the LRT project after the election of Rob Ford.

Metrolinx justified the province's limiting of the environmental assessment to six months as a move that would allow the city to start building TC. This was framed as making Toronto equal to cities such as Madrid in transit infrastructure fast. It said that environmental assessment was one of

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[47] The power dynamics is obvious between the two. However, the newspaper did not show any preferential treatment to any of them.

the things that were delaying construction and as a result holding it back from competing with cities like Madrid.[48] TS made a point that environmental assessment was being used as a delaying tactic. The then CEO of Metrolinx Rob MacIsaac alluded to that in a quote on February 8, 2008 when he said, "There are lots of public processes that allow people to have their say and make sure their concerns are heard. When a city does its official plan, when a city does its master transportation plan, those are the times that people need to get involved. There are plenty of ways in which they can do that. At some point we have to say, 'Decisions have to be taken and projects have to move forward.'" This highlighted Metrolinx's stance on the extent of public involvement.

The power dynamics between TTC and Metrolinx entered the media discourse around September 2008 in a significant way. With its ownership of the LRT project came Metrolinx's proposal to modify TC. Metrolinx's CEO MacIsaac was quoted in a September 4, 2010 report "the heart and soul of Transit City will be in our plan, I predict." This statement suggested that there would be change to TC. TS cited unnamed sources to saying that Metrolinx was more interested in building a subway line along Eglinton Avenue than building an LRT line. The agency said it was not the case. Metrolinx assured it didn't want to create friction with the City of Toronto by drastically changing TC implying where TTC's power lied. However, it admitted the possible struggle between the agency and the city and said that it was important to work together. Transit advocate Steve Munro verbalized the source of conflict between the agency and TTC quoted in a report on September 4, 2008 quoted as follows: "The problem with these gigantic projects is they use all the money. But what portion of the regional demand does it address?" The question implied to what extent TC fulfilled Metrolinx's regional plan. The source of the conflict was Metrolinx would want to go for an option that would be beneficial to the region, while the city and TTC would prioritize an option that was more beneficial locally.

After the election of Rob Ford, towards the end of 2010, the discourse showed signs of Metrolinx

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[48] According to TS, Madrid has short environmental assessment process and constructed 150K subway in a little over decade.

conceding to the possibility of change in TC from LRT to subway lines. TS reported on December 1, 2010 "But, he [Metrolinx CEO, Bruce McCauig] conceded that, 'To deliver transit projects in the city we need a partnership with the city, and if we don't have a partnership it's going to be pretty hard to deliver on the projects.'" This indicated where Metrolinx's power lied and where the power of the city lied. Metrolinx had spent a significant amount of money by the time there was suspicion that Rob Ford might scrap TC. In the same report, TS said Metrolinx had "special interest in protecting… the Eglinton Crosstown line". Metrolinx said that that line had a regional importance because it would connect to the airport, was linked to regional transportation systems from GO stations, and crossed the city from one end to the other. This suggested that Metrolinx's concern was this line and not so much for the others.

4.2.5 The Province's Discursive Frame as Represented in TS

The *Toronto Star's* representation of the province revolved mainly around funding TC. To a lesser degree it also discussed the environmental assessment and reaction to Rob Ford's intention of replacing LRT with subway.

In February 2008, the province approved that the time required for environmental assessment for transit projects was to be limited to six months (85 days). On February 8, 2008 the Premier was quoted in TS as saying, "I think it's going to make a real difference in terms of our ability to get public transit up". The province's framing of the issue was only in terms of building transit fast. It didn't address its limit on public involvement. In fact, the newspaper reported that the provincial government expected the public's reaction to this decision to be in its favor. This could be explained in terms of agenda setting from the provincial government's side.

The province was expected to fund two-third of the budget for TC. Towards the end of 2009, it

paid two-third of the cost for the Sheppard Avenue line.[49] By April 2009, the province announced

money for the Eglinton and Finch LRT lines. The province released the money for the transit project

two years after the city announced TC.[50] TS speculated that the next provincial election was the

province's ulterior motive for the timing of releasing the funds.

During the mayoral election, the Transportation Minister, Kathleen Wyne, expressed willingness

to work with the next mayor. At the same time in a report on September 9, 2010, she was quoted as

saying "anything that would slow us down is a problem," As reported in the paper, she sounded

resolute to continue with the plan. Her comment also implied a direct reference to Ford's proposal of

scrapping TC upon election. After his election, the tone of the province changed. TS reported on

December 1, 2009: "Premier Dalton McGuinty, who has the final say on whether the province would

alter its light rail plans, has said there's room to talk. But there's no more money." This implied the

province's lack of complete power. It also suggested the only power the province could leverage was

through money.

4.2.6 TEA's Discursive Frame as Represented in TS

Toronto Environmental Alliance was one of the special interest groups presented in TS.[51] The

group's main appearance in TS was in coverage about a report it released in November 2010 in

support of LRT. The group's discursive frame on the surface focused on the environment. However,

money was an issue as well.

In TEA's discursive frame, the environmental friendliness of LRT was highlighted. In November

2010, the group released a report titled "Clearing the Air on the TTC". [52] The report brought back the

debate on LRT versus subway in support of LRT that was under a threat of being scrapped by the new

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[49] The federal government paid for the remaining one-third.
[50] During these two years, the city repeatedly asked the province to fund the project.
[51] It was not discussed the data from NP.
[52] It should be noted that this report was released after the election of Rob Ford.

mayor. TEA highlighted the inappropriateness of subway lines for the existing density. Their

argument that the city might have to wait for a long time for that density to happen silenced the other

argument that subways bring density. In addition, the group was not addressing if there was any

environmental cost of waiting for a long time for the density to happen to build subways. The

relatively inexpensive LRT cost, the group said, would enable the city to build more lines. Other sets

of issues were silenced in the argument as well: was there a need to build more? Where? Would that

require extra environmental assessment cost? Framing LRT as an inexpensive transit alternative

helped the group strengthen their argument that LRT would take more cars off of the road.

TEA stated that LRT was cheaper and better for the environment. The executive director of the

group was quoted in TS in a November 15, 2010 article as saying, "But the good news is that the best

option for the environment is also the best option for the pocketbook".[53] TEA supported the idea for

the council to continue with TC when the new mayor expressed his preference for subways. The

report provided justification for the group's support of LRT.

4.3 Canadian Urban Transit Association Forum

I identified eight articles that have some relevance to TC; none of the articles had bylines.

This thesis considers CUTA Forum as the official discourse of CUTA. The discursive frame

discussed here therefore is that of CUTA.

The forum had a positive representation of TC. The coverage included details on the technical

aspects of transit, for example fare card, accessibility, signal priority technology and, speed. In

addition, there was a detailed coverage about the vehicle's dimension, type, the fact that it was bi-

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[53] I read the report and according to the statistics in the report, LRT emitted more GHG than subway. The report framed this statistics as saying for every dollar spent, LRT produces less GHG. In other words, money was the factor here. Essentially, the report outlined that LRT was good because it was less expensive to build even though the statistics was framed differently. However, the group used this argument to support their interest (stated in the report) in changing the debate from money to environment while their analysis didn't exactly say that.

direction and had low floor. These were framed in their implications in improving people's transit

experience and life in general. The coverage made a distinction between existing streetcars and LRT

vehicles. For example in its June 2007 issue, the forum described the TC technology as "light rail

services operating in dedicate transit lanes". The data collected from this publication, did not discuss

relevant interpretive communities. Therefore, this magazine was examined for its own discursive

frame and its media practices.

4.3.1 CUTA Forum's Discursive Frame

CUTA Forum emphasized the environmental and social objectives of TC. In its April 2008

article, the forum reported "[w]e are seeing the recognition of the importance of transit expansion and

sustained funding in meeting environmental and social objectives in Canadian cities." One of the

projects cited as exemplary was TC.

The forum's coverage was pro-TC. It also clearly stated that CUTA supported *Move Ontario*,

which included TC in its list of projects. It described *Move Ontario* as "ambitious"; the usage was

positive. Its support was not without pointing out drawbacks. However, the drawbacks were still

framed in a positive light. The forum reported that there was more work (on planning and project

design) that needed to be done on the projects. It also pointed out in its April 2008 coverage other

drawbacks. These were framed as "risks". These "risks" were the fact that *Move Ontario* was relying

on the federal government to fund one-third of the cost; the assumption in the "the ability of cities to

match transit investments with transit supportive urban development"; and the possible lack of

capacity of relevant sectors to plan and build many projects.

In this discursive frame, TC was portrayed as "revolutionizing" transit infrastructure by

creating transit access to the suburbs. In its November 2008 publication, CUTA praised the transit

evolution that it reported was happening in Canada. TC was cited as an example of the evolution.

According to CUTA, revolutionizing transit included serving the suburbs, which TC was described as

doing. Furthermore it said, "In Toronto, the Transit City Light Rail plan has been specifically designed to vastly improve transit quality in outer areas of the City of Toronto that are earmarked for intensification." [54] TC was also framed as an improved means of accessing employment and services for low income communities that also had social problems.

The superiority of TC was considered a given; in this discursive frame there was no discussion on comparison between LRT and subway system. On explaining why light rail was a preferred mode of transportation, the forum said "Light rail was chosen as the technology both because it has the capacity to deal with increasing demand, and because of the very visible investment that will be signified by a new rail line". There was no reason given why other transportation modes – for example subways – couldn't achieve the same result. The last part of the sentence was similar to TTC's description of the LRT as a symbolic gesture in addition to being utilitarian.

4.4 Ontario Planning Journal

The search produced four articles that have indirect relevance to TC. There was no substantial coverage of the topic in this publication. Regional transportation seemed to be the focus in this journal as far as transportation was concerned. The writers of the four reports were all planners; bylines were provided with a brief biography. Two of the reports were by Paul Bedford, the former chief planner of the City of Toronto and a board member of Metrlinx. The coverage in all four of the articles was detailed, and included mostly technical aspects of transportation and relevant planning concerns. References were made to Canada's commitment to the KYOTO Protocol and a suggestion to authorities was made that they should ask if their transportation plans fit with the Places to Grow Strategy[55].

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[54] The intensification consideration was not discussed in the data from the newspapers.
[55] Discussion of TC in terms of Kyoto protocol and the Places to Grow Strategy only appeared in OPJ.

Similarly to CUTA Forum, there was not enough data that discussed relevant interpretive communities in a significant way. Therefore, the journal was examined for its own discursive frame and discursive practices as was the CUTA Forum. The OPJ is the Ontario Professional Planners Institute's publication. However, the OPJ couldn't be considered as the official discourse of the OPPI the same CUTA Forum was for CUTA. In this aspect the OPJ is more similar to the newspapers; the reports were by various writers.

4.4.1 OPJ's Discursive Frame

The first relevant report in the OPJ was cautiously supportive of the generous funding for *Move Ontario*, including for TC, announced by the province. It raised issues that needed to be addressed. It asked if *MoveOntario*[56] could reduce traffic congestion and improve quality of life and was well integrated. Moreover, in its Nov/Oct 2007 article it pointed out, "[T]here is no clear direction on implementation priorities…, how priorities will be set, or how each system will be integrated or supported by development practices…. Will municipalities implement the appropriate land use, densities, and urban design required to support these rapid transit initiatives?"

The coverage acknowledged the existing traffic congestion and gridlock.[57] The discussion framed the funding in terms of giving public transit a competitive edge over cars and convincing people to take transit and hence contribute in reducing congestion. This was done in a way that acknowledged private automobiles as a valuable transportation system. The framing was more "neutral" than the "car versus transit" type of coverage in the newspapers. The Regional Transportation Plan, that included TC, was framed in one report as being important for the economy and quality of life. However, another report commented that the RTP projects do little to help the existing congestion problem in downtown.

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[56] By transitivity TC is implied here.
[57] All interpretive communities agreed on this.

Similar to the newspapers, a report commented on Metrolinx's ownership of transit lines "Under the proposed legislation, new transit lines built must be owned by Metrolinx, but could be operated by the respective local transit agency." May/June 2009 article. The writer also explained the reason behind this through an analogy of TTC's formation in the early 20th century to replace "sporadic service" by private transit. No reference was given to the legislation discussed above in the data collected from newspapers. My analysis of the reference data from the newspapers implied that the ownership transferred had to do with funding.

Comparison between discursive practices of the four publications is analyzed in the next chapter. In addition, the findings regarding the interpretive communities and their discursive frames, and the recurrent themes, points of conflict and their conceptual sources are analyzed in terms of the research question and the purpose of this research.

Chapter 5
Discussion

The purpose of this research is to understand the characteristics of the discourse, i.e. to map the architecture of the media discourse surrounding LRT. This chapter analyzes the findings that are relevant to the purpose of the research with the intent of using the understanding of discourse to help create effective public engagement.

5.1 The Discourse and Its Characteristics

Fairclough (1995) says, "The analysis of any particular type of discourse, including media discourse, involves an alternation between twin, complementary focuses, both of which are essential: Communicative events, The order of discourse" (Fairclough, 1995, P.56). As such the analysis of the findings, which are outlined in the previous chapter, is conducted in terms of communicative practices and order of discourse. The discussion about communicative events focuses on the role of the media and their relevance to planners while the order of discourse deals with the discursive practices. In addition, the analysis looks at the elements of the discourse: the ICs, the themes, and points conflicts and their conceptual sources.

5.2 Communicative Events

This research collected data about the discourse surrounding TC and the relevant interpretive communities through media coverage. As such, there is more to discuss about the media's discursive frame and discursive practices than the other interpretive communities'. In addition, the media used a significant portion of the platform to express their views on TC to using the platform in representing other IC's point of view. This sections deals with the media and their practices in the context of TC.

5.2.1 The Role of Media in the Discourse Surrounding TC

The media play several roles in this thesis. They represent[58] the discourse surrounding TC and they demonstrate analytical significance to TC. In addition, this thesis suggests using their platform of communication in creating informed public participation.

Representing role: In their role as purveyors of public discourse (Fairclough, 1988b), the media provided information regarding TC to a significant part of the public in a way that cannot be achieved except through them. They discussed some of the relevant ICs, their interest in TC, their opposition to TC, and the themes they raised.

Analytical and evaluative role: The media provided analysis of TC, offered alternatives to what they perceived was shortcomings about TC and issues around it, and they voiced criticism. They also evaluated the officials' actions or lack thereof in regards to TC and other relevant issues. This demonstrated their analytical relevance to TC and their evaluative role. And as such it highlighted the media's role as a "rough-and-readily-available measurer and evaluator" of the conditions of the metropolis and policy outcomes as Jones (1975, P.360) says.

Media's role as a forum: In showing different views and interpretation of TC, the media platform served as a forum of discussion. In addition to the journalists/writers in each publication, non-staff writers including politicians, professionals, regular citizens (to a lesser extent) wrote articles in favor or against TC. Even though not of a significance of amount, there were letters to editors as well.

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[58] Representation in this thesis is used in terms of Fairclough's (1995) description cited previously that it is also construction.

5.2.2 Practices of Textual[59] Representation

This section summarizes the analysis of the practices in the four publications, the two newspapers and two trade magazines, examined for this research. The importance of the discussion about TC was demonstrated in the fact that it was represented in all of them. Practices of representation between the newspapers and trade magazines demonstrated more differences than similarities as discussed below.

Genre and news value[60]

Most of the articles were news stories. As expected the news articles were more "neutral" than the commentaries, which took a clearer stand in support of the LRT project or against it. All of the outlets had a positive coverage about TC, overall. The support of TS, CUTA Forum, and OPJ was expected. TS' editorial stand supports the LRT. Similarly, most urban planners and professionals in related fields and their respective publications are supportive of LRT. Contrary to my initial assumption, NP, considered to have an editorial stand that is against LRT, showed support for TC overall. NP's support for TC was subtler than that of the others. With the exception of some of the overtly pro-LRT articles in TS, most of the reports in either of the newspaper could fit in the other. There are two possible explanations for this: similarity of views among journalists in regards to TC and that most articles examined were news reports and therefore had less bias than the commentaries.

Coverage

The coverage in the trade magazines was less than the magazines. This can be explained in terms of their frequency of publication; the newspapers are daily while the trade magazines publish six times a year (OPJ) and five times a year (CUTA Forum). As such there were more reports in the

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[59] Talbot (2007) distinction between text and discourse which describes text as an "observable product" and "discourse" (P.9) as a process is assumed for the purpose of this discussion.

[60] The discussion of communicative events cannot exclude elements that are suggestive of a discursive nature completely.

newspaper articles regarding TC than in the trade magazines. With that in mind, there was no report that specifically discussed TC in OPJ published during the study period. The transit plan was only mentioned as part of MoveOntario or the Regional Transit Plan. The fact that OPJ's focus is province-wide could explain that since TC is specifically for Toronto. As far as topic of discussion is concerned, OPJ is also not transit specific. However, CUTA Forum, which is a national publication, had better specific reports regarding TC. The fact that the forum is transit-specific explains that.

Focus/Topic

The two newspapers mostly discussed on events relating to TC such as funds, TCs Pan Am Games, reactions of ICs, the debate between LRT and subways to cite some examples. Both had different emphasis on discussing these topics; NP focused on issues that had to do with efficiency and money, while TS focused more on social aspects. The professional magazines focused on technical details and aspects of planning. They highlighted the importance of accompanying land use planning with transit planning, TC's appropriateness to the Places to Grow Strategy and the official plan and so on. These issues were framed in their social benefits to the public. The technicality of the information was in such a way that it could only be appreciated by an audience familiar with relevant fields. Understanding this difference has implications to planners. When relaying information to the media, they need to consider these facts and tailor the information to suit the respective medium's focus, which can be appreciated by its readers.

The trade magazines didn't provide representation of other ICs as their focus was communicating information about the transit plan. This makes them less of a representing media of the discourse than the newspapers. Planning agencies need to take these characteristics of the professional media discourse and engage them as a way of communicating technical and planning information.

Style of Representation

The style of writing in the trade magazines was technical and less engaging compared to that of the newspapers. The style of writing was more engaging in the newspapers than the professional publications. As the stylistic difference is a function of audience, planners need to take this into consideration when providing information to each outlet.

The differences between the newspapers and trade magazine reports regarding coverage, focus, and style of representation can be explained in terms of the audience they cater to, frequency of coverage, focus of the publication, and locality. Regardless of the above differences in representing their discourse through text, all publications used discursive practices (defined later in this section which contributed to the highlighting of some themes and the silencing of others. Even though it is very important to acknowledge media's informative and watchdog role (Kovach & Rosensteil, 2007) in society, it is equally important to point out their discursive practices that bias their representation of issues that are important to the public. It helps planners develop informed strategies of engaging them to avoid misinformation and misrepresentation of planning issues.

5.2.3 The Order of Discourse

Fairclough (1995) says, "[D]iscourse analysis is concerned with practices as well as texts, and with both discourse practices and sociocultural practices" (P.16). The above discussion summarized the analysis of the text. The section below explores briefly some of the characteristics of the discursive practices in creating the order of discourse in the media's representation of TC.

In constructing each interpretive community's discursive frame in regards to TC, the media represented an incomplete picture[61]. This has implication in the fact that the audience, readers of the print media, gets an incomplete picture of other interpretive communities' point of view and discursive frames. The media had a narrative/storyline and filled in other IC's themes to that

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[61] The limited amount of data possibly contributes to that.

storyline. Planners need to realize that and engage the media differently with an appreciation of this particular media limitation. This could be in the form of taking measures to ensure their message is communicated as completely as possible. As Goodey (1973) suggested, "Implicit in the suggestion that the planning student or researcher should become associated with some phase of communication or should set about analyzing media messages, is a belief that doing so he or she will obtain information experience which may be used to modify, or develop media presentations" (P.28). He also emphasized the need for including in the planning education "critical techniques for media and information appraisal" (P. 30).

Constructing an incomplete picture was not the only media limitation this thesis identified. There was also an unbalanced representation of ICs and their discourses.

In his analysis of media discourse Fairclough (1995) points out:

A very high proportion of media output in news, current affairs and documentary consist of the mediation of the speech or writing of, mainly, prominent people in various domains of public life – politicians, police and lawyers, many categories of experts, and so forth. Sometimes such people speak for themselves – they may write articles in newspapers…. Sometimes their discourse is represented by … reporters. (P.79)

This was found to be true in this research. Experts and politicians, including the former mayor of Toronto David Miller, published an article in the newspapers. In addition, the majority of media coverage represented Metrolinx, Toronto Transit Commission, the provincial government, and the City of Toronto. To a lesser extent, it represented special interest groups and the federal government. It didn't represent in any significant way the general public, aside from business improvement areas, professionals, in a few cases neighborhood associations of immediately affected areas. Any reference to the general public happened in the form of anecdotal pieces of information collected through interviews for reports. These few interviews didn't represent any significantly identifiable community/interpretive community or discursive frame. Even though the media represent the public discourse as the researchers say, they also don't represent everyone equally as the literature says.

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Therefore, planners need to take this into account when using the media to understand public discourse and identify discursive communities and complement their research by including other methods of gaining local knowledge/understanding the discourse.

Carvalho (2008) points out, "Discursive strategies are forms of discursive manipulation of reality by social actors, including journalists, in order to achieve a certain effect or goal" (P.169). All discursive communities in the reference data used discursive practices. However, the discussion in this section focuses on the discursive practices of representation for two reasons. Firstly, the public discourse about TC was accessed through the media platform. The media also used the discursive platform mostly to communicate their own view. As such most of the finding in this research is in regards to the media. Secondly, the focus on the discursive practices of the media has relevance to planners as the thesis proposes using their platform to inform the public effectively.

Both newspapers used similar practices of persuasion; there was not any noticeable difference in their practices. The discursive practices of the professional magazines were not any different except the fact that the data from the magazines were too small to enable a lengthy discussion on the subject.

In the collected data, the media[62] used discursive practices that ensured an order of discourse that highlighted certain points of view as truth or common sense and that gave preferential treatment to some groups. A summary of analysis of the nine discursive practices[63] repeatedly used is discussed below.

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[62] It is specifically about the data collected here but as Bednarek (2005) commented about her the 100 articles she analyzed that they are "strongly indicates certain trends".
[63] It is important to note here that the discursive practices "emerged" as a result of the close examination of the text. Their emergence is possibly influenced by my background (Yanow, 2000), by theoretical preconceptions (Wetherell, 2001) including the literature I have read for this research.

1. Exclusion

The media excluded certain groups and views from the discourse in a number of ways. They excluded repeatedly contending views that were different to the writers' point of view. For example in a report on March 6, 2009 in NP stated: "As on St. Clair, the light rail right-of-way will forbid cars from travelling on the two centre lanes of Sheppard Avenue East." This excludes the other view that the LRT service will reduce the number of cars from the street and that the two outer lanes would be adequate. Similarly, CUTA Forum stated, "Light rail was chosen as the technology both because it has the capacity to deal with increasing demand and because of the very visible investment that will be signified by a new rail line". By not acknowledging what other options there were, the above sentence excludes other views that might support the other options. Fairclough (1995) points out, "While the discourses and specific formulations of certain favoured sources are massively present and foregrounded, those of other – and especially oppositional – sources are either omitted altogether from some reports, or backgrounded" (P. 98). While the BIA's view on the LRT line on Sheppard Avenue was well represented, there was no mention of other publics or counter arguments to the BIA's.

Selective interviewing was another form of exclusion observed in the media discourse. Some reporters interviewed those who supported their own arguments without interviewing those who might have had different opinions. This could create an assumption in the reader/audience that those interviewed are representative of the public.

Disregarding plausible scenarios by focusing in others was a repeated form of exclusion that was observed. In a May 23, 2009 article in TS, one writer said, "The Don Mills and Jane St. corridors are so narrow, planners will be challenged to find any segments able to include all the features[64]." This statement gave the impression that all streets included all features except the streets under

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[64] Bike lanes, car parking, pedestrian walkway

discussion. This kind of framing manipulates the facts to make a desired point.   There were also instances where it was not clear what the reports were referring to. In addition, some reports included information that could not be appreciated by anyone joining the conversation mid-way. They lacked adequate background and explanation to put the issue in context for a new audience. The writers seemed to be having an "insider discussion". This kind of subtle practice excluded new audiences from appreciating the conversation.

2. Dominance[65] of Voice

Most of the articles that appeared in both newspapers were written by a few journalists as can be seen in the tables below. The table demonstrates that the discourse surrounding TC was dominated by a few writers. To borrow a term from Forrester (1981), the discourse and its implication on informed participation were "vulnerable" to these writers. Thousands of readers get their information that is filtered through the discursive frame of these few journalists. Planners need to be watchful of reportage by such dominant voices/discourse leaders as the implication is significant. The existence of the discourse leaders can have advantages and disadvantages depending on how planners engage them. They need to engage the discourse leaders differently and ensure they don't misrepresent the planning issues that are important to the public and that they ensure these voices represent the planning aspect of the issues.

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[65] This is by the virtue of recurrence.

Table 5.1. Number of Articles by Discourse Leaders in NP

Writers	Number of Articles out of 39	Percentage of articles
Alison Hanes	9	23%
Natalie Alcoba	8	21%
Peter Kuitenbrouwer	5	13%

Table 5.2. Number of Articles by Discourse Leaders in TS

Writers	Number of Articles out of 43	Percentage of articles
Teresa Kalinowski	21	49%
Royson James	4	9%
Donovan Vincent	2	5%

3. Oversimplification

Over simplification was another discursive practice that recurred. For example in a June 26, 2009 article in NP, a report said, "Transit needs, ideas, not money". This particular view, in addition to being uncommon in the discourse, was oversimplifying the debate into money versus ideas while the debate was more complicated as was seen in the discussion in Chapter Four. Similarly, CUTA Forum stated, "Light rail was chosen as the technology both because it has the capacity to deal with increasing demand and because of the very visible investment that will be signified by a new rail line". This is also another form of simplification where the reason for preferring LRT did not reflect the complexity of the issue. This demonstrates the need for planners to actively participate in shaping media messages by responding to coverage like this that misrepresent the issue.

4. Irrelevant information

There were instances of writers providing information that did not have immediate relevance to the discussion in a particular report. The following quote in a report on March 6, 2009 in NP demonstrates that. "As on St. Clair, the light rail right-of-way will forbid cars from travelling on the two centre lanes of Sheppard East." The discussion at hand was about the Sheppard East Business Improvement Area's complaint about the light rail line construction continuing without adequate funding. The sentence cited above did not fit in the article. There was nothing related to it in the sentences preceding it or that came after it. However, by its irrelevance to the topic at hand, it reflected a possible bias in the reporter against the LRT line on Sheppard Avenue.

5. Lack of context and loose boundaries

In quoting a source or an interviewee, sometimes a proper context was not given to clearly understand what the specific quote was about. In addition, there were several instances where there was a lack of clear boundary between a paraphrased statement and the writer's statements/opinions. It was difficult to know if it was intentional or otherwise[66]. The following example on February 8, 2008 report in TS demonstrates that. "Because the process was often used as a stalling tactic by not-in-my-backyard opponents, Premier Dalton McGuinty's cabinet has approved a six-month time limit for environmental assessments on transit projects." There is no clear attribution in this sentence. Therefore, it raises a question: who was accusing the not-in-my-backyard opponents? Was it the journalist or the cabinet? Moreover, Fairclough (1995) says:

> [A] key question (which requires historical research and research on production processes) is where the discourses of reporters come from. By comparing attributed and unattributed formulations within and across reports, one can often see the same discourses being drawn upon by reports and official sources". (P. 97)

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[66] Identifying the intention is not the focus in this research.

The implication to planners here is that they need to control their message and need to address the issue, e.g. ask for retraction and proper attribution in similar instances.

6. Authoritative voice

Reports in four of the publications communicated their views on TC in an authoritative voice. Reports in the trade magazines were by writers in the field and the authority could be more justifiable in that instance than the newspapers. There were reports in the newspapers that spoke with an authoritative voice and made statements that without providing reasonable arguments or making any effort to explain. The following example is in a report in TS on February 18, 2010. "The planners can't wait for the coffee shops to arrive and for the community building to start along Sheppard Ave. It has to start now." Such authoritative claims have more negative effects in newspapers than the trade magazines as the audiences of the former do not have the background information to question such a claim.

7. Bias in news reports

Van Dijk (1988b, P. 5) says, "Genuine news articles may feature opinions, despite the ideological belief of many journalists that news only gives the facts and not opinion". This research found that there were news reports which had unmistakable opinions in the title and the body of the article even though news articles are considered to be relatively less biased than opinion pieces. The following example is from a February 8, 2008 news report in TS: "Ontario cuts red tape snarling transit lines; Environmental reviews of proposed projects limited to six months". Instead of reporting the government's limiting of the environmental assessment, this title portrayed the government's action in a positive light by framing it as a practice of eliminating red tape. This theme was reinforced in the news report's body as well.

8. Assumptions

Greene and Lidinsky (2012, P. 37) say, "Claims are assertions that authors must justify and support with evidence and good reasons…." (P.37). However, in the reference data, there were reports that made assumptions that were not supported by reason or evidence. For example, an article on April 6, 2010 says, "There seems to be a desire for rapid transit along Eglinton as well." There was no reference given as to how or why the writer reached at this claim. Similarly, CUTA Forum said there was support from the public and the municipalities for the project without giving evidence how this opinion was obtained.

9. Differing usage of terminology

In almost all of the coverage, especially in TS, TC lines were equated with streetcar lines. This was reflected from direct references to TC as a streetcar line, comparison between TC and the existing streetcar lines, and reference to St. Clair and Spadina streetcar lines in discussing TC. The reason for equating TC lines with the existing streetcar lines reflected a number of things: a way of explaining it in terms of something that people are familiar with; portraying TC in a negative light by associating it with streetcar lines, which are criticized for blocking and slowing traffic; giving TC a positive reputation that resonates with the sentiment some Torontonians have for streetcars; a lack of understanding of the difference. My analysis indicated that the more likely explanations were the first and the last. Despite the reason, such misinformation has an effect in the planning process. Public participation in regards to TC is likely to be influenced by such misinformation in the media. Planners need to be watchful of such misinformation and address it.

In summary, this showed that the media could use discursive practices that result in a biased representation of TC that did not reflect the issue in its planning context. The literature says that ideology, practical issues such as limited time, and the nature of media are the reason for problems in

media representation. What is important to planners, despite the reason, is the effect this has on the communication of planning issues with the public.

As Forrester (1981) pointed out, "Informed citizen action is vulnerable" (P. 11). Planners need to take these practices into consideration while engaging the media for public engagement and information purposes. It can help them in their planning and tailoring of information to be relayed to the media. It also helps them to actively address misinformation and misrepresentations that may occur.

5.3 Architecture of the Debate

Fairclough (1995) says discourse analysis focuses on communicative events and order of discourse, which the previous section has thoroughly dealt with. This section explores the architecture of the discourse by following Yanow's(2000) IPA procedure as discussed in Chapter Three. As such it focuses on the interpretive communities around TC, the themes in the discussion, discursive change, points of conflicts and their conceptual sources. Understanding the characteristics of the discourse is framed in its implication in informing the public and hence creating an informed participation.

5.3.1 Interpretive Communities

Eight interpretive communities that were relevant to light rail transit were identified in the media discourse: the City of Toronto, TTC, the Province of Ontario, Metrolinx, Sheppard East Business Improvement Area, Toronto Environmental Alliance, *Canadian Urban Transit Association Forum*, *Ontario Planning Journal*, *National Post*, and the *Toronto Star*. Overall, their dominant discursive frame supported *Transit City*. Most of them were powerful interpretive communities that had comparative "discoursal and pragmatic rights and obligations according to status"[67]. As my

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[67] Fairclough (1985)

analysis showed, these interpretive communities relevant to TC formed their view regarding the matter based on the perceived effect of TC on their lives or what they consider important, on their responsibility for TC, and on their belief systems. Hajer (2009) points out, "characteristically, an interaction will be found between interests and meaning-making discourses, that mutually influence and constitute each other and thus generate a particular argumentative logic" (P.60). This was found to be true in this research.

When identifying ICs, Yanow suggests "the existence of at least three communities of meaning in any policy situation: policymakers, implementing agency personnel, and affected citizens or clients" (P.10). Based on that, the interpretive communities identified in this research are categorized as follows: the City of Toronto and the provincial government as policymakers; Metrolinx and TTC as implementing agencies; the public at large, mainly as the unheard voice, and Sheppard East BIA as clients or affected citizens; the media and TEA as special groups.

The inclusion of media and TEA as ICs and particularly as special groups requires a brief discussion. Both are considered as interpretive communities/stakeholders in regards to TC. Yanow (2000) includes in her description of ICs groups that have "analytic and decision-making" relevance. The analytic relevance of the media and TEA can be inferred from examining their discursive frames in Chapter Four. In addition, Edey et al. (2006) found out in the Oakridge Moraine debate that TS had an influence in decision.

In addition, both the media and TEA are also considered as special group stakeholders. These two groups didn't have a *direct* stake in the matter for example as BIA did. However, they advocate on behalf of the public. Ideally, their stake in the matter would be on behalf of the public. As Kovach and Rosenstiel (2007) say, "[T]he idea that journalists serve citizens first remains deeply

felt by those who produce the news" (P.53). TEA self-proclaims its advocacy for "all Torontonians" ("TEA", 2008). As such, they are considered as special group stakeholders/ICs.

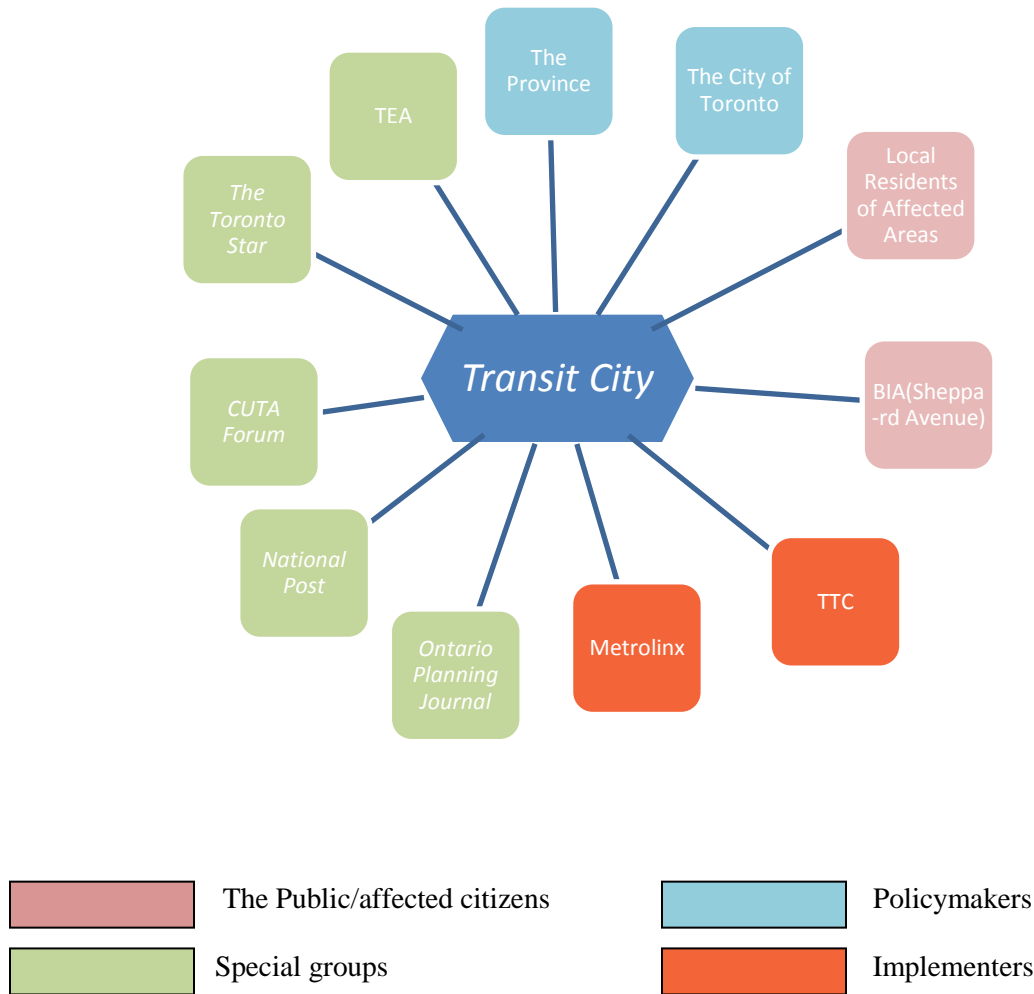**Figure 5.1. Interpretive Communities Relevant to *Transit City***

Figure 5.1. The different ICs surrounding TC grouped in terms of their relevance to TC. Developed based on "Related to an artifact, the relevant social groups are identified." By Wiebe E. Bijker, 1995, p. 47.*Of Bicycles, Bakelites, and Bulbs: Toward a Theory of Sociotechnical Change,* Bijker, 1995.

Generally, members of an IC share a discursive frame on an issue; however, diversity can exist within that frame (Yanow, 2010). The research showed this to be true in the case of *Transit city*. NP and TS had dominant and subaltern frames that had differing interpretation of TC.[68] OPJ and BIA also showed some variation in their frames to some extent. A different kind diversity was observed in the City of Toronto's discursive frame. TC was proposed by the city in 2007 under the administration of Mayor David Miller. When Rob Ford was elected as a new mayor in 2010, the city's discursive frame in interpreting TC changed. The city didn't support TC anymore. Yanow (1996) summarizes the discussion in this paragraph as follows:

> Given human variety, creations of human activity may be interpreted differently by others. That means there is the possibility of multiple meanings, of varieties on interpretation. There are possibilities of miscommunication and of noncommunication, of meanings that are shared or not shared, of meanings once shared that are later dismantled[69]. (P.7)

The identification of ICs from the media discourse surrounding LRT demonstrated that planners can use media discourse to learn about some of the stakeholders, their view points on a planning policy or project. Healey (2003) summarizes relevant literature on mapping stakeholder as saying, "Mapping the stakeholders is an important task in any strategic planning process which operates in a world with a plurality of interests and sources of power" (P. 244).

5.3.2 Recurrent Themes[70] in the Discourse

The interpretive communities highlighted the meaning they ascribed to TC by the themes they raised in the discussion. The study period starts in March 2007, when the plan was unveiled and ends in December 2010, when modification and scrapping of the plan started appearing in the discourse. The ICs raised certain themes repeatedly throughout this period in all four publications.

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[68] The existence of a dominant frame gives NP, TS, BIA, and OPJ an IC status.

[69] The change in the city's discursive frame could be an example of "dismantling".

[70] I believe the identification of these themes is influenced by my background in urban planning. However, it is important to note that these themes might also emerge during a close reading to an analyst without that background.

These themes indicated what the ICs considered was important in the LRT debate. They are briefly discussed below.

Traffic congestion and relieving it: All ICs agreed that the existing traffic congestion needed to be solved. Their proposals on how to solve it differed. Proponents of TC argued that a dedicated LRT was the best way to solve the existing problem by freeing public transit from being held up by left turning traffic. Opponents of TC said LRT would create traffic congestion by taking away lanes from automobiles. Therefore, the subway was a better option.

Density: Proponents of TC argued that there was not adequate density to build subway lines to solve the traffic congestion; that was why dedicated LRT was a better solution. Opponents suggested subway lines would bring density. Land use plan was needed along subway lines to achieve the density requirement.

Revitalization: Proponents of TC pointed out that LRT revitalized neighbourhoods while the subway has the opposite effect.

Speed: Opponents of TC argued that the subway system is faster and more convenient than light rail transit.

Financial efficiency: The limitedness of resources for public transit is a theme that all ICs agreed on. The ICs differed in their opinion on how to efficiently use it. Proponents of TC argued that LRT is more cost-effective than the subway. Opponents argued long-term benefits and speed of the subway would justify the cost. Therefore, the TTC and the city have to come up with ways of creating revenue.

Transit funding: This theme recurred throughout the study period. The city and TTC pushed for provincial and federal funding while the province and federal government resisted. TTC and the city asked for funds so that they could start construction of TC while the federal government insisted on releasing the money once construction started.

Private versus public transportation: Proponents argued that TC would provide access of transportation and as result access to social services to underserved (transit-wise) suburbs. However, opponents said the private automobile created access to underserved areas.

Environmental friendliness: Opponents of TC highlighted its environmental friendliness when compared to cars and buses.

Image: Those who advocated for LRT said TC would make Toronto equal with European cities not only in infrastructure but also in image. TC was about other things but also about image.

Some of these recurrent themes were agreed upon while others were disputed. Traffic congestion and using funds effectively were issues all ICs agreed. They disagreed in the solution they proposed to the congestion problem. There was also disagreement in which transportation mode was more cost-effective. There were also themes that were neither agreed upon nor disputed. For example, the environmental-friendliness of TC compared to private automobiles was not contested. Neither was the claim that TC would give Toronto a certain image.[71] The identification of these themes can help planners understand what the ICs consider as important issues that planners need to address in planning projects or in communicating planning issues.

In addition to being recurrent, these themes address the planning aspect of TC. The emphasis in planning aspects was stronger in the discussion in trade magazines than the newspapers, which have far more reach and hence more influence in informed participation. This demonstrates to planners that they need to enrich the depth of discussion in the public realm. They can achieve this through the messages they relay to the media and to the public through other venues, including town hall meetings. It demonstrates the need and opportunity for planners to control the message.

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[71] This was a theme TS repeatedly raised. TTC and Metrolinx also raised these to some extent.

5.3.3 Silenced Themes

The discussion above partly addresses the recurrent themes that were disputed. The dispute or conflict was as a result of each discursive frame highlighting certain arguments and disregarding others. The disregarded arguments constitute the silenced themes. It is important to note that the themes silenced by one IC's dominant frame might be highlighted by its subaltern discursive frame or by another IC's frame. Therefore, silenced themes cannot be listed and separately discussed from the ICs and their highlighted themes.[72] Hajer (2009) says that there is a relationship between meaning-making and interest. As such the thesis infers that ICs silenced some themes based on their interest and belief systems just in the same way they highlighted other themes. This illustrates to planners the importance of identifying silenced themes in each ICs discursive frame and injecting them into their communication with respective IC.

5.3.4 New Themes and Discursive Change

The discourse showed a shift in focus with the introduction of Pan Am Games, with the changing ownership of TC, and during the mayoral election campaign. The media discourse reported on the interaction between TTC and Metrolinx when the latter took over the ownership of TC. That resulted in a new theme in the discourse: competition between local and regional needs when it comes to transit expansion. Constructing TC in time for Pan Am Games was introduced in the middle of the study period. Both newspapers analyzed the TTC's proposal on how to achieve that. This brought in new themes: the involvement of unions and the private sector. The other change in focus appeared during the mayoral election campaign in fall of 2010. The LRT versus subway debate that seemed had settled prior to that reappeared. Once Rob Ford was elected as the mayor of Toronto, the discourse included the possibility of scrapping TC and extending a subway line on Sheppard Avenue.

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[72] Silenced themes in regards to the TC argument are identified in Chapter Four within each IC's discursive frame and along with the recurrent themes in section 5.2.3.

However, in general criticism and support for TC did not focus anymore in comparison with subways. It was about the financial implication of scrapping TC. The shifts in focus, however, do not qualify as discursive changes. Kuo (2007) says Fairclough's definition of discursive change is "related to a more general direction of social and culture change" (P. 761). As such this thesis assumes there was no discursive change but shifts in focus due to the introduction of new themes around TC.

5.3.5 Points of Conflict

Hajer (2009) states, "Illuminating discourse(s) allows for a better understanding of controversies, not in terms of rational-analytical argumentation but in terms of the particular argumentative logic that people bring to a discussion" (P.60). This section focuses on the points of conflict raised by ICs and the underlying conceptual sources.

The points of conflict are the controversies raised by the ICs. Most of them were not specifically among individual ICs except the ones between TTC and Metrolinx. As such they are mostly referenced in this thesis as points of conflict against TC supporters/TC or as just points of conflict. It is also important to note that the points of conflict are not necessarily themes that recurred even though most of them did. They are issues that the researcher identified to be indicative of the underlying conceptual differences which resulted in variations in interpretations of the LRT project by different ICs. Such exploration of points of conflict highlights to planners the controversies in LRT or any other planning issues that they can address when stimulating an informed debate and in their role as mediators. Planners can highlight this in helping ICs appreciate each other's point of view.

5.3.5.1 Points of Conflict Represented in NP

Table 5.3. NP's Point of Conflict against TC Supporters

Points of Conflict	Conceptual Sources
Disapproves that TTC made private transportation less of a priority.	The individual has the right to provide personal transportation. The discourse opposite to this would be the individual's right to public transit.
TC would take a long time to construct.	valuing economic efficiency over other criteria
TC doesn't solve the existing problems of streetcars running on mixed traffic.	Differing expectations of deliverables Mistrust of the plan
TTC shouldn't have offered unions a no-strike deal to ensure that construction continued without interruption so that TC is finished for Pan Am Games.	Unions are not deserving of taxpayers' money
TTC should continue with TC after the election of Ford in order not to waste money that was already committed.	Valuing efficient use of resources Economics as a criteria for decision making

The list on the left side shows the points of dispute NP had against TC. The list on the right hand highlights the underlying conceptual differences that resulted in different interpretations. The points of conflicts discussed here are the ones raised by the subaltern discourse which was against the LRT project. In this instance, it was the subaltern discourse that reflected the belief system the newspaper is generally associated with.

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As can be seen in the table, the conceptual differences of some of the points of conflict overlap. These conceptual sources fall under two categories - social and economic - that hint at core values that underpin the different interpretations of TC by the different ICs. It is important to note that such values can be described in terms of ideology. As van Dijk (1993) says:

> [I]deologies organize social group attitudes consisting of schematically organized general opinions about relevant social issues… (Eagly and Chaiken,1993). Depending on its position, each group will select from the general cultural repertoire of social norms and values those that optimally realize its goals and interests and will use these values as buildings blocks for its group ideologies. (P.138)

However, Bell and Garret (1998) in summarizing van Dijk imply that "ideological positions" are not the only factors that that influence conceptual sources/discourse structures even though they do not provide explanation as to what else can be ascribed to that. The exploration of ideology and what else informs conceptual sources is not relevant to the focus of the thesis. In addition, the limited data used for this research is not adequate to enable such exploration. Therefore, the *thing* that informs conceptual sources is not discussed in this research. It is important to note, however, that the understanding – not necessarily naming – of the conceptual sources of ICs helps planners better mediate differences and bring these stakeholders to consensus.

Table 5.4. The City of Toronto's Points of Conflict

Points of Conflict	Conceptual Sources
When Rob Ford became the mayor, he proposed the extension of subway lines against TTC's plan for LRT lines.	Providing fast transportation system – efficiency in time has positive economic implications Economic efficiency a more worthy criteria for making decisions

TC was proposed by the city of Toronto under the administration of David Miller. Therefore, until he was replaced by Rob Ford in October 2010, there was not any point of conflict with TC. The new mayor advocated for subways to light rail transit. The conceptual source here is a preference of efficiency that has economic implications.

As the transit commission of the City of Toronto, which proposed TC, there was no point of conflict with the LRT project. In fact, when the city was exploring the idea of scrapping TC, TTC remained supportive of the LRT project.

Table 5.5. Metrolinx's Points of Conflict with TTC

Points of Conflict	Conceptual Sources
Metrolinx prioritized plans, including the modification of TC, which benefited the region over the City of Toronto.	Competing priorities as a result of each IC's mandate Larger economic benefits over local ones.
Private sector involvement, something TTC had been resisting for fear of the cost that it would incur. Metrolinx said efficiency that would be gained would even out the cost.	The role of the private-public partnership as a legitimate means of contribution to the economy or generation of revenue
When Metrolinx took over TC, it wasn't certain about building TC in time for Pan Am Games the same way TTC was.	The prioritization of larger economic benefits over local social benefits

Metrolinx's interpretation of TC differed from TC supporters. The conceptual sources of the conflict with TC were different priorities that arose from the respective responsibilities of TTC and the City of Toronto on the one hand and Metrolinx on the other.

Table 5.6 The Sheppard East BIA's Point of Conflict with TTC

Point of Conflict Indicators	Points of Conflict
The lack of clear plan and funding for TC was a major criticism against TTC. If and when construction stalled because of lack of details and money, business along Sheppard East would be affected.	This has negative financial/economic implications this IC is trying to avoid
An LRT line along Sheppard Avenue would take away customer parking space in front of business and office along the avenue.	Competing interests: private versus public This IC is trying to protect its private economic interests over public benefit

As with most ICs the conceptual sources of the conflict of BIA were economic and social issues that had to do with protecting its interests.

5.3.5.2 Points of Conflict Represented in TS

Table 5.7. *Toronto Star's* **Points of Conflict with TC**

Points of Conflict	Conceptual Sources
TC lines are the same as the existing streetcar lines.	Different terminologies resulting from differing interpretations of a technology
Dedicated lanes for TC would take away from automobiles and give priority to public transit at the expense of private transportation.	The right of the individual to use public-funded infrastructure Prioritizing individual interests
TC was not a rapid transit project but an environmental one.	Assumption of another IC's conceptual source This discourse values speed which has economic implications over environmental reasons that don't have economic implications
TTC needs to have region-wide discussion on how to fund transit and shouldn't expect the federal government and the province to fund its projects.	Avoiding reliance on government funding for transit revenue generation
TC is an inferior solution the city had to resort to because of lack of funds.	Assumption of another IC's conceptual source Fast transportation and its economic implications are superior
TS suggested partnering with private sector would create	The role of the private-public partnership as a legitimate means

revenue to fund TC.	of contribution to the economy or generation of revenue
The lack of density enough for subway lines could be solved by accompanying subway plans with land use intensification.	Creating necessary conditions that would make happen the option that has more economic implications
TC wouldn't improve the current conditions of transportation in the city.	Differing expectations of deliverables

In the same way as in NP, in TS it was the subaltern frame that had different interpretation of the LRT project to that of the supporters of TC. The dominant discursive frame showed support for TC. The conceptual source of the interpretation of TS's subaltern was similar to that of NP's subaltern discursive frame. As can be seen from the above table, most of the conceptual sources are economic reasons.

Table 5.8. The City of Toronto's Point of Conflict with TC Supporters

Point of Conflict	**Conceptual Sources**
After Rob Ford's election, the city advocated for subways because they were considered superior in speed, comfort, and carrying capacity.	This discourse values the transit option that has economic benefits over another that has mostly been described as having social benefits

Conflict between the City of Toronto and TTC arose only when Rob Ford came to power in 2010. The discursive frame[73] changed the characterization of TC by the City of Toronto. This

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[73] "[Frames] highlight and contain at the same time they exclude. That which is highlighted or included is often that which the framing group values" (Yanow, 2000, P.11).

reflected the differing value systems these two mayors' upheld. This point of conflict is similar to the ones in NP and TS.

Table 5.9 Metrolinx's Points of Conflict with TTC

Point of Conflict	Conceptual Sources
The agency considered modifying TC in a way that prioritized regional needs.	Competing priorities as a result of different mandates; this translates into preferring larger economic values over local benefits

Overall, there were no differences in the points of conflicts raised in NP and TS. The points of conflicts were identified in the subaltern discursive frames in both newspapers. The subaltern frames demonstrated similar value systems that advocated private transportation and economic values over social benefits.

5.3.5.3 Points of Conflict Represented in CUTA Forum

Table 5.10. CUTA Forum's Point of Conflict

Point of Conflict	Conceptual Sources
Funding shouldn't be entirely from province.	Expectation of different government roles

The above conceptual difference overlaps with one of TS' point of conflict.

5.3.5.4 Points of Conflict Represented in OPJ

Table 5.11. *OPJ*'s Point of Conflict[74]

Point of Conflict	Conceptual Sources
MoveOntario (TC) doesn't solve existing traffic congestion problems in downtown.	Differing expectations of deliverables

The above overlaps with a point of conflict NP had with TC supporters.

As far as the trade magazines were concerned, it is important to note that there were limited data and the analysis conducted was based on those data. Overall, the different interpretation of TC mainly resulted from professional/technical aspect these magazines emphasized. Both trade magazines did not have much conflict with TC. Where they existed, they overlapped with other ICs.

In summary, the discussion regarding points of conflict highlights that different interpretations of TC arose from different belief systems that the ICs upheld. There were overlaps as well. The discussion assists in "clarifying the varying interpretations of policy meanings made by different groups, as well as understanding the various elements through which these meanings are communicated" (Yanow, 2000, P.18). There were overlaps in the meaning indicators and as the analysis showed the conceptual differences.

This has implications to planners in two different aspects: in mediation between stakeholders/ICs and in creating an informed discourse that helps ICs appreciate each other's different interpretation of planning issue. In essence, analysis of discourses can contribute to the collaborative and communicative planning process that contemporary planning upholds.

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[74] When it comes to the media, the term "point of conflict" should be understood in the context of the definition in this thesis that considers the media as a stakeholder.

Specific recommendations drawn from this chapter and the previous one are discussed in next chapter.

Chapter 6
Conclusion

The motivation for this research was an interest in contributing to making public engagement more effective through informed participation and effective mediation in the planning process. Planners need to understand the existing discourse in order to effectively inform participation and in order to become better mediators. Knowing the characteristics of the discourse helps inform communication strategies[75] and mediation[76]. As Hajer (2009) points out, "Rethinking strategies of governance needs to fully incorporate an understanding of what a mediatized politics implies" (P. 13).That is why I posed the research question: What are the characteristics of the discourse surrounding urban planning issues presented in the media? The case study was Toronto's *Transit City*.

6.1 Characteristics of the Discourse

In summary, below are the main characteristics discussed in previous chapters in detail of media discourse in the 94 articles[77] identified for this research. The summary is categorized into communicative events and order of discourse and architecture of the debate.

- **Communicative events and order of discourse**

  - The media discourse overall supported *Transit City*; TS and CUTA Forum showed more support than NP and OPJ.

  - The media gave an overview of the discourse and its components in a way only possible through them. As such, this confirms the views in the literature. However, their representation was incomplete as the literature cautions.

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[75] Strategic communication is a field of study by itself.
[76] And to advise policy even though this aspect is not explored in this thesis
[77] This refers to the 94 articles even though as explained previously the characteristics are indicative of a pattern.

- The media gave some ICs more coverage than others; policymakers and implementers got more coverage than affected citizens such as the BIA.

- There was no bias observed in the media as to how much representation the policymakers and implements received. The degree of coverage merely reflected happenings and degree of involvement of each in TC. For example, Metrolinx appeared more in 2009 and 2010 as its involvement in TC increased. The reference to the province appeared when it came to funding TC as its involvement was in that aspect. As such this thesis concludes that the policymakers and implementers had comparative discoursal power, i.e. representation in the discourse.

- The media used their discursive platform more to communicate their own views rather than to represent other IC's.

- The media used discursive practices which resulted in some points of views being favored or more privileged than others. There were 11 such practices that maintained order of discourse in each respective media outlet. Some of the practices overlapped between all of the media.

- The media discourse in the newspapers discussed events surrounding TC in addition to some planning aspect of TC while the discourse in the professional publications focused mainly on the technical and planning aspects and dealt with issues in depth.

- There was a lack of understanding and misrepresentation of the distinction between TC and the existing streetcar lines.

- **Architecture of the discourse**

  - There were eight relevant discursive communities: The City of Toronto, TTC, the Province of Ontario, Metrolinx, Sheppard East BIA, Toronto Environmental Alliance, *National Post*, the *Toronto Star*, *CUTA Forum*, *Ontario Planning Journal*.

Most of them had comparative "discoursal and pragmatic power"[78]. The city, the province, Metrolinx, and TTC had comparative power in that they needed to cooperate with each other in order to perform their mandate. This fact highlighted While Metrolinx and the province represent a larger government body, this fact did not translate into a more privileged representation in the media discourse.

- o Each community had a discursive frame, in some instances two, which highlighted certain views and excluded others. The discursive frames showed different interpretations of TC by the different discursive communities. Some interpretations overlapped.

- o The discursive frames highlighted meaning carriers/indicators; these meaning carriers indicated points of conflict with TC.

- o The conceptual sources of the conflict were mainly as a result of differences in value system each IC upheld which influenced their interpretation of TC's economic, social, and technological aspects.

The understanding of the media discourse gained in this thesis lead to the following recommendations that can have applicability to other planning issues, transit or otherwise, with the particularities of each issue in context.

6.2 Recommendations for Planners

The motivation for this research was interest in contributing to making planning a collaborative and communicative process through the provision of quality information effective mediation. The following quote in Forrester (1981) sums up the reason for that:

[T]he vulnerability to misrepresentation of the "facts" of possible actions, costs, benefits, or risks: support or opposition to projects and participation in the planning or broader political

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[78] Fairclough (1985)

process depends in part upon what interested citizens believe to be true about project alternatives, threats to the quality of life, what benefits may actually derive from the proposed project; whether or not "the truth shall set community organizations and neighborhood groups free", misrepresentations of what they can do (whether improving streets or health services) is likely to breed cynicism and cripple action….(P.11)

Johnstone (2002) says one of the two assumptions in any descriptive work is that, "the proper role of a scholar is to describe the status quo first, and only later, if at all, to apply scholarly findings in the solution of practical problems" (P. 27). The emphasis of the research and the discussion up to this point has been the findings and analysis. The next section addresses recommendations derived from the analysis. Since the recommendations do not consider any particular practical example, their application needs to take into consideration specific contexts[79] that might result in the recommendations' revision. Below is the summary of the recommendations discussed in the previous chapter.

6.2.1 Recommendations for Effective Communication

Innes (1998) highlights the importance of communication when she says: "Researchers show us not only that communication is central to planning, but also that as researchers and practitioners we must give far more explicit and systematic attention to this basic dimension of practice" (P.52). The recommendations listed below recognize and address that importance.

1. When relaying information to the media, planners need to present it in a way that fits the nature of the particular media. It was observed in this research that the newspapers have a different way of representing information to the professional publications. Therefore, information relayed to them has to be prepared in a way that fits their style of writing, which is a function of its audience as the literature shows. As Hajer (2009) points out, "Different languages appeal to different publics" (P. 18).

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[79] Consistent with the social constructivist view assumed for this research, it is important to acknowledge that those "contexts" are in part socially constructed.

2. The different discursive frames focused on different aspects in discussing TC. For example, NP's subaltern discursive frame focused on finance, protecting taxpayers' money, and regard for private transportation. Therefore, information relayed to this discursive frame could be framed in terms of those themes. When it comes to TS' dominant discursive frame, the information relayed could be framed in terms of the issues that it highlighted; issues such as the image of the city, serving underserved areas, social benefits of the project and so on. This can result in an improved coverage and understanding of planning issues. Since these two discursive frames have different audiences, that improved coverage translates into better awareness in the public about a particular planning issue. As Jones (1975) states, improved media coverage can change what and how much the public demands from the government in its urban policies. This as a result would enrich planning as a collaborative process where the client, i.e. the public, presents an informed demand.

3. Encourage the media to use terminology in transit issues that reflects the planners' discursive frame. For example, TC was equated with the existing streetcar lines. Planners can take action to avoid that. First of all transit planners and professionals in similar fields need to have a working definition that they agree on.[80] Planners can then provide the media with a fact sheet including the definition of terminology regarding technical and social aspects of transit projects specifically prepared in non-technical terms.

4. It was found in the research that there were discourse leaders who wrote most of the articles in the reference data. The influence such writers have is significant. Engaging them specifically in regards to the technical and planning aspect of a transit project can be a means of providing quality information to the reader and a way of enriching the discourse. The

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[80] This was suggested by an audience during my presentation at Metrolinx in February 2013.

special engagement of discourse leaders can also be used as a way to provide information that is lacking in the discourse.

5. The comparison between the professional publications and newspapers showed what was missing in the discourse represented by the newspapers, which have a far more audience and influence. The technical and planning aspect of the LRT project was very well dealt in the limited data collected from the trade magazines. That kind of technical information can be provided to the newspapers in a way that fits the newspaper's style of representation.

6. Planners need to continuously track and record relevant discourses to understand their characteristics and to continuously provide the information that is lacking and that is new As Hajer (2009) says, [N]ew authoritative politics will have to be able to inform decisions at various levels, in various spheres, and not at one focal moment, but much more in a stream of continuing events" (P.13). It also helps in identifying new themes and new discursive communities and any changes in discourses that might happen. Understanding why discourses change has valuable information for planners. Understanding why could inform communication strategies.

7. In some instances TC was mistakenly described as a network of eight LRT lines by both the newspapers and professional publications. This was easy to identify within the media discourse without doing fact-checking outside the discourse.[81] Although not of a great significance by itself, the example indicates the possibility of erroneous coverage in the media planners need to pay attention[82] to and address. Relevant literature emphasizes the responsibility of planners in participating in the media's coverage of planning issues. Johnson and Graves (2011) emphasize the importance of the involvement of planners in information platforms. According to them, it can alert planners to the possible distortion of information.

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[81] Going outside the discourse was beyond the scope of this discourse.
[82] as suggested above by continuously tracking the media

8. As was observed in this research and as Fairclough (1995) points out, experts and officials use the media to represent their discourses. Planners can write articles in media outlets representing their discourses on a regular basis to have more impact in the public discourse and to control their own messages in a way that highlights their discursive frame. This adds a dimension to what Innes (1998) calls "communicative planner".

9. Understanding the characteristics of media discourse has importance to planning practice as was illustrated in the last two chapters of this thesis. Therefore, as Goodey (1973), says "effective media information appraisal" can be incorporated into planning education.

10. The comparison of discussions in the trade magazines and newspapers showed coverage in the former had more depth in regards to the planning aspects of TC. Enhancing the level of discourse in the public realm requires bringing it to a comparable level with that of the trade magazines. Planners can play a significant role in this through the messages they relay to the media.

11. The analysis of the findings showed that there were discursive practices the media used in their representation of TC. As van Dijk (1988b) says, "[I]f they[the media] thus are able to persuade or otherwise influence their audiences, we also want to know which discursive structures and strategies are involved in that process" (P. 303). Even though he does not explain how, he adds, "[W]e … have to deal with relations between discourse and cognition, … discourse structures form the crucial mediating role" (van Dijk, 1988b, P. 303). I believe planners can deal with this relationship by understanding the discursive practices and preparing the message they relay to the media with that understanding in context.

12. In their coverage of TC, the trade magazines did not discuss subway lines as a viable option unlike in the discourse in the newspapers. This highlighted what Jorgensen and Phillips (2002) describe as "understandings naturalized in all of the discourse as common-sense" (P.

145). Planners can use such powerful endorsements from credible groups such as CUTA and OPJ to gain public support.

6.2.2 Recommendation for Effective Mediation

This research acknowledges effective mediation has significant implications in collaborative and communicative planning processes. It also recognizes that effective mediation requires planners understanding of each IC's discursive frame. The recommendations below summarize how planners can understand the ICs' discourse and what they can do with that knowledge.

1. The finding showed that the media do not represent all stakeholders equally. Therefore, planners need to use other sources to identify and include all relevant stakeholders. Innes and Booher (2003) say that all stakeholders and their interests need to be included to ensure communicative planning.

2. As the analysis indicates, points of conflicts were a result of different belief systems that the ICs upheld. In their mediation role between stakeholders, planners can help them appreciate each others' point of conflict in terms of these conceptual differences. As Yanow (2000) recommends, "in helping the parties understand the differences underlying one another's positions – that they are situated knowers arguing from different standpoints (rather than attributing stupidity or "blindness" to reality to the opposing side)…" (P.9).

3. Planners can address each IC's point of conflict[83] in mediation a way that responds to the ICs concern. For example, one of the Sheppard Avenue BIA's points of conflict was TC

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[83] They can also use this while communicating through media.

line's effect on customer parking in front of their businesses and offices. Planners can show the BIA the benefits of the line for the BIA.[84]

4. There were silenced themes in the discourse. Planners can incorporate them while communicating with ICs. It will enhance the discussion surrounding the issue at hand and help respective ICs appreciate the silenced themes, which are usually the concerns of other ICs, and gain wider perspective. Innes and Booher (2003) say that collaborative policymaking helps stakeholders learn about each "other's needs and capabilities" (P. 36).

5. Planners can consider solutions suggested by all ICs and include them when possible. Bikjer (1995) shows how the needs of the social groups surrounding the bicycle were incorporated and as a result these needs shaped the technology of the bicycle. Yanow (2000) makes a point why that should be the case: "In land using planning issues, city planners have visions of things as they should be based on good design principles, whereas residents foresee a host of problems ensuing from living the plan's implementation" (P.9)[85].

6.3 Generalizability and Future Research

This section deals with the issues of generalizability concerning this research. As Creswell (2009) says "[G]eneralization occurs when qualitative researchers study additional cases and generalize findings to the new cases" (P.193). The purpose of my research was to understand the characteristics of discourses surrounding urban planning issues. I took TC as a case study. As such the research has limited generalizability. Future research works can apply the same investigative framework to other urban planning issues to see if there are generalizable traits in the characteristics

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[84] This example was inspired by a comment made by an audience while I was making an informal presentation at Metrolinx in March, 2013.
[85] This recommendation can also have implications in policy revision.

of discourses surrounding urban planning issues. This case is also about Toronto's LRT project. Therefore, it has limits to its transferability[86] to other LRT projects as each LRT project might have a different context. However, the same research framework can be used to examine media discourse surrounding other LRT projects to understand each project individually and to see if there is any generalizability to media's representation of light rail transit. It should also be acknowledged this research examines a limited amount of data. Even though the discourse about LRT is in the reference data, it doesn't necessarily mean that the data represent the discourse. As Bednarke (2005) says, such data is indicative of a pattern. Therefore, to have statistical certainty, it is possible do the same research and to examine the same case study for a larger corpus.

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[86] As Polit, Taton, and Beck (2010) describe, transferability is as a form of generazability, a "Case to case transfer" (P. 1452).

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