REGENT PARK
SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

PART II:
BEST PRACTICES FOR SOCIAL INCLUSION
IN MIXED-INCOME COMMUNITIES

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Toronto Community Housing
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The redevelopment of Regent Park will result in an integrated, mixed-income community consisting of public housing tenants and middle-income homeowners. Regent Park already has a community with a rich history of community involvement, engagement and activism to draw on. But Regent Park also experiences barriers that are worth overcoming.

The design of Regent Park cuts residents off from the community around them. Enclaves, dead ends and ambiguous spaces attract criminal activity to the area. The buildings are old and in decline. These physical conditions need to be changed.

Regent Park residents also face well-documented neighbourhood effects that result in barriers to employment, income, economic mobility, educational attainment, health outcomes, personal security and empowerment. These social conditions are as critical an element of the revitalization as the physical changes.

Broadening the diversity of the community to include a wider range of social, economic and life-experience backgrounds provides an opportunity to address neighbourhood effects and reduce the barriers faced by current Regent Park residents. Connecting Regent Park residents to neighbours who can add new experiences, networks, relationships and economic assets to the community provides the already creative and energetic community with more tools to address the challenges that face it. But a new mix of residents also presents a wide range of opportunities and challenges for community building. The process for supporting the growth of a successful community will involve many disparate partners in a variety of focused strategies.

To identify best practices for developing mixed-income communities, this chapter reviews the extensive research available on mixed-income communities in North America, Europe, Australia and New Zealand, including academic sources, case study examples and reports
from mixed-income experiments in various public housing communities in different parts of the world.

The results are conclusive. Mixed-income communities can work. But social cohesion and social interaction across income and tenure are vitally important to making these communities healthy. Redevelopment processes that took careful account of the social development and social cohesion aspects of new mixed communities were most successful in building healthy and strong communities that produced meaningful benefits and improved outcomes for the people who lived there. Conversely, redevelopment processes that did not treat social cohesion as a central priority did not experience these benefits and in some cases adversely affected residents.

1. SOCIAL INCLUSION AND SOCIAL COHESION

The literature argues that social factors are among the most important factors in the success of new mixed-income communities. There are divisions between groups of residents in new mixed-income communities based on income, ethnicity, age, ability and length of stay in the community. Those divisions separate residents and their interests and often result in their working at cross-purposes. Effective social cohesion happens when people interact with each other across these boundaries and establish relationships. Effective social inclusion happens when those relationships are balanced and equitable and reflect the needs of the community as a whole. Creating that balance requires a complex effort not only to pursue shared interests but also to compensate for imbalances by supporting segments of the community that have less access to power resources and connections.

While no single factor can guarantee a cohesive or inclusive community, there are certain favourable conditions that lead to an increased likelihood of positive outcomes. In each of these areas, there are benefits, challenges and opportunities associated with promoting social interaction, social cohesion, social inclusion and good relations among public housing tenants and new middle-income residents. This chapter will explore each of these areas within the context of mixed-income housing and redevelopment in Regent Park:

Social networks across income and tenure
Ethnicity and cultural communities
Families, children and population stability
Community facilities, structures and activities
Design, safety and appearance
Local governance structures
Local businesses and local economic development
2. THE CHALLENGE OF SOCIAL NETWORKS ACROSS INCOME AND TENURE

2.1 INCOME AND TENURE

Interaction across income groups is the first and most important challenge and opportunity in mixed communities. Many of the other indicators and factors discussed in this chapter are critically dependent on social interaction between residents from different income groups.

In the United States, the general direction of social planning for mixed communities has been to attract higher-income residents to areas that previously had concentrated public housing (Schwartz et al. 1997). This approach underestimates the significance of the lower-income communities in fostering social cohesion and social inclusion. The literature tends to overemphasize strategies for attracting higher-income households. As a result, much of the American literature does not discuss factors for successfully integrating the income groups in a healthy mixed community—rather, it simply assumes that the presence of higher-income households will support a strong and healthy neighbourhood, and so this literature is of limited utility.

Some of the literature from the United Kingdom discusses factors and indicators of healthy mixed-income communities, focusing particularly on strategies for social cohesion. Berube (2005) suggests that a smaller gap in income levels among different resident groups will promote more social cohesion, as people will be more likely to interact with each other.

In their case study of mixed-income estates in the UK, Allen et al. (2005) show that inter-household cooperation took place in relation to practical rather than personal issues. People were more interested in becoming involved in collective community-based activities than in developing close personal interactions with their neighbours. These “weak ties” are an important part of social cohesion across incomes, tenure types and ethnicities as neighbours meet, interact, and work together to build their neighbourhood.

As the literature demonstrates, these tools for inter-household cooperation are important because it is easy for higher- and lower-income people to occupy different worlds while living in the same geographic area. In the absence of systems that induce residents to participate in local activities, more affluent residents will use their broader range of options and resources to engage elsewhere. This often results in the local services reaching primarily the lower-income residents in the neighbourhood, undermining their capacity to serve as sites for interaction across incomes.

The failure to create attractive local services can fragment even the lower-income population, despite their having fewer options and less ability to travel. Some lower-income residents will accept the less attractive services available locally, but primary research in Regent Park (Meagher and Boston 2003) shows that many residents withdraw from services that fail to meet a basic standard of quality and accessibility. This barrier deepens the fragmentation and isolation in the community and can create divisions along ethno-cultural lines.
The research clearly shows that creating relationships across income and tenure groups is challenging and that the natural inclination will tend toward separation. Overcoming this division will require a range of attractive and practical, rather than purely social, activities that appeal to different income groups.

### 2.2 SOCIAL NETWORKS

Social networks are another key indicator of a healthy mixed community, but not all forms of social networks are effective ways of building communities. Intensive social networks or “strong ties” provide a number of challenges and opportunities related to neighbourhood building.

Several European studies (Wood 2003, Atkinson and Kintrea 2000) show that public housing tenants tend to be socially isolated and have most of their social networks within the public housing complex. In many cases, those networks are fairly restricted, linking people of very similar cultural and economic backgrounds. People in higher-income groups tend to have wider social and geographic networks. Atkinson and Kintrea (2000) found that for renters, 40% of their activities took place outside of the public housing estate, whereas for homeowners, over 75% of their activities took place outside of the estates. In this case study, homeowners occupied different social worlds from their neighbours who rented units and did not tend to interact with lower-income people in their neighbourhoods.

In the United States, Rosenbaum et al. (1998) measured the extent to which residents interacted with their neighbours and found that public housing tenants interacted more with other public housing tenants than with the new higher-income residents of the neighbourhood. Higher-income individuals spent most of their days outside of the neighbourhood, participating in work and social activities with their social networks outside of the community.

It is clear from the research that mixed-income communities are difficult to unify. They tend to fragment across income and tenure lines. It is unrealistic to assume that geographic proximity will cause these different groups to connect, develop cohesion and create a socially inclusive community. Other research, however, indicates that there are a variety of measures that can overcome these tendencies and can help to create socially inclusive mixed communities.
3. THE BENEFITS OF ETHNICITY AND CULTURE

Immigrant groups in a neighbourhood tend to have a complex web of relationships within their own cultural groupings that include participants from many income levels. As a result, immigrant communities are a significant asset in encouraging social integration across income and tenure groups, as people tend to find support from other people of the same ethnic group (van Kempen et al. 2004). However, though these networks cross income lines, they often do not cross cultural lines, constraining their overall impact on social cohesion.

Some ethnic groups can also have a stabilizing influence on areas of generally high turnover through their greater social investment in the neighbourhood. Groups may choose to stay in a community because of local ethno-specific social networks that they have established, which lead to longer residency, established roots and a greater social stake in the direction of the neighbourhood (Rowntree 1998). These traits contribute to social cohesion.

Ethnic groups, irrespective of income levels, may also have ties with wider networks within the city-wide ethnic community. The presence of a critical mass of an ethnic community contributes to the survival of small specialist shops, which tend to diversify the local economy and add local alternatives to the higher-income shops that are attracted to the neighbourhood by new higher-income residents (Rowntree 1998).

Immigrant communities that have achieved a critical mass appear to assist in crossing income barriers, though not all residents have access to the benefits of those multi-income social networks. Settlement patterns over the last 10 years show that people from Regent Park's major ethno-cultural groups are settling in growing numbers in market housing in the areas surrounding Regent Park. This pattern suggests that some of the people attracted to new market housing in Regent Park will reflect the ethno-cultural groups already in Regent Park and help build a stronger mixed-income ethno-cultural community. Patterns in other settings suggest that these new residents could play an important bridging role in the new community.
4. THE BENEFITS OF FAMILIES, CHILDREN AND POPULATION STABILITY

4.1 PRESENCE OF FAMILIES WITH CHILDREN

Most of the case studies examined for this study suggest that the presence of families promotes social cohesion (van Kempen et al. 2004, Silverman et al. 2005, Manzi et al. 2003, Berube 2005, Atkinson and Kintrea 2000, Allen et al. 2005, Ewalt 1997). Families with children tend to participate in local schools and other services and to create social networks around children that cross income levels, and families tend to move less often, leading to increased social stability.

In a study of mixed-income communities that are over 20 years old, Allen et al. (2005) found stronger friendships among children of different income and tenure groups than among adults. This leads the authors to suggest that local schools are important venues for social interaction between people living in public housing and middle-income homeowners. These interactions also lead to local support networks related to children; for example, parental interaction is fostered as children develop friendships, new young people enter the family network through babysitting and contacts are made through childcare services.

Participation by children of all backgrounds in local elementary schools improves the probability of social mixing and social cohesion (Silverman et al. 2005). Local elementary schools should work to attract children of all income backgrounds and are attractive to a variety of needs. Immigrant families often seek out schools that respect, reflect and reinforce their cultural heritage and values. Higher-income parents often have the resources and networks required to send their children to schools outside of the community and seek settings they perceive as more likely to be clean, well maintained, academically successful, and safe.

Efforts to attract people to schools for a variety of reasons help to bring people from different backgrounds together in a familiar setting. But the various challenges affecting the lives of lower-income residents mean that they tend not to participate in school activities or use school facilities unless there is a concerted effort to make them accessible and to accommodate schedules and child care challenges. Such accommodations are needed to make schools more accessible.

Silverman et al. (2005) argue that higher-income families “have high stocks of cultural and social capital that could potentially be deployed in the neighbourhood for the improvement of schools and other services for children, but which might equally be expended elsewhere to secure access for their own offspring to services not available to others in the neighbourhood, for example in private schools and other facilities.” As a result, higher-income families need to feel confident that their commitment to a local school will result in a quality education for their children, as they have more opportunities to withdraw from local services and seek service elsewhere.

The potential for conflicts relating to school policies and practices is increased in mixed-income communities and can lead to the alienation of people from different backgrounds.
Schools should therefore have procedures in place for equitable representation on parents’ councils, for mediating conflicts between parents, and for involving a wide and representative range of parents in school activities (Vestergaard 2004).

Local primary schools should have a good sense of community, adequate childcare facilities and space for community activities. When parents are accustomed to interacting with other parents from different income groups and ethno-cultural backgrounds at the school, their chances of interacting outside of the school increase as well (Atkinson and Kintrea 2000).

### 4.2 POPULATION STABILITY

The literature also shows that high turnover rates hinder social interaction and social cohesion. People tend to have more social contacts and community involvement when they stay longer in one neighbourhood. If people think they are settling in a neighbourhood, they will become more interested in making friends and participating in neighbourhood activities (Morrison 2005). Place attachments are, in fact, a way that researchers have measured the success of a neighbourhood (Brown et al. 2003, Kleinhans 2004).

Conversely, high turnover rates may also indicate neighbourhood decline (Brown et al. 2003). Affordable units can help to reduce turnover, providing residents with a clear economic incentive to remain in the community.

Some studies argue that home ownership also contributes to place attachment. As homeowners stay longer and invest more money in housing, they tend to participate in more community groups and are less likely to leave poor or declining neighbourhoods. Conversely, when homeowners view their neighbours negatively, they tend to leave the area, leading to high turnover rates for residential property and a drop in housing prices (Brown et al. 2003).

Ethno-cultural enclaves can also improve neighbourhood stability. When people from specific ethno-cultural backgrounds can participate in cultural activities and purchase culturally appropriate products from local stores, they are less likely to leave the community.
5. COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES, STRUCTURES AND FACILITIES

A key question for new mixed-income communities is how to involve all groups of residents in community activities. Left to their own devices, higher-income residents tend to leave the community for services, while lower-income residents have fewer choices and are more likely to use local services but withdraw from activities when they feel unsafe, unwelcome or disconnected. Similarly, new immigrant communities tend to be less engaged in activities that do not reflect their cultural background or cultural values. Participation in community services and activities by different groups of residents is often dependent on the design and appearance of community facilities (Atkinson and Kintrea 2000, Silverman et al. 2005), and the kinds of activities provided (Rowntree 1998).

5.1 COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES

In Atkinson and Kintrea’s study (2000), homeowners did not feel part of the community because so much of their life was conducted outside of the neighbourhood. They felt excluded from activities that renters might be involved in because the daytime meeting times were inconvenient for them and because they were not interested in becoming involved in activities at local facilities that they felt were substandard. At the same time, studies conducted in Regent Park (Meagher and Boston 2003) show that residents may feel that even when there are many services offered to them, if they are not available in the home languages of the residents, or if the facilities are perceived as unsafe or unappealing, many families withdraw from the services.

Organized community activities and attractive facilities are needed to build social bridges within the neighbourhood. Neighbourhood events such as garage sales, community barbecues, various neighbourhood arts events and local festivals promote interactions and can lead to a greater appreciation for the community (Rowntree 1998).

Activities and community involvement need to be accessible for people from different income, age and cultural backgrounds (Atkinson and Kintrea 2000). Activities must be scheduled at convenient times and revolve around things that interest residents across income groups.

Other community participation strategies include community gardens, local newspapers and newsletters, and activities that revolve around schools (for example, bake sales and other fundraising campaigns) and children. These activities have appeal because they cut across differences in income, tenure and ethno-cultural background.

5.2 COMMUNITY GARDENS AND OTHER GREEN SPACE

Community gardens are an important vehicle for social interaction, as they provide a venue for social mixing, promote a healthy lifestyle to participants, and facilitate interaction between people (Glover et al. 2005). Salivar-Tanaka et al. (2004) carried out a study of community gardens in the Latino community in New York City. The authors found that “the
garden hosts numerous social, educational, and cultural events, including neighborhood and church gatherings, holiday parties, children’s activities, school tours, concerts, health fairs, and voter registration drives." Similarly, Armstrong (2000) found that community gardens were very likely to lead to community-organizing activities on other issues as well as facilitating and providing a venue for social interaction. As such, gardens are important venues for cross-income interaction among community members and are often a starting point for other community activities.

Other types of local green spaces also encourage interaction between different groups of people. Parks, park benches and large open green spaces promote social interaction and social cohesion. Park benches and areas for parents to sit and chat while watching children are also very important. Welcoming green spaces should be present from the earliest stages of the redevelopment so as to encourage casual social interaction from the outset.

5.3 INTEGRATED USE OF COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Publicly used facilities in the neighbourhood are one of the most important venues for interaction across income, ethnicity and tenure. Community centres, schools, libraries and other public spaces provide important opportunities for fostering interaction among new and existing residents from all backgrounds. Community facilities should be designed to appeal to a range of needs so that different groups have the chance to share the space and meet each other.

In surveys, focus groups and consultations with Regent Park residents in early 2006, many participants expressed significant concerns about current community facilities, including the quality and relevance of activities, the attractiveness of the facilities, and the safety of the space. These are some of the existing barriers that prevent lower-income people from using current facilities. This confirms the findings in the literature. Many authors point out that mixed-income communities need local venues that are attractive to both groups of residents (Atkinson and Kintrea 2000)—the more affluent and mobile groups, and the lower-income residents who do not use facilities because they are perceived to be substandard and unsafe.

In a comparison study of new purpose-built mixed-income communities and redeveloped low-income communities in Britain (Silverman et al. 2005), lower-income tenants consistently listed a lack of community facilities and local shopping as reasons for disliking their neighbourhood. They indicated that the lack of local facilities led to some issues related to youth “hanging out.” In the new purpose-built mixed-income communities, Silverman et al. found that residents from all income levels were happy with brand-new community facilities that had inclusive policies. In Atkinson and Kintrea’s (2000) case study of revitalized communities, the lack of adequate facilities for residents, in particular, created resentment in all income groups.

Facilities need not be formally programmed nor designed with social cohesion as their primary goal. Some facilities that have worked in other mixed-income neighbourhoods include local coffee shops, affordable meeting rooms, places of worship, spaces for festivals and cel-
ebrations, spaces for garage sales, local theatres and casual communal meeting space within the buildings.

It is important for the designers to work with service agencies when planning shared spaces within residential buildings. Communal facilities in buildings can be designed as spaces that service providers can use for building specific programs such as homework clubs.

It is clear that the quality and inclusivity of local community facilities plays a big role in how residents from all income groups perceive the neighbourhood. Local facilities for community activities need to be attractive to a wide range of people, including people who have viable options to leave the neighbourhood for similar services (Atkinson and Kintrea 2000) and people who do not participate in any community activities because of their concerns about the facilities (Neumann et al. 2004).

At the earliest possible stages, the Regent Park redevelopment should include attractive and well-designed community facilities of the kinds described above. If newer residents avoid the local amenities from the beginning of their residence, the pattern of disconnection from neighbours will be difficult to reverse.
6. DESIGN, SAFETY AND APPEARANCE

6.1 PHYSICAL DESIGN AND PLANNING

The physical design of a neighbourhood can have a significant impact on the social interaction of people in the community. Small spatial distances between renters' and owners' houses and entranceways are a factor in encouraging social contacts between neighbours of different income groups (Atkinson and Kintrea 2000). Casual social interaction is important, and there are a variety of factors that lead to increased casual interaction, such as: Pathways and bicycle use to permit access to different parts of the neighbourhood (Allen et al. 2005). Communal facilities that are accessible and used by a wide variety of community members (Atkinson and Kintrea 2000). Local outdoor and indoor spaces, including green spaces, for activities and casual social interactions (Atkinson and Kintrea 2000). Shared courtyards and shared open public spaces (Silverman et al. 2005).

6.2 STREET-LEVEL MIXING

Street-level mixing is important. These casual encounters can connect people who would otherwise have few points of contact. Positioning entrances and exits and establishing pedestrian layouts that promote pedestrian traffic past other people’s windows and doors, and which provide a range of meeting points, lead to increased social mixing. A connection between different parts of the neighbourhood using paths and bicycle routes facilitates chance meetings and conversations between diverse residents.

Designs should place entrances and exits and pedestrian and cycling routes in positions that maximize encounters, especially among people of different incomes, different cultures and different housing tenures.

6.3 HOUSING DESIGN SIMILARITIES

The community should appear seamless. Housing design similarities between owner-occupied and rented housing serve to blur tenure distinction, emphasizing similarities rather than differences between residents (Allen et al. 2005).

The literature also emphasizes that mixed-income households in the same building or area are a key factor in promoting social cohesion. A number of studies have shown that new higher-income residents who live in different buildings or on different streets from more established lower-income residents tend to be isolated from the rest of the community and perceived as outsiders by the more established residents (Wood and Vamplew 1999, Jupp 1999, Wood 2003). Some authors point out that this isolation can lead to the failure of the development; as initial enthusiasm drops and the value of private housing decreases, the social division among low-income and higher-income residents remains, and the low-income areas continue to be perceived as areas of concentrated poverty (Wood 2003).
Design should reflect the importance of the seamless blend of building types and proximity between people of different economic and cultural backgrounds.

6.4 ACCESSIBILITY

In addition to ensuring that units for people with disabilities are accessible, the accessibility of common areas must be ensured in order to increase residents’ ability to access other units occupied by neighbours and to enable them to participate fully in the life of the community.

6.5 SAFETY AND CIVILITY

When creating a healthy mixed-income community, the neighbourhood must not only be safe, but must be perceived to be safe. In neighbourhoods that have a reputation for being unsafe prior to redevelopment, the perception of safety by all residents needs to be reinforced throughout the redevelopment and afterwards (Knox et al. 2005). Primary research carried out for the Regent Park redevelopment indicated that homebuyers already living within a few blocks of Regent Park were often deterred from living in the new housing in Regent Park or from using local services because of their perceptions of insecurity. To address such perceptions, mechanisms need to be put in place to support visible indicators of safety, to demonstrably engage security personnel including police, and to ensure that the neighbourhood design has addressed security issues. Areas with blind alleyways and unlit or unclaimed public spaces create more fear among residents.

Rosenbaum et al. (1998) examined the Lake Parc Place redevelopment in Chicago and found that the visible commitment to security, the presence of strong building management and the overall support for rules in the development led to increased feelings of safety in the new mixed-income development. In other developments, the presence of 24-hour building management, such as superintendents, has been found to create a sense of confidence in the safety of the building and the commitment to making it a secure setting.

In other examples, authors point out that feelings of safety are related to ‘civilities.’ People who perceive fewer incivilities (for example, graffiti, garbage or broken windows) on their property have a lower fear of crime and a higher sense of their ability to have a positive effect on their surroundings. They also tend to be more attached to their neighbourhood (Brown et al. 2005). In their extensive research on neighbourhood cohesion in Chicago, Robert Sampson and Felton Earls (Sampson et al. 1999) found that this phenomenon affected people from all income groups, both homeowners and renters, and that although minor variations occurred across ethno-cultural groups, all groups responded favourably to a reduction of incivilities.

The attractiveness of the neighbourhood is a significant factor in the perception of comfort and safety. In a study of several redeveloped public housing estates in the United Kingdom, Allen et al. (2005) point out that an attractive design and the quality of the neighbourhood
have allowed people to escape the prejudice usually faced by people in public housing. High-quality housing design makes the neighbourhood attractive and is a key factor in ensuring long-term sustainability, both among the groups that choose to stay in the neighbourhood and in terms of how the neighbourhood is perceived from outside (Knox et al. 2002).

The neighbourhood should appear clean, safe and friendly with a unified appearance in order to foster a positive sense of shared community among residents and to create a positive impression of the neighbourhood on non-residents (Knox et al. 2002).

Mechanisms that allow people to set rules related to safety and civilities for their neighbourhood make residents feel safer in their communities. Even when crime and incivilities happen in their communities, if people feel that there are open and accessible structures and mechanisms for them to actively pursue change, their confidence in the success of the community and in their long-term security increases.

Managing civilities is about managing people’s experience of a neighbourhood. This can often happen through interventions that make adverse situations less obtrusive. Harm reduction, for example, minimizes the rate at which people with substance abuse problems go into crisis, and can thereby reduce incivilities without penalizing people with addictions. The Toronto Drug Use Strategy is an example of this approach.
7. LOCAL GOVERNANCE STRUCTURES

Local governance mechanisms include tenants’ councils, committees and groups that enable residents to control their environment. The literature argues that local governance mechanisms and processes are important in allowing residents opportunities to:

- Change their communities.
- Create collective rule-setting or conflict-resolution processes.
- Provide venues for resident involvement.
- Represent their community to the wider community.

These activities increase residents' perception of their ability to bring about change in their neighbourhoods, which is also called ‘collective efficacy’ in some studies. Low collective efficacy is related to neighbourhood decline, high residential turnover and the perceived and actual rates of crime (Brown et al. 2003, Sampson et al. 1997). Residents are less likely to feel that they are able to change their neighbourhood if the mechanisms and structures are not in place for them to participate in this change.

In a study by Knox et al. (2005) on local governance structures, residents supported a governance mechanism that could vigorously enforce covenants in order to maintain the area’s physical appearance and combat anti-social behaviour. These governance mechanisms were strongly supported by both low-income renters and higher-income property owners. Residents wanted rules designed to control the area’s physical appearance, which increased their feelings of safety. In studies in Chicago, Robert Sampson found that for all income groups and ethno-cultural groups in the community, the sense that residents could positively affect their neighbourhood was a more significant factor in creating a feeling of safety than any other single factor, including crime rates, signs of physical disorder and signs of social disorder (Sampson et al. 1999). These findings resonate clearly with the views that dominate the history of Regent Park, where residents have always advocated for increased local control and increased capacity to play a role in the fate of their community.

However, governance mechanisms are not necessarily self-creating, self-sustaining or inclusive. Considerable research points to the need to commit resources to ensuring that neighbourhood governance reflects the balanced needs of the community and that participants with fewer resources or experience in governance can play an equitable role.

Neighbourhood associations and tenants’ and residents’ associations are an important mechanism in local democratic governance structures. They foster relationships between residents of local communities and generally aim to improve the neighbourhood. In a comparative study of public housing tenants’ participation in governance structures in Boston and Los Angeles, Conway and Hatchen (2005) suggest that neighbourhood attachments, grievances, resources, constraints and feelings of efficacy are the main factors that influence tenants’ participation in neighbourhood associations. Based on their findings, the authors argue that poorer neighbourhoods do not have inherently lower levels of participation, but do have a combination of barriers and constraints that can hamper participation. They found that addressing grievances, attachments and efficacy can lead individuals to become more involved in local democratic structures as avenues for change. Another important factor that leads to people’s participation in tenant democracy structures is social ties. The
authors suggest that proponents of strong local governance structures can do things that are conducive to forming ties by creating spaces, situations, and activities that allow tenants to interact with one another, thereby facilitating increased participation in local democratic structures.

In a case study by the Rowntree Foundation (Rowntree 1998), training was provided for residents on the workings of local municipal council, community development techniques, and various other subjects as a way of ensuring high-quality participation in local governance mechanisms. Involving residents early in their stay—or even prior to arrival—by providing training, information and opportunities for early interaction proved to be a good strategy for developing lasting involvement and for building a good foundation for neighbourhood-based relationships.

In a comparative study of two areas in Boston that had a high number of tenants' and neighbourhood associations, Meyer and Hyde (2004) found that neighbourhood associations need sources of income and other supports for collaborative efforts, technical assistance and conflict mediation. This study also recommends that umbrella organizations should have clear lines of communications with the more localized tenants and neighbourhood associations. In addition, the study found that having a paid community organizer whose job is to build relationships among residents and across different kinds of tenants' and neighbourhood associations is the most effective method of supporting stable community structures.

Aside from funding and open lines of communications, the authors found that the main supports that neighbourhood, tenants and residents associations need are training in conflict mediation and resolution, and technical training.
8. LOCAL BUSINESSES AND LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Small business development in mixed-income neighbourhoods is an important way of promoting local economic development and is an important part of the overall economic and physical revitalization of the neighbourhood. It can also play an important role in fostering positive social interaction.

The literature argues that different groups of residents have different shopping habits, often related to income but also reflective of ethno-cultural background. Income affects shopping patterns in several ways. Car owners have more choices about where to shop. People who are employed outside their neighbourhood have regular shopping opportunities at work as well as at home. The increase of choice in shopping venues that comes with higher incomes affects both the strategies required to ensure that higher-income residents shop in the neighbourhood where they live, and the locations where they are more likely to interact casually with neighbours and build informal links with other people in the community.

Ethno-cultural preferences have a similar effect. Regent Park residents born outside North America or Europe tend to shop in stores that provide familiar, culturally appropriate goods (Meagher and Boston 2003). Many leave the immediate neighbourhood, preferring to shop in East Chinatown rather than in the East Downtown in order to find affordable and appropriate goods and services.

A strategy for redeveloping the neighbourhood needs to ensure that the retail needs of the whole range of residents are met. Low-income residents need access to appropriately priced, culturally relevant products (Rowntree 1998). At the same time, it is also important that higher-income residents find appealing shops within the community, in order to enable local businesses to play a role as shared public spaces where residents interact with each other.

8.1 MECHANISMS FOR ENSURING SUSTAINABLE LOCAL BUSINESSES

The phasing of regeneration, especially the demolition of housing in the shopping catchment areas and the relocation of the population, can have a major impact on the commercial viability of local retailing facilities. It is therefore important to foster local retail vitality as part of the regeneration activities. This requires a commercial strategy for local businesses and for ensuring that appropriately priced and culturally relevant retail services are available for both renters and owners throughout the redevelopment period and beyond.

Carley et al. (2001) suggest that a good mix of sizes of retailers is important, along with a mix of different kinds of stores that serve different income and ethnic communities. They also suggest that extending the catchment areas beyond the locality makes the local shops a destination for people who live in surrounding neighbourhoods, thereby leading to more economically stable businesses. This strategy creates a regional draw to the businesses in the new development and ensures the quality and stability of the local businesses in the neighbourhood. The presence of unique, ethno-culturally specific shopping opportunities can be an element of such a strategy.