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New avenues for comprehensive planning in fragmented urban development

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PART II

Analytical and conceptual framework

2. Finding comprehensiveness in fragmentation? Analysing linkages between fragmented city-building endeavours

This chapter has been submitted as a single-authored article to an international peer-reviewed journal.

Planning in a comprehensive manner represents a longstanding ambition within the discipline. Yet, changing public sector interventions in the built environment, disconnected property development projects and fragmented social initiatives lead to fragmentations overall. This paper develops a framework to read urban development through institutional fragmentation to provide the foundation for new theoretical approaches and planning practices that link these variegated city-building endeavours. Based on an extensive literature review, the framework consists of four building blocks reflecting the significant dimensions of fragmentation debated in planning studies. Illustrative evaluations of planning systems in Toronto and Amsterdam demonstrate the framework's applicability and exemplify how conditions and elements that enhance or impede linkages between, and among, city-building endeavours can be identified. It is argued that focusing on the establishment of linkages provides an integrative lens for the operation of planning as a fragmented spatial governance activity.

2.1 Introduction

Ideals of comprehensiveness that tackle complex challenges lie at the heart of the planning discipline (Innes, 1996; Branch, 1985; Altshuler, 1965). Contemporary urban development, however, is characterised by fragmented city-building endeavours: disconnected property-driven development projects incorporate private sector interests (Tasan-Kok and Baeten, 2012; Fainstein, 1994), while social movements

and initiatives bring forward their own fragmented claims to, and interventions in, the built environment (Blokland et al., 2015; Palermo and Ponzini, 2014). Above all, public sector goals shifted from providing direct social welfare towards incentivising investments into the built environment in the hope for social transformations through spatial interventions (Fincher et al., 2014; Swyngedouw, Moulaert and Rodriguez, 2002; Hall and Hubbard, 1996). Underpinning these variegated city-building endeavours are altered relationships between public, private and civil society sector actors that resulted in the fragmentation of urban governance (Cars et al., 2002). Planning, which is nested within these complex governance landscapes, interacts with, shapes and regulates both property developments and social efforts, morphing into a fragmented governance activity in itself.

Nonetheless, and despite being severely limited by market-oriented regulatory restructuring, planning retained its “ambition of making all-inclusive connections” (Madanipour, 2010: 366). This discrepancy between ambition and existing practices reinvigorates long-standing discussions surrounding comprehensive planning. In his seminal work, Altshuler (1965) criticised the comprehensive rational planning ideal that dominated the mid-20th century for its rigidity and planners’ expert-driven definition of a unifying public interest. Thirty years later, Innes (1996) proposed consensus building as a new ideal of comprehensiveness and a solution to the dilemmas put forward by Altshuler. Combined, these accounts reflect a shift in planning studies since the 1960s from perceiving flexibility in planning as a negative to that of a positive feature allowing planners “to cope with the complexity of urban space and society” (Tasan-Kok, 2008: 183). However, criticism on flexible and consensus-based planning, particularly for co-opting less powerful voices to the advantage of market interests, is well-established (Purcell, 2009). Furthermore, the dominant focus on procedural aspects at the expense of substantive planning outcomes is criticised (Eraydin and Tasan-Kok, 2012; Fainstein, 2010) and fragmentation as a result of flexibility is depicted as problematic (Albrechts, 2013).

In this paper, I develop a framework for reading urban development through the lens of institutional fragmentation to provide the foundation for both new theoretical approaches and planning practices that link disconnected city-building endeavours to overarching governance structures. Planning studies represent a diverse collection of theories, approaches and paradigms standing in a ‘dialogical relationship’ with practice (Fainstein and DeFillipis, 2016). Yet, this relationship is in jeopardy as practitioners tend to devalue theories as being too detached from real-life situations (*ibid.*) while current theoretical debates emanate an increasing disappointment felt by scholars with planning practice in connection to sweeping neoliberal agendas “that led to increased inequality, democratic deficit

and the exclusion of disadvantaged groups” (Eraydin and Tasan-Kok, 2019: 29). Correspondingly, recent years saw mounting pleas for transformation in planning systems to adapt to contemporary urban dynamics and to respond to deep-rooted societal challenges (Albrechts, 2016; Eraydin and Tasan-Kok, 2012; de Roo and Rauws, 2012). Particularly underscored, in this respect, is the importance of creating linkages between fragmented actions and activities (Madanipour, 2010), yet no suggestions have been made on how to implement these given changes in practice.

My proposed framework responds to pleas for transformation in planning practice and is simultaneously strongly rooted in theoretical debates. Instead of engaging in attempts to establish all-inclusive connections and linking everything – which I consider as neither possible nor desirable – it offers a different way of dealing with fragmentation by establishing targeted linkages. My view on comprehensiveness is informed by, but differs on several accounts from, both incrementalism and strategic planning which can be seen as two ends of the spectrum. It differs from incremental *laissez-fair* perspectives in terms of the belief in the necessity of a firm overarching framework which allows for flexibility within its parameters, or ‘guided flexibility’ as Tasan-Kok (2008) terms it. Without such an overarching structure, objectives surrounding social justice and environmental sustainability cannot be achieved and substance not be brought back into planning. At the same time, my view differs from strategic planning in terms of this overarching structure’s ability to transform itself. Literature on strategic planning does emphasise that long-term plans and visions are not stable but regularly updated (Salet and Faludi, 2000), or reframes strategic planning, for instance, as an adaptive co-production process (Albrechts, 2013). Nonetheless, as Friedmann (1971: 2017) posited almost 50 years ago, organisations involved in planning must “be exceedingly flexible, adaptive, and opportunistic with respect to changes in the external environment”, and a public sector led spatial strategy that is updated every few years does not capture the transformation of the overarching spatial governance structure that I contemplate.

The framework consists of four building blocks, which I developed on the basis of an extensive literature review, that reflect four major dimensions of fragmentation as currently debated in planning studies: *i)* the growing discrepancy between social and physical interventions closely connected to the shifting goals of public sector planning and policy, from social welfare concerns to economic objectives and investments; *ii)* planning’s ad hoc engagement with project-based private property development; *iii)* planning’s engagement with fragmented micro-scale social efforts; and *iv)* the disconnection between these fragmented city-building endeavours and overarching visions and governance arrangements. Based on this abstraction and categorisation, I argue that urban development is not only increasingly fragmented,

but also that planning studies is characterised by compartmentalised foci and analytical divides.

In order to generate and construct explanations of phenomena in a variety of contexts (Stanley, 2012), I illustrate the applicability of my framework on an exemplary basis in planning systems in Toronto and Amsterdam. I contend that turning the four building blocks into analytical categories can reveal the context-dependent nature of fragmentation in diverse planning systems, and identify and ultimately improve linkages between the actions of diverse sets of actors through tailor-made mechanisms. I operationalise my framework by following Janin Rivolin's (2012: 69) understanding of planning systems as "institutional technologies for territorial governance" which are established and transformed through the complex interplay between *discourses*, *structures*, *tools* and *social practices*. Using these features as a sub-frame of analysis within my four analytical categories draws attention to elements and conditions that allow or hamper the creation of linkages in both cities. City-specific planning literature and practices underpin my theoretical contention on the need for new approaches that overcome analytical divides, particularly in terms of analysing property-driven developments and micro-scale social efforts as independent occurrences or as inherent adversaries.

This paper begins by revisiting the changing ideals of comprehensiveness in planning, and by defining the four major dimensions of fragmentation discussed in existing literature. Moreover, I delineate the dimensions as my framework's building blocks and explain the paper's methodology. After contextualising urban development and planning in the illustrative examples of Toronto and Amsterdam, I methodically scrutinize *discourses*, *structures*, *tools* and *practices* in both cities within the framework's four building blocks. The paper concludes with empirical and theoretical reflections. I urge for a new conception of comprehensiveness in planning and outline a new research agenda focusing on the potential of fragmented city-building endeavours to instigate structural changes in wider spatial governance.

2.2 A reconsideration of comprehensive planning

The literature on comprehensive planning is vast. Ideals of comprehensiveness have shifted in focus and scope over time and various theoreticians have proposed their own approaches to address complex challenges in an exhaustive manner (Innes, 1996; Branch, 1985; Hague and McCourt, 1974; Friedmann, 1971; Altshuler, 1965). At the turn of the 20th century, when the foundations for modern urban planning were laid, space was perceived in absolute terms that meant it could and needed to be managed (Hall and Tewdwr-Jones, 2010). Comprehensiveness was thought to be achieved through expert knowledge as the basis for rational interventions

in the built environment addressing a consolidated public interest. Substantive ambitions laid down in long-term physical master plans were expected to shape the future and, from the 1950s onward, to provide a stable framework for post-WW2 economies (Madanipour, 2010). However, political economic transformations since the late 1970s put an end to the perceived stability and called into question both the inherent predictability of the future as well as the notion of a single public interest.

The focus shifted from substantive physical understandings to procedural understandings of comprehensiveness. Following an “exceptional interlude of affluence, full employment and planning” (Bodnar, 2001: 180) in the West, globalisation and market-oriented deregulation created a “heightened sense of fragmentation” (ibid.). With city governments finding themselves in constant competition for global capital and shifting from managerial to entrepreneurial forms of urban development (Harvey, 1989), the institutional structures of planning changed and property developers emerged as the main agents of change within the processes of urban development (Cars et al., 2002; Fainstein, 1994; Turok, 1992). Planning “turned its attention to the management of social and economic change, becoming especially paramount in the 1970s, when it was increasingly interested in the agencies and processes of urban change rather than in spatial connections and orders” (Madanipour, 2010: 356). Simultaneously, growing flexibility in planning practices opened opportunities for residents and communities to engage more with development matters and for various bottom-up initiatives to take-off. In the 1990s, policy discourses embraced participation as a feature of good governance, adding “an additional layer of local participatory institutions to an increasingly complex institutional landscape” (Fischer, 2006: 21).

Intertwined with changing relationships between states and markets, and following critiques of modernist planning as a paternalistic scientific exercise, planning scholars began to embrace collaborative and communicative approaches to reflect pluralist societies (Albrechts, Alden and Da Rosa Pires, 2001). Relational understandings of space and a focus on stakeholder inclusion increasingly replaced notions of a unified public interest (Friedmann, 2003; Innes, 1996). To work in a comprehensive manner meant to interact with and incorporate the knowledge of as many actors as possible: a “new generation [of planners] rejected the idea of comprehensiveness; however, they still aspired to be comprehensive, albeit in a political sense and [within] market-based solutions” (Madanipour, 2010: 359). This shift in focus did not occur without significant criticism. Collaborative and communicative planning came under attack for disregarding considerations of power, conflict and attention to actual planning outcomes (Tewdwr-Jones and Allmendinger, 1998), and scholars urged for practitioners to restore norms and

bring substance back into planning, specifically with regards to substantive justice, equity and environmental sustainability (Eraydin and Tasan-Kok, 2012; Fainstein, 2010; Fincher and Iveson, 2008).

Policy integration and coherence often constitute guiding principles in planning practices and become part of plan-making processes through approaches such as strategic planning (Stead and Meijers, 2009). However, the fragmentation of governance and changing power dynamics hamper the implementation of these ideals, for instance by favouring competitive pursuits (Wilson, 2004). In several European countries the move to urban development on a project basis incorporating private sector actors led to incremental approaches in urban and regional policy and revived interest in strategic planning, which had first emerged in the 1960s and 1970s (Wiechmann, 2007). Comprehensiveness within strategic planning was considered as a firm link between social, economic and physical considerations through the coherence of policy across different sectors and levels of government (Albrechts, 2013; Salet and Faludi, 2000). Nonetheless, in the absence of binding requirements, strategic visions failed to bring about the changes aspired to and were utilised to achieve economic rather than social targets (Madanipour, 2010). In general, governance-related issues in planning are analysed from two broad but distinct perspectives: the first focusing on the consequences of market-oriented regulatory restructuring, and the second on more positive, normative conceptions of the term surrounding participatory democracy and civil society involvement (Schmitt and Danielzyk, 2018). These perspectives can also be discerned in the literature addressing the four major dimensions of fragmentation that are challenging existing ideals of comprehensiveness in planning.

Literature following the first perspective highlights how neoliberal and entrepreneurial shifts cause modifications to planning practices and wider public-sector goals, leading to two disparate but interrelated dimensions of fragmentation. For instance, growing discrepancies are highlighted between planning frameworks concentrating on economic growth and the “traditional goals of social planning” (Fincher et al., 2014: 15; Tasan-Kok and Baeten, 2012; Sager, 2011; Martin, McCann and Purcell, 2003), here considered as the first dimension of fragmentation. Public sectors are said to scale back on reconciling social and spatial (policy) objectives and instead play into the hands of private sectors by flexibilising and streamlining planning systems, leveraging land markets, accelerating land acquisitions, and adjusting spatial policies to accommodate the interests of property industries (Tasan-Kok and Baeten, 2012; Sager, 2011; Swyngedouw, Moulaert and Rodriguez, 2002; Imrie and Thomas, 1993). Processes marking the second dimension of fragmentation are based on the interaction between planning and property

development. Particularly since the 2008 financial crisis, property-led development is not only realised through large-scale projects, but also follows piecemeal approaches to avoid financial risks (Savini, 2017).

Literature following the second perspective highlights a third dimension of fragmentation, in regards to efforts that adjust the spatial environment to diverse social needs often through means of small-scale area-based projects or different forms of bottom-up mobilisation and initiatives (Moulaert et al., 2010). As Friedmann (1971: 318) argued when opposing the notion of rational comprehensive planning, “societal actions tend to be focused on limited objectives, are resource-mobilizing as well as resource-using, short-range in conception (though possibly informed by long-range purposes), opportunistic, and dependent on temporary coalitions for accomplishing their ends.” Critical scholars have emphasised the correlation between the rise of social endeavours and agendas of active citizenship and self-responsibilisation, and illustrated how the devolution of responsibilities to civil society groups can appropriate and fragment them. Others, however, focus on collaborative practices and the positive opportunities given to ordinary citizens to influence their spatial environment (Elwood, 2004). The list of catchwords that (re)gained popularity in recent years is long and robust, including local social innovations, bottom-up movements and self-organisation, urban laboratories, co-production, and place-making (Palermo and Ponzini, 2014; Punter, 2010). Planning is consistently confronted by, and increasingly engages with, these multitudes of social efforts (Cars et al., 2002) exhibiting fragmented and often place-specific claims (Blokland et al., 2015). Furthermore, these efforts often further fragment internally during the interaction with local planning authorities due to divergent perspectives within movements themselves (Özdemir and Eraydin, 2017); here representing the third dimension of fragmentation.

The fourth dimension of fragmentation focuses on the challenge of seeing the ‘bigger picture’ amidst the complexity caused by the first three dimensions, and to connect various city-building endeavours with each other as well as to overarching visions and governance arrangements. Flexible and short-term strategies are increasingly replacing long-term, end-state planning (Eraydin and Tasan-Kok, 2012). Concerning property development, they create opportunity-driven ‘islands’ of physical restructuring (*ibid.*). In relation to social city-building endeavours, Lindblom’s (1959) premise of incrementalism as a decentralised approach of ‘muddling through’ and constantly readjusting planning objectives to people’s multifaceted and changing needs, which is often contrasted to modernist approaches of rational-comprehensive planning, receives renewed attention (van Karmenbeek and Janssen-Jansen, 2018). However, the risk lies in simply re-labelling existing

planning approaches while overlooking the ‘rules of the game’ that form the basis of collective action in planning (ibid.). Furthermore, a major challenge exists in how to integrate fragmented social city-building endeavours into established planning practices and wider strategies (Palermo and Ponzini, 2014). Existing analyses tend to either perceive social endeavours as entirely absorbed by market-oriented practices (Larner, 2014), or adopt narrow frames for social endeavours disregarding any property market influences (Özoğul and Tasan-Kok, 2018).

I propose to turn the four dimensions of fragmentation highlighted in the literature into the building blocks of a framework which concretises the ‘problems of fragmentation’ (Albrechts, 2013: 58). The framework provides an integrative analytical lens for overcoming theoretical compartmentalisation drawing attention to the nature of fragmentation and offers knowledge for potential improvements of linkages among different groups of action (dimensions 1-3) and between each other (dimension 4) in a step-by-step approach (Figure 14).

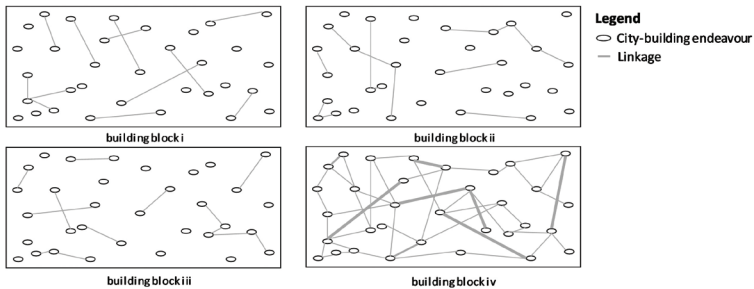


Figure 14. Analytical framework of ‘finding comprehensiveness in fragmentation’

I agree with Campbell, Tait and Watkins (2014) in their premise that planning is never perfect but should continue to strive to be better. With regards to linkages, I argue that planning will never be able to be all-encompassing but comprehensiveness should be a guiding conception in terms of creating possibilities and enhancing and encouraging linkages instead of moving entirely toward isolated actions and decision-making processes. Figure 14 provides a visual illustration of my analytical framework, with the four theoretical dimensions of fragmentation turned into the framework’s building blocks. *Building block i* draws attention to the connection between social and physical interventions. Particularly from a public-sector perspective, it means aligning social and spatial policies, strategies and mechanisms. *Building block ii* centres around linkages between project-based developments with a strong private property component. *Building block iii* emphasises the connection

between all kinds of micro-scale social efforts. The last one, *building block iv*, not only represents the culmination of the previous three building blocks, but goes a step further: it concentrates on creating linkages between the different types of city-building endeavours categorised in the first three building blocks (illustrated by thick lines in Figure 14) as well as to overarching visions and governance arrangements as a way to integrate them in the wider city as a network of fragmented city-building endeavours. The remainder of this paper illustrates how the framework can be applied and draws insights on the exemplary basis of planning systems in Toronto and Amsterdam.

2.3 Methodology

Following research conducted on planning and governance arrangements in Toronto⁶ and Amsterdam, I struggled to find a framework in planning studies to capture my empirical observations. Yet, through dialogical engagement with existing literature addressing elements of fragmentation both directly and indirectly, I recognised recurring patterns and dimensions. The discovery of theoretical fragmentation encouraged me to develop an integrative analytical framework of my own. However, turning the identified dimensions of fragmentation into my framework's four building blocks remains relatively abstract. Therefore, I additionally draw on the work of Janin Rivolin (2012: 67), who defines planning systems as “institutional technologies for territorial governance.” This conceptualisation emphasises systems’ non-static nature and responsiveness to “internal and external drivers of change” (ibid.:72). More concretely, Janin Rivolin (2012) argues that transformation in planning systems is driven by four features and their interaction: *discourses, structures, tools* and *practices* (Table 1). As problems emerge when planning institutions fail to adapt and respond timely to new conditions (Albrechts, Alden and Da Rosa Pires, 2001), I systematically analyse these four features within each of my framework's four building blocks in order to understand and evaluate a planning system's engagement with fragmentation.

The objective of applying the framework in Toronto and Amsterdam is not to provide an in-depth analysis of planning systems, as this lies beyond the scope of the paper. Instead, I use examples to illustrate how the framework can direct attention to the existence or lack of linkages in both cities. The examples come from qualitative data including interviews, policy documents and institutional configurations collected and analysed between September 2015 and December 2018. Focusing on planning from a public policy perspective, albeit accounting for the involvement and cooperation with non-state actors, they are based on 24 interviews with individuals working for local administrations and social housing corporations. Following unambiguous informed consent, in-depth interviews were conducted in Toronto

FEATURES	FOCUS
Discourses	prevalence of certain ideas, concepts and arguments in the frame of spatial planning
Structures	substantial elements (constitutional and legal provisions) and procedural aspects
Tools	'plans', ranging from regulative zoning maps to strategic programs, visions or guidelines; further means for territorial governance such as control devices, monitoring and evaluation procedures and various forms of economic incentives
Practices	variety of practices generated from the social experience of planning and control activities

Table 1 Planning system features according to Janin Rivolin (2012)

with five planners working in the municipality's City Planning division, four in the Social Development Division and inter-divisional programmes collaborating with City Planning, as well as five planners working for Toronto Community Housing (TCH), the city's social housing agency providing rented-geared-to-income units to around 89% of its tenants. In Amsterdam, interviews were conducted with five planners working within the municipal cluster of Space and Economy, one working in the Social Affairs cluster, two individuals working on urban development at the district level, and two for housing corporations active in the wider Amsterdam area. Interviewees were selected based on purposive sampling and the semi-structured questions tailored to the interviewee's position and experiences.

2.4 Fragmentations and linkages in and through planning in Toronto and Amsterdam

Planning and planning systems are highly context-specific, yet dimensions of fragmentation have been documented in both Toronto and Amsterdam. In Canada, provinces have full autonomy over land-use planning and legislation, and develop one or more regional plans centred around provincial objectives (OECD, 2018). Municipalities develop their own plans abiding to provincial legislation and usually combine land-use plans with wider visions and strategies for future development (ibid.). In the city of Toronto, entrepreneurial styles of planning have long existed, for instance with planners conducting transactions in the 1980s with private developers allowing increasing heights and floor spaces in exchange for small social contributions (Desfor et al., 2006). In the 1990s, Toronto's downtown neighbourhoods regained popularity and planners accommodated growth through intensification and mixed land use planning in the urban core (Grant, 2002). A strong shift in approach and the overall structure of planning occurred in 1998, when the Conservative provincial government of Ontario amalgamated the old city of Toronto with five surrounding municipalities. Accompanied by the devolution of responsibilities, for instance social housing and transit, and deep cuts in financial

transfers from the province to municipalities, the changes put immense pressure on Toronto's property tax, on which the city largely depends (Horak and Moore, 2015).

The newly amalgamated City of Toronto had to combine the land use plans of six former individual municipalities. Resulting in the first Official Plan (City Planning Division, 2002), the process has been described as reducing regulatory complexity, flexibilising zoning and marking a shift from neighbourhood planning to the incentive of investment (Lehrer, Keil and Kipfer, 2010; Kipfer and Keil, 2000). Growing discrepancy between social and spatial interventions are exemplified by the large-scale waterfront redevelopment in anticipation of the 2008 Summer Olympic Games, while "long-standing commitment to proactive equity programs" (Desfor et al., 2006: 138) experienced severe financial cuts. Scholars have criticized planning policy and practices for contributing to the privatization of social housing and land, as well as promoting a property market that shifted from low- and medium-income to luxury housing (Rosen and Walks, 2015; Lehrer, Keil and Kipfer, 2010). Simultaneously, planners in Toronto engage with a multitude of place- and interest based communities which play a crucial role in the city's governance (Tasan-Kok and Özoğul, 2017). Many welfare functions are taken over by neighbourhood initiatives, cultural and faith-based groups, and non-profit organisations. As Rose (1996) famously argued, "the same neoliberal processes that highlight the importance of granting individual freedom, choice, and autonomy" creates new dependencies, "notions of community and spaces for collective action and responsibility" (Trnka and Trundle, 2014: 140).

The Netherlands has a long tradition of strong state intervention in urban development. Nonetheless, planners have closely collaborated with private sector actors particularly in large-scale urban development projects since the 1980s, when financial cutbacks in central government transfers triggered new public management approaches in local municipalities (Hendriks and Tops, 1999). Throughout the 1990s, national policies started to deregulate land use and housing markets (Engberink and Miedema, 2001). However, it was especially reforms to the national planning law, which is legally separated from planning policy and defines the structure of the planning system in the country, that instituted a shift from a top-down plan-led system to fragmented, flexible and property-led planning approaches (Buitelaar, Galle and Sorel, 2011). The 2008 Dutch Spatial Planning Act, which represented the first major change to the planning law since 1965, reshuffled responsibilities between layers of government and streamlined the planning system to stimulate development (Gerrits, Rauws and de Roo, 2012). It kicked-off a number of substantial changes with the latest taking the form of a new Environment and Planning Act (*Omgevingswet*) which will probably take effect in 2021, and is

expected to further enhance flexibility to accommodate market interests (Korthals Altes, 2016). Affected by these changes, Amsterdam “is characterized by a peculiar mixture of neoliberal and state-led institutions and regulation regimes” (Engelen and Musterd, 2010: 702). On the one hand, the city is known for its entrepreneurial governance and large-scale development projects such as the CBD in Zuidas (Peck, 2012; Fainstein, 2008), on the other hand it retains a reputation of being equitable and ‘just’ (Fainstein, 2010).

Extensive public landownership and a leasehold system provide the Amsterdam municipality, which relies on “national tax revenues and at the same time fosters proactive land use policy to leverage income from targeted urban interventions” (Savini et al., 2016: 107), with a strong position in urban development. Despite efforts to foster a more organic planning approach that is “more oriented towards stimulating both markets and social engagement via ‘creative communities’” (ibid.), practices tend to remain highly controlled. Simultaneously, the turn to active citizenship in the Dutch policy sphere is increasingly incorporated into planning (Boonstra and Boelens, 2011). While some ascribe these changes to “the re-emerging demand among contemporary Dutch citizens to take the lead in developing their everyday urban environment” (Rauws and De Roo, 2016: 1085), others see it as processes of neoliberalisation and criticise the growing discrepancies between socio-economically weak and strong neighbourhoods based on their respective residents’ abilities to self-organise and set up initiatives (Uitermark, 2012). It is in these wider contexts that I now turn to my framework’s building blocks and systematically analyse how *discourses* relate to it, what *structures* and procedures enhance or impede linkages among the respective group of actions, whether specific *tools* have been developed to create linkages and what planning *practices* occur.

2.4.1 Reconciling social and spatial (policy) interventions

Reconciling policies affecting social processes in the city with those affecting the built environment builds a fundamental premise in spatial justice theories (Harvey, 2009), but considering the first dimension of fragmentation it appears increasingly difficult to implement. *Discourses* provide insights into how this linkage is approached in different planning systems. In Canada, planning has a dual origin being influenced by US functional land use zoning and the English planning tradition exhibiting broader social concerns (Ward, 1999). *Discourses* in the planning policy framework of Toronto reflect this duality by focusing on land use regulations but highlighting their strong interaction with economic, environmental and social processes and grounding the Official Plan, for example in the principle of social diversity (City Planning Division, 2015). In the Netherlands, in contrast, planning stems from the tradition of protecting scarce land resources and water management

as large parts of the country lie below sea level (Faludi and van der Valk, 1994). Internationally known for its ‘comprehensive integrated approach’ (Commission for Environmental Cooperation, 1997) of coordinated inter-sectoral and multi-level public sector interventions, planning policy *discourses* relevant to Amsterdam strongly connect land use planning to economic and environmental factors but less to social ones.

Comprehensiveness in terms of policy integration in planning operates as a guiding principle in both local administrations, which have both been characterised as vast and professionalised (Horak and Moore, 2015; Savini et al., 2016). Yet interviewees in Toronto perceived *structures* and procedures allowing for explicit linkages between social and physical interventions much more positively than those in Amsterdam. In Toronto, they outlined well-established channels of collaboration of City Planning with other divisions and agencies in policy and strategy development. The Amsterdam municipality, on the other hand, is divided into four clusters, one being the ‘Social Cluster’ and another the cluster of ‘Space and Economy’. Within these clusters, departments were described as highly specialised. As one interviewee formulated, this strong specialisation means that if people were to step out of their formal competences, they “*get into trouble as someone else will get angry*”. Procedurally, many small efforts to create linkages are made in individual projects, but collaboration was generally described as difficult. Working in area-based projects on behalf of, and together with, different departments, districts and neighbourhoods of the municipality, the city’s Project Management Office, for example, faced challenges in linking social and spatial interventions based on rigid administrative boundaries delimiting areas in which specific funds could be spent. This prevented investment into social programming and physical interventions in areas adjacent to large-scale development projects, and thus this inflexibility was seen as negatively contributing to concerns and feelings of alienation of existing residents facing extensive new housing productions.

Discursively and structurally more established, the main *tools* which support linkages between social and interventions in Toronto’s built environment were described as the more general municipal-level plans, for example, the *Official Plan* (City Planning Division, 2015) and the *City Planning’s Strategic Plan* (City Planning Division, 2013). The latter operates as a ‘divisional playbook’ and presents five strategic directions, one of them being to pursue ‘deep collaborations’ both internally but also with external stakeholders. In Amsterdam, inquiries into *tools* were predominantly met with two concrete regulations, the *Amsterdam Model for Service Provision* providing guidelines for the amount of social infrastructure (such as education, health, sport facilities and green space) that should accompany new housing constructions,

and the 40-40-20 provision established in 2017 which requires 40% social housing and 40% housing for middle-income groups in new developments. While a lack of flexibility was lamented regarding social investments and administrative boundaries, some interviewees perceived these regulations as too flexible, with the former having failed to be instituted as a legal requirement and adopting a city-wide blueprint model based on inner-city recommendations, and the latter being able to take the social housing percentage of neighbouring adjacent areas into account to lower the requirements of affordable housing in new developments.

Despite stark differences, existing forms of collaborative working and thinking between planners and social policymakers were ascribed to specific *practices* in both planning systems. In Toronto, the 2005 programme on ‘Priority Neighbourhoods Areas for Investment’, for example, was described by interviewees as having initiated procedural changes. However, the programme which started off as a high-profile collaborative effort of the philanthropic organisation United Way of Greater Toronto and city officials, as well as representatives from provincial and national governments, was less successful in realising substantive transformations: political shifts at the national level in 2006 disabled tri-level agreements and consequently hindered the establishment of “overarching institutional arrangements capable of comprehensively planning and funding a citywide neighbourhood revitalisation strategy” (Horak and Moore, 2015: 182). Despite being subsequently updated to the *Toronto Strong Neighbourhoods Strategy 2020*, “Toronto’s policymakers have been able to implement revitalisation as planned only in instances where they have chosen to harness the forces of the real estate market in pursuit of physical reconstruction” (ibid.: 206). Similarly, in Amsterdam political and financial support from all administrative levels were named as a requirement to link social and spatial interventions in area-based projects, combined with the personal investment of an alderperson. Together with the mayor, alderpersons form the executive board of the municipality. The *Moving City* project, for example, was developed based on the initiative of an alderperson with overlapping portfolios of spatial development and health, and eventually became institutionalised as a permanent city programme. Nonetheless, available funds are limited and only cover the costs of staff who advocate for policy changes and take on advisory positions, while substantive spatial interventions are dependent on the willingness of private sector actors to implement advised changes.

2.4.2 Linking property developments

Private sector parties play an important role in both planning systems. Discursively, however, the relationship between public planning and private actors is depicted very differently in the Toronto and Amsterdam contexts. In Toronto, planning

policy *discourses* stress the importance and necessity of accommodating private sector interests and collaborating with private sector actors. On the other hand, the *Structural Vision of Amsterdam* (Municipality of Amsterdam, 2014), the city's long-term plan only sporadically mentions non-state actors even though it is focusing on building 70,000 new apartments by 2040. Discourses have the power to "shift significantly the way resources are allocated and regulatory tools formulated and used" (Healey, 2006: 303), and the difference becomes visible by looking at the following features.

With private sector collaboration being openly discussed in Toronto, *structures* also embrace it. Interviewees were honest about the limitations they face in terms of their dependency on private investments to implement planning changes, and emphasised the importance of negotiation skills in planning procedures. The City Planning Division as well as TCH closely follow property dynamics and conduct market analyses to identify areas that qualify for redevelopment and investments. In Amsterdam, *structures* in terms of constitutional and legal provisions increasingly shift powers to private sectors, but interviewees lamented that in planning procedures, divisions focusing on physical interventions lack knowledge of property dynamics and "*look at developers as part of the government*" who are doing their job in the public interest. A risk was seen in a lacking critical discussion on private sector influences in planning due to longstanding perceptions of strong state power controlling urban development, and the consequent recycling of the same ideas, mistakes and approaches while the external conditions of planning change rapidly.

Tools employed in Toronto to link different property developments are, for example, Section 37 Agreements to finance community infrastructure. As one interviewee explained, "*this is really how you fund a lot of things in the city when you're tight for cash*". Being aware of their controversial character, which was ascribed to the fact that the outcomes of these agreements are not immediately visible to the public, planners described "*good planning*" as looking ahead and trying to link different property development projects to collect funds until enough capital comes together to make substantial investments into community infrastructure. In Amsterdam, development requirements are included in the 'building envelope', a *tool* containing all regulations and requirements that a project needs to comply with when land is leased. Providing much more scope of influence than planners have in Toronto, interviewees from the social cluster and the district level criticised the fact that the responsibility for building lies with the city's Land and Development department, whose practice is closely intertwined with real estate interests following the principle of "*building, building, building*" while not paying enough attention on how to sustain social life within and around new development projects.

Specific *discourses*, *structures* and *tools* influence *practices*, which result in the fact that in Toronto, “neighbourhood improvement is more likely to be realised when it is compatible with economic-development objectives” (Horak and Moore, 2015: 182; Özoğul and Tasan-Kok, 2018). Open discussion and a constant search for new tools and procedures represent a positive element in Toronto’s planning system in terms of linking property developments but despite these efforts, the scope of planners remains limited. In Amsterdam, planning *practices* strongly rely on the leasehold system and the perception of far-reaching influence. Nonetheless, it still allows for a more regulated approach to property development than in Toronto, but the lack of open discussion on the intertwinement of the property industry and public planning interventions impedes the development of adequate tools. For instance, a recent OECD report (2017) concluded that the municipality could make better use of fiscal instruments in land use planning, for instance, to capture real estate values better.

2.4.3 Linking micro-scale social efforts

Various social efforts, often operating in an area-based manner, contribute to the dynamic landscapes of contemporary governance. The focus in this third building block moves beyond questions of participation in planning, to the explicit engagement and incorporation of these ‘social’ city-building endeavours. *Discourses* in Toronto utilise a double framing, one on ‘vibrant healthy’ neighbourhoods, and one on ‘complete communities’ (City Planning Division, 2015). A similar focus on the provision of services and facilities can be found in discourses in Amsterdam’s planning system. Emphasising a vision of the city which ‘emancipates people’, the *Structural Vision* follows a strong neighbourhood approach. It mentions the importance of “a comfortable bench in a pretty park, a sociable community centre, nice cafés in walking or biking distance trigger initiatives such as starting a company, a community association or using the park as an office” (Municipality of Amsterdam, 2014: 18, *own translation*), but mainly connects resident involvement to the prevention of deterioration and insecurity. Thus, in both contexts, social initiatives are not explicitly emphasised.

Despite similar discourses, the *structures* and procedures of engaging social endeavours differ. In Toronto, a much stronger network governance approach is visible, and in line with the general importance that is attached to the notion of community and community initiatives in the city’s governance. For instance, Community Planning as sub-division of City Planning often occurs via cultural groups or places of worship and bottom-up social endeavours promote collaboration and the formation of networks. Social Planning Toronto, for example, is a non-profit, charitable community organisation that plays a strong role in bridging between

the municipality and social endeavours in various communities. It administers the SPACE coalition representing organisations and groups centring around the use of public space with over 300 groups (Space Coalition, 2019). Another initiative is The Neighbourhood Grants Program for which the City of Toronto engaged Social Planning Toronto to provide CA\$ 1,000 - 3,000 in funding to support resident-led groups to make the changes they wanted to see in their communities (Social Planning Toronto, 2017). Amsterdam follows an area-based approach (*gebiedsgericht werken*) to connect initiatives, ideas, residents, entrepreneurs and social organisations, which involves cycles of area-analysis and the establishment of area plans. However, through a restructuring of the local state which the municipality started in 2014 and which led to massive administrative transformations, most decision-making power and financial means now lie with the central city government, whose administration follows its own priorities, which may be in conflict with those of small areas and districts (Krijnen, 2018).

Specific *tools* to link micro-scale social efforts with each other were difficult to pinpoint in both Toronto and Amsterdam's planning systems. However, in both contexts, the social housing corporations played an important role in this. In Toronto, Toronto Community Housing (TCH) employs resident engagement schemes and tries to incorporate micro-scale social efforts into its revitalisation schemes. In Amsterdam, housing corporations were also taking a lead in supporting initiatives, for instance those with small financial contributions in larger redevelopment schemes.

Concerning *practices* in Toronto, Horak and Moore (2015: 190) argue that "most of Toronto's grassroots policy actors are not particularly well suited to participate in comprehensive neighbourhood revitalisation initiatives" and that there are discrepancies between the inner city, in which social non-government agencies are concentrated, and inner-suburban areas where less agencies can be found. Research in Jane-Finch, however, showed the presence of strong informal social city-building endeavours as well as informal connections and networking to address the needs of the local disadvantaged community (Tasan-Kok and Özoğul, 2017). The challenge for planners is to recognise these dynamics, actively support linkages and utilise them. TCH faces the same challenges that planners face, and are dependent on private investments to implement large-scale revitalisation. In Amsterdam, triggered by financial scandals, legislative changes at the national level started to prohibit the housing corporation's role as wider area-developers. Their role has been limited to the provision of housing, which prevents them from developing comprehensive area-based interventions that lead to very one-sided and insufficient revitalisation strategies.

2.4.4 Connecting fragmented city-building endeavours in wider spatial governance

The fourth building block of the framework focuses on connecting the city-building endeavours discussed in the first three categories with each other, and to overarching visions and governance arrangements. Planning systems operate “as a hinge between the public authority and the social usage of space [...as they...] allow and rule the continuous process of land use rights” (Janin Rivolin, 2012: 68). Hence planning systems play an essential role in wider spatial governance, which can be understood as ‘wider structuring forces’ (Gonzalez and Healey, 2005: 2056) which guide actors, processes and interactions in urban development. *Discourses* in Toronto highlight a comprehensive vision of a city in which all communities benefit equally but also admit, for instance in the *Official Plan*, that there are “gaps in community-based facilities and services” (City Planning Division, 2015: 21) and poorly integrated areas with the rest of the city. In Amsterdam, similar *discourses* emphasise the importance of connecting neighbourhoods and especially integrating ‘deprived’ ones within the wider municipality (Municipality of Amsterdam, 2014).

In Toronto, *structures* and procedures allow for a revision of planning applications by multidivisional and multiagency teams to congruent, varied forms of city-building endeavours. In Amsterdam, frequent changes in *structures* and procedures in recent years added to the administrative complexity, and while the removal of districts’ ability to operate as area developers arguably increased the municipality’s comprehensive grip on the development of the city, it also increased its distance to local dynamics and social initiatives on the ground (Krijnen, 2018). Interviewees expressed dissatisfaction with the many legislative and administrative changes over the last couple of years, making it even harder for public administrators to understand who to talk to or who to get approval from. Efforts to achieve a comprehensive grip exist at the regional level, but the foundation of regional cooperation was described by interviewees as mainly economic and less developed on the social front.

Different *tools* in Toronto aim to counter fragmentation on diverse fronts. For example, in 2009 the City of Toronto launched a collaborative programme called ‘Tower Renewal’, which focused on upgrading the many high-rise apartment towers in an effort to diminish the stark differences between islands of property development, especially downtown, and the less attractive areas for private sector investments in the most deprived areas of the city. In 2015, the programme was transformed into a permanent Tower and Neighbourhood Revitalization Unit. As part of the programme, City Planning is particularly involved in the programme’s Residential Apartment Commercial (RAC) zoning, which sets new rules for small-scale commercial and community uses in selected apartment towers. Another example

that the City of Toronto developed was the first place-based Social Development Plan, which clearly outlined community development objectives in addition to the policy framework guiding the physical restructuring process. Responding to the challenges of complex administrative arrangements in Amsterdam, some districts established *tools* such as the function of ‘connectors’ whose job it is to simply connect people, departments and initiatives across administrative layers, and to bridge the gap between centralised planning and local concerns, or to have people from central city departments physically working in district administrations on certain days of the week. Although there have been significant improvements since its inception, according to interviewees, the changes stemming from this initiative have been slow coming.

Toronto’s Official Plan states that “city-building involves balancing social, economic and environmental needs and priorities” (City Planning Division, 2015: 47). The challenge of fragmentation in Toronto is the systematic production of winners and losers through *practices* depending on location and market attractiveness. At the same time, projects linking both social efforts and property development, prove that reality is far from black and white, and emphasise the importance of an integrative planning framework and changes concerning more social responsibility in the development landscape. Private developer Daniels CM Corporation, for example, combines retail efforts with a ‘Community Commercial Programme’ in its Regent Park revitalization project, offering local community enterprises rent-free store space and a microbusiness mentorship programme within their first five years (Lorinc, 2018). In Amsterdam too, property developments and micro-scale social efforts are often not consciously connected, have competing objectives, or in the case of connection run the risk of increasing disparities between areas that are restructured to respond to the needs of more affluent middle classes, which are also taking more advantage of the turn towards active citizenship. The strong position of the municipality remains a considerable advantage for planners in Amsterdam, especially compared to those operating in Toronto. However, enhanced by decreasing resource transfers to the local government as well as a wider paradigm shift and orientation towards a global economy, reliance on the private sector is intensifying, resulting in the fact that the “tight connection that used to exist between spatial structure plans, i.e. the propagated vision of the city to be, and actual projects to implement this vision, has weakened” (Hoetjes, Bertolini and Le Clercq, 2006: 197).

2.5 Discussion and conclusion

Planning as a fragmented governance activity engages with a wide range of actors in various city-building endeavours. Ideals of comprehensiveness in terms of long-term physical master planning, procedural stakeholder inclusion, or coherence in public policy are inadequate to capture the dynamic nature of urban development that is characterised by an increasing diversity of fragmented governance arrangements. Planning approaches that do not adjust to these dynamics are unable to cope with the existing complexity and explains planning scholars' quests to bring substance back into planning. In order to do so, however, planning academics need to closely observe the actual happenings in cities. Moreover, they need to equip future planning practitioners with adequate tools and perspectives in preparation for the conditions which they will face in practice (Tasan-Kok and Oranje, 2018). Even though planning practitioners deal with and are confronted by challenges to establish linkages in their everyday practice, theoretical reflections on these linkages are thin.

Madanipour (2010: 366) argues that "rather than a rigid approach to finalized futures, new spatial connections are needed that can connect the plan and the project; the strategic directions with local concerns and action." My proposed framework operationalises this request and breaks this immense task down into smaller more manageable parts in the form of the four building blocks. They provide analytical insights and can steer action in terms of the combination of social and spatial interventions (*i*), linkages between property-driven development projects (*ii*), connections and the activation of micro-scale social efforts (*iii*) and finally linkages between the previous three groups of actions with each other as well as to overarching visions and governance arrangements (*iv*). As my intentions were rather theoretical than empirical in nature, only tentative conclusions can be drawn on Toronto's and Amsterdam's planning systems. Nonetheless, the examples given underscore my theoretical contention for a more integrative analytical framework approach that overcomes analytical divides.

Furthermore, the empirical examples point towards the importance of interrogating Janin Rivolin's (2012) planning system's features of *discourses, structures, tools* and *practices* simultaneously within the framework's four building blocks. Just analysing discourses and structures, for example, would provide a very skewed picture on Toronto faring much better than Amsterdam in respect to paying attention to linkages between social and spatial interventions. Another interesting aspect emerging from the empirical examples are the conflicted perceptions of private developers. While public sector interviewees in Amsterdam perceived private developers as either entirely adversarial or amicable, practices in Toronto provided some clues that

private property development does not automatically oppose social city-building endeavours. This rather black-and-white thinking on private sector involvement in urban development is reflected in planning studies (Campbell, Tait and Watkins, 2014; Henneberry and Parris, 2013), and calls for more nuanced understandings of the connection between property-driven developments and micro-scale social efforts without tapping into generalised assumptions. My intention is not to advocate for private sector involvement in general, but to demonstrate a more realistic picture of the diversity within the private sector, which needs to be critically examined in order to develop tailor-made public policy responses.

Even more importantly, the results of Toronto and Amsterdam illustrate the difficulty of creating linkages in and through planning in today's complexifying urban development. One of the main points of criticism currently discussed in planning studies is the fuzziness of concepts and approaches leading to the "eclectic character of the existing planning systems" (Eraydin and Tasan-Kok, 2019: 29). Planning thought feeds from practice, and vice versa. As fragmentation is seen as problematic and comprehensiveness as an ideal to be achieved, not only planning practice needs to change, but planning thought needs to provide more approaches to guide practitioners to create linkages based on their learning from city-building endeavours in line with the objectives they want to achieve. My conception of comprehensiveness aims to remain realistic while retaining ambitions of utilising planning to achieve more socially-just and sustainable cities. The idea of 'finding comprehensiveness in fragmentation' goes beyond being instrumental to link fragmented city-building endeavours in practice. While it is important to emphasise again that I do not intend to develop a new planning model or paradigm which planners ought to follow, I see my framework as complementing planning thought on complexity and comprehensiveness, and shedding new light on theoretical discussion in relation to conditions in the 21st century.

My ambition is to support the exploration of responses to some of the complex challenges that exist in contemporary urban development. As examples from planning systems in Toronto and Amsterdam show, many conditions prohibiting the creation of linkages lie beyond the scope of planning practitioners, such as wider political, global-economic changes and the restructuring of the state. In this respect, returning to classic thinkers on comprehensive planning proves fruitful: Hague and McCourt (1974: 145) argued that "one way to improve planning practice [...] is to improve the theoretical base for action", and Branch (1985) stressed that it is impossible for planners to comprehend challenges in their complexity and hence they must respond to the knowledge of others. Planning studies can more effectively contribute to such in-depth knowledge by focusing on transformation as structural

change in spatial governance. Structural change refers to the ways in which a system is arranged and organised, introducing new elements or causing new connections and patterns of behaviour between the elements that constitute the system (Hernes, 1976). In this respect, future research can scrutinise the context-specific conditions that allow individual city-building endeavours to become institutionally embedded learning practices by exploring their transformative potential.

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