

**COMPETING FOR TALENT: IMPLICATIONS
FOR SOCIAL AND CULTURAL POLICY
IN CANADIAN CITY-REGIONS**

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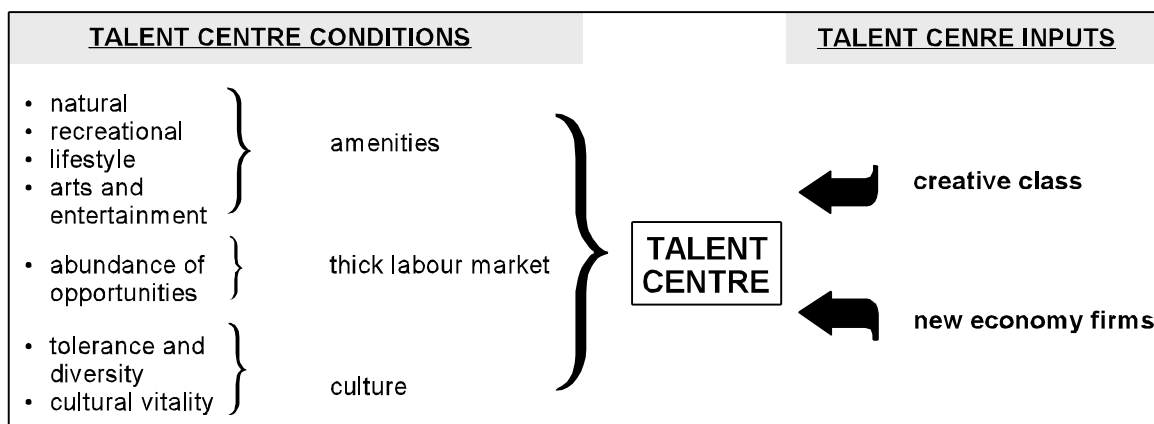
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Richard Florida's *The Rise of the Creative Class* represents one of the most significant contributions to the urban economic development literature in recent years. In his book and in over a dozen other research papers, Florida and his colleagues have set out criteria for economic competitiveness of city-regions in the new economy. This criteria is called here the 'Talent Model'. In this model, knowledge workers (or what Florida calls the 'creative class') pursue employment opportunities less on the qualities of a firm and more on the qualities of the place in which a firm is located. In particular, this creative class seeks places that have well-developed quality-of-life amenities such as arts and entertainment, a deep labour market, and a culture characterized by vitality, diversity and tolerance. Workers in this class are less inclined to relocate with a particular firm if that firm is located in what they perceive to be an unappealing location.

Figure 1 - The Talent Model (Source: Author, 2003)



As a result, this 'large-scale resorting of people among cities and regions nationwide' is leading to a new map of urban winners and losers across North America. Urban centres that are attractive to the creative class are more likely to be the economic winners in the new economy, whereas working-class and service-class urban centres are more likely to be economically stagnant or in decline.

This shift in loyalties from firm to place also has some obvious—and not so obvious—implications for cities and city-regions. For policymakers, Florida's research can inform policies in education, culture and the arts, immigration and settlement, and local cultural planning. It also sheds light on the role that political culture and local economic development policy play in shaping the health and futures of North American cities.

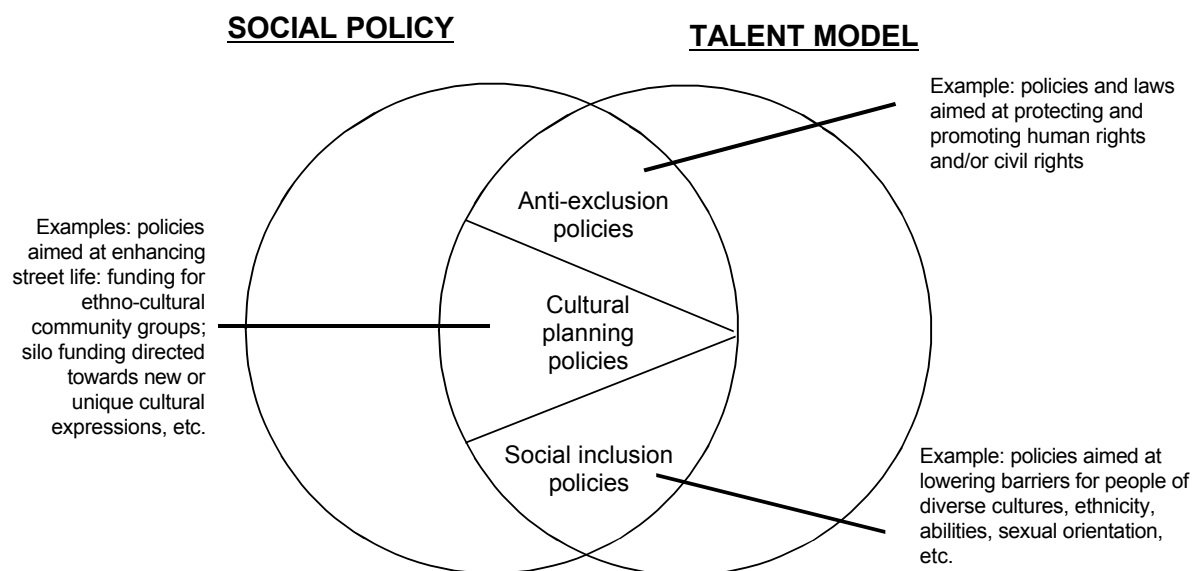
Florida's work has not gone without criticisms, however. These can be divided into two main types: the first has to do with the dangers of quick and careless translation of the talent model into public policies. One of the risks is that local politicians and economic development officers simply focus on marketing the consumption value of gay neighbourhoods or 'funky' bohemian districts. Yet, surface-level 'place' marketing may have the potential of glossing over the essential investments required to maintain and enhance the creative city. Care must also be taken not to conflate tolerance with cultural consumption. The second type of criticism is directed at the research itself. Underdeveloped themes in Florida's research include inadequate attention paid to gender and life cycle issues, and to the relationship between high-tech metropolitan growth on the one hand, and income inequality, racial segregation and social capital on the other.

Recently, Florida and his American colleagues, have responded to some of these criticisms as evident in their latest research projects. Clearly, these and other projects point to the tremendous opportunity to develop a research program in the Canadian context that draws on Florida's groundbreaking multi-factor creativity index and the rich body of literature on social exclusion, inclusion and cultural planning.

There is a need to better understand the relationship between the talent model and the social policy objectives of eradicating exclusivity, promoting social inclusion and cultural tolerance. Contrary to a widely held view, the current and future health and vitality of Canada's city regions depends less on policies that simply market cultural consumption for the talent class, and more on policies that lie at the intersection of the talent model and social policy. Local economic development officers have interpreted Florida's research as a prescription to do only the former. Yet Florida's results, when considered in light of other social policy and cultural planning literature, underscore the need for cities to make strategic policy investment in policies that also contribute to social inclusion and the celebration of cultural difference.

The intersection of the talent model and broader social policy is fundamental to creating and maintaining the necessary conditions for the economic success and well-being of Canada's city regions.

Figure 2 - Intersection of Florida's Talent Model with Social Policy (Source: Author, 2003)



Three social policy areas are examined in detail in the paper: (1) policies for economic opportunity and social inclusion (2) policies for nurturing cultural vitality in land development and urban public space; and (3) policies for promoting social inclusion in everyday cultural consumption activity. Research on the application of the talent model to Canadian city regions is only just beginning. This paper identifies three areas for further research: (1) the cultural reproduction of the talent class, particularly in the Canadian context; (2) the link between baseline data on talent model indicators and baseline data on social inclusion and cultural planning indicators; and (3) the barriers to, and opportunities for, involvement by the federal government in the economic and cultural planning of Canadian city regions.

These research areas are timely. The relationship between Richard Florida's talent model and social and cultural planning begs important questions regarding the urban-cultural foundations of the new economy. Addressing these issues will be of interest not only to researchers in this area, but also to urban practitioners concerned with the economic, social and cultural well-being of our cities.

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INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVE OF THE PROJECT

The current academic interest in the ‘creative class’ and its role in providing the impetus for growth in the city has been positively, if not uncritically, received by urban decision-makers and business people. While the use of cultural amenities as an attractant for business is not new, the specific emphasis on cultural consumption is a recent phenomenon. Coming hard on the heels of other urban growth models, this particular ‘cultural turn’ has significant implications for cultural planning as well as for the larger issues of social inclusion and representation in the city.

The goal of this paper is to examine these developments and provide Canadian Heritage with a clear understanding of notable new directions—and gaps—in the literature, and areas for further research within the Canadian research and policy community.

In particular, the report examines the Talent Model developed by Richard Florida and the current social and cultural policy literature. It aims to provide a comprehensive analysis of the literature to date with a particular emphasis on the implications for cultural planning policies that aim to attract and retain the urban talent class. It also analyzes the relationship between ‘democratic’ cultural policy objectives of social inclusion and diversity, on the one hand, and cultural consumption policies geared more toward the attraction and retention of a particular class of talented workers on the other.

METHODOLOGY

The report reviews the current English language, international literature from academic journal articles, books, newspapers, magazines, policy documents, and on-line sources. These were supplemented by a small number of informational interviews with key researchers in the field to ascertain what cutting-edge research is currently being conducted, but not yet published.

OUTLINE AND KEY THEMES

The report is divided into four main sections. The first section reviews key aspects of the Richard Florida ‘Talent Model’ (also known as the ‘creative class’ theory), first by setting the context and background to the model, next explaining some of the key elements in the model, and then examining their implications for city-regions in the areas of culture, politics and local economic development. The final part of this section is a critical evaluation of the talent model and its applications.

The second section of the report reviews the social policy literature in context. It outlines three important policy concepts: social exclusion, social inclusion and cultural planning. All are necessary conditions for the Richard Florida talent model, yet are not well-understood in the local economic development context.

The third section looks at the policy implications of the talent model and the social and cultural policy literature for Canadian city-regions. In particular, it examines the relationship between cultural policies aimed at social inclusion and cultural policies aimed at the talent class. The main theme of this section is that policies at the intersection of the talent model and social policy are fundamental to creating and maintaining the necessary conditions for the success and well-being of Canadian city-regions both now and in the future.

The final section of this report reviews some of the areas for further study. These include the tremendous opportunity to link baseline data on talent model indicators with baseline data on social exclusion, inclusion and cultural planning indicators; the fundamental recognition of the different Canadian and American policy and cultural contexts; and finally, some of the barriers to involvement in cultural planning at the urban scale by the Federal Government.

RICHARD FLORIDA'S 'TALENT MODEL'

CONTEXT AND BACKGROUND TO THE MODEL

Recently, scholars have been documenting corporate and occupational change in the new economy and the implications of these changes for the competitive success of firms, cities and regions. A number of these studies have argued that the rise of the new economy radically alters the way firms, cities and regions maintain competitive advantage.¹ In the old economy, firms selected locations that provided low-cost land, cheap labour, and a cost-conscious business climate. By extension, cities and regions established competitive advantage through factors such as natural resource endowments, transportation access, productivity of the labour force, and the overall cost of doing business.

In the 'new-economy', however, the 'production cost' dimension of competitiveness is still important, but so are two other aspects. One is the ability to achieve, maintain and enhance the quality of one's products—the 'quality' dimension. The other is the ability to develop and retain the capacity to innovate—the 'innovative' dimension. These two aspects of competitiveness are increasingly important in the knowledge-based economy for responding to rapidly shifting market trends with new products or processes. It has been well noted that these two dimensions of competitiveness also necessitate certain conditions beyond the scale of the firm, leading to a new appreciation of the importance of cities and city-regions in the innovative process.²

There are three ways that the scale of the city or city-region can provide a competitive advantage. First, larger cities and city-regions provide the critical mass of economic actors (including a wide range of specialized suppliers and services), a deep labour pool, firms in related industries, and associated institutions, and other resources for firms to draw on in order to increase their competitive advantage.³

Second, certain cities and city-regions provide the necessary social and institutional infrastructure necessary for newer types of innovation to flourish. Innovation in many sectors of the new economy does not just occur because an individual or firm takes an idea to market. Rather, innovation involves many people engaging in dynamic, collaborative processes built around creative teams, face-to-face interaction, and the transmission of codified and tacit knowledge.⁴ Evidence supports the finding that the sharing of this tacit knowledge, skills and experience (i.e. social learning) is easier when the components of these learning networks are in the same place.⁵

Third, the city or city-region scale may itself be competitive because of its ability to attract highly-skilled talent.⁶ The worker who generates the ideas, creativity and imagination for knowledge-intensive production and innovation is a key component of a high-wage, high-value-added economy. This skilled worker is also highly mobile and attracted to places that offer certain employment opportunities and 'quality-of-life' amenities and lifestyle options. This is the central theme of Richard Florida's latest book, *The Rise of the Creative Class: and how*

*it's transforming work, leisure, community and everyday life*⁷, which has attracted much attention in business and public policy circles.

The Rise of the Creative Class represents only one of the latest in a line of contributions Florida has made in the area of regional economic development. He is currently J. John Heinz III Professor of Regional Economic Development, Heinz School of Public Policy and Management, Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburgh, and has lectured and published numerous papers over the past few years on the major ideas of *The Rise of the Creative Class*. The seeds of his ideas, however, stem back over 40 years to Jane Jacobs' seminal book, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*. In 1961, Jacobs described the role that diversity plays in generating vitality in the city. Richard Florida acknowledges his debt to Jacobs. In Chapter 1 of *The Rise of the Creative Class*, Florida made the following observation:

*As the great urbanist Jane Jacobs pointed out long ago, successful places are multidimensional and diverse—they don't just cater to a single industry or a single demographic group; they are full of stimulation and creativity interplay. In my consulting work, I often tell business and political leaders that places need a people climate—or a creative climate—as well as a business climate. Cities like Seattle, Austin, Toronto and Dublin recognize the multidimensional nature of this transformation and are striving to become broadly creative communities, not just centers of technological innovation and high-tech industry.*⁸

Both Jacobs and Florida have seized upon the vital role that creativity and diversity play in the economy. The key difference, according to Florida is that, notwithstanding some technological similarities, the social context Jacobs described in 1961 is fundamentally different from today's. Florida attributes the shift to an undercurrent of human creativity, in both the work world and in other spheres of life. He suggests that a higher value is placed on creativity now, and that it is demanded and cultivated to a much greater extent. This, he believes, is occurring also in the realm of economics:

*Many say that we now live in an 'information' economy or a 'knowledge' economy. But what's more fundamentally true is that we now have an economy powered by human creativity. Creativity—the ability to create meaningful new forms', as Webster's dictionary puts it—is now the decisive source of competitive advantage. In virtually every industry, from automobiles to fashion, food products and information technology itself, the winners in the long run are those who can create and keep creating. This has always been true, from the days of the Agricultural Revolution to the Industrial Revolution. But in the past few decades we've come to recognize it clearly and act upon it systematically.*⁹

The backdrop for Florida's theory is what others have referred to as the new economy. The emphasis on creativity is the crux of his theory, and it is what distinguishes his work from the mainstream observers of the new economy. It is the foundation for his concept of the 'creative class'.

Who is the creative class? According to Florida, the core of the class includes 'people in science and engineering, architecture and design, education, arts, music and entertainment, whose economic function is to create new ideas, new technology and/or new creative content.' The outer ring of the creative class includes 'creative professionals' in business and finance, law, health care and related fields who are engaged in complex problem solving that involves a

high degree of independent judgment and education. All members of the class ‘share a common creative ethos that values creativity, individuality, difference and merit’. Every aspect and every manifestation of creativity—technological, cultural and economic—is seen as interlinked and inseparable.¹⁰

Table 1 - Relevant Distinguishing Features of Old Economy and New Economy (Source: Donald, 2002c)

Features	Old Economy	New Economy
Sources of economic power	Economic power is with owners or controllers of the means of production; workers build power base through collective bargaining and/or company loyalty.	Economic power is diffused from owners or controllers of means of production to individual, highly mobile knowledge-workers.
Skilled worker’s role in production processes	Skilled labour is a key input but it does not control the means of production.	Skilled labour is a key input and may control the production of intellectual property
Skilled workers’ attitudes towards work	Worker prestige based on longevity in job or at company. Career path relatively certain. Personal identity linked with company.	No prestige in longevity at a job. Career trajectory is uncertain. Personal identity linked with occupation and lifestyle (‘bourgeois bohemians’, Brooks 2000)
Skilled workers’ attitudes towards place	Skilled workers relocate depending on where firm or company is located. Skilled worker movement to different locations of same firm based on advancement prospects. Personal preferences for place are subordinate to company loyalty.	Skilled workers’ loyalty to company is subordinate to personal preferences for place. Advancement prospects are sought in place rather than within a single firm.
Skilled workers’ involvement in local economic development	Skilled workers’ local dependence (Cox and Mair 1988) organized through company.	Skilled workers’ local dependence organized through labour market. Skilled worker may or may not be involved in growth coalitions.

Florida distinguishes the creative class from other classes primarily by what they are paid to do. Those in the ‘working class’ and the ‘service class’ are primarily paid to carry out pre-designed functions, whereas those in the creative class are paid for their ability to create and to work with much greater degrees of autonomy.¹¹ Table 1 summarizes how the creative worker distinguishes various features in the new economy, including their attitudes towards place.

Although the creative class is smaller than the service class, Florida sees it as much more significant economically. For example, in the United States, it represents 30 per cent of the workforce, yet generates 50 per cent of wealth generation. Thus it is dominant in terms of wealth and income, and its members are much more mobile, both in terms of their own industry and geographically. The creative class is oriented to larger cities that can offer a greater variety of economic opportunities, a more stimulating milieu, and an array of cultural and leisure amenities. Combined with these ideals is a preference for openness to diversity, where creative class members feel their identities are validated and accepted. The creative class is thus attracted to communities with a distinctive flavour, defined in part by the impermanent relationships and loose ties that allow its members to live the quasi-anonymous

lives they want. Communities based on traditional forms of solidarity or characterized by conservative social values, are unattractive to the creative class.¹² Florida sees the preferences and increased mobility of the economically influential creative class as creating profound economic-geographical shifts in contemporary society. This is what he calls the ‘geography of creativity’.

Table 2 - Overall Rank of U.S. City Regions (pops. > 1 million) in the Creative Economy (Source: Florida, 2002)

Rank	City
1	San Francisco, CA
2	Austin, TX
3	San Diego, CA
4	Boston, MA
5	Seattle, WA
6	Raleigh/Durham, NC
7	Houston, TX
8	Washington/Baltimore, MD
9	New York, NY
10 =	Dallas, TX
10 =	Minneapolis/St. Paul, MN

Rank	City
39	Detroit, MI
40	Providence, RI
41	Greensboro, NC
42 =	Oklahoma City, OK
42 =	New Orleans, LA
44	Grand Rapids, MI
45	Louisville, KY
46	Buffalo, NY
47	Las Vegas, NV
48	Norfolk, VA
49	Memphis, TN

Florida points to the recent trend of a ‘large-scale resorting of people among cities and regions nationwide’ in which some regions becoming centres of the creative class, while others are composed of larger shares of working class or service class. He also notes that the centres of the creative class are more likely to be economic winners, whereas working class centres tend to be economically stagnant or in decline.¹³ Table 2 sets out the top and bottom ranked U.S. cities (with populations over 1 million) in Florida’s model.

THE TALENT MODEL EXPLAINED

Richard Florida’s ‘Talent Model’ is a prescript for economic competitiveness of cities and city regions in the new economy. The model is a set of premisses that Florida has supported with empirical evidence and set out in a number of different papers.¹⁴ In its simplest form, the model is comprised of conditions and inputs. The conditions are those that Florida has found in his studies to exist in cities and city-regions he considers to be attractive to the creative class. These ‘talent centres’ have certain necessary (but not sufficient) conditions that set them apart. First, they have well developed amenities, particularly in the form of natural, recreational, lifestyle, and arts and entertainment. Second, they have a thick labour market, and third, they have a culture characterized by diversity and tolerance.

Amenities

According to Florida, there is a considerable difference between the amenities that attract in the new economy and those that attracted in the old economy. In the old economy, ‘big ticket’

amenities like professional sports, the fine arts (such as opera, symphony music, and theatre) and cultural destinations (such as museums and art galleries) were important amenity-attractants. In the new economy, however, amenities typically revolve around outdoor recreational activities and lifestyle. As Florida points out, talent centres may or may not have the old economy amenities, but his point is that there is no correlation.¹⁵ More recently, however, he has conceded that while new economy talent may or may not choose to participate in more formal cultural destinations, they tend to appreciate its existence in cities as these and other institutions are representative of a city that values its culture and heritage.

Thick Labour Market

According to Florida, the new economy labour market has three chief characteristics. First, people tend to pursue their careers horizontally rather than vertically. In fact, he notes that the entire economy is moving toward a more horizontal division of labour. Second, people have come to identify more with an occupation or profession than with a particular firm. (The average stay in a job in the US is three years and for those under 30 it is one year). Third, people now bear more responsibility for their careers by investing in their own education and acquisition of skills, because it is accepted that the traditional sources of security and entitlement no longer exist or matter.¹⁶ As a result of these characteristics, Florida believes that people know they are going to change jobs frequently and are therefore attracted to places with many opportunities for them. This is what Florida means by the term 'thick labour market'.¹⁷

Culture

It is apparent from Florida's discussion of amenities that he distinguishes what many others mean by 'culture' from the sense in which he uses the term. For Florida, 'culture' is much broader than the institutionalized arts such as opera, ballet and dance, symphony music, art galleries and museums. 'Culture' and 'the arts' are often used in conjunction, particularly in the context of government policy as they are lumped together and distinguished from such other social constructs as the business and the economy, law, education, healthcare, social services, the environment, etc. Florida is interested not in the institutions of culture per se, but rather the culture that may or may not inform the activities of those institutions.

Culture, of course, is difficult enough to define, let alone measure, but Florida has not been deterred in his effort to compare the culture of one city with that of others and draw conclusions as to its relationship with economic competitiveness in the new economy. Two aspects of culture have received his attention. One is what is referred to here as 'cultural vibrancy', the other is 'tolerance and diversity'.

Florida sees cultural vibrancy as the product of 'a whole new cluster of amenities mainly revolving around a vibrant street level culture—from outdoor cafes and hip restaurants to [local level] art galleries and a pulsating music scene'.¹⁸ To determine the relationship between cultural vitality and the new economy, Florida created the 'Bohemian Index' (or 'Boho Index'), which is a measure of the *producers* of culture based on the number of writers, designers, musicians, actors and directors, painters and sculptors, photographers, and dancers (by occupation) in a metropolitan area. The bohemian index is a location quotient measure, a ratio that compares the percentage of bohemians in a region to the national pattern.¹⁹ From this number he concludes that cities that are over-represented by these 'bohemians' are those with an appreciation of amenities that support and showcase creativity and artistic expression.²⁰ Florida has found that the geography of Bohemia is highly concentrated, and that there is a significant and positive relationship between the bohemian index and talent.²¹

Florida's other dimension of culture is tolerance and diversity, which he measures by two indices: the 'gay index' and the 'foreign-born index'. According to Florida, 'gays can be thought of as canaries of the knowledge economy because they signal a diverse and progressive environment that fosters the creativity and innovation necessary for success in high tech industry....To some extent, the gay and lesbian population represents what might be called the "last frontier" of diversity in our society.'²² On the basis of his research, he concludes that the gay index is the most effective measure of social and cultural diversity in predicting both the concentration of high-technology industries but also their growth.²³

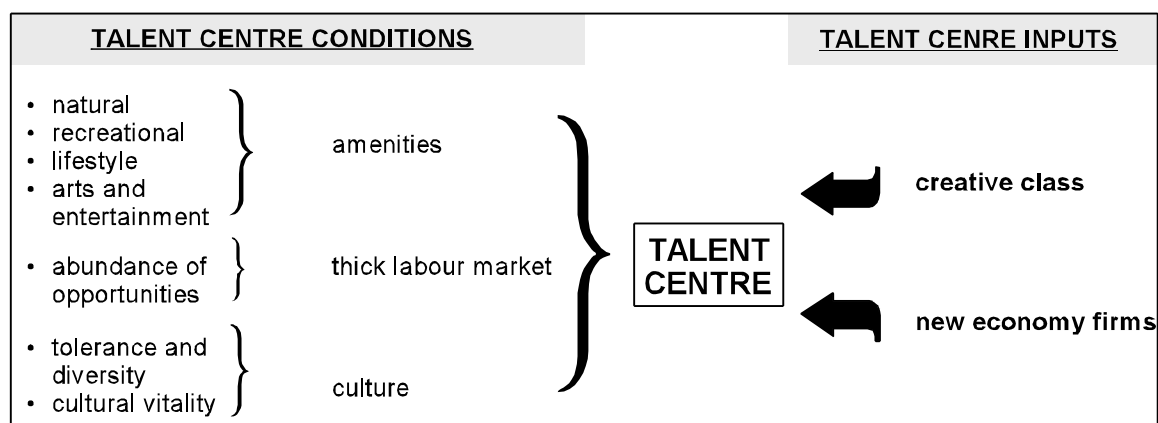
Similarly, Florida believes that economic growth also rises out of a city's ability to welcome newcomers. The 'foreign-born index', the percentage of a region's population that is foreign born, is the mechanism he uses to determine the relationship between the percentage of foreign born individuals and cities of high-tech concentration and growth. He found that leading high-tech centres are places where people from virtually any background can settle and thrive.²⁴

Florida's findings with respect to both the gay index and the foreign-born index support his contention that encouraging diversity and lowering barriers to entry can help to attract human capital and generate technology-based growth.

Recently, Florida teamed up with Meric Gertler, Professor of Geography and Goldring Chair in Canadian Studies at the University of Toronto, to conduct a Canadian version of the Talent Model study (*Competing on Creativity*, 2002).²⁵ The report examined the relationship between talent, technology, creativity and diversity in city-regions in Ontario—and Canada more generally—and compared these to the relationships found to exist in American metropolitan regions. They found that Ontario city-regions fared well against their American counterparts, particularly in measures with regard to the bohemian and mosaic (foreign-born population) index. A vibrant local creative class and openness to diversity, they conclude, attract knowledge workers in Ontario and Canada, and may in fact be Canada's competitive edge.

IMPLICATIONS FOR CITY REGIONS

Figure 1 - The Talent Model (Source: Author, 2003)



Florida's talent model has some obvious—and not so obvious—implications for cities and city regions. For policymakers, this work has implications for understanding policies towards education, culture and the arts, immigration and settlement, and local cultural planning, as well

as the role that political culture and local economic development policy play in shaping the health and futures of North American cities.

First, are those policy implications that derive from notions of, and policies towards, culture and the arts. In Canada, much of the explicit public funding in this area is directed towards ‘capital-C’ culture and arts institutions such as museums, galleries, symphony music, opera and ballet, and broadcasting. This type of assistance is essential to the viability of many of these institutions. These longstanding cultural policies have also had an important *implicit* policy role to play in the development of the *producers* of Canadian culture, namely the number of writers, designers, musicians, actors and directors, painters and sculptors, photographers, and dancers referred to in the bohemian index.

However, this type of cultural policy does not necessarily directly address all the notions of culture that Florida believes attracts the talent class to a city. As discussed above, Florida’s model examined two other important components of culture: cultural vibrancy and tolerance and diversity.

In terms of cultural vibrancy, Florida’s work found that vibrant and interesting street-scapes and city life, with cafés and restaurants, thriving music, art, literature, and design and fashion scenes, have high appeal to the talent class. Clearly some of these cannot be manufactured completely through public policy. Rather they develop naturally, spontaneously and symbiotically. At the same time, however, there are policy options available to create the best growing conditions.

Many of these policies centre around urban land use development and the use of city space. Much criticism has been leveled at the traditional urban planning system for strangling the natural vibrancy of an area and replacing it with sterile space that quite often does not ‘work’ in the way it was intended. Jane Jacobs is one of a long line of such critics. In 1961 she prescribed what she called ‘planning for vitality’, which she believed must (i) stimulate and catalyze the greatest possible range and quantity of diversity among uses and among people throughout the city; (ii) promote continuous networks of local street neighbourhoods, whose users and informal proprietors can keep the public spaces safe and vibrant; (iii) help promote peoples’ identification with city districts; (iv) create conditions aimed at curbing the negative effects of gentrification; and (v) clarify the visual order of cities by promoting and illuminating functional order.²⁶

Since Jacobs wrote this over 40 years ago, many of these abstract principles have been translated into practice in some of the more progressive planning departments across North America. Specific planning tools such as density bonusing, performance-based zoning, and more compact development standards have the potential to encourage more creative uses of land and public space and ultimately promote the type of cultural vitality that attracts the talent class. More creative uses of land may include higher-density growth, diverse and mixed-used urban redevelopment, and the preservation and accentuation of authentic, distinctive neighbourhood character.

Of course, land use planning tools alone cannot generate the creative use of land. Florida and Gertler’s work also points to the importance of collaborative efforts between local governments, firms, and individuals to reinforce and strengthen the unique urban character of their city-regions. This does not simply mean ‘marketing’ cultural vibrancy in terms of gay-pride parades or multicultural festivals and markets. Rather, it requires a clear commitment on the part of the community to build on the unique and creative strengths of its built, natural and human elements.

The second component of Florida's culture condition has to do with tolerance and diversity. This component of the work—especially the work Florida and Gertler have done in the Canadian context—point to the important role that public policies, at all three levels of government have played in creating the conditions for successful economic development now and in the future. These include policies that have supported immigration and settlement, human rights, and citizenship education. However more can be done in this area, as the cultural planning literature tells us (discussed further in the next section).

Indeed, financing local and diverse cultures on the level Florida is referring to is quite often left to community groups that conduct their own fund-raising from various sources. However, depending on the particular organization, there may or may not be a solid base of patrons with the means to generously donate. At the same time, the activity of these community-based organizations is often of the type that directly or indirectly contributes to, or maintains, the aspects of a city's culture that attract the talent class. Some of these activities are directed towards ethnic or religious-based community centres and activities; others involve social action, particularly with respect to housing, human rights and environmental protection; and still others create access to space and resources to carry out artistic activities (such as local theatre, music, dance, art and writing). According to Florida, this type of cultural activity is a necessary condition for attracting the talent class. In this light, Florida suggests that cities would do well to reconsider the relative importance they attach to these 'grass-roots' and 'democratic' cultural activities at budget time.

Other implications of the talent model are political. It is a trite point that, without political will, change—no matter how positive or desirable—will not come about. It is also the case that many important steps in a city's development are driven by narrow interests (quite often land developers). Some of the policy options that flow from the talent model run counter to the inherited wisdom of city officials and local economic development advocates. Changing course will mean inviting a different set of constituents to the table and making important decisions on the basis of faith rather than tried-and-true practices. Stakeholders who reject Florida's talent model as being counter-intuitive are likely to resist policy changes in that direction. In Pittsburgh, for example, some letters to the editors of local papers and callers to talk shows have accused Richard Florida of trying to make Pittsburgh a 'yuppie haven', with the result that Florida, himself, is contemplating moving his research institute out of the city. He clearly hoped that Pittsburgh would embrace his ideas for its major urban renewal strategies. But as he sees it, 'Instead, they're saying, "Get the hell out".'²⁷ The question, then, is what effect will the political debate itself have on a city's attractiveness to the talent class?

Another key implication for city region concerns education policy. As Florida and others have shown, there is a strong relationship in North American cities between regional high-tech growth and talent, defined as the proportion of the population over 18 years of age with a bachelor's degree or higher. MERIC GERTLER²⁸ has argued that it is essential for Canada to invest in higher-education, but also key to invest in primary and secondary education. High-quality public education programs in Canadian cities are imperative for the smooth entry for new Canadians, and they are also important for the continuing stability of large city neighbourhoods.

Florida's research also raises important questions regarding the types of economic development strategies that 'less-successful' places should (or more accurately, *should not*) be adopting. City-regions with economies largely based on a fordist industrial model are already experiencing economic stagnation or decline because so much of the manufacturing base has shifted to other regions of the globe where costs are lower. The talent model suggests,

however, that city-regions that attempt to attract firms with cost incentives (such as tax holidays and subsidized municipal infrastructure) are missing the boat. Instead, efforts—and resources—should be devoted to building and attracting a set of knowledge workers by developing the city's amenities and social conditions.

The model has implications for economic development strategy. Florida and others have argued that regions must promote 'quality-of-life' and amenity characteristics that appeal to talented and creative workers.²⁹ These must be central elements in strategies to attract knowledge-workers and build innovative economies.³⁰ It is not about competing for business and firms with cheap labour and low taxes. Rather, the key to a region's prosperity and success is shaped much more by attracting talent. Central to this is a continued investment in talent. 'Invest in your university base' he advises his municipal clients. 'Continue to build clusters. Continue to invest in research and development and technology transfer'.³¹ In addition to fostering entrepreneurship, technology and economic vitality, it is also necessary to provide good public transit, fine schools, parks and places for jogging and cycling, music and theatre, and good universities and colleges.³²

Finally, this research raises provocative questions regarding the politically fragmented nature of the new economy, and the implications for national politics and policy. Bill Bishop and Florida recently explained the seismic shift that is now taking place in American politics:

*For much of the last century, the nation's politics has been dominated by geographic splits—North and South, rural and urban. Now, society is changing at a more molecular level. City by city, even neighborhood by neighborhood, our politics are becoming more concentrated and, consequently, more polarized....It has become increasingly likely that people live near those who share similar views of the world. As a result, the political middle ground evaporates. Regions pull away from each other economically and politically, and the widening distance makes it increasingly difficult to find civility, much less consensus, in national debate.*³³

Canada has also witnessed a growing fragmentation in its political geography, even at the micro-urban level. Recent research demonstrates how politics in cities and neighbourhoods—even within the same geographic region are becoming more polarized.³⁴ Many of these new political divisions do not fall along traditional economic lines. The New Democratic Party, for example, has always considered itself a champion of the working people and of economic, environmental and social justice. However, their constituency is often strongest in city-centres like downtown Toronto, which also happens to have the highest level of economic inequality and the least amount of blue-collar manufacturing. The Canadian Alliance party, on the other hand, boasts a support base in the entrepreneurial, wealth-generating constituency, but it largely draws its electoral vote from rural, primarily agricultural, regions with less vibrant economies.

These social shifts have political consequences for governance. This has become one of the greatest Canadian policy challenges, and failure to meet the challenge risks increasing social and political polarization at the national, inter-urban and intra-urban scale.³⁵

A CRITICAL EVALUATION OF THE TALENT MODEL AND ITS APPLICATIONS

Florida's work has not gone without criticisms, however. These can be divided into two main camps: the first has to do with inherent problems of the fast-translation of Florida's talent model into public policies. The second is more critical of his research.

In terms of fast-policy applications, many North American city-regions appear to be making 'quality-of-place' a central element of regional economic development efforts. However, much of the practical work in this area conflates quality-of-life—an individualized concept—with quality of place—a concept suggesting a general consensus among inhabitants. The assumption of a consensus tends to favour certain economic development strategies over others. Some observers believe that the subtle conceptual shift from 'quality-of-life' to 'quality-of-place' has de-politicized the concept, and made it harder for more marginalized voices to be heard in the quality of life debates.³⁶

One of the risks is that local politicians and economic development officers simply focus on marketing the consumption value of gay neighbourhoods and 'funky' bohemian districts. Yet, surface-level 'place' marketing may have the potential of glossing over the essential investments required to maintain and enhance a creative city. As one Montreal sculptor pointed out in response to Florida's results showing Montreal to be ranked high on the bohemian index,

*Tourists might get a kick out of the city's bohemian population, but I'd like them to realize that it's not so easy to live as an artist here....Montreal is a great city—for people who have money to go out to celebrate at restaurants, to go to concerts, movies, the theatre and museums. About the only place where it's free to go here are the stores, but even there you're not welcome for long if you don't shop....The reality is that most artists I know live below the poverty line.*³⁷

This artist's comments underscore one of the most important policy implications of the talent model. It is ironic to laud the virtues of a high bohemian index rating without devoting adequate resources to maintain and develop it.

Yet at the same time, some have suggested that translating Florida's talent model into public policies is inherently problematic. The 'authenticity' and 'cultural vitality' sought by the talent class may be difficult for cities to create. Commenting on Florida's thesis, one newspaper columnist pointed out:³⁸

But when [Florida's] ideas are imagined as policies, they sound preposterous. Successful creative cities have developed spontaneously, usually over long periods. San Francisco (which of course sits on the top of his charts) became famously tolerant not with the help of consultants but through the often indecorous activities of rock musicians, poets, dope dealers and brothelkeepers.

Ignored in this statement, however, is the central role of public policy in San Francisco, not only 'over the long periods' as the writer says but also—and particularly—during the unnamed period to which he obviously refers: the '60s and '70s. The city of San Francisco demonstrated, directly and indirectly, not only through public policies but also at the polls, a measure of tolerance and diversity that set it apart from most other U.S. and Canadian cities of that time.³⁹ San Francisco was, as the writer points out, 'famously tolerant' of its bohemian element. It is this political culture that has helped to put the city at the top of Florida's 'charts'.

The second set of criticisms focusses more on the research. There are two aspects to this. The first concerns the more radical critique of the research itself—which some theorists see as part of a larger body of new economy research that runs contrary to much recent scholarship that has found a contradiction between urban entrepreneurialism on the one hand and social justice on the other, as evident in the increased social polarization in the fastest growing cities.⁴⁰

Table 3 - Demographic Profile of Toronto Public Library Users (Source: Toronto Public Library, 2000)

User profile	Use/week = ≥ 1	Use/month = 4 ≥ 1	Use/year = 2-3	Non-visitor
GENDER				
Male	18%	27%	24%	29%
Female	23%	32%	22%	23%
AGE				
< 25	22%	34%	24%	20%
25 < 34	19%	26%	26%	28%
35 < 54	21%	33%	22%	22%
55 < 64	19%	27%	24%	30%
> 65	19%	24%	19%	37%
EDUCATION				
High school or less	20%	27%	20%	33%
Some college/university	18%	33%	23%	25%
University graduate	22%	29%	25%	23%
INCOME				
< \$60,000/yr	20%	29%	24%	26%
> \$60,000/yr	15%	42%	23%	21%
CURRENT SITUATION				
Employed (full time)	17%	29%	25%	27%
Retired/homemaker	21%	29%	18%	32%
Student	34%	30%	21%	16%
CANADIAN BORN				
Yes	14%	30%	25%	30%
No	30%	29%	19%	20%

This group of scholars often illustrate their thesis with reference to the unprecedented proliferation in the construction of 'high-arts' cultural institutions in the United States since the 1970s. David Harvey argues that this proliferation is in part due to structural changes in the global economy that has accentuated the desire of urban elites to increase the symbolic capital of their city. In the new economy, individuals no longer establish their identities through their professions, but through acts of consuming certain goods and services. For the urban elite, symbolic capital through the consumption of high arts and culture is a form of economic and class distinction. The increase in the government funding received by these cultural institutions is made possible because of like-minded individuals in business, the arts and government, engaged in creating an image of the city as a place of global cultural sophistication in which museums and opera houses play an important role.⁴¹

A recent research paper on Toronto's cultural institutions has documented how governments have financed amenities for the urban elite at the expense of local collective consumption. The research demonstrates how the provincial government has targeted their spending on private-public cultural institutions that serve Toronto's elite (such as the Royal Conservatory of Music,

the Royal Ontario Museum and the Art Gallery of Ontario). In the 2002-3 fiscal year, an unprecedented \$133.5 million dollars in Superbuild capital spending has been directed at these and other cultural institutions. This increase has come after several years of declining support for Toronto's two main public cultural institutions (the public library system and parks and recreation). As well, the province of Ontario has eliminated \$90 million dollars from the Toronto Board of Education's budget. The cuts were mainly to cultural components of the curriculum such as music and art. For example, Toronto's public library system is a cultural institution for the whole city. Newcomers to the city learn about settlement issues, Canadian law, resume writing and job searching. In the morning, job seekers come in to look at the classified sections in the newspaper, at night, people treat the library as if it were their livingroom. According to a Toronto librarian, 'the library is a gathering place...we are not a community centre, but in one sense we are; this is where the community comes'. Table 3 presents a demographic profile of library users in Toronto which shows that a broad-cross section of the city's residents are patrons of the system.⁴²

Other researchers are wary of a local economic discourse that promotes multiculturalism and tolerance as making 'good economic sense'. There are two reasons for this skepticism. First, there is increasing documentation to show that success in the new economy increasingly depends on a racialized division of labour as many of Canada's entry level jobs are held by temporary Mexican workers, new immigrants and/or people of colour.⁴³ These scholars point to the reality that much of this racialization has been regularized under NAFTA and GATT. Second, this economic discourse can contribute to a watering-down of multicultural interpretation that only focusses on the benefits of cultural consumption. In other words, care must be taken not to conflate tolerance with cultural consumption. We may create venues for immigrant culinary, music and religious expression that can be consumed as part of an economic development strategy, but at the same time, we must not ignore the growing segregation of our cities as indicated by increasing pockets of poverty and racial disintegration.⁴⁴ This latter point leads into the second aspect of the research criticism. These criticism focus on methodological criticisms as well as some of the underdeveloped themes in the talent model to date.

Methodological Criticisms

Quantitative analysis has always been open to criticism, and Florida's work is no exception. The gay index is a measure of the over- or under-representation of coupled same-sex households living in a metropolitan area. The data are based on the U.S. Census for 1990 and 2000. However, these data also include same-sex households that were not gay.

The talent index is a measure of the human capital in a region, based on a region's share of people with a bachelor's degree and above. Therefore, it does not take into account those with other forms of post-secondary education or those talented ones with no or incomplete formal post-secondary education. The bohemian index, a measure of people employed in artistic and creative occupations, such as authors, designers, musicians, etc., may capture some of the talent that escaped the talent index.

The melting pot index (or 'mosaic index' as in the Canadian study), measures the relative percentage of foreign-born people in a region. As a result, this index does not measure the U.S. (or Canadian) born racial or ethnic composition, the inclusion of which would likely produce different results. The data from both these indexes are based on 1990 U.S. Decennial Census Public Use Microdata Sample. While 1990 was the most current year available to Florida, there is now a need to update these findings to the most current year available.

The Canada-U.S. study conducted by Gertler, Florida, Gates and Vinodrai also had to rely on older data dating back to 1990 and 1996. At the time of their writing, key data from Canada's 2001 Census of Population was not yet available. Again, it will be interesting to track the results once this data becomes available.

Presently there is little in the way of a more *qualitative* analysis of the culture and the talent class in North American cities. Florida's research is one of the few quantitative studies on the spatial distribution of *what are held to be* the vital indicators of the new economy. There is currently a need for research that situates urban case studies in theoretical and quantitative and qualitative empirical terms, and that is transnationally comparative and fully contextualized.⁴⁵

Some Underdeveloped Themes

Underdeveloped themes in Florida's research include inadequate attention paid to gender and life cycle issues, and to the relationship between high-tech metropolitan growth on the one hand, and income inequality, racial segregation/integration, and social capital on the other. Some critics contend that Florida's research really only examined a very small percentage of the high-tech population in any detail, namely single males in their early to late 20s working in the high-tech field. As a result, certain indicators of the new economy that appeal to other knowledge-workers (such as maternity leave and benefits, accessible and affordable child-care, and a quality public school system, which are particularly important to talented female workers in the new economy) have been overlooked.⁴⁶

Florida has recently responded to critics regarding the underdeveloped theme on the relationship between high-tech metropolitan growth on the one hand, and income inequality, racial segregation/integration, and social capital on the other. His forthcoming book aims to incorporate more social policy into his talent model analysis.⁴⁷ Florida gives some indication of the material to be covered in an article recently published in the *Washington Monthly*. His colleague, Kevin Stolarick, has developed an index of wage inequality comparing creative-class wages to others' to study the relationship between inequality and regional prosperity.

*His main finding is startling: City-regions that rank highest in terms of creative economic strength also rank highest in income inequality. Among major metropolitan areas, San Jose, in the heart of Silicon Valley, scores third on [Florida's] multi-factor Creativity Index and also ranks first in inequality. North Carolina's Research Triangle is the fourth-most creative region and has the second greatest level of inequality. Boston ranks seventh on both scales. Conversely, regions lagging in creative economic strength tend to be more equal—more people are chugging along in the same slow boat.*⁴⁸

Gary Gates, co-author on several Florida papers and inventor of the gay index is currently conducting work with the Fannie Mae Foundation on racial integration, diversity, and social capital: an analysis of their effects on regional population and job growth. Clearly, these and other research projects point to the tremendous opportunity to develop a research program in the Canadian context that draws on Florida's groundbreaking multi-factor creativity index and the rich body of social policy literature on social exclusion, inclusion and cultural planning; the focus of the next section in this report.

SOCIAL POLICY LITERATURE IN CONTEXT

At a recent talk in Toronto⁴⁹, Richard Florida was asked to reflect on what would be the competitive advantage for cities and regions in the future. Essentially, he implied, it would be those places that ultimately are the most effective at eradicating exclusivity, promoting social inclusion and cultural tolerance. Afterward, the lingering policy question to his answer was: how best to achieve it? Also apparent from his observation was the need to better understand the relationships between his Talent Model and the rich body of recent social policy literature on the subject.

Conceptually, we argue in this paper that attaining the worthwhile goal to a more inclusive and tolerant society can be better understood, and ultimately achieved, by breaking down the social policy literature into three policy concepts: (1) eradicating social exclusion; (2) promoting social inclusion; and (3) celebrating difference through cultural planning.

SOCIAL EXCLUSION, INCLUSION AND CULTURAL PLANNING

Social exclusion, inclusion and cultural planning are three important social policy concepts that have emerged over the last two decades. They have developed in response to concern over growing social inequalities caused by structural changes and the ensuing inability of social welfare systems to respond to the demands of an increasingly diverse population. There is a tremendous amount of literature on all three concepts, but little literature on the relationships among them, and little research on how we can apply these concepts to the study of cities, especially within the knowledge-based economy.

Social exclusion

The earliest of these concepts, social exclusion, originated in the social policy of Western Europe in the 1980s. It was adopted by the European Union (EU) to refer to the EU objective of achieving social and economic cohesion. The term exclusion has been defined in a number of ways, which may include some or all of the following elements: disadvantage in relation to certain norms of social, economic or political activity pertaining to individuals, households, spatial areas or population groups; the social, economic and institutional processes through which disadvantage comes about; and the outcomes or consequences for individuals, groups or communities. One of the more comprehensive definitions comes from the European Commission:

Social exclusion refers to the multiple and changing factors resulting in people being excluded from the normal exchanges, practices and rights of modern society. Poverty is one of the most obvious factors, but social exclusion also refers to inadequate rights in housing, education, health and access to services. It affects individuals and groups, particularly in urban and rural areas, who are in some way subject to discrimination or segregation; and it emphasizes the weaknesses in the social infrastructure and the risk of allowing a two-tier society to become established by default. The Commission believes that a fatalistic acceptance of social exclusion must be rejected, and that all Community citizens have a right to the respect of human dignity.⁵⁰

The term 'social exclusion' is often interpreted as being more or less synonymous with poverty or disadvantage. However there are important differences. First, the concept of poverty is primarily concerned with the extent to which a household's income falls below a particular level. Second, disadvantage, as a concept, focuses on the lack of material resources and

social services and supports. Thus policies that address poverty and disadvantage primarily are concerned with resource distribution (including goods and services).⁵¹

By contrast to poverty, social exclusion examines dimensions like poverty and disadvantage within a wider context. Most notable, it sees social exclusion as a consequence of fundamental structural changes occurring in the global economy that have transformed local economies. In addition to the impact of globalization processes on social exclusion, the concept also considers national economic policies, welfare regimes, rights of citizenship and local governance as affecting social exclusion. While the causes may be structural, its effects can also be ameliorated or exacerbated by the attitudes, activities and policies of governmental bodies at all spatial scales.

In an effort to target policy that will eradicate social exclusion, a number of dimensions and indicators of social exclusion have been developed. Table 2 summarizes some of the key measures.

Social Inclusion

Contrary to a widely held view, 'social inclusion' is not simply the opposite of social exclusion. It extends beyond removing boundaries or barriers between 'us' and 'them'. Earlier research tended to focus solely on issues of social exclusion, assuming that if racial discrimination, class inequality or sexual prejudice were diminished, then a more inclusive or socially cohesive society would necessarily result. More recent research, however, suggests that social inclusion has its own logic; that is, in thinking and practicing social inclusion, we must give equal weight to both social inclusion as a goal *and a process*.⁵²

Broadly speaking, social inclusion has been defined by one leading scholar as 'a situation where everyone is able to participate fully in society and no-one is blocked from doing so by lack of political and civil rights, by lack of employment or income, by ill-health or lack of education. In terms of things which are objectively measurable, an inclusive society would seem incompatible with high levels of income poverty and inequality and with high levels of unemployment.'⁵³

The Laidlaw Foundation, in an excellent series of working papers on social inclusion, explains how the more relational character and quality of social inclusion can work in action. Take the example of diversity. Acknowledging its importance has become key to new understandings of identity at both a national and local level. However, as the Foundation points out, the goal of social inclusion in this context is to take recognition one step further: to actually validate diversity and recognize the commonality of lived experiences and the shared aspirations among people. In terms of process, this requires a more 'proactive, human development approach to social well-being that calls for more than the removal of barriers or risks. It requires *investments and action* to bring about the conditions for inclusion, as the population health and international human development literature have taught us'.⁵⁴

Table 4 - Dimensions of Social Exclusion (Source: Percy-Smith, 2002)

Dimension	Indicators
Economic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Long-term unemployment • Casual employment and job insecurity • Workless households • Income poverty
Social	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Breakdown of traditional households • Unwanted teenage pregnancies • Homelessness • Crime • Disaffected youth
Political	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disempowerment • Lack of political rights • Low registration of voters • Low voter turnout • Low levels of community activity • Alienation/lack of confidence in political processes • Social disturbance/disorder
Neighbourhood	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental degradation • Decaying housing stock • Withdrawal of local services • Collapse of support networks
Individual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mental and physical ill health • Educational underachievement/low skills • Loss of self-esteem/confidence
Spatial	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concentration/marginalization of vulnerable groups
Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concentration of above characteristics in particular groups: elderly, disabled, ethnic minorities

Cultural Planning

Cultural planning would seem to take the notion of social inclusion one step further. That is, while the purpose of social inclusion is *celebrating sameness*—by recognizing the commonality of lived experiences and the shared aspirations among people—cultural planning is really about *celebrating cultural difference*, by recognizing that our exposure to different cultures and experiences enriches us all as human beings.

A leading international expert in the field has defined cultural planning as ‘the strategic and integrated planning and use of cultural resources in urban and community development.’¹⁵⁵ Two key concepts within this definition deserve mention. First is the core idea of understanding culture as a *resource* for human development. ‘Cultural resources’ not only include traditional areas of heritage and cultural industry activity, but also involve the wider cultural assets of a community. These can include cultural facilities, landscapes and buildings from a range of ethno-cultural communities, and also more intangible images and perceptions of community by a variety of different actors.

It is not enough, according to the cultural planning literature, to simply acknowledge difference by treating everyone the same. It is important to also recognize difference as a tremendous cultural asset. By experiencing different cultures—in all its forms—our own perspectives are altered. Experiencing the uniqueness of ‘the other’ will not only enrich our individual lives, but

is itself an important form of development. This leads to the second important idea within the definition. ‘Development’, in the context of cultural planning, is defined broadly to include all forms of human development—economic, social, environmental, civic—that contribute to the well-being of cities and communities.

Place has become an essential ingredient to this definition of culture. Unlike traditional cultural policy which emphasized *discipline-based* approaches to culture (e.g., visual arts, performing arts, heritage), cultural planning has shifted the focus to *place-based* approaches. A leading expert in the Canadian context explains:

Discipline-based distinctions grew up in part as a result of granting programs established by senior levels of government. These programs tended to place more emphasis on developing specific artistic disciplines than on connecting these disciplines with community interests and needs, or with strengthening connections across disciplines at the community level. Cultural planning reverses this perspective. It begins by considering the circumstances and needs of a specific community. More specifically, its point of departure is how the cultural assets of resources of the community can contribute to reinforcing a unique sense of place.⁵⁶

Table 5 - Contrast of Cultural Policy with Cultural Planning (Source: Baeker, 2002)

	Cultural Policy	Cultural Planning
Perspective	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Discipline-based</i>: fragmented perspective driven by disciplinary ‘silos’ (e.g. theatre, dance, museums, etc.) • <i>Cultural development</i>: understood as development of the cultural sector 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Place-based</i>: more ‘whole systems’ perspectives rooted in place • <i>Cultural development</i>: understood as culture as a resource for human development
Definition of ‘culture’	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Arts-based</i>: largely European ‘high arts’ and cultural industries 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Cultural resources</i>: expanded view of local cultural assets or resources
Rationale for municipal investment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Inherent importance</i>: ‘arts-for-arts sake’, plus economic impacts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Benefits-driven</i>: emphasis on contributions to urban development (broadly defined)
Vision of government role	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Top-down</i>: old public management focus on financing, regulating, owning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Bottom-up</i>: new public management focus on enabling, supporting (‘steering not rowing’) combined with community development approaches

Like Jane Jacobs, cultural planners advocate whole systems thinking as applied to the planning and management of cities. ‘The role of municipalities becomes less one of determining and controlling direction than of establishing the conditions necessary for local cultural activity to flourish. A key part of this condition is enabling opportunities for people to come together, to define shared needs and to take action’.⁵⁷

Jane Jacobs’ ‘whole systems thinking’ has been quite influential in explaining the history of cultural vibrancy and the protection of older neighbourhoods in places like Toronto. But as other researchers have pointed out, Jane Jacob’s U.S. style of 1960s civil action was

transformed to suit the specific context of Canada's own politics. Rather than rejecting planners and public institutions, solutions were seen in reforming them to be more sensitive to the needs and wishes of the local urban community. An example was the election of the 1972 city of Toronto reformist council. High on their agenda was the protection of older neighbourhoods, mixed-land use zoning and European-style mixed-income public-housing projects such as the St. Lawrence housing complex on reclaimed industrial land in inner-city Toronto.⁵⁸

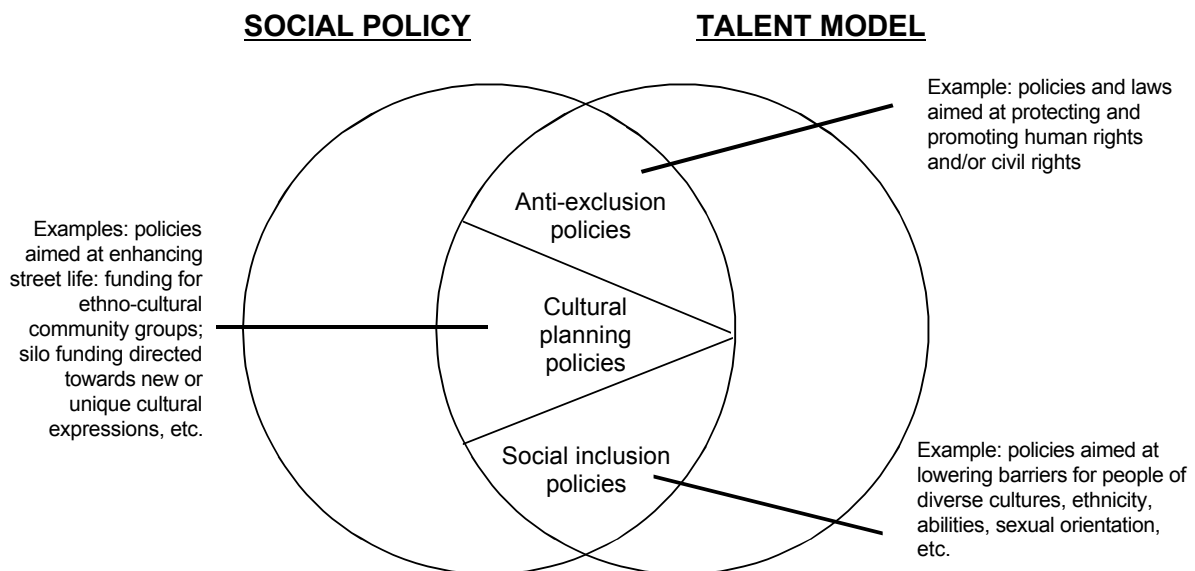
Another example of the role that public institutions played in the cultural vibrancy and tolerance of Toronto was federal funding of multicultural programs beginning in the 1970s. These programs (whether administered directly, through local school boards, or through the dense network of public or private and nonprofit agencies and associations) helped to integrate various ethnocultural communities into city life, which in turn promoted a more tolerant social fabric.⁵⁹ Unfortunately, as others have pointed out, many of the very programs which build Toronto's—and other Canadian cities' reputations as safe, harmonious and tolerance communities—are at risk, having faced significant cutbacks in recent years.

The next section examines some of the policy implications (of the Florida Talent Model and the social policy literature) on exclusion, inclusion and cultural planning. In particular, it will examine the relationship between cultural policies aimed at social inclusion and cultural policies aimed at the talent class.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS FOR CITY REGIONS

The first main section of this report discussed policy implications of the Florida Talent Model for city-regions. These included, among things, implications for cultural policies and planning, land-use planning, local economic development, and political culture. The purpose of this section is to examine some of the more specific policy implications regarding the intersection between the Talent Model and the social policy literature on social exclusion, inclusion and cultural planning. In particular, this section of the report will examine the relationship between cultural policies aimed at social inclusion and cultural policies aimed at the talent class.

Figure 2 illustrates the intersections of social policy that focus on anti-exclusion, social inclusion and cultural planning, on the one hand, and the Richard Florida Talent Model on the other. To better illustrate how this diagram may work in terms of the pivotal policies for the successful development of Canadian city-regions, three cultural examples are examined here. The first will look at culture in terms of promoting tolerance and diversity in the context of economic opportunity. The second will explore culture in terms of nurturing cultural vitality in land development and growth management. The third will examine culture related to everyday consumption activity that can contribute both to the cultural consumption demands of the talent class and to the needs of a more excluded population. These examples draw on traditional, long-standing cultural policies as well as newer ideas from the cultural planning literature.

Figure 2 - Intersection of Florida's Talent Model with Social Policy (Source: Author, 2003)

Policies for Economic Opportunity and Social Inclusion

Economic opportunity is a necessary condition for the Talent Model and it is a key indicator for social inclusion. It can also be thought of as a key cultural resource in urban development. The concept of economic opportunity will be discussed in the context of the three steps of anti-exclusion policies, social inclusion and cultural planning. These have largely been broken down for discussion purposes, recognizing that there are overlaps among them, and that, as policy processes, they occur simultaneously and are long-term. All are necessary conditions for the development of our cities in the new economy.

The first policy step toward achieving goals of economic opportunity is aimed at eliminating social exclusion for people of diverse cultures, ethnicity, sexual orientation and abilities. These policies, such as those enshrined in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, aim to provide everyone with the same opportunity for participation and advancement. These may involve affirmative action to establish a more level playing field, or special accommodations for persons with disabilities so that they can fully participate and advance in society.

The second policy step toward achieving goals of economic opportunity can be found in policies that aim to break down the barriers for participation in the workplace. In this context, economic policies include those that are aimed at workforce re-entry, training programs, income redistribution, and educational and skills upgrading. These ensure that class inequality and other barriers to full participation in Canadian society are minimized.

The third policy step focuses on policies aimed at cultural tolerance and diversity. This includes more traditional cultural policies such as grants for community groups and ethno-cultural associations to promote their culture as well as discipline-based funding directed towards new and unique cultural expressions. It also includes cultural planning policies that recognize the value that other cultures bring to the economic and cultural life of a city. This does not just include policies aimed at promoting the cultural consumption value of a particular Canadian community (such as, say, giving money for the marketing of an ethnic food festival, etc.). More

significantly, it includes policies that recognize the productive and educational value that different Canadian cultures bring to the vitality of a city.

A good example is Toronto. As a region, Toronto welcomes half of all immigrants who arrive in Canada, more than 60 per cent of whom are skilled workers. Richard Florida and Meric Gertler, in their recent report, *Competing on Creativity*, have shown that Toronto has the highest percentage of foreign-born population in all the North American cities they compared, and that there is in fact a strong statistical relationship between the foreign born population and the knowledge-based economy in terms of the region's technological prowess.

However, their study does not get at some of the social and economic distances faced by many foreign-born populations in Canadian city-regions. As mentioned above, other researchers have shown that many of Canada's entry level jobs (nannies, cleaners, taxicab drivers, security guards) are often held by otherwise highly-skilled immigrants, resulting in a racialized division of labour in the new economy.⁶⁰ Barriers include lack of information on employment in their trade or profession, difficulty in obtaining recognition of their educational and professional credentials, and lack of access to employment-relevant language training. The Conference Board of Canada has estimated that if all immigrants were employed to the level of their qualifications, an additional \$4 billion of wages across the country could be generated.⁶¹

A recently released report, *Enough Talk*, by the Toronto City Summit Alliance—an alliance of community, labour, business, and political leaders—makes several recommendations on how Toronto could better capitalize on its multicultural and highly-skilled labour force advantage.

First, the Toronto City Summit recommends the establishment of a *Toronto Region Council for Immigrant Employment* to improve access to employment for immigrants in the region. The goal of this Council (comprised of private, voluntary, labour and public sector leaders) is to foster a coordinated and collaborative approach to integrating newcomers. One of its initiatives is to establish an employer-led economic integration initiative. This will involve working with employers from the private, public and voluntary sectors to set up internship programs, mentoring opportunities, job shadowing opportunities and co-op placements to speed entry into the workforce. In addition, the Toronto City Summit recommends and proposes to help the Council create the conditions for a multi-lateral agreement between the federal and provincial governments and interested Toronto area municipal governments for more effective coordination of immigrant settlement services.⁶²

These initiatives could be complemented by efforts to diminish more subtle forms of racial discrimination (such as racial profiling by police) and strengthening employment equity laws and equity training programs in the workplace. The Toronto example provides a good illustration on what other cities might do to strengthen opportunities for full participation in Canadian society. What becomes abundantly clear is that cities cannot do it alone; they require strategic interventions and policy directions from all levels of government.

Policies for Nurturing Cultural Vitality in Land Development and Urban Public Space

The second example involves those policies and plans that have the ability to nurture cultural vitality in land development and urban public space. In contrast to the planning tools aimed at encouraging more creative uses of land and public space, this section looks specifically at land development policies that lie at the intersection of the talent model and social inclusion.

Smart Growth is an evolving approach to land development, the goal of which is to balance economic progress with environmental protection and social equity. Many of the ideas behind smart growth potentially offer progressive alternatives to the current model of single-use, single-income, car-oriented development. These include: access to public transportation; more intensive use of existing infrastructure; conservation of resources; infill and brownfield development; pedestrian-friendly developments; historic preservation; and mixed-income, mixed-use, compact, and adaptive land uses. Two of these features will be examined to understand how they may meet goals of both economic progress and social inclusion.

Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, many of Canada's inner-cities benefitted from mixed-income, mixed-use, housing developments. Vancouver's False Creek and Toronto's European-style mixed-income St. Lawrence housing project on reclaimed industrial land are still considered success stories in Canadian urban revitalization.⁶³ These projects involved all three levels of government and the private sector, and they promoted both economic progress and social equity. Unfortunately, government withdrawal in social housing programs over the last decade has left a vacuum unfilled by the private sector. There is great potential here for all levels of government and the private sector to work together to reintroduce this kind of urban redevelopment at a much larger scale in Canadian cities.

Portland, Oregon offers an inspirational example of how affordable housing elements might be incorporated into neighbourhood planning using both public and private funds. Portland's Pearl Court Apartments is a full-block residential development in that city's emerging River District, a new growing neighbourhood on 70 acres of vacant brownfield land between downtown Portland and the Willamette River. This affordable housing project blends in well with the upper-end housing in the surrounding neighbourhoods. The developer for the project was able to draw on low-income housing tax credits, a Portland Development Commission loan, and tax-exempt bonds from the Housing Authority of Portland⁶⁴, a fact that underscores the broader range of financial tools available to American cities compared to their Canadian counterparts.

Another policy option focuses on the preservation of historic buildings and cultural landscapes. The historic preservation of buildings has been criticized as being an elitist endeavour because of the social distribution of the costs and benefits of gentrification.⁶⁵ However it is becoming increasingly recognized that historic preservation can regenerate self-esteem and self-identities of disempowered peoples and revive declining neighbourhood economies.⁶⁶

Federal, provincial, and municipal planning, transportation and tax policies can encourage community revitalization and the rehabilitation of historic houses and places. Challenges currently facing governments in Canada include (1) the relative ineffectiveness of our heritage protection laws compared to those of other jurisdictions; (2) the lack of coordination of preservation policies across levels of government; and (3) the lack of effective financial incentives to encourage property owners to restore and preserve heritage buildings.

To address these shortcomings, several pieces of heritage legislation are under review across Canada. Currently only 1.2 per cent of the existing 1.7 million pre-1920s buildings in Canada are historically designated. As a result, the Federal Government, through its Historic Places initiative, is currently coordinating with other levels of government to develop a set of shared criteria with standards and guidelines for conservation. It is also working on a certification process to tie new federal income tax incentives to heritage preservation. Several cities have also been lobbying their provincial counterparts for more effective financial tools, such as sales tax reductions and property tax rebate programs to promote heritage preservation. Some cities also have heritage grant programs, although they vary in size and scope. In 2002, for example,

Victoria awarded \$287,000 in heritage preservation grants which was almost four times the amount granted in Toronto that same year.⁶⁷

Policies for Promoting Social Inclusion in Everyday Cultural Consumption

There are many ways that social inclusion can be promoted in everyday cultural consumption activity. One notable area is food. Canada has always had a strong agri-food production industry, with roots in the Prairie provinces and in the rich farmlands of Ontario, Quebec and some of the maritime provinces. However, the specialty, ethnic and local food system is an area within the food sector that is of increasingly important to the dynamic culture and economic life of Canadian cities.

Recent research⁶⁸ reveals that Vancouver, Toronto and Montreal are emerging as great culinary cities of the world, with their cuisines informed by over 150 countries. Well-known local chefs are drawn to quality ingredients produced on local farms and the diversity of ingredients found in these cities. Steven Chan, the manager of the Toronto restaurant, Bright Pearl, recently told a conference of local farmers, chefs and food specialty producers that he can cook and consume better Chinese Food in Toronto than in Hong-Kong because of the quality and variety of the chefs and the ingredients available in Toronto.

The culinary delights found in these cities are not just for the consumption of the talent class. Local farmers as well as grass-roots, and other civic organizations are also benefitting from the demand for specialty and local products by growing alternative and organic produce, providing fresh food to economically disadvantaged communities and engaging in innovative solutions to feed the hungry. FoodShare, an organization working to improve access to healthy and affordable food in Toronto, provides over 4000 fresh fruit and vegetable food boxes per month to households in the city. Over half of these boxes are provided to households with incomes below the poverty line, and only about 3% are for people with household incomes over \$70,000. Of the 4000 boxes, 600 are what FoodShare refers to as 'wow' boxes, containing organic and specialty food items for those who specifically request and pay extra for them. This food box program, like many of their other programs, are examples of a non-profit organization engaging in both entrepreneurial activity and direct social service delivery by providing fully-subsidized quality food distribution programs. The FoodShare model, in existence since 1985, has been copied by other cities across Canada and around the world. It is considered a leading example of how to effectively deliver affordable healthy food and provide nutritional security to economically disadvantaged members of the community.

FoodShare, with the support of the Afri-Can FoodBasket, Greenest City and the Toronto Environmental Alliance, has also been active in promoting community gardens across the City. Cultural identity is an important aspect of these gardening experiences. The Afri-Can FoodBasket, at its Shamba Garden, is experimenting with growing crops like eddoe, bitter melon, Jamaican pumpkin and sweet potato that is usually imported from tropical climates. Produce that is commonly used in Caribbean cuisine such as Jamaican thyme, celery, amaranth and peppers are grown in large quantities and distributed to over 200 families during the summer months.⁶⁹

Despite the success of many of these programs, many are still understaffed and struggling to access funding. However, program actors recognize the clear potential for federal government involvement in the implementation of a national food policy that promotes local, organic and specialty food products and the development of effective strategies for nutritional security. Although Agriculture Canada and Health Canada have related policies, there is currently a gap in a comprehensive food policy. Given the growing multicultural dimension of Canada's food system, Canadian Heritage could play a role in developing such a plan.

AREAS FOR FURTHER STUDY

Research on the talent model in Canadian city regions is only just beginning. A quantitative overview by Gertler et al. of how Ontario's cities compare to the North American index is an excellent starting point. Their findings strongly suggest that the relationships found by Florida and his colleagues in US city regions also exists in Canada. In particular, Canadian city regions appear to score well on cultural vibrancy and openness to diversity as measured by the bohemian and mosaic indices. Their research also provides the necessary statistical grounding from which to develop further studies in this important area.

Currently, policymakers and some academics are uncritically translating studies conducted in the United States to the Canadian context. However, there is currently little understanding of how the different historical, geographical, cultural, and policy contexts in Canada and the United States have shaped the economic and cultural geographies of Canadian city-regions. This context provides the necessary background to ask the following questions: What is the role of human and social capital in the Canadian context? What is the scope for deliberative policy at all levels of government? Who and where are the likely winners and losers from the new map of economic growth that is being promoted across Canadian cities?

Three broad areas for further research have been identified above: (1) the cultural reproduction of the talent class, particularly in the Canadian context; (2) the link between baseline data on talent model indicators and baseline data on social inclusion and cultural planning indicators; and (3) the barriers to, and opportunities for, involvement by the Federal Government in the economic and cultural planning of Canadian city-regions.

In the first area for further research, the following questions should be examined: Who comprises the Canadian talent class? What are the motivations of its members? Do they represent new institutional and occupational actors in local economic and cultural development? How, if at all, are they influencing urban economic and cultural development practice and thinking?⁷⁰

The preceding literature review makes it clear that further research needs to explore the relationship between the talent model indicators and social inclusion and cultural planning indicators. Although work is currently being done in this area in the United States⁷¹, it needs to be carried out here in Canada as well, perhaps with an expanded list of indicators. There are also tremendous opportunities to compare these transnationally with not just the United States, but also European city regions.

There certainly are opportunities for greater involvement by the federal government in Canadian city regions, and there is a general acceptance in the policy community that the federal government sees an expanded role for itself in the economic and cultural planning of Canadian city regions. It would be a worthy research project to examine how the actual structures and decision-making processes of the federal government act as barriers to effective economic and cultural planning at the city region scale.

These and other questions are timely, focussing on issues of research and policy significance. The relationship between Richard Florida's talent model and social and cultural planning begs important questions regarding the urban-cultural foundations of the new economy. Addressing these issues will be of interest not only to researchers in this area, but also to urban practitioners concerned with the economic, social and cultural well-being of our cities.

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 43. See for example, A. Kobayashi, "Racism in Canada post September 11" paper presented at the Department of Geography Seminar Series, Queen's University, April 2003; G. Pratt, "From registered nurse to registered nanny: discursive geographies of filipina domestic workers in Vancouver, B.C." *Economic Geography*, vol. 75, no. 3, July 1999, pp. 215- 236; P. Jackson "Commercial cultures: transcending the cultural and the economic" *Progress in Human Geography*, vol. 26, no. 1, 2002, pp. 3-18.
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 45. In May 2003, the author was awarded a Initiative on the New Economy SSHRC-funded grant to examine how local economic development officials are responding to the new economy by changing the policies that originated in an older industrial era. She is concentrating on a transnationally comparative case study of Toronto and Boston. Her research will involve over 100 interviews with key cultural and economic actors in these city regions.
 46. Tara Vinodrai, a Ph.D. student in Geography at the University of Toronto, is starting to examine gender issues in her research on the urban, knowledge-based economy.
 47. Florida is apparently writing a new book which will examine social indicators in more detail.
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<http://www.washingtonmonthly.com/features/2003/0303.florida.html> last accessed May 12, 2003.

49. R. Florida and M. Gertler. "Competing on Creativity" presented at the Design Exchange, Toronto, Ontario, April 15, 2003.
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51. J. Percy-Smith, ed. "Introduction" *Policy Responses to Social Exclusion: towards inclusion?* Buckingham: Open University, 2000, p. 4.
52. A. Stewart "Social inclusion: a radical agenda" in P. Askonas and A. Stewart, eds. *Social Inclusion* London: Macmillan Press, Ltd., p. 296.
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54. C. Hamilton "Perspectives on Social Inclusion: summaries" prepared for the Laidlaw Foundation's Working Paper Series, *Perspectives on Social Inclusion*, p. 6 emphasis added.
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56. G. Baeker, "Planning, Culture and Sustainable Communities", p. 21
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61. Toronto City Summit Alliance, *Enough Talk: an action plan for the Toronto Region*, April 2003, p. 20.
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63. David L.A. Gordon "Rebuilding the Inner City" Lecture notes from Urban Geography, Department of Geography, Queen's University, March 2003.
64. For more examples of best practice smart growth case studies in the United States visit <http://research.uli.org> last accessed May 11, 2003.
65. R. Shipley "Heritage designation and property values: is there an effect?" *The International Journal of Heritage Studies*, vol. 6, no. 1, 2000.
66. I. Serageldin, E. Shluger and J. Martin-Brown, eds. *Historic Cities and Sacred Sites: Cultural Roots for Urban Futures*. World Bank, January 2001.
67. As reported in the City of Toronto *Culture Plan for the Creative City*, draft report April 17, 2003.

68. Alison Blay-Palmer and Betsy Donald, Department of Geography, Queen's University are currently conducting empirical research on innovation in the alternative food economy in Toronto. Their research is part of a SSHRC-MCRI grant on Innovation and Local Economic Development in Canada, spearheaded by David Wolfe and Meric Gertler, University of Toronto.
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70. B. Donald was recently awarded a Initiative on the New Economy SSHRC grant to examine these questions within the Toronto and Boston context. The title of the project is "Governing the quality-of-life city in the new economy: growth politics in Toronto and Boston", file number 501-2002-0119, 2002/03 - 2004/05.
71. Florida and his colleagues have started to conduct this type of research in the United States. Florida has worked with his colleague Kevin Stolarick who has developed an index of wage inequality comparing creative-class wages to others to study the relationship between inequality and regional prosperity. Florida is also working with Robert Samson at Harvard to link his data with a safety and crime index.