

RESIDENTIAL LOCATION OF MILLENNIALS: A CALGARY CASE STUDY

TRINA BURGESS

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TRINA BURGESS

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Dr. Ivan Townshend Supervisor University of Lethbridge	Professor	PhD
Dr. Susan McDaniel Thesis Examination Committee Member University of Lethbridge	Professor	PhD
Dr. Tom Johnston Thesis Examination Committee Member University of Lethbridge	Associate Professor	PhD
Dr. Markus Moos Thesis Examination Committee Member University of Waterloo	Associate Professor	PhD
Dr. Wei Xu Chair, Thesis Examination Committee University of Lethbridge	Professor	PhD

ABSTRACT

The housing preferences and residential geography of the Millennial generation are different than those of previous generations and that has implications for the urban landscape. Young people are delaying the traditional milestones of adulthood such as marriage and childbearing, even buying a car, and instead are increasingly found in walkable, amenity rich urban centres where they congregate in high-density housing in historically high concentrations. This leads many to ask if this trend is indicative of a new normal of urban renewal or if it is just a temporary phenomenon.

This research examines the locational preferences of Millennials in Calgary by analysing interviews with 37 young adults in three distinctive regions of Calgary that had high concentrations of the oldest Millennials in the 2011 Canadian census. We find that there are a range of attributes that are important determinants of why Millennials choose to live where they do, and that there are some differences between inner city and suburban Millennials. The main themes that emerged were constraints, neighbourhood attributes, housing attributes, employment based considerations, transportation attributes, social attributes of the neighbourhood, psychological benefits people receive from living in a particular place, and family or household considerations. These results support the findings of the literature. Also, the effects of the current downturn in the Calgary economy is discussed in terms of how it affects the neighbourhoods and residential decisions of participants.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

“The emergence of the Millennial generation into adulthood is a major force potentially reshaping cities.”

- Dowell Myers, 2015 ACSP
Conference Paper

Myers’ quote highlights the fact that academics as well as planners, real estate professionals, and others are discussing how Millennial residential location and housing preferences are different than those of previous generations and are interested in the implications of this change for urban landscapes. Many young people are delaying the traditional milestones of adulthood such as marriage and childbearing, even buying a car, and instead are concentrating in walkable, amenity rich urban centres where they congregate in high-density housing in higher concentrations than has historically been seen (Moos, 2015). This leads some to ask if this trend is indicative of a new normal of urban renewal or if it is just a temporary phenomenon (Moos 2015, Myers, 2015).

For decades the housing preferences of Baby Boomers, the generation born between 1946 and 1965, have been driving the housing market in terms of what gets built and where. Many Baby Boomers wanted big houses and life away from the downtown core, and this contributed to the growth of suburbs and urban sprawl that began with previous generations in the post-World War II boom. Because they are such a large cohort comprising 29% of the population in 2011 (Statistics Canada, 2011), Baby Boomer housing preferences were an important factor in molding urban development and the shape of our cities. The next large demographic cohort shaping housing demand is the Millennials who are just about as large a cohort as the Baby Boomers, accounting for almost 27% of the population in 2011 (Statistics Canada, 2011). There are a number of

different definitions of the Millennial generation, with some starting as early as 1977 (see www.nielsen.com). Some definitions of Millennials have no set end date for the cohort (Pew Research Center, 2014) but most end in the late 1990s or early 2000s. For the purposes of this research we will use the most common definition in the literature: those born between 1980 and 2000 (Alsop, 2008; Blumenberg, Brown, Ralph, Taylor, & Voulgaris, 2015; Furman, 2014; Myers, 2015; Rainer & Rainer, 2011; see also canadianmillennials.ca), thereby including people aged roughly 15 to 35 in 2015. Although the younger Millennials still reside in the parental home, the nature of Millennial demand for housing is interesting in terms of how neighborhoods are affected as more of this cohort leaves home and enters into the housing market, either as home owners or renters.

In order to determine the permanency of the shift to urban living that is now observable, this thesis seeks to explore the stated preferences behind residential location patterns of the Millennial generation (specifically the oldest segment of that cohort who are 25-35 years old in 2015, the majority who have established households of their own). More specifically, the aim is to further our understanding of why young adults live where they live, and to investigate where they see themselves living in the long term.

As of the 2011 Canadian census, 81% of the population of Canada lived in urban centres (Statistics Canada, 2011), making the growth and development of urban landscapes an important issue that affects the vast majority of the population. Housing markets and policies are among some of the underlying circumstances that affect what and where development takes place as well the maintenance or replacement of existing housing stock. The literature points to an increasing concentration of young adults living

in Canadian city centres with populations over 1 million (Moos, 2014b, 2015; Walter-Joseph, 2015). This thesis examines the case study of Calgary, where in the 2011, there is found to be high concentrations of the oldest Millennials in the downtown core of the city, as well as medium concentrations of that age group surrounding the core and out in some of the newest suburbs of the city. Three regions are delineated for analysis and participants from each region were interviewed to elucidate why those young adults are living in each region of Calgary. This study addresses the following questions:

1. *What differences are there in the stated preferences and structural characteristics for housing and neighborhood choices between Millennials living in the core or area surrounding the core as opposed to in the suburbs in Calgary?*
2. *What are the future residential intentions of this group of young adults and how will that shape urban development?*

This research builds on the literature, and attempts to address a number of research gaps concerning Millennial residential location in urban Canada. In addition this work finds themes and sub-themes mentioned by participants support previous research. The main themes that emerge from the qualitative analysis of the responses of Millennials include constraints, neighbourhood attributes, housing attributes, employment based considerations, transportation attributes, social attributes of the neighbourhood, psychological benefits people receive from living in a certain neighbourhood and family and household considerations facing young adults when they decide where to live. The second research question is examined by asking participants in each of the areas what their future residential plans are. The majority of respondents said they were content with their current neighbourhood and planned to stay, at least in the short term.

Because Calgarians are currently facing a unique economic climate, participants were also asked how the 2014-2016 downturn in the economy is affecting their lives and their neighbourhoods. Respondents expressed a variety of effects from the recession, with some more deeply affected than others.

Six chapters follow from the introduction. Chapter 2 provides an overview of the literature relating housing to demographic change across different cohorts and the urban implications that result from the changing geography over time as demographics change. Chapter 3 outlines the research objectives and methods used to examine Millennials locations in a case study of Calgary, Alberta. Chapter 4 presents the findings from the qualitative research, including the themes that emerge from the study and the discussion of respondents' future residential plans. Chapter 5 provides a discussion that compares the themes from this study with corresponding themes in the literature. In Chapter 6 the effects of the downturn in the Calgary economy are examined and the thesis concludes with Chapter 7.

Chapter 2: Background to the Thesis

This chapter seeks to provide some context for the discussion and interrogation of the factors constraining and influencing the residential decisions of Millennials in the case study of selected neighbourhoods in Calgary. The first section explains who Millennials are while the second section examines how changes in demographics can be accompanied by changes in preferences that shape supply. The third section examines literature on housing choice. The fourth section includes a discussion of how happiness and quality of life shape decision making.

Where people choose to live is influenced by an array of factors including income or socio-economic status, family structure, occupational profiles, education, ethnicity and housing costs. Changes in the social structure of the society affect the housing decisions individuals make and manifest as alterations in urban neighborhoods (Dear & Flusty, 2002, p. 45). Demographic changes to the social structure have a significant impact on the changing demand and supply of housing, as well as the changing character of urban neighbourhoods (Townshend & Walker, 2015; Myers & Pitkin, 2009). The concept of generation is one significant dimension of stratification that has been largely overlooked in the literature (McDaniel, 2004). As McDaniel (2004) notes, “Generation could be as important as class in shaping societies,” (p. 29) and it provides an important basis for study of inequality between people of different ages.

As Barton and Collins (2012) note, generational shifts in geographic behavior will have significant impacts on urban morphology by changing what is built to cater to the needs and desires of the people. If Millennials are exhibiting a geographic shift of the kind that Barton and Collins posit, it will have far reaching effects within cities.

Investigations by Moos (2014b, 2015) and Walter-Joseph (2015) reveal the greater propensity of young adults aged 25-34 to live in the downtown core and near public transit centres, especially in areas that have a high concentration of high-density housing, leading to an unprecedented “youthification” of central cities. Walter-Joseph (2015) found evidence of the centralization of young adults in select neighborhoods in all the major metropolitan areas in Canada with populations of over 1 million inhabitants. Moos (2014a) finds that post-Fordist and neoliberal restructuring “characterized by an increasing prevalence in outsourcing, short-term contract work and part-time employment, with a diminished role for organized labour and the welfare state under neoliberalism” (p. 2080) have left young adults with lower average incomes and more precarious employment options in comparison with previous generations. Economic restructuring has seen a decrease in manufacturing jobs as those industries have shifted investment to countries with lower labour costs, and an increase in service jobs in the tertiary, quaternary and quinary sectors of the economy (Coffey & Shearmur, 2006). Geographically this has manifested as a movement of services and the remaining manufacturing jobs to the outer suburbs with the convergence of financial and business sector offices in the core of the city (Murdie & Teixeira, 2006). Millennials are facing a more uncertain labour market than older generations, “characterized by declining private-sector unionization and the transformation of employment relations, including the increase of flexible, part-time, temporary, and precarious work” (Vinodrai, 2010, p. 87).

The combination of work-based insecurity and retrenchment of the welfare state is causing increasing polarization along lines of class, income, gender as well as between generations (McDaniel, 1997). In terms of income this has meant that more people earn

high or low incomes with a decline in the percentage of middle-income earners.

Educational attainment is an important determinant of income inequality, since people with more education earn higher incomes on average (Boothby & Drewes, 2006; Caponi & Plesca, 2009). Moos's (2014a) research shows that the education gap has increased during the period of economic restructuring. The income gap between young adults with a university degree relative to those with only a high school diploma increased by CDN \$3,341 between 1981 and 2006, holding other factors constant (p. 2091). Moos also confirms earlier research by Walks (2011) that shows managerial earnings are outstripping those of other occupations, exacerbating further income inequality.

The changes that Moos and others found in the earning structure of young adults relative to older workers has implications for the housing market and producing disparities between where lower and higher income earners can afford to buy, "altering the social ecology of cities" (2014a, p. 2096). In Toronto, for example, Hulchanski (2010) noticed that higher income earners are increasingly occupying areas close to downtown and to subway stations, forcing lower income earners into the northeast and northwest parts of the city where they have less access to transit and fewer amenities. The fact that Millennials are flocking to areas typical of high income earners despite the overall lower earning power on average, seems somewhat of a contradiction. However this can partially be explained by the increased polarization of incomes. Even though on average young adults are earning less, there are still high income earners who are able to afford to live in relatively more expensive parts of the city.

The discussion of how Millennial housing preferences shape the social geography of cities is framed by the details of the housing markets and their interaction with

changing demographics. To understand the changing demographics it is useful to look at the main demographic cohorts and what distinguishes them from one another, particularly how Millennials are different than their predecessors.

2.1 Demographic Cohorts

Cohorts are a group of people born in a specified time period. In popular usage the terms cohort and generation are often used interchangeably (McDaniel, 2007), although the term generation is more socially and culturally defined. For instance the Millennial generation is coined as such because they are that segment of the population who are coming of age in the new millennium of the 2000s and thus experience opportunities and constraints that were different from previous generations. The largest generation in Canada is the Baby Boomers, who, as defined by Statistics Canada, were born between 1946 and 1965 during a 20 year period of increased birth rates following World War II. In 2011, 9.6 million or 29% of Canadians were part of the Baby Boom generation (Statistics Canada, 2012a). At almost 27% of the population in 2011 or 8.5 million people, the Millennial generation is a close second to the Baby Boomers in terms of size. Commonly defined as those born between 1980 and 2000, Millennials are different in many ways from the generations that preceded them. Bibby (2009) observes that Millennials have grown up in a time of unique change and choice. He finds that teens have a high degree of moral relativism rather than adhering to objective or universal moral truths. They derive enjoyment from their friends, music, the internet and electronic devices. “The latest emerging generation knows unprecedented consumption choices in every area of life, including entertainment” (p. 29). Millennials are also delaying adulthood by pursuing more education, staying at home with their parents longer, and

postponing marriage and children or forgoing family all together (Townshend & Walker, 2015; Furman, 2014). The prevalence of the traditional nuclear family has given way to a greater number of family types, and more variation in the structure of Canadian families, with a diversity of life courses attributable to modernization, individualization, and detraditionalization (Gazso & McDaniel, 2015; Townshend & Walker, 2015).

According to an Abacus Data survey of Millennials aged 18-35 in 2015, only 19% of Millennials aged 30 to 35 had accomplished the major life milestones of moving out of their parents' home, achieving financial independence, completing post-secondary education, working full time, buying a home, and having children (Abacus Data, 2015). Those who have achieved five out of six of these milestones are still less than half of the total of the oldest group of Millennials. Millennials are also known as the Net Generation, Screenagers, Digital Natives, Generation Y, the Echo Boom, or the Trophy Kids (Alsop, 2008; Barton & Collins, 2012; Townshend & Walker, 2015, see canadianmillennials.ca). They have grown up with computer technology and have been labeled as lazy and entitled with high expectations. In the Abacus study (2015), 68% of respondents agreed with the statement "Many people in my generation want the best that life has to offer, but aren't willing to work hard for it". Millennials are also part of a boomerang or cluttered-nest phenomenon, where many young adults return to live with their parents at some point, or never leave home in the first place (McDaniel, 2004; B. A. Mitchell, 2004, 2006). McDaniel, et al. (2013) observe that for some young adults "co-residency of generations can provide temporary shelter at difficult life transitions," while on the whole living with their parents has become routine "for many adult children in the US and Canada who delay finding their own homes" (p. 313). In 2011 42.3% of

Millennials aged 20 to 29 lived in their parents' home which is essentially the same as the preceding census (42.5% in 2006) (Statistics Canada, 2012b) but much higher than earlier decades. The proportion of 20-29 year olds living at home rose from 32.1% in 1991 and 26.9% in 1981 showing a new trend since the boomers were young adults. Immigration also appears to have had an impact on this trend because multigenerational households are the norm for many immigrant families, and so the increase in the immigrant share of the population has increased the number of young adults living in their parents' home. Notwithstanding the observations, co-residency is less pronounced for middle-class Canadians, possibly because middle-class adult children are receiving more help from their parents to purchase homes of their own (McDaniel et al., 2013).

The differences between Millennials and their predecessors culminate in implications for urban geography. An American study characterizes Millennials as a more urban, multicultural, and transient generation when compared to older cohorts (Belden Russonello Strategists LLC, 2013). Among all the generations surveyed by Belden Russonello Strategists LLC (2013), Millennials have the highest share living in cities, and they have the strongest preference for mixed use, amenity rich, walkable neighborhoods with access to public transportation.

2.2 Demographic Change

Foot and Stoffman (1996, p. 2) claim that demography explains two-thirds of everything. While that may or may not be an exaggeration, demographics certainly has an integral relationship with urban geography. Myers and Pitkin (2009) highlight population growth and decline as “fundamental aspects of urban change” (p. 91). They focus on two significant population trends molding modern cities in the United States:

changes in age structure and the revival of large-scale immigration. These changes in population structure are long swings that affect demand for various forms of the built environment. For example, Myers and Pitkin (2009) notice that construction of high-density housing tends to increase when there is an increase in the number of young adults in the housing market. Apartment construction peaked in the 1960s and 1970s when the baby boomers were coming of age and forming households. The decade and a half from 1991 to 2006 marked a time of reduced apartment construction with a corresponding decrease in the population of young adults. “Recently, some analysts have suggested there is a resurgence of interest in living in central cities, or more generally in higher-density neighborhoods, and that there is an impending revival of more compact urban form” (Myers & Pitkin, 2009, p. 95) alongside the growth in the number of young adults in the housing market. Although demography may be associated with this revival of interest in central city living, numerous other factors such as housing costs may play a significant role as well. In their 2009 paper, Myers and Pitkin focus on changes in the age structure of Baby Boomers and how that affected the built environment. By 2015, Myers was taking note of the Millennials and modelling their increased prominence in American cities (Myers, 2015).

Demographic changes in age structure are highlighted by other researchers as well (Murdie & Teixeira, 2006; Townshend & Walker, 2015) who note that fewer traditional families are forming and those that do form are having fewer children. Household sizes are decreasing with a rise in one and two person households. One-person households accounted for 7.4% of households in Canada in 1951 but by 2011 that portion had grown to 27.6% (Statistics Canada, 2011). In 2011, 30.8% of young adults in their twenties lived

as couples, a modest decline from 32.8% in 2006 and a substantial decrease from 51.8% in 1981 (Statistics Canada, 2012b). “The outcome of these trends has been a fragmentation of living arrangements that has important implications at the individual level for the intersection of life-cycle stage and housing careers and in the aggregate for the city’s social geography” (Murdie & Teixeira, 2006, p. 155). Because young people are not forming families at the same age or rate as their predecessors, they have different housing needs and make different decisions than previous generations. Smaller household size as well as other factors such as lifestyle and increased housing costs have increased the demand for smaller dwellings. This trend is reinforced by declining relative incomes and growing labour market uncertainty (Moos, 2014b). Young adults are increasingly congregating in areas where there is high density housing as it offers the small and affordable apartment size they are looking for. Condominium booms particularly in the central city and along transit lines have allowed the increased concentration of Millennials in these areas (Moos, 2014b). Decreasing household size has also increased demand for more and smaller housing units, and is fueling the development industry to supply this demand.

Immigration is another major trend changing the demographic structure of many Canadian cities. This is particularly the case in the largest metropolitan areas as they receive the greatest percentage of immigrants although the regional distribution of immigrants has been shifting to other parts of the country in recent years (Bonikowska, Hou, & Picot, 2015). While, Toronto, Vancouver and Montreal account for 63.4% of the country’s immigrant population (Statistics Canada, 2013), recent immigrants are also locating outside Canada’s three largest cities. Although Calgary has fewer immigrants

than Montreal at just under 313,900 (4.6% of all immigrants in Canada) they represent a larger share of the metropolitan population than Montreal at 26.2% in 2011, up from 23.6% in 2006 (Statistics Canada, 2013). Most immigrants come to Canada when they are relatively young. The median age of newcomers was 31.7 years old in 2011 (Statistics Canada, 2013) so immigration is increasing the number of Millennials in the population relative to other generations. The proportion of newcomers (i.e. immigrants within the last five years) to Canada who identify themselves as visible minorities continues to increase. Before 1971 visible minorities accounted for 12.4% of immigrants. In the 1970s this proportion increased to 53.0% and by the 1990's it was up to 74.8%. During the five year period from 2006 to 2011, 78.0% of newcomers were visible minorities. In 2006 visible minorities accounted for 16.2% of Canada's total population compared to 4.7% in 1981 (Statistics Canada, 2008). Immigrants make different housing choices than the rest of the population sometimes because there are fewer options available to them. As Walks (2010) notes, "the racialization of poverty...is producing new forms of social exclusion in Canada's cities" (p. 156) particularly for visible minorities. However, not all immigrants are living in poverty. Many immigrants choose to congregate in 'ethnoburbs' (Hall, 2010) for reasons other than financial (Kataure, 2013).

2.3 Housing Choice

The housing choice literature points to a number of different factors that influence why people choose to live where they do. As mentioned in section 2.1, Belden Russonello Strategists LLC (2013) use a market research survey to find that young adults (who would fall into the popular definition of Millennials) prefer to live in walkable communities with access to public transit. Of all the adult generations, Millennials, or Generation Y as they

are defined in the study, express the strongest desire to live in urban, apartment style mixed-use communities and housing types. However, the study shows that young adults are also the least satisfied with their current housing choices and so are the most likely to want to move.

There is a strong tradition of using hedonic modeling, which attempts to determine prices people will pay for different amenities. For example, Hoehn, Berger, and Blomquist (1987) estimate the value of various amenities including climatic factors (sunshine, precipitation, wind speed, etc), coastal location, central city, teacher pupil ratio, violent crime rate and environmental quality using a model of interregional wages and rents. Their research is based on the assumption that “if individuals locate in desirable and undesirable locations, undesirable locations must carry lower prices” (Hoehn et al., 1987, p. 605). Bartik and Kerry Smith (1987) suggest that households consider amenities when they are choosing where to live or work but that some amenities are objectively measurable, such as air quality, while some such as the ‘charm’ of a historic neighbourhood are not (p. 1210).

Brower (2000) reviewed 36 residential satisfaction surveys from which he developed a list of 33 qualities that are necessary for a satisfactory neighbourhood. Brower breaks the qualities into three categories where lifestyle and neighbourhood come together, namely ambience, engagement and choicefulness. Ambience deals with spatial aspects of the physical environment as well as the types of land uses. Engagement includes ways that people engage, or avoid engagement, with each other which can be helped or hindered by the physical and social attributes of the neighbourhood. Choicefulness has to do with the ability of people to choose where, how, and with whom

they will live. From his survey of the residential satisfaction literature, Brower found that the most frequently mentioned feature of a desirable neighbourhood was good maintenance, meaning that the neighbourhood was “well cared for, clean, tidy, neat, well kept up, with no dilapidated structures” (Brower, 2000, p. 97). Other important features influencing neighbourhood satisfaction are things such as tranquility, safety, and friendliness of neighbours. However, Brower notes that the studies show differences in preferences for different socioeconomic classes, life stages, genders, and urban vs, suburban dwellers.

Galster and Hesser (1981) carried out a residential satisfaction survey and attempted to determine the relationship between people’s satisfaction with the neighbourhood and dwellings with ‘contextual’ or physical characteristics of the dwelling and neighbourhood, as well as ‘compositional’ characteristics of the household, including social class and stage in the life cycle. The authors found that the relationship between contextual variables and satisfaction changed depending on the different type of respondent. Certain contexts or physical characteristics of a neighbourhood or dwelling are desirable to some groups and not others. Notable exceptions to this were poor dwelling conditions, few bathrooms, dilapidated structures, high densities, and racial integration which were viewed unfavorably overall. Galster and Hesser also found that in general, younger participants, married participants, female heads of household, black respondents, and those with larger families were less satisfied with their residential situation, regardless of where they lived.

A variety of amenities emerge from the literature as being important in housing and neighbourhood choice. A number of studies relate neighbourhood choice and house price

to the quality of schools that people are able to access by living in a particular neighbourhood (Chung, 2015; Insler & Swope, 2016). Tu, Abildtrup, and Garcia (2016) show that people value living close to peri-urban forests and having scenic views of green spaces from their homes. Jim and Chen (2009) show an increase in housing price for dwellings with a view of the sea as well as for building amenities and proximity to rapid transit. Zheng (2016) asks the question, “What city amenities matter in attracting smart people?” and finds that young people aged 25-35 of all education levels are drawn to cities with more population, a lower population density, more educated residents, a racially diverse population, lower income inequality, and a warmer winter.

2.4 Happiness and Quality of Life

Ballas and Dorling (2013) reviewed the concept of happiness as it relates to geography, concluding that there is not enough literature exploring this subject. They note that there is not one universally accepted definition of happiness and they describe how the definition of happiness has changed over time. Ballas and Dorling’s review of the literature points to measures of inequality at the nation level being correlated with measure of well-being. The more unequal a society is the worse that country performs in measures of well-being.

Hedonic modeling has been used to attempt to understand why people choose to live where they do. Hoehn et al. (1987) use a hedonic model to estimate what people are willing to pay for such amenities as sunshine, precipitation, humidity, wind speed, heating degree days, cooling degree days, living near the coast, central city, teacher pupil ratio, violent crime rate and environment –pollution measures and waste. Their premise is that land rent or housing prices will be lower in less desirable locations.

In his book “Happy City: transforming our lives through urban design”

Montgomery (2013) makes the argument that the proliferation of suburbs as the standard in urban design has led to a decrease in urban levels of happiness. He claims that people are getting it wrong when they choose to live in spread out, car dependent cities that cause people to spend way more time getting to the places they want to go. Montgomery cites an

“emerging consensus among psychologists and behavioral economists that as individuals and as a species, humans just aren’t that well equipped to make decisions that maximize our happiness. We make predictable mistakes when deciding where and how to live, and the architects, planners, and builders who create the landscapes that help shape our decisions are prone to some of the very same mistakes” (2013, p. 78).

According to Montgomery, people’s residential choices are not accurately reflecting the kinds of attributes that would lead people to greater levels of happiness.

2.5 Summary

The literature points to changes in the housing available in our cities due in part to changes in demand as a result of demographic shifts, and also to changes in the supply due to major shifts in governance with neoliberal ideologies. The Millennial generation has different lifestyle and housing preferences than previous generations. They also face a much different labour market than what was available to their parents. This adds new constraints to where Millennials choose to live. Indeed, many are delaying household and family formation due to financial pressures and lifestyle preferences. The desire of many Millennials to live downtown, close to amenities and transit is re-shaping the Canadian city, although other Millennials are concentrating in suburban locations or along public transportation corridors.

This section has identified significant gaps in the literature pertaining to Millennial housing decision making processes or outcomes. Much of the research has focused in the United States or in Canada's three largest cities. There is little discussion of second-tier Canadian cities such as Calgary, a gap in the literature this thesis contributes to filling.

Chapter 3: Research Objectives, Methods, and Context

3.1 Introduction

Building on much of the recent work highlighting urban residential patterns of Millennials, the major objective of this research is to understand why Millennials are locating where they are and how long they plan to stay there, using the city of Calgary as a case study. The literature points to the emergence of a strong concentration of young adults in the central city and in polycentric nodes throughout the metropolitan area (Moos, 2014b, 2015; Walter-Joseph, 2015). Walter-Joseph (2015) claims that “in major metropolitan regions in the United States and Canada young adults live centrally” (p. 108) and his findings show that all of the metropolitan areas in Canada with over 1 million inhabitants exhibit centralized patterns of locations for young adults aged 25-34. Of Canadian cities with populations over 1 million, Calgary had the highest percentage of 25-34 year olds with 16.39% in 2011. It will be used as a case study for understanding the concentration of this age group of Millennials. Even though Millennials are aged 15-35 in 2015 this research will focus on the age group 25-35 years of age as most 15-24 year olds are still living at home with their parents and so their location is determined by the geography of the parental home and space availability in that home.

3.2 Research Question

This study proposes to answer the following questions:

- 1. What differences are there in the stated preferences and structural characteristics for housing and neighborhood choices between Millennials living in the core or area surrounding the core as opposed to in the suburbs in Calgary?*
- 2. What are the future residential intentions of this group of young adults and how will that shape urban development?*

The answers to the question about young adult future plans needs to be interpreted with the understanding that respondents are making no commitment to take action on what they say they are going to do in the future. Participant responses contained herein are only opinions of what people think they are going to do in the future or where they say they would like to live. Unforeseen circumstances could change what they actually choose to do in the future.

3.3 Study Area

The Calgary CMA is home to 1,214,839 residents (Statistics Canada, 2011) with 90% or 1,096,833 of those living in the City of Calgary itself. Calgary had a much higher rate of population growth than other Canadian CMA's, with 46.4% growth between 1996 and 2009 when the national average percentage population growth was 17.3% (Roach, 2010). The economy of Calgary is largely dependent on the energy sector. Calgary is the corporate headquarters for 132 of Canada's 598 largest corporations and 78.8% or 104 of those companies are energy based (Calgary Economic Development, 2014). The median age of the population in the city of Calgary was 36.4 years old in 2011 with 16.7% of Calgarians being between 25 and 34 years of age and 10% over the age of 65. Close to 6 in 10 households in Calgary are 1 and 2 person households (Statistics Canada, 2011a). According to the National Household Survey (2011), 28.5% of people living in the CMA of Calgary were born outside of Canada, 74% of householders were homeowners and 26% rented. The median household income in Calgary in 2012 was \$98,300 before tax, which was highest in Canada among all the

other CMAs (Statistics Canada, 2014). Calgary is a young, affluent, ethnically diverse, contemporary Canadian city.

In 2011 the oldest Millennials were 21 to 31 years old. Statistics Canada groups census ages in five year groupings of 20-24 years old and 25-29 years old. Many of the 20-24 year olds still live with their parents (Statistics Canada, 2012b) and show much different locational patterns than the older cohort. Figure 3.1 shows the central concentration of the oldest Millennials aged 25-29 in Calgary in 2011 with seven census tracts around the city centre having more than double the city wide average concentration of that age group (i.e. location quotient greater than or equal to 2.0). Additionally there are 19 census tracts with location quotients for 25-29 year olds of 1.5 to 2. Twelve of these census tracts surround the downtown area up to 6 km from the city centre then there is a large gap with the remaining seven census tracts located in the periphery of the city in the newest subdivisions of Calgary. There are two distinct concentrations of Millennials, one in the downtown and close to it, and the other in the southeast suburbs. For the purposes of this study, the area in the city centre will be broken up in to a core region (R1) where the location quotient for 25-29 year olds in 2011 was 2.0 or higher, and the area surrounding the core (R2) where the location quotient is 1.5 to 2. A third area consists of a set of contiguous census tracts in the southeast suburbs (R3) where the location quotient for 25-29 year olds in 2011 is 1.5 to 2. The two census tracts in the north of the city with location quotients of 1.5 to 2 were excluded as they are isolated with no contiguous census tracts having as high a concentration of 25-29 year olds. This research examines the factors that distinguish Millennials residing in these three regions, drawing on the literature for guidance. To answer the research questions young adults in three

areas in Calgary were interviewed to determine which factors they state as influencing their locational decisions. As well, census and National Housing Survey (NHS) variables were examined for 25-29 year olds to determine the characteristics of the oldest Millennials who were congregating in the three areas in Calgary.

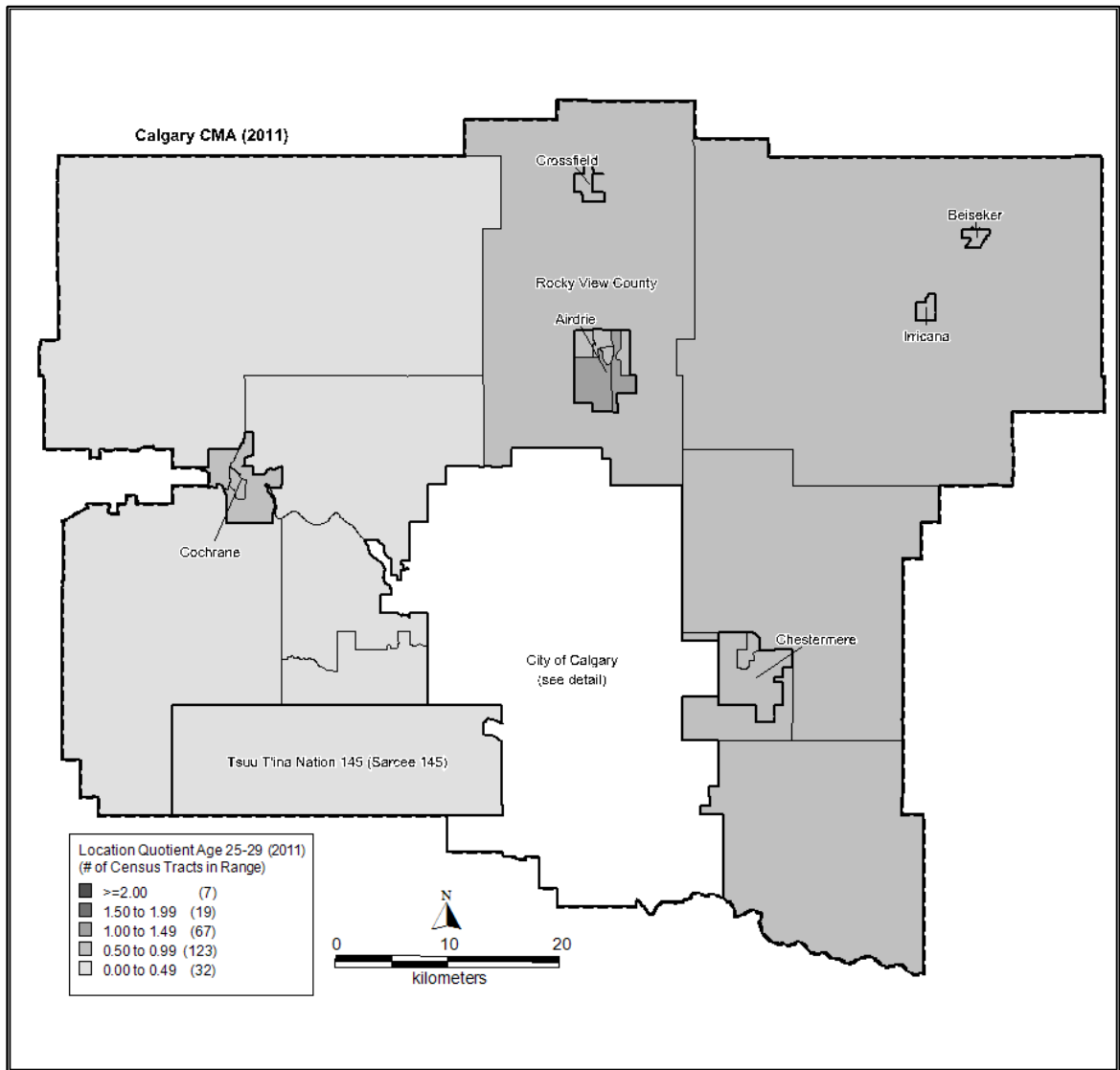


Figure 3-1: Location Quotient for Population Aged 25-29 in Calgary CMA in 2011.

Source: Base map and data from Statistics Canada Census, 2011. Location quotients computed by the author.

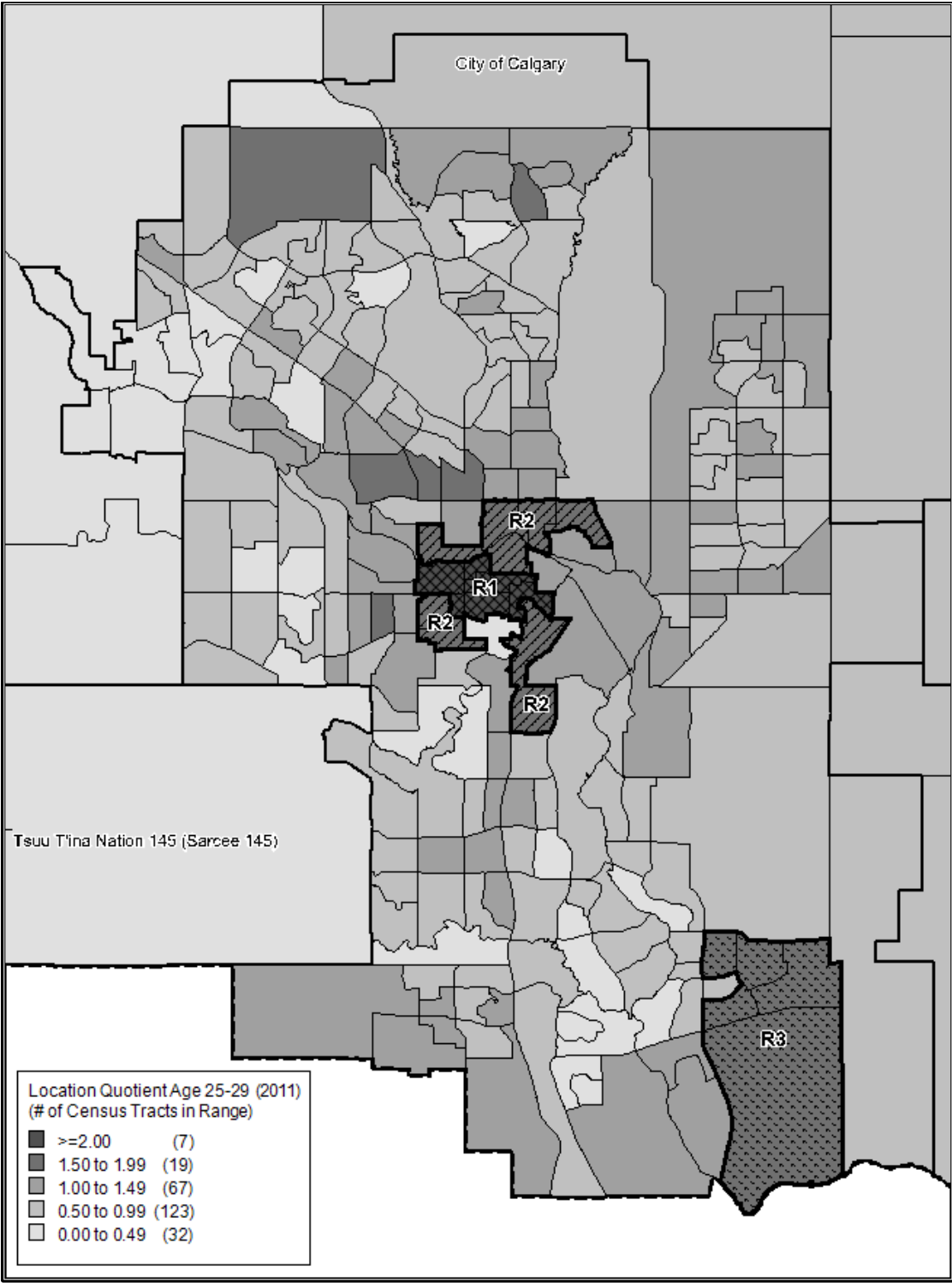


Figure 3-2: Location Quotient for Population Aged 25-29 in Calgary CMA in 2011 and Study Regions R1, R2, and R3.

Source: Base map and data from Statistics Canada Census, 2011. Location quotients computed by the author.

3.4 Demographic Characteristics of Study Regions in Calgary

While a number of studies show an increasing concentration of Millennials in the centre of cities with populations over one million, not all Millennials are the same. In the city of Calgary, Millennials in the three regions outlined in this study have distinct characteristics as shown by the 2011 Canadian census and the 2011 National Housing Survey. Full data tables with comparisons of 25-29 year olds with to other age groups in the city are included in Appendix A. Excerpts describing the oldest Millennials in 2011, aged 25-29, are included in this chapter.

The majority of 25-29 year olds living in R1 and R2 were single (see Table 3.1). Around 60% were never married and were not living common law. However for the oldest suburban Millennials in R3, less than 30% were single. Of those that had formed families, the 25-29 year olds in R3 were also much more likely to have children, as 41% of those families had children compared to 14% and 16% of families with children in R1 and R2.

In terms of type of housing that 25-29 year olds live in there were noteworthy differences between the regions. In the suburbs, two thirds of people in this age group lived in single detached homes with only 13% living in apartment buildings. In R1, however, 96% of 25-29 year olds lived in apartment buildings and less than 2% lived in single detached home. R2 is similar to the core in that a majority of 25-29 year olds lived in apartments (70%) but more lived in single detached homes (14%).

Household structure varies also. Closer to the core, 25-29 year olds were more likely to live in small households of one or two people. In R1 95% of that age group

either lived alone or with one other person. In R2 it was 89% and in R3 less than two thirds of 25-29 year olds lived in one or two person households.

Table 3.1 Characteristics of 25-29 year old in Calgary CMA and selected regions from 2011 Canadian census

	CMA	Core R1	Surrounding Core R2	SE Suburbs R3
Defacto Marital Status				
Never legally married and not CL	50%	63%	59%	29%
Legally married or common law	48%	35%	40%	69%
Separated, Divorced and Widowed (not CL)	2%	2%	1%	2%
Census Family Status				
Married or CL with no children	58%	86%	85%	59%
Families with children	42%	14%	16%	41%
Type of Dwelling Lived in				
Single-detached house	37%	2%	14%	66%
Total Apartments	40%	96%	70%	13%
Other	24%	3%	16%	22%
Small Households				
Percent 1 Person households	31%	55%	47%	18%
Percent 2 Person households	42%	39%	43%	46%
Percent 1 and 2 person households	73%	95%	89%	63%

Source: 2011 Canadian Census sample, Statistics Canada.

The proportion of immigrants decreased with distance from the core. In R1, 20% of 25-29 year olds were immigrants (see Table 3.2), which is very close to the percentage of 25-29 year olds citywide who were immigrants (21%). In R2, 16% of the oldest Millennials were immigrants while the southeast suburbs in R3 were the least diverse with only 13% of 25-29 year olds who were immigrants. The pattern was very similar for visible minorities with the percentage of 25-29 year olds in the core who were visible minorities being very close to the city wide average for that age group and the percentage of visible minorities in R3 being less than half that of R1. R3 was significantly less multicultural than R1 and even R2.

The education level of the oldest Millennials varied significantly between the regions. In the suburbs roughly one third of 25-29 year olds had a bachelor's degree or less, one third had some postsecondary less than a bachelor's, and one third had a bachelor's degree or higher. This was close to the city wide pattern of 25-29 year olds. In R1, 58% of 25-29 year olds held a bachelor's degree or higher, while in R2 slightly fewer of the 25-29 year olds had that level of education (53%). The data from the NHS shows that more people who live in the city centre have some postsecondary training and a majority have at least a bachelor's degree.

City wide, 71% of commuters aged 25-29 drove or rode as a passenger to work in a car, truck or van. However Millennial commuters in R1 and R2 were less likely to drive and more likely to walk, bicycle, or take public transit on their way to work. In R2, 52% of commuters used a car, truck or van to get to work whereas in R1, only 40% of commuters drove. Public transit and bicycle ridership were highest in R2 while walking was favored by 36% of 25-29 year olds in R1. City wide, 7% of 25-29 year olds chose to walk to work while in R3 only 1.1% of that age group walked to work. Rates of walking and bicycling to work are higher for 25-29 year olds in all regions than the average of all commuters.

Table 3.2 Characteristics of 25-29 year old in Calgary CMA and selected regions from 2011 National Housing Survey

	CMA	Core R1	Surrounding Core R2	SE Suburbs R3
Percent of Immigrants and Non-permanent Residents				
Non-immigrants	75%	73%	78%	85%
Immigrants	21%	20%	16%	13%
Non-Permanent Residents	4%	7%	6%	2%
Visible Minorities				
Visible Minorities	28%	26%	22%	12%
Education Level				
High school diploma or less	32%	20%	19%	31%
Postsecondary less than bachelor's degree	31%	22%	28%	37%
Bachelor's degree and higher	37%	58%	53%	32%
Mode of Transportation to Work				
Car, truck or van	71%	40%	52%	88%
Public transit	19%	20%	23%	9%
Walked	7%	36%	20%	1%
Bicycle	1%	3%	4%	1%
Other	2%	1%	1%	2%
Occupation				
Management	7%	9%	8%	8%
Business, finance and administration	19%	23%	21%	19%
Natural and applied Sciences and related occ.	12%	17%	15%	10%
Health Occupations	6%	5%	7%	7%
Occupations in Law and social, community and gov't services	10%	11%	12%	15%
Art, culture, recreation and sport	3%	5%	4%	3%
Sales and service occupations	22%	21%	22%	19%
Trades, transport and equipment operators and related	16%	9%	10%	17%
Natural resources, ag, and related production	2%	1%	1%	1%
Manufacturing and Utilities	2%	1%	1%	1%
Mobility - Address 1 year ago				
Different census district in Canada	7%	11%	12%	6%
Outside Canada	3%	4%	3%	1%
Same address (dwelling)	67%	54%	56%	68%
Same census district, different dwelling	23%	31%	29%	25%

Source: 2011 National Housing Survey sample, Statistics Canada.

In terms of occupations, the regions are not hugely different from each other and from the citywide average. The greatest regional difference is in trades, where the percentage of 25-29 year olds living in R3 who work in trades, transport, and equipment operation is almost twice as high as those in R1. The pattern was similar but opposite for those working in natural and applied sciences. More people in R1 worked in natural and applied sciences (17%) while only 10% of workers in the suburbs (R3) were occupied in that field.

The oldest Millennials living in the core and area surrounding it were less likely to have been at the same address as they were a year previous to the 2011 National Housing Survey, and more likely to have moved from outside Canada during that year. The 25-29 year old cohort were less mobile in the suburbs (R3) than in R1 and R2. The oldest suburban Millennials were the least likely to have moved from somewhere else in Canada, from outside of Canada and from somewhere else in the census district.

Table 3.3 Duration of Commute to Work in Minutes

	CMA	Core R1	Surrounding Core R2	SE Suburbs R3
All Commuters	27	23	23	31
20-24 year old commuters	27	24	24	30
25-29 year old commuters	28	23	23	31
30-34 year old commuters	28	23	23	33
35-64 year old commuters	27	24	22	31

Source: 2011 National Housing Survey sample, Statistics Canada.

Table 3.3 shows the duration of commute to work for various age cohorts of commuters in the CMA and in the three regions studied. There are very little differences between the age groups. Commuters in the CMA traveled for 27-28 minutes on average one way to get to work. In R1 and R2 commuters travelled between 22-24 minutes to

work. Commuters in R3 had the longest commute to work at 30-33 minutes on average each way. For 25-29 year olds, commuters in R3 travelled for 40% longer than commuters of the same ages in R1 and R2.

The 2011 Census and 2011 National Housing Survey point to many differences in the social fabric of the three areas studied in this thesis. There are significant differences between R1, R2 and R3 in terms of marital status, family status, type of dwelling, size of household, percent of immigrants and visible minorities, education level, and mode of transportation to work. The differences between the areas are less pronounced for occupation and mobility. For duration of commute to work, R1 and R2 are almost indistinguishable, although both of those areas differ significantly from R3.

3.5 Methods

Using aggregate statistics and multiple regression models, Moos (2014b, 2015) and Walter-Joseph (2015) found young adult location in Canadian and American cities with populations over 1 million to be correlated with high density housing, urban amenities and proximity to transit both in central regions and reaching into suburban areas. While the aggregate data provide important insights into factors that are found in correlation with young adults, the residential decision of young adults are only partially understood. “The reliance on census data often precludes a detailed investigation of factors such as personal preferences and cultural factors, [and] the role of social identity and social distance factors” which are crucial in assessing the residential location of young adults (Owusu, 1999, pp. 77-78). “Relying solely on quantitative research methods has been found by many to oversimplify real-world experiences,[or] miss factors of importance not easily quantified” (Bateman, 2001, p. 51). The problem is not just with the

quantitative approach, it is also because the research relies on secondary data instead of primary data. In trying to understand the locational patterns of Millennials it is useful to talk to them directly to find out what factors they report as drawing them to the locations they choose to settle in. This was done through a qualitative approach of interviewing adult Millennials living in the three study regions identified above. Qualitative interviews provide a depth of understanding to the research not available in quantitative studies. Open ended questions and semi-structured interviews allow the researcher to discover the underlying factors that Millennials see as influencing their locational decisions. In the past it was widely believed that such causation could only be deduced using quantitative methods but Maxwell (2012) argues that qualitative research can describe possible causal relationships such as those that influence Millennial housing decisions.

“Qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them. (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011, p. 3 as cited in Creswell, 2013, p. 44). This approach of understanding the meanings that people ascribe to the different causal factors that influence their housing choices makes the qualitative approach the appropriate method for undertaking this study. A natural setting for the research allows the qualitative researcher to “collect data at the site where participants experience the issue or problem under study” (Creswell, 2013). Interviewing people directly allows the researcher to uncover the meanings that the participants put forth rather than prompting them with a survey instrument with predetermined factors that the researcher deems important. An inductive, exploratory approach will aid in the process of discovering the meanings that Millennials

ascribe to the various factors in their decision making process to ensure that the results are more organic rather than prescriptive.

After gathering demographic data, open-ended questions were asked in a semi-structured interview style to inquire about why the respondents choose to live where they live and where they see themselves living in the future. Interview topics covered included motivations for choosing their current residential location, housing attributes, neighborhood attributes, commute, length of residency, and future residency plans. The demographic information sheet and semi-structured interview protocol are included in Appendix B. The interviews were recorded and transcribed then coded and analyzed for themes using NVivo software (Creswell, 2014). The interview data produced an exploratory understanding of the housing choices and locational preferences of Millennials in Calgary, shedding light on why they choose to live where they do. In addition, answers to questions about their future plans for where Millennials want to live can inform ongoing development and planning objectives.

3.6 Participant Selection

A purposeful sampling method seeks to “intentionally sample a group of people that can best inform the researcher about the research problem under examination” (Creswell, 2013, p. 147). To answer the research questions outlined in this thesis it was necessary to interview young adults aged 25-35 who live in the Calgary centre city core (R1), those in the area surrounding the core (R2) as well those who live in the southeast census tracts 2.16, 2.18, 2.19, 2.20 and 2.21 which correspond to the neighborhoods of McKenzie Towne, New Brighton, Mahogany, Copperfield, Auburn Bay, and Seton (R3). The core area corresponds to the neighborhoods of Downtown West End, Mount Royal,

Cliff Bungalow, Scarboro, Sunalta West, Mission, Beltline, Bankview and Sunalta. The neighbourhoods in the area surrounding the core are Chinatown, Richmond, Elbow Park, Park Hill, Rideau Park, Renfrew, Eau Claire, Erlton, Roxboro, South Calgary, West Hillhurst, Crescent Heights, Rosedale and Sunnyside. Those still living in their parents' home were not included in the sample and in fact there were no respondents who fit this description. In each area the principle of data saturation (Creswell, 2014) was used to determine the number of participants. In R1 twelve participants were interviewed, eleven in R2 and fourteen in R3.

To ensure a heterogeneous sample of adult Millennials, a few different methods were used to recruit participants. The researcher contacted neighborhood associations such as McKenzie Towne Council, McKenzie Towne Community Association, Downtown West Community Association, and the Hillhurst Sunnyside Community Association to ask for referrals to their members who are aged 25-35 and living independently from their parents. University alumni associations were also contacted in a like manner to solicit participants but this approach did not prove fruitful. Neither did contacting immigrant based organizations. In fact only one immigrant participated in the study. Social media was the dominant source for participants in the study. Facebook and Twitter posts attracted the bulk of participants to the study. As well, a local newspaper, Metro News, wrote an article about the research inviting further participants, which solicited a number of participants.

Those who responded were forwarded further information and a consent form (Appendix C). This letter states that participation is voluntary and that participants have the right to withdraw from the interview at any point. The researcher is not in any

position of influence over these individuals and the invitations stressed that participation is completely voluntary. To identify additional participants as required, the researcher used snowball sampling, relying on referrals provided by gatekeepers from the associations and research participants (de Wit, 2013). This ended up introducing some bias into the sample as members of a cycling club circulated the invitation to participate amongst themselves and the final sample included a much higher percentage of people who bike to work than is found in general population of R1 and R2.

3.7 Descriptive Statistics from the 2011 Census and National Housing Survey

To better understand the residential location of Millennials in Calgary data from the 2011 Census and National Housing Survey (NHS) were collected and discussed. This mixed methods approach helps to triangulate which Millennials are concentrating in the areas show in Figure 3.1. This method involved an application to access data from Statistics Canada's Research Data Centre (RDC) to create cross tabulations for 25-29 year olds in Calgary who concentrate in census tracts at rates 1.5 and higher than the city wide average. Those who live in the core were compared with those living in the areas surrounding the core as well as those who live in the southeast suburbs.

3.8 Theory of Factors Affecting Millennial Locational Choice

The literature provides some clues as to which factors may be dominant in affecting Millennial locational choice. According to Murdie's ecological model of urban social structure family status has a concentric ring pattern with low family status (people with no children) in the central rings and higher family status (families with children) in the rings farther away from the city centre (Knox & Pinch, 2014). The spatial distribution of 25-29 year olds in 2011 seem to correspond to the expectations of Murdie's model.

Murdie's model would predict that the high relative concentration of 25-29 year olds in the city centre up to 8 km corresponds to a low family status, so either singles or couples with no children who are living downtown. Once people start having children they tend to move out of the city centre in favor of neighborhoods with more child friendly amenities. This is corroborated by Plane, et al, (2005) who track migration patterns across various sized cities showing that people in the 25-29 age range move into large metropolitan areas. Some of the suburban concentrations of 25-29 year olds could be accounted for by households that have transitioned to families and some may be those still living at home with their parents in the suburbs. In a telephone survey of second generation South Asians in Brampton, Ontario, Kataure and Walton-Roberts (2012) found that the majority of these ethnic young adults preferred living in semi-detached or detached homes that were close to family and friends, in the desired house or neighborhood or close to work. This research suggests ethnicity to be a large factor in young adults deciding to live in the suburbs. However ethnic groups are a smaller share of the total population in Calgary than in Brampton so further research is needed to determine whether ethnicity is a factor driving suburban living in Calgary. This research explores the experiences and stated preferences that young adults express as influencing their decisions to locate in the city centre versus the suburbs of Calgary. Using the qualitative interview approach adds depth to the understanding gained from census data and quantitative statistics alone to give a richer picture of why Millennials live where they live and whether the trend is likely to be permanent or temporary.

3.9 Personal Situatedness

When conducting research, a researcher is influenced by his or her situatedness or involvement within the context of the project he or she is undertaking to study (Creswell, 2013). This situatedness can affect the way the researcher designs the analysis and interprets the results and so it is important to position oneself within the research and acknowledge potential biases based on personal involvement in the research.

I am researching the oldest Millennials but I am not a Millennial myself. I miss the upper bounds of the generation by a few years. I am also aware that my training in economics affects how I interpret decision making as largely a function of preference and choice. I come from a rural background and all the people I interviewed were living urban lifestyles. I have to be explicit in the interviews about discovering the constraints that participants are facing. I lived in a large city only briefly in my life when I was pursuing post-secondary education. However I found that as I interviewed the people who lived downtown or close to it, I was influenced by their love for where they lived and the urban amenities they enjoyed. I had to catch myself when subsequently talking to people who lived in the suburbs, so that I wouldn't express judgement against them for choosing to live farther away from all the activity available close to downtown. The literature suggests some possible reasons of where Millennials are choosing to live within the set of constrained choices they face, but I really tried to put those aside during the interview process and I didn't refer back to my conceptual framework until after I had organized the codes into loose themes that emerged from the data. In this way I tried to remove myself from the influence of the literature and give voice to the participants themselves.

Chapter 4: Qualitative Interview Analysis

To answer the research question of why Millennials are deciding to live in areas of high concentration with other people in their cohort, thirty seven participants were interviewed in three areas of Calgary where the location quotient was greater than 1.5 for 25-29 year olds in the 2011 Canadian census. A number of themes and sub-themes emerge from the qualitative interview analysis. Millennials are making locational decisions by prioritizing their preferences within the set of constraints that they face. The major themes discovered in this analysis are constraints, neighbourhood attributes, housing attributes, employment-based considerations, transportation attributes, social attributes of the neighbourhood, family or household considerations, and psychological benefits.

The participants were between the ages of 25-35. Out of the 37 participants, 18 were men and 19 were women. The majority of participants were married or living common-law (27 out of 37 or 73%) while 10 were single, divorced or separated. In the CMA 59% of people on average are married or living common-law. Six participants self-identified as visible minorities, representing 16% of the sample. This is lower than the CMA average of 26%. The percentage of participants identifying as immigrants was even lower at 3% even though the CMA wide average of immigrants is 25%. The sampling methods used in this study were not effective at attracting immigrants to participate even though immigrant organizations were specifically invited. The sample of participants was highly educated with 97% having some post-secondary and 77% having a bachelor's degree or more. In the CMA as a whole, 60% of the population has some postsecondary less than a bachelor's degree and 29% have a bachelor's degree or higher. Most of the

participants did not have children (62%) while 38% did have children. Among the participants there were 9 people living alone (24%), 15 people living with one other person (41%), and 13 people living in households of 3 or 4 people (35%). The percentages are quite close to CMA wide averages where 25% of people live in one person households, and 32% of people live in two person households. Less than a quarter of the participants personally earned less than \$50,000 a year, 59% earned between \$50,000 and \$99,999 a year, and 16% had incomes over \$100,000 a year.

4.1 Constraints

People face a number of constraints that limit their choices in the housing market. The most commonly discussed constraint that the Millennials in this study mention is affordability. Cost of housing presents a major constraint for people when they are looking for a place to live. What differs between respondents in the suburbs (R3) versus the core (R1) and surrounding area (R2) is what their greatest priority is and what trade-offs they are willing to make. Many people in the suburbs are choosing bigger, newer houses with yards and garages. Respondents talk about being able to get more value for their dollar in the far SE of Calgary than anywhere else in the city. Perry (R3) articulates how location is affected by the budget people have available:

Well if money was no option I probably would have built closer to downtown. With more money your location can improve. Like for an equivalent house I guess. Like if I wanted the same space and the same newness to the house, the money goes up exponentially as you get closer to downtown. So price kind of dictated how far out I had to go to afford the house that I wanted if that makes sense.

Many respondents who choose to live closer to the core are willing to trade off a larger house in order to be closer to work and or amenities. When asked why she decided to live in a neighbourhood surrounding the core, Evelyn (R2) was quick to respond,

“Because we value our time to an enormous extent”. Evelyn (R2) considered the cost of commuting and used those calculations to figure out what they could afford to spend on a house close to the core. Evelyn (R2) is not alone in her valuation of time affecting her locational choices. Lee (R1) notes that a 1 hour commute each way is 2 hours a day, 10 hours a week which is an extra day out of your week just devoted to commuting.

Blake (R2) originally moved from the core to an area a little farther out because prices had gone up and he and his roommate were looking for something more affordable. Another constraint he faced was the availability of suitable properties. In the past Calgary has been a fast growing metropolis and at times it has been difficult for people to find the home they want. The first time Shawn (R2) and his girlfriend started looking for a rental close to downtown Calgary he said, “We would find a place online and if we didn’t contact the landlord within an hour the place was gone”. They moved out of the core and came back again a second time when it was much easier to find rentals in Calgary. Greg (R3) mentioned the pressure he felt to buy during the housing boom of 2007, “My age group had to buy a house now or maybe you are not going to get one. So a lot of us bought houses at that time”. Availability of places was a constraint that affected Dean (R1)’s locational choice as well. He would have preferred to live in a certain neighbourhood close to downtown but couldn’t find the furnished accommodations that he was looking for in his preferred neighbourhood and ended up settling for a furnished suite on the other side of the core.

4.2 Neighbourhood Attributes

A variety of neighbourhood attributes were identified as being important to the respondents when making locational decisions. Amenities are the most frequently mentioned neighbourhood attribute and include such things as green space, shopping,

schools, restaurants, bars, as well as sport and concert facilities. Location of the neighbourhood is another important attribute drawing people to each area although the definition of a good location varies for different people. Trees, nightlife, noise level, safety, community maintenance, and the aesthetics of the housing stock are other neighbourhood features mentioned by some of the respondents.

4.2.1 Amenities

For the purposes of this thesis, an amenity is defined as an attractive feature of a neighbourhood that the participants mention enjoying or using. There are a wide range of neighbourhood attributes that Millennials in the Calgary case study are looking for. The most commonly mentioned attribute that people value are outdoor amenities such as parks, pathways, water and green space. A majority of people (11 out of 14) in the suburbs mention the importance of the lake in their community or how they would like a lake if they do not already have one. For Kali (R3) and her family being close to the lake is the most important determinant of why they live where they live, which is four doors down from their lake entrance. For Kali (R3), the fact that she grew up in a lake neighbourhood is an important factor for her that she mentions several times in determining why she wants to live in a lake community where she does. Janet (R3) says that the private community lake was a huge part of why she decided to locate in her neighbourhood. For her it was the second most important reason for selecting her location.

Likely because there is no lake close to downtown Millennials in the core and surrounding areas do not mention a lake as an important part of their neighbourhood or even as something they are looking for in future neighbourhoods so living in a lake

neighbourhood is an attribute that is unique to the suburban respondents. A few of respondents from the core and surrounding areas do mention the appeal of being close to the river, both the Bow and the Elbow. People talk about the river often in relation to the ability to walk, run, or bike along it. Some people, like Steve (R1) and Blake (R2), are also using it as a transportation route, and not just for recreation.

More generally, most Millennials, regardless of residential location, mention the value of being close to parks, playgrounds, and green space. For Dillon (R1), in the core, the value of green space stems from being able to connect with people, “It’s easier for my friends to go out and be active”. One of Rob (R3)’s top priorities in choosing a home was to find one that backed onto a green space. He takes advantage of the 70 acre wetland with walking trails right out his backyard to walk, rollerblade and bike. When asked what the walking paths add to his life Rob (R3) says, “Exercise. They bring me down, you know. I’m all about work, work, work. When I’m at home it gives me a chance to get out in nature a bit. And you know just calm down”. He thinks that if he lived somewhere that only had sidewalks and not the walking trails through green space he would not get outside and exercise as much. Linda (R2) explains the psychological benefits from having green space close by in her neighbourhood, “It’s nice to be able to escape into nature when you’ve had a busy day. Just unwind”.

For Michelle (R2) green space in the community around her house substitutes for the lack of a yard at their condominium complex, “Oh there’s lots of parks and everything around. So even though we don’t have a back yard it forces us to get out and explore our city some more with our son, take him to different places all the time, rather than just staying at our house and playing in the backyard if we were to live somewhere different”.

Matthew (R1) articulates his enjoyment of public space in this way:

Another element of this home is that my front yard and back yard while not private are amazing. Because my front yard is Memorial Park and the library and the neat restaurant down the way and my back yard is the cycle tracks and the shopping centre and all that other fun stuff. That's an interesting element that I've learned, perspective I think that I've also learned that this idea of you have your little space that is your home and compared to other people in the world who live in-, I have a friend who lives in London. Our home is gigantic compared to what she's lived in and what she's living in with 2 people. But we use the public space a whole lot more and appreciate it as a member of the public that's just our cool little space. So the community for me is part of my home. I guess is the way I would describe it.

People with less private space seem to value the public spaces as part of their living space. Alternatively, some people who have their own yard value not having to compete for space in public parks. Darcy (R3) says, "I don't use a whole lot of parks. I don't know. We have a play centre in the back of our yard so I just feel like the park would be pointless to go to, so [our son] just plays in the back yard". Darcy (R3)'s sentiments are consistent with the findings of Tu et al. (2016) who show that people with private yards aren't willing to pay for green space. However, many other respondents, as previously mentioned, are looking for green space in their neighbourhoods even though they have their own yards.

Community and recreation centres are neighbourhood features that are important to about half the people in all three of the areas. In the southeast there is a noticeable lack of large, multi-purpose recreation centres which the city is in the process of building two of, one in Seton and one in Quarry Park, so the people in the southeast mention the benefit that those coming amenities will be to them. In the meantime they are making use of the facilities they do have in the community such as skating rinks, volleyball, basketball and tennis courts. In the suburbs some people are using the community centre

primarily for access to the gated lake as the private amenities with access only to local residents is a feature unique to the suburbs.

Another very popular neighbourhood amenity that most people in all three areas mention is a grocery store. For some people in the core and surrounding area, having a grocery store within walking or biking distance makes a significant impact in their lifestyle and health. Having a grocery store within walking distance is more of a priority in the core and surrounding area than the suburbs with the exception of both Kali (R3) and Haley (R3) who enjoy having grocery stores within walking distance in the suburbs. Haley (R3) says, “Even when I lived downtown I wasn’t as close to a grocery store as I am now”. For Nadia (R1) from the core, being close to food is one of her top three priorities of why she lives where she lives. Nadia (R1) has no car and so she is getting all her groceries by bike or by walking to the store, thus having the grocery store close is very important to her.

Being close to restaurants, bars, pubs and coffee shops is important to over half the respondents, most of them in the core and surrounding area. For Matthew (R1) in the core, having a good neighbourhood pub nearby is one of his top three priorities for why he lives where he lives. He lives in a two bedroom condominium downtown and does not really like entertaining in his personal space because he feels it’s not really set up for that. Having a good neighbourhood pub that is within walking distance of his home and now that he has children, one that is kid-friendly is a major part of Matthew’s (R1) social life. Perry (R3), who recently moved from downtown to the suburbs also likes having a few good pubs within walking distance so he does not have to worry about catching a taxi. Colin (R2), who lives in the area surrounding the core, was attracted to the neighbourhood by the numerous amenities, including restaurants that were within

walking distance. When asked what features of the neighbourhood he makes the most use of Colin (R2) said, “Restaurants for sure. We’ve tried just about all of them within a 5 block radius”. Further to that he expands on the convenience of having the restaurants in close proximity, “If I want to go to a restaurant there’s tons in the neighbourhood. I don’t have to get in the car and go drive there and fight traffic and put up with delays because of construction”. In addition to the proximity, Colin (R2) really enjoys the variety of restaurants that he has available. Within a 5 block radius he estimates that they have 30 different restaurants to choose from. The value he gets out of that is “it keeps life interesting, we get different flavors. We can explore different cuisines”. Colin (R2) sees living in the core with all the amenities as an advantage over people who live in the suburbs and have much less variety in where they can go out to eat. Indeed, restaurants, bars, pubs and coffee shops seem to be important to more of the people who live in the core and surrounding area than those who live in the suburbs.

A majority of suburbanites discuss the importance of schools in their neighborhood, but only a couple of people from each of the other two areas mentioned schools at all. In some of the suburban neighbourhoods the schools are just being built. Jessica’s (R3) number one consideration for where to locate is where there is a good school system for her children. She is looking for a well-established school that has good teachers and something that is close to home that they can walk to. Having a school in her neighbourhood that her children can walk to is very important to Haley (R3). Knowing that the schools would be opening in time for her children to attend was a factor in their decision to stay in their neighbourhood. Schools are definitely a more prominent theme in the suburbs where the family status is higher than in the core or surrounding area. Lin is one of the few people in the core and surrounding area who mentioned schools at all. Part

of Lin's reason for why location is important to her is so that she can walk her son to school when he starts going.

Sport and concert facilities are another amenity mentioned by a few respondents, mostly by those in the core and surrounding area. The people who live close to those amenities seem to talk about attending those events more frequently. Shawn (R2) likes having a wide variety of activities and venues because he says, "If there's a lot to do around us then it is more likely that we are going to go do stuff". Shawn's comment highlights the overlap between amenities and lifestyle that people choose to live.

Other amenities mentioned by a few people are medical services including doctors and hospitals, banks, post offices, dry cleaners, hardware stores, and libraries. People also talk about transportation amenities but that will be discussed in further detail in the section on transportation attributes.

4.2.2 Location

People from all three areas highlight the importance of location in their decision to live where they do. However, location means different things to different people. In terms of location, Janet (R3), from the suburbs, is looking for "schools, stores, close to work, kind of easy access on to main roads. Within 2 minutes I'm on the highway". In contrast, Darcy (R3)'s number one priority is being located close to his work in the suburbs and his third priority is having amenities in the neighbourhood:

Even though it's close to work, if the neighbourhood didn't have quality amenities and my kids were having to go outside the neighbourhood for all these things, then it wouldn't make much sense to- yea I get to walk to works but if I have to drive to do everything else then what's the point? So having a lot of the amenities was probably the biggest thing for me.

More people are concerned about being close to amenities than they are with being close to work. This is particularly the case for those in the suburbs who live far away from work but like having amenities close to where they live. Perry (R3) lives in the suburbs and drives to work downtown, but being located close to amenities is his number one priority for living where he does. “If you have to drive an hour to get something, it doesn’t matter if you have a beautiful view, but if you can’t get groceries it’s not worth it”. Rob (R3) drives 33 km to work from his home in the suburbs, which is about three quarters of the way across Calgary. He likes the neighbourhood he chose to live in because of “just how everything is close and easy to get to”.

For people who choose not to have a car, having amenities close by, within walking or biking distance is their main way of getting the things they need. For Matthew (R1) in the core, who does not own a car, accessibility to amenities, especially walkable amenities, is his number one priority for choosing a place to live.

Many people in the suburbs talk about amenities being within driving distance of their homes. They value such things as grocery stores, shopping and restaurants. Rita (R3), who has a long commute to downtown during the week, says she's got everything she needs close to her home.

Another aspect of location that is important to people is living close to their work. This will be discussed further in employment based considerations.

Some people who live downtown or close to it have a strong aversion to living in the suburbs. Cindy (R1) rents a condominium downtown even though she owns a place in the suburbs. As she states, “I was at one point living in it but then I discovered living in the suburbs sucks”. Her biggest reason for not wanting to live in the suburbs was the long commute which some days was over an hour each way. Shawn (R2), who lives just

outside the core, has similar feelings about the suburbs, “I used to live in the very, very deep south Calgary and I would never want to do that again”. For much the same reason as Cindy (R1), when Shawn (R2) lived in the south, his commute was an hour long each way on transit compared to now where he walks 20 minutes to work. He never wants to go back to the long commute even if he has children.

On the other hand, some people who live in the suburbs are equally happy to live far away from downtown. Rob (R3) says, “It’s far enough away from the hustle and bustle that you don’t think you are in a city”. Perry (R3) still commutes to downtown from where he now lives in the suburbs but he likes having separation between where he works and where he lives.

4.2.3 Trees

The presence of trees in the neighbourhood is a feature that a few people mention enjoying or wishing for if they live in some of the newer communities. Colin (R2) lives in an area surrounding downtown with lots of mature trees.

There’s trees. That’s one of the major drawing points of our neighbourhood that we love is there’s trees that are massive like 60-70 ft. trees and a lot of Calgary doesn’t have that...That’s a really big selling feature. We can look right out our window and see these huge trees looking right out at us so that’s awesome.

Peter (R2) and his wife rent a house in a neighbourhood surrounding the core. What Peter (R2) loves most about his house is the crab apple tree in the front yard that they harvest apples from. In her neighbourhood in the core Wendy (R1) wishes it had more trees. Kali (R3), Joanne (R3), Ken, Janet (R3) and Rita (R3) all said similar things of their suburban neighbourhoods. Elsie (R3) lives in one of the older areas of the southeast suburbs where the houses are getting to be about 20 years old so they actually have trees. Elsie (R3) thinks the trees are one of her favorite things about the neighbourhood, “They all have

trees out front and they're all fairly well kept. So that's what contributes to that nice community feeling, right?"

4.2.4 Nightlife

The presence of bars and nightlife in a neighbourhood is an attribute mentioned almost exclusively by those living in the core or surrounding area. Lee (R1) says his decision to live in a core neighbourhood came down to lifestyle, "just in terms of social activities, that kind of stuff. That's one of the neighbourhoods in town that seems to have a lot of things happening at night and on the weekends outside of work as well. There's kind of a vibrant energy around there". Dillon (R1) likes being close to the nightlife because "if I go out for a night on the town I'm not driving and drinking and all that kind of stupid stuff. No need for a vehicle or a \$40 or \$50 cab". Celina (R2) likes living close to the nightlife downtown versus what is available in the suburbs, "We like to entertain so we will have friends over and for us being downtown if we want to go out after well there's lots of places to go out after. You know suburbia is more for families so there isn't going to be bars or different restaurants that you might try". Blake (R2) moved from the core to an area surrounding the core and he likes living close to the action but not in it.

Millennials are stereotyped as desiring access to nightlife and it is certainly an attribute that shows up in this study. However, this characteristic may not be a universal trait since respondents in the suburbs hardly mention it at all. Some people from the suburbs mention pubs as being important to their social life but other than that the only mention of bars is by Greg (R3) who talks of going downtown for clubbing in the past tense as something they used to do. There appears to be some heterogeneity between Millennials who choose to live in the various areas for different reasons.

4.2.5 Quiet

A quiet neighbourhood is seen as a desirable attribute by some. As Blake (R2) said, he likes to be close enough to nightlife and the action of downtown, but he prefers to have his home in a quiet neighbourhood just outside of downtown. He picked his place in the area surrounding the core “because it’s just outside of downtown. It’s quite nice. It doesn’t feel like it’s close to downtown. Once you get into Crescent Heights it gets pretty quiet. So that was nice”. For Wendy (R1), having a place with less noise is one of her top three priorities. In the condominium where she currently lives, there is a bar across the alley, and on weekends she has difficulty sleeping because of the noise. She and her boyfriend plan on moving in the near future to something more quiet but still close to where they are now. Right now they are both able to walk to work. Ideally Wendy (R1) would like to live just outside of downtown. For Wendy (R1), having a quieter neighbourhood is a matter of her health and wellness because she is not getting the sleep she needs living where she is close to nightlife. Peter (R2) and his wife moved from the core to a neighbourhood in the surrounding area partly because the neighbourhood seemed a little quieter. Referring to his previous place downtown, Peter (R2) said, “It was getting too noisy. Our apartment complex was right off 17 Ave. Which if you’ve ever lived there it can get pretty hairy on the weekends. We still wanted to live close to downtown but didn’t want to have to deal with that weekend crowd”. These comments seem to define what distinguishes people who choose to live in the core from those who live in the area surrounding the core. Respondents in the area surrounding the core liked to be close to all the activities that are available downtown but to have some separation and quiet in their residential communities.

The suburban respondents (R3) also enjoy quiet. Janet (R3), for example, says her ideal neighbourhood is “quiet not like the downtown places where you hear the sirens and the partying and all that kind of stuff”. Rita (R3), who also lives in the suburbs, has a similar opinion: “it’s kind of away from the chaos of downtown. So that’s nice too. It’s quieter”. When asked what attracted her to a suburban neighbourhood, one of the things that Joanne (R3) mentioned is, “I like that it seems really safe and quiet”.

4.2.6 Safety

Safety is another neighbourhood attribute that is important to some people. For Joanne (R3), her community seems safer because it is well maintained, “I like living in a community where people take pride in how things look. It makes it feel safer. Maybe it isn’t actually safer but it gives that perception”. Joanne (R3) is the only woman in the suburbs who mentions that having a safe neighbourhood is important to her. Several of the suburban men talk about the importance of safety. Rob (R3) thinks that the suburban community he lives in will be safer because there are more families there. For Ben (R3), the nature of the community has become more important to him now that he’s a father. For Darcy (R3), “Safety is a big piece”. Darcy (R3) hears about break-ins in his neighborhood on social media and so he gets the perception that there is a lot of crime in his neighbourhood even though he says that statistically his neighbourhood has an average number of break-ins. Darcy (R3) still feels that suburbia is safer than downtown. However this view is contested by Matthew (R1), who lives in the core, “I hear of a lot more shootings and stabbings and whatever in places that aren’t the downtown. So I don’t feel like there is a cumulative feeling of violence or criminal activity here. I think a lot of people have a misconception about how dangerous a place might be”. Lin, who also lives in the core, agrees with Matthew (R1), “We have a lower crime rate here than a lot of the

suburbs. And it's a lot safer on the sidewalks here. And we've got a lot more marked crosswalks".

For Melonie (R2), who lives in the area surrounding the core, safety was a gender issue. She avoided areas that had a poor reputation for safety when choosing a place to live. Melonie (R2) often works long hours at her downtown office, sometimes coming home late at night so being close to her work in a safe neighborhood allows her to get to and from work in comfort.

4.2.7 Community Maintenance

To Ben (R3), having a clean, well maintained neighbourhood is something that he values strongly and that he is willing to pay extra for in the suburbs where many communities charge extra fees for neighbourhood maintenance. Ben (R3) mentions 10 times during the interview that he cares about a clean, well maintained neighbourhood. Cleanliness of the neighbourhood is one of Rob (R3)'s top three reasons for living where he does in the suburbs. He says it is important to him because:

you don't have to worry about coming home and having to pick dandelions off your yard because your neighbour next door doesn't love to take care of their stuff as much as the rest of you do. Or you know, putting their garbage out and it's overflowing onto your property. Everybody is respectful of everything.

It's not just people in the suburbs who value clean, well maintained neighbourhoods. Linda (R2), who lives in the area surrounding the core, says that people in her area maintain their individual homes, which contributes to positive feelings about living in the neighbourhood. Melonie (R2) enjoys that her neighbourhood in the area surrounding the core is "just really clean, well kept".

4.2.8 Housing Stock - Aesthetics and Appearance

Most people in the study liked the look of the housing stock in their neighbourhood. For Colin (R2), in the area surrounding the core, the character of the housing stock in his neighbourhood is one of his top three priorities for living where he does because he walks through the neighbourhood every day and he likes to have something interesting to look at:

I like that no matter what street you go down, there's different houses for you to look at and to see in the neighbourhood. Oh that's an interesting place. There's a lot that catches your eye. ...I guess the value I am getting is I am more intrigued in my neighbourhood. It just seems to, I don't know. It feels better, walking through.

Joanne (R3) loves the aesthetics of her suburban neighbourhood and mentions it several times as one of her favorite things about where she lives. Joanne (R3) lives far away from her family, from recreation centres and she's got a longer drive to work than she would like but she loves the way the community looks and she says, "Every time I drive into the community and head towards my house it's so cute, like these little like brick townhouses and this European look to it. It's like- it makes me happy". So Joanne (R3) is getting value out of the appearance of her community despite the trade-offs she's made to live there. She said a couple of her friends suggested she buy in the northeast where they had bought which is close to her work but Joanne (R3) said she was turned off by the poor appearance of the neighbourhood.

Several people in the suburbs mention choosing a neighbourhood with no garages in the front because they like the look of it better. Elsie (R3) says one of the things that attracted her to McKenzie Towne was that "it doesn't look like a bunch of garage doors. It's also got lane homes so everybody's garage is in the back for the most part in our little

area there, so it makes for a much prettier neighborhood". The designers of McKenzie Towne attempted to incorporate features of New Urbanism into the neighbourhood. Another feature designed to encourage interaction with neighbours that Elsie (R3) mentions is the "nice big front porches". Elsie (R3) mentions the advantage that her neighbourhood has a large variety in the size of homes, which allows people to stay in the same neighbourhood if they want a bigger or a smaller home.

Kim (R1) describes the drawbacks of having very uniform housing stock in her downtown neighbourhood:

It's all basically condos. So if you wanted a row house or a town house your choices are very limited. You'll pay for a lot of that. You'll pay for that privilege I guess. Which is unfortunate, but I think that's why a lot of families when they have their second kid they're like "Oh, geez, we're going to need more space" and move out.

Other neighbourhoods in the core have more variety in housing stock than the one Kim (R1) lives in. Of the mix of housing stock in her core neighbourhood Beth (R1) says, "Ah it's great. I like seeing the little old houses still there, but having apartments adds more variety to the neighbourhood. You see more people and it brings more flavour to the neighbourhood". Steve (R1) says before they moved to the core they didn't think about the mixture of housing stock in their neighborhood at all, "But after we moved in and started to explore the neighbourhood we viewed that as a definitely positive aspect in that we have a lot of historical homes, in the south part of the community, where that part of the community is a lot more diverse". Steve (R1) says he likes living where it is diverse.

The historical characteristics of housing is important to some. Living in a neighbourhood with some history in the buildings was one of the things that attracted Nadia (R1) to where she lives in the core. Nadia (R1) said she moved to Calgary from out

east where she is used to a lot more history than what Calgary has. She finds herself drawn to the older houses and has purchased a small but recently renovated turn of the century home in the core. Nadia (R1) likes the mixture of housing stock in the neighbourhood which she says contributes to the mixture of people they have on their street.

A number of people like high density housing stock because of the increased activity it brings along with greater opportunities for social interaction. This will be discussed more extensively in section 4.6.6 on high density living. However, others do not have a positive opinion of high density living. Wendy (R1) has a negative opinion of high-density housing stock, even though she lives on the 9th floor of an apartment building, “I think the high-rises detract from area because then there is less parking. And some of them they just take away from the charm”. Wendy (R1) hopes to move in the near future from the core to somewhere with less apartment buildings and more houses but still close enough to downtown to get to work easily.

One complaint that Peter (R2) has about the appearance of the housing stock in his neighbourhood surrounding the core is that the new “modern monstrosities” are all so different that it makes it look unsightly, “When every house is trying to be different you just get this sort of like this visual ugliness”. His neighbourhood has older homes as well as more modern in-fills whose style clashes with the houses around them.

The sameness of suburban housing is also seen in a negative light. A lot of people talk about the “cookie-cutter” houses in the suburbs, including Serge (R3), who lives in one of them. Yet his distaste for the look of the housing stock in the neighbourhood has not stopped Serge (R3) from locating there. It is a trade-off that he is willing to make. Jessica (R3) says that she does not really like living where all the houses are similar and

it's one of the reasons she would like to move in the next 2-3 years. She says her house is very typical of the suburban neighbourhoods, "I mean if you've driven through these neighbourhoods you've seen what my house would look like. They all kind of look the same". Rita (R3) says when they bought their house they didn't pay attention to the other development that was planned for the neighbourhood. They bought a brand new single family home in a suburban neighbourhood a couple of years ago when the rest of the housing stock in the neighbourhood was just similar single family homes and not a lot of amenities yet. Now that condominiums and townhouses are being built Rita (R3) is concerned that could change the mood of the community, the type of neighbours and the amount of traffic. For now she says things are working out, but the development isn't finished yet, and if the change in housing stock does turn out to produce undesirable side effects then Rita (R3) may consider moving.

4.2.9 Summary of Neighbourhood Attributes

Although there were a number of different neighbourhood attributes that Millennials mentioned were important to them, there were a few areas where differences emerged between the three regions (see Table 4.1). Many Millennials say that green space is important to them but only those in the suburbs mentioned a preference for lakes in their communities. Some suburbanites wish for more trees in their neighbourhoods whereas few people in the other two areas mention trees at all. Being close to amenities is important to people living in all three regions but those living in the core or surrounding area are much more likely to look for amenities within walking distance of their homes. Most of the Millennials who consider restaurants, bars, pubs, coffee shops and nightlife to be important to them live in the core or surrounding area. More

Millennials in the suburbs discuss schools as being a desirable neighbourhood amenity than those who live in the core or close to it. Location is important to Millennials from all three areas but they are looking for different things. Those who live in the core or surrounding area are much more likely to say that living close to work is a priority for them. Having a neighborhood with some historical aspects is mentioned by Millennials living in the core and area surrounding the core but not by respondents who live in the suburbs.

Table 4.1 Importance of neighborhood attributes to Millennials in the three regions of Calgary

Neighbourhood amenities	R1 Core n=12	R2 Surrounding Core n=11	R3 SE Suburbs n=14
Lake	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	High
Parks, pathways, water, greenspace	High	High	High
Community and rec centres	Medium	Medium	Medium
Grocery store	High	High	Medium
Restaurants, bars, pubs, coffee shops	Medium	High	Low
Sport and concert facilities	Low	High	Low
Location close to amenities	High	High	High
Location close to work	High	High	Low
Trees	Low	Low	Medium
Nightlife	Medium	High	Not mentioned
Quiet	Low	Low	Low
Safety	Medium	Low	Medium
Community maintenance	Not mentioned	Low	Medium
Historical character of housing	Medium	Low	Not mentioned

High importance = 6 or more out of 10 people mentioned the attribute

Medium importance = 3 to less than 6 out of 10 people mentioned the attribute

Low importance = less than 3 people out of 10 mentioned the attribute

The importance of the neighborhood attributes is listed as low if less than three people out of ten mentioned the attribute. If six or more out of ten people mentioned the attribute, its importance is listed as high for that area. Medium importance is characterized by three or more people but less than six out of ten people in the area talked about the attribute.

4.3 Housing Attributes

Housing attributes is another major category that emerges in this case study of Millennials in Calgary. Many can be further classified as attributes of the inside of the dwelling unit or attributes of the outside of the dwelling unit. Some attributes were just mentioned by people living in apartments or condominium which in this study was only people living in the core or downtown. There are condominiums in the suburbs but they are in the minority and none of the respondents in this study who live in the suburbs currently live in condominiums. In the southeast suburbs in this study 76% of the dwellings are single detached homes, compared to the core which is 92% apartments and the area surrounding downtown that is 27% single detached homes and 52% apartments.

4.3.1 Apartment and Condominium Living

Housing attributes that respondents who live in apartments and condominiums are looking for include such things as in-suite laundry and covered or secure parking for their vehicles. Both of those criteria were on Steve (R1) and Lin's (R1) list of places they considered when they were looking for a condominium. Dillon (R1) is less concerned with having a secure indoor parking space. His condominium comes with a titled parking spot underneath the building but instead of parking there, he rents that parking space out for extra income and he parks his own vehicle on the street, which he says he has no problems with.

Having a nice view is something mentioned almost exclusively by respondents living in condominium towers in the core or surrounding areas. Matthew (R1) loves his east facing view of downtown from his suite. Dillon (R1) remarks that his favorite thing about where he lives is his view which he is glad he will never lose because he lives in a condominium building that borders a park. For Nelly (R1) having a nice view is one of

her top three priorities for living where she lives because having a nice view increases her quality of life.

Building amenities are another feature mentioned exclusively by apartment and condominium dwellers. Several people mention that they like having a gym in their buildings. Some people have hot tubs, party rooms and guest suites in their buildings as well. Dean (R1), Dillon (R1) and Nelly (R1) like the rooftop patios in their respective buildings. Several people in condominiums mention appreciating their balconies where they can enjoy the view and barbeque if they like. For Michelle (R2) and other condominium dwellers like her, the patio or balcony is the only private outdoor space that they have. Lee (R1) has a large, south-facing patio on his ground floor condominium that he really likes. He finds that it provides social benefits as people will drop by when he's hanging out on the patio,

Respondents in condominiums also talked about the temperature of the suite. When Ellen (R2) was looking for a place air conditioning was near the top of her list of requirements as "it can get pretty hot here in Calgary". For Evelyn (R2) the temperature of their condominium became an issue of quality of life:

The biggest factor that caused us to start looking elsewhere was our house got unbearably hot in the summer. And even our basement was what they call a sunshine basement. It was half about grade with full-size windows. So even the basement would be hot. And our condo board would not let us put in an air conditioner but it got to the point where we could not handle another summer. Because if you can't sleep for 4 months of the year it's a significant decrease in your quality of life.

Condominium living can have its drawbacks when it comes to dealing with condo boards. Michelle (R2) likes the townhouse condominium where she lives close to downtown but laments having "to deal with ridiculous condo board

meetings/requests/permissions”. Linda (R2) has been turned off condominium living after renting a condominium in the area surrounding the core. For her it is a matter of autonomy:

I would never buy a condo. Even if I was an old little lady and I was downsizing, I would rent before owning a condo. Because I feel like the way that they manage the money. And then they come at you and they tell you that- they didn’t do this to us because we were tenant but they sure as heck did it to the landlord – where they give you surprise bills and say oh by the way we’ve got to replace the copper paneling on the side of the house with a very unique material. It costs an arm and a leg, and you have to now pay \$10,000. It’s like okay, that’s a great expense to just add to my cost of daily living. So for me that seems like not a lot of decision, not a lot of influence on the decisions but you have to then support. If that makes sense.

While Linda (R2) never wants to own a condominium, Lin (R1) and Steve (R1) chose a condominium because they wanted less maintenance hassles to deal with. Matthew (R1) and his wife live in a condominium in the core and he says he is not interested in doing the yard work that is associated with owning a home. He is happy that his condominium board hires someone to do that.

4.3.2 Interior Housing Attributes

In terms of housing attributes associated with the interior of the dwelling unit, the feature that dominated in importance to the Millennials in this study was the layout or floorplan. In particular, an open concept layout was particularly popular. For Celina (R2), Ellen (R2) and Ben (R3), the layout of their living space was one of their top three reasons for locating where they do. All three separately mentioned that it was important to them to have a layout that lends itself to entertaining guests. In total, eight people of the 37 interviewed in all three areas, mentioned that an open concept floorplan is important to them.

Another floorplan feature some people mentioned was having more than one bathroom so that they didn't have to share with other people in the house or guests including having an ensuite bathroom attached to the master bedroom. Other features that were talked about include the basement, office space, storage, walk-in closets and integrated audio visual equipment which Perry (R3) built into his new home. Rita (R3) likes the layout of her home for how much light it allows inside the house. Ten other people in this study also mentioned natural light or windows being important to them.

In terms of interior spaces, the kitchen was the most frequently discussed room in the house. Perry (R3) custom built himself a gourmet kitchen in his suburban home. Ellen (R2) loves the size of the kitchen in her condominium, "We like to cook a lot so I think both of us being able to cook in the kitchen is important". For Nelly (R1) the size of the kitchen was a trade-off that she was willing to make, "I like to cook and the kitchen is really small so that was kind of a turn-off but location was really good".

4.3.3 External Housing Attributes

In terms of exterior housing attributes, the features that most people are looking for are a yard and a garage, and both of these things are more common in the suburbs than other areas. For people in condominiums and apartments, most do not have yards and they talk about parking in covered secure parkades rather than individual garages.

For Ken (R3), one of the things his family likes most is spending time in their yard and being outdoors. Ken says their family opted for one of the smaller homes on the block so they could have a bigger yard. Greg (R3) and his family chose not to build a garage on their lot because they would rather have the yard space to use. "We didn't choose the garage because we just figured that-, like everybody is so envious of our back yard because they are like: 'Oh we put a garage in. We can't do anything in the

backyard.' I see why you would want a garage but we want our backyard". For Joanne (R3), she wanted a place with a yard for her dog. She says the backyard and the garage were the features of her home that most strongly influenced her decision to move to the southeast far away from family, friends and work. Even so, Joanne (R3) says she would like a bigger back yard than what she currently has. A number of people who live in the suburbs complained that the lot sizes in their neighbourhoods are too small to have a good sized yard. Haley (R3) says she would like a bigger lot but she's happier to walk past smaller ones, because the higher density means things are closer together and more walkable.

Evelyn (R2) and her husband were very intentional about getting an oversized double car garage with room for their two cars plus camping gear, hockey equipment and other things. That requirement ruled out a lot of places in the core where they could have got a townhouse but not their own garage. What Evelyn (R2) ended up finding was a duplex in the area surrounding the core, still within the 15 minute radius around downtown that they were searching within. Michelle (R2) also lives in the area surrounding the core and a garage is the feature her home is missing that she most wishes it had. They have had their vehicle broken into a few times and would like somewhere more secure to park.

A deck or porch is an additional exterior feature that was sought after by some Millennials in this study. A few people mention enjoying their deck. Brett (R2) really likes his porch in the front of his century old home in a neighbourhood surrounding the core,

It has a porch. Which a porch is a major thing for me. I find that porches enhance that casual conversation that I was talking about. When you sit out on your porch and you are there with your friends and your family maybe having a beer or a

lemonade and you see someone walking by and you say hi and maybe have a brief conversation with them. That’s a common occurrence for us when we sit out on the porch and I like that. So that was a major factor in why we liked that particular home. That vibrancy that is built into the structure of the house itself.

Brett (R2) finds that having a porch on his house enhances his ability to have social interactions with people in his neighbourhood.

4.3.4 Summary

In terms of housing attributes, the main differences between what Millennials in the three areas in Calgary chose has to do with the types of housing that are most readily available in those areas (see Table 4.2). People in the suburbs tend to place a higher priority on having single family homes with yards and garages. More people living in the core or close to it chose condominium living and the housing attributes associated with that. Interior housing attributes are important to respondents from all three areas but different people are looking for different things and there is no pattern based on the region people live in. For some people layout is important to them. Others emphasize lighting or their kitchen, etc.

Table 4.2: Importance of housing attributes to Millennials in the three regions of Calgary

Housing Attributes	R1 Core n=12	R2 Surrounding Core n=11	R3 SE Suburbs n=14
Apartment & condo	High	High	Not mentioned
Interior housing attributes	High	High	High
Garage	Not mentioned	Low	High
Yard	Low	Low	High

High importance = 6 or more out of 10 people mentioned the attribute

Medium importance = 3 to less than 6 out of 10 people mentioned the attribute

Low importance = less than 3 people out of 10 mentioned the attribute

4.4 Employment-based Considerations

Employment considerations are the fourth major set of factors that are important to Millennials in this study. When people are thinking about where they want to live most of them take into account the location of their work relative to where they choose to live. For some people this is more important than others. In the section under location as a neighborhood attribute it was discussed that more people place emphasis on having amenities close by in their neighbourhood than those who choose a location that is close to work. But still out of 33 people in the survey that were asked to list their top three priorities for choosing where to live, 16 said that being close to work was one of their top three priorities.

The length of commute to work is an important factor that people consider when they are deciding where they are going to live. According to the 2011 National housing survey, Calgarians spend an average of 27 minutes travelling to work which is slightly higher than the Canadian average of 25.4 minutes (NHS 2011). Some people are willing to accept longer commutes than other people are. Shawn (R2) used to live in the south and commute an hour to his work downtown. He says he will never do that again because he didn't like losing so much time to commuting. In contrast Greg (R3) feels that once he is on the road, a bit longer commute is not a major inconvenience.

For the couples, often at least one partner lives close to their work. According to Jessica (R3) in the suburbs, living close to her husband's work "played a huge factor in us selecting this neighbourhood". Rita (R3) moved in with her boyfriend in the suburbs where he lived close to work but she has a 45 minute bus ride to her work downtown. Rita (R3) explains, "My boyfriend and I live together and he lives about 10 minutes from work. He's just always lived close to work so it just kind of works out for him that he's

close. One of us may as well be close. If we are both commuting it doesn't make any sense".

For Michelle (R2), who lives in the area surrounding the core, living in a location close to her work is important to her because of the time she is able to save, "The lower the commute the better, certainly. It allows you to have a lot more time, to spend with your family and friends and doing the things that you want to do". Michelle (R2)'s husband bought the condominium where they live before he and Michelle (R2) were together because it is within walking distance of his work downtown. Michelle (R2) used to work downtown as well but now drives 15-20 minutes to the southeast for work. However she is close enough that she still drives home at lunch to meet her husband who also walks home for lunch. Ellen (R2) also lives in the area surrounding the core and she is a 15 minute walk from her work downtown. She says that the biggest reason for selecting her current location was its proximity to her work. She said she's read a lot of studies on how a person's happiness is directly correlated to how long a commute time they have.

When we moved down here I had to take the train and with a ½ hour to work, I just felt like so tired when I got to work. And grumpy. There's so many people on the train. And you are fighting for space. Then when we moved and I've been walking 15 minutes every morning. Like I feel a million times better. So much happier. And I'm awake when I get to work.

Olsson et al. (2013) have demonstrated a correlation between satisfaction with the work commute and happiness. Also as the commute gets longer, satisfaction as well as happiness decreases. People who walk and bike to work have higher levels of satisfaction and happiness than those who drive or use public transit. Janet (R3), who lives in the suburbs describes the negative effect that a long commute had on her life. She has worked

in the southeast for several years now and she used to live on the other side of the city, “And it was the absolute worst thing in the world. I hated it so much. Every day I was miserable. This was before the ring road so I was spending 3 hours a day just to commute, which was brutal”. Now that she has moved to the southeast, her commute is reduced to a 10-15 minute drive of which she says she is very happy with. Being close to work is her number one reason for living where she does. Janet (R3) also likes the significantly reduced vehicle costs including gas and maintenance since she has made the move close to her work.

Matthew (R1) and his wife have been very careful in their careers to pick jobs that they can easily get to from their home in the core without driving. They have chosen to live without a car for about six years now. Matthew (R1) says his wife even turned down a job opportunity at one point because she would rather work somewhere that was easier to get to. Right now Matthew (R1) has a 15 minute bike ride to work and he prefers active transportation.

Not everyone who lives in the suburbs has a long commute to downtown. Some suburbanites are choosing to locate close to their work as well for reasons similar to those expressed by the central dwellers. Ben (R3) is a 4 minute drive from his work in the suburbs and says he chose his location to be environmentally friendly. He used to bike to work but now needs his car for work. Darcy (R3) is unique among suburban respondents. While some other suburbanites are choosing to live close to work, for most that means a short drive to work—under 15 minutes for those in this study who mention being close to work as a top priority. Darcy (R3) is like many of the Millennials living in the core who chose to locate where they could walk to work. According to the 2011 NHS, 86% of people who live in the southeast suburbs defined in this study drive or are a passenger in a

car, truck or van for their commute to work. Darcy (R3) is part of only 1% of people in the southeast suburbs who walk to work. That's compared to 32% of the people in the core who walk to work and 19% who walk to work from the area surrounding the core. When choosing a place to live Darcy (R3) drew a small circle around his place of employment and looked only at homes within that circle. In the last 3 years he has upgraded from a nearby condominium to a house within a 15 minute walk to work, which he makes year round. While Darcy (R3)'s commute on foot is not common in the suburbs it is more common in the downtown and surrounding area.

In terms of employment considerations the main differences between the three regions in Calgary are that more people who live in the core or surrounding area place a high priority on being close to their work place than those who live in the suburbs.

4.5 Transportation Attributes

A fifth set of factors to be considered are those associated with transportation. Millennials in this study discussed three transportation factors: active transportation, public transit, and car sharing. Some of the discussion relevant to transportation attributes overlaps with the discourse on commute which was already covered in the previous section. People have different preferences as to mode of transportation in the different areas. According to the 2011 National Housing Survey, most people drive to work, although more people in the suburbs drive than in the core and area surrounding the core. In the southeast suburbs included in this case study of Calgary, 86% of people travel by car, truck or van, 12% take public transit and only 1% report walking to work. In the core 45% travel by car, truck or van, 22% use public transit, 32% walk and 1% bike to work. The area surrounding the core is similar to the core with 58% of people travelling by car, truck or van, 21% taking public transit, 19% walking and 2% biking.

Table 4.3 Usual mode of transportation to work

Mode of Transportation to Work	Core R1	Surrounding Core R2	SE Suburbs R3	CMA
Car, Truck or Van	45%	58%	86%	80%
Public transit	22%	21%	12%	15%
Walk	32%	19%	1%	4%
Bike	1%	2%	0.0%	0.4%

Source: Statistics Canada, National Housing Survey, 2011.

Table 4.4 Mode of transportation to work for people in survey who commute to work

Mode of Transportation to Work	Core R1	Surrounding Core R2	SE Suburbs R3
Drive	2	1	8
Public Transit	1	1	1
Walk	3	5	1
Bike	4	3	0
Total commuting to work	10	10	10

Source: Interviews with Millennials, 2016.

4.5.1 Active Transportation

Active transportation pertains to transportation that is powered by humans, such as walking or biking. It is an important consideration among some Millennials. This survey sample is highly biased towards people who choose active transportation in the core and in the area surrounding the core. While the NHS found that only 1% of people living in the core bike to work, of the people sampled for this survey, 4 out of 10 people who commute to work in the core bike on a regular basis. In the area surrounding the core the NHS found that 56% of people drive to work on a regular basis but in the survey only one respondent drives to work out of the ten in that area who commute.

Steve (R1), who lives in the core and bikes a half hour to work, prefers the bike ride over the much shorter drive. Ellen (R2) also prefers active transportation, and living close enough to work so that she can walk is a top priority for her. Darcy (R3), who lives

in the suburbs and walks to work, prefers active transportation as well, “It’s great. I don’t have to warm my vehicle up in the wintertime. It’s a decent amount of exercise. Anytime I don’t have to drive my truck is a good time”. He also mentions the benefit of reduced driving costs when he can keep his vehicle parked most of the time.

Having a walkable neighbourhood is important to many people, even if they are driving to work. Walkability is one of Elsie’s (R3) favorite things about her suburban neighbourhood. She says she walks to the amenities on the local main street two to three times a week. Walkability is particularly important to respondents like Kim (R1), Matthew (R1) and Dean (R1) who choose not to own a vehicle. For Kim (R1) walking gives her a greater sense of connectedness to other people in her community because she encounters people face to face rather than being isolated in a vehicle. Dean (R1) mentions something similar, “It helps to get to know other people and see them. It just gets you out in the community a lot more than if you are driving in your car 20 min to go get a gallon of milk or something”. Walkability is one of Wendy (R1)’s top priorities for choosing where to live and she finds it enhances her ability to access activities: “I would rather be outside than in the car. And I find I do more things if I can walk there. Like going out for coffee or going to the gym, going shopping, going to a restaurant, maybe, for lunch. It’s pretty awesome being able to walk to work”.

Nadia (R1) and her husband do not own a vehicle and bikability of the neighbourhood is really important to Nadia (R1). The addition of the cycle tracks to Calgary’s transportation system is a feature appreciated by those who like to bike in the central city. The cycle track network is a pilot project by the City of Calgary that opened up four routes in Calgary’s downtown in June of 2015 with dedicated lanes for cyclists protected by barriers separating it from vehicle traffic. In December 2016, Calgary City

Council voted to make the network permanent. According to a City of Calgary newsletter, women make up 27% of the total riders using the cycle tracks which is an increase from an average of 20% female riders before the cycle tracks was implemented (City of Calgary, 2016b). This finding is supported by Evelyn (R2) who says she bikes more now that the city has the cycle tracks. Matthew (R1) uses the cycle tracks on a daily basis as he has no car. He and his wife had a child after the cycle tracks was opened and it helps them feel safer taking her on the cycle tracks than he would biking with his child on the road. The cycle tracks network is only in the central city of Calgary so it was mostly just mentioned by people who live in the core. Respondents out in the suburbs say they like to use bike paths in their neighbourhoods but none of the respondents in this study currently bike to work. Bike paths in the suburbs are used more for leisure and recreation.

4.5.2 Public Transit

Public transit is also an important factor mentioned by some respondents. Most of the people who said public transportation was important to them live in the core. Only two people who live in the suburbs said that public transportation was important to them: Haley (R3) because she does not drive, and Rita (R3) because she uses the express bus to get from her suburban home to her work downtown. A few people who live in the suburbs mentioned that the public transit service in that area is poor. Haley (R3) said, “It is annoying if I have to leave the neighborhood ‘cause then the transit is bad”. Joanne (R3) said that she’s considered using transit for trips downtown but it’s just too inconvenient. The city has announced that they will be extending the C-train into the southeast suburbs but that still could be decades before it is completed.

Some respondents who live in the core or surrounding area reported that access to public transit was a factor for them in choosing where they live. When Kim (R1) and her

husband were looking for a place they drew a small square around a C-train station in the core and searched for homes inside that square. Linda (R2) currently takes public transit from her place in the area surrounding the core, but she is planning to move farther out and being close to a C-train station was one of her criteria for where to live next so she can still get in to her work downtown relatively easy. The cost of parking was one consideration for Linda (R2) in choosing transit as her method of getting to work, “Public transit is important to me because parking downtown is way too expensive. And I work downtown, so quite frankly I want to make sure I can get to work for an affordable rate”. One thing about her move from close to downtown to farther out that Linda (R2) is not looking forward to is the added time she will have to spend commuting. Still she would rather take transit than drive herself. Several people mention preferring the train over using the bus because it is more reliable.

4.5.3 Car Sharing

A transportation option that people in the core and area surrounding the core have to them is car2go where people can buy a membership and then use available cars for a fee. Michelle (R2) and her husband share one car between the two of them and use car2go for when they need a second vehicle. Celina (R2) lives in the area surrounding the core and says that she has given up her car for the most part. Instead she uses car2go when she needs a vehicle. Brett (R2) says he may use car sharing even more that he uses his own car. He likes the flexibility of the car2go service and says he “can take one-way trips if we are going out somewhere and have a few drinks. Also [I] don’t have to pay for parking with car2go”.

4.5.4 Summary

The main differences in transportation attributes between the three regions are expected with the locations of each region (see Table 4.5). Active transportation was more important to respondents who lived in the core (R1) or surrounding area (R2) than it was to those who lived in the suburbs (R3). Car sharing was only available to those living in the core or close to it. Public transportation was more important to and more widely used by those who live in regions 1 and 2.

Table 4.5 Importance of transportation attributes to Millennials in the three regions of Calgary

Transportation Attributes	R1 Core n=12	R2 Surrounding Core n=11	R3 SE Suburbs n=14
Walk to work	Low	High	Low
Bike to work	Medium	Medium	Not mentioned
Public transit	High	Medium	Low
No car	Medium	Not mentioned	Not mentioned
Car sharing	Medium	Low	Not mentioned

High importance = 6 or more out of 10 people mentioned the attribute

Medium importance = 3 to less than 6 out of 10 people mentioned the attribute

Low importance = less than 3 people out of 10 mentioned the attribute

4.6 Social Attributes of the Neighbourhood

The sixth major theme that emerges from the study is the various social attributes of the neighbourhood. This theme has to do with how the social characteristics of people who live in the community affects respondents' choice of where to live. Some respondents are looking for neighbourhoods where there are families and children, or where they can live close to their own family and friends. Others are looking for places to meet new people and socialize with their friends. Having friendly neighbours is important to some respondents, while others suggest high levels of community engagement is a

priority for them. As briefly mentioned in Section 4.2.8 about housing stock, the idea that living in a high density neighbourhood has its benefits is further explored in this section. Also respondents' preferences for social diversity or homogeneity is discussed as a part of this theme.

4.6.1 Families and Children

Living in a neighbourhood where there are other families and children is important to some people with children. Darcy (R3) says he does not really pay attention to the social diversity in terms other types of people in his suburban neighbourhood, but he does notice the children and families,

The only thing I notice is the kids and the families. Because I wouldn't want to live in a neighbourhood where it's just old people like their kids are gone or they are retirees. I feel like my kids wouldn't have anyone to play with and when I was growing up that was always a bonus point. There was a lot of kids my age that you could go and play hockey with or hang out with and stuff like that. When people are close too, it just makes it easier. The kids aren't having to travel longer distances just to go hang out with their friends.

Serge (R3) works from home and his wife works all over the city so they could have easily located anywhere in the city. However, demographics played into their choice of the southeast (R3) as they wanted to be around other people who were similar age wise and in a similar stage of life with having children. Serge (R3) says,

Because there are some older communities you can go to where you can get the large house, large yard and stuff like that but it's an older community with older folks, retirees and what not. Where the kids wouldn't have anyone to play with. And they wouldn't have anyone to really hang out with as peers. So you can get a large house, large yard in a number of different communities out there but here there are people in a similar boat.

Both Rob (R3) and Perry (R3) didn't have children yet but moved to the southeast suburbs in anticipation of it being a good place to start a family.

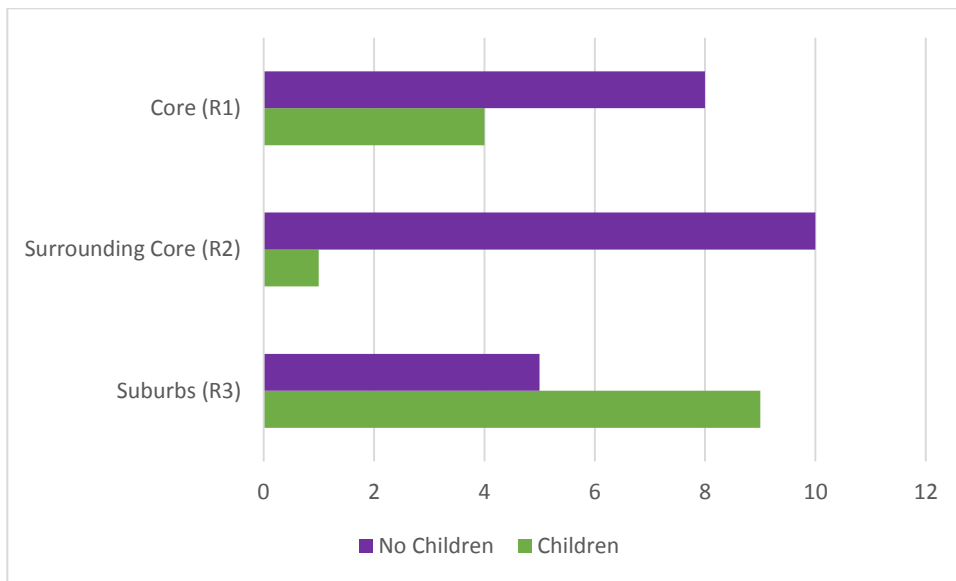


Figure 4-1: Number of study participants in each area with children.

In this study, the majority of participants who live in the suburbs have children while the majority of those who live in the core and area surrounding the core do not have children (see Figure 4.1).

Lin (R1) lives in the core in a two bedroom apartment with her husband, Steve (R1), and one child. Lin really loves the core as a place to raise her family. Lin has a lot of reasons for liking where she lives as a good place to raise her child. She reports interacting with lots of different people in the neighbourhood and she appreciates how this introduces her son to different kinds of people. Her involvement in the community and even getting to know other people in her building seems to enhance her enjoyment of the neighbourhood and her feeling that it is a good place to raise children. Lin's husband, Steve (R1), didn't talk at all about the viability of the neighbourhood for raising a family.

Cindy (R1) lives in the core and really likes that her building has no children, Cindy (R1) is the only participant who mentioned an explicit preference for living in a low family status place. Some other people said they live in adult only buildings so their preference is implicit in where they choose to live.

4.6.2 Proximity to Family and Friends

Many participants, wherever they live, like being close to family and friends. Ben (R3) in the suburbs says, “My parents lived around here so when it came time for us to purchase a home I decided to buy a home close to work and close to family”. He also mentions having friends in the area. Serge (R3) comments that having friends who also lived in the southeast was something that influenced his decision to move there. After his family moved to the southeast he convinced his mother to move farther south in Calgary to be closer to them.

For Dean (R1) who lives in the core, being close to friends is one of his top priorities because he saves time traveling to meet them which makes him happier. When choosing where to live he plotted out where his friends live as well as his favorite “work-out” places. For Lee (R1), the convenience of being close to friends and in an area where he can meet people is one of his top three priorities for living where he does:

I would also say when you are younger and you are single and you are out dating and what-not that’s where you are going to meet people, more easily meet people and run into people and that sort of thing. I think there’s just a higher concentration of that demographic there as well. . . . I moved into an area where I already had a number of friends kind of living fairly close by. So that was actually kind of nice as well. Just being able to, you know, drop in or quickly meet up or just hang out.

Lee (R1) also likes his ground floor patio as he comments that people tend to drop by and say hi to him when he is out on the patio.

4.6.3 Places to Meet People and Meet Up with People

Several people discuss the importance of being able to meet people in their neighborhood. Serge (R3) started up a community Facebook page for his neighbourhood and it is now helping to connect neighbours to one another. Serge (R3) says, “Well the reason we started it was ‘cause we weren’t having a ton of luck meeting people in the neighbourhood that we wanted to spend time with. So we thought we would cast a bigger net. And we did. We found a lot of people that we’ve made some really good friendships with”. Community barbeques, volleyball and basketball games and poker nights are now common occurrences in their suburban neighbourhood as neighbours are using social media to connect and meet in person.

Of his neighbourhood in the core, Dillon (R1) remarks that it is good “just for meeting up with anybody. It’s just better amenities and going out with friends and stuff like that. It’s an easier lifestyle that’s for sure”. Shawn (R2) likes his neighbourhood in the area surrounding the core because, “It’s easy to meet people. You get a good friendly vibe because you automatically have something in common in one instance or another”. He says that his neighbourhood is mostly a lot of young professionals similar to himself and he really enjoys that aspect of where he lives.

4.6.4 Friendly Neighbours

Some people are attracted to their neighbourhoods by people in the neighbourhood being friendly to them. In the suburbs, Ben (R3) was attracted to his neighbourhood by how friendly people were to him before he decided to buy a house there. He says:

We spent a lot of time in this community. I lived here when I lived with my parents in McKenzie Lake actually on the other side. I had friends that lived in this area. And when we were shopping for homes we walked around the

neighbourhood. One of the things that stood out to us was people said hi when we were passing by. We didn't even live here yet and people would greet us. It was different from where we lived before, that's for sure. It was noticeably different.

Now that he lives in the neighbourhood, Ben (R3) comments that he has made good friends with some of his neighbours and that community barbeques are an annual event bringing people in the community together. Ben (R3) remarks that the community he lives in is pretty close to his ideal neighborhood and friendly neighbours contribute to making it that way, "I like the neighbourly aspect, I like how friendly it is". For Ben (R3) that includes the friendly commercial staff at the local places he goes to. He comments that the staff are always friendly, "I like the people who work in the area. Every store I go to from the corporate places to the like little family owned shops are all really nice. There's not much I would change about it. I just like all of it. So it would all kind of be my ideal, I guess". When asked what she enjoys most about her suburban neighbourhood, Janet (R3) gushes about her neighbours, "They are the best neighbours I've ever had. They are awesome. They are really, really good". Kali (R3) really appreciates her neighbours as well. Picking a neighbourhood where she and her husband and children could make friends with people was a consideration for them when deciding where to live and Kali (R3) reports, "We've just kind of become friends with people who are in a similar family situation to us and we've just become friends. Yes we know all of our neighbors". Serge (R3) comments, "It's nice to know your neighbors. It's nice to have some friends where you can walk to their house or ride a bike to their house or run into each other on the street. And not just live in your own little bubble with your head down all the time. I'm a social kind of guy".

When Rob (R3) moved to his suburban neighbourhood he took getting to know his neighbours seriously. He had a flyer company design and print invites to a block party at his house. Rob (R3) reports that he had about 80 people from the neighbourhood come over throughout the night and that he's maintained contact with some of them, "Oh yea we have friends come over all the time that we met in that little crescent". Living in a community where he is surrounded by good people is a top priority for Rob (R3), "Well people. Let's be honest. If you don't have good people living around you there's no point living in a neighbourhood". He explains why living in a place with good people is so important to him: "Because we are a gay couple, certain people look down on that. Like certain religious groups. Certain ethnicities. But yea, certain groups of people. They don't appreciate kinds like us so I would want to be around people, you know, that I can have fun with, be normal around". Rob (R3) likes to socialize with people in his neighborhood and threw another block party this year for Neighbour's Day. He jokes that in his ideal neighbourhood he would take resumes for neighbours and do interviews to make sure he is surrounded by good people.

Living in a friendly community is one of Michelle (R2)'s top priorities for living where she does in the area surrounding the core, "just a friendly community, you know. Nice neighbours. It really does make a difference. Can you imagine living next to someone who was just the bane of your existence? I think it would just be terrible, you know. And we've been really lucky so far so that's been really important too". Michelle (R2) says that living in a friendly community makes her happier.

4.6.5 Community Engagement

Community engagement goes hand in hand with having friendly neighbours who spend time doing things together and helping one another out. For Greg (R3), community spirit has become one of his top priorities for choosing where to live, “On my top 3... Since now I have community spirit. I would say community involvement, friendliness, outgoingness, and activity level. I would need a community that has that. Since I have that now. But it wasn't part of my decision when I originally bought this place”. In the neighbourhood where Greg (R3) and Serge (R3) live, participation on the community Facebook page that Serge (R3) started is bringing the community together, engaging them in activities and even providing a support network during hard times. Greg (R3) describes some of the things that are happening because of the community Facebook page:

So we have a Facebook group. So it's very encouraging to like- it's bringing back, I call it bringing back the 1980s feeling of relying on your neighbour or asking your neighbours for help. So somebody got hit by a car and everybody donated. At Christmas time when somebody lost their job someone would say 'I have a friend that can't give their kids any Christmas presents, does anybody have anything' and people were like, 'Here'. If you want to borrow something, like I need a shovel that I don't have I would just post on there and say can I borrow a shovel and someone says sure, come get my shovel. I mean for a while the internet kind of took away the neighbours and you didn't talk to your neighbours cause you were busy online. Now we've created like, we have a Volleyball community page so we are able to communicate with our neighbours to get more neighbours out to activities.

Serge (R3) says, “because of this Facebook page we've been having a bunch of game nights, poker nights, BBQs and stuff with a bunch of people in the neighbourhood. [...] the neighbourhood keeps us pretty busy nowadays”. Community engagement, or as Serge (R3) calls it, sense of community has become one of his top 3 priorities for choosing where to live. Both Serge (R3) and Greg (R3) say that now that they've lived in a

community where people are engaged and neighbourly it is something they would be looking for if they ever were to move.

Brett (R2) really values the sense of community in his neighbourhood that surrounds the core, “I like that sense of community. And that vibrancy where people are happy to talk to each other and they are involved in civic life. They are not just kind of in their box and then they go somewhere and they come home and they never see people or talk to people. That’s not the life that I want, at least”. Vibrancy in his community is one of Brett (R2)’s top priorities for choosing where to live. According to Brett (R2) that vibrancy comes from a wide variety of activities and a diversity in types of people in his neighbourhood:

I like to be engaged, like going to places and talking to people and seeing different types of people and different types of activities going on. If it’s the case that I don’t see people or I see the same kinds of people and there’s only so many activities I can do in the neighborhood before I have to go a long distance to get to something new, that’s quite frankly boring. And maybe that’s not the case for everybody but that’s the case for me.

For Beth (R1) in the core, the ideal neighbourhood includes community engagement with a “vibrant community of events going on. And people interested in doing things like community gardens, or festivals and parades and stuff like that”. Being downtown, Beth (R1) is close to other neighbourhoods and gets involved in activities in neighbouring communities as well as her own. Beth (R1) says that vibrancy of the community is one of her top three priorities “Because it shows that people care about where they live and about who they are surrounded by. And that they would rather live somewhere that they know people. I think that it makes for a happier group of people in general”. For Beth (R1) that vibrancy comes from when community members get engaged in activities and are willing to get together to organize things.

Within the city different neighbourhoods have varying levels of community engagement. The sample in this study didn't reveal any overarching patterns as to where community engagement can be found due to the small number of people in each neighbourhood.

4.6.6 High Density Living

Several people in the core and one in the area surrounding the core mention an appreciation for having lots of people living in the neighbourhood and the spin-off benefits this brings to the area. Kim (R1) remarks:

There's a lot of neighbourhoods in Calgary that are very much NIMBYs. Like not in my back yard. Meanwhile the Beltline is like yea go ahead and build that really tall building full of people. We'll take all those people. And lots more cool things will start showing up because there are so many more people here.

Matthew (R1) expands on some of those cool things that show up with more people, "there's a certain activity to the neighbourhood that I really like. Lots of people. I like that it seems like there's always something going on. It's kind of wild but there's, you are never at a loss for something to do". Even though Matthew (R1) lives in the highest density neighborhood in Calgary his ideal neighbourhood would have more people and more transit. What Cindy (R1) like about high density communities is, "You actually see more people. It contributes to all the other things I like. Like things can't be close together if it's not high density. I've also got friends in the building which is fun. You actually see humans out doing their thing rather than just hiding in their giant houses". For Wendy (R1), having more people around enhances her sense of safety in her neighbourhood, especially when she goes out at night to take her dog for a walk. Beth (R1) thinks that "having apartments adds more variety to the neighbourhood. You see more people and it brings more flavour to the neighbourhood". Brett (R2) appreciates the

diversity that comes with high density living. He lives in a single family home in the area surrounding the core but he is surrounded by a wide variety of housing styles, including mid-century walk-up buildings and some mid-rise and mixed use buildings:

I definitely appreciate that it provides when you have those - some higher density development- you have more people, and I think that's good for the vibrancy of the neighborhood. It encourages more activity. It supports the local businesses. It supports the local parks and community associations and things like that. And the local schools. And because you have different types of housing stock, you have different incomes of people who live there. We have affordable housing developments in the community. And I think that's fantastic as well.

This preference for high density living and having lots of people around is unique to the core and the area surrounding it as the suburbs are much less dense than downtown. In the core area in this study the dwelling density is 4,371 private dwellings per square kilometre. In the area surrounding the core the density is 1,475 private dwellings per square kilometre, and in the southeast suburbs there is an average of 356 private dwellings per square kilometre.

4.6.7 Social Diversity

Some respondents identified social diversity or heterogeneity as an important social attribute of the neighbourhood. According to the National Housing Survey 2011 the core and area surrounding the core has higher percentage of immigrants and visible minorities than the southeast suburbs included in this study. The percentage of immigrants and visible minorities in the southeast suburbs is also 7% below the CMA average. (See Table 4.3). Other suburbs in Calgary have higher percentages of immigrants and visible minorities.

Table 4.6 Percent Immigrants and Visible Minority by area in Calgary

	Core (R1)	Surrounding Core (R2)	SE Suburbs (R3)	CMA Average
Percent Immigrants	29%	23%	18%	25%
Percent Visible Minority	28%	22%	19%	26%

Source: Statistics Canada, National Housing Survey, 2011

Brett (R2) values the diversity of people in his neighborhood in the area surrounding the core,

It's also a reasonably diverse community which I like. There are young people and older people and wealthy people and poorer people. They live in a variety of different types of houses and they look in a variety of different ways and I value that. It is important to me to live in a community where everybody is not exactly the same, and everybody has the same story. I enjoy that there are some weird people in my community. That makes it more interesting.

Lin (R1) is a visible minority living in the core. She appreciates the diversity in cultures for herself but also for her son. Matthew (R1) also lives in the core and appreciates that he can raise his daughter in a diverse community. People in his neighbourhood are different than him and he says:

That's what makes it great. I should have mentioned that, it's uh, it's kind of just a thing that is the nature of the fabric of the community that you see people who are different than you. You hear languages that you wouldn't normally hear.

Both Lin and Matthew (R1) value the diversity in the core for what it can teach their children. They have both bought condominiums in the area and intend to stay there long term with their single child families. Matthew (R1) has lived in the core since 2001 but social diversity was not particularly important to him when he first moved downtown. At the time he was attending university and was happy to have a place where he could take transit to get to the University of Calgary. He remarks that downtown living has grown on him and now he does not want to leave. From his comments it sounds like he is looking

forward to raising his daughter in a diverse community where she will have the opportunity to interact with people from many different countries. Lin also didn't mention social diversity as one of her criteria for locating in the core but it is one of the side benefits that she enjoys about her community. She feels that where she lives is a great place to raise her son and the social diversity is one of the things that makes her want to stay where she is.

Kim (R1) is a visible minority who lives in the same neighbourhood as Matthew (R1) but she does not notice much diversity in the types of people in her neighbourhood. She comments that, "maybe it's just the people I hang out with but it's very Caucasian, middle class kind of vibe". She says that the immigrants tend to be in different buildings as her building is filled mostly with owners, and new immigrants are often renters. It could be that Kim (R1) and Matthew (R1) have different cognitive maps and perceptions of the same neighbourhood. Perhaps for Matthew (R1), who grew up in a monoculture, 29% immigrants and 28% visible minorities is so much different than what he grew up with that he perceives it as quite diverse. Kim (R1), on the other hand, is not seeing as much diversity, even though she lives very close to where Matthew (R1) does. It's possible that for her she does not perceive 29% immigrants and 28% visible minorities as being very diverse as it is still a large Caucasian and Canadian-born majority.

Kali (R3)'s preferences are opposite of Lin and Matthew's (R1). One of the primary reasons she picked the southeast suburbs as a place to live was because it was "less multicultural than other communities and other quadrants". Where she used to live in the northeast of Calgary she felt like a visible minority among the residents there, whereas where she lives now she is not the visible minority. She much prefers living in a

neighbourhood where people are the same as her and she feels that “some communities seem more vibrant when they have younger people in them”.

Dean (R1) would like more ethnic diversity in his core neighbourhood because he is looking for more diverse ethnic restaurants that he can go to. Lee (R1) discusses the connection between a heterogeneous housing stock and social diversity in the neighbourhood. He also expands on why diversity is good as the different people in his neighbourhood attract different amenities and events, even though many of the people are the same age:

There is for sure, I'd say, in general, a younger demographic. Especially now that it seems that it maybe the original residents of the neighbourhood are starting to get older and move on now. But even within that younger demographic you have a mixture of let's say liberal art student all the way to your downtown corporate types. And I think that kind of spread and range of-, I think that's a good and interesting mix. 'Cause that brings in different types of stores and events that are happening in the neighbourhood.

Lee (R1) says he is not necessarily interested in participating in all the different activities but he likes having the chance to try different things out and he appreciates the social diversity in his community that facilitates interesting things showing up in his neighbourhood. At the same time, Lee (R1) likes the convenience of living around a high concentration of other young people as discussed in the section on being able to meet people. The convenience of being close to friends, and where he can meet and interact with people is one of Lee (R1)'s top priorities for living where he does, and for Lee (R1) that means he likes living in an area where many people are similar in age to him.

Melonie (R2), in the area surrounding the core, likes that the people in her building are very similar to her. So instead of diversity, she appreciates homogeneity in age and life stage, “It's a young neighbourhood. So there's a lot of young professionals

similar to me. Especially just in my building itself to be honest. The demographic is very similar to mine. It seems like people that are all working really hard and are quite young”. For Melonie (R2), being surrounded by people like her means everyone shares a similar lifestyle so that eliminates potential conflicts that could arise. As the young professionals tend to have similar work schedules they are not causing disturbances by partying on odd nights of the week. Melonie (R2) also likes being able to easily meet other people like her. Shawn (R2) lives in the same neighborhood as Melonie (R2) and he also observes that many of the people living there are in the same stage of life as he is. Shawn (R2) says he likes that homogeneity for much the same reasons that Lee (R1) and Melonie (R2) mentioned, “It’s nice. It’s easy to meet people. You get a good friendly vibe because you automatically have something in common in one instance or another”.

The respondents like Shawn (R2), Melonie (R2) and Lee (R1) who like to be around people of similar age and life stage are not that different from those who like to be in the suburbs around other people with families discussed in section 4.6.1. Certainly part of the reason for the concentration of Millennials in the areas of Calgary that we’re investigating in this study is because people are choosing to live around other Millennials who are in a similar life stage.

4.6.8 Summary

Families and children are more prominent themes for respondents living in the suburbs although not all people in those areas had formed families or had children (see Table 4.7). Being close to family and friends was relatively important to respondents regardless of where they lived but surprisingly the importance of having friendly neighbours came up for more people in the suburbs than in other areas. Community engagement was mentioned by a few people in each area, particularly those in the core (R1). Not surprisingly the benefits of high density living were mentioned most by those living in the densest region (R1) and was not mentioned at all by those living in the suburbs. Social diversity was most important to respondents living in the core (R1) but was also mentioned by some of those living in the other two areas as well (R1 and R2).

Table 4.7 Importance of social attributes to Millennials in the three regions in Calgary

Social Attributes	R1 Core n=12	R2 Surrounding Core n=11	R3 SE Suburbs n=14
Families and children	Low	Low	High
Proximity to family and friends	High	High	Medium
Friendly neighbours	Medium	Low	High
Community engagement	Medium	Low	Low
High density living	Medium	Low	Not mentioned
Social Diversity	High	Medium	Medium

High importance = 6 or more out of 10 people mentioned the attribute

Medium importance = 3 to less than 6 out of 10 people mentioned the attribute

Low importance = less than 3 people out of 10 mentioned the attribute

4.7 Psychological Benefits

There are psychological considerations from living where they do that people take into account when deciding where to live. Some of these have been discussed in previous

sections such as how Janet (R3) is much happier living close to where she works and shortening her commute from 1.5 hours to 15 minutes each way. Several respondents discuss the side benefits that people get from incorporating exercise into their commute, such as greater alertness, an improvement in mood and just feeling healthier. In this section we identify three factors that seem to fall under the rubric of psychological benefits. These are an increase in happiness or quality of life, pride of ownership, and stigma or reputation.

4.7.1 Happiness or Quality of Life

Peter (R2) talks about experiencing an increase in his quality of life when he moved closer downtown from what he describes as a miserable existence out in the suburbs,

When you don't have to drive everywhere you can actually be a lot more spontaneous, when things are a lot closer. When I first moved to Calgary I was living out in the northwest out in the Brentwood area and there was nothing anywhere near me. It was – you had to drive everywhere. It was just sort of a miserable existence. And I was actually planning on leaving Calgary altogether until I had a friend who was living in the downtown And he said 'I need a roommate', so I was his roommate for a few months. And all of a sudden I noticed when everything was close by, there was always something to do. And it was great. It was a very big jump in quality of life. So having things nearby, it's a quality of life thing.

So Peter (R2)'s quality of life improved with a move to the downtown. Because of it, he decided to stay in Calgary. Now he is married and has a high paying job keeping him in the city. So the increase in quality of life turned out to be a major factor in Peter (R2)'s locational decision.

Steve (R1) enjoys a feeling of belonging in the neighbourhood he calls home. Community feel is one of his top priorities for why he lives where he lives, which he describes as a place where he has a sense of belonging. So according to Steve (R1) this

idea of community feel has become important to him since he moved to his condominium in the core. Steve (R1) feels like he belongs in the neighborhood, not just within the four walls of his house. He describes it as a way to be connected to other people and to what is going on in the neighbourhood.

For Rob (R3), he notices a calming effect from living close to walking trails where he can get out and exercise. He specifically chose his home because it backs on to 70 acres of wetlands with walking trails throughout it. Living close to green space is one of Rob (R3)'s top priorities because it allows him to disconnect from the rat race, and "you could say it calms me down. Destresses me". Perry (R3) finds living in a larger house relaxing, "It's nice to have separate rooms and be able to relax and fan out a little bit". Other things Perry (R3) likes about his move to the suburbs from a small condominium downtown is the less busy neighbourhood and the privacy of being in his own home. Dean (R1) enjoys psychological benefits from spending time in green spaces around his home in the core, "I think it's also a happiness thing. You just go sit in a green space and immediately feel better about life. So yea, it's a place to relax and wind down. And sort of get in touch with nature even though you're in the middle of a big city".

Living close to his friends is important to Dean (R1) because he receives the psychological benefit of being happier, "Overall I'm happier than if I'm further away". For Michelle (R2) living in a friendly community contributes to her happiness, "A friendly community? I just think that when you are happier – you know, people who are happy have wonderful lives. Happiness plays a great part in everybody's lives - I would hope most people. So that's kind of self-explanatory for me". As discussed in section 4.4 on employment based considerations, Ellen (R2) describes being happier because she lives closer to work, a phenomenon that Olsson et al. (2013) find is generalizable. People

who live closer to work are found to have higher levels of happiness than those who have long commutes to work. If people are happy in a community, that makes it attractive for people to want to live there.

4.7.2 Pride of Ownership

A few people talk about the psychological benefit they get from owning and being able to personalize their homes which can be categorized into the psychological benefits derived from the pride of ownership. When asked what he loves most about his house, Colin (R2) mentioned the pride of ownership, “What do we love most? I guess just that we were able to make it our own”. In answer to the same question, Michelle (R2) describes an emotional connection to her home because, “we’ve put some work into it. It’s where we started our family. So I guess there’s an emotional connection to it”. When asked what she loves most about her house, Joanne (R3) exclaims, “That its mine! It’s pretty awesome to have my own space that is all for me. Being a woman I think it’s pretty awesome. A generation ago, like my mom would have never been able to own a house by herself. I really like that I’m independent, and I can own my own place”. Joanne (R3)’s sense of pride in owning her own place is reflective of the progress women have made in being able to live and thrive on their own.

4.7.3 Stigma or Reputation

Some people’s locational decisions are influenced by their perception of other people’s opinions. Elsie (R3) comments that one of the reasons liking her community is her top priority is because “I don’t want my dad to visit and we live in a really super ugly community”. So part of her decision of where to live was influenced by what Elsie (R3) thought her father’s opinion of her neighbourhood would be.

Stigma is Greg (R3)'s top priority for living where he does. He is very concerned about what his friends would say about where he lives and so he chose to live farther away from his work to find a community that meets his requirements for its reputation,

Stigma is probably #1. That's just – you've got your friends and you are buying a new house. ... And when they were like where did you buy a house, and you said oh I'm buying a house in Ogden they'd be like 'Oh, okay well that's not your first choice.' We wanted to buy in an area where someone would be like 'Oh, you actually chose to live there'. ... Here we could have lived in Ogden and got a bigger house, bigger yard. But then you have to tell people you live in Ogden. ... It's just, you just don't want your friends to look down on you. Like I have friends that live in those parts of town and we just joke about how much better we are than they are. And behind the joke there is a little bit of truth. You know we definitely feel like because they chose that area - they make the same amount of money as us - they just decided that 'who cares?'. Whereas we just care. I don't know how to say it.

Greg (R3) was the first among his friends to buy a house and he wanted to make sure that he bought in an area that his friends would approve of. After he located in the far southeast suburbs in Calgary, several of his friends showed their approval by following suit and buying homes nearby as well.

For Shawn, living in a building that is modern looking is a top priority for how he chooses where he lives. He remarks that it helps him feel that he gains approval from the people around him. Living in a modern looking building is important to Shawn:

I guess a little bit because we are vain. For us, we like to live somewhere that is nice. We like to feel that the thing we are renting is worth the money we are paying. If we have people come over we like to know that they are comfortable, being in that space, that it looks and feels clean. That they feel safe, that we feel safe. So I guess it does give off the impression of safety I guess. So in how we view it, it gives us a sense of comfort. And we do take into consideration how people view us. So then we feel like we look alright to the people around us.

Shawn's building is only four years old in the area surrounding the core and it meets his needs to live somewhere modern that is acceptable to his peers.

4.7.4 Summary

Psychological benefits do not fit neatly into the regions explored in this study. But people in each region are receiving psychological benefits from living where they choose to live that differ based on their different preferences. People who choose to live downtown gain happiness from the environment surrounds them, like Peter who experienced a high jump in quality of life when he moved downtown. In contrast, Perry's satisfaction increased when he moved in the opposite direction from Peter, from downtown to the suburbs. Pride of ownership and the importance of stigma or reputation are mentioned by just a few people in each of the three study regions in Calgary.

4.8 Family and Household Considerations

Some of the discussion about family considerations has been covered in the section about families and children as a social attribute of the neighbourhood (see section 4.6.1). Often families with children are looking for places where they can interact with other families and children and so they are choosing high family status areas to raise their children. Some people find they would like more space once they have children or in preparation for having children. Darcy (R3) moved from a condominium in the suburbs to a nearby single family home, which he says felt too big at first. But they knew they wanted to have a second child so they bought a home they could grow into. Families with children also consider the amenities for children in their neighbourhood including schools, parks, playgrounds, and activities.

When people form couples and families then their locational decisions move from being individual to being household decisions where they need to take their partner's preferences into consideration when choosing where to live. Also, for various reasons,

some people choose to live with roommates who are outside the family. In general, the interviews revealed two family and household considerations: partner preferences and roommate considerations.

4.8.1 Partner Preferences

For people in partnerships, the decision of where to locate involves negotiation between the preferences of both partners. Elsie (R3) lives in the southeast suburbs but would prefer to live closer to downtown. They previously lived in a condominium in the central southeast but Elsie (R3) says her husband didn't like the condominium because "he found it cramped". Elsie (R3) explains, "And that's a compromise between husband and wife a little bit too I think. I would be perfectly happy in a two bedroom condo. My husband wants the garage and the yard and that kind of stuff". Rita (R3) says if her boyfriend didn't work in the southeast she would probably live closer to downtown. Currently he is about 10 minutes from work while Rita (R3) buses 45 minutes to an hour each way to her work downtown. When Rita (R3) moved in with her boyfriend he was already living in the south but then recently they looked for a place and together decided to stay in the southeast. Both Elsie (R3) and Rita (R3) have had to compromise where they would rather live to accommodate their partner's preferences.

Other people are more fortunate to find a partner with preferences similar to their own. Michelle (R2) comments that while her husband bought the condominium they live in before they were a couple, they've made the decision together to stay where they are. Neither of them wanted to move to the suburbs after having children so they are continuing to live in the area surrounding the core as a family of 3. Kim (R1) has a similar story. She moved in with her husband in the core where he had been living

previously. Because she also liked where they lived, when they looked for a place of their own together, they ended up staying within a few blocks of where they previously lived. Wendy (R1) moved in with her boyfriend who already owned his own place in the core. It is convenient for her because she can walk to work but they are currently looking for a place just outside the core that is quieter but still walkable.

4.8.2 Roommates

Roommates can allow people to live in places that they otherwise wouldn't be able to afford. For Greg (R3), to be able to afford a big house in the suburbs he partnered with his wife and his sister and took on a roommate as well. Having a roommate when they first bought helped Greg (R3) to afford a larger house. Even still, he says if he had more money he would buy a bigger house. But now that he has his own child he does not want to continue to have a roommate.

Shawn (R2) and his girlfriend have a roommate in their two bedroom apartment in the core. He said they didn't need a roommate but the girl living with them is a friend of his girlfriend and she needed a place to stay. Even though it wasn't out of necessity, it provides them with a buffer in case someone loses a job. Shawn (R2) says "We don't mind having the extra money and with how things are in the Calgary job market it gives us security that if one of us loses our job we have that to help supplement the rent so we are not going to get kicked out". These views suggest that roommates, even if episodic, are a consideration in both inner city and suburban locations.

4.8.3 Summary

The need for people to take on roommates to live where they want to live represents a unique way to address the constraints that confront people in the housing

market. A few Millennials in each of the regions in this study expressed that they had chosen to take on a roommate to alleviate cost constraints on their desired home. Also, people who are living with a spouse or partner have someone else's preferences to take into account when deciding where to live. Some respondents in this study expressed that they would have chosen to live somewhere different if they were making the decision alone.

4.9 Future Plans

Participants were asked how long they plan to live where they are and where they plan to move to next. The majority of the people in this study plan to stay in the neighbourhoods where they currently reside. This section looks at where respondents, who currently reside in each of the three regions, plan to live in the future. However, there is no guarantee that what people say that they are going to do in the future is what they will actually do when the time comes. There is a non-commitment bias that needs to be taken into account when interpreting this section. Respondents shared their expectations about what they will choose to do in the future but any number of factors could change their decision making process at any time.

4.9.1 Suburbs

Out of 14 respondents living in the suburbs, 12 plan to stay where they are for at least the next year, and the 13th may stay depending on where his partner gets a job. Only one is moving for sure. Kali (R3) wants to move as soon as possible from the home they own in the southeast suburbs to an older lake community where she grew up, closer in to the central city. They are just waiting for the right home to come available as they want to

live in it for the next 20 years or so. Things that are drawing Kali (R3) to the older area are:

Lot sizes are bigger in Bonavista. The schools in the neighborhood that are not at capacity. There is lots of room and lots of schools. So where we are it would be 10 minute less commute for my husband. Their lake is much, much larger for the community size. Our lake is too small for the community size so I would rather go to a larger one. And the mature trees and bigger lots. Not so crammed in.

Darcy (R3) plans to retire in his home. Haley (R3) thinks they will stay for at least seven years until her son is in grade 10. At that point he may have to leave the neighbourhood to attend high school. Haley (R3) said she would move for her son's school as "It would be better than having to bus them halfway across the city". Also, Haley (R3) wants to make sure she has representation on the school trustee board, "The difficulty is they bus the children into a different section of the city for the school trustees. So when they bus your children across the city you don't have any representation on the school trustee board. So that's why you want to live close to your school". Jessica (R3) plans to stay where she's at for the next two to three years, five at the most. After that she wants to move to a lake community with a bigger lot and a bigger house. The places she mentioned possibly moving to are all fairly close to where she is now. Elsie (R3) plans to stay where she's at for another four years, at which point she wants to move closer to downtown. She says:

I may have told my husband a couple of times that I don't want to live in the suburbs forever. So I would probably prefer to live closer in to downtown and I think what would be the impetus would be having enough money to do that. The parts of the inner city, like the closer in, is not necessarily attainable right now but in a few years it might be more so.

Elsie (R3) is the only participant from the suburbs who mentioned a preference for living downtown although several of the participants who live in the core and surrounding areas said they used to live in the suburbs and didn't like it so they have already made the move to the city centre.

Joanne (R3) plans to move if her family status changes so she is hoping that within the next couple years she will get married or move in somewhere with her boyfriend. She says the place she is at now is not big enough for two people so staying there with two people is not an option. The vast majority of respondents living in the suburbs plan to stay where they are or close to it.

4.9.2 Surrounding Core

Of the 11 people in the study who live in the area surrounding the core, 10 plan to stay where they are at for at least another year. Blake (R2) is happy where he is at but if he entered a relationship he does not know where he would end up, “It depends on what my partner’s situation is as far as where they’d be at. Like if they wanted to move in to my place I think that would work. But you know if there’s other life situations then I’d like move out. But again that’s really hard to say”. Michelle (R2) really likes her neighbourhood and has no plans to move but says if she did move at all it would be to a house in the same neighbourhood as the condominium they live in now. Ellen (R2) and her husband would have to move buildings if they have children as the building they live in now is adult only. She says:

We’ve talked about it lots. I think I would like to stay as close to work as possible and live in the inner city even when we do decide to have children. And maybe just, I guess for us I think we don’t need like a 3000 square foot house to raise a kid. But I guess that’s just my opinion. I know a lot of people don’t think like that.

For Ellen (R2) the decision to have children feels like it is still far off so they plan to stay where they are for now. Celina (R2) has talked about where they would move with her boyfriend and they both agree they do not’ want to move to the suburbs. They would stay within the car2go zone, maybe a 10 minute drive to downtown where they could still

walk if they wanted to. Shawn (R2) is in a rental apartment and says they will be there for at least another year. Beyond that he does not know what he and his girlfriend will be doing. Melonie (R2) plans to stay where she is in her condominium close to work for the next five to seven years - until she is 30 or 32. At that time she thinks she will move out of downtown to somewhere more suburban or even to Canmore to be close to the mountains.

Linda (R2) is planning to move out right away and has an offer on a house in an area farther away from downtown than she currently lives now. Her decision to move was prompted by a desire to have a place that she and her boyfriend will own without it being a condominium. She is going to miss the short commute to work but she will be closer to her family who live in the suburbs.

Within the respondents who live in the area surrounding the core (R2), most plan to stay in the area in the short term but there is some uncertainty about where they will end up in the long term. Some may move farther out if or when they start having families.

4.9.3 Core

In the core, 10 people out of 12 interviewed were planning to stay where they are for at least a few more years. Cindy (R1) plans to stay in the core “probably for a long time. Foreseeable future. I could see us buying a place. I don’t know about Beltline but again, inner city, I could see us buying a place. Having that be a permanent home”. Cindy (R1) is not planning to have children, in fact she does not even like them, and so living downtown long term fits her preferences. Beth (R1) wants to stay in the core long term to accommodate her car-free lifestyle, but she would like to move to an apartment with a balcony that allows pets, two things she does not have now.

Lee (R1) plans to stay in the core for a few more years and then he may be looking for a place in the area around the core. He comments, “I think at the end of the day I’d like - I’d still rather stay more central. But I think over the next couple years starting a family. Recognizing that I’ll need more space”. While ideally he would like to stay central, where Lee (R1) ends up will depend on housing prices:

It comes down to affordability I suppose. But you know, I would love to stay within-, I quite often make this joke with my friends that my world only exists within the car2go area. So if you take that outline that would be my starting. Those would be my extent, the limits of how far outside the core I would be willing to go. I’ve always lived in the SW. So I kind of look at the Marda Loop area or maybe I’ll live in Killarney. It really depends on the affordability. I mean if I had more money I would love to live in like Elbow Park or somewhere like that but it just comes down to what I can afford.

Dean (R1) is back in Canada temporarily for medical leave after living abroad for a couple of years. He only plans to stay in Calgary for a few more months before leaving the country again to find work. Wendy (R1) is planning to leave her neighbourhood in a few months although she would like to stay close to where they live now.

The preferences of people living in the core are similar to those living in the area surrounding the core. Most of the respondents want to stay where they are in the short term although some are settled in for the long term. Others express the desire to move to larger dwellings at some point in the future which will necessitate a move away from the core to accommodate their budgets.

4.9.4 Summary

Respondents in this study who live in the suburbs seem very settled in to where they are living compared to the other regions although there are some people who live in

the core (R1) or surrounding area (R2) who have been in the region for a decade or more and there are some who intend to stay for the long term. There are a number of people in regions 1 and 2 who see themselves moving away from downtown at some point although that may be five or more years down the road. None of those respondents expressed a desire to move to the suburbs.

4.10 Conclusions

This study has shown that there are many factors affecting Millennial locational decisions and some have more weight for some people than others. Respondents from the core and the area surrounding the core expressed similar preferences and constraints. People in these two areas placed a higher priority on living close to work than people in R3, and they were more willing to trade off living in a smaller home to reduce their commute times. For people who live in the core or area surrounding it, housing prices are much higher than out in the suburbs, so choosing to live centrally means the house they can afford in the city centre is going to be smaller than what they would be able to afford in R3. As some respondents in R1 and R2 mentioned, when they are making the decision to live close to downtown, they are taking into account the value of their time and the costs of commuting. Several attributes are valued by respondents in all areas, including parks, pathways, water and greenspace as well as being located close to amenities. There is some overlap between these two categories as parks, etc. are some of the amenities that Millennial respondents like to locate close to. Community and recreation centres as well as grocery stores are important neighbourhood amenities for most respondents. Nightlife is important to respondents in R1 and R2 but is not mentioned at all by people in R3. Having a garage and a yard is important to many more people who live in the suburbs

than those who live centrally. Respondents who live in R1 and R2 are much more concerned with the walkability and bikeability of their neighbourhood as a greater percentage of them are choosing active transportation to get to work and back than those who live in R3. Public transit is also more widely available and used by people living in the core and surrounding area than those in the suburbs, although there are still people in the suburbs who use public transit to get to work on a daily basis. Car sharing was a feature only used by people in R1 and R2.

One noticeable difference between regions 1 and 2 is that more people in the area surrounding the core (R2) have a preference for a quiet neighbourhood away from the noise of downtown, however they still want to be close enough that they can get to work and nightlife easily. Respondents out in the suburbs were more likely to express a desire for family focused amenities in their neighbourhoods. They also have a stronger preference for single family homes. On the other hand employment-based considerations were higher on the priority list for those who lived in regions 1 and 2. The next chapter offers a more detailed discussion of the results reported here, focussing on how findings of this study fit in to the broader literature.

Chapter 5: Discussion

This chapter provides an overview of how the detailed, empirical findings from the Calgary cases study, reported in the previous chapter, relate to what other people have found. This section covers the themes that emerged from the qualitative interviews, including constraints, neighbourhood attributes, housing attributes, employment-based considerations, transportation attributes, social attributes of the neighbourhood, psychological benefits people gain from living in their neighbourhood and family and household considerations.

5.1 Constraints

Several authors describe how economic restructuring has constrained the choices of younger generations, leaving them with lower average incomes and less secure employment options (Moos, 2014a; Vinodrai, 2010; Walks, 2011). Bolton and Breau (2012) survey 87 Canadian cities and find an increase in earnings inequality between 1996 and 2006, particularly in larger cities with populations over 1 million and all cities in Alberta. Calgary was found to have the highest level of inequality of all Canadian cities. What this means is that some people in the city are experiencing greater constraints than others. The pattern in Toronto that Hulchanski (2010) described was a divide along socio-economic lines where low income earners have been pushed away from the core and transit lines, further from amenities.

A discussion that emerges from the literature investigates the decisions that people make to rent a dwelling or to own their own home. Fuster and Zafar (2016) inquire into the constraints consumers face in the housing market to find out hypothetically if people would choose to rent or purchase a home given different financial situations and down

payment rates. They find that younger respondents are less likely overall to say that they would buy a home, but when the required down payment is decreased, many would choose to buy. “This suggests that many younger respondents are to some extent prevented from buying by liquidity constraints” (Fuster & Zafar, 2016, p. 638).

The case study of Millennials in Calgary underrepresented low-income individuals in the sample. Almost all of the respondents had some form of post-secondary education and many had high household incomes which means they had a greater ability to choose where they want to live. Some people who lived in the suburbs mentioned they would like to live closer to downtown if they could afford it or if their partner didn't want to be out in the suburbs. For those who were renters, I didn't interrogate them on whether they would prefer to buy or what may be keeping them in the rental market. That is perhaps an area that could be explored with further research.

5.2 Neighborhood Attributes

Some neighbourhood attributes that have been found to be important in the literature are green space, facility use, schools, location, trees, quiet, safety, and community maintenance. Many of these correspond to the kinds of things that respondents in this study mentioned as being important to them.

5.2.1 Green Space

From the interviews with Millennials in Calgary, green space emerged as a major consideration for why young adults choose to live where they did. Calgary has over 8,000 hectares of parkland and 800 km of pathways throughout the city (see www.calgary.ca). There is a growing body of literature about the importance of green space in urban settings. Botchwey, Trowbridge, and Fisher (2014) highlight the influential roles of green

space in the promotion of physical, social, and mental health. The authors argue that the built environment can have significant impacts on health outcomes and because of this “health-oriented design and planning needs to become a central part of standard practice” (Botchwey et al., 2014, p. 113). Other studies also show the health benefits associated with proximity to green space (Mitchell & Popham, 2007). San Martin-Feeny (2014) explores the experiences of park users who feel a sense of mental restoration during and subsequent to their visits to urban parks. She finds that people value the time they spend in urban parks because of the connections they feel to nature, community and to themselves. Tu et al. (2016) explored the willingness of people to pay for urban green spaces. Their research confirms previous findings that people are gaining both a recreational value from direct use of urban green spaces as well as an indirect value from having a scenic view of green spaces. Tu, et al. also find that people with their own private yards are less willing to pay for urban green spaces. However Crompton (2001) mentions that real estate values for properties adjacent to green spaces are typically higher, leading to higher property taxes as well.

The findings from Millennials in Calgary seem to reinforce the literature on the perceived health benefits and attractiveness of urban green space. Respondents talked about green space as being able to “calm them down” and help them “escape into nature” after a busy day. They were not asked how much they were willing to pay to live close to green space so no comparison can be made between the willingness to pay literature and this Calgary case study. It can only be assumed that people who talk about green spaces being important to them are willing to pay something to live close to green space. Green space has amenity value.

5.2.2 Facility Use

Respondents in this study also mentioned community and recreation centres as well as some sporting and cultural facilities as being important amenities in their communities that they make use of. Townshend (2001) and Davies, Chan, and Townshend (1999) identify facility use as a potentially distinctive dimension of neighbourhood community variations within cities. Facility use falls under the category of behavioral or experiential features of place-community variation and emerges in both studies as a unique experiential dimension of community variation. Facility use also pertains to such things as shopping and using restaurants and bars. Many of the participants mentioned that they enjoy being close to their grocery store. Drewnowski et al. (2014) find a wide variation in distance people live from the grocery store at which they most frequently shop. People in Paris, for instance, live much closer to their favorite grocery store than people in Seattle do and in both cities people who live in the city centre live closer to where they shop than people in the suburbs. A 1975 Quality of Life Survey of the Detroit Standard Metropolitan Statistical Area showed that 56.1% of respondents live within one mile of where they shop and 27.0% walked to the grocery store (Connerly, 1985, p. 543). Ettema and Smajic (2015) find that people's moods are enhanced in locations that have lots of shops, cafes and restaurants. Certainly these findings seem to be corroborated by the respondents in this Calgary case study. Many of the Millennials interviewed in this study expressed their desire to be close to such amenities. According to the literature, that could possibly be because proximity to such amenities enhances their well-being (Ettema & Smajic, 2015).

5.2.3 Schools

Having a good school in their neighbourhood was a feature mentioned by some of the parents who participated in the study. Chung (2015) found that opening up the choice of schools to residents who lived outside of the traditional jurisdictional bound affected house prices in Seoul. Before the change in policy people would pay a premium to live close to high quality schools. Once the restrictions were lifted people could buy homes farther away from the desired schools. Insler and Swope (2016) found that people are willing to pay more to purchase homes close to “good schools”. The study “Americans’ Views on their Communities, Housing, and Transportation” (Belden Russonello Strategists LLC, 2013) finds that the quality of public schools is the second most important characteristic of a community that participants are looking for. On a scale of 1-10 where 10 is very important, 79% of respondents rated the quality of public schools as a 6 to a 10. This seems to be more than the number of Millennials in this study who mentioned the importance of schools. The reason for the discrepancy could be because of life stage as many of the Millennials in the Calgary case study do not have families yet, and therefore are not concerned with schools. Also further research would be needed to see if people in Canada are willing to pay more to be close to what are considered good schools or if there is less differentiation between schools in Canada.

5.2.4 Location

The study by Belden Russonello Strategists LLC (2013) found that location is an important characteristic of peoples’ community. Being a short walk or drive from work or school was important (a rating of 6 to 10) for 71% of people. So was being close to doctors, hospitals, or clinics, something that was mentioned by only a few respondents in

this study. More Millennials in Calgary mentioned the importance of being close to amenities than work. But in the American survey more people mentioned the importance of being close to work than other amenities such as shopping, entertainment, parks or recreational areas. This could be due to differences in sampling as the Calgary case study is not a representative sample.

5.2.5 Trees

Several participants mentioned the value of mature trees in their neighbourhood, or the desire for more mature trees if their neighbourhood didn't have them. There is a considerable literature developing around the values of urban forests. Sinclair, Diduck, and Duinker (2014) take participants on a tour of treed areas in Winnipeg designed to elicit valuations of the urban forests. Participants said they were drawn to the wooded areas and valued such things as the natural environment, the recreation value, shade, aesthetics and beauty. "Some felt that any green space with trees is special because each "incorporate[s] nature into the city" and "any nature is a nice bonus in a city" (Sinclair et al., 2014, p. 926). Duinker et al. (2015) provide a long list of the benefits and disadvantages of trees in cities and conclude that the benefits far outweigh the disadvantages. The authors claim that "most city residents would like more trees and better urban-forest management in their own cities" (Duinker et al., 2015, p. 7385) and that "a healthy urban forest contributes to a healthy and happy people" (p. 7386). In another Canadian study respondents said that the most important attributes of trees to them were aesthetics, air quality and shade (Ordóñez, et al. 2015). The literature adds depth to what was talked about in the Calgary case study. Respondents in Calgary talked about enjoying trees or wishing for trees in their neighborhood, but did not go into the

detail found in the literature about why they value the trees or how much they would be willing to pay to be close to trees.

5.2.5 Quiet

In the study of Millennials in Calgary, some participants talked about preferring a quiet neighbourhood. Townshend (2001) showed that externalities and nuisances are an affective characteristic of a neighbourhood that emerge as a potential experiential dimension of community life. This dimension includes local nuisances which are the degree of nuisances occurring within the neighbourhood, and extra-local annoyances which are the degree of annoyances from outside which impinge on the community. Certainly some of the Millennials in Calgary talk about annoyances that they would like to avoid, such as Wendy (R1) who wants to move somewhere quiet where she can't hear the nightclub noise. Other informants talk about quiet as a lack of traffic and other noise. This idea of preferring to live in a quiet neighbourhood is one that is not addressed directly by the literature. However it is often used by real estate agents on listings or even municipalities on marketing material so "quiet" seems to have some market appeal.

5.2.6 Safety

Belden Russonello Strategists LLC (2013) found that safety of the neighbourhood is the most important community characteristic to the participants in the study of "Americans' Views on their Communities, Housing and Transportation". However, Millennials in Calgary who participated in this research had relatively little to say about safety in their community. Ettema and Smajic (2015) find that "a safe environment apparently gives one more freedom to move around and feel more activated" (p. 105). They suggest that feeling safe is equivalent to being in control of the environment which

is a prerequisite for increasing feelings of wellbeing. Shay, et al. (2009) report that perceived safety of an area leads to more people choosing active transportation such as bicycling and walking. This idea was discussed by some people in the Calgary case study who mentioned safe crosswalks in their neighbourhood, or how the addition of the cycle tracks in Calgary's downtown has given them more confidence to choose biking as a method of transportation. Townshend (2001) characterizes safety and security as an affective dimension of neighbourhood variation. This is corroborated by the respondents in Calgary who reported feeling better about living in a safe neighbourhood.

5.2.7 Community Maintenance

In a review of 36 residential satisfaction surveys, Brower (2000) found that good maintenance was the most frequently mentioned quality that people were looking for in a satisfactory neighbourhood. Participants in the studies Brower surveyed talked about having clean, tidy, neat, well-cared for neighbourhoods with no dilapidated structures (p. 97). Participants in this research with Millennials in Calgary used some of the same language to describe why they liked their neighbourhoods. Community maintenance is analogous to what Townshend (2001) identified as an affective dimension of community called place appearance.

5.2.8 Summary

The literature suggests that green space and facility use are important to people's level of satisfaction with their communities. These findings are reinforced by the interviews with Millennials in Calgary. However with regards to schools, the literature suggests a much higher priority placed on having schools in a neighbourhood than was discussed by respondents in this study. Millennials in Calgary also placed emphasis on

different aspects of location than what the literature suggests is important. Trees, safety and community maintenance receive much attention in the literature and are mentioned by a few respondents in Calgary. However the literature makes no mention of the attribute of a quiet neighbourhood even though it is discussed by some of the Millennials in Calgary.

5.3 Housing Attributes

The literature often uses hedonic price modeling to determine willingness to pay for housing attributes but it looks at a limited number of attributes such as number of rooms. Van Ommeren and Graaf-de Zijl (2013) find that in the rent controlled sector in the Netherlands, people are willing to pay about 7% of their annual income to go from a three bedroom home to a four bedroom home. Sheppard (1999) acknowledges the difficulty of determining the value of housing attributes because people buy housing attributes as part of a bundle, not as individual entities with prices attached. The American Housing Survey (2013) provides some statistics on housing attributes in the United States but does not provide any type of valuation of those attributes. For owner occupied housing units, 80% have a garage or carport, 29% have four or more bedrooms, 66% have two or more complete bathrooms, 64% have a separate dining room, and 92% have a porch, deck, balcony, or patio. According to the 2011 Canadian National Household Survey (NHS) 12.1% of households lived in condominiums, most of those being located in the ten largest census metropolitan areas (National Household Survey, 2011). Themes emerged in this Calgary case study that dealt primarily with apartment and condominium living. For example, respondents talked about choosing a place because it had in-suite laundry, building amenities, or a comfortable temperature of the suite.

Moghimi and Jusan (2015) developed an extensive list of housing attributes that people feel are important in their decision making process, such as the sufficiency of daylight, features of the housing exterior including a yard, the layout of the interior, and even the presence of air conditioning, all of which were talked about by respondents in this Calgary case study. Moghimi and Jusan (2015) also list housing attributes that were not mentioned by respondents in Calgary, such as the adequacy of natural ventilation, interior walls, or type, number and position of the electrical sockets. This literature suggests that the list of housing attributes compiled by respondents in Calgary may not be exhaustive of all the things people consider when they are purchasing a home.

5.4 Employment Based Considerations

Living close to their work was important to a number of respondents in this Calgary case study. A number of studies in the literature seek to estimate the cost of commuting, or what people are willing to pay to live closer to work (Van Ommeren & Graaf-de Zijl, 2013). Some respondents in this Calgary case study had considered the cost of their time and vehicle costs when choosing to live in the core and area surrounding the core. Length of commute is also a factor considered in quality of life measures (Morais & Camanho, 2011). Studies also show that happiness decreases as length of commute increases (Olsson et al., 2013). Montgomery (2013) makes the argument that contemporary urban design fails to make people happier because of the proliferation of suburban sprawl that increases the amount of time people have to spend getting to places, including their work. The Calgary case study did not compare happiness levels between people who live in the suburbs with those who live in the core or close to it so the literature goes beyond what was revealed by Millennials in Calgary.

5.5 Transportation Attributes

The Calgary Millennials who live in the core and in the area surrounding the core talked a lot about enjoying active transportation to work and around their communities. In fact there is a strong bias in the Calgary case study towards people who bike and walk to work in the core and area surrounding it. This supports the findings of the study by Belden Russonello Strategists LLC (2013) who report that young adults age 18-34 use public transportation more than older generations, and they also value walkability in their neighbourhoods although they are still car dependent. Similarly, many of the respondents in Calgary talked about the importance of walkability in their neighbourhoods, even some of those who lived in the suburbs. These findings are corroborated by the literature that shows housing values are higher in places that are walkable (Cortright, 2009; Leinberger & Alfonzo, 2012). There is some literature that discusses the effects of urban design on people's choice of travel, including the principles of New Urbanism, which are designed to reduce automobile use (Handy, 1996, 2005). Participants in Calgary who live in a neighbourhood that was built on the principles of New Urbanism talk about enjoying the walkability of their neighbourhood, which seems to reinforce the discussion in the literature.

A transportation option that has been available in Calgary since 2012 is car sharing through the car2go company, where people can rent cars for one way trips within the designated car2go zone. The literature notes that this transportation option is growing in popularity in North America (Bardhi & Eckhardt, 2012; Katzev, 2003). Katzev (2003) also notes how the availability of car sharing options is influencing some people's

locational decisions. This finding is corroborated by the Calgary case study as some respondent's expressed a desire to locate within the bounds of the car2go home area.

5.6 Social Attributes of the Neighbourhood

Social attributes of the neighbourhood have been discussed extensively in the literature. Murdie's model suggests that family status increases with distance from the central business district in a city (Knox & Pinch, 2014). This finding was definitely supported by the Calgary case study as people in the suburbs had higher family status than those who lived in the core and area surrounding the core.

A number of studies identified various behavioural, cognitive and affective dimensions of differentiation between communities (Davies et al., 1999; Townshend, 2001; Townshend & Davies, 1999). Participants in the Calgary case study talk about choosing to locate near family and friends and the value of having friendly neighbours. The literature finds informal interactions between neighbours to be a unique behavioural dimension of neighbourhoods that includes such things as knowing neighbours by their first name, visiting with neighbours, having close friends in the neighbourhood, and feeling like one can confide in their neighbors. Community engagement as it is discussed by Millennials in Calgary also has a complement in the empathy and belonging affective dimension of neighbourhood variation found in the literature. This dimension includes sense of community, belonging and cohesion. Participants in the Calgary study talked about desiring a sense of community and a feeling of belonging in their neighbourhoods.

Most but not all of the respondents in Calgary expressed that they were accepting of ethnic diversity in their neighbourhoods, with some people stating a strong preference for diverse neighbourhoods. In contrast the literature finds that people tend to prefer racial

homogeneity in their neighbourhoods (Clark, 1992; Galster & Hesser, 1981) and that some people avoid areas where there are many ethnic minorities (Andersen, 2008). Even though preferring ethnically homogeneous neighbourhoods is common as the literature shows, there are also many people who enjoy diverse communities as evidenced by respondents in the Calgary case study. There is some evidence that the Millennials are considerably more tolerant and accepting of social and racial diversity than other generations. Further research could explore the prominence of the two preferences.

5.7 Psychological Benefits

Respondents in the Calgary case study talk about having an improved mood by living close to where they work, a finding that is corroborated by the literature (Olsson et al., 2013). Another aspect of this theme is the finding that people base part of their housing choices on what other people think of their neighbourhood. The literature discusses this aspect as the influence of neighbourhood reputation on housing prices (Koopman, 2012) and mobility (Andersen, 2008; Permentier, Ham, & Bolt, 2007). Permentier et al. (2007) find from the literature that people who live in a neighbourhood tend to have a higher opinion of their own neighbourhood than those who live outside it. This was evidenced by the respondents in the Calgary suburbs having a higher opinion of suburban living than those who lived downtown or close to it and vice versa.

5.8 Family and Household Considerations

Within the field of economics various approaches are taken to model decision making within a household. Unitary models treat households as individual decision makers who maximize “a single utility function for the whole family subject to a single budget constraint, given by the sum of all family members’ income” (Himmelweit,

Santos, Sevilla, & Sofer, 2013, p. 628). Other approaches try to model the interaction between family members' preferences such as bargaining models or collective models of the household. The information shared by respondents in the Calgary case study adds rich description to the kinds of considerations and compromises that people are making when choosing to live in a household. The descriptions go beyond the academic modeling that is found in the literature and provide real insight into Millennial household decision making.

5.9 Conclusions

Housing attributes are prominent in both this study and the literature although some literature goes into greater depth than respondents in this study did. For instance, the findings of this study reinforce the literature about transportation attributes and psychological benefits of the community. In terms of employment based considerations the literature goes beyond what respondents in this Calgary case study discussed. The literature compares levels of happiness between people who live close to or far away from their work whereas no such comparison was made in this study. In terms of social attributes of the neighbourhood, some respondents express different preferences than what are suggested by the literature. Some respondents prefer to live in socially diverse communities and this theme was not found in the literature. This study also adds rich description to the kind of negotiations people are making when they have partners, roommates and families to consider as part of their decision making processes.

Chapter 6: Effects of the Downturn in the Calgary Economy

In order to help provide a temporal context for the residential decisions they make, participants in the study were asked about how the current long term downturn in the economy has affected them and their neighbourhoods. The respondents revealed that the downturn has affected the opportunities and constraints available to them in the housing and rental market. Several respondents expressed that they would like to live in areas of the city that have previously been priced out of their affordability range. This section highlights how economic factors can shape people's residential decisions.

Alberta is in the midst of one of the worst recessions in its history with GDP losses higher than the last four recessions in Alberta (TD Economics, 2016). This current downturn is also long in duration with projections for it to last upwards of two years. The recession in Alberta was triggered by a drop in oil prices in 2014 that have continued to stay low through 2016. The downturn in the economy has impacted many people living in the city of Calgary where there are over 1,500 energy businesses and the highest concentration of head offices per capita in Canada (Calgary Economic Development, 2016). With 49,000 jobs lost in Alberta between August 2015 and July 2016 the unemployment rate has crept up to 8.6%, a rate not seen in Alberta for over 20 years (Statistics Canada, 2016). Many of the job losses have been within the city of Calgary. According to the president and CEO of Calgary Economic Development, 25,000 people have been laid off from Calgary's downtown core alone in the last two years ending in July 2016, leading to high vacancies in commercial buildings in Calgary (Morgan, 2016).

Dean (R1) was impacted by the downturn in the economy when he was laid off in July of 2015. He decided to take the opportunity to travel overseas to work, "And part of

it was just I want to go see another country too. It was sort of an opportunity. But yeah I guess my hand was forced by the economy”. Currently Dean (R1) is back in Canada for medical leave but he intends to return overseas to find work once his medical condition is taken care of.

Ben (R3) has seen his business impacted by the downturn in the economy:

Well my commissions are a little smaller. It's a diverse enough industry that I'm not suffering but yeah, it's noticeable. A lot of the guys I've seen through work actually, uh, don't work at these businesses anymore. Or they are desperately looking for jobs to keep their companies going.

And as far as the neighbourhood goes I've seen a lot more places up for sale. They are up for sale longer. The problem is everybody has a mortgage so it's not like they can let them go for significantly less than what they paid. Everyone wants to at least break even so the amount of houses up for sale has increased quite a bit in this area. But the average house price has only dropped like 3-6% I would say. It's minute. It's not even enough to incentivise anyone to buy it. And these places are on the market for a lot longer than they have been. Like when we were buying we had maybe 3-4 days to put in an offer. Because the first place we put in an offer on we didn't get. It was just that quick. We looked at it and the next day it was sold. We've obviously seen that change drastically.

Serge (R3) has seen his business affected as well. He works from home and has noticed that “Businesses have all tightened up. Like I'm involved in marketing. So getting people to loosen the purse strings to put on campaigns to do web design is definitely a lot harder now than a year or two ago”.

Janet (R3) knows of many people who have been laid off although she says she has been lucky to keep her job as she does not work in oil and gas. She comments that:

Some are not doing very well. Other people aren't going out or doing things that cost money. There are some people that are using this as a chance to go travel the world. And then I have others that are just scrambling and doing anything they can for money. Like doing housecleaning or babysitting or really any kind of extra cash they can get. They are just trying to do that.

Elsie (R3)'s husband had a bit of a scare being laid off right before they took possession of their house last year but he managed to find work again quickly. Not everyone is so lucky. Some of Perry (R3)'s neighbors have been out of work for a year and a half:

Most of my friends are all oil patch. Like engineers, geologists, project guys. So a lot of households have kind of lost a primary breadwinner. Like maybe, I don't know what percentage that would be but I know on my street three guys have lost their jobs out of 10 households that I talk to regularly. That's 30% right there. And my immediate neighbour, she's been out of work for 18 months now. And just nothing. Like no calls, no prospects so she's taken a retail job just to work as a filler because her EI has run out and her severance has run out. It's tough. Like it is really stressful for a lot of people.

Perry (R3)'s neighbours have all built new house in the last year and a half, so for those who have lost their jobs life could be particularly difficult. Perry (R3) is not sure who of his friends will have to sell and downsize because of losing their job.

In his neighbourhood, Lee (R1) has noticed that a couple of business have closed down, likely due to the downturn and there are a few more vacant units in his building than usual. Even though Lee (R1) has managed to keep his job, he still feels the stress of job insecurity every day:

Fortunately I'm still gainfully employed. I've had co-workers and friends who have been laid off over the last couple years during the downturn. Yeah it definitely weighs on you even if you are still employed. Just knowing that there is that uncertainty whether you will have a job a few months from now. That definitely affects a little bit how you make your –call it - economic decisions. Yea there's probably just that extra cloud or little bit of stress around that. You know certainly in work there is a tension around the office. Which I think people are getting used to, and they are adapting to it but that doesn't mean that you know it's a good thing to have around either.

Lee (R1) remarks that people who are lucky enough to still be employed are trying to save a bit more cash in case they lose their job, putting off any major expenditures that they can. Shawn (R2) also notices the daily stress and the change in spending that has been precipitated by worry about the economy, "Obviously it's a lot more stress, I think,

in general. So personally every day you worry about it. We start planning a little bit more financially into the future so maybe not doing as many risky things or we scale back the vacation”.

A number of people talk about the increase in the number of homes for sale and rentals available in their areas. According to the City of Calgary 2016 civic census the vacancy rate is up to 4.3 % of all dwellings in April of 2016, a 63% increase from the previous year’s vacancy rate of 2.64% (City of Calgary, 2016a). However the vacancy rate in the core neighbourhoods is 9.4% compared to the southeast suburbs in this study where only 3.4% of dwellings are vacant. Blake (R2) moved recently and said that because of the downturn, finding an apartment in the area surrounding the core was quite easy to do. For Shawn (R2) the process of finding a place in the area surrounding the core was very different when he moved there in late 2015 compared to when he was looking for a place in 2014,

The experience was night and day. The first time we would find a place online and if we didn’t contact the landlord within an hour the place was gone. So this time I had been scouting for two months before I knew that we were actually going to be looking, and some of the places were still on the market when we actually started looking. So completely different. We actually had a landlord contact us two days later and ask us if we were going to take the place which was completely unheard of in Calgary previous. So definitely more options this time around. Prices were a little lower.

Wendy (R1) wants to move out of the core to the area surrounding it. With lower prices in the current housing market some of the houses she is looking at have become more affordable. But her boyfriend owns the condominium they are living in right now, so what he could sell or rent the condominium for has also come down in price. Prices in the core are also going to suffer from more downward pressure as the units currently under construction are completed and come onto the market. As of April 2016 in the core

there were 33,710 dwellings with 3,161 vacant and another 2,220 under construction, representing a 6.6% increase in the number of dwellings (City of Calgary, 2016a).

Despite the increasing supply and the dwindling demand, Celina (R2) comments that the real estate market has not come down as much as she thinks it should. Evelyn (R2) notices that houses are sitting on the market for longer as sellers are unwilling to drop their prices. “There is one house that has been on the market for almost a year. Which is unheard of in a neighborhood like this and in a city like Calgary. Like housing stock, unless there is something massively wrong with it, doesn’t sit on the market for a year. And now they are”.

Peter (R2) likes living close to downtown and hopes that the current downturn in the oil and gas industry is “going to lower housing back to where rates are within the means of normal people”. Currently he is renting in the area surrounding the core and would like to stay in the area permanently but feels like he has been priced out of the neighbourhood. Of the downturn he says, “I work in industry that is unrelated to oil. As does my wife. The downturn in the economy might open the possibility that we could actually afford a place down here. It doesn’t affect us otherwise”.

Blake (R2) lives in one of only three communities in the central city of Calgary to experience an increase in population between April 2015 and April 2016 in and he has not noticed the same changes in the housing market that people in other areas of the city have observed:

It seems to me that in terms of the neighborhood things haven’t changed significantly in terms of real estate and housing stock and things like that. That tends to be in my understanding - more stable in the areas closer to the downtown. With those neighborhoods there is a desirability of them that can pervade throughout an economic change. Whereas some communities less so and they struggle more. So I haven’t really noticed a whole lot in terms of that. Definitely in terms of the conversations that I have with people –people are struggling more

often. And that's I think expected. People seem reasonably optimistic to me. They know that in Calgary things go up and down. And that's quite frequent. So I think that people even if they are struggling now they do have that mind towards things will improve in the hopefully not too distant future.

Steve (R1) noticed the easing up of traffic pressures since the downturn in the economy led to so many layoffs in Calgary's downtown, "The downturn hasn't affected me directly. But I know that general traffic, since we live on one of the main commuter routes to get to downtown, traffic has definitely fallen off a little bit". Linda (R2) has noticed that there are less people downtown and on transit,

I work downtown. I work right across from the Bow Tower, which is the biggest building in downtown Calgary. They were so proud of it when they built it. They were saying it would be a huge centre for work and people were going to come here. There's going to be a mix of offices and shops and restaurants and blah, blah, blah, blah, blah. It's empty. Like I mean there's still people in there but in comparison to what it was like 2 years ago it is so quiet. And even on the train, I mean at rush hour it's not uncommon to be sardined into 6 other people I don't know, we're touching and you just bear it because it's so busy. Now you can walk on and find a seat".

With the reduced traffic, Perry (R3) is enjoying the increase in parking spots available in the downtown core.

Darcy (R3) comments that their family is seeing an upside from downturn: I know for us, we both work in healthcare, so our jobs aren't really affected in terms of that but one thing, a benefit that we've gotten out of the downturn is the price of childcare has drastically dropped because of kids being pulled out of childcare and there's more vacant spots. And so that's one thing that we've benefited from the downturn in the economy is because the price of childcare has come down probably 20%.

Whether it is cheaper childcare, more parking, less traffic or lower prices, some people are taking advantage of the slowdown in the province, as long as they've been able to stay employed. Kim (R1) says she has not noticed any changes in her day to day life,

I do know there's a few people, who I know casually who have been laid off. But to be honest I really haven't noticed a difference. Just because I don't work in the oil and gas industry and neither does my husband and I only really have one close

friend that does. And it seems like everything is okay. [...] The neighbourhood seems just as vibrant as it has always been.

Even though she lives in one of the highest vacancy neighbourhoods in the city, Kim (R1) says she has not noticed more for sale or for rent signs than usual. The one thing that she has noticed is that there are more people begging on the street on her way to work.

Matthew (R1) lives in the same core neighbourhood as Kim (R1) and says he has not noticed more places for sale or rent either even though the vacancy rate in their core neighbourhood of Beltline has doubled from less than 5% in April 2015 to over 10% in April of 2016 (City of Calgary, 2015, 2016a). Matthew (R1) explains that relatively the population has not changed a lot, “I know the stats show that there are more places to rent and for sale. But it doesn’t feel that way. When you’ve got a building of 100 people and 10 people leave, you still have a building of 90 people”.

Matthew (R1) hopes that the recession will drop inflation in Calgary a bit,

Maybe the downturn will allow for the price of-, for things to normalize a little bit. We have such high inflation in Calgary. Things might just tone down a little bit. So you’ll have more \$5 beers than \$10 beers hopefully. If that’s a way to look at it. It hasn’t affected our-, I haven’t noticed any other effects in the community. Every one still lives here. There’s not fewer or more people. I haven’t really seen, not a lot of people moving from downtown or anything like that. I think people are just weathering it out.

Matthew (R1) is right about there being the same amount of people in his neighbourhood.

Where he lives in the Beltline, the population has stayed relatively the same between April 2015 and April 2016 with less than a 0.01% increase of 19 people. The neighbourhood added 247 dwelling units during that time, contributing to but not accounting for the doubling in vacancy. Vacancies went from 831 in April of 2015 to 1,775 in April of 2016 (City of Calgary, 2015, 2016a). So even though there are the same number of people in the Beltline neighbourhood, there are slightly more people per household in 2016 as compared to 2015.

With the downturn Lin perceives a shift towards downtown living, however the Calgary civic census data show that her core neighbourhood has had a decrease in people living there from 2015 to 2016, and the highest vacancy rate in the core at over 11%. Lin says:

We are noticing that a lot of people are coming back into the community. Because when there was a lot more money people would be like 'Oh you know I'm going to build a house, or I'm going to buy a house'. And actually there's a lot more people coming in now because renting is becoming more viable. Because it has a bit more flexibility because it is definitely cheaper than owning a home and having to pay a mortgage and then having to pay to drive from home and for gas and all that other stuff. So we are finding that people are coming back in. And there's a lot less vacancy signs. There's a few of those lock box things from realtors agents. And there is less people selling, and more people buying. More people renting instead of going out to the suburbs. I think that with the downturn people are staying in a smaller space for now.

Lin's husband, Steve (R1), does see more rental listings and has noticed that the rentals aren't filling as quickly as they used to. Dillion, who lives in the core, has a similar perception as Lin in that he sees people moving to his neighborhood:

I think the downturn in the economy has actually boosted the neighborhood. Because you are seeing more people move out of those big houses that they really didn't need. More people are moving toward the greener ideology of you know, there's car2go. They don't need a vehicle if they live downtown and work downtown. 'Why am I driving 45 minutes?' I think a lot of those people have moved in and I've noticed even with the downturn there's probably about 6 or 7 cranes I can see out of my place. So they are still building, right? I think more people are switching to that lifestyle of downtown. They are starting to see the benefit out of it.

Dillon (R1) says that out of 48 units in his building only one person is selling their unit, and that's not necessarily because of the downturn. Some neighbourhoods are faring better than others in the current challenging economic times.

One of the things Greg (R3) has noticed in his suburban community is the increase in crime:

Well there is more crime. But again is it more crime or is it that Facebook is more informative of when crime happens? I don't know. But the police reports say crime is up 25% this year. It feels like it's 125% more, but they said it is 25. It's also everywhere. So I don't think that's unique to our area. But we definitely notice it.

Blake (R2) says he thinks some people who have been laid off during the downturn are exploring new options for what to do with their lives:

I think that some people hang their hat on that, that the price of oil will go back up and that the traditional Calgary economy will be better again. But I think there are also other people who are exploring new options. They are thinking maybe it's not great that we just have one economy, and that it fluctuates so drastically. So maybe I should explore some different opportunities and maybe I can go out on my own and start my own business or I have an interesting idea. I'm going to explore it.

So while overall the recession has been hard on some of the people of Calgary, there are some people who are getting by relatively untouched, and others who are taking the opportunity to make some life changes.

The downturn in the economy in Calgary has changed the process of decision making for Millennials looking for housing. Many Millennials are facing new constraints and stresses due to uncertainty in their employment. They may be putting off buying decisions if they do not know whether they will have a job next month or not. For others who feel more security in their jobs, the current downturn in house prices has opened up opportunities to live in more desirable neighborhoods that they may not have been able to afford before. Certainly the decisions Millennials make in terms of where they live is influenced by the economic climate they are subjected to.

Chapter 7: Conclusion

The purpose of this work was to discover what factors influenced Millennials in a second tier Canadian city when they were making the decision of where to live, and what their future residential plans were. The major themes that emerged from the qualitative interviews with respondents were constraints, neighbourhood attributes, housing attributes, employment-based considerations, transportation attributes, social attributes of the neighbourhood, family or household considerations, and psychological benefits.

Two of the regions, the core (R1) and the area surrounding the core (R2) were very similar in most characteristics, although the sample is not representative and the differences could be due to a bias in the sampling. Sport and concert facilities as well as nightlife were important to slightly more people in the area surrounding the core (R2) than those in the core. Also, safety was mentioned by some in R1, but few people living in R2 talked about safety at all. Community maintenance, a theme found in the literature to be prominent, was not mentioned by any of the participants in the core (R1) and by only a few people in the area surrounding the core (R2). Some people living in the core talked about how they appreciated the historical character of housing in the area but the topic was discussed by few respondents in the area surrounding the core. Few people in the core talked about walking to work even though that was the only area where people said they had chosen to live without a car of their own. Instead people in the core were more likely to take public transit, bike, or use car sharing. On the other hand, walking to work was very important to many people living in region 2. Public transit was mentioned by some in that area but car sharing was only used by a few people in region 2. In terms of social attributes differentiating region 1 and 2, friendly neighbours, community engagement, and high density living were discussed more frequently by respondents

living in the core than those living in the area surrounding the core. Social diversity was important to many in R1 and was mentioned by some respondents in R2. Regions 1 and 2 were very similar on the rest of the characteristics.

Regions 1 and 2 were so similar for the most part and adjacent in proximity that they could be treated as part of the same region. Many of the differences could be due to the small sample size but people in Regions 1 and 2 had very similar constraints and preferences making the two regions essentially undifferentiated space in terms of why people are choosing to live there. Young adults aged 25-29 concentrated more highly in R1 than in R2 in 2011. In fact the differences in location quotients between the two areas was what precipitated the original decision to distinguish them as two separate areas. The main differences between R1 and R2 relate to the type of housing found in each of the areas. According to the 2011 Canadian census, 91% of the dwellings in R1 are apartments while in R2 only 53% of dwellings are apartments.

Even though responses from participants in the core and area surrounding it were very similar, participants in R3 did talk about some distinctive themes, different from those in R1 and R2. Where the suburbs differed most from regions 1 and 2 was in the desire of most suburbanites to have a lake, something not even mentioned by those living in other regions. People in region 3 were also less likely to value restaurants, bars, pubs, coffee shops, nightlife, sport and concert facilities, and living close to work. Respondents living in the suburbs were more likely to value trees in their neighbourhood by saying they wished they had more mature trees, as the new suburbs in the southeast have only small, newly planted trees. They were also more likely to place an importance on having a well maintained community and to choose living in single family homes with yards and garages. People in the suburbs were much more likely to talk about the importance of

living in a neighbourhood with families and children and the amenities that go along with that. Of the three areas, suburban respondents were the most likely to express the importance of friendly neighbours.

The things that were important to Millennials in all areas of the study were parks, pathways, and greenspace. Another theme that emerged as significant to all Millennials, regardless of where they lived was the importance of living close to amenities. More people in the core and surrounding area talked about being within walking and biking distance of amenities but a few people mentioned walking to amenities in their neighbourhoods as well. Interior housing attributes were important to respondents in all areas but different people liked different things about their home, with no regional pattern emerging. Grocery stores were mentioned by most people in the core and surrounding area and by some people in the suburbs.

In terms of future plans, most respondents expressed an intention to stay where they were or in similar neighbourhoods for the foreseeable future. Some people had tried living in different areas in the past. For example, some of the respondents in regions 1 and 2 used to live in the suburbs and really didn't like it, saying they wouldn't go back even if they had children, and expressing an increase in quality of life when they moved more centrally. Similarly some people in the suburbs used to live close to downtown and appreciate the lifestyle change when they moved away from the "hustle and bustle". Several people in the southeast suburbs (R3) said they would like to live closer to downtown but are constrained either by cost for the kind of house they want to live in or by partner preferences where their partner either works in the suburbs or wants to live there. Some people in regions 1 or 2 envision having to move farther out from the core at some point in order to be able to grow their families but most said they would not like to

move far out to the suburbs. There was also a mention of the lack of dwellings with more than two bedrooms in the core, preventing families who want to live there from staying when their families grow. Some respondents in regions 1 and 2 said that if they did have to move to be able to afford housing they would still like to stay within the car2go zone relatively close to the city centre.

For the respondents in Calgary, the 2014 downturn in the economy has changed the landscape in which they make decisions about where to live. Housing is much easier to find in the current environment than it has been in the past. Some people are hoping that the drop in housing prices will open up ownership opportunities for them in areas that were previously unattainable. Some are uncertain about their job security and are putting off big expenses, like buying a house. Others are taking advantage of changes in the marketplace.

One way that the findings of this study depart from and add to the literature is in the description of a significant proportion of Millennials who make residential decisions that are similar to previous generations. Much of the recent interest in Millennials has to do with how more of them are living in central, high-density areas of cities close to amenities and transit. While this group of people was represented in this Calgary study, another category of people who prefer a suburban lifestyle was also identified. Their constrained choices are reminiscent of the Baby Boomers whose desire for suburban living lead to the sprawl we see in cities today. Millennials are a diverse group and broad generalizations about the generation will leave out significant proportions of the people. In terms of the effect of Millennial choices on urban form, we can expect to see a continued popularity of both increased densification around city centres and transit hubs, as well as strong demand for single family homes in suburban neighbourhoods.

7.1 Limitations

This research has several limitations in its scope. The sample of respondents largely left out the voices of those who were immigrants and those who lacked a post-secondary education. Out of 37 participants only one was an immigrant and one didn't have a post-secondary education. Attempts were made to entice immigrants to participate, but they were unsuccessful. Immigrant perspectives could have added a depth of understanding to the decisions newcomers to Canada make when they are choosing where to live. Also, those of lower socio-economic status were under-represented in this study. It is conceivable that they face different constraints and challenges than those who participated in the study.

Due to the in-depth nature of the interviews conducted in this study, only a small number of people were able to participate. Conceivably other Millennials in Calgary could add additional insight into the findings presented here but time and resource constraints limited the sample size in each area.

As this thesis presents a case study of only Millennials living in Calgary, it leaves out perspective that might be gained from Millennials living in other cities, and further work will be required to ascertain if the Calgary findings differ from the experience in other cities. As well the study focused only on three limited areas of Calgary. There are many Millennials who are choosing to live in areas of the city not investigated in this study. They may have interesting insights to offer about why they choose to live where they do.

7.2 Future Research Directions

This study has provided a unique look at Millennials in three regions in Calgary in terms of their housing choices and the constraints that face them. It also opens up many areas for further research. A quantitative study could be conducted to see if the themes that emerged during this qualitative study are generalizable. Also it would be interesting to see if having friendly neighbours is really more prominent in the suburbs in other cities and for other age groups as well. Community engagement using social media was mentioned by a couple of respondents in this study, and could provide fruitful for further in-depth research. In this study, the older Millennials were asked about where they would like to live in the future. It would be interesting to interrogate younger Millennials as well to find out if their preferences match the older half of the generation. The choices that people have of where to live is in part driven by policy. Future research could examine how the political climate in Calgary and other cities drives development, and also look at the influence of developers on policy.

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Appendix A: Selected Social and Demographic Characteristics for Calgary CMA and Study Areas R1, R2, and R3.

<u>Defacto Marital Status</u>	CMA	Core R1	Surroundi ng Core R2	SE Suburbs R3
All residents age 15 and over				
Never legally married and not common-law	28.9%	47.1%	39.1%	21.4%
Legally married or common law	58.7%	39.0%	46.5%	70.6%
Separated, divorced or widowed (and not CL)	12.4%	13.9%	14.3%	8.0%
25-29 year olds				
Never legally married and not CL	50.0%	62.8%	59.1%	28.5%
Legally married or common law	47.8%	35.4%	39.5%	69.3%
Separated, Divorced and Widowed (not CL)	2.2%	1.8%	1.4%	2.3%
30-34 year olds				
Never legally married and not CL	27.7%	51.8%	44.4%	15.1%
Legally married or common law	67.5%	41.8%	50.4%	81.1%
Separated, Divorced and Widowed (not CL)	4.8%	6.3%	5.3%	3.8%
35-64 year olds				
Never legally married and not CL	11.7%	32.1%	24.5%	8.6%
Legally married or common law	74.2%	46.5%	56.2%	79.0%
Separated, Divorced and Widowed (not CL)	14.1%	21.4%	19.2%	12.4%

<u>Sex</u>	CMA	Core R1	Surroundi ng Core R2	SE Suburbs R3
All residents				
Female	50.1%	47.2%	48.8%	49.1%
Male	49.9%	52.8%	51.2%	50.9%
20-24 year olds				
Female	49.3%	54.4%	51.0%	56.9%
Male	50.7%	45.6%	49.0%	43.1%
25-29 year olds				
Female	49.4%	48.3%	51.0%	51.0%
Male	50.6%	51.7%	49.0%	49.0%
30-34 year olds				
Female	50.0%	43.4%	44.7%	50.0%
Male	50.0%	56.6%	55.3%	50.0%
35-64 year olds				
Female	49.7%	42.0%	47.2%	48.5%
Male	50.3%	58.0%	52.8%	51.5%

Source: 2011 Canadian Census sample.

Appendix A: Selected Social and Demographic Characteristics for Calgary CMA and Study Areas R1, R2, and R3 (Continued).

Structural Type of Dwelling

	CMA	Core R1	Surrounding Core R2	SE Suburbs R3
All households				
Single-detached house	61%	5%	27%	75%
Total Apartments	21%	91%	53%	9%
Other	19%	4%	19%	16%
20-24 year olds				
Single-detached house	26%	2%	12%	49%
Total Apartments	50%	96%	73%	14%
Other	25%	2%	15%	37%
25-29 year olds				
Single-detached house	37%	2%	14%	66%
Total Apartments	40%	96%	70%	13%
Other	24%	3%	16%	22%
30-34 year olds				
Single-detached house	51%	2%	19%	81%
Total Apartments	27%	95%	59%	5%
Other	22%	3%	22%	14%
35-64 year olds				
Single-detached house	68%	8%	34%	80%
Total Apartments	14%	87%	44%	7%
Other	18%	5%	22%	13%

Source: 2011 Canadian Census sample.

Appendix A: Selected Social and Demographic Characteristics for Calgary CMA and Study Areas R1, R2, and R3 (Continued).

Number of persons in household

	CMA	Core R1	Surrounding Core R2	SE Suburbs R3
All households				
Percent 1 Person households	25.0%	57.0%	46.2%	16.7%
Percent 2 Person households	32.4%	32.5%	34.7%	32.4%
Percent 1 and 2 person households	57.4%	89.5%	80.9%	49.1%
20-24 year olds				
Percent 1 Person households	30.8%	47.9%	37.1%	18.0%
Percent 2 Person households	46.1%	45.9%	48.2%	59.6%
Percent 1 and 2 person households	76.9%	93.8%	85.3%	77.6%
25-29 year olds				
Percent 1 Person households	31.3%	55.4%	46.6%	17.8%
Percent 2 Person households	42.0%	39.4%	42.8%	45.5%
Percent 1 and 2 person households	73.3%	94.8%	89.4%	63.3%
30-34 year olds				
Percent 1 Person households	24.1%	58.9%	47.3%	10.9%
Percent 2 Person households	30.2%	32.5%	33.8%	32.1%
Percent 1 and 2 person households	54.3%	91.4%	81.1%	43.0%
35-64 year olds				
Percent 1 Person households	20.8%	56.8%	45.2%	17.8%
Percent 2 Person households	26.9%	26.8%	30.4%	25.1%
Percent 1 and 2 person households	47.7%	83.6%	75.6%	42.9%

Source: 2011 Canadian Census sample.

Appendix A: Selected Social and Demographic Characteristics for Calgary CMA and Study Areas R1, R2, and R3 (Continued).

Percent of immigrants and non-permanent residents

	CMA	Core R1	Surrounding Core R2	SE Suburbs R3
All residents				
Non-immigrants	71.9%	65.1%	73.6%	80.1%
Immigrants	26.2%	29.0%	22.6%	18.4%
Non-Permanent Residents	1.9%	5.9%	3.9%	1.5%
20-24 year olds				
Non-immigrants	80.1%	73.7%	84.0%	84.8%
Immigrants	17.7%	17.4%	11.2%	14.3%
Non-Permanent Residents	2.3%	8.8%	4.9%	1.1%
25-29 year olds				
Non-immigrants	75.1%	73.0%	77.9%	84.6%
Immigrants	20.5%	20.0%	16.0%	13.4%
Non-Permanent Residents	4.4%	7.0%	6.0%	2.1%
30-34 year olds				
Non-immigrants	68.7%	65.3%	72.5%	80.7%
Immigrants	27.1%	28.0%	19.1%	16.6%
Non-Permanent Residents	4.2%	6.7%	8.5%	2.7%
35-64 year olds				
Non-immigrants	64.7%	58.4%	70.6%	69.8%
Immigrants	33.6%	36.4%	26.6%	28.9%
Non-Permanent Residents	1.7%	5.2%	2.8%	1.3%

Source: 2011 National Housing Survey sample.

Appendix A: Selected Social and Demographic Characteristics for Calgary CMA and Study Areas R1, R2, and R3 (Continued).

Mode of Transportation to Work

	CMA	Core R1	Surrounding Core R2	SE Suburbs R3
All commuters				
Car, truck or van	75.8%	44.2%	56.4%	84.4%
Public transit	16.5%	22.3%	20.6%	11.8%
Walked	5.0%	29.8%	18.1%	1.9%
Bicycle	1.2%	2.4%	3.5%	0.5%
Other	1.5%	1.4%	1.3%	1.4%
25-29 year olds				
Car, truck or van	70.8%	40.2%	52.4%	87.6%
Public transit	19.0%	20.0%	23.0%	9.1%
Walked	7.3%	35.6%	19.7%	1.1%
Bicycle	1.4%	2.9%	3.9%	0.6%
Other	1.5%	1.3%	1.1%	1.6%
30-34 year olds				
Car, truck or van	75.4%	45.0%	57.7%	86.5%
Public transit	16.8%	20.8%	21.7%	11.0%
Walked	5.1%	31.6%	15.0%	0.2%
Bicycle	1.2%	1.9%	4.1%	0.4%
Other	1.4%	0.6%	1.6%	1.9%

Source: 2011 National Housing Survey sample.

Percent visible minorities

	CMA	Core R1	Surrounding Core R2	SE Suburbs R3
All residents	28.1%	28.4%	21.8%	19.0%
20-24 year olds	25.5%	20.8%	16.6%	12.1%
25-29 year olds	27.7%	26.3%	21.6%	12.4%
30-34 year olds	30.9%	31.3%	22.6%	17.1%
35-64 year olds	26.3%	28.2%	20.4%	20.2%

Source: 2011 National Housing Survey sample.

Appendix A: Selected Social and Demographic Characteristics for Calgary CMA and Study Areas R1, R2, and R3 (Continued).

Education level of population age 15 and over

	CMA	Core R1	Surrounding Core R2	SE Suburbs R3
All residents age 15 and over				
High school diploma or less	40.0%	26.8%	28.8%	34.0%
Postsecondary less than bachelor's	31.2%	27.4%	26.9%	38.1%
Bachelor's degree and higher	28.8%	45.8%	44.3%	27.8%
20-24 year olds				
High school diploma or less	59.1%	40.6%	46.1%	51.8%
Postsecondary less than bachelor's	23.8%	30.3%	21.9%	36.7%
Bachelor's degree and higher	17.1%	29.1%	32.1%	11.5%
25-29 year olds				
High school diploma or less	32.0%	19.8%	18.8%	31.3%
Postsecondary less than bachelor's	31.2%	22.1%	27.8%	36.7%
Bachelor's degree and higher	36.7%	58.1%	53.4%	31.9%
30-34 year olds				
High school diploma or less	26.9%	19.1%	17.3%	26.2%
Postsecondary less than bachelor's	33.2%	26.8%	28.2%	42.8%
Bachelor's degree and higher	39.9%	54.2%	54.5%	31.0%
35-64 year olds				
High school diploma or less	30.7%	23.0%	23.6%	28.3%
Postsecondary less than bachelor's	35.8%	32.3%	29.0%	41.0%
Bachelor's degree and higher	33.5%	44.8%	47.4%	30.7%

Source: 2011 National Housing Survey sample.

Appendix A: Selected Social and Demographic Characteristics for Calgary CMA and Study Areas R1, R2, and R3 (Continued).

Labour: Occupation broad categories (based on the NOC 2011)

	CMA	Core R1	Sur Core R2	SE Subur bs R3
All workers aged 15 years and older				
Management	11.3%	10.2%	11.9%	14.2%
Business, finance and administration	18.9%	19.3%	19.3%	19.1%
Natural and applied Sciences and related occupations	11.4%	15.8%	14.7%	10.8%
Health Occupations	5.5%	4.6%	6.2%	5.1%
Occupations in Law and social, community and government services	10.0%	9.7%	11.9%	11.2%
Art, culture, recreation and sport	2.7%	4.6%	4.0%	2.4%
Sales and service occupations	22.7%	23.1%	20.2%	18.9%
Trades, transport and equipment operators and related occupations	13.7%	9.9%	9.2%	15.2%
Natural resources, ag, and related production	1.6%	1.3%	1.3%	1.3%
Manufacturing and Utilities	2.3%	1.6%	1.3%	2.0%
25-29 year olds				
Management	7.3%	8.5%	7.6%	8.4%
Business, finance and administration	18.9%	22.6%	20.6%	18.9%
Natural and applied Sciences and related occupations	12.2%	17.1%	15.2%	10.4%
Health Occupations	6.3%	4.6%	6.7%	7.0%
Occupations in Law and social, community and government services	10.4%	10.9%	11.7%	14.5%
Art, culture, recreation and sport	2.8%	4.9%	3.7%	2.6%
Sales and service occupations	22.1%	20.5%	22.2%	18.7%
Trades, transport and equipment operators and related occupations	15.9%	8.7%	10.4%	17.1%
Natural resources, ag, and related production	1.9%	1.3%	1.3%	1.0%
Manufacturing and Utilities	2.0%	0.8%	0.7%	1.4%

Source: 2011 National Housing Survey sample.

Appendix A: Selected Social and Demographic Characteristics for Calgary CMA and Study Areas R1, R2, and R3 (Continued).

Mobility - Address 1 year ago

	CMA	Core R1	Surrounding Core R2	SE Suburbs R3
All residents				
Differet CSD in Canada	3.3%	7.0%	5.3%	4.0%
Outside Canada	1.5%	5.4%	2.8%	1.1%
Same address (dwelling)	84.5%	66.7%	74.8%	76.6%
Same CSD, different dwelling	10.7%	20.9%	17.1%	18.2%
20-24 year olds				
Differet CSD in Canada	8.3%	17.5%	14.8%	4.2%
Outside Canada	2.0%	7.1%	3.2%	1.4%
Same address (dwelling)	68.7%	37.7%	46.4%	56.2%
Same CSD, different dwelling	21.0%	37.9%	35.6%	38.5%
25-29 year olds				
Differet CSD in Canada	7.3%	10.5%	11.7%	5.8%
Outside Canada	2.6%	4.4%	3.2%	1.2%
Same address (dwelling)	67.0%	54.0%	56.2%	68.4%
Same CSD, different dwelling	23.1%	31.0%	28.9%	24.6%
30-34 year olds				
Differet CSD in Canada	5.0%	7.5%	5.2%	4.2%
Outside Canada	2.6%	8.4%	5.7%	1.2%
Same address (dwelling)	75.0%	62.9%	66.2%	74.2%
Same CSD, different dwelling	17.5%	21.1%	23.0%	20.4%
35-64 year olds				
Differet CSD in Canada	2.1%	3.5%	2.8%	3.6%
Outside Canada	1.1%	3.3%	2.2%	0.9%
Same address (dwelling)	89.3%	79.6%	83.2%	81.5%
Same CSD, different dwelling	7.5%	13.6%	11.8%	14.1%

Source: 2011 National Housing Survey sample.

Appendix B: Demographic Information Sheet and Semi-Structured Interview Protocol

Demographic Data to be collected:

Sex

Age

Marital status (Divorced, legally married, separated, single, common-law, widowed)

Visible Minority Status

Immigrant Status

Education level (high school, apprenticeship or trades, college, bachelor's, graduate degree)

Children

Household size

Income (0-\$24,999; \$25-49,999; \$50-74,999; \$75-99,999, \$100,000+)

Proximity to work

1. Where do you live?
 - a. Can you tell me about why you decided to live in [this neighborhood]?
 - b. What kind of things attracted you to this neighborhood?
 - c. What process did you go through when deciding where to live? How did you find this area?
 - d. What do you enjoy about the neighborhood?
 - e. What features of the neighborhood do you make use of?
 - f. What is your favorite thing about where you live?
2. How would you describe your home?
 - a. What year was it built? Is it the same age as other homes in the neighborhood?
 - b. What features of your house most strongly influenced your decision to locate here?
 - c. What do you love most about your house?
 - d. Would you say that the house or the neighborhood was more important to you when you decided to locate where you now live?
 - e. Are there characteristics about the mixture of the housing stock in your neighborhood that drew you here? (Or that you particularly like or dislike?)
3. Do you like living in a neighborhood where people are different than you or the same?
 - a. Who do you interact with most in your neighborhood?
4. How do you commute to work? How long does it take you to go one way?
 - a. Is that an acceptable amount of time for you?
 - b. Is access to public transportation an important feature of your neighborhood?
5. How long have you lived in this current neighborhood?
 - a. Have you moved within the neighborhood?

6. How long do plan to continue living in this neighborhood?
 - a. Do you plan to stay in this neighborhood when your family status changes (i.e. when you have children or get married?)
 - b. Can you tell me more about where you want to live next?
7. Describe to me your ideal neighborhood.
 - a. What features is your home or neighborhood missing that you most wish it had?
 - b. What is preventing you from living in your ideal neighborhood?
8. Regarding the recent downturn, how many of your friends and colleagues have left Calgary or lost their jobs?
 - a. Has the current economic situation altered your outlook at all? With respect to housing?

Is there anything else that you feel is important that we haven't talked about?

Thank you for your time, and for sharing your thoughts about why you chose to live where you live.

Appendix C: Information and Letter of Consent
INTRODUCTION AND LETTER OF CONSENT

University of Lethbridge

[Date]

Dear [Name]; You are being invited to participate in a thesis research project about the housing and locational preferences of young adults in both the central city and selected neighborhoods of southeastern Calgary. In particular this project will focus on how people view the communities, and what they feel is important about the neighborhoods.

This interview will require about a half hour to one hour of your time. During this time, you will be interviewed about what factors influenced you in choosing to live where you live and how long you plan to stay there. The interview will be conducted by phone at a time that is convenient and comfortable for you. In addition to taking hand-written notes, I would like to digitally record the interview for accuracy. It is your right to request that the entire interview or any part of the interview not be recorded.

Your participation in this research is completely voluntary. You will not benefit directly from this research, nor are there any anticipated risks or discomforts. You have the right to refuse to answer any question you do not wish to answer and you can terminate the interview at any time. Should you terminate the interview before its completion and withdraw from the study, you will be asked if the information you have provided to that point can be retained or if you would like it destroyed.

A verbatim transcript will be created from the interview recording, after which the recording will be erased. To protect your anonymity and identity, your name will not be included in the transcript, which will use a Study ID Number instead. All consent forms and transcripts will be kept secure, either in a locked cabinet at the University of Lethbridge or in password protected computer files; only the researcher and the thesis supervisor will have access to the interviews. Once the project is completed, all interview materials including hand-written notes, and the transcription of your interview will be destroyed.

The perspectives you offer will be combined with those of other residents of selected neighborhoods in Calgary. The results from this study will be used for the completion of a Master of Arts thesis. The results may also be presented in writing in professional journals. At no time, however, will your name be used or any identifying information revealed. Pseudonyms will be assigned and used in the case of direct quotations. If you wish to receive a copy of the study's findings, you may contact the researcher at the email address given below.

If you require any information about this study, or would like to speak to the researcher, please contact Trina Burgess by email at trina.burgess@uleth.ca. Questions regarding your rights as a participant in this research may be addressed to the Office of Research Ethics, University of Lethbridge (Phone: 403-329-2747 or Email: research.services@uleth.ca).

I have read the above information regarding this interview on the young adult locational preferences and consent to participate in the interview.

I agree that the interview may be digitally recorded.

_____ (Participant's Printed Name)

_____ (Signature)

_____ (Date)

_____ (Researcher's Printed Name)

_____ (Signature)

_____ (Date)