

**Sharing of the Dish: The Dish with One Spoon and
Environmental Planning in Toronto**

Executive Summary

Indigenous worldviews explicitly address relationships with the environment and attending to them is vital for both environmental and social justice outcomes. With growing concerns regarding climate change and environmental problems, there is an urgent need for environmental planners to reassess existing planning practices. As Indigenous people are the original occupants of this land, their knowledge, culture, language, and spirituality must be reflected in the environmental planning processes. Additionally, as Toronto is on the territories of The Dish with One Spoon, environmental planners should engage with the principles of the treaty. Early treaties were negotiated and signed with the intent of sharing and creating mutual benefits. Yet, policies were developed and implanted to exploit and eradicate Indigenous people (Report of the Indigenous Planning Perspectives Task Force, 2019). It is not enough for environmental planners to only be aware of environmental impact, it is also critical that they be aware of their obligations under the treaties and to ensure that the responsibilities and principles within the treaties are upheld.

Through key informant interviews, this paper explores the work of environmental planners in Toronto to enact their responsibilities to The Dish with One Spoon. In doing so, it offers some guiding principles on how environmental planning processes could better address environmental issues and engage with Indigenous people. The necessary change can be through implementing the principles embedded within The Dish with One Spoon, such as peace, equity and sustainability. While many tensions exist in planning, planners must also be at least educated and aware of treaties, Indigenous rights and sovereignty and are working towards decolonization and transforming planning within their practices. Many questions remain unanswered after this research and, further research is necessary. Future research should explore how planners can

better transform the existing planning process by engaging with Indigenous methodology and worldview, as well as research addressing the limitations of current planning practices in environmental planning. All of these could be instrumental to the future of planning.

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1 Introduction

Toronto is a city of 2.93 million people located on the northern shore of Lake Ontario and the traditional territory of many nations, including the Mississaugas of the Credit, the Anishnabeg, the Chippewa¹, the Haudenosaunee and the Wendat peoples. Its also covered by Treaty 13, Treaty 13a with the Mississaugas of the Credit, the Williams Treaty, and is also part of The Dish with One Spoon territories (City of Toronto, 2019).

In recent years, there has been growing anxiety regarding climate change and environmental issues in Toronto. With these concerns, the notions of sustainability and sustainable development have shaped planning discourse and have become essential goals of planning. However, in the environmental planning process in Toronto, there has been a lack of engagement with Indigenous people. Many existing Indigenous engagement processes are either tokenistic or ineffective, and the approaches utilized often do not allow Indigenous people to share their opinions (Escott et al., 2015).

With the release of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Report (TRCA) and the Calls to Action, there is an urgent need for planners to at least understand and include Indigenous people's perspectives on environmental planning. In June 2019, the Ontario Professional Planners Institute (OPPI) released a report titled *Indigenous Perspective in Planning*. The report guided OPPI to a better understanding of Indigenous people's perspective on planning and how to strengthen the institutional framework so the practice of professional planning can more effectively support Indigenous planning approaches and perspectives. However, this should only be the first step and planning as a profession must transform from its initial colonial project to

¹ Mississaugas and Chippewa are both Anishinaabek

one that reflects the values and needs of Indigenous people. As environmental planning always involves land, planners must have a better understanding of the various treaty obligations that are required and ensure the sharing and creating of mutual benefits.

Many Indigenous groups see self-determination as having the right to identify their problems and making choices to their goals in policy processes (Heritz, 2018). This approach challenges the Canadian federalism and Canada's assertion that the federal and provincial governments have jurisdiction and responsibilities over Indigenous communities. This is part of the inherent tensions in the inclusion of treaties such as The Dish with One Spoon in the planning process as "any transformative process is by definition very political" and requires planning as a process to "discuss, debate, mediate and negotiate" with the different values and worldviews (Matunga, 2013, 24).

I will argue that one-way planners in Toronto can better facilitate environmental planning is engaging with the treaties that govern the territory of The Dish with One Spoon. Many people living in Southern Ontario are becoming more familiar with the Treaty, in part because the following is usually said before an event or conference in Toronto:

"Toronto is in the 'Dish with One Spoon Territory.' The Dish with One Spoon is a treaty between the Anishinaabe, Mississaugas and Haudenosaunee that bound them to share the territory and protect the land. Subsequent Indigenous Nations and peoples, Europeans and all newcomers have been invited into this treaty in the spirit of peace, friendship and respect." (Ryerson University, 2014)

The Dish with One Spoon is an important treaty that governs Indigenous people and non-Indigenous people's relationships on this land. As stated by Mohawk scholar Ruth Polestar-Green (2018), many of us are guests on this land and have a responsibility to "learn about the history and current story of the land, to listen and learn protocol and to unsettle the privilege of the ignorance." To truly address the environmental crisis, environmental planners in Toronto

need to understand the principles of The Dish with One Spoon and implement them in the environmental planning processes. As planning has historically been complicit in this by providing the intellectual, conceptual and technical skills to facilitate the clearance of Indigenous people (Matunga, 2013, 3); this means that planning has a responsibility not just to confront its complicity but to also aid in the recovery and re-inclusion of Indigenous communities (Matunga, 2013, 9)(Porter, 2015).

1.1 Situating the Work

As I embark on this research, it is important to acknowledge my positionality, my own biases and worldviews. I am a First-Generation immigrant of Chinese descent. My Chinese Canadian identity shaped a lot of my upbringing and it helped inform a lot of my understanding of the world and my relationships to it. Being raised in an immigrant household, I was taught to respect authority and to be grateful for the opportunity to live in a country like Canada. My early upbringing created an idealistic perception of Canada as an open, liberal and inclusive nation.

Growing up in Toronto and being educated in Western Institutions have also significantly moulded my understanding of Indigenous people, their culture, and history. Like many Canadians, I was taught to think about Indigenous people through the stereotypes often perpetrated by the Canadian government and mainstream media. As I started my post-secondary education at the, and through my educative travel to the Arctic, I learned about Canada's history from the perspectives of Indigenous elders and youth. These learnings meaningfully reshaped my understanding of Canada and my role as a guest/settler. I learned about the broken treaties and the attempts by the Canadian government in implementing policies to exploit, assimilate, and eradicate Indigenous people. Working on this research as a non-Indigenous researcher was also

something that I had to come to terms with. I had to understand my role and positionality and ask myself a series of questions that were mentioned in Leanne Simpson's book *As We Have Always Done*. I had to ask myself whether I can use the knowledge that was shared with me in an ethical and appropriate way, given the colonial context within which scholarship is taking place. I had also to be mindful of whether my research could perpetuate further colonialism. Additionally, I had to be mindful to ensure that my research does not speak on behalf of Indigenous people but rather coming from the perspective of a guest/settler attempting to understand his role and obligation to treaties.

This research is motivated by my position as a future planning practitioner and my past experiences learning from Indigenous elders. I especially remember the words from an Indigenous speaker in 2017 at a conference in Toronto. She mentioned that the reason that our cities are broken is that the planners themselves are broken inside. She stated that before we can plan the ideal city, we must transform ourselves first. Her words that day reminded me of the importance of recalibrating and transforming our relationship to nature and each other. As many planners are educated in institutions based on capitalistic and white perspectives, I want to do my part and be responsible for educating others on reconciliation. As I am a guest on this land, I have a responsibility to learn about this land, the history, the current story, and to recognize my privilege and to use it in a way that gives back to the community.

Through this research, I also grapple with many tensions that exist, such as how to ensure Indigenous methodology and values are reflected in the planning process. I also had concerns with the existing planning's attempt to incorporate Indigenous values and worldview into the pre-existing structure as opposed to truly addressing the underlying issues. These tensions

continue to emerge throughout my research and are something I am still attempting to understand and grapple within my relationships to it throughout my personal life and career.

I believe that it is vital for me to acknowledge these relationships and biases as I continue this journey of learning and understanding my obligation as a guest to the treaties of this land.

1.2 Research Question and Framework

Many papers are written on the inclusion of Indigenous people and Indigenous knowledge in the environmental planning processes, but few focuses on treaty obligations in the environmental planning processes. The purpose of this research is to explore and understand the roles of planners in fulfilling the obligations of The Dish with One Spoon. As Toronto is located on territories covered by The Dish with One Spoon, environmental planners should have a duty to plan according to the guidelines and principles of the treaty.

The research question will consist of three separate questions.

1. What is The Dish with One Spoon?
2. Why should The Dish with One Spoon inform environmental planning?
3. What are the environmental obligations represented in The Dish with One Spoon?

2 Literature Review

Most existing literature on The Dish with One Spoon focuses on issues of treaties, Indigenous planning, colonialism, dispossession, and Indigenous sovereignty. While most literature I reviewed doesn't look specifically at The Dish with One Spoon, it provides essential historical and contemporary insight into planning and the ongoing dispossession of Indigenous land in Canada. It has also allowed me to gain a better understanding of the barriers and challenges of existing planning practices in fulfilling the obligations under The Dish with One Spoon.

The following sections will be in this order: Treaty and Treaty Rights, Existing Planning Practices, Environmental Planning, Indigenous Planning and Knowledge, Erasure of Indigenous Presence in Toronto and lastly, The Dish with One Spoon. These sections are organized in this way first to establish the context in which the Dish with One Spoon is significant, such as treaties, colonialism and dispossession. These are essential literature that the readers need to know as without them, it would be difficult to grasp the significance of The Dish with One Spoon in planning.

2.1 Treaty and Treaty Rights

According to the *Idle No More* movement, treaties are nation to nation agreements between the various Indigenous nations and the Crown. From the understanding of many Indigenous people, treaties are agreements that cannot be altered or broken by any one side. The spirit and intent of the treaty agreements meant Indigenous peoples would share the land but retain their inherent rights to lands and resources (Idle No More, 2012). Indigenous people also understood treaties as a relationship with both rights and responsibilities (Simpson, 2008), and

when they signed treaties, it's not understood as giving up their sovereignty, independence or nationhood. Indigenous people have always argued that the treaties signed between the nations outlined the rights and responsibilities of both parties within this relationship and demonstrated that the Indigenous nations did not intend for their nations to be subsumed by the British crown or the Canadian state (Simpson, 2008).

Under *Section 35* of the *Constitutional Act 1982*, “existing Aboriginal² land rights can no longer be extinguished without the consent of those Aboriginal Peoples holding interests in those lands. Aboriginal consent may be required to give effect to legislation purporting to extinguish Aboriginal land rights, even if compensation is paid.” It's important to note this as while the government of Canada stated that treaties provide a framework for living together and sharing the land with Indigenous peoples and provide the foundations for ongoing co-operation and partnership toward reconciliation (Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada, 2018), they also failed to acknowledge that Indigenous sovereignty and rights are the basis of treaty relationships.

Additionally, treaties are grounded in the worldview, knowledge system and political-cultural of the nations that were involved and are governed by Indigenous people's ethic of justice, peace, respect, reciprocity and accountability (Simpson, 2008). Indigenous scholars Leanne Simpson and Canadian scholar Shiri Pasternak discussed the historical processes Indigenous nations have for making treaties and maintaining a peaceful relationship with the land and each other. Simpson mentioned Gdoo-naaganiaa, which means “Our Dish” and referred to the pre-colonial treaty between the Nishnaabeg and the Haudenosaunee Confederacy. This treaty is one of friendship and set forth the terms for taking care of the shared territory and was

² “Aboriginal peoples” is a collective name used for all the traditional inhabitants of Canada and their descendants.

designed to promote peaceful coexistence between two sovereign nations (Simpson, 2008).

Pasternak also refers to the concept of Onakinakewin that was practiced by the Algonquin of Barriere Lake (Pasternak, 2017,77). Onakinakewin represents the Algonquin's understanding of the land, and it is a sacred constitution that contains the law that governs all living relationships in their world (Pasternak, 2017,78).

However, these principles, guidelines and laws have not been recognized by the colonial state, and problematically, many treaties signed between Indigenous and European nations were often based on the premises of sovereignty that reflects only the European value and their ultimate dominion over the land based on the principle of *terra nullius* (Wolfe, 2006). The adversarial nature of Western European legal tradition demonstrates violence to the Aboriginal understanding of political sovereignty. The claiming of Canada is founded on the respect for supremacy of God, and the rule of law is a non-cultural statement (DeVries, 2011, 144). Even when treaties such as the Oregon Treaty were created between European nations regarding Indigenous land, Indigenous nations were often not included. In the eyes of the colonial powers involved, the issues of sovereignty were settled, and they had decided that the Indigenous people did not possess sovereignty over these lands (Harris, 2004). However, in Canada under the Royal Proclamation, 1763, it explicitly states that Aboriginal title has existed and continues to exist and that all land would be considered Aboriginal land until ceded by treaty (Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada, 2013). As many territories in Canada are unceded, this raises questions about the sovereignty of Indigenous people. The Royal Proclamation should be assertions of Indigenous sovereignty, yet in the contemporary planning process, its rarely mentioned.

When discussing treaties, it is also essential to discuss treaty responsibilities. Many scholars argue that treaty rights go beyond the relationship between the Crown and Indigenous

governments and its something every member of that nation has a duty and obligation to fulfil (Hiller, 2016). Recognizing the treaty is an essential step in addressing the colonial legacies of Toronto and moving forward to rebuild this relationship. According to scholar Kirke Kickingbird, “treaties form the backdrop of the past, confirm rights in the present and provide the basic definition for the evolving future” (1995). Pasternak (2017) also highlights that it's essential to know the source of the jurisdiction of the colonial state. For the colonial state of Canada, their jurisdiction focuses on the accumulation and transaction of land and resources. However, this contrasts with Indigenous legal orders, which focuses on ensuring the care of land and people and is reinforced in their understanding of the treaties (Pasternak, 2017). The Dish with One Spoon focuses on ensuring there are enough resources for future generations; environmental planners should ensure that the planning process is reflective of Indigenous legal orders and respect the treaties and Indigenous sovereignty.

2.2 Existing Planning Practices

In Ontario, planning falls under the jurisdiction of the provincial government, which frequently delegates the responsibility of land use planning to municipalities such as the City of Toronto. The Canadian Institute of Planners (2020) defines planning as the scientific, aesthetic, and orderly disposition of land, resources, facilities and services to secure the physical, economic and social efficiency, health and well-being of urban and rural communities.³ It has been defined in similar ways by other professional institutes of planners internationally. Planning as a profession has been complicit in the erasure of Indigenous knowledge and sovereignty and has

³ Canada Institute of Planning (2020) <http://cip-icu.ca/About/About-Us>

struggled to accommodate and comprehend the challenge that Indigenous people brought to this field (Porter et al., 2015). This is because planning has been actively involved in the dispossession, oppression and marginalization of Indigenous people (Ugarte, 2014) (Harris, 2004) to make way for colonial resettlement and economies (Porter al,2015). The aim of the colonial project has always been to clear the way for the settler state and planning is complicit in this by providing the intellectual, conceptual and technical skills to facilitate the clearance of Indigenous people (Matunga, 2013, 3). Going forward, planners have a responsibility not just to confront their complicity but also to aid in the recovery and re-inclusion of Indigenous communities (Matunga, 2013, 9) (Porter, 2015).

In recent years, with a series of court rulings such as the *Haida Nation v. British Columbia (Minister of Forest)*, the *duty to consult and accommodate* has become one of the essential principles of Canada Aboriginal law. However, even with these principles, most engagement processes are still ineffective when consulting Indigenous people. While the duty to consult is grounded in the honour of the Crown, which is a core principle that informs all interaction between Indigenous people and the government, the same legal obligation does not apply to municipalities (Imai and Stacey, 2014). The limitation of the duty to consult in municipal planning decisions can be seen in the *Neskonlith Indian Band v Salmon Arm (City of Neskonlith)*. In that court case, the British Columbia Court of Appeal ruled that as municipalities are not of the Crown, they do not have an obligation to consult (Imai and Stacey, 2014).

This limitation shows that the principle of duty to consult is not enough when working with Indigenous people and that planners need to transform planning practices better to reflect the worldview and needs of Indigenous people.

2.3 Environmental Planning

Currently, it can be argued that the environmental planning process in Toronto is based on the idea of sustainable development. With growing concern regarding climate change and environmental degradation, the concepts of sustainability and sustainable development have frequently appeared in various reports such as *Toronto's First Resilience Strategy* and *TransformTO* and has become an essential part of planning. Sustainability is generally understood as “a guiding framework for attempts to change politics, economy, and society towards enabling more sustainable ways of living” (Gottschlich et al., 2016). The dominant sustainability discourse tends to reflect the recommendations of the 1987 Brundtland Report, which viewed “economic development as essential to meeting social goals of sustainable development (Gunder, 2006: 214). While many planning scholars highlight the importance of sustainability and its inclusion in planning, others are more critical. In a paper by New Zealand professor Michael Gunder, *Sustainability, Planning's Saving Grace or Road to Perdition*, he argues that the current concept and understanding of sustainability is flawed and has a negative influence on planning. Gunder criticizes the idea of sustainability and how it has mostly been captured and deployed under the concept of sustainable development. As stated by Indigenous scholar Robin Kimmerer, sustainable development sounds like continuing as we always have and still about "what we can take?" rather than “What can we give to Mother Nature” (2013, 190). With the existing dominant Western worldview, the current society is still predicated on the hope of a better future through a materialistic term of growth and economy (Gunder, 2006, 218).

For many scholars, to address the existing gap in the environmental planning process, there needs to be a focus on transforming the current planning practices to reflect Indigenous worldviews and values. Principles such as reciprocity, relationships and responsibilities are

highlighted. Anishinaabe scholar Deborah McGregor in her research on sustainable forestry management highlighted the importance of reciprocity, relationship and responsibilities (2010). She stated that reciprocity is about how knowledge is shared, the condition it is shared, and why it is shared. Relationship and responsibilities are to ensure respectful and mutually beneficial relationships are not neglected (2010, 237). These are all values that are important to creating an equal relationship between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people.

Historically, there has been a lack of engagement of Indigenous worldviews in environmental planning processes and the dominant Western knowledge often overshadows local Indigenous presence, and the validity of Indigenous knowledge has often been denied (Taylor et al., 2012). The European conception of orderly development has rejected Indigenous agriculture and environmental management as irrational and unproductive, and the legal system continues today to be structured around white privilege and priorities (DeVries, 2011, 67). In many cities, this occurs through the “construction and separation of Indigenous and non-Indigenous spaces by the state, and this process continues to happen as the state continues to police Indigenous place-making and self-determination, particularly in relation to cities” (Tomiak, 2017, 298). This process often occurs through restricting Indigenous people’s land use, active erasure of Indigenous history and a series of institutional mechanisms that erase Indigenous titles and rights in cities (Tomiak, 2017). There also exist deep-seated tensions regarding historical rights, access to land and resources, and there are many times where Indigenous jurisdiction or their constitutionally enshrined titles and rights are unrecognized during consultation and engagement processes (Von der Porten et al., 2013).

2.4 Indigenous Planning and Knowledge

According to scholar Ted Jojola (2008), Indigenous planning is defined as both an approach to community planning and an ideological movement. He stated that what distinguishes Indigenous planning from mainstream practice is its reformulation of planning approaches in a manner that incorporates “traditional” knowledge and cultural identity. A key component of this process is the acknowledgement of Indigenous worldviews that distinguish it from neighbouring non-land-based communities. Many scholars see the ultimate aim of Indigenous planning to be improving the lives and conditions of Indigenous people and to “refuse” ongoing exploitation, oppression and extinction (Matunga, 2013, 5). Indigenous knowledge is often built over millennia and provides the basis for the understanding of resources, their availability and temporal variability (Escott et al., 2015). The failure to engage and recognize Indigenous knowledge often limits the capacity of Indigenous people to be involved in the environmental planning processes.

Indigenous knowledge is essential and can help address pressing environmental issues as they are rooted in particular areas and are practical and collective. Indigenous planning is often “community/kinship and place-based and its rooted in specific Indigenous people’s experiences linked to specific places, land and resources”(Matunga, 2013, 5) and through working and empowering Indigenous communities, we can create the most sustainable and grounded planning processes (Taylor et al., 2012). Some scholars, such as John Borrows, even argue that “North American democratic institutions should more effectively link democracy and environment and provide for the participation of Indigenous people” (Borrows,1997). He believes that by better engaging Indigenous people, we can design a more sustainable future, and he referred to the Hay Island proposal as an example of how this could occur. As Indigenous knowledge is predicated

on a better understanding of and respect by others and to be effective, planners need to be culturally appropriate and respectful of the Indigenous culture rather than imposing Western ideas and practices (Escott et al., 2015). Most importantly, Indigenous planning recognize that Indigenous people are not stakeholders but rather right holders and that they have the right to self-determination as stated under the *UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* (UNDRIP, 2007, Von der Porten, 2013).

2.5 Erasure of Indigenous Presence in Toronto

While most major Canadian cities were developed on locations used by Indigenous people before European settlement, most of the Indigenous presence has been continuously erased by the process of colonization (Freeman, 2010). Many Indigenous people were systematically dislocated from urban centers and moved to reserves, and due to these processes of segregation from urban centers, mainstream understanding of Indigenous people failed to include the reality of urban Indigenous people (Heritz, 2016). There are almost no museums or large-scale institutions that are devoted to the Indigenous history and non-Indigenous historians mention little of the pre-contact settlement history (Freeman, 2010).

Toronto, as a settler-city, is likewise guilty of this process. While over 70,000 Indigenous people are living in Toronto, which represents the 4th largest urban Indigenous population in Canada (City of Toronto, 2016), there is a lack of recognition of Indigenous history and presence in Toronto. As stated by an Indigenous elder in 2009 during the celebration of the 175th anniversary of Toronto, “I’m asked to come and celebrate this city, but the city itself kind of moved us out” (Freeman, 2010). He was referring to the processes of colonization that have

forcibly removed the Indigenous people from their traditional lands in Toronto over the last 200 years.

Toronto is bound up with colonial relations ranging from treaties to the contemporary construction of the urban space. Understanding the settler colonialism processes that are occurring here draws attention to the foundational importance of Indigenous territorial dispossession to the making of settler societies (Dorries et al., 2019). Similar to many parts of Canada, there has been little recognition of Indigenous history in Toronto, and even when there is an acknowledgement of Indigenous nations, much of the history and obligation of treaties are left out.

In a letter to the Toronto Parks and Environment Committee in 2017, Councillor Mary-Margaret McMahon decried the lack of Indigenous presence in our city. She stated that “when we walk down our city streets, through our parks, and in our institutions, we are hard-pressed to see that (Indigenous) history and that relationship reflected. Few examples exist which have the engagement and feeling of ownership from the Indigenous community” (Mary-Margaret McMahon, 2017). She raised the issue that our city lacks the Indigenous presences and calls for our planning processes to recognize the importance of using Indigenous lenses when looking at opportunities for place-making within our city. However, even with the historical erasure of Indigenous people in Toronto, they are still living, working and thriving in Toronto and planning has a responsibility to reflect this reality.

2.6 The Dish with One Spoon

According to most historical records and archival research by scholars, The Dish with One Spoon is usually understood as a treaty that was renewed throughout the 17th, 18th and 19th

centuries between Algonquian and Iroquoian nations, and subsequently, Europeans and all newcomers (Lytwyn, 1997). In most interpretations of the treaty by Indigenous scholars, the dish symbolizes the common hunting ground shared among the inhabitants. At the same time, the Spoon denotes that all people who share the territory are expected to limit the resources they take and leave enough for each other. The Dish with One Spoon specifies that each nation is to share resources and land responsibly, taking only what is needed and not more than what can be sustained by nature (DeVries, 2011, 83). According to the Haudenosaunee records, The Dish with One Spoon is one of the most critical responsibilities that was outlined under the Great Law. The principle of The Dish with One Spoon that was described in *Concerning the League* stated that:

It will turn out well for us to do this: we will say, “we promise to have only one dish among us; in it will be beaver tails, and no knife will be there.” Thereupon the chiefs confirmed that so it should happen. Thereupon [the Peacemaker] said, “now we have completed the matter, we will have one dish, which means that we will all have equal shares of the game roaming about in the hunting grounds and fields’, and then everything will become peaceful among all of the people, and there will be no knife near our dish, which means that if a knife were there, someone might presently get cut, causing bloodshed, and this is troublesome, should it happen thus, and for this reason, there should be no knife near our dish.”(Hill, 2017, 42)

As highlighted throughout the literature review, its important to recognize treaty rights, and the history of dispossession and erasures of Indigenous people. Whiles The Dish with One Spoon contains many principles that could help transform environmental planning, its essential for planners to realize that its also a treaty that encompasses Indigenous law and worldview.

3 Research Methods

3.1 Key Informant Interview

For this research, semi-structured interviews were conducted with six key informants alongside an analysis of the literature. The primary research method was through interviews with planners, policymakers, and Indigenous knowledge holders who have experiences working on projects regarding treaty obligations. The primary source of data I sought and collected was an understanding of whether or not, how, and to what extent does planners currently engage with The Dish of One Spoon treaty in the environmental planning processes. Additionally, this research focused on understanding if or how The Dish with One Spoon treaty affects planning policies and treaties. At the same time, the literature reviews provided a picture of the theoretical framework around treaties, dispossession, colonialism. Each interview was approximately one hour in length, and the people I interviewed represent different organizations and viewpoints and included Indigenous scholars and knowledge holders, City of Toronto staff, NGOs, and City Councillor. They are:

- ◇ Toronto City Councillor Mike Layton
- ◇ Clara MacCallum Fraser, Shared Path Consultation Initiative
- ◇ Elder Philip Cote, First Story Toronto
- ◇ Dr. Alan Corbiere, York University
- ◇ Dr. Jon Johnson, University of Toronto
- ◇ Toronto Indigenous Affair Office Staff

The key informants were selected for different reasons. I wanted the interviews to reflect the diversity of those involved in this field and, at the same time, to hear different perspectives and viewpoints. The main themes covered in the interviews range from the principles of The

Dish with One Spoon, Indigenous worldviews, treaties, Wampum Belts, Indigenous history, roles and responsibilities of those living on the land, education and planning tools. The interviews not only helped fill in the gaps that existed in the literature and provided a more in-depth understanding of The Dish with One Spoon, but it also raised new questions and revealed some of the tensions on Indigenous and non-Indigenous people's understanding of The Dish with One Spoon.

3.2 Limitations

There are some possible faults of using Western methodology when discussing The Dish with One Spoon. Indigenous methodologies are shared by Indigenous paradigms, worldviews and principles (Absolon, 2011, 53). This means that it influenced by their culture, socialization and experiences. By utilizing Western methodology of literature reviews and interviews, there are challenges in sharing the Indigenous knowledge and stories that were shared with me. As I am a non-Indigenous person, I am not in a position to speak about some of these issues that emerged during the interviews. Additionally, the underlying tensions on how planning could create the space that allows for Indigenous worldview and values to transform this profession is also a question that continues to exist throughout this research. There are also tensions in planning's attempt to incorporate Indigenous values and worldviews into the current planning paradigm without acknowledging the questions surrounding land, dispossession, sovereignty and treaties. Those are important issues that need to be better addressed in future researches.

4 Key Informant Responses

Key informants provided valuable context and information on The Dish with One Spoon and how it may impact environmental planning. While some variations existed in the interviews,

mostly on the relevance of the treaty, The Dish with One Spoon is generally described as a treaty or covenant initially between the different Haudenosaunee nations and the Anishinaabe, Mississaugas and other nations and to ensure the environment is protected.

Elder Philip Cote, a Traditional Wisdom Keeper and historian from Moose Deer Point First Nation, stated that The Dish with One Spoon has existed for thousands of years and governs the relationship on this land. He describes it as a covenant that represents all the waterways and land around Southern Ontario. Similarly, according to Dr. Alan Corbiere, an Anishinaabe historian, The Dish with One Spoon is a set of overarching principles, and many similar treaties exist in other parts of North America and govern the relationship of many nations throughout the continents. Additionally, Dr. Corbiere stated that there is a philosophical aspect of The Dish with One Spoon as it is based on the idea that one is not to be greedy and not take more than your share, and to leave enough for the future generation. As the land is understood as a dish, it is essential to ensure that a spoonful is all one takes from the dish at a time to ensure its sustainability for the future. The insights from the interviews provided an important context for how The Dish with One Spoon could impact environmental planning processes. It also highlighted that The Dish with One Spoon speaks of a political relationship between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people. Throughout the interviews, several themes and challenges emerged when discussing the roles of planners and decision-makers in considering the principles of The Dish with One Spoon and eventually transform the environmental planning processes in light of the treaty.

4.1 Themes

4.1.1 The Relevance of The Dish with One Spoon

The relevance of Dish with One Spoon in the environmental planning process in Toronto was discussed in many of the interviews from a variety of perspectives. According to a Toronto Indigenous Affairs Office staff, The Dish with One Spoon is only a historical treaty that was signed hundreds of years ago and doesn't currently have any legal impact on modern environmental planning. He further elaborates that while many nations have historical claims to Toronto, such as the Huron-Wendat and Six Nations of the Grand River, the only treaty that is officially recognized by the Government of Canada is the Treaty 13 (1805) with Mississauga of the Credit First Nation. This interpretation of the treaty means that while The Dish with One Spoon may have important principles and guidelines within it, the City of Toronto has no legal obligation to implement them.

In addition to not having legal status, the relevance of The Dish with One Spoon in the environmental planning process is also impacted by the limitation of the existing planning practices. City Councillor Mike Layton stated that the planning department at the City of Toronto mostly deals with policies and has less flexibility on issues of land-use planning. This means that the city is limited in addressing issues around treaties and sovereignty. Additionally, Councillor Layton stated that many of the decisions concerning the environment in Toronto also happens outside of the City's jurisdiction and "unless we have other levels of government that are taking it (the environment) seriously and changing how decisions are made to ensure the voices of the environment has some power, then not much is going to change." This means that even if the city wishes to implement the principles within The Dish with One Spoon, they do not have the political authority to do so.

On the specific details of The Dish with One Spoon, it is generally agreed by my key-informants that the treaty provides an overarching guideline that reflects the Indigenous worldview. However, as the treaty also lacks any specific guidelines that people can follow, it does raise concerns about how planners can fulfil the treaty obligations. As there are no measurable criteria on whether planners have fulfilled the treaty or not, this makes it difficult to measure whether environmental planners in Toronto are fulfilling the treaty obligations during the environmental planning processes. However, planners could look to the Royal Proclamation, Treaty of Niagara, Section 35 of the Constitution or Section 25 of the Charter of Rights of Freedom for guidance. While these treaties and laws are not perfect, they contain principles and mechanisms as defined by the court that are legally binding and can be implemented to some extent.

However, other key informants raised counterpoints and argue that The Dish with One Spoon is still relevant and should still guide and inform modern planning practices. Dr. Alan Corbiere stated that while The Dish with One Spoon may lack many clauses of a modern treaty, its relevance should not be dismissed. He stated that.

“The Dish with One Spoon is a treaty. It may not have specific clauses the way a Western treaty does, which talks about specific causes and demarcations of which territory or boundaries are set, nor does it specify what nations can only take X amount of deer. It doesn't have that, but it has the flexibility it's supposed to have. It has many principles that would be called co-management in the contemporary sense where the nations are supposed to work together to maintain the dish to ensure that there's something for future generations” (Dr. Alan Corbiere, Interview, January 17, 2020).

As stated by Dr. Corbiere, the relevance of The Dish with One Spoon should not be dismissed as it contains many principles of contemporary environmental planning practices such as co-management and requires the different nations to work together. Dr. Jon Johnson also

stated that while The Dish with One Spoon is a historical (pre-confederation) treaty, its still relevant and has real implications on current day practice. He stated,

“If they (early settlers) didn’t agree to The Dish with One Spoon, then they wouldn’t be allowed or invited to stay on the lands. Additionally, in the early period, settlers engaged in sustainable relationships with Indigenous peoples around the Great Lakes and this early relationship should be evidence that indicated that the early settlers knew about The Dish with One Spoon and implicitly or explicitly agreed to the terms. As we are the descendants of those Indigenous and non-Indigenous people who made the agreement or we have immigrated to the territory, I believe that The Dish with One Spoon is operative to all of us who currently live and work in this region” (Dr. Jon Johnson, Interview, February 6, 2020).

The two-contrasting perspective on the relevance suggests that there are still many gaps and tensions that exist on how The Dish with One Spoon is currently understood. The two views are significant as it speaks to broader structural tensions and issues that exist outside the scope of this research.

4.1.2 Indigenous Worldview

The inclusion of Indigenous knowledge and worldview into the planning practice was seen as a major challenge by Clara MacCallum Fraser, who works with both planners and Indigenous communities in her work with the Shared Path Consultation Initiative. Fraser mentioned that one of the most challenging things is that many treaties, such as The Dish with One Spoon, have a spiritual component and that many planners and policymakers are very uncomfortable with. She recognizes the hypocrisy of the belief of secularism and highlighted the religious foundation of contemporary planning practice.

As we live in a society that often thinks of ourselves as secular and having separated our policies from spiritual or religious practices. However, spiritual or religious foundations play a vital role in shaping our ideas around land use, particularly for the early settlers arriving in North America. Those settlers had this view of the landscape and thought of the place like Eden, untouched and perfect for their use. It's important to acknowledge

that these religious ideas always played a role in the formation of Canada and with the increasing environmental disaster throughout the world, it's essential to look back and reevaluate our relationship to nature, a part of which is spiritual (Clara MacCallum Fraser, Interview, January 6, 2020).

Fraser also mentioned that the way we understand treaties such as The Dish with One Spoon differs from the Indigenous people's understanding. Our usage of words such as resources reflects a fundamentally different understanding of nature and our way of thinking and way of knowing reflects on a different understanding of the world. As Indigenous worldview tends to focus on a more holistic understanding of the world that emerges from thousands of years of existence and experiences while Western worldview is more compartmentalized, this can be seen in our understanding and interpretation of treaties such as The Dish with One Spoon.

When these treaties were signed between the Indigenous people and the settlers, while the words on the treaties might be agreed on by both parties, they may also have different interpretations of the treaties. Sometimes it's overwhelming for us to try to understand what treaties mean for the current day planners, and it's something I'm trying to achieve at work by looking at how I can help planners understand and translate treaty language. (Clara MacCallum Fraser, Interview, January 6, 2020).

However, it's also important to be careful with the contextualization of Indigenous knowledge. As explained by scholar David Delgado Shorter (2017), Indigenous knowledge must be understood in the context of Indigenous legal and political order. By framing Indigenous knowledge as spiritual, it could result in the depoliticize Indigenous knowledge and undermine its importance in the discourse around treaties and sovereignty.

Elder Philip Cote also mentioned that in the Indigenous worldview, there are many stories that focus on not being greedy and only taking what is necessary. These lessons provide important guidance about how Indigenous people should live and interact with nature. Additionally, he mentioned that there is cosmology embedded in the treaties and it is intricate and represents how Indigenous people are here both spiritually and physically. It is important for

planners to recognize *ontological pluralism* the idea that there are different ways or modes of being (Escobar, 2016), as there is a risk in that the failure of recognizing different worldviews can result in planners and policymakers omitting Indigenous concerns such as Indigenous rights and sovereignty during environmental planning processes. As a researcher, I found it difficult and uncomfortable to bring Indigenous worldviews to fit within the existing planning parameter. This is an ongoing tension that exists within planning. As Indigenous values and the current planning practices are fundamentally different, without radically transforming planning, any inclusion or incorporation of Indigenous ideas would only serve the colonial project.

4.1.3 Changing Existing Planning Processes

While there are many inadequacies and limitations within the existing environmental planning process in engaging with Indigenous communities, there are also many steps in place to address some of these shortcomings. According to the staff from the Toronto Indigenous Affairs Office, a multitude of initiatives are in the works that could improve existing (environmental) planning processes. One of the initiatives is setting up a new planning council that would include representation from urban Indigenous communities, architects, planners and elders. The council would be there for urban planners and other relevant city development divisions to reach out to for guidance when planning for Indigenous people. Councillor Mike Layton also believes that the Parks and Recreation Department at the City of Toronto could aspire to incorporate elements of The Dish with One Spoon. He stated that ideally, the principles of The Dish with One Spoon could help guide the planning of parks in Toronto. As parks spaces service, the needs of the communities and The Dish with One Spoon can help planners gain a better understanding of the natural system and plan parks for the present and future generations.

At the surface level, it might seem relatively straight forward to include the principle of The Dish with One Spoon into the environmental planning process. As stated by Dr. Jon Johnson, the core values of The Dish with One Spoon are peace, equity, sustainability, and peaceful relationality with others. However, this could be much more challenging and difficult. As there is a significant difference between Western worldview and Indigenous worldview, planners' understanding of The Dish with One Spoon might significantly differ from its original intent. Additionally, while the principles of The Dish with One Spoon may seem very similar to many existing environmental planning values, there are some fundamental differences. The major difference is that The Dish with One Spoon reflects Indigenous worldview and encompasses all of creation as opposed to just humans and that if planners abide by the principles of The Dish with One Spoon, then they must think of all of creation. Without addressing this underlying tension, it would be challenging for any policies to truly reflect the principles and values of The Dish with One Spoon.

One big challenge remains. As stated by Clara MacCallum Fraser, how can planners become more engaged with treaties? She struggles with translating Indigenous worldviews and knowledge into planning vernacular. She questions how can planners "Who are currently working in the city. Who hasn't even pondered their part in this story of Truth and Reconciliation? Who are just reading the Provincial Policy Statement" She wonders how they can be more aware of treaties, and Aboriginal treaty rights? While there are positive signs of progress made in including more Indigenous voices in environmental planning processes, many gaps still exist. The planning process doesn't currently recognize or are reflective of Indigenous worldview, and there isn't any mechanism in place to truly reflect the principles of The Dish

with One Spoon. Additionally, there is a critical need for planning to think differently. As stated by Fraser:

“If we are thinking about Seven Generations instead of the next 20 years, that could change the way planning could be done. However, we are working within systems that generally don’t think that way. For us [planners] to actually plan for Seven Generations require radical change, which is something that is not happening yet.”
(Clara MacCallum Fraser, Interview, January 6, 2020).

The Seventh Generation Principle is based on an ancient Iroquois philosophy that “the decisions we make today should result in a sustainable world seven generations into the future” (Indigenous Corporate Training, 2012). This means that planners need to rethink planning in a way that reflects the Indigenous values and worldview. It also means that any decisions related to land or the environment need to result in a sustainable environment for those living seven generations into the future.

4.1.4 Education and Decolonize Planning

To truly transform planning and to have an environmental planning process to reflect the values of The Dish with One Spoon, there is a vital need to educate current and future planners. As stated by the staff at the Indigenous Affairs Office, there should be more opportunities for the Indigenous communities in Toronto to connect with universities and set up institutes within planning. Planning organizations should also create educational opportunities for planners to become more aware of Indigenous issues and act toward it to create the necessary changes. He stated that “if planners are educated on treaties throughout planning school and [in their] professional career, then it would go a long way in addressing some of the gaps that currently exist.” He recognizes that historically, planning as a profession has not done a great job recognizing treaties or working alongside Indigenous people. Still, he has seen positive changes

in the profession in recent years, such as OPPI's creation of an Indigenous Planning Perspective Taskforce in 2018 and their subsequent publication of a report on Indigenous perspective in planning (OPPI, 2019). Additionally, he mentioned the importance of developing tool kits for planners. As planning has a very specific paradigm, and it is highly complex, there need to be tool kits that allow planners to understand the impacts of historical processes on the present-day Toronto. He said:

“I'm also saying we need to give people practical tools. So how do you engage a community? How to better recognize treaties? Who should planners be speaking to? And many other kinds of practical issues. What I'm proposing in the system is that you take knowledge, like applied knowledge, and create a tool where [the] knowledge [is] passed to other planners. It becomes something that planners are going to use pretty much every day (Indigenous Affairs Office Staff, Interview, January 16, 2020).”

However, while a toolkit might be important in addressing some of the gaps that currently exist and provide planners with the tools better engage and work alongside Indigenous people, it's still limited in many ways. A toolkit would be insufficient in addressing the need for ongoing conversations surrounding the renewal of nation to nation relationships or questions of self-determination as it would not have the flexibility necessary to answer these important questions on responsibility and reciprocal relationship

Additionally, it is also crucial for planners to engage and learn from Indigenous leaders. These leaders would provide valuable knowledge and guidance to planners during the environmental planning processes. He said:

“The planner should be working with the Indigenous leaders of the area, and by leaders, I don't just really mean the elected leadership but the Elder like we used to have. Elders Councils, Youth councils, Women's Councils. So, planners first should ask those people, the elders and the ceremony people and tell them what they want...and whether it's the right thing to do. And then, the (Indigenous)people deliberate upon it and then they would then inform the planners, this is what they should do and, here are some of the constrictions” Dr. Alan Corbiere, Interview, January 17, 2020).

Learning from Indigenous elders and educating current and future planners would go a long way in addressing the existing gaps within environmental planning. It can be argued that there are currently a lack of Indigenous voices and worldview within the planning process and many processes that do involve Indigenous people are limited and often do not reflect the needs or values of those Indigenous nations. With more knowledge and awareness of The Dish with One Spoon and other relevant treaties, planners can have more tools and capacity in addressing some of the underlying tensions in the environmental planning process. The interviews reflect a quote from the literature in that “there is an important need for planners to accept the legitimacy of Indigenous planning as a parallel tradition that has its own history, focus, goals and approach” (Matunga, 2013, 31). This statement means that planners shouldn’t only look at and not merely incorporating or including Indigenous knowledge or ideas into the existing practices, but rather seek to reorganize or transform planning as a profession that would allow these different ideas to exist.

4.2 Challenges

4.2.1 Researching as a non-Indigenous person

While embarking on this research as a non-Indigenous person, I came across many tensions and issues around Indigenous knowledge and treaties that I did not feel comfortable addressing. Regarding treaties, while the Crown only recognizes Treaty 13 with the Mississauga of the Credit First Nation, there are existing tensions with other nations who have historical claims such as the Six Nations of the Grand River, and the Huron-Wendat Nation. Additionally, as Toronto is home to a large urban Indigenous population, there are questions regarding whether there are legal obligations to consult them on matters of treaties and sovereignty.

Elder Philip Cote stated during one of the Interviews that Indigenous culture is something one can only experience; it raises questions on how I can translate these oral knowledges into an academic paper. I felt the discomfort in trying to articulate something that cannot be understood in the current planning framework. While there are conceptual tools that have emerged in past projects such as the Hay Island proposal (Borrow, 1997), I am still learning of ways to translate this oral knowledge into the written format without undermining the values and essence of this knowledge. This is still a major challenge I am trying to understand better as I continue this academic journey. This research raised many more questions for me regarding my role as a treaty person and a guest on this land.

Through this research, I was also able to gain a better understanding of my role as a treaty person. Through the literature reviews and the interviews, I learned about ways to uphold my responsibility as a guest on this land and ways to build towards an inclusive and equitable future.

4.2.2 Planning as a Colonial Project

Throughout the research, I have come across the challenges of bridging Indigenous and non-Indigenous worldview. It can be argued that the current planning practice is based on the worldview of Euro-modernity that can be described as capitalist, rationalist, liberal, secular, patriarchal, white (Escobar, 2016). In this worldview, planning is mostly interested in managing private property, and our relationship with nature and land is seen as extractive. This contrasts with the Indigenous worldview, which is more holistic and looks at the relationship to both the human and non-human world. I found it difficult to include the principles of The Dish with One Spoon into existing planning practices. I see the current planning practices as siloed, professional and governed by Canadian laws and different jurisdictions. This view is challenged by The Dish

with One Spoon, which speaks of an inherently different set of planning. The Dish with One Spoon reflects Indigenous worldview and law that is more holistic and reflective of all of creation as opposed to just human. As opposed to merely incorporating Indigenous values and worldviews in The Dish with One Spoon, it would be more important to transform planning as a profession. Merely embedding or including some principles of The Dish with One Spoon into existing planning practice risk romanticizing and depoliticizing Indigenous knowledge. This would only result in changes on the surface while the institutional tensions and barriers remain. I implore current and future planners to recognize this and work towards fundamentally changing planning.

5 Sets of Guiding Principle for Planning

The following are sets of guiding principles that emerged during the key informant interviews that are important to highlight and implement for future planning practitioners.

- The core values of The Dish with One Spoon are peace, equity, sustainability, and peaceful relationality with others and all of creation as opposed to just humans. These values mean that in all environmental planning processes, planners need to assess whether the planning processes fulfil the value of peace, equity, sustainability and peaceful relationality, not just in the context of humans but also with all creations. This guiding principle also emerged from the interviews but also draw from the work of Anishinaabe scholar Deborah McGregor which emphasizes the importance of practicing reciprocal relationships with the Indigenous nations involved and focusing on building and maintaining a respectful relationship with the communities. As stated by Dr. Alan Corbiere during the interview, The Dish with One Spoon has the flexibility that would allow different nations to work together in taking care of the land. This should mean that different groups should be able to understand the principles of The Dish with One Spoon and work together to create a more sustainable and inclusive future.

- Seven Generations thinking: Planners should plan while thinking about those living seven generations in the future. This principle is reflective of Indigenous worldview of the 7th Generation Principle that dates back to the writing of The Great Law of Iroquois Confederacy. Currently, many planning decisions are only looking at a timeline of 20-30 years. It would be necessary for future planning decisions to assess whether those living

seven generations into the future would approve of the decisions that are being made now. As The Dish with One Spoon was created based on the acknowledgement that what we extract from the environment can cause harm and impede its ability to sustain people and future generations, it is essential to ensure that our shared world is left in a better place for future generations.

- Knowing the history of the land before Western settlement and learn from Indigenous elders. As Indigenous people have lived here for thousands of years, planners need to maintain open communication and engage Indigenous communities during every step of the environmental planning process. During the interview with Elder Cote, he mentioned that knowing the history of the land allows us to connect to the land and to remember all the history and communities. The knowledge of the land is critical in maintaining a different world and a different way of knowing. A better understanding of history before European settlements also challenges the notion that Western knowledge is superior and allows planners to gain a better understanding of Indigenous worldviews and values. This requires planners to be opened minded when learning from Indigenous elders and to ensure their practices reflects these teachings.

- It is important for planning schools and planning institutions to provide workshops and educational opportunities for planners to learn about treaties such as The Dish with One Spoon. The education process should be more than just looking to incorporate Indigenous worldviews into the existing planning institution but rather look into fundamentally transforming planning. These changes can be done through the education process that

introduces the importance of Indigenous law, Indigenous worldviews and Indigenous methodology to planning students and practitioners. These education opportunities can go a long way in improving planners' capacity to engage with Indigenous people and towards decolonizing planning.

6 Conclusion

Ultimately, environmental planners in Toronto should plan according to the principles of The Dish with One Spoon. The Dish with One Spoon is a treaty that contains a set of principles that reflects Indigenous laws and worldviews. There is an essential need for planners to engage with it as we all have a legal obligation to uphold the principles within it. To achieve these necessary changes, planners must think about planning in terms of relationships, to think about the needs of all of the creations as oppose to just humans. Planners should also think about their roles as treaty people and to reflect on how their work can transform planning as a profession.

While planners do have a challenging role as they need to work within the limits of the existing planning framework , they do have an obligation to work towards transforming current planning by learning from Indigenous people and to truly understand their roles as guests on this land. The role of planners on The Dish with One Spoon territory is to mediate this set of political relationships, and work to address some of the existing tensions. Taking The Dish with One Spoon into account in the environmental planning process is only a starting point. Planners have a responsibility in ensuring that all future environmental planning processes are based on this historical relationship of equity, peace, sustainability, and reciprocity with the land and each other. However, planners need to also realize that Indigenous knowledge and worldview are political and should not undermine its importance in the discourse of treaties and sovereignty.

Planners must think further about what are the factors that allow this relationship to be maintained in the right way, how planning can be one of the tools that will address the tensions that exist in the context of settler(guest)-Indigenous relationships and the conditions and terms of references on how these relationships would exist.

It's important to remember that this research is just a small first step, and there are much more work and further research that are required to understand how planners can not only engage with The Dish with One Spoon but also the larger discourses on Indigenous worldview and Indigenous sovereignty in the planning processes.

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