Title: “Transit-Oriented Governance: A Comparison of the Impact of Regional Government Structures on public transit use in Toronto and Vancouver”

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Abstract: This thesis explores the relationship between regional government structures in the Toronto and Vancouver metropolitan areas and the development of comparatively high post-war transit use. While local government reforms and the impacts of regional development on transit use following World War II have received much attention in isolation, they have rarely been analyzed together. This paper investigates how the unique regional governance structures in Toronto and Vancouver allowed both cities to counter North American transportation trends by facilitating the creation of policies that favored transit use. By analyzing the historic operating and financial data from the transit agencies in both cities within the context of legislative reforms to local government and the resulting transportation policies, the impact of regional governance structures on transit use is examined. This paper finds that the success of transportation institutions in achieving high regional transit use is closely tied to the extent that local government bodies have fiscal autonomy, jurisdictional flexibility and involve local transit operating knowledge in transportation policy formation. Finally, the cases of Toronto and Vancouver suggest that the presence and long-term sustainability of these three capacities is inversely related to the involvement of senior government in local transportation planning.