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**GETTING TOWARDS 'YES':
INTEGRATING PRINCIPLED PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT
INTO B.C.'S REGIONAL GROWTH STRATEGIES**

BY

**ERIC ROLAND WESTBERG
B.A.**

**A Practicum
Submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of**

MASTER OF CITY PLANNING

**Department of City Planning
University of Manitoba
Winnipeg, Manitoba**

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A Thesis/Practicum submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies of The University

of Manitoba in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the degree

of

MASTER OF CITY PLANNING

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Dedication

*To Mom, Grandpa, Dad, and each of my friends
for their ongoing support, compassionate
confrontations, and supreme patience
in helping me achieve this goal
and set out on the career I have chosen.*

Acknowledgments

I am especially grateful for the ideas, encouragement, and patience of Dr. Ian Wight, whose service as my advisor has been invaluable in helping me deliver this project.

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Abstract

Getting Towards 'Yes': Integrating Principled Public Involvement into B.C.'s Regional Growth Strategies

By Eric Roland Westberg

The recent provincially-initiated re-introduction of regional growth management planning in B.C. through Regional Growth Strategy policy has significantly advanced long-term planning for sustainable development in B.C. regions. Although this policy mandates plans which address a holistic range of issues, it is largely silent on the subject of public involvement in the regional growth planning process. Considering that Regional Growth Strategies must take on ambitious sustainability goals, navigate inter-municipal conflict, overcome NIMBY, and engage an uninterested public, the lack of structure surrounding public involvement is a serious concern. B.C. regional planners themselves have recognized this fact and have called for guidance on this issue.

This practicum maintains a focus on these planners' needs, and looks at two key context areas facing Regional Growth Strategies: regionalism and inter-municipal conflict; and urban citizenship/community. In each area characteristics and trends are explored, and threats and opportunities in relation to public involvement are identified. The public involvement "needs" that emerge form an agenda for planning practice, part of which calls for planners to: create cross-sectoral regional partnerships; build a political constituency that can sustain regional initiatives; and encourage community networks that forge new relationships and replace adversarial lobby-group models.

One major outcome of this study is a modified structural model of the dimensions of regionalism, applied here to map both the existing profile of Regional Growth Strategies and a proposed alternative structure. A second major outcome is a set of 11 guidelines for B.C. regional planners to use as they structure public processes at several distinct stages in the Regional Growth Strategy planning cycle. The relevance of these guidelines is demonstrated by applying them as a diagnostic checklist to recent planning exercises in Hamilton, Ontario and Vancouver, B.C.

Key theoretical inputs into this research include: the social construction of growth management (Innes, 1992); postmodern planning (Innes, 1998); inventing regionalism (Wallis, 1994); and sustainable community politics (Potapchuk, 1996). The role of the planner as a consensus-builder (Innes, 1996) is a fundamental part of the solutions proposed here.

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Section One:
Background to the Subject

Chapter One: Introduction--- Problem and Response

Problem Rationale

In response to rapid population growth in several B.C. regions, and with the expectation that this growth will spread to other parts of the province, the Province of B.C. has enacted new legislation that will facilitate a planning response to growth at the regional level, built on mandated co-ordination between municipalities. The *Growth Strategies Act* of 1995 (GSA) is evolved somewhat from the consensus-based regional advisory planning regime that existed in Greater Vancouver from 1983 to 1995.

The first step to implementing the GSA in a given region where growth pressures indicate the need for a regional plan is the development of a *Regional Growth Strategy* (RGS). An RGS takes the form of a long-term (minimum 20 years), comprehensive plan to address social, economic, environmental, and cultural issues at a broad policy level. As a regional plan, an RGS is created by any one of the 26 existing Regional Districts in B.C., and as each Regional District is comprised of a number of municipalities, in each case will involve the participation of several adjacent municipalities (B.C. Ministry of Municipal Affairs [b], 5).

As the initiator of the RGS concept, the Province has established a set of broad goals that each RGS must work to achieve. Relating to the current thinking in planning for sustainable development, these goals include: "*promoting settlement patterns that minimize the use of automobiles; protecting environmentally sensitive areas; reducing and preventing air, land and water pollution; promoting adequate, affordable, and appropriate housing*" (B.C. Ministry of Municipal Affairs [b], 6).

While the Province is clear about broad substantive areas for Regional Districts to consider in creating an RGS, it leaves certain components of the "plan-making" process to the discretion of the regions. How the general public becomes involved in this process is one such unspecified area:

"The Regional District must provide the opportunity for consultation with individuals, organizations, and authorities who the Regional District considers will be affected by the strategy. This includes the adoption of a formal consultation plan that provides for early and ongoing consultation...The legislation does not specify what type of consultation must be undertaken"

(B.C. Ministry of Municipal Affairs [b], 10)

Considering the reluctance of many municipalities to accept provincially imposed directives, it is possible the Province has purposefully avoided imposing detailed structures such as public involvement strategies on the regions. Certainly there is a need for flexibility and a locally-responsive approach to planning. However, public involvement in planning processes has come to be recognized as a crucial element in the successful implementation of plans at the neighbourhood, civic, and regional level. In particular, several issues related to the context of regional planning in B.C. suggest that a deliberate, principled approach to public involvement in the RGS process is critical.

Subject-Related Issues

Current practice in regional growth management is closely tied to principles of sustainable development. These principles embrace the need to seek consensus and broad public involvement in planning for sustainability, and as an RGS must seek to attain goals consistent with sustainable development, a deliberate approach to public involvement must be integrated into the creation of each RGS. With the pressures of

growth, conflicts between diverse interests over increasingly scarce resources create a new context for planning that demands attention to process:

"Conventional decision making mechanisms tend to exclude rather than include diverse interests and do not cope well with the complexity that issues of sustainability present"

(Canadian Round Tables, 5)

The nature of growth management as a specialized planning activity creates further linkages to public involvement. The work of U.S. planning theorist and practitioner Judith Innes outlines in detail the basis of this connection. Although the subject of her research was growth management policy creation at the state level, her emphasis on social process makes her conclusions still highly relevant to plan creation at the regional level. Innes' basic contention focuses on the need to build support for policies:

"...the design and implementation of growth management demand carefully constructed group processes to build socially many of the policies...groups, including experts, citizens, and high level officials, go through a process of mutual learning to create a shared conception of the intent of growth management and to agree on specific ways to implement it. The groups learn by doing and by discussing."

(Innes, 1992, 440)

While the focus of her study dealt with consensus-based group process as one particular form of participation, Innes' insights speak broadly to the social variables that underlie any approach to growth management policy and plan-making. These social variables are very much present in the Regional Growth Strategy policy context in B.C.

To begin with, growth management is often about breaking away from status quo practice— as a result, its success frequently depends on changes in attitude and

behaviour on the part of citizens, planners, and elected officials. Further, because growth management encompasses many equally important and urgent concerns, there is no one "right" hierarchy of goals— thus goal setting can only be accomplished through a process of bargaining and mediation between stakeholders. Finally, as growth management itself is a policy innovation, its acceptance depends on stakeholders being able to understand its benefits and relate these to their own needs and values (Innes, 1992, 442-43). The critical link to public involvement that comes out of Innes' discussion is that because it touches on so many aspects of community quality-of-life, regional growth management makes stakeholders out of everyone.

Besides coping with these challenges, regional growth management must navigate difficult institutional waters— as it requires the co-operation of neighbouring municipalities, this type of regional planning is conflictual by nature. The siting of regional facilities can produce fierce competition where benefits are perceived, and can generate intense resistance where costs and impacts are feared. Issues such as air and water pollution and traffic congestion (among many others) generate varying impacts and produce varied perceptions of equity or "fair share" among municipalities. The current municipal governance dispute in B.C.'s Comox Valley is one of many examples of this type of intra-regional conflict. As one conflict-resolution measure for this institutional context, public involvement would help build regional identity that could ultimately break through such barriers to regional problem-solving.

Lastly, regional plan implementation is closely linked to concepts of urban citizenship. As citizens most often become directly involved in planning processes when issues reach their doorstep, public awareness and understanding of the more removed practice of regional planning is problematic. The need to engage citizens and increase public awareness of the inter-relationships between issues and the resulting policy

"trade-offs" is demonstrated in many municipal planning documents intended for public distribution. Cities such as Vancouver and Nanaimo have developed "survey workbooks" to visibly show these connections, and pose "either-or" style questions.

One particular area of concern for Regional Growth Strategies within the citizenship theme is the "Not-In-My-Backyard" or NIMBY dilemma. This form of resistance relates either to the public's lack of understanding of the issues, or their informed unwillingness to accept change. The recent University of B.C. land-use planning process is an example of both conditions. Public open houses revealed general public ignorance of regional consultation opportunities over the last few years, and strong opposition to the regional designation of U.B.C. as a residential growth area.

In general, rezoning processes where mixed uses are being introduced into single use zones, and where residential uses are being intensified are especially prone to the NIMBY phenomenon. In cities where housing affordability is an issue, neighbourhood resistance to new and different forms of housing has been identified as a critical policy issue. Concerning NIMBY and larger urban citizenship themes, public involvement provides a critical avenue for improving knowledge and effecting attitude change.

Practice-Related Issues

Added to these subject-related reasons for principled public involvement in Regional Growth Strategies are a number of practice-related factors unique to B.C. regional planners' status as a "special public" within the wider B.C. planning profession.

The introduction of the Growth Strategies Act has given most B.C. regional planners an opportunity to enter a completely new area of professional practice. Outside Greater Vancouver, these planners— unless veterans of other cities, provinces, or organizations— have had little experience with growth management or vision-based community planning. In particular, they have also had little experience with public involvement. Thus far their main focus has related to subdivision and other "current planning" issues. Perhaps because of this situation, almost all planners in place around B.C. who are responsible for managing Regional Growth Strategies have been brought in from outside rather than assigned from existing Regional District staff. This pattern is based on the recent experience of Regional Districts in Victoria, Pemberton, Kelowna, Kamloops, and Chilliwack.

This organizational context is a cause for concern. Across B.C., these new RGS planners typically report to an existing planning director. While these new recruits may be highly skilled individuals, any capacity they will have to influence action within the organization— in particular with Regional District board members— will be tempered by the amount of support they receive from their director. If the skills and innovative ideas of these "new" planners are to be fully applied to urgent regional growth management problems around B.C., it will be critical for these directors to have a general working knowledge of the problem context at hand, and be able to understand and anticipate how they can assist in advancing the strategy.

A critical component of this "working knowledge" must be recognition of the factors outlined in the previous section— in particular, how public involvement is the fundamental connective tissue on which any regional growth management initiative will depend.

Besides within the organizational hierarchy, the assistance of regional planning directors will be especially important in relation to the regional community itself. A transplanted planner in a new community will have no network of relationships with key local stakeholders and groups and will thus be all the more dependent on the personal relationships already established by the planning director.

There is therefore much cause for concern about such an organizational context for planning. Having supportive Regional District planning directors in place with a good working knowledge of the regional growth management problem context and public involvement's function *within* this context is crucial— yet where is this working knowledge to come from if these same directors have had no experience in this area of practice? This specific knowledge gap is a cornerstone of the rationale for this practicum. As it sets out to respond to the "public involvement aspect" of this gap, this entire discussion will focus on this particular target audience— the regional planning directors around B.C. who together form a "special public" within the provincial planning profession.

Aspects of this knowledge gap have already been spoken of within B.C. professional circles. In particular, longtime Regional District planners have identified a need for professional guidance in public involvement. This need has been stated in two different professional survey processes.

First, in the process of creating Growth Strategy legislation, B.C. Ministry of Municipal Affairs staff consulted with B.C. planners about policy proposals. This series of consultation meetings in the Spring of 1994 identified a number of concerns and follow-up needs that would become issues for Regional Districts as they became involved in the RGS process. Among these areas of need was the issue of public

involvement. In particular, planners were looking for better models for public involvement in planning, and more innovative ways of involving the public (B.C. Ministry of Municipal Affairs, 1994, B2).

Second, in 1997 the Planning Institute of B.C. and the U.B.C. School of Community and Regional Planning jointly conducted a "Continuing Education Needs Assessment Survey". The purpose of this exercise was to gather information from B.C. planners to provide a basis for the design and delivery of professional continuing education programs. The survey asked detailed questions both about respondents' background and their educational needs (Christie, 1997).

The results of the survey indicate significant educational interest in public involvement among Regional District planners. Of a total of 186 survey respondents, 42 planners indicated working for a Regional District. Of these 42, 27 stated a need for further education in "public involvement strategies". Further, these 27 planners came from 12 different Regional Districts located all over B.C.— including the North, Vancouver Island, and the Central and Eastern Interior (Christie, 1997).

In reference to these needs, there is already a precedent for professional advice-giving to Regional District planners. As part of their advisory role, B.C. Ministry of Municipal Affairs staff have a mandate to assist these planners through the provision of policy guidelines on different practice subject areas. This mandate has had a relationship to RGS planning through a recent Ministry publication on negotiation methods (B.C. Ministry of Municipal Affairs, 1998). In this advisory role, thus far the Ministry has not yet addressed the subject of public involvement. However, research from other sources which addressed public involvement in RGS planning and directed

its findings at Regional District planners would relate strongly to the Ministry's advisory precedent.

Considering the state of knowledge on the subject around B.C., professional guidance in public involvement is hard to come by. In its survey of provincial government initiatives, a recent provincial resource-planning Commission noted a general "absence of clear and consistent guidelines" for public involvement in a range of different planning contexts (Commission on Resources and Environment, vol.4, 26).

Where guidelines do exist, they are most often targeted towards narrow, specialized purposes such as: how to reposition public involvement within the corporate planning cycle (B.C. Hydro Public Affairs Division, 1995); how to improve organizational learning from each public involvement exercise (Salasan Associates Inc., 1995); and how to structure roles and relationships among different players within the planning process (Context Research Ltd., 1998). One recent work comes close to addressing regional planners' needs in that it outlines appropriate degrees of public involvement in different municipal government decision-making processes (John Talbot and Associates, 1996).

However, what this and other sources do not address are the mix of contextual factors specific to regional growth management— and the mix of variables specific to the B.C. Regional District organizational setting. This practicum seeks to add to the B.C. planning-related public involvement knowledge-base by offering an integrated response to challenges in both of these arenas.

Problem Statement, Guiding Questions, and Guiding Objectives

Out of this rationale comes the following problem statement and guiding questions to set the research and analytical agenda for this practicum:

For B.C.'s Regional Growth Strategies to be implemented successfully, specialized guidance concerning public involvement is urgently needed so that B.C. Regional District planners can respond to both the fundamental elements of regional growth management and the problematic dynamics of their own organizational setting.

- What are defining features and characteristics, current trends, and innovations in each major Regional Growth Strategy context area— regionalism, and urban citizenship— and what threats and opportunities do these present for public involvement in Regional Growth Strategies?
- In terms of their structure, how well equipped are Regional Districts to address these threats and opportunities?
- What specialized roles and responsibilities will planners have to accept to become an effective part of solutions?
- How can this cumulative understanding be shaped into relevant, credible, and concise conclusions to respond to the needs of B.C. regional planners within their organizational setting?

Related to these questions is another aspect of this practicum's research agenda— specifically, accomplishing the following set of objectives:

- Base research and analysis on a balance of relevant theory and case examples, with particular reference to B.C. sources.
- Generate applied knowledge on how public involvement relates to regional growth management in general and Regional Growth Strategies in particular.
- Generate specialized and detailed guidance for integrating public involvement into Regional Growth Strategies.
- Communicate findings to planners in a manageable, utilization-oriented format to facilitate their implementation.

Study Limitations

This discussion of the framework of this practicum has thus far attempted to build a persuasive rationale for why this study has chosen public involvement as an area of focus within the larger problem context of regional growth management. Since regional growth management is such a broad and multi-layered planning subject, what remains to be detailed here is exactly which layers of the subject this study's exploration of public involvement will address.

The house-building analogy shown in Figure 1 distinguishes the different layers within regional growth management and shows their inter-relationships. Nested within a growth-management framework are regional planning and urban citizenship layers. Figure 1 shows how within the regional growth management subject hierarchy these layers are critical structural features. The viability of any of the lower-order systems—however well they are crafted—will depend on the soundness of the regional planning and urban citizenship layers.

Accordingly, this practicum will focus on public involvement only as it relates to the regional planning and urban citizenship layers. It examines each area separately to begin with, but ultimately it will link concepts from the two layers into one integrated strategy. Throughout this process, discussion will take place with the regional planner in mind as a target audience.

As a result, the knowledge resources B.C. planners already have access to through networks, conferences, and newsletters are also taken into account here. Thus high profile cases such as the recent regional plans of Greater Vancouver and Nanaimo, as well as Vancouver's CityPlan are not discussed in detail. This is partly

because these are unique cases from contexts not typical of other regions, and partly because extensive analysis on these plans has already been undertaken— with results widely communicated across the province. Where possible then, this research tries to present ideas from fields and sources that are not always considered by or available to B.C. planners.

Figure 1: Layers Within the Subject Context— A House-Building Analogy

- Regional Growth Management:
(the end product).....the finished house.

- Growth-management within a philosophy of
sustainable development:the foundation, building
envelope and building footprint.

- Regional Planning:
(the institutional context).....the roof covering
each individual room.

- Urban Citizenship and Community:
(the grassroots context).....the framing, studs,
and beams.

- Internal component areas:
 - Governance..... the flooring.
 - Social Imperatives..... the heating.
 - Economic Imperatives.....the walls.
 - Environmental Imperatives.....the plumbing.

- THE REGIONAL PLANNER.....the general contractor.

A Research Orientation

The research orientation of this practicum is grounded in several related ideas about the purpose of research and the knowledge it produces. The first of these ideas demonstrates how community planning-oriented research has its own distinct intentions:

"An important characteristic that distinguishes planning and design research is its emphasis on the search for right/ pragmatic/ effective answers, more in the domain of utility (Dewey), rather than on the pursuit of truth exclusively."

(Carvalho, 1)

Along this same theme of utility is Innes' notion of "postmodern planning" (Innes, 1998). Most importantly, this concept acknowledges the difficult political context planners face when they bring forward their ideas. Innes highlights that in such an environment, planning's fundamental purpose needs to be realistic:

"This planning is driven, not by a search for the best way to achieve a goal, but for a package of actions that participants agree will improve on the situation."

(Innes, 1998, vii)

As a pragmatist, Innes has thus abandoned Daniel Burnham's 100-year-old rallying cry to "make no small plans". In place of this concept are incremental planning solutions built on stakeholder consensus. The catalyst in this new postmodern equation is the planner, who must forge networks to make "connections among ideas and among people" (Innes, 1998, vii). According to Innes, the source of new knowledge and innovation relevant for this professional context can only be front-line practice itself. Because academic theorists are not grounded in this problem context, models must come from the "best-practices" of planners themselves (Innes, 1998, vii).

The concept of postmodern planning is a current that runs throughout this practicum. "Getting Towards Yes" captures this study's focus on overcoming obstacles — at both institutional and grassroots levels— and facilitating agreement. The solutions ultimately proposed here anticipate political variables and attempt to handle them adroitly. While theory is a significant component to this discussion, more often ideas and lessons are put forward from North American practice.

Taking the utility theme one step further, a final concept underlying this practicum's research orientation relates closely to the target audience of this work. Patton's idea of "utilization-focused evaluation" offers a useful framework for keeping the ultimate research goal front and centre throughout this discussion (Patton, 1978). For Patton, the findings of successful utilization-focused evaluation must reduce uncertainty for a specific decision-maker (individual or group) facing a specific decision (Patton, 1978, 50). In the context of the program evaluation discipline, this "decision" has traditionally been whether to renew or cancel a given program. In a planning context, the "decision" is more likely to be whether to maintain or revise a set of roles, strategies, or techniques.

Following the "reduction of uncertainty" imperative, utilization-focused evaluation particularly involves targeting as a research audience specific decision-makers as they consider a specific decision. A critical part of the utilization emphasis is involving research users in the design of the research itself. Only through this means will decision-makers have ownership in the research and thus be less likely to ignore its findings (Patton, 1978, 74).

Applying this utilization-focused approach to Regional Growth Strategies will involve a two-stage process. A first stage will need to respond to the public involvement

educational needs among B.C. Regional District planners in general. As it builds a foundation for action, this stage will need to show how public involvement relates to the subject context of regional growth management. The outcome of this stage would be specialized guidance applicable to all planners involved with Regional Growth Strategies. To have the most relevance to this group, this stage will also have to relate its guidance directly to the policy environment facing these individuals.

A second stage will need to focus on specific conditions in each separate Regional District. In particular, this will involve detailed needs assessment in relation to community threats and opportunities— with special emphasis on local political and collaborative culture. The outcome of this stage would be a Regional Growth Strategy public involvement plan applicable only to one region. Because of its localized focus, it is in this stage that Patton's imperative about including end-users in research design is most crucial.

This practicum fulfills the agenda of stage one. It limits itself to two subject context areas within regional growth management— regionalism and urban citizenship — and aims its conclusions at Regional District planners province-wide. Beyond the immediate academic audience of this complete practicum document, it is anticipated that an "executive" version of this study will later be made available through the Planning Institute of B.C. to this group of planners.

Practicum Structure

The next part of this chapter concludes Section One's introduction to the practicum subject by mapping the B.C. policy setting— including the evolution of

Regional Growth Strategies, their operational components, and how they are taking shape around the province.

Section Two contains the most in-depth analysis and discussion of the practicum— focusing on two major context areas. Chapter 2 charts the regional landscape by first outlining the driving forces behind new interest in regional problem-solving. Using a unique model, this chapter then portrays and discusses two regional policy profiles— one that is flawed and currently in place, and one that is capable, legitimate, and a viable alternative. Finally, Chapter 3 goes into territory less familiar to planners— the social context of planning where urban citizenship and "community" are critical factors. This chapter will discuss how planners can mitigate against unfavourable social trends and capitalize on positive developments in the community sphere.

Section Three provides the next level of analysis for the practicum. Here in Chapter 4, the tentative public involvement guidelines developed in each of the two preceding chapters are refined and clustered into a manageable form more relevant to planners. These evolved guidelines are then applied as a diagnostic checklist to two planning case examples so that planners can see how they work in practice.

Stages of Analysis

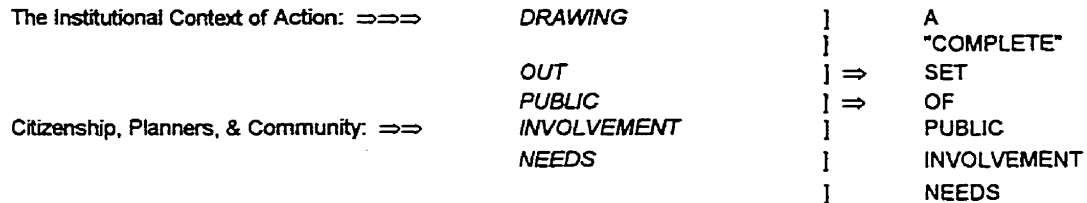
The methodology of analysis in this practicum is divided into three stages (Figure 2). Stage One explores threats, opportunities, and themes within regional growth management and its institutional, grassroots, professional, and societal contexts — drawing from each of these a set of public involvement "needs". An added

component to this stage is the outlining of current and proposed structures for regional action using a jurisdictional dimensions model.

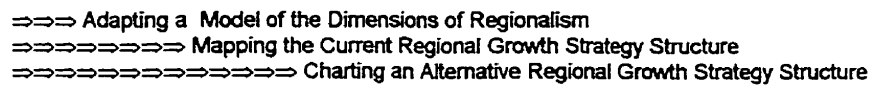
Stage Two takes the public involvement needs and fashions them into a manageable set of guidelines for public involvement in B.C. Regional Growth Strategies. Stage Three then takes these guidelines and demonstrates them by using them as a checklist against two cases of public involvement in planning. The selection of these two cases is based on Patton's concept of exemplary and/or deviant case sampling (Patton, 1990, 169). Using this approach, lessons are derived from both recognized leading-edge practice and acknowledged failure. Because of its United Nations "Best Practice" status, Hamilton-Wentworth's regional plan qualifies as an exemplary case. Conversely, based on a detailed "post-mortem" of its problematic features, Vancouver's Arbutus neighbourhood plan can be considered a deviant case.

Figure 2: Practicum Methodology--- Stages of Analysis

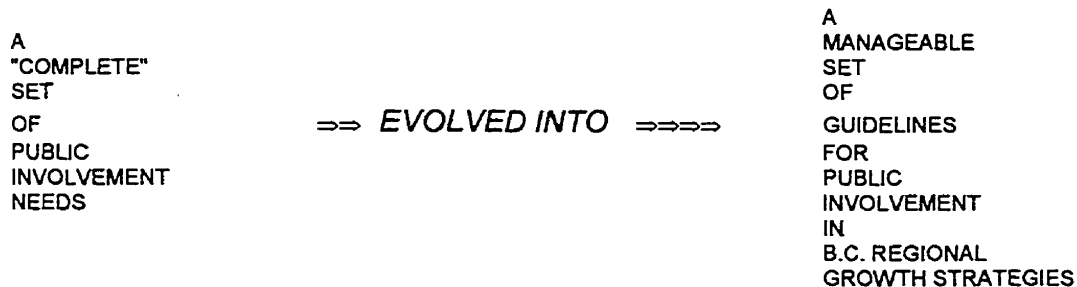
STAGE ONE: IDENTIFYING NEEDS AND CONNECTIONS (CHAPTERS 2-3)



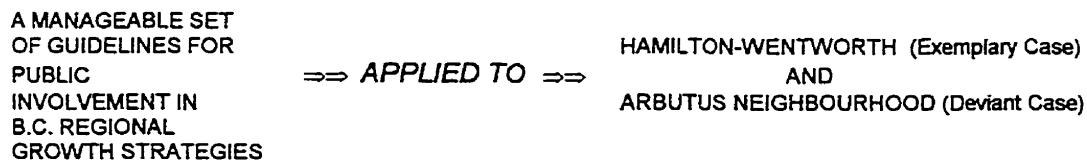
The Institutional Context: Modeling The Structural Needs Of Renewed Regionalism



STAGE TWO: DEVELOPING PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT NEEDS INTO GUIDELINES (CHAPTER 4)



STAGE THREE: DEMONSTRATING THE GUIDELINES (CHAPTER 4)



The Immediate Policy Setting

History

With regional growth management planning only now taking root across British Columbia, it would seem on the surface that this is an entirely new policy milestone for planning in B.C. However, although Regional Growth Strategies are indeed a new idea for almost all Regional Districts in the province, the principles underlying this policy innovation are already familiar to local planners. Growth strategies are really just the latest evolutionary step in the multigenerational history of regional growth planning in B.C.

From their original formation in the mid-1960s, Regional Districts were given a mandate to plan for regional growth. Over the next decade and a half, the implementation of this mandate in Greater Vancouver was met with great acclaim and success. The legacies of these "glory years" of regional planning— decentralized suburban town centres, the Seabus, Skytrain, and a regional parks network— continue to be defining forces in regional urban growth. But this original Regional District mandate was not to last.

A difference of opinion over regional growth policy application between the Greater Vancouver Regional District and the Province resulted in the Province rescinding planning authority from Regional Districts province-wide in 1983. However, it did not prevent Greater Vancouver planners from finding a way to carry on with their vision— by replacing their legislated mandate with a co-operative philosophy built on inter-municipal consensus. Over a decade later, it is this same consensus-orientation that has now found its ultimate expression in Regional Growth Strategies.

Philosophy and Components of the Growth Strategies Act

Fast forward to 1995. In response to rapid population growth in several B.C. regions, and with the expectation that this growth will spread to other parts of the province, the Province of B.C. restores regional growth management planning to Regional Districts province-wide. The *Growth Strategies Act* of 1995 (GSA) is neither a return to the authoritative mandate of the 1960s and 70s, nor is it simply an extension of the recent weak consensus-based practice of the Greater Vancouver Regional District. It is in fact a hybrid of both:

"The Act reflects a widely shared view that a Regional Growth Strategy must be an outcome of consensus among equal partners at the local government level. But it also recognizes that, despite all efforts, sometimes agreement won't be possible...Because of this, a dispute resolution process is built into the legislation...there is guaranteed closure— within a reasonable time frame.

(B.C. Ministry of Municipal Affairs [c])

Considering the two personas of the GSA— its consensus ideal and its enforcement recourse— it is clearly the consensus personality that is invoked when planners and politicians describe a "made-in-B.C." approach to regional growth management. This orientation distinguishes B.C. policy from most American policy, where a "top-down" philosophy has prevailed. It also creates a local cross-border contrast with Washington state, where the consensus ideal is supported by a much more formally structured and readily applied enforcement mechanism (State of Washington [b]). However, the GSA's consensus foundation is very much an accurate reflection of the long-standing spirit of provincial-municipal relations in B.C., which holds that Victoria should take a "hands-off" approach and protect local autonomy wherever possible. It is likely because of this very spirit that the GSA has avoided all

but the broadest prescriptions for how B.C. regions should structure public involvement in their growth strategy planning processes.

Beyond philosophy, in terms of its execution the GSA is operationalized through three distinct policy instruments— each corresponding to one stage in the GSA growth management process. The first of these is the *Regional Growth Strategy*— a regional growth management plan developed by a Regional District in a region where growth pressures indicate the need for initiating an inter-municipal planning response. The second GSA instrument is the *Regional Context Statement*, through which each member municipality must justify how its Official Community Plan fulfills the directives of the Regional Growth Strategy developed by its governing Regional District. The last of these three policy instruments is the *Implementation Agreement*, a partnership contract that defines investment, management, and policy relationships between a Regional District and either member municipalities, the Province, or related agencies (B.C. Ministry of Municipal Affairs [c]).

Although technically distinct, the three GSA instruments are closely inter-related and inter-dependent. Accordingly, the consensus or conflict that colours any one stage of the GSA process will surely define the potential for success of subsequent stages. It is with this understanding in mind that this practicum will focus its attention on the making of the *Regional Growth Strategy*— and generate ideas to help "get things right" from the beginning.

Regional Growth Strategies in Detail

Besides outlining the three major process stages, the GSA also details structures and processes for each individual stage. For Regional Growth Strategies this mandate means creating a long-term (minimum 20 years), comprehensive framework to

address social, economic, environmental, and cultural issues at a broad policy level. It also means working towards a broad set of goals. Relating to the current thinking in planning for sustainable development, these goals include: "promoting settlement patterns that minimize the use of automobiles; protecting environmentally sensitive areas; reducing and preventing air, land and water pollution; and promoting adequate, affordable, and appropriate housing" (Ministry of Municipal Affairs [b], 6).

Under the Act, a critical first step in getting an RGS moving towards these goals is the formation of an *Intergovernmental Advisory Committee* (IAC). Outside of a Regional District's own council chamber, this body serves as the key stakeholder forum for guiding RGS process and identifying and building the partnerships on which RGS implementation will depend. Besides the Regional District and its member municipalities, key players targeted for participation on an IAC are federal and provincial government ministries and crown corporations, as well as local school boards. Additional stakeholders can be included at each Regional District's own discretion (B.C. Ministry of Municipal Affairs [b], 11).

While the GSA is clear about IAC establishment and the broad substantive areas Regional Districts must consider in creating an RGS, it leaves certain components of the "plan-making" process to the discretion of the regions. How the general public becomes involved in this process is one such unspecified area:

"The Regional District must provide the opportunity for consultation with individuals, organizations, and authorities who the Regional District considers will be affected by the strategy. This includes the adoption of a formal consultation plan that provides for early and ongoing consultation... The legislation does not specify what type of consultation must be undertaken."

(Ministry of Municipal Affairs [b], 1)

On paper, the phrase "adoption of a formal consultation plan" seems to suggest that the Province has an active role as "public consultation plan approving officer" through the application of formal GSA criteria for public consultation. However, in practice this phrase plays itself out in a much less formal way. It is the IAC that acts as the main arbiter of public consultation strategy, with the Province generally taking a "hands-off" observatory role (Taylor, 1997). Further, the Province provides no structured criteria for the review of such a strategy— except that public consultation should be "early", "ongoing", and "reasonable" (B.C. Ministry of Municipal Affairs [b], 10). It is into this unstructured environment that this practicum will venture as it provides guidelines for integrating public involvement into Regional Growth Strategies.

Current Implementation Status

The public involvement guidelines that will emerge from this practicum come at an opportune time for regional planners given the current state of GSA implementation around B.C. As of May 1998, 12 out of 27 Regional Districts are at varying stages in the RGS process: Greater Vancouver and Nanaimo have completed plans; Fraser Valley, Thompson-Nicola, Capital, and Central Okanagan have plans well underway; Squamish-Lillooet and Cowichan Valley are just beginning the RGS process; and Sunshine Coast, Okanagan-Similkameen, Comox-Strathcona, and North Okanagan are likely to enter the process next (B.C. Ministry of Municipal Affairs [a]). With growth pressures apparent in the Kootenays, in the Prince George region, and elsewhere in the province, the next decade can be expected to be one where planners extend the RGS concept to even more regions around B.C. Thus, although for a few regions this practicum arrives a little late, for many others it will be a timely resource.

Section Two:
Core Context Study Areas

Chapter Two: The Institutional Context of Action--- Inter-Municipal Conflict and Renewed Regionalism

Introduction

This is an opportune time also to look at the institutional structure the RGS concept faces in each Regional District. Before the impacts of growth strategies reach doorsteps around the Province, these new policies must first navigate their institutional environment— a context that offers up the obstacle of frequent inter-municipal conflict. It remains to be seen whether the consensus-orientation of the RGS concept can withstand this context, or whether what is needed is a new form of reinvented regionalism.

In current planning circles, most discussions of regional planning involve detailed comment on the subject of regional governance reform. In relation to current events in Toronto, Winnipeg, and Halifax, much has been written recently on governance issues such as power-sharing, amalgamation, and electoral accountability. Although these issues will be included here in an examination of regional solutions, it is not intended that this discussion be an in-depth addition to the governance debate.

Rather, attention here will focus on what forces are driving regionalism back onto the public agenda, what structural problems exist in the regional arena, what remedies reinvented regionalism can offer, and finally, how concepts of inter-municipal conflict and co-operation can be linked in practical ways to the broader theme of public involvement.

Driving Forces Behind the Regional Re-Discovery

Planners have long argued that many of the most urgent urban issues need a regional response and cannot be effectively addressed at a local level. This idea—the idea of *regionalism*—is now finding a new audience. Through the winter of 1998, this was especially true in Greater Vancouver as a multi-billion dollar regional transportation authority "unique in North America" was proposed, debated, and approved ("Super Board Would Take Wheel From Transit in Lower Mainland", Vancouver Sun).

Vancouver's experience may well be a unique expression of regional thinking, but beyond any one model city the regionalist theme is coming to life right across this continent—from Portland to Toronto, and from St. Louis to Atlanta. One indication of the strength of this new regionalist movement is the attendance of 500 leaders and citizens at a "National Regional Summit" in Washington, D.C. in February 1998. Among the actionable ideas emerging from this gathering was the call for a White House Conference on Regionalism (Peirce, 1998).

The powerful mix of driving forces behind the rise of regionalism touches on almost every strand of society's fabric—social, economic, environmental, as well as governance itself. The first of these relates to social class and the widening gap between rich and poor. As inner-city poverty, homelessness, and crime worsen, their impacts begin to affect not just the inner-city, but the region as a whole. Crime spreads into the suburbs, the visible decay of the city centre tarnishes the identity of the entire region, and since the inner-city hosts *regional* health-care, social service, and affordable housing resources, its leaders start to demand support on a more equitable regional basis. Out of this crisis comes a natural constituency for regional problem-solving (Wallis [b], 18-19; Dodge, 27-34).

A crisis of a different sort is having the same effect on the economic front. In the urban economy, relationships between plant and supplier, office and employee have long taken place on a regional scale. Economic development initiatives however, have not. The move towards an increasingly globalized economy is now forcing cities to become more specialized and more competitive. Their success under these conditions will demand pooled resources and a collective approach to strategic planning, capital investment, human resource development, and marketing. In economic, as in social issues, the fight to maintain standards of living will depend on replacing inter-city rivalry with regional partnership (Wallis [b], 18-19; Dodge, 34-36).

Outside of the boardroom, the call for regional partnership is also being heard in environmental circles. Although many urban environmental issues (water supply, sewage treatment, waste management) have long been dealt with on a regional basis, some have not. Perhaps the most striking lesson in regional interdependence for policy-makers and the general public alike comes in the form of "Air Quality Advisories", when distress in the urban environment comes to a head, and when the need for regional solutions is most obvious. In response to this issue and other environmental concerns, advocates of sustainability have outlined several fundamental cornerstones for building truly sustainable communities. Alongside initiatives in grassroots-oriented economic development, and the protection of sensitive areas, these directives call for planners and leaders to adopt a bioregional perspective and "re-invent civic society at the regional level to create a responsive regionalism that will strengthen communities rather than dictate to them" (President's Council, 1996).

Across town in the council chamber, a crisis is emerging in the governing of cities. As devolution is overwhelming many cities' ability to plan and deliver services effectively, inter-municipal co-operation is increasingly embraced as a platform for

problem-solving. But even as regions are being built up in their authority and the breadth of their enterprise, they face a public crisis of confidence. Widespread public skepticism about the competence of government, and the rise of "public sector bashing" are keenly felt by regional agencies as they try to emerge from obscurity and establish a positive public image (Naake, 41; Dodge, 14-19). The U.S. National Association of Counties has tried to respond to these challenges through its "Community Countdown 2000" initiative— a nationwide collection of grassroots planning processes focused on solving key urban problems *and* making the public knowledgeable and confident about regional government and its promise (Naake, 41).

Forces at Work Around B.C.

Considering conditions around British Columbia in 1998, every one of these North America-wide pro-regional driving forces is very much in evidence. Among social factors, the provincial de-institutionalization of mental health patients has coincided with an acute shortage of affordable housing in the cities where these patients are most likely to find the out-patient support services they need. As a result, centres such as Kelowna, Victoria, and Vancouver are seeing unprecedented numbers of homeless persons— and are looking outside their boundaries for support. An even more dramatic B.C. example of a social force is the worsening AIDS and hard-core drug addiction epidemic in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside. With experts publicly citing world-leading increases in rates of AIDS infection, and with researchers talking about the "poorest postal-code district in Canada", the link between inner-city social conditions and regional identity seems readily apparent.

In the economic arena there is more cause for hope, as regional co-operation is well underway in some strategic areas. As part of nationwide policy, federal ports (such as Vancouver and Prince Rupert) and federal airports (such as Vancouver and

Kelowna) are now under the ownership and management of regional stakeholders. But while this bodes well for economic development planning, it is worth noting that this long-term regional improvement came at Ottawa's initiative— not from any visionary leadership at the local level in B.C.

Within the private sector, the development industry is sometimes considered a less-than-willing participant in regional co-operation. This is a situation that may well change. Growth issues such as traffic gridlock are bringing private sector interests to the regional table as the business community acknowledges a vested interest in regionalism— especially as it concerns the efficient movement of people and goods. In Vancouver, the Downtown Vancouver Association is one example of a business interest-group with a keen interest in such issues, and a willingness to discuss collective solutions.

In such a context, it would be difficult for the development sector to act as an "anti-regional" holdout within the larger business community. Another factor that may drive developers to act regionally is their urgent need to rebuild community relations. 1998 has been a difficult year for this sector as B.C.'s "leaky-condo" issue has come to a head and as distrust of the development industry has spread widely. Development interest-groups such as the Urban Development Institute may indeed welcome the opportunity offered by regional co-operation to repair public confidence in their membership.

Elsewhere, environmental issues demonstrate both achievement and challenge for regionalism in B.C. As a product of the "war of the woods" (environmentalists vs. loggers) which occurred throughout B.C. from the mid-1980s to early-1990s, the provincially-sponsored Land and Resource Management Plan (LRMP) process has

brought regional resource planning to many B.C. regions. This program's use of consensus-based decision-making has led to significant success in uniting stakeholders around a common regional land-use vision. Besides demonstrating achievement, it is the environment which also provides the most glaring reminders of B.C.'s regional problems and their urgent need for solution— as air pollution in the Fraser Valley and water pollution in parts of Georgia Strait demonstrate on a regular basis.

Similarly on the governance front in B.C., regionalism has made recent strides but also faces urgent opportunities. In this case, the theme of devolution has played itself out in two directions at once. Concurrent with the federal government "off-loading" responsibility and decreasing health transfer-payments to the provinces, the Province of B.C. embarked on a large-scale province-wide restructuring of health-care management that shifted control from the local to the regional level. This "regionalization" of health-care has created administrative super-regions with unprecedented budgets and authority in implementing provincial policy. By way of impacts, although this new regime promises improved economies-of-scale and more integrated planning and service delivery, these benefits may come at a cost to local influence on decision-making. And once again, the credit for this case of new regional thinking does not go to B.C. communities— the health plan was provincially-initiated.

Regional Innovation and Political Feasibility

If the result of all these driving forces is that regionalism is finding a new audience, it is partly because the regionalism catching on in Washington D.C. and among forward-thinking communities elsewhere is not just a warmed-up serving of the regionalism of old. Where previous models took a less effective "top-down" and

formally bureaucratic approach (Espinosa, 1995), new models promise better results through consensus-oriented methods and flexible organization. Leading U.S. regionalist Neal Peirce clearly makes this distinction:

"Today's regionalism is economic, organic, social, strategic...What the old regionalism could not do for metropolitan politics—wield authority—the new regionalism promises to deliver through alliances and new forms of intraregional collaboration...regionalism in today's America is multi-faceted, exploratory, creative, cutting-edge stuff."

(Peirce and Johnson, 1997-98)

Despite the passion and sound ideas of the regionalist camp, it is still unclear whether this new thinking will play in Peoria— or Pentticon, or Prince George. Urban academics are divided on the prospects for building public support for regionalism. Encouraging results come from cities such as Portland, where municipal councils readily embrace the concept (Seltzer, 10); and from San Francisco, where broad-based growth-management coalitions have gained considerable big business support (Leo, Beavis, et al, 1,5). Discouraging evidence comes from communities such as Orange County, California, where even regionally-conscious and informed citizens vigorously resist the idea of regional planning taking the place of local autonomy (Baldassare, 117).

For the B.C. context, as an innovation in regional planning Regional Growth Strategies are indeed creative, exploratory, and cutting-edge. But as they begin to colour the regional landscape around the province, the canvas these strategies face is far from being a blank slate— it is already thickly clouded with inter-municipal conflict. What remains to be seen is whether Regional Growth Strategies will be able to build strong alliances and form the multi-faceted structures needed to make the new regionalism work.

B.C.'s Conflictual Inter-Municipal Environment

The growth pressures of recent years have certainly heightened the frequency and scale of inter-municipal planning-related conflict around B.C. This conflict is most apparent in Greater Vancouver, where issues related to cross-town commuting have led to a number of flashpoints:

*"Halt Transit study, city says: Vancouver condemns
Richmond link planning"*

(Vancouver Sun, May 29, 1991, pA1)

"Burgeoning UBC: Consultation needed to calm fears"

(Vancouver Sun, May 31, 1996, pA22)

"UBC housing plan raises fears of increased traffic volume"

(Vancouver Sun, August 30, 1997, pA17)

Perhaps the highest profile of these events was Vancouver Mayor Gordon Campbell's 1991 vow to block a proposed Vancouver-Richmond Skytrain route (since shelved) from "destroying" high-income West-side neighbourhoods. In more recent years, the impact of car commuting on neighbourhoods has been a key issue— particularly between the independently-governed University of British Columbia and the City of Vancouver, and between the four municipalities clustered around the Lions Gate Bridge.

Of greater importance for the future of Regional Growth Strategies is the recurring conflict between overall municipal growth policy and regional growth management goals. In Greater Vancouver, these disputes have taken several forms:

*"Port Moody bog ruling contested: Inclusion in transit planning unlikely
if development commitments fail"*

(Vancouver Sun, December 16, 1995, pA1)

"North Van launches slow-growth policy"
(Vancouver Sun, March 19, 1997, pB3)

"Richmond, district clash on growth goals: Tinkering with population figures 'weakens the plan' "
(Vancouver Sun, October 12, 1995, pB1)

"Richmond considers separation from the GVRD: Feelings about region similar to Quebec's for Canada"
(Vancouver Sun, October 28, 1995, pA14)

In Port Moody, the issue was municipal re-designation of a large area targeted for greenfield housing development as parkland. In North Vancouver, it was introducing a new policy at odds with the spirit of the regional plan. But most alarming was the case of Richmond, where the municipal council withheld its ratification of the Regional Growth Strategy itself. This first setback for the then brand-new RGS policy came when regional planners' concerns over floodplain development (The City of Richmond sits on an island composed entirely of dike-encircled reclaimed land) clashed with Richmond's ambitious "edge-city" growth agenda. With several years of regional negotiation at stake at an eleventh-hour stage, regional leaders had to resort to provincial mediation to resolve the standoff.

Although B.C.-based inter-municipal and municipal-regional growth conflict has been most obvious in Greater Vancouver, it is creating serious consequences elsewhere in the province. In the Comox Valley, the Comox-Strathcona Regional District's "Valley Vision" growth management planning process identified municipal restructuring— amalgamation and annexation— as a critical step in creating a sustainable region. Disagreement between stakeholder municipalities around how this restructuring should take effect created a deadlock that stalled the Valley Vision process (B.C. Ministry of Municipal Affairs [d]). Four years later, and despite unabated growth pressures in the Comox Valley region, this impasse remains unresolved.

A Dimensional Model of Regionalism

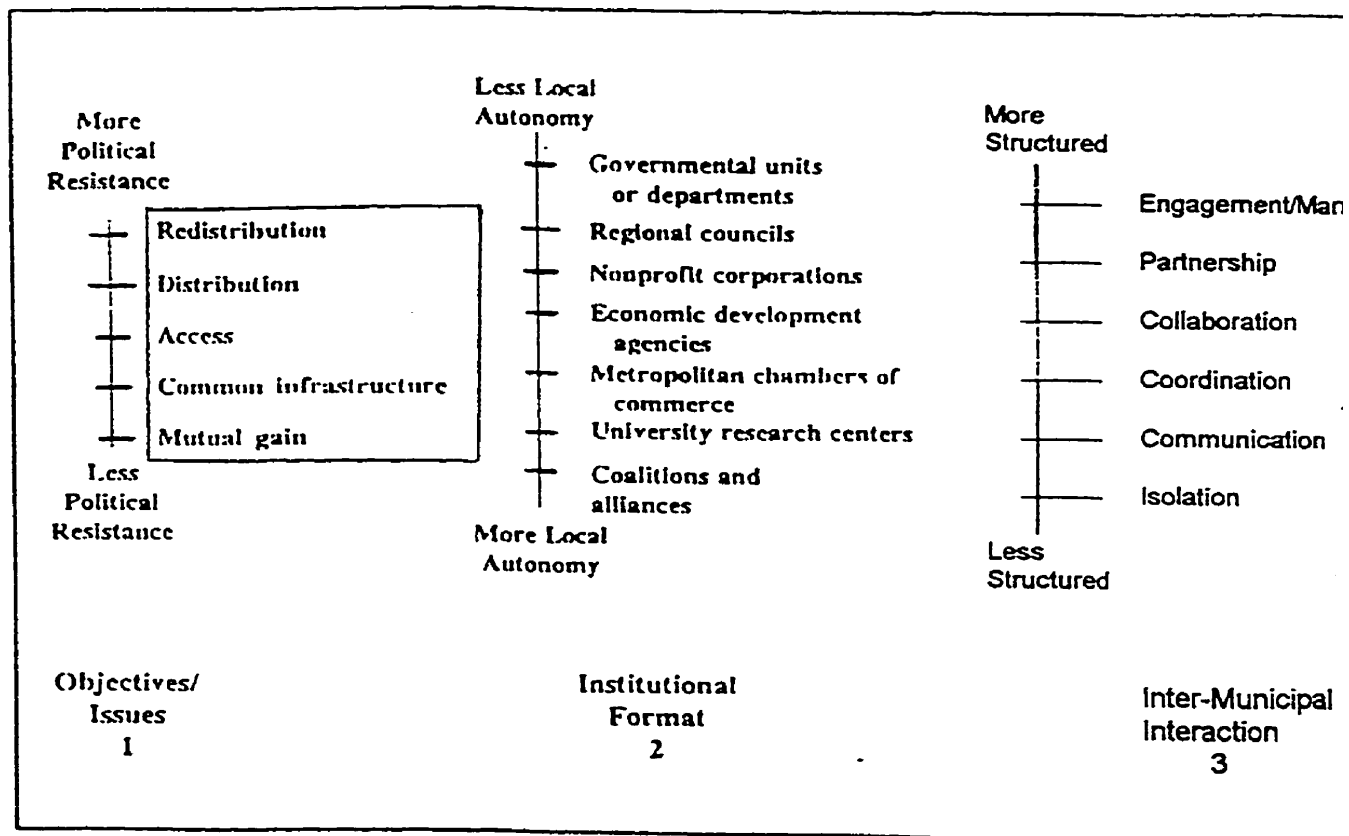
What is encouraging for Regional Growth Strategies is that beyond the headlines lie some structural explanations that not only help to explain why inter-municipal conflict persists, but also help to provide a roadmap to the ideas of renewed regionalism. One such theory comes from a U.S.-based study of regional organizations in Denver, Portland, Toledo, Louisville, and Pittsburgh. Through their examination of region-building in each of these cities, Nunn and Rosentraub (1997) have developed a model of four key dimensions of interjurisdictional (i.e. inter-municipal) cooperation. Complementing this model is the work of Seltzer (1995), Warm (undated), and Wight (1997). These three regional thinkers have applied Arnstein's classic concept of a "Ladder of Participation" (Arnstein, 217) to inter-municipal relations. Where Warm offers a "three-rung" model, Seltzer provides a finer-grained "five-rung" typology. To Seltzer's ladder, Wight has added a sixth step.

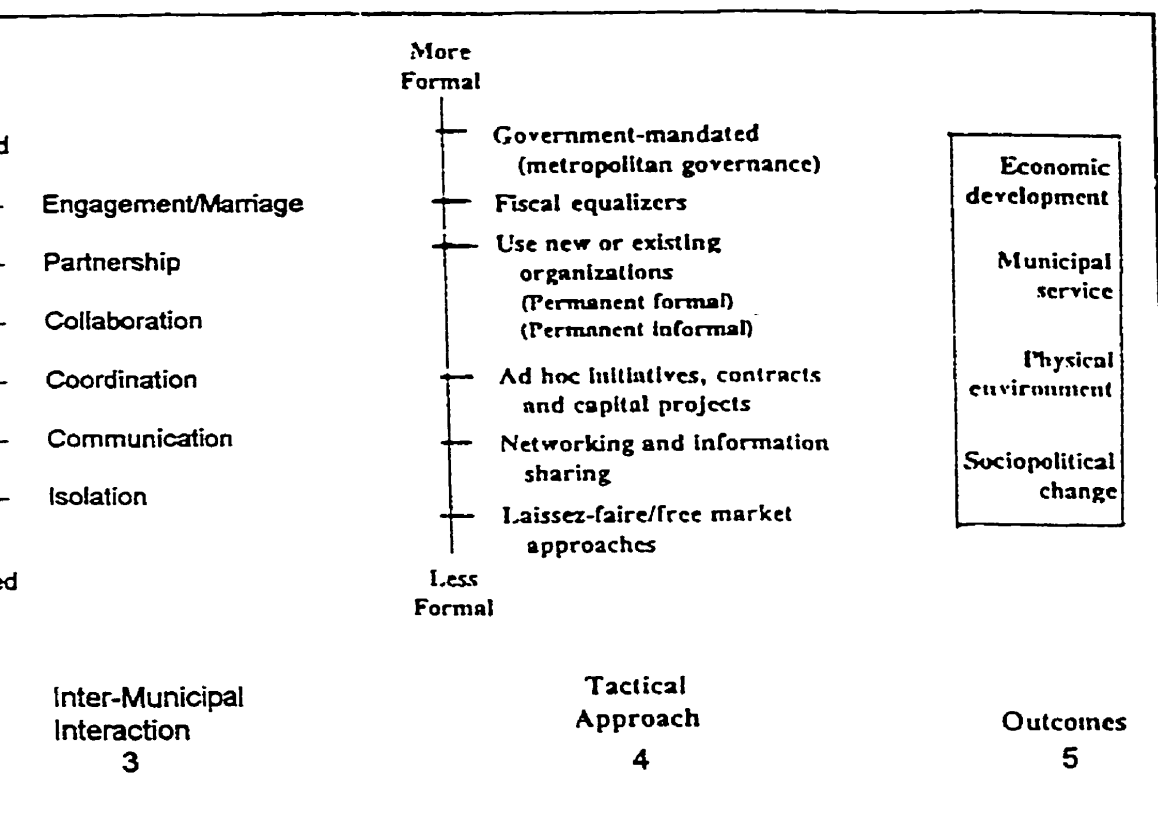
Figure 3 is a tale of two models— a composite of the work of Nunn and Rosentraub, and Seltzer/Wight. It uses Nunn and Rosentraub's four dimensions as a basic template, and adds the Seltzer/Wight "ladder" as a fifth dimension between "Institutional Format" and "Tactical Approach". As a foundation for mapping Regional Growth Strategy policy and renewed regionalism concepts, it also locates the practice of growth management on the first and last of these dimensions.

Dimension One (Objectives/Issues) characterizes differences in the nature of inter-municipal initiatives, and ranks these according to political risk. *Mutual gain* and *common infrastructure* could describe economic development or municipal services projects recognized as a "win-win" situation for all parties involved. More problematic and of greater political risk are "win-lose" oriented initiatives that deal with controlling

Figure 3: Dimensions of Regionalism--- A Model

(Sources: Nunn and Rosentraub, 209; Seltzer, 11; Wight, 1997, 10)





and limiting access (to existing resources), or involve *distribution* or *redistribution* (of benefits or costs) (Nunn and Rosentraub, 208-9).

Because of its comprehensive long-term scope, regional growth management encompasses all of the initiative types outlined on Dimension One. These qualities of regional growth management policy have been established by Innes (1992, 1996) and discussed in a previous chapter. In particular, what was stressed in this previous discussion was the challenge of facilitating goal setting and compromise among policy stakeholders— and how meeting this challenge is critical to the successful implementation of growth management. The most complex aspects of growth management then are at the higher end of the Dimension One scale, where the dynamics of this political process take shape. These aspects could be fundamentally about *access*— as in the case of regional policy mandating a smaller, poorer municipality being amalgamated with a more prosperous, amenity-rich neighbour; or *distribution*— where the tax-base benefits that come with growth are allocated within a region; or *redistribution*— where community or private assets such as open space or development rights are "taken away" through the designation of growth areas or the use of down-zoning.

Dimension Two outlines a spectrum of structures for intermunicipal cooperation, ranging from more autonomous, consensus-based networks to "top-down" arrangements that allow for less local municipal discretion. Dimension Three— borrowed from Seltzer, and Wight's work— establishes a qualitative hierarchy of inter-municipal interaction. Their six stages are characterized as follows:

- **isolation:** little attention to neighbours— no accountability to them for policy externalities, and no perception of the benefits of partnership.

- **communication:** awareness of others' actions and the existence of common interests; interaction is limited to informing neighbours about proposed policies.
- **coordination:** moving beyond "ceremonial" communication to synchronize actions in time and space.
- **collaboration:** recognizing that cooperation can lead to mutual gain and acting on this belief by combining initiatives and creating efficiency gains.
- **partnership:** joint goal setting as part of a "true merger of interests"; willingness to take organizational risk by devolving authority to new partnership structures.
- **engagement/marriage:** the study or initiation of amalgamation or tax-sharing initiatives. **(This step is Wight's addition)*

(paraphrased from Seltzer, 11; Wight, 1997, 10)

Dimension Four goes a step further and describes methods of cooperation in more detail— from more flexible practices to approaches that establish highly-structured relationships.

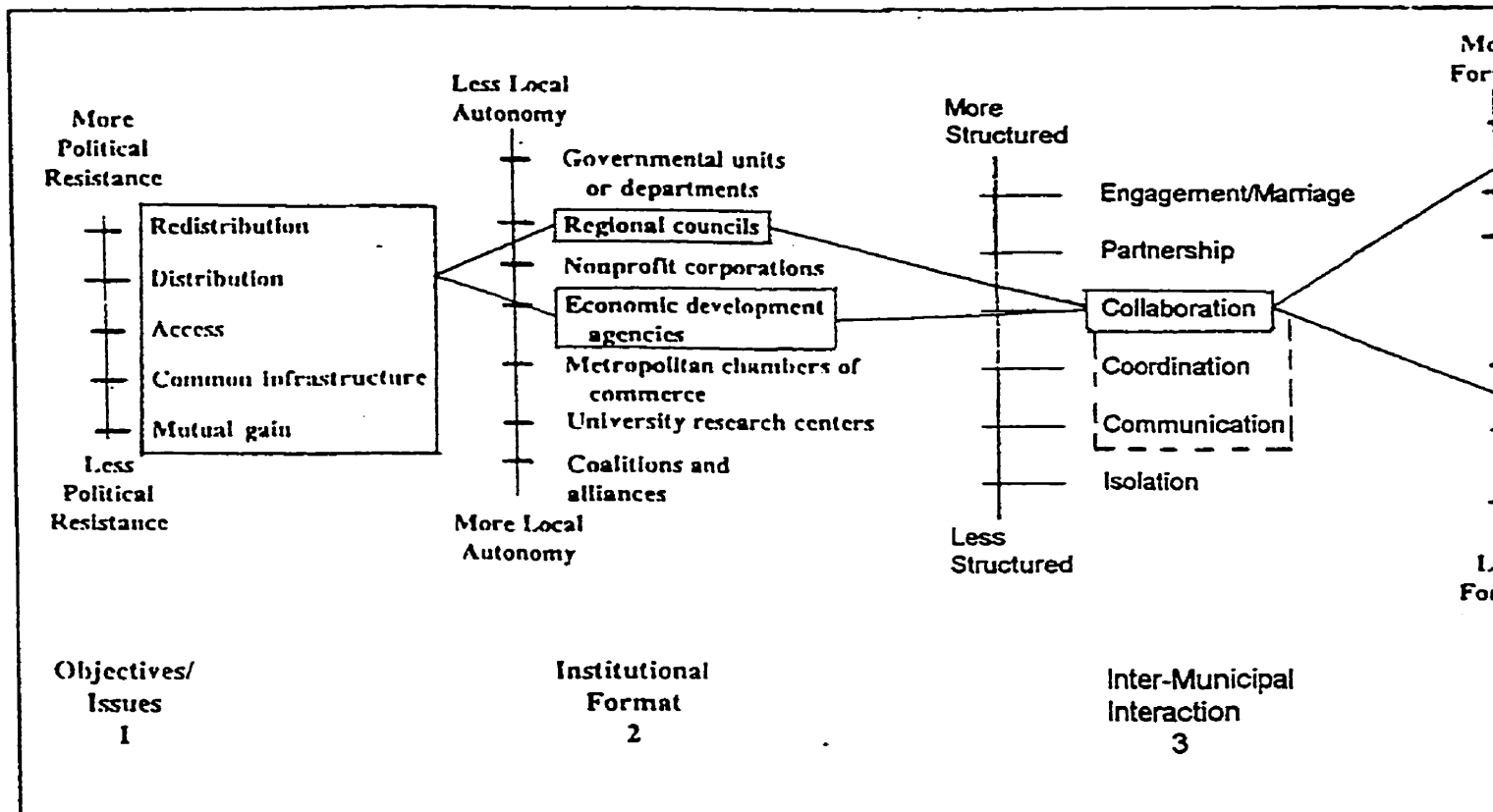
Lastly, Dimension Five shows a range of policy goals— and again, because of its comprehensive nature, regional growth management encompasses the whole scale. Although "sociopolitical change" may sound beyond the scope of this type of policy, it is meant in this context to refer to the goal of better incorporating citizens into decision-making processes (Nunn and Rosentraub, 210).

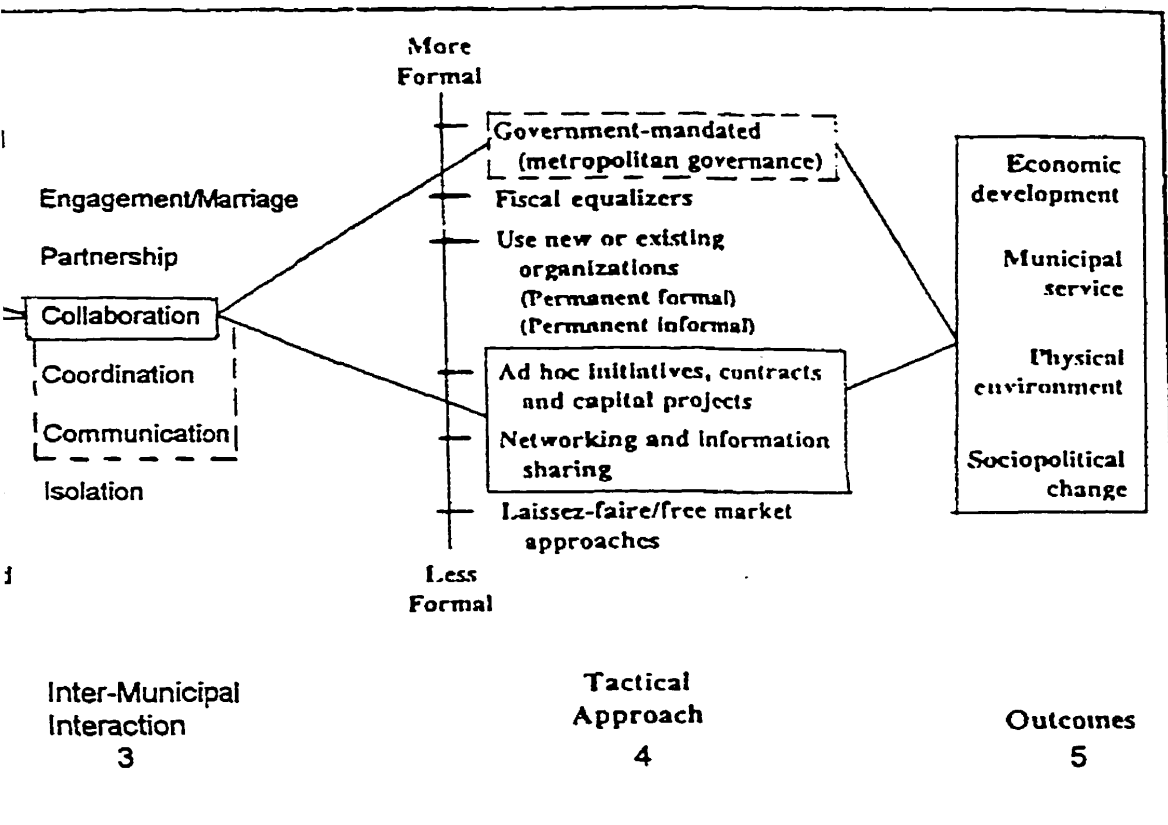
The Current Profile of Regional Growth Strategies

Just as Nunn and Rosentraub used their four-dimension model to map regional practice in the U.S., so too can the model of intermunicipal cooperation outlined in Figure 3 be applied to B.C.'s Regional Growth Strategy (RGS) framework. Figure 4 carries forward assumptions about growth management on Dimensions One and Five, and maps out RGS policy along Dimensions Two to Four.

Figure 4: Dimensions of Regionalism— A Current RGS Profile

(Sources: Nunn and Rosentraub, 209; Seltzer, 11; Wight, 1997, 10)





Along Dimension Two, growth strategies follow the institutional context already established through Regional Districts (RDs). Regional officials have always been quick to point out that RDs are "not another level of government"— and the consensus-orientation of RDs has certainly borne this out. Accordingly, the main institutional format for growth strategies is closest to the "regional council". Because most RDs also incorporate a regional economic development function, (usually research-based and purely co-ordinative) growth strategies also relate to an "economic development agency" format.

In terms of the mode of intermunicipal interaction they mandate and encourage, it may be too soon to fully judge where growth strategies sit along Dimension Three. On paper, with supportive mechanisms such as Regional Context Statements and Implementation Agreements, RGS policy could lead to genuine "partnership" between municipalities. In practice in Greater Vancouver— the birthplace of growth strategies—, the workings of the consensus-orientation of RGS policy thus far would suggest a lower rating.

One recent assessment of the GVRD is ambiguous in this regard. An initial "Seltzer/Wight-rating" of part collaboration—part partnership is then undermined by the statement that in the GVRD, "a strong vision, which is essential to achieve a sustainable region, is hard to put into place, maintain, and implement" (Wight, 1997, 11). Considering that "partnership" involves a true merger of interests and a degree of organizational risk-taking, it seems that from GVRD practice "collaboration" at best would be a more appropriate rating. While Regional Context Statements would seem to give RGS policy "teeth" and make them worthy of a higher rating, this mechanism is still unproven.

It is at this stage that the differences between Greater Vancouver and other regions of the province become most apparent. The GVRD's leadership in the regional consensus field in the years prior to the Growth Strategies Act (1983-95) have given it a vast head-start in inter-municipal relations compared to other B.C. regions. Within historical Regional District functions in these regions, regional interaction would likely either rank as "coordination" or "communication". Longstanding joint-action around the province on matters such as waste disposal, water supply, and parks accounts for the "coordination" ranking. Concerning land-use planning interaction, ranking is less certain and may tend more towards "communication". Because of the joint-action tradition in these regions, "isolation" would not apply as a descriptive label. Accordingly, because of its strong link to GVRD practice, RGS policy on paper will be considered here as "collaboration"— shown in Figure 4 with a solid line. In addition, to more accurately reflect the diversity of conditions around B.C., the inter-municipal context RGS policy faces on the ground in different regions will be marked as "coordination" and "communication". Because of the variability involved, these rankings are shown in Figure 4 with a dotted line.

In terms of "tactical approach" (Dimension Four), the consensus-basis of RGS policy has already proven effective in facilitating networking, information sharing, and capital projects between municipalities in RDs across B.C. However, as RDs move into the growth management business, the GVRD/RGS emphasis on consensus-networking — a less formal tactic— may prove inadequate in the face of objectives such as *distribution* and *redistribution*— issues that come with high political resistance attached.

Outside the B.C. context, a recent case review of U.S. practice has expressed similar doubts about using a consensus approach to build growth management strategies (Porter, 1997). One particular risk is having a regional strategy proposal held

hostage by the veto of one member municipality. Out of an impasse such as this can come "regional statements that are so broad as to be almost meaningless" (Porter, 228). Another risk arises from the fact that consensus-driven regional agencies are most often dependent on member municipalities for funding. Even in cases where a consensus approach is fortified by mandated local-regional plan conformance, regional agencies are usually reluctant to act on their enforcement mandate for fear of losing core funding support (Porter, 229).

In the GVRD, these issues are significant concerning municipalities' acceptance of their regional "share-of-growth". Specifically, this involves their acceptance of a distribution pattern of employment and housing growth that best uses existing infrastructure, protects environmentally-sensitive areas, and encourages complete, mixed-use communities. The way the GVRD predicts how this process will unfold through the Regional Context Statement stage clearly reflects a strong belief in consensus-networking philosophy:

"It is the GVRD Board's objective that, as community plans are reviewed and updated, the municipal growth capacities change to support realization of the region-wide targets." (GVRD, 3)

For the GVRD, the three guiding principles that seem to underlie this belief are: " 'knowledge is power', 'good ideas will triumph over bad ideas', and 'a thorough and inclusive consensus will produce the regional interest' " (Artibise, 1997, 21). But in light of past experience and what may lie ahead, faith in consensus-networking as the Healer and Deliverer for B.C. municipalities afflicted with growth-conflict may be a misguided belief. In the GVRD, difficulties with the acceptance of growth targets have already been detailed in relation to Richmond, Port Moody, and North Vancouver District. In addition, further disagreement between the GVRD and member

municipalities Langley Township and Surrey has recently been cited as a major threat to RGS implementation (Patterson, 19).

It may seem unfair here to be over-emphasizing the consensus-orientation of RGS policy considering that the Growth Strategies Act does after all incorporate structured provincial government enforcement mechanisms. Accordingly, it would seem that RGS policy should receive a rating on Dimension Four that would recognize its consensus attributes as well as its "government-mandated" components. But in this case, appearances are at odds with both history and expert opinion. Recall that the history of regional planning in B.C. shows the Province first granting regional planning authority, then taking it away, then reinstating it. For influential B.C. planning professor Alan Artibise, this not a record that affirms a bright future for RGS policy:

"The GVRD's (or any other RD's) role is strategic but when disputes arise, it is the Province who must step in to resolve problems and the record suggests that they (sic) are likely to favour municipalities over the region. In short, only the very optimistic suggest that the future for a consistent and comprehensive realization of (the GVRD plan) is possible."

(Artibise, 1997, 25)

The dilemma in rating RGS policy here is thus the same one faced earlier with Dimension Three— whether to rate based on the historical record and current evidence, or based on idealistic but unproven policy. To reflect this present ambiguity in the B.C. context— a situation that may soon be clarified if conflict leads to a test of Growth Strategy policy enforcement— Dimension Four registers a solid line around proven tactics of networking and capital works. More uncertain "government-mandated" RGS components are indicated with a dotted line.

A Flawed-in-B.C. Structure for Viable Regionalism

Collectively, elements from the past and present, together with predictions for the future suggest that RGS policy faces a difficult path to implementation. Considering growth target-related conflict within the GVRD, it would appear that when member municipalities approved an RGS in 1996 they really only deferred head-on confrontation until a future stage in the Growth Strategy Act process (Patterson, 19).

In the absence of confrontation in the GVRD, appeasement is proving just as great a risk to the regional vision. Regional District councilors (who also hold seats on member municipalities' councils) have thus far been reluctant to take a firm position with member municipalities who lobby strongly to relax RGS provisions. This was apparent in 1997 when the GVRD undermined its own plan by voting to extend sewer lines into a part of Langley Township formally considered outside of a regional growth area (Patterson, 19).

This paradox between the achievement of plan approval and the risk of plan betrayal is acutely relevant for B.C. regional planners as they accept provincial and national professional awards for their plan-making efforts. It is unclear whether they have indeed negotiated regional "peace in our time" or whether the plans they hold on to are just a "scrap of paper".

The future of RGS implementation is further doubted because of the weak connections between regional policies and the municipal rezoning process (Artibise, 1995). It is here that public involvement is seen as a potential vehicle for bringing a much-needed regional voice to neighbourhoods. The success of this approach in Washington and Oregon has already shown how an educated and organized public

can hold municipal leaders accountable to the regional vision, and help prevent regional plans from being eroded in the face of neighbourhood resistance to progressive zoning (Artibise, 1995). This conceptual approach and these U.S. examples will be discussed in more detail in a subsequent chapter.

In light of their weaknesses then, the question emerges as to whether B.C.'s growth strategies are more or less sound than similar policies elsewhere. Washington state's Growth Management Act is certainly stronger in terms of its prescriptive elements and its enforcement procedures. In particular, it enforces the siting of essential public facilities (State of Washington [b]) and specifies in great detail which governmental players must co-ordinate with each other on which individual issues (State of Washington [a]). Elsewhere in the U.S., "point-systems" have been proposed as a method for siting regional facilities and fostering intermunicipal cooperation (Popper, 24). However, when these methods were applied to dispute resolution at the inter-neighbourhood level they were unsuccessful (Rose, 97-98).

While regional approaches with a greater "top-down" emphasis— such as Washington's— may have their merits, they still may not be the ideal answer. Recent events in Toronto show how the imposition of a regional vision can poison community relationships, and suggest that B.C.'s approach may be a better way (Artibise, 1997, 28). Perhaps what is needed for B.C.'s Regional Districts is not so much additional formal authority but reinforcement of their consensus-orientation. Towards this end, the Province has already offered regional and municipal leaders lessons in interest-based negotiation (B.C. Ministry of Municipal Affairs, 1998). But upon reflection on the current regional dilemma in B.C., it seems reinforcement will require a lot more.

The driving forces behind the regionalism of the late 1990s are both strong and diverse— encompassing social, economic, environmental, and governance-related issues. Each of these forces is bringing both great challenge and great opportunity to B.C. communities as they begin processes of cooperative regional planning. Compounding the challenge side of the equation is the recent history of inter-municipal conflict in the province. Given the level of political complexity intrinsic in the act of growth management, this is a serious concern.

As B.C. regions look to Greater Vancouver for leadership, predictions of municipal conflict and regional and provincial abdication from the regional vision threaten to take regional planners province-wide back to square one. In light of all these perils, B.C.'s Regional Growth Strategies clearly need a transfusion of new ideas if they are to survive infancy. Thankfully though, there is great cause for hope— considering some recent ideas in renewed regionalism it appears a cure is at hand.

Ingredients for Renewed Regionalism

While B.C. planners are only now getting re-accustomed to regional planning, their American counterparts have reached the stage where they can reflect on several years of nationwide experience with new regional concepts. The comparative regional progress of U.S. cities can be largely attributed to the 1991 federal Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA), which mandated cooperative regional planning as a condition for the approval of cities' highway and transit funding requests.

It is against this backdrop that the recent "National Regional Summit" in Washington, D.C. took place. A leading participant organization at the summit was the National Civic League— a 100 year old organization with a focus on community-based

problem-solving (Peirce, 1998). From within this tradition comes Allan Wallis, the League's Director of Research. Wallis' ideas about regionalism have a theoretical emphasis but are firmly tied to a problem-solving mandate. Collectively, his ideas focus on how to "invent" regionalism— or, more to the point for B.C., how to "re-invent" regionalism.

Legitimacy, Capacity, and Implementation

Wallis' process of regional invention has two key components— building *legitimacy* and building *capacity*. For a regional planning body, legitimacy is the fundamental prerequisite for action. It consists of legal authority and credibility— built on the confidence of politicians as well as the general public. More than authority, to Wallis credibility and confidence are especially critical as they distinguish the "new" from the "old" within regional practice. Where the regional agencies of the past had authority on paper, they lacked popular support and credibility and were often immobilized as a result. Consequently, a first stage in the invention sequence is the building of popular and political support through a consensus visioning process involving a broad-base of regional stakeholders. The regional vision that emerges from this process becomes the basis for a regional body's legitimacy— around which formal legal authority can then be structured (Wallis [a], 448, 450).

Beyond legitimacy, a regional body must have the capacity to act. It must have an institutional context into which it can channel resources and out of which it can carry out objectives established through the regional visioning process. For Wallis, creating this context does not mean establishing another level of government— rather, it means restructuring the *existing* public, private, and non-profit sector institutions within a community to form a broad-based, responsive network for plan implementation (Wallis [a], 457-58).

The way this network takes shape demonstrates another distinguishing feature of the "new" regionalism. New regional planning is no longer a two stage process where planners first create a plan and then look around for ways to implement it. To Wallis' thinking, the two stages should overlap in a seamless connection. Thus, when planners gather together stakeholders for the visioning process they are not just gathering "idea" people, they are convening a group that will collectively take on responsibility for implementing the regional plan— after the group itself finishes creating it (Wallis [a], 451-52). Following this new approach, planners who have thus far been limiting their work to facilitating the process of "choosing the future" will now need to place equal emphasis in their processes on "choosing and *conveying* the future" (Wight, 1998, 34).

Creating Civic Culture

Embedded in Wallis' concepts of legitimacy and capacity-building is the wider notion that the key to producing "regional excellence" is creating strong regional "civic culture". This notion comes from a detailed comparative study of Italian regions by Harvard scholar Robert Putnam. Civic culture itself is also an alloy, made up of three basic ingredients— norms, networks, and trust (Wallis [b], 23).

Norms include the shared values, mutual sense of identity, and common vision of citizens within a community. The degree to which norms apply across a region will often be related to geography— where regions defined by strong natural features have a ready-made identity, regions without such a benefit have to work much harder at creating their own. In "identity-poor" regions this makes the visioning process described by Wallis all the more crucial for planners, whose success in forging implementation networks will depend greatly on their ability to inspire regional identity (Wallis [b], 23-24).

In an era where individuals are identifying more with communities-of-interest based on family, ethnic, and lifestyle ties and less with geographically-based communities, some have expressed concerns about the potential for regions to compete for "identity market-share" (Wight, 1998, 30). While the regional-identity formation process may not be an easy one, some ready-made building blocks are at hand. Acknowledged Toronto urban-expert David Crombie suggests that a first step to building regional identity is to remind citizens about the economic opportunity that was the basis for the founding of a community, and that is generally the reason why citizens choose either to move to or remain in a region (Crombie, 1).

Networks include the connections between the three major legs on the community stool— public, private, and non-profit sectors. For Putnam, a region's ability to breed cross-sectoral partnerships is both a critical indicator of its current well-being and a major predictor of its future prosperity. One measure of this concept of well-being is the ease with which divergent community interest-groups can be convened— especially in times of crisis (Wallis [b], 23-24).

The way these cross-sectoral partnerships are structured is of particular relevance to Wallis and his regional invention process. From the broad input of social, economic, and environmental issues that goes into the regional visioning process comes a similarly broad output of strategic problem-solving initiatives built around these issue areas. In relation to these issue areas, each sectoral partner has the most legitimacy and capacity to act in its own field— government in the regulatory field (most relevant to environment); business in the facilitation of economic growth; and non-profit organizations in the provision of social services. The best regional strategies will therefore assign leadership for implementing initiatives to each sector according to its

strengths. It is on this "expert-sector" base that cross-sectoral partnerships can most effectively be identified and established (Wallis [b], 21-22).

It is through these methods of cross-sectoral networking that the new regionalism creates an institutional context for action *without* creating another level of government. The value of this regional networking approach is already being recognized by U.S. metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs), and is being applied to regions through programs such as the St. Louis Regional Jobs Initiative. With startup funding from federal government, local business and non-profit foundation sources, this initiative has set out a workplan that very much echoes Wallis' ideas about visioning and partnerships:

"...East-West Gateway (St. Louis' MPO) has joined with more than 30 other agencies, businesses, and community based organizations to plan and propel an eight-year effort to strengthen the regional labor market through joint economic development, workforce development, human service, and transportation strategies...we will invest public and private funds in cross-cutting projects...we expect to adopt a 'regional jobs policy agenda' that institutionalizes new relationships and joint investment procedures linking (the four strategy areas) in the region."

(Forlaw, 1996)

Finally, *trust*— a self-explanatory component of civic culture— is a factor very much relevant to the skeptical and jaded political culture of the 1990s. It is especially relevant to the selling of the regional concept considering that neighbourhoods and municipalities seem to automatically associate regional agencies with the loss of local autonomy. This perception makes the structuring of stakeholder visioning processes all the more crucial for regional organizations as they set out to build legitimacy on a foundation of trust (Wallis [b], 25).

Involving the Public

In his ideas about regional invention, Wallis also comments in further detail on how public involvement fits into the new regionalism. Just as the work of a regional agency is long-term by nature, so too is its need to maintain legitimacy. Thus the process of regional legitimacy-building cannot stop at the end of the visioning stage—it must continue through ongoing citizen participation in implementing, monitoring, and revising the regional plan (Wallis [a], 457). And stakeholder participation in implementation means significantly more than the "advisory committee" approach of the past. Where a specific issue—such as economic development—is of particular concern to a region this means involving relevant stakeholders at the highest possible decision-making level, even alongside elected representatives on a board of directors. The Atlanta Regional Commission already stands as a precedent for this type of radical action (Wallis [a], 460-61; for a recent critique see also Helling, 1998).

If the result of the regional invention process is the mobilization of a strong pro-regional citizenry, then regional planners will have on their side an informed, co-operative army equipped with a long-term vision—and well prepared to do battle with hardened opponents of the regional agenda. In a striking echo of the ideas quoted earlier from B.C. planner Alan Artibise, Wallis suggests that "of special importance is creating opportunities for citizens and interest groups to challenge attempts to compromise the regional vision" (Wallis [a], 461). As will be detailed in a later chapter, the effectiveness of groups such as 1000 Friends of Oregon and 1000 Friends of Washington clearly affirms this position.

Restoring Regional Growth Strategies to Health

If all of these new regionalist ideas are to be a "cure" for what ails B.C.'s Regional Growth Strategies, the task of establishing a treatment plan still remains. Considering some obvious commonalities between Wallis' ideas and the B.C. context, the risk of B.C. rejecting the idea transplant may be encouragingly low.

How New Ideas are Compatible

An emphasis on building legitimacy through visioning processes is a particularly relevant feature for B.C. Regional Districts, which have long suffered charges of poor accountability as a result of their unelected municipal-delegate board structure. Further, the idea of creating a viable institutional format for plan implementation without establishing another level of government will find instant appeal among municipal and regional politicians (one in the same group) as the theme of "no government expansion" is perhaps their favourite mantra. This concept would likely have similar appeal for the Province, as it avoids legislating super-regions into existence that could pose a threat to formal provincial power.

Finally, there is already B.C.-grown evidence of Wallis' notion of building regionalism through restructuring existing institutions. In the Comox-Strathcona Regional District's "Valley Vision" growth management exercise, the re-drawing of municipal boundaries was identified as a critical component of vision implementation (Comox-Strathcona Regional District, 1994). The fact that deadlocked municipal restructuring negotiations have stalled the whole regional planning process is testament to the pivotal inter-relationship described by Wallis.

Repairing the Structural Flaws

At a more detailed level, new regionalist ideas respond directly in several ways to some of the specific Regional Growth Strategy problems identified earlier. Presently, prevailing relations between many B.C. municipalities do not embody a spirit of partnership— yet formal regional policy tools such as Regional Context Statements (RCSs) and Implementation Agreements (IAs) are designed for a partnership-oriented platform. Thus in B.C. there is a mismatch between regional "software" and "hardware". This conflict is already becoming evident as the first set of RCSs is emerging in Greater Vancouver. As a solution, a broad-based cross-sectoral regional approach would instill the type of partnership culture where regional partners could take full advantage of opportunities created by RCSs, IAs, and other legislation that enables local governments to enter into public-private partnerships.

At their worst, problematic inter-municipal relations have led to "standoffs" such as Richmond's refusal to ratify the Greater Vancouver regional plan— which was only resolved by provincial intervention. It would be hoped that a regional partnership culture would preclude this type of conflict— but where an impasse could not be avoided, new regionalist ideas suggest that problem-solving could take place within the region without the regional equivalent of a trip to the Principal's office.

First, bringing a wider range of partners into the regional process would allow for a whole new set of mediating institutional partners. It is after all much easier to mend a rift between two members of a large group of regional friends than it is to settle one between two individuals alone. Further, Wallis spoke about the need to be able to convene diverse regional interests quickly and easily, especially in times of crisis— and although he referred to crises such as the Los Angeles race riots, B.C. planners could

just as easily apply the concept of a regional "rapid response team" to inter-municipal conflicts.

Still another regional remedy could be the use of pro-regional citizen lobby groups based on the "1000 Friends" model. In cases where municipal councils are unreasonably threatening the regional vision through major policy decisions or even strategic re-zoning choices, a cadre of organized, pro-regional, local voters could provide a formidable political lobby to support the plan.

Another conflict-related problem identified earlier was the propensity for some Regional Districts to betray their very own regional visions by making decisions that run counter to the goals of their regional plans. Aside from the prospect of unprecedented provincial intervention, at present there is no system of accountability to safeguard against this danger. Here again is where the partnership model could prove useful. If a Regional District was just one of many cross-sectoral partners responsible for plan implementation, a ready-made forum for accountability would exist around the partnership table— where each member would be held responsible for following through on its commitments.

Follow-through was also identified as a concern in relation to the Province, which has historically showed ambivalent support for the concept of regional planning. At present, serious doubts exist about whether if called upon to enforce a Regional Growth Strategy the Province would do so. Current political forces facing the Province are certainly heavily stacked in favour of the municipal perspective rather than the regional point-of-view. Where strong organizations such as the Union of B.C. Municipalities exist on the municipal side, there is a complete vacuum of political leverage on the regional side. In this political environment, grassroots regional visioning

and regional partnership building become critical. If regional processes can create a pro-regional citizenry and an array of cross-sectoral regional partners then they will have established a broad-base of support that could well compel the Province to follow-through with its enforcement commitments.

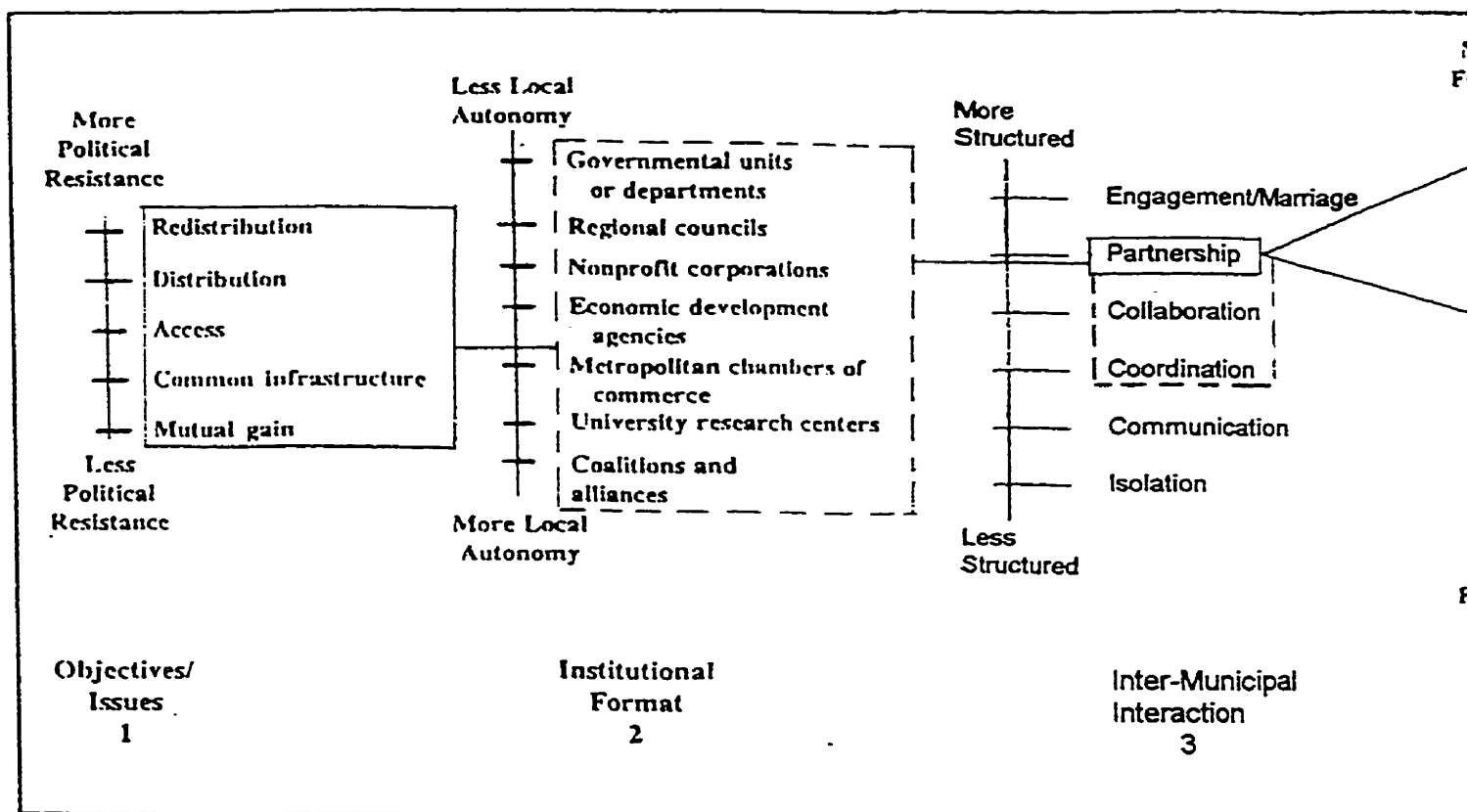
A New Profile for Regional Growth Strategies

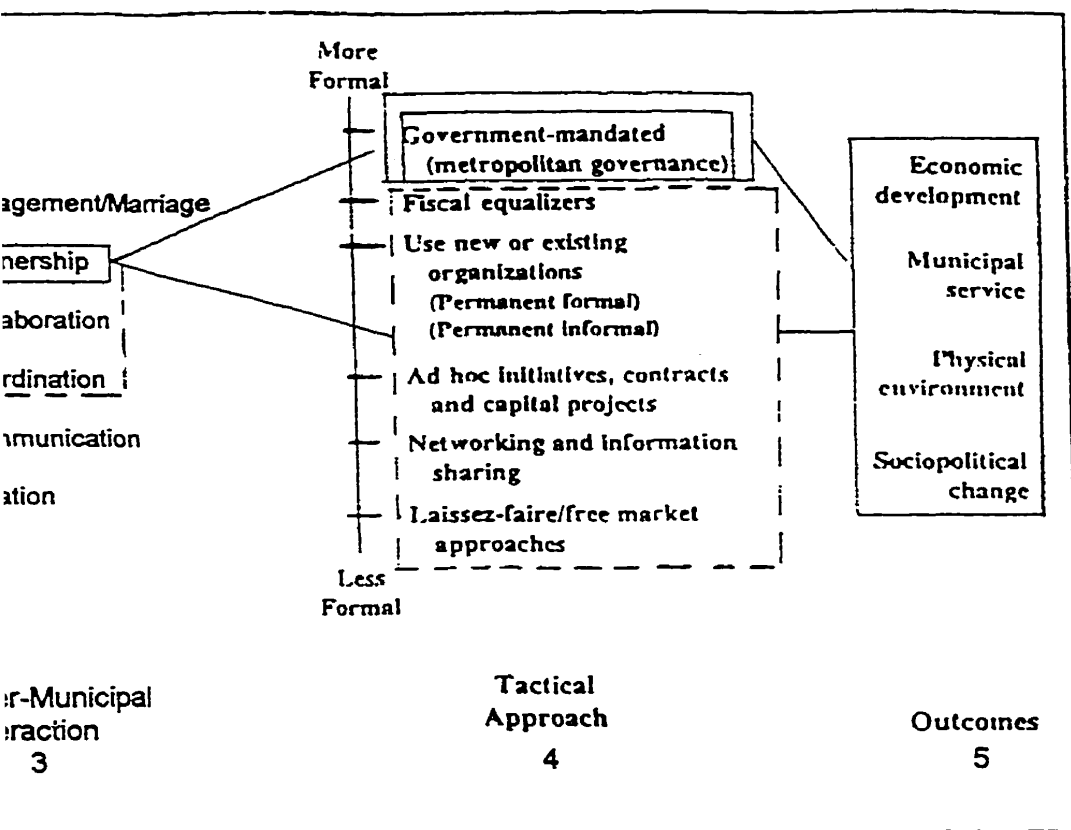
Where Figure 4 depicted the current dimensional features of Regional Growth Strategy and identified structural weaknesses, Figure 5 now shows how this regional policy would look after its "new regionalism" treatment plan. Dimensions One and Five are unchanged, reflecting the same growth management policy context as before. Dimension Two shows a dotted line around *all* potential institutional formats to signify the flexibility of possible choices. This reflects the new belief that institutions should be created or reshaped on an ad hoc basis in response to the needs of the regional vision. Some may endure, others may have a short life-cycle. A wide range of cross-sectoral formats will be used concurrently.

Dimension Three maps an ideal mode of interaction at the "partnership" level, recognizing the true merger of interests implied in a collective regional vision. This status also recognizes that leadership for plan implementation is now devolved to cross-sectoral regional partners according to their own areas of expertise. Because new regionalist ideas emphasize the importance of flexible and responsive structures, Wight's more rigid "engagement/marriage" stage is not considered an appropriate mode of interaction. Once again, here is where the GVRD/ "rest-of-B.C." issue re-emerges. A solid line marks "partnership" as an ultimate stage each region— especially Greater Vancouver— should aspire to. A dashed line marks stages upwards of where other B.C. regions likely are at the moment. This attempts to find a balance

Figure 5: Dimensions of Regionalism—A Proposed RGS Profile

(Sources: Nunn and Rosentraub, 209; Seltzer, 11; Wight, 1997, 10)





between acknowledging realities around the province and setting an appropriately ambitious standard for renewed inter-municipal interaction. Within this context, regions with long histories of conflict should celebrate each incremental cooperative step, and regions with a collaborative record should more appropriately set their expectations higher (Nunn and Rosentraub, 208).

Dimension Four upgrades the dotted line around "government-mandated" tactics to a double solid line. This reflects first that the new grassroots and cross-sectoral base of political support for regionalism helps respond to previous fears about lack of provincial enforcement. It also shows the critical importance of this one tactical feature as an underlying foundation for all others. Because the Province is the ultimate legal arbiter of all things regional, its backing of the regional concept is fundamental for developing any confidence at all in any implementation tactic. For all other tactics on Dimension Four, a dotted line again represents the flexibility of choices. The restructuring of institutions will involve creating new organizations and using existing ones. Any combination of tactics is possible.

With each of these specific treatments, the end result for Regional Growth Strategies is a strengthened consensus-orientation built on a stronger and more legitimate regional vision, and a broader and more capable network of regional partners. This new-improved policy version is now much better equipped to respond to the risky aspects of growth management— issues such as *access*, *distribution*, and *redistribution*— and much more likely to lead B.C. regions to their desired social, economic, environmental, and governance-related outcomes.

B.C. Regions and Planners as National Leaders

Emerging from its treatment, Regional Growth Strategy could even become a national model. The exclusive citing here of American experience in relation to the new regionalism raises the question of whether any Canadian models exist for B.C. planners to look to as they consider re-inventing their own regions. Although Vancouver's condition has already been described as problematic, it seems closest to the ideal when compared to Toronto and Montreal. In Toronto, a top-down provincial attitude has stifled informal, flexible regional networking and has entrenched an old-style government structure that is at odds with new ideas about cross-sectoral regional governance (Wight, 1997, 11). In Montreal, a deep-rooted inter-municipal competitive streak and a provincial government fearful of power-sharing have together created hostile soil for any effective notion of regionalism (Wight, 1998, 34-35).

B.C. planners then have an ambitious agenda ahead of them as national professional leaders if they choose to heed the call of the new regionalism. To be successful as process managers and cross-sectoral "agents collaborateur", they will have to embrace a new role and recast themselves as "citistate place-makers" (Wight, 1998, 36).

This change will mean accepting a new paradigm of social learning where planners pay greater sensitivity to the details of the planning process itself (Wight, 1998, 31). Relevant at the toolkit level will be concepts such as Seltzer/Wight's "ladder" of regional interaction, which provides a valuable benchmark for measuring the progress of the regional re-invention process (Wight, 1998, 32).

Selling the Concept

Building on Wallis' ideas, U.S. regionalist William Dodge has outlined several steps that are required to "sell" the concept of regionalism to the general public. Part of

this process is for regionalism to make itself "prominent" and "strategic" (Dodge, 47). This emphasis on prominence redresses the traditional shadowy behind-the-scenes stance of most regional agencies. Similarly, by taking on strategic issues of the greatest concern to the greatest number of people, regional leaders can demonstrate up front that the public's interest is their interest. For regionalism to be effectively marketed within a region, these two related aspects would have to be integral to any regional visioning process.

Positive news for the regional marketing campaign is that there is already evidence of citizens recognizing that where certain issues are concerned— such as affordable housing— a regional agency is more likely to be their ally than even their own local government (Leo, 26). Perhaps the group that needs the most convincing then is municipal politicians. The importance of cementing regional support among municipal councilors and leading bureaucrats has been stressed by many regionalist authors (West and Taylor, 1995; Peirce and Johnson, 1997-98; Seltzer, 1995). Efforts at building such support have focused on developing a sense of "regional leadership" through exercises such as overseas visits to role model regions, seminar training series, and regular inter-municipal forums.

Conclusion

A useful part of the regional leadership-building process for B.C. planners would be to educate them on each of the elements this discussion has touched on. Such an educative process would make several themes clear. First, after years of playing only to a professional audience, regionalism is now going "mainstream" with a high community profile as a range of regional initiatives take shape in urban centres. The social,

economic, environmental, and governance-related driving forces behind this change are strong— and each is very much present in B.C. communities.

Second, standing in the path of these regional forces in B.C. is a minefield of inter-municipal conflict. In light of this conflict, and the difficult political tradeoffs inherent in the act of growth management, Regional Growth Strategies appear to be not well enough equipped to be an appropriate policy structure. From even the few tests they have already faced, it seems their present consensus-orientation is seriously flawed.

Third, recent U.S. experience has led to the development of several ideas that if adopted could fill the "structural gap" in B.C. regional policy. Among these is the premise that effective regional approaches must build legitimacy through a broad-based vision, and build capacity through a flexible structure of cross-sectoral networks. No longer should regional planners plan first and implement second— rather, they should integrate these two stages by bringing a wide range of implementation partners into the planning process from the start. Besides building regional networks, these ideas collectively would help create a regional civic culture based on shared identity and trust.

Fourth, although moving towards the "new regionalism" would be a dramatic change for B.C., there are many elements of the concept that fit well with the province's existing regional policy culture. If these advantages were capitalized on and new regionalist ideas were implemented, B.C. could become a national leader in the regional movement— since for all its weaknesses, the B.C. context is much more pro-regional than the context facing cities such as Montreal and Toronto.

A crucial factor in this policy leadership will be the professional leadership of planners, as they learn to master process-related skills and take on new roles as "citistate-makers". Planners will also have to be creative in selling regionalism to both public and political audiences. In order for planners' efforts to endure after each round of municipal elections within a region, it will be especially important for them to cultivate regional leadership in municipal councilors and leading managers on an ongoing basis.

But this educative process should really be part education and part inspiration. The ISTEA-inspired American regional renaissance has produced results that should excite B.C. planners about the possibilities for their own regions. The dividends of new regionalist ideas for municipal cooperation can be compelling:

"But some officials, like those in the Thurston Regional Planning Council in Olympia, Washington, have decided that (regional) 'government interference' is not so bad. The MPO's regional plan established a desirable development pattern, with density targets, including minimums. Elected officials on the council understood the implications for local planning and zoning and went on to help enact these standards in their own jurisdictions."

(Andrews, 1996)

Beyond the experience of councilors, equally striking are the changes that planners themselves have gone through—in this case in St. Louis—as they adapt to new roles as citistate makers:

"It's a bittersweet laugh we have at ourselves when we think back on the public meeting we held prior to adopting our first transportation program under ISTEA in 1992. Stiff and awkward, speaking a language based on obtuse technical processes, there we were standing on an elevated stage to explain a list of projects to a group of citizens who were sometimes bored, sometimes pleased, sometimes angry, but not really a part of what was happening. (Since then) we have cast such meetings out of our toolbox and invested in a whole new set of instruments: visioning sessions...workshops, guidebooks, and others...You won't see us standing up front in big auditoriums much anymore."

(Forlaw, 1996)

This retrospective look at regional planning in St. Louis is just one of many indicators of the key role public involvement strategies will play in the citistate-making process. And while the change this process represents is dramatic, it need not suggest the multi-generational citistate-building processes of old— of Florence, Venice, or the like. With a supportive policy environment change can happen quickly— these planners in Olympia and St. Louis were reflecting on four years of progress. If B.C. planners do take up the citistate challenge, the professional journals of 2002 could well have a familiar ring to them.

To connect the threats and opportunities outlined here to the original practicum purpose— generating guidance in public involvement— these themes can be reconceived into a public involvement "needs-list" as shown in Figure 6. This will pave the way for an examination of the next subject layer within the regional growth management problem context— the layer of urban citizenship and community, where the focus shifts from institutional interaction to grassroots interaction, face-to-face.

Figure 6: Regionalism— Public Involvement Needs

In responding to the themes of regionalism, public involvement must...

- be used as the vehicle for designing "made-in-the-region" regional initiatives— through which any provincial and federal regional policy must be channeled.
- build on and/or improve on recently developed regional structures such as port and airport authorities, health boards, and Land and Resource Management Plans.
- use broad-based and representative visioning processes to improve the legitimacy of Regional Districts in the face of concerns about their unelected council structure.
- build shared regional identity and replace "regionophobia" at the local level with newfound trust.
- link planning and implementation stages into a unified, seamless process.
- foster specialized, cross-sectoral partnerships between public, private, and non-profit sectors.
- build a lasting base of political support for regionalism among grassroots and sectoral partners that will hold municipal, provincial, and other partners accountable for maintaining their commitment to the regional vision.
- identify strategic, actionable issues for regional partners to respond to so that they can quickly establish their relevance and legitimacy.
- establish ongoing mechanisms for public participation in the regional process— in monitoring and revising the plan— so that the process maintains the legitimacy it builds at the outset.

Chapter Three: Citizenship, Planners, and Community--- A Vision for Change

Introduction

In looking at what is required to manage urban growth on a sustainable basis, to build broad-based regional visions and structures, and to better enfranchise neighbourhoods in planning for change, one theme has become clear— breaking through current impasses in each of these areas will involve fostering a new kind of citizenship, and finding new ways of engaging the public in the planning process. Yet how prepared the public is to respond to this agenda remains to be seen.

Stories are heard of citizens coming together in an urban or small town renaissance— from Chattanooga to Phoenix and from Sudbury to Nelson, but some critics are unconvinced of the citizenship/involvement imperative. Across the Atlantic, as Londoners have gathered to debate a vision for their future, advocates of a laissez-faire approach to planning argue that city-building is an organic, unregulable process, and that time spent visioning and consensus-building is time wasted:

"One of the great public participation successes of the year so far has been the monthly series of 'London debates' held in the cavernous Central Hall, Westminster... Thousands crowd into the hall each month to soak up an atmosphere that is part political, part revivalist..."

The spirit-shrivelling word 'vision' is frequently invoked... It is an endless, and endlessly entertaining, activity. It is also 99% futile... It will be a fine evening of talk, everyone searching for the 1% of gold in the 99% of guff."

("London Gets Lost in the Fog", The Sunday Times [UK])

Alongside the urban critics, planners and citizens alike may be justified in their skepticism given past experiences with problematic public involvement processes. But new ideas have emerged, and lessons have come out of failure.

In helping planners advance the citizenship/involvement cause, this discussion will examine the current state of civil society, as well as characteristics of an ideally networked, sustainable society where public involvement processes revitalize citizens *and* planners. As it details benefits and cautions attached to public involvement, this inquiry will also look ahead to the next stage of this practicum— a "made-in-B.C." set of public involvement guidelines for B.C.'s Regional Growth Strategies.

The Recent Evolution of Citizenship

Searching for Community

As the 1990s have unfolded, the word "community" seems to have worked its way up the political and policy buzzword chart into a solid standing among the "Top 20" hits. It is invoked at the highest levels— by U.S. President Clinton in his State of the Union Addresses, and by U.K. Prime Minister Blair in his proclaiming of a "Third Way" (neither right-wing nor left) in governing. Although it may echo from the political pulpit, as with most buzzwords "community's" origin can be traced back to a set of emerging values at the grassroots level.

It appears that just as with the trend towards regionalism, several societal forces have converged to inspire a desire for a new sense of urban identity— in this case a search for community on the part of citizens. Faced with unresponsive senior governments, a crumbling nuclear family, and an indifferent global economy, people are turning to their communities as a forum for meeting needs and for effecting change. As an alternative, communities appear to offer "the potential for responsiveness, innovation, equity and the strength that derives from tackling problems collectively" (President's Council). However, despite such promising attributes, in North America the demand for community is not equaled by its supply. Running counter to the search for

community are several disturbing social trends that demand resolution before the potential of renewed community and citizenship can be realized.

The Decline of Traditional Community Engagement

The ways citizens are engaging themselves in their communities today are very different from the ways of the past— and not just different, but qualitatively inferior considering the weakness of the community fabric that is produced in the process. This was the key finding of Robert Putnam's landmark 1995 paper "Bowling Alone: America's Declining Social Capital". In tracking a range of social indicators, Putnam profiles how "community" has lost ground over time:

- Voter turnout in U.S. federal elections fell 25% between the early 1960s and early 1990s, despite increases in average education levels. *(Education levels have traditionally been thought of as a predictor of political participation)*
- Churches, unions, PTAs, fraternal organizations, service clubs, Scouts of America, and the Red Cross all show declines in real membership totals since the mid-1960s, despite a significant national population increase.
- The number of Americans responding yes to the statement "I have attended a public meeting on town or school affairs in the past year" dropped from 22% in 1973 to 13% in 1993.
- The number of Americans claiming to have "socialized with neighbours more than once a year" fell from 72% in 1974 to 61% in 1993.

(Putnam, 68-73)

The period described by these trends has obviously been a time of dramatic social change. Among many influences on community engagement, it seems increased female participation in the workforce, breakdown of the nuclear family unit, and the "technological transformation of leisure" (the arrival of the VCR, etc) have had the greatest effect (Putnam, 74).

A New Pattern of Community Networks

In place of the grassroots association-driven pattern of the past, community participation is now finding its strongest expression in the "tertiary" association, the support group, and the local special-interest group. The tertiary-class of associations contains a new breed of clubs with national scope and membership in the hundreds of thousands—groups such as the Sierra Club and the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP). In contrast to local associations, in this class membership often means no more than mailing a cheque and receiving a newsletter (Putnam, 71).

At a more localized level, support groups have played a valuable role in bringing people together around shared issues such as parenting special-needs children, overcoming life-threatening illness, and recovering from substance or domestic abuse. However, like tertiary associations, these groups seldom involve a social contract among members, where responsibilities are assigned and commitment is expected (Putnam, 71).

For citizens willing to make more of a commitment, local special-interest groups can offer a degree of social intimacy within a task-performing, advocacy-oriented environment. In an era of media-driven political and corporate accountability, these groups have scored considerable success in influencing policy. Whether they function as a healthy forum for debate and decision-making is another question. Within these groups, the ideas of individuals can be suppressed in favour of "party-discipline". Further, in terms of internal group process, these organizations are typically skilled at consciousness raising and taking strategic action. What they lack in between these stages is an intervening "working-through" process stage, where conflicting values and attitudes are resolved on a collective and individual basis (Kubiski, 15).

Problems with debate and decision-making also have effects beyond the group meeting hall. In an environment where special-interest groups often face off against each other, their advocacy-orientation can lead to hardened position-taking and can foster a win-lose confrontational culture. Further, as they grow and as their members become more empowered, in relative terms these groups can have a *disempowering* effect on non-member citizens, or those attached to less effective organizations (Kubiski, 12). Considering both the Canadian and American experience with the local special-interest movement, it seems "the reality of groups is that they are an essential, but problematic vehicle for citizen participation" (Kubiski, 13).

Interpreting the Change

In the B.C. context, it is still unclear exactly what effect the search for community and the changing structure of community engagement will have on civic citizenship. In places such as Victoria, Nelson, and Langley, recent co-housing projects show that people are indeed searching for new forms of social connectedness. There are also aspects of Canadian society that suggest that the community "losses" outlined by Putnam may not be as severe on this side of the border.

First is the distinct Canadian climate— long thought of as a unifying cultural force. Through 1997 and 1998, floods, ice storms, and forest fires have highlighted a grassroots co-operative spirit across the country. Second is the traditional Canadian resource economy, and the "one-industry" or "one-employer" towns that it creates. Despite shifts toward an info-tech economy, resource communities are still a significant part of the B.C. landscape. While their single-purpose may be an economic disadvantage, it creates ready-made social networks and a culture of common interest.

What could be most worrying is the types of social networks that are on the rise. As nationally-oriented tertiary associations grow, they may divert citizen allegiance and identity away from the local level. Where there are local roots they may exist in the form of special-interest groups— and concerning urban issues these groups can often facilitate NIMBY-oriented conflict. If through these groups citizens have lacked opportunities to "work-through" attitudes, values, and choices about their communities, it will be shown later here how planners in Vancouver, Surrey, Nanaimo and elsewhere are filling the gap with "workbooks" as a thought-provoking tool. As a planning response this is a good start— but renewing urban citizenship will require a lot more.

A Dilemma for Community

Reflecting on social trends in light of the imperative of sustainability, a recent national U.S. conference on sustainable communities summed up the present community citizenship dilemma:

"If communities, positioned at the forefront of social change today, are well-placed to take on many of the key challenges facing society, they are not necessarily well-equipped.

Indeed, it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that if communities are the key to the future well-being of American (or Canadian) society, they must then be strengthened and revitalized.

How do we strengthen the foundations of our communities? What policies and actions can advance a movement whose goal is the creation and rebuilding of communities?"

(President's Council)

Still another question concerns where leadership of the community strengthening process will come from. In the past, local business "establishments" often led the charge into new community visions— but in the age of globalization, in most cities business no longer has the same community commitment (except where an Olympic or World's Fair bid is involved).

As a modern-day alternative, the leadership group San Diego Dialogue presents one example of a more broad-based approach. This "permeable, flexible, and nonexclusive" organization was formed by academic, community, and media leaders to provide a regional forum for business, university, and government problem-solving around diverse issues such as "workfare", Pacific Rim trade, and administration of the U.S.-Mexico border (Peirce and Johnson, 1997-98). A coalition such as this seems to address many community citizenship issues— but still unanswered is the question of how planners fit into the equation.

An Opportunity for Planners

While communities have been looking for new models for the future, planners have also been searching for new roles and greater relevancy— and just as communities are poised to embrace a new role, so too are planners. *The opportunity for a new type of planner-community relationship is compelling.* Consider once more the basic dilemma: citizens and planners are both searching for "community" as they seek to fulfill their own goals; "community" itself is in need of repair— but who can lead the repair crew, and how? The answer: planners can if they improve their practice of public involvement.

Through the process of creating regional growth management plans, official community plans, and neighbourhood plans, planners have a ready-made medium that brings citizens together to create visions, policies, and designs for the future. By adding principled, effective public involvement strategies to their plan-making processes, planners can take the next step and build ongoing social structures— the wooden frame if you will— into which citizens can cement the foundation for renewed community. In recent years, planners have made great strides in incorporating public

involvement strategies into their work. The time has now come for them to embrace a "second-generation" of public involvement thinking and practice.

Planners as Leaders

Becoming Consensus-Builders

The link between public involvement and planners' purpose and effectiveness has been firmly established in a recent addition to the debate on planners' role and relevance by theorist Judith Innes. In her response to longstanding questions about the legitimacy of planners, Innes demonstrates how a consensus-building orientation can restore credibility to planners and the plans they produce.

As consensus-builders, planners can validate and supplement their own knowledge with the in-depth experience of grassroots stakeholders. Likewise, they can engage in values-based decision-making by allowing representative stakeholders to make choices. Finally, as planners have sometimes lacked opportunities to win public support for their ideas, they can use the forum of consensus-based dialogue with communities to more effectively share their own vision (Innes, 1996, 462-3). In short, by using consensus-building processes, planners can improve the quality of their knowledge, create plans more solidly grounded in legitimate public values, and become better valued as educators and prophets of change.

Importantly for the B.C. situation, Innes' theory is supported by evidence from regional growth management planning in the U.S. In all of the cases studied, stakeholders became better informed and established new networks that formed a basis for plan implementation following the consensus process. Further, final agreements among stakeholders were comprehensive— including new laws, policies,

action plans, and monitoring indicators— and were most often endorsed by agencies or governments responsible for ultimate approval (Innes, 1996, 465).

To put Innes' shift in practice in the context of Sherry Arnstein's benchmark "Ladder of Citizen Participation", consensus-building prescribes replacing "Placation" with "Partnership"— in place of their limited formal role as advisors, citizens become partners in negotiating outcomes (Arnstein, 217). However— negotiation comes with a caveat. In a growth management setting, it is critical for planners to structure such partnerships around groundrules which will ensure that mutual acceptance of sustainability goals provides a starting point for negotiations.

Considering the B.C. context, it appears only a part of consensus-building philosophy has made it into the planners' public involvement toolkit. Encouragingly, through advisory groups, open houses, surveys, and other methods planners have increasingly incorporated grassroots knowledge into their decision-making. Discouragingly though— reflecting on earlier discussion of the systemic inter-municipal and neighbourhood-based problems facing regional plans— it seems planners need to improve the way they determine the public interest and express their ideas. A first step in this process— towards realizing the potential of consensus-building and moving into a second-generation of public involvement practice— is understanding what happens to citizens themselves when they engage in community planning.

A Community Renewal Agenda

Understanding Participation

Citizen participation in democracy in general brings several societal benefits that bode well for planners. To begin with, it is through participation that an individual starts

to see beyond his/her own interests to recognize a public interest shared by all— or in the words of John Stuart Mill:

"to weigh interests not his own; to be guided, in case of conflicting claims, by another rule than his private partialities; to apply, at every turn, principles and maxims which have for their reason of existence the general good."

(Berry et al, 5)

Beyond participation alone, a crucial part of this process is for individuals to gain a sense of belonging and identity within a larger group. From this comes acceptance of the group's common goals, which in turn leads to the willing compromise of some individual interests so that those goals may be achieved (Berry et al, 10).

The participatory process also creates an arena for accountability, whereby citizens learn the impact of their actions on other individuals— thus the sidestreet-shortcut speeding commuter is brought to task by the neighbourhood parent. In building a common public interest where individual compromise will always be necessary, the corollary of these pro-participation arguments is that there really is no other way— or as theorist Herbert Simon puts it: "significant changes in human behaviour can be brought about rapidly only if the persons who are expected to change participate in deciding what the change shall be and how it shall be made" (Berry et al, 6).

Moving beyond theory, Berry and his colleagues have *measured* citizen participation's effect on the well-being of urban democracy. In particular, their findings refuted the notion that neighbourhood associations only stir up debate— they found instead significant public faith in these groups as an effective forum for conflict resolution (Berry et al, 202). Further, they also found a direct positive relationship between participation and trust in local government (Berry et al, 255).

In sum then, citizen participation will be a critical tool for planners as they take on the role of consensus-builder in advancing regional growth management. Implementing a sustainability agenda will depend on getting citizens first to understand that it is in the public interest, and then to see that it requires them to change their behaviour— whether recycling habits or transportation choices. The way planners structure groups within public involvement strategies will be an important step in facilitating this educative process and in creating a forum for citizen-to-citizen accountability. What is most encouraging for planners is that citizens themselves see benefits in participating, and that after they have been involved they have renewed trust in government— and implicitly also in planners.

Public Involvement as Community-Building

A second step in moving towards a second-generation of public involvement practice is realizing that a public involvement strategy is more than just a column on the critical-path chart of a planning exercise— it is in fact part of a long-term process of community-building. An innovative concept built on this perspective is put forward by William Potapchuk of the U.S.-based National Civic League. His idea of "sustainable community politics" is a direct answer to the declining fortunes of community described earlier by Putnam.

A Theory of Action

At the heart of his concept is the notion that political strategies (and public involvement processes) should "not only get the job done, but heal and strengthen a collaborative and inclusive political culture" (Potapchuk, 55). Just as the sustainability metaphor applies to forests and rivers, so too should it apply to the social fabric of communities. Thus the political (and planning) process should not deplete a

community's problem-solving resources, but rather it should foster networks that build and maintain these elements to ensure their viability into the future (Potapchuk, 55).

Another aspect of Potapchuk's concept deals with the long term commitment required to fully implement a sustainability agenda. No matter how visionary or supportive elected officials and planners may be, the time frame involved in achieving sustainability goals extends beyond their terms of office. Accordingly, the staying power required to keep policies and initiatives alive over the long run must come from communities themselves (Potapchuk, 59).

In terms of specific remedies, creating a sustainable community culture will first mean making better connections between citizens, institutions, and government leaders — paralleling the broad-based approach behind renewed regionalism. Building networks between hitherto disconnected social groups will also be a part of producing "generalized social capital" or fostering a more responsive, capable, problem-solving community (Potapchuk, 59). If "sustainable community politics" indeed redresses community's declining fortunes, a by-product of this process will be the broadening of individuals' social identities (Putnam, 76). For regional planners trying to advance the idea of "regional citizenship" this would be a critical outcome.

In the B.C. context the need to build connections between cultural and special-interest groups is especially apparent, as fault lines have grown along ethnic, lifestyle, and political (pro-environment vs. pro-development) lines. As planners look for ways to create community-building, problem-solving social networks, they can look to several West Coast models.

Models of Social Capital

Coincident with the 1990 introduction of the Growth Management Act in Washington state, the broad-based, statewide group 1000 Friends of Washington established itself as a non-profit planning advocacy group. According to its current mission statement:

"1000 Friends of Washington seeks to maintain vital urban, suburban, and rural communities through responsible growth management. We work for sound land use plans and practices that protect the environment, spend public resources wisely, and absorb growth efficiently and fairly...1000 Friends assists citizen organizations, the business community, and government as we all work collectively to pursue this common vision..."

(1000 Friends of Washington, 5)

In addition to its educative role and its function as a collaborative forum for problem-solving, 1000 Friends acts as a watchdog against sprawl— where necessary it has launched legal action (provided for under the GMA) against "anti-sustainability" municipalities. This group's rapid evolution is partly due to the fact that it grew out of another successful model— 1000 Friends of Oregon has paralleled state growth management practice since the early 1970s.

Back in B.C., an example of newly-constructed social capital on a more regional level is the Howe Sound Round Table (HSRT), one of many B.C. groups built on the nationwide model put forward by the National Round Table on the Environment and the Economy. The HSRT comprises stakeholders from industry, first nations, government, business, recreation, health, education, and environmental groups, as well as interested individuals. Its mandate is to serve as an advisory body and provide a "community perspective on planning for sustainability" (B.C. Round Table, 68). Among other initiatives, the HSRT has received federal funding to undertake a collaborative

process in planning for the sustainability of local water resources and aquatic habitat (B.C. Round Table, 69).

Because of their sustainability outlook and their inter-municipal scope, Round Table groups all over B.C. will likely be a valuable asset to planners in the Regional Growth Strategy process. Where such groups do not yet exist, planners may consider taking a "sister-region" approach (such as twinning Howe Sound with the Shuswap region) in encouraging "technology-transfer" around the Round Table model. Considering their commitment to consensus decision-making, as well as their accessibility and broad-based representation, Round Tables go a great distance towards providing the type of generalized social capital called for by Potapchuk— and needed by planners involved in regional growth management.

Concerning the needs of planners— one specific area where reconceived thinking about the purpose of public involvement, where ideas about "sustainable community politics", and where lessons from groups such as Round Tables and 1000 Friends can be integrated is in resolving the NIMBY dilemma.

Addressing NIMBY

In land-use planning, the Not-In-My-Backyard or "NIMBY" syndrome is perhaps the greatest symptom of the difficulties individuals and communities have in dealing with change. In many cases, individuals express ill-formed attitudes about change, and show little regard for a greater public interest. In responding to the NIMBY situations that grow out of this environment, communities themselves often do not have the problem-solving capacity to craft effective solutions.

The prevalence of NIMBY has already been noted by planners as a serious obstacle to the provision of affordable housing and the encouragement of compact, sustainable communities (Diehl, 30). Among growth management policies, it is often residential land-use intensification that provokes the strongest resistance to change. Consider this snapshot of recent Vancouver experience in introducing new forms of market housing into one neighbourhood:

"Dunbar residents will appeal a planning department decision to allow construction of a four-storey building on Dunbar Street that will include 28 studio-style suites..."

*...A resident claimed the project:
"will diminish the quality of life in what he described as a quiet residential neighbourhood" and set "an unwelcome precedent for Dunbar..."*

"Earlier this month, West Kerrisdale residents opposed a larger residential project...designed specifically for seniors"

(*"Suites Unsuitable, Say Dunbar Locals"* Vancouver Courier)

The Social Nature of the Problem

Confronted with what they believe to be the selfish, irrational motivations of those resisting change, politicians and planners can be quick to brand their grassroots opponents with the NIMBY label and privately or publicly disparage their views. Recent urban researchers have criticized this tendency and suggested instead that NIMBY be seen not as pathological, but as a "natural outgrowth of a community's ongoing debate about its housing (or other land use) needs" (White and Ashton).

This concept is useful in that it encourages planners to think of NIMBY not as something to be "rooted out" but as something to be better understood—and ultimately better managed. But labeling NIMBY as a "natural outgrowth" could also risk fostering a resigned acceptance of the problem. Such a point-of-view would turn attention away

from the critical distress in urban citizenship that underlies NIMBY. To more accurately reflect the ideas about citizenship and community developed in this discussion, a better definition of NIMBY would call it a *natural but problematic outgrowth of a community's problematic debate about its land use needs.*

A major assumption surrounding NIMBY is that creating a common public interest by nature carries a social cost to individuals (White and Ashton). This social cost is discussed in both qualitative and quantitative terms— concerning "quality of life" factors such as neighbourhood character and traffic, and most frequently, concerning loss of property value. What has not been well understood in the NIMBY debate thus far is whether residents are justifiably resisting an actual social cost, or whether they are resisting a perceived social cost that may really not exist.

In B.C., recent provincially-sponsored real estate market research has sought to determine if indeed property values are reduced when social housing is introduced into a neighbourhood. Research results based on a sample of seven projects from around B.C. indicated: homes in the immediate area showed no reductions in their sale prices; adjacent homes appreciated as much as homes more distant from the project but within the same neighbourhood; panic selling did not take place in the immediate area; and adjacent homes took no more time to sell than others across the neighbourhood (Cityspaces Consulting Ltd. [b], 2). This evidence would suggest then that NIMBY may be more about misconception than about rational resistance to social cost. However, as a complex social condition, NIMBY is more complicated than that.

In some cases, neighbourhood or community change is not just about new ways of housing the same people (such as empty-nesters, students, or youth), or advancing mixed-use sustainable development, or even addressing social equity through housing

different people. It can be about integrating newcomers with radically different values. Sometimes this change is centred on gentrification, but it is not always about physical upgrading or higher-income newcomers. A phrase that better captures the values dimension to this process is "been-heres vs. come-heres" (Spain, 156).

This version of NIMBY is particularly relevant to communities in all of B.C.'s regions as the province's quality of life attracts retirees, home-based professionals, and other newcomers into urban neighbourhoods and small towns alike. The values-conflict that can result from this influx is demonstrated by Saltspring Island's experience. Urban refugees arrived seeking postcard coastal beauty and a village pace of life. Dismayed to find a strong-smelling commercial fish dock on their doorstep, they lobbied to close it down. The fish operation was a longstanding and significant part of the local economy, and "been-here" residents were left dumbfounded and angry at the people they now had to accept as neighbours. Similarly, in her study of a Philadelphia neighbourhood and a coastal Virginia county, Spain found considerable values-conflict between been-heres and come-heres, most often centred on environmental protection. Newcomers tended to lobby for conservation, whereas established residents sought economic development (Spain, 165).

Thus the profile of NIMBY that emerges from this discussion is not straightforward. NIMBY is sometimes about perceived social costs that do not in fact exist— yet it is equally about resistance to social costs that can indeed threaten communities' quality of life. In responding to NIMBY as a natural but problematic outgrowth of problematic community debate, solutions will therefore not only have to provide a forum for clarifying misconceptions, they will also have to offer opportunities for neighbours to learn about each others' values and ultimately find common ground. Several solution approaches from recent Canadian practice seem to do just that.

Promising Solutions

Developer-neighbourhood collaboration has been advocated as an essential process for non-profit groups to use in gaining community support for their social housing projects (Cityspaces Consulting Ltd. [a], 2). Collaborative dialogue here is intended to be a holistic process: it begins during the design process, continues through re-zoning, and carries on into construction and the monitoring of post-occupancy impacts. Further, it can also be open-ended in the case of non-profit societies, where neighbourhood representatives can be included as board members or invited onto on-going advisory committees (Cityspaces Consulting Ltd. [a], 6; King's Square, 7).

This type of collaborative process addresses several underlying aspects of NIMBY: physical features are considered during the design process; potential value-conflicts with newcomers are looked at in the post-occupancy phase; and even short-term grievances receive a hearing during project construction. Even more noteworthy is how a permanent avenue for neighbourhood input is created through formal access to boards and committees. This enduring feature of collaboration could be invaluable in responding to changing and unforeseen impacts a development may have on its neighbours— whether increased traffic and parking congestion, or the conflict that sometimes arises when new cultural groups move into a neighbourhood.

Planners have taken the principle of collaboration a step further by convening more formalized processes to resolve developer-community conflict. In Massachusetts and in Kamloops, B.C., mediated processes grew out of the discovery that to overcome NIMBY, the whole re-zoning process itself needed reconfiguration. It became clear that traditional re-zoning procedure provides no forum for dialogue between parties. The

only avenue for public input comes at a formal public hearing; it comes at a late stage in project development, and it offers a highly confrontational format. The result is that positions become more polarized and choices are couched in a win-lose framework. Prospects for alternative processes are made more difficult by the fact that this problematic re-zoning method is firmly entrenched in provincial and state legislation. The challenge for planners then was to craft an alternative *within* the formal structure of a dysfunctional system. (Diehl, 30; Dorius, 101-103)

For Kamloops in particular, mediation has been a win-win-win situation all around: for neighbourhoods in providing a forum for meaningful input; for developers in saving time and money; and for planners (and society-at-large) in facilitating the provision of affordable housing and other sustainability objectives. As a communicative response to NIMBY, mediation fosters understanding of the values behind the conflict, and supports a search for shared values within a structured, trust-building environment. The only caveat concerning mediation is that it not be used by political leaders as a method of avoiding responsibility for making difficult long-term oriented decisions—the type of decisions often required to build a sustainable community (Diehl, 34).

It is as educators that planners have made their strongest efforts at changing individuals' attitudes about change. It is also through this response to NIMBY that the regional sustainability agenda is presented most forcefully. As public involvement has become a larger part of the planning process, planners have played a critical role in structuring the choices presented to communities—in educating them about the urgency of adopting sustainable regional goals, and in showing them how changes to the neighbourhood landscape can improve rather than threaten the quality of life.

Recent planning processes in Surrey, Vancouver, and Nanaimo (among others) have dedicated significant time and money to this task— particularly through planners' development and analysis of "workbooks" distributed to the general public (see Figure 7). These workbooks have sought to present alternatives together with their consequences on a wide range of issues including housing, workplaces, transportation, heritage, and recreation. Founded on an optimistic view of an ultimately rational public, the planner's educative role has not been to preach acceptance of a given option— rather, it has been to present alternatives in value-free language, and express thorough analysis of consequences.

What is perhaps most apparent in this technique is the creativity, imagination, and clarity of the workbooks themselves. Planners have demonstrated skill in translating complex concepts and packaging ideas in an appealing format. Considering that attitude change involves awareness as well as the "working through" of new realities, it appears that building this type of educative instrument planners may have created a valuable tool to help this process along.

Whether collaboration, mediation, or education, solutions to NIMBY are urgently needed if regional growth management plans are to be given a chance to take root and have a lasting effect on building competitive, sustainable, and equitable regions. In the context of Regional Growth Strategy policy in B.C., the NIMBY factor has already been forcefully spoken of as a critical issue by planner/professor Alan Artibise. Since the re-orientation of land-use patterns towards sustainability will take place on a parcel-by-parcel basis— where abstract planning concepts will come to life in built form— maintaining regional commitments by projecting regional goals into each re-zoning process will be essential to the success of growth strategies (Artibise, 1995).

Figure 7: An Educative Workbook--- Nanaimo

(Source: City of Nanaimo)

OUR NEIGHBOURHOODS



STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	UNDECIDED	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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A3



A3. Non-Market Housing Requirements

Our Challenge

A small portion of our community is unable to afford even the least expensive market housing due to financial, physical or social reasons.

However, cuts to non-profit rental and co-operative housing programs by senior levels of government mean new ways must be found by municipalities to meet the housing needs of low income households. Recent changes to the Municipal Act by the Provincial Government now allow municipalities to become directly

involve
The
options
Our
Provinc

Your Viewpoint

THE NEW COMMUNITY PLAN SHOULD
ENCOURAGE THE DEVELOPMENT OF
AFFORDABLE HOUSING IN NANAIMO BY:

What it would look like

Depending on senior government funding
for new subsidized housing.

- typically townhouse and low rise apartment forms integrated within neighbourhood setting

Creating Incentive Zoning - adopt new
zones that give developers additional density
as an incentive to include a percentage of
affordable housing units in their project.

- non-market housing units mixed in with regular market units in each project
- developers would receive more density in exchange for building some affordable housing

Negotiating affordable housing as a condition
of upzoning.

- non-market housing units mixed in with regular market units in each project
- (The City of Vancouver requires up to 20% of new developments as affordable units)

The City becoming a developer of affordable
housing.

- non-market housing integrated with market housing in a neighbourhood setting

Your Alternatives / Comments

Please add your ideas,
options or other comments.

Assisted housing p

Requirements

Even the least expensive market housing due to

housing programs by senior levels of government mean the housing needs of low income households. Recent government now allow municipalities to become directly

involved in the provision of affordable housing in their community.

The City of Nanaimo's Housing Policy acknowledges the ongoing need for more and varied housing options throughout the city, including subsidized and other forms of non market affordable housing.

Our challenge is to find new ways to create non market affordable housing in our city, despite declining Provincial Government funding.

SHOULD

OF

BY:

What it would look like

What it would mean

funding

- typically townhouse and low rise apartment forms integrated within neighbourhood setting

- number of subsidized units would continue to decline as programs are cut back
- homelessness increases
- longer waiting lists for subsidized housing
- people forced to choose between affordable sub-standard or adequate but unaffordable accommodation
- declining support of subsidized housing programs limits opportunity to distribute social housing more equitably across the city

new
density
stage of
project

- non-market housing units mixed in with regular market units in each project
- developers would receive more density in exchange for building some affordable housing

- affordable housing more equitably distributed across community
- the city incurs affordable housing administration costs
- units would remain affordable into the future through housing agreement with developer
- costs incurred by developers are off set at least in part by additional floor space for extra market units

condition

- non-market housing units mixed in with regular market units in each project
- (The City of Vancouver requires up to 20% of new developments as affordable units)

- affordable housing more equitably distributed across community
- the city incurs affordable housing administration costs
- units would remain affordable into the future through housing agreement with developer
- costs incurred by developers are off set at least in part by incentives of increased density

affordable

- non-market housing integrated with market housing in a neighbourhood setting

- City would acquire land to lease for rental as subsidized housing
- taxes increase or other services are cut as funds are directed to housing
- number of subsidized and affordable units increase
- affordable housing more equitably distributed across community

Assisted housing project



Each of the NIMBY solutions outlined here responds directly to the larger community renewal agenda established earlier in this discussion. Educative workbooks have transformed the concept of the opinion questionnaire into a challenging tool which highlights decision implications and works towards attitude change. If properly structured, collaborative and mediated processes not only serve a short-term project function, they also create a pool of social capital that can be the basis for future community-based problem-solving.

For public involvement to be the answer to NIMBY and the larger issue of building strong urban and regional citizenship, and for planners to be most effective in their new role as leaders in the community-building movement, citizens and planners will have to look closely not just at "best practices" but also at examples of problematic planning process. For different reasons, the recent experience of Brisbane and Austin provide useful lessons.

Cautions from Experience

Brisbane, Australia

In the early 1990s, the region around Brisbane, Australia was growing rapidly—yet as its suburbs were prospering, inner-city Brisbane proper was falling behind. Within this context, the 1991 Brisbane Strategy Plan set out to form a long-term, comprehensive framework for guiding decision-making on economic, as well as social and environmental issues (Caulfield and Minnery, 678).

The critical public involvement problem in this case was that instead of fostering a genuine dialogue in the community, the process from the outset was an exercise in legitimation—where planners were leading participants towards a position supportive

of unacknowledged predetermined economic development goals. Through the staging of workshops and the compartmentalization of issues, process leaders contained the potential for dissent. Where conflict did emerge, dissidents were branded with the NIMBY label—and NIMBY in this case was characterized as "insidious" and "a disease" (Caulfield and Minnery, 686).

Although Brisbane's experience may sound extreme, it has particular relevance for the B.C. context, as some of the same criticisms have been directed at Vancouver's extensive CityPlan process (1992-95). During CityPlan, some expressed the feeling that although a range of choices were presented, they were being led to accept neighbourhood densification as a preferred option. With planners' professional obligation to advance sustainability principles, it is understandable that they should try their best to "sell" sustainable concepts. However, it is critical that they structure alternatives appropriately as they present choices to communities.

Rather than using value-laden language in support of the "most sustainable" choice and creating a doomsday "straw-man" out of "do-nothing" policy options, planners should strive as much as possible within the political environment of their practice to first outline sustainability goals as a fundamental non-negotiable framework. Within this organizing structure, they can then present genuine choices to communities in good faith.

Austin, Texas

The 1989 adoption of Austinplan marked the end of a three year planning process for the City of Austin, Texas. During that period, over 1000 people participated in creating a comprehensive growth management plan to guide urban development up

to the year 2020. Citizen participation was organized around both neighbourhoods and subject areas such as housing and transportation (Beatley et al, 187).

The public involvement problem in this case was founded on good intentions. As most planners would, Austin planners brought together participants they considered *representative* of the general public— in terms of ethnicity, gender, geography, age, and other variables. But they found that what started out as a representative group was no longer reflective of the general public by the end of the process. As participants became better informed and educated about policy tradeoffs and growth-related issues, their attitudes became more sophisticated than those of typical non-participants (Beatley et al, 185).

Encouragingly, this aspect of Austin's experience bears out earlier observations about how individuals can come to recognize and accept a public interest through participation. However, where the Austin planners believed they had broad-based "buy-in" for their plan and a basis for implementation, they instead were confronted with a general public opposed to many plan concepts (Beatley et al, 185). Their "typical veteran" and "typical soccer mom" ended up in fact being not so typical.

The changes in participants' attitudes should really not be so surprising. What is surprising here is the way Austin planners failed to anticipate these learning effects. It seems they viewed public involvement the same way a consumer-goods company views focus groups— as a tool to accurately gauge a range of representative *opinions* that will not change over time, and whose *predictability* forms a foundation for setting policy and strategy.

The critical lesson out of this experience is that there needs to be a medium to transmit the learning effects of process participants to non-participants in the

community-at-large. Planners will need to assist stakeholders in carrying on the educative process as they take ideas back to their respective constituencies. Tools such as speakers' bureaus and choices workbooks have already been used by cities in this regard.

Following Potapchuk's notion of improved networks and generalized social capital, connections between interest groups will also require encouragement. Finally, beyond existing (and sometimes over-represented) stakeholder groups, the message of plans must also be more effectively conveyed to the general public. Towards this end, broad-based forums based on the Round Table or 1000 Friends model could provide an important link.

Conclusion

In overcoming the barriers to realizing regional growth management it has become clear that a new kind of citizenship and a new formula for participatory planning is needed. Towards this end, recent trends in community citizenship offer a mixed blessing. Encouragingly, the search for community is one manifestation of how communities are emerging as a leading arena for change. Discouragingly, the structure of 1990s community networks seems not to be as strong as the structures of the past.

Even if communities are poised to take on new challenges, there still remains the question of who will lead the charge. For planners seeking to maintain their legitimacy and take on a redefined role, this "job-vacancy" in leadership has come at an opportune moment. Capitalizing on this opportunity will require planners to recast themselves as consensus-builders and recognize expanded, re-oriented public involvement as the key instrument of their leadership. By making this change, planners

will improve the quality of their knowledge, create plans more solidly grounded in legitimate public values, and become more effective community educators.

To get from "here" to "there", it will be critical for planners to better develop a common public interest and better convey their own unique perspective and ideas. Accomplishing this task will first involve building a better understanding of participation and its effects on citizens. Beyond understanding, it will also involve recognizing public involvement as a community-building exercise modeled on the same concepts of sustainability with which planners are already familiar.

To connect the threats and opportunities outlined here to the original practicum purpose— generating guidance in public involvement— these themes can be reconceived into a public involvement "needs-list" as shown in Figure 8. Together with the companion regionalism "needs-list", this list forms a complete set of public involvement concerns from within the two key context areas of regional growth management. The next step in the process of creating guidance relevant to B.C. planners is to refine this set into a manageable form.

Figure 8: Citizenship/Community— Public Involvement Needs

In responding to citizenship/community themes, public involvement must...

- restore and replenish community problem-solving ability and capacity for collective action.
- connect the learning process of participants to the general public by using existing and new community networks.
- structure community choices appropriately and in good faith by declaring relevant value-orientations such as a sustainability bias.
- tap into the "search for community" by creating groups and networks on a regional scale that are founded on commitment, open debate, and a non-confrontational culture.
- incorporate existing knowledge and models such as the Round Table approach.
- build trust in local and regional government.
- foster the acceptance of planning innovations.
- allow planners to act as leaders and consensus-builders in addition to their role as technicians of public involvement.
- allow for early and ongoing involvement in all stages of change: design, construction, and in monitoring/resolving longer-term impacts.
- reframe formal processes to avoid creating a confrontational win-lose effect.
- create organizations and networks that can lead a sustainability agenda within the community and ultimately succeed planners in a leadership role.
- connect previously unconnected sectors within the community.
- use the power of "group identification" to encourage individuals to recognize the public interest and think of themselves as regional citizens.

Section Three:
Presenting and Testing Solutions

Chapter Four: Evolving, Relating, and Demonstrating Public Involvement Guidelines for Regional Growth Strategies

Precedents in Guideline-Development

Although it is original thinking in the context of regional planning in B.C., the central idea of this discussion— that guideline-driven public involvement is needed— is in fact an extension of an existing body of debate and practice in the development of public involvement guidelines. One critical outcome from this existing discussion is the specific call for guidelines relevant to a B.C. land-use planning context:

"Policy guidance on public participation varies considerably among ministries, ranging from non-existent to highly detailed. A primary difficulty faced by public officials, especially with regard to issues that involve several agencies, is the absence of clear and consistent guidelines..."

(Commission on Resources and Environment, vol.4, 26)

"...a comprehensive policy is needed to ensure effective public participation in land use and related resource and environmental decisions across British Columbia. This need exists because of: inconsistency and apparent arbitrariness in many decisions related to public participation; uncertainty about the roles, rights, and responsibilities of decision-makers and the public; (and) uncertainty about the availability of appropriate resources and institutional support for public participation."

(Commission on Resources and Environment, vol.3, 35)

While these observations come from a Province-of-B.C. professional perspective, they may well also describe conditions at the regional policy level. For as the Province's resource planners have had to manage the most volatile of B.C.'s land-use disputes, so they have become professional leaders in stakeholder involvement and consensus processes. Thus their own call for guidelines may indicate a more

widespread need among B.C. planners— particularly at the regional level. Considered alongside the UBC/ Planning Institute of B.C. professional needs assessment and B.C. Ministry of Municipal Affairs professional consultation findings quoted in an earlier section, these comments further fortify the case for incorporating public involvement guidelines into Regional Growth Strategies.

In addition to the identification of needs, the "guidelines debate" has led to the creation of diverse public involvement guidelines targeted at a range of specialized applications. By way of a guidelines-foundation, the leading professional body related to public involvement— the International Association for Public Participation, or "IAP2" (formerly IAP3)— has put forward core values and a code of ethics for public involvement practitioners. In particular, these measures address managing professional integrity in the face of competing client demands, maintaining social equity, and respecting the needs and goals of process participants (IAP2, 1997). Beyond this foundation, more specific cases of guidelines from the recent B.C. professional context have dealt with determining appropriate degrees of public involvement in different municipal government decision-making processes (John Talbot and Associates, 1996); and evaluating and repositioning public involvement within the corporate planning cycle (B.C. Hydro Public Affairs Division, 1995).

Two additional B.C. cases have produced guidelines that most closely mirror the guidelines of this practicum. In a "best-practices" evaluation of B.C. Hydro's public involvement, a team of consultants emphasized organizational development issues as they prescribed ways of better orienting corporate culture towards public involvement and improving organizational learning from each public involvement exercise (Salasan Associates Inc., 1995). Most recently, an intensive independent case study review of the City of Vancouver's public involvement processes developed a set of criteria which

focused on structural concerns such as process goal-setting, and role and relationship issues among different players within the process (Context Research Ltd., 1998). In these cases, guidelines go beyond the role of public involvement in general and deal with detailed issues of process management and structure. Where they differ from the guidelines produced here is that instead of being custom-made for one specific application, they are intended to provide a more generic template for public involvement design and execution.

Evolving Regional Growth Strategy Guidelines

Refining

The outcome of drawing guidelines from the two preceding chapters is a cumulative set of 22 draft guidelines for public involvement in B.C.'s Regional Growth Strategies. Out of a pattern analysis of this set, it was decided that nine should remain unchanged. The remaining 13 shared similar characteristics— and so a process of grouping and combination reduced this number to five. Thus a more manageable set of 14 guidelines emerged. Finally, through this practicum's revision process a further cut reduced this number to a final set of 11. This last edit removed guidelines considered to be redundant. To make this process of refinement transparent, what follows is a presentation first of the unchanged guidelines and then of the evolved guidelines together with the original guidelines they comprise:

*In responding to regionalist and citizenship/community themes,
public involvement must...*

(—unchanged guidelines—)

- be used as the vehicle for designing "made-in-the-region" regional initiatives—through which any provincial and federal regional policy must be channeled.
- link planning and implementation stages into a unified, seamless process.
- identify strategic, actionable issues for regional partners to respond to so that they can quickly establish their relevance and legitimacy.
- restore and replenish community problem-solving ability and capacity for collective action.
- reframe formal processes to avoid creating a confrontational win-lose effect.
- connect the learning process of participants to the general public by using existing and new community networks.
- structure community choices appropriately and in good faith and declare relevant value-orientations such as a sustainability bias.
- tap into the "search for community" by creating groups and networks on a regional scale that are founded on commitment, open debate, and a non-confrontational culture.
- use broad-based and representative visioning processes to improve the legitimacy of Regional Districts in the face of concerns about their unelected council structure.

(—evolved guidelines—)

- foster specialized, cross-sectoral partnerships between public, private, and non-profit sectors.
- connect previously unconnected sectors within the community.
 - **foster specialized, cross-sectoral partnerships between public, private, and non-profit sectors that connect previously unconnected interests within the community.**
- establish ongoing mechanisms for public participation in the regional process— in monitoring and revising the plan— so that the process maintains the legitimacy it builds at the outset.
- allow for early and ongoing involvement in all stages of change: design, construction, and in monitoring/resolving longer-term impacts.

- **establish mechanisms for public involvement that relate to each aspect of the regional planning cycle— planning, implementing, monitoring and revising — so that the process maintains the legitimacy it builds at the outset.**
- allow planners to act as leaders and consensus-builders in addition to their role as technicians of public involvement.
- foster the acceptance of planning innovations.
 - **encourage planners to be accepted as leaders, innovators, and consensus-builders in addition to their role as technicians of public involvement.**
- create organizations and networks that can lead a sustainability agenda within the community and ultimately succeed planners in a leadership role.
- build a lasting base of political support for regionalism among grassroots and sectoral partners that will hold municipal, provincial, and other partners accountable for maintaining their commitment to the regional vision.
 - **create politically assertive organizations and networks that can assume leadership for the sustainable regionalist agenda and hold all regional partners accountable for maintaining their commitment to the regional vision.**
- build trust in local and regional government.
- use the power of "group identification" to encourage individuals to recognize the public interest and think of themselves as regional citizens.
- incorporate existing knowledge and models such as the Round Table approach.
- build shared regional identity and replace "regionophobia" at the local level with newfound trust.
- build on and/or improve on recently developed regional structures such as port and airport authorities, health boards, and Land and Resource Management Plans.
 - **create shared regional identity and trust in regional institutions by building on recognized as well as recently developed regional structures and groups in resource, health, transport, and other sectors.**

(—guidelines omitted after a final edit—)

- be used as the vehicle for designing "made-in-the-region" regional initiatives— through which any provincial and federal regional policy must be channeled.

- identify strategic, actionable issues for regional partners to respond to so that they can quickly establish their relevance and legitimacy.
- tap into the "search for community" by creating groups and networks on a regional scale that are founded on commitment, open debate, and a non-confrontational culture.

Clustering

The final set of 11 guidelines contains several distinct themes. To further refine this set into a format better suited to professional application, guidelines have been clustered into four major categories— *starting principles*, *initial steps*, *middle steps*, and *outcomes*. Matched with each guideline is a note on its heritage within this practicum, showing how it reflects themes from theory and/or practice and how it is linked to either or both major chapters. Although rigid ordering of the guidelines is not practicable, within each category, they are generally presented in order. They are also numbered to allow for simplified reference in the discussion which follows.

Starting Principles

- 1 • encourage planners to be accepted as leaders, innovators, and consensus-builders in addition to their role as technicians of public involvement.
 - *Citizenship & Community---Innes 1996.*
- 2 • use broad-based and representative visioning processes to improve the legitimacy of Regional Districts in the face of concerns about their unelected council structure.
 - *Regionalism/ C & C ---vehicle for regional identity, networks, plan implementation...also lasting community problem-solving structures...and planners to assert themselves in a reinvented role.*
- 3 • link planning and implementation stages into a unified, seamless process.
 - *Regionalism--- Wallis.*

Initial Steps

- 4 • reframe formal processes to avoid creating a confrontational win-lose effect.
 - *C & C (NIMBY subsection)— Kamloops, B.C. case example.*
- 5 • structure community choices appropriately and in good faith and declare relevant value-orientations such as a sustainability bias.
 - *C & C — Brisbane and Nanaimo case examples.*

Middle Steps

- 6 • create shared regional identity and trust in regional institutions by building on recognized as well as recently developed regional structures and groups in resource, health, transport, and other sectors.
 - *Regionalism/ C & C — Crombie; Putnam (norms, networks, & trust); Wallis.*
- 7 • foster specialized, cross-sectoral partnerships between public, private, and non-profit sectors that connect previously unconnected interests within the community.
 - *Regionalism/ C & C — Wallis; Potapchuk.*
- 8 • connect the learning process of participants to the general public by using existing and new community networks.
 - *C & C — Austin case example.*

Outcomes

- 9 • establish mechanisms for public involvement that relate to each aspect of the regional planning cycle— planning, implementing, monitoring and revising — so that the process maintains the legitimacy it builds at the outset.
 - *Regionalism/ C & C (NIMBY subsection) — Wallis; also concerning localized impact mitigation for new land uses.*

- 10** • create politically assertive organizations and networks that can assume leadership for the sustainable regionalist agenda and hold all regional partners accountable for maintaining their commitment to the regional vision.

• *Regionalism/ C & C — Wallis concerning partnerships, Artibise concerning advocacy and the 1000 Friends model, Potapchuk concerning the sustainability of initiatives.*

- 11** • restore and replenish community problem-solving ability and capacity for collective action.

• *C & C — Potapchuk.*

Relating RGS Guidelines to the RGS Process

A number of the guidelines bear particular relevance to distinct stages in the Regional Growth Strategy process. Accordingly, the following section relates these guidelines to three separate policy structures within the RGS framework. Following the philosophy of this practicum, this section is intended to enhance the face validity of research findings, and ultimately improve their usefulness to Regional District planners.

Intergovernmental Advisory Committees

- 6** • create shared regional identity and trust in regional institutions by building on recognized as well as recently developed regional structures and groups in resource, health, transport, and other sectors.
- 7** • foster specialized, cross-sectoral partnerships between public, private, and non-profit sectors that connect previously unconnected interests within the community.
- 10** • create politically assertive organizations and networks that can assume leadership for the sustainable regionalist agenda and hold all regional partners accountable for maintaining their commitment to the regional vision.

At the beginning of a Regional Growth Strategy (RGS) process, Intergovernmental Advisory Committees (IACs) play a leading role in bringing together regional partners to help design and strategize the regional planning process. In their current form, and as their name implies, IACs appear to have been cast as a highly exclusive forum—generally limited to government staff. Considering the inter-sectoral imperative of the new regionalism, and the fact that IAC formation is almost the first step in the RGS timeline, a valuable and urgent opportunity exists for the recasting—and renaming—of the IAC. What is most critical in this transformation is the incorporation of key private and non-profit sector players alongside governmental agencies. A new generation of "Intersectoral Partnership Networks" (IPNs) could be built on prescriptive principles of inclusivity and representativeness, but could take a variety of organizational forms to reflect different regional contexts.

This new IPN concept would naturally build on recent local advances in regionalism (guideline 6), and would begin to make the inter-sectoral connections ultimately necessary for plan implementation (guideline 7). At the end of the RGS planning process, an IPN could then take on significant lead responsibility for implementation—carrying forward its role as an activist steering committee (guideline 10).

Regional Context Statements

- 1** • encourage planners to be accepted as leaders, innovators, and consensus-builders in addition to their role as technicians of public involvement.
- 6** • create shared regional identity and trust in regional institutions by building on recognized as well as recently developed regional structures and groups in resource, health, transport, and other sectors.

- 4 • reframe formal processes to avoid creating a confrontational win-lose effect.
- 7 • foster specialized, cross-sectoral partnerships between public, private, and non-profit sectors that connect previously unconnected interests within the community.
- 10 • create politically assertive organizations and networks that can assume leadership for the sustainable regionalist agenda and hold all regional partners accountable for maintaining their commitment to the regional vision.

Thus far in RGS practice, the Regional Context Statement (RCS) process has on several occasions been a source of significant regional-municipal conflict. Difficulties in maintaining municipal commitment to regional plans over time would seem to pose a serious threat to RGS integrity. It is in this context that consensus-building planners (guideline 1) skilled at finding common ground through formal and informal channels may be most needed. Part of the RCS conflict resolution strategy could parallel steps taken by neighbourhood planners in Kamloops and elsewhere. Recall that where these planners found formal processes which bred conflict they crafted consensus measures that produced agreement *within* the existing legislative parameters of the formal process itself. Applying this concept to the RCS process would mean identifying systemic points of conflict and designing "process detours" (guideline 4) which would bring resolution without taking on the politically difficult task of re-writing the Growth Strategies Act.

In addition to these measures, steps toward regional identity building (guideline 6), and the building of cross-sectoral partnerships on a regional scale (guideline 7) could take conflict prevention to a deeper level by redressing the regional/municipal adversarial culture from which RCS disputes originate. If after all these initiatives an RCS dispute still arises, a ready-made problem-solving body would exist in the form of the "Intersectoral Partnership Network" already described. In such a situation, sectoral partners could mediate between municipalities and a Regional District to bring about a

"made-in-the-region" solution that would avoid having to resort to provincial intervention (guideline 10).

Implementation Agreements

- 6** • create shared regional identity and trust in regional institutions by building on recognized as well as recently developed regional structures and groups in resource, health, transport, and other sectors.
- 7** • foster specialized, cross-sectoral partnerships between public, private, and non-profit sectors that connect previously unconnected interests within the community.

Once an RGS planning process is completed, Implementation Agreements (IAs) provide a policy framework for structuring action plans on specific RGS initiatives. Alongside changes in the B.C. Municipal Act in support of private-public partnerships, IAs offer a promising platform for facilitating co-operative action between regional partners. Ideally, out of the RGS process should come a highly developed set of networks and working relationships between regional sectoral partners— such that IAs can be readily established and initiatives readily begun (guidelines 6 and 7). The need for quick strategic regional action will be especially important to stakeholders who have invested considerable time in the planning process and who will be eager to see visible, tangible outcomes.

Demonstrating the RGS Guidelines

A final step in this discussion of guidelines is the demonstration of the 11 guidelines as a diagnostic checklist in relation to two cases of planning practice. This process should not be interpreted as an evaluation of the cases. Each of these cases has already been evaluated— in one case by a United Nations committee, and in

another case by a professional consultant. The purpose at hand here is to show the guidelines in action by relating them to findings from the existing evaluations.

These examples from Hamilton, Ontario, and Vancouver, B.C. (Arbutus) have been chosen partly for their substantive parallels to RGS contexts. They have also been selected because they provide two "extreme" profiles. Where one is recognized as exemplary, the other could be considered "deviant". Accordingly, each demonstrates the guidelines from different perspectives— as shown in Figure 9. Where Hamilton shows the results of applying guideline concepts, Arbutus shows the consequences of ignoring them. In relation to each case, the following discussion will detail case context, selection, and analysis in reference to the guidelines.

In terms of the following case analyses, it is important to note that all information sources on Hamilton's Vision 2020 exercise were published by the Regional Municipality itself, and further, that the sole source on Vancouver's Arbutus plan is an independent consultant's final report. If these analyses were meant to be serious critiques of the projects this would be a serious data collection concern. However, because the primary purpose at hand is demonstration of this practicum's guidelines in action, reliance on limited data sources is not considered to be a disadvantage here.

Hamilton

Plan Context

The Regional Municipality of Hamilton-Wentworth, Ontario (the Region and its plan will generally hereafter be referred to as "Hamilton") is a second-tier regional authority comprised of six municipalities: Hamilton, Stoney Creek, Ancaster, Dundas,

Flamborough, and Glanbrook. In 1990, the Region was faced with the task of updating its Official Land-Use Plan and its Economic Strategy. Concurrent with these needs was the emergence of new thinking in sustainable development— and the shared belief among regional management that this concept could provide a valuable foundation for new regional policy (R.M. of Hamilton-Wentworth 1996, 1).

Following a three-year visioning and planning process, "Vision 2020: The Sustainable Region" was passed by regional council in 1993. The set of long-range planning documents produced as part of Vision 2020 provide a comprehensive vision as well as 400 detailed strategy recommendations in 11 subject areas. The analysis which follows is concerned exclusively with these Vision 2020 plans. It is important to note that Vision 2020 is not itself a formal regional plan— rather, as a visioning and action-planning exercise it should be considered as representing two-thirds of the regional planning process. The final, and formally legal stage in this process was completed in Hamilton in 1994 with the enactment of a new Official Regional Land-Use Plan based on direct adoption of 100 Vision 2020 recommendations (R.M. of Hamilton-Wentworth 1996, 3).

For its innovation in community involvement and its advancing of sustainable development goals, Hamilton has received two significant international awards based on its Vision 2020 initiatives. First, it is the only North American city among 14 cities worldwide to receive "Local Agenda 21 Model Community" status. Under the aegis of the United Nations-sponsored International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives, this status is awarded to cities which most advance goals set at the 1992 U.N. Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro. Second, Hamilton's Vision 2020 is among only 43 urban initiatives worldwide to be awarded leading status in the U.N.'s Best Practices Database— developed as part of the 1996 Habitat II conference on human settlements

in Istanbul. Selection of initiatives for this database was based on three main criteria: *partnership, impact, and sustainability* (U.N.C.H.S.).

Although most of the Vision 2020 process took place between 1990-93, this initiative is still very much an ongoing project as community-based implementation and monitoring continues.

Case Selection

Hamilton's Vision 2020 project was chosen for analysis here based on several ways in which it relates to Regional Growth Strategies. Just as in the B.C. context, Hamilton's plan depended on support from several (in this case six) municipalities within a regional policy setting. In a similar parallel, Vision 2020 was a long-term (30 year) comprehensive growth management exercise founded on principles of sustainable development. Furthermore, the role of participants in Hamilton's broad-based public involvement process was formally only an advisory one as Regional Council maintained its role as plan approving authority. This is the same process dynamic Regional Growth Strategies will face around B.C.

Certainly the key basis for Hamilton's selection is its global status as an exemplary case of community involvement and planning practice— particularly in its use of vision-oriented, broad-based public involvement.

Case Analysis

Hamilton's plan began with the regional council's adoption of a general concept of sustainable development. This concept was then carried forward into a year-long

vision-building process involving 1,000 citizens— including those traditionally under-represented in public decision-making— through involvement formats such as town hall meetings, focus groups, working groups, and open houses (**guideline 2**). The outcome of the visioning process was a comprehensive, holistic, 30-year long-range community vision presented in a "future scenario" format. This Vision 2020 scenario encompassed thematic areas such as "landscape", "communities", "getting around", "quality of life", and "livelihood" (R.M. of Hamilton-Wentworth 1996, 2-3, 6; R.M. of Hamilton-Wentworth 1993 [a], 32-35).

Explicit both during the regional planning process and in plan implementation strategies was an agenda to educate the public about sustainable development values and principles. This agenda set out to include: providing facts for citizens on the consequences of certain behaviours and lifestyles; showing individuals how their actions could make a difference; promoting role models through the creation of "awards of excellence"; and training teachers in basic sustainability concepts. A further educational goal was to communicate the ideas and choices of citizen participants back to the public at-large (**guideline 8**) (R.M. of Hamilton-Wentworth 1996, 13; R.M. of Hamilton-Wentworth 1993 [a], 23; R.M. of Hamilton-Wentworth 1993 [b], 38-39).

Following the completion of regional visioning, the same citizen groups involved from the outset of the vision process were formed into "implementation teams" around subject areas and asked to detail specific actions necessary for realizing the regional vision (**guideline 3**). Further on into the process, partnerships became a significant part of implementation strategy. One partnership venture brought together the Region, conservation authorities, and the Hamilton Naturalist Club to survey locales for designation as Environmentally Sensitive Areas (**guideline 7**). Out of this venture came the Environmentally Sensitive Area Impact Evaluation Group— an expert-volunteer

Figure 9: A Guidelines Checklist

Hamilton

Arbutus

Starting Principles

- 1** • encourage planners to be accepted as leaders, innovators, and consensus-builders in addition to their role as technicians of public involvement.

x

• *Citizenship & Community—Innes 1996.*

- 2** • use broad-based and representative visioning processes to improve the legitimacy of Regional Districts in the face of concerns about their unelected council structure.

✓

x

• *Regionalism/ C & C — vehicle for regional identity, networks, plan implementation...also lasting community problem-solving structures...and for planners to assert themselves in a reinvented role.*

- 3** • link planning and implementation stages into a unified, seamless process.

✓

• *Regionalism— Wallis.*

Initial Steps

- 4** • reframe formal processes to avoid creating a confrontational win-lose effect.

✓

x

• *C & C (NIMBY subsection)—Kamloops, B.C. case example.*

- 5** • structure community choices appropriately and in good faith and declare relevant value-orientations such as a sustainability bias.

x

• *C & C — Brisbane and Nanaimo case examples.*

Figure 9: A Guidelines Checklist (cont'd)

Hamilton

Arbutus

Middle Steps

- 6** • create shared regional identity and trust in regional institutions by building on recognized as well as recently developed regional structures and groups in resource, health, transport, and other sectors.

• *Regionalism/ C & C — Crombie; Putnam (norms, networks, & trust); Wallis.*

- 7** • foster specialized, cross-sectoral partnerships between public, private, and non-profit sectors that connect previously unconnected interests within the community.

• *Regionalism/ C & C — Wallis; Potapchuk.*

✓

x ✓

- 8** • connect the learning process of participants to the general public by using existing and new community networks.

• *C & C — Austin case example.*

✓

x ✓

Outcomes

- 9** • establish mechanisms for public involvement that relate to each aspect of the regional planning cycle— planning, implementing, monitoring and revising — so that the process maintains the legitimacy it builds at the outset.

• *Regionalism/ C & C (NIMBY subsection) — Wallis; also concerning localized impact mitigation for new land uses.*

✓

Figure 9: A Guidelines Checklist (cont'd)

Hamilton

Arbutus

Outcomes (cont'd)

- 10** • create politically assertive organizations and networks that can assume leadership for the sustainable regionalist agenda and hold all regional partners accountable for maintaining their commitment to the regional vision.

✓

• *Regionalism/ C & C — Wallis concerning partnerships, Artibise concerning advocacy and the 1000 Friends model, Potapchuk concerning the sustainability of initiatives.*

- 11** • restore and replenish community problem-solving ability and capacity for collective action.

✓

✓

• *C & C — Potapchuk.*

Legend

- ✓ = case demonstrates this guideline's elements.
- ✗ = case's lack of this guideline's elements was a significant contributing factor to the overall breakdown of the involvement process.
- ✗✓ = case contains both strengths and deficits in relation to this guideline's elements.

consultancy group set up to advise regional staff about potential development impacts **(guideline 11)** (R.M. of Hamilton-Wentworth 1996, 2, 24).

Still another partnership brought together the Region, McMaster University, local school boards, and a citizen advocacy group to establish an ongoing educational program. "Young Citizens for a Sustainable Future" is an annual three-day program which provides 50 highschool students with a certificate in sustainable development **(guidelines 7 & 11)**. A final partnership-related initiative in Hamilton was the formation of a community working group to examine what new regional governance structures would improve sustainable decision-making by providing an alternative to present fragmented frameworks **(guidelines 4 & 7)** (R.M. of Hamilton-Wentworth 1996, 28; R.M. of Hamilton-Wentworth 1993 [b], 42). In sum, Hamilton's implementation partnerships were diverse— building on existing groups as well as forming new ones, and focusing on short-term projects as well as long-term ongoing commitments.

Hamilton's regional process is still very much a work-in-progress. As implementation continues, regional accountability and ongoing public involvement are provided for through the Region's Sustainability Indicator process. Early in the implementation stage, over 100 representative community stakeholders participated in workshops to choose a wide range of key indicators to measure progress towards the regional vision **(guideline 3)**. The resulting adopted set of 29 indicators includes such items as "Number of 'All Beaches Open for Swimming' Days", "Office Vacancy Rate for Downtown Hamilton", and "Library Items Borrowed by Juveniles". Each year these indicators form the basis for an Annual Report Card **(guideline 10)** around which Vision 2020 Sustainable Community Festival events are planned. In 1996, Festival events involved 150 community groups and businesses and over 3,700 citizens. Beyond an awareness function, these events provide an ongoing forum for public involvement in

celebrating plan achievements, and revising plan strategies where needed in areas of poor performance (**guideline 9**) (R.M. of Hamilton-Wentworth 1996, 4; R.M. of Hamilton-Wentworth 1995).

Arbutus

Plan Context

The Arbutus Industrial Area (hereafter referred to as "Arbutus") is an isolated pocket of industrial land located on a branch rail line on the eastern edge of Vancouver's Kitsilano neighbourhood. It is bounded generally by single family homes occupied by above-average income households. This roughly four square block area was the longtime home of a Carling O'Keefe/Molson's brewery and a packaging plant. Between 1989-92, the City of Vancouver conducted a neighbourhood planning process to manage the transition of this site from industrial to residential use (Fogel, 1). Because the site is strategically located adjacent to a major regional arterial street with significant transit connections (Broadway), the City targeted it for intensive mid-rise residential development. This site objective was consistent with a larger City pattern of using obsolete industrial land to accommodate population growth.

The neighbourhood process did result in a plan, a form of which was passed by City Council. In 1998, years after the process, the Arbutus site is now roughly 50% developed and occupied. Following the present pattern of site development, final built form will consist of a mix of ground-oriented townhouses and 4-storey condominium buildings.

The significant aspect of the Arbutus process for this discussion is that planners, developers, and citizens were so confused, frustrated, and disillusioned two-thirds of the way through the process that Council contracted with an independent public involvement consultant to review the process. The consultant's initial task was to interview planners, developers, citizens, councilors, and other City staff to assess problems. This problem assessment was then to lead to process-specific remedies, as well as recommendations for structuring future processes so that the difficulties of Arbutus would not be repeated (Fogel, 1).

Case Selection

Both the Arbutus context and process offer valuable lessons for Regional Growth Strategies. As an exercise in planning for residential intensification in a single-family neighbourhood, Arbutus deals with a critical growth management issue— and one that will be a significant part of Regional Growth Strategies. Accordingly, the fact that it has a neighbourhood rather than regional scope should not be considered a disadvantage. Most important is Arbutus' role as a "deviant" case of community involvement and planning practice. Amid the day-to-day time pressures facing most planners, it is rare to find cases where time and money is spent on the evaluation of practice. The availability of such an evaluation— conducted by a disinterested external professional during the process itself— is a valuable artifact not just for this analysis, but for public involvement practice in general as well.

Case Analysis

Part of Arbutus' difficulties began even before the public entered the process. Planners spent little time scoping residents' and landowners' project perspectives. With

not enough time spent on conflict assessment, planners were then less prepared to resolve conflict when it developed later (**guidelines 1 & 4**) (Fogel, 23). A further pre-process difficulty concerned the setting of boundaries for the public process—essentially defining what was "on the table" and what was non-negotiable. Failure to set firm objectives and expectations led to significant resident confusion and mistrust. Initially, planners accepted unrealistic citizen ideas without providing corrective feedback. Later in the process, planners appeared to be steering decisions towards pro-intensification outcomes (**guideline 5**). For residents expecting an "open-ended, resident-driven" process, suspicions of an "unspoken plan" created lasting bitterness towards planners and councilors (Fogel, 34, 38).

Problems also existed in relation to how stakeholder groups participated in the Arbutus process. Individuals who claimed to be representative of larger neighbourhood interests seemed to be taken at face-value by planners. It later became clear these individuals were not representative of anyone but themselves (**guideline 2**) (Fogel, 34). A further issue involved the management of issue-area sub-committees during the process. Property development stakeholders were not adequately informed of sub-committee meeting times, and in cases where these individuals did attend they felt they were not given a reasonable opportunity to be heard. Lack of proper sub-committee management and facilitation seemed to worsen the polarization between residents and developers (**guidelines 7 & 8**) (Fogel, 38).

Council's relationship to the Arbutus process was a further source of problem issues. Poor communication linkages left the process isolated from Council (**guideline 8**). Since through its approving authority Council was the main agent of plan implementation, this lack of structure in the Council-process relationship threatened to render obsolete much of the planning work undertaken by planners and by citizens and

developers working on sub-committees (**guideline 3**). These conditions created uncertainty and eroded confidence in the process as all parties attempted to "second-guess" the will of councilors. A significant factor in this situation was stifled interaction between planners and councilors. Among the remedial recommendations to come out of Arbutus was the call for more frequent and less formal contact between these two groups (**guideline 4**) (Fogel, 40-41).

Despite its numerous flaws, there were also positive by-products of the Arbutus process. Citizens became better educated about technical issues, about interests other than their own, and about the public policy process (**guideline 8**). Individual planners—and the planning department itself—underwent a "crash-course" in public involvement. It has been said that this process experience was influential in re-orienting staff towards the vision-based style of practice demonstrated soon afterwards in the CityPlan initiative. Developers in particular remarked on how the enlightenment of local citizens had created valuable "social infrastructure" that would make future project negotiations much less problematic. Among citizens themselves, the unifying effect of the planning process created social infrastructure of a different sort—as the process broadened neighbourhood networks it had a direct effect on the expansion of an annual neighbourhood festival (**guidelines 7 & 11**) (Fogel, 12, 18, 24).

Conclusion

A key objective for this research at a time when it was still in its formative stage was that it generate outcomes of immediate relevance to planners in present-day situations. It was this objective that led to the choice of a practicum framework for this work rather than a thesis format.

The process of defining a conceptual knowledge need, identifying a niche audience, bounding one topic from within a multi-faceted subject, building upon a challenging research orientation, and integrating ideas from two major context areas has ultimately led to two distinct value-added outcomes.

The first outcome is a proposed institutional structure for Regional Growth Strategies, mapped on a custom-made model of the dimensions of regionalism. A starting step leading to this outcome was the modification of an existing model (Nunn and Rosentraub) using another related model (Seltzer, and also Wight). A next step was to use the evolved model to chart weaknesses of current Regional Growth Strategy policy identified within this research and through the findings of others (Artibise, Patterson, Porter). The final step in this process was the mapping of a structure capable of overcoming these weaknesses and dealing effectively with an ambitious growth management agenda. What made this structure a capable one was the integration of new ideas about regionalism and regional excellence (Dodge, Wallis).

The second outcome is a set of 11 specialized guidelines for integrating public involvement into Regional Growth Strategies— guidelines which are matched to key stages in this planning process, and which are illustrated using two Canadian case examples. The heritage of these guidelines is tied to two key subject context areas—

regionalism and urban citizenship/community. From within these areas, an integrated discussion of theory, social trends, best-practice cases, and problematic case experience generated a set of 29 public involvement "needs". Pattern analysis identified overlapping ideas and redundancies, and resulted in this number being reduced to 11. These guidelines were then clustered into a meaningful sequence, and matched to three distinct Regional Growth Strategy components— the Intergovernmental Advisory Committee, the Regional Context Statement, and the Implementation Agreement. The final step in this outcome process was applying the guideline set as a diagnostic checklist to one exemplary (Hamilton, Ontario) and one problematic (Arbutus neighbourhood, Vancouver) case from recent planning practice.

The research orientation of this practicum has steered it more often to case examples than theory during this knowledge-production process. Nonetheless, several theoretical landmarks stand out. Innes' (1992) observations on the social construction of growth management and its relationship to plan implementation were useful in building the rationale for this project. Innes' later (1998) concept of a politically savvy, pragmatic, network-based "postmodern" planning echoed and supported the assumptions about present-day planning within which this research was first conceived. As a basic platform for this study's research orientation, Patton's (1978) "utilization-focused evaluation" has helped to keep discussion directed at the specific decision-making needs of B.C. Regional District planners.

Theoretical inputs into the dimensional model of regionalism have already been outlined. Concerning the guidelines, Wallis' (1994) notions of "legitimacy" and "capacity" in relation to regional agencies and plans have been critical inputs to this study's remedial action plan for B.C. Regional Districts. In building the bridge between growth management and urban citizenship, Potapchuk's (1996) ideas on "sustainable

community politics" have helped to make the connection between quality-of-life sustainability and much-needed sustainable action for driving policy initiatives ahead.

Finally, Innes' (1996) theory of the planner as consensus-builder has provided useful background for the presentation of a new role for public involvement in planning. This new role casts planners as leaders in community renewal by getting them to use public involvement not just as a short-term project stage, but also as a vision-based stepping stone to building long-term community problem-solving capacity.

To chart in retrospect the path this practicum's discussion has taken, the following section re-introduces the original guiding questions and objectives of this research and demonstrates how the discussion has responded to them:

- *What are defining features and characteristics, current trends, and innovations in each major Regional Growth Strategy context area— regionalism, and urban citizenship— and what threats and opportunities do these present for public involvement in Regional Growth Strategies?*

In the sphere of regionalism, compelling social, economic, environmental, and governance-related driving forces are pushing communities towards a regional decision-making framework. Standing in the path of these forces is a conflict-ridden arena of inter-municipal relations. Both the driving forces and the conflict are very much in evidence in B.C. regions.

An opportunity for solution to this dilemma exists if regional agencies strengthen their legitimacy and capacity to act by forging intersectoral partnerships and treating planning and implementation as concurrent parts of a unified process. Other new

regionalist themes such as the concept of "no new institutions" will fit well with B.C.'s municipal political culture and its traditional resistance to new layers of government.

In urban citizenship, the breakdown of family and the social safety net have led people to search for "community". At the same time, changes in the structure of social organization mean there is less "community" to go around than there once was. Planners can respond to this dilemma by helping to create lasting social structures which can ultimately take on a leadership role in keeping planning initiatives viable. Groups such as Round Tables and "1000 Friends" provide useful models in this regard.

- *In terms of their structure, how well equipped are Regional Districts to address these threats and opportunities?*

In their present form, Regional Districts have structural weaknesses which do not bode well for the practice of regional growth management. In particular, they lack cross-sectoral connections and experience with large-scale inter-municipal partnerships. They also lack proven provincial enforcement mechanisms to back up an essentially weak consensus-orientation.

However, if new regionalist ideas are brought to the existing Regional Growth Strategy policy framework, tools such as Regional Context Statements and Implementation Agreements could be applied more broadly to bring new partners into the regional process.

- *What specialized roles and responsibilities will planners have to accept to become an effective part of solutions?*

Planners will need to be networked consensus-builders to bring regional partners together. They will also need to be educators and innovators within the

regional visioning process. A politically realistic concept of postmodern planning will help orient them to this purpose.

- *How can this cumulative understanding be shaped into relevant, credible, and concise conclusions to respond to the needs of B.C. regional planners within their organizational setting?*

The 11 guidelines presented here are targeted at specific stages in the Regional Growth Strategy process. They are geared directly for the consensus-style orientation of B.C. Regional Districts—they have also been brought forward at an opportune time for many regional planners around the province as they prepare to enter the Regional Growth strategy cycle.

- *Base research and analysis on a balance of relevant theory and case examples, with particular reference to B.C. sources.*

In addition to theoretical inputs discussed earlier, experiences from Kamloops, Nanaimo, Vancouver (Arbutus neighbourhood), the Howe Sound Round Table, and the provincial Commission on Resources and Environment have been high profile and significant parts of this study's discussion.

- *Generate applied knowledge on how public involvement relates to regional growth management in general and Regional Growth Strategies in particular.*
- *Generate specialized and detailed guidance for integrating public involvement into Regional Growth Strategies.*
 - *Communicate findings to planners in a manageable, utilization-oriented format to facilitate their implementation.*

In its present package, the knowledge produced in this practicum serves a specialized purpose in relating to the needs of B.C. regional planners. Should a

research user from another context want to draw lessons from this research, he or she may find some useful themes embedded here. In particular, the original set of 29 unedited public involvement "needs" and the dimensions of regionalism model template could serve a role as inputs into similar research geared to the specific needs of planners in other regions outside of B.C.

In addition to targeting specific points in the Regional Growth Strategy process, and demonstrating guidelines in two case examples, this project has been grounded in the case experience of many different communities— communities which to some degree provide similar professional contexts to those faced by B.C. regional planners. Further, by attempting to anticipate the knowledge base of these planners, this study has sought to avoid presenting ideas already in circulation within this group.

Lastly— this practicum is also intended to address a wider purpose unstated so far in this discussion. Besides responding to the stated educational needs of B.C. regional planners, it aspires to deal with broader issues facing the planning profession nationwide— in particular, issues of professional confidence and effectiveness.

In a 1994 survey of Canadian planners, 67% of respondents indicated the belief that their profession was in a state of crisis (Witty, 1996). Asked in the national survey what was behind this crisis, planners suggested a lack of support and understanding from politicians and the general public, and a lack of appropriate professional tools and methods (Witty, 1996).

By offering one modest set of professional tools to a group of planners facing a new horizon in their practice, this practicum hopes to take one small step towards building a healthy and strong planning profession in Canada.

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