STAKEHOLDER MANAGEMENT OF GOLF COURSE DEVELOPMENT IN THE LOWER MAINLAND

by

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We accept this thesis as conforming to the required standard

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ABSTRACT

In the years 1988-1991, municipal governments in the Lower Mainland dealt with numerous applications from golf course developers seeking to capitalize on the popularity of the game and a projected shortage of golf courses to meet the increased demand for courses to play on.

However, it soon became apparent to those same developers that getting approval for a golf course development was a much more involved process than merely having access to land and the finances to develop the golf course. Applications before Lower Mainland municipal councils at the time were to collide with the interests of individuals and groups other than golfers and their benefactor developers. These oppositional groups contested each other through the formal political reviews process.

The purpose of this study was threefold. The first objective was to identify key stakeholders in the unfolding golf boom and determine which were most salient. Having determined the most important stakeholders to the process, the next goal was to determine their stake in the golf course development situation. Finally, the third goal of the study was to examine the process concerning the level of stakeholder management which took place.
Successful stakeholder management is dependent upon the ability of an organization to manage their relationships with their stakeholder groups in an action oriented manner (Freeman, 1984). By doing so, the organization is attempting to create compatibility between organizational priorities and stakeholder interests. This increases the probability of the organization’s success and survival.

Three of the original stakeholder groups proposed (developers, local government and environmental and wildlife groups) and one stakeholder not originally identified (the agricultural community) were confirmed as the most salient stakeholder groups. Three stakeholders originally identified were shown to be less important in the process including related businesses, area residents, and golfers.

Stakeholder management was not evident through the golf course development process. Developers were viewed as the individuals responsible to control the stakeholder management process, although little evidence of this was found. Instead it was the local councils that were left to balance the arguments from the opposing stakeholders in an issue of land development. Stakeholder management was considered to be of use to a developer if done prior to the submission of their application.
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CHAPTER I- INTRODUCTION

Significance of the study

In the years 1988-1991, municipal governments in the Lower Mainland of British Columbia had to deal with numerous applications from golf course developers seeking to capitalize on the popularity of the game and a projected shortage of courses to meet the boom in demand for courses to play on.

However, it soon became apparent to those same developers that getting approval for a golf course development was a much more involved process than merely having access to land and the necessary financial backing to underwrite construction costs. The many applications before Lower Mainland municipal councils at the time were to collide with the interests of individuals and groups other than golfers and their benefactor developers. These oppositional groups contested each other through the formal political reviews process. Inevitably, many course application permits were denied while others were subjected to extensive delays before permits were approved.

The review process before the municipal councils was in most instances a contestual one with actions and counteractions
brought by the involved parties. Absent, was a review process in which the competing interests of the various stakeholders might be given even consideration at the outset of a development application - a review process based on accommodation rather than confrontation- a process whereby individuals and groups were invited to voice their opinions and concerns and to have them taken into account and negotiated with the developer at the outset.

While it is unlikely that all groups would have all their demands addressed, it would nonetheless have been desirable for development agencies to conduct negotiations with stakeholders at an early stage in the development of their bid proposals so that issues of importance to all stakeholders could be given serious consideration before being taken up by municipal council. Such action might even have permitted the design of new golf courses that would in effect have satisfied competing stakeholder positions.

To this end, identification of stakeholder concerns in the form of a stakeholder analysis along with an understanding of proper stakeholder management should benefit our understanding of the complexity of this game's status in the cultural fabric of our society (Freeman, 1984). On this general topic there has been limited research. Stoddart
(1991) has observed that, "As the predicted 1990's golf boom unfolds, so too should the deeper investigation of its inner workings" (p. 387).

**Purpose of the Study**

The study focussed upon problems faced by developers and their relationships with other stakeholders in their bid to gain approval for a golf course development.

The identification of several potential and key stakeholders active in the unfolding golf boom was made possible from a review of literature on and about golf. This study proposes to both verify the identity of those stakeholders and to further ascertain whether certain stakeholders played a more important role than others in determining the success or failure of developmental permit applications before local councils for new golf course construction in two of the Lower Mainland's municipalities.

To this end, several key persons representing various stakeholder interests were extensively interviewed for their respective positions vis a vis golf course development in the Lower Mainland. The interview data was then analyzed for evidence of stakeholder management and stakeholder salience.
CHAPTER II- LITERATURE REVIEW

Players Versus Courses

The First Two Golf Boom Periods: The 1920's and the 1960's

The most recent notable increase in the popularity of golf represents the third "boom period" since the game was first introduced to North America around the start of the 20th century (Beditz, 1994). The game's first substantial growth period came during the 1920's as golf became an accepted sport, albeit a game played almost exclusively by the wealthy. By 1931 there were approximately 5,600 golf courses in the United States of which 78% were private facilities. At this time it was estimated that only 2% of the population played golf and of these players, 90% were men.

It was not until the decade of the 1960's that golf experienced another explosive growth spurt in the game's popularity. In the time between the end of the game's first period of growth in 1931 and the beginning of it's second period of expansion during the sixties, the number of golfing facilities grew at a rate of only 0.4% per year (Beditz, 1994). This represented an increase of approximately 800 (5,600-6,400) golf courses over a period
of 30 years. While the increase in the actual number of facilities was minimal, the number of facilities made accessible to the public significantly increased from only about 22% in 1931 to around 50% of all golf courses by 1960. The increase in the number of public golf facilities made the game more accessible to a larger market of golfers and set the stage for the game's second expansion phase.

The time period between 1960 and 1971 represents golf's second period of rapid growth when the number of facilities in the United States increased from 6,385 to 10,188, an increase of almost 5% per year (Beditz, 1994). The development of new public golfing facilities was a major reason for the emergence of the game. A second factor contributing to the rise in golf's popularity was increased television and media exposure focusing on the emerging popularity of well known "golf personalities" such as Arnold Palmer and Jack Nicklaus. During this period the population rate of golfers increased from 3.3% in 1960 to 7.1% in 1970. This represented an increase in the number of golfers from 4.4 million to 11.2 over this same time period.

During the period between the end of golf's first period of growth in 1931 until the period identified as the beginning of the second stage of growth in 1960, the number of public
facilities increased at a rate of 1.7% per year from 543 to 895 (Beditz, 1994). From 1960-1970 public golf facilities grew by 4% annually to a total of 1,321 public golf courses and increased from 48% of all facilities in 1960 to 55% in 1970. Many of the public facilities developed during this period were aided by financing from the U.S. government (Beditz, 1994).

The Third Golf Boom: 1986-1992

Following the increases of the 1960’s, the expansion of the game through the 1970’s and early 1980’s was slowed. The participation rate increased by only 1% through the 1970’s after increasing by 4% in the previous decade and the growth of the number of new facilities was also delayed by factors such as a recession, high interest rates and inflation (Beditz, 1994).

The slow growth of golf facilities continued into the 1980’s as between 1980-1986, a total of only 379 new golf facilities were developed in the U.S. Despite the limited growth of new facilities, the number of people playing golf was on the rise. From 1980-1986 the participation rate in the U.S. had increased by 2.1% to 10.2%, doubling the 1%
increase in participation through the whole previous decade and thus setting the stage for problems. The discrepancy between the accelerating rate in the number of players contrasted with the stable growth in golf course facilities is displayed in Figure 2.1.

![Figure 2.1.](image)

Canadian figures parallel those in the U.S. and indicated the game’s popularity to be quickly on the rise in the 1980’s. During the boom period between 1986-1992 the number of golfers was growing by more than 10% per year and there
were an estimated 2.2 million golfers in 1988, (Argyle et al, 1991; Richardson, 1990; Stoddart, 1990).

While the number of Canadian golfers playing the game was increasing at 10% per annum, the number of courses was only growing at a rate of 7-8% annually, which gave rise to a Canadian Golf Foundation prediction of a shortage of approximately 400 courses in Canada by the year 2000 with an expected 3 million golfers across Canada (Argyle et al, 1991; Richardson, 1990; Stoddart, 1990). A study undertaken for the Greater Vancouver Regional District (GVRD) estimated that the development of 25 new courses was necessary by 1996 to satisfy the recreational and tourism demands of the area (Argyle et al, 1991). Similar studies carried out in the United States and the United Kingdom showed that some 33 new courses were needed every month in the United States and that in Great Britain 700 new courses would be needed by the year 2000 to keep pace with the projected boom (Stoddart, 1990).

It was apparent that increased popularity in the game of golf was on the rise around the world. Figure 2.2 (Andrews, 1989, p. 105) shows that while the number of golfers had increased 87% in North America, this was only a fourth in standing when compared to worldwide numbers such as
Australia, Asia and Europe all of which countries showed even greater increases in the number of golfers over the same period of time. Europe showed a remarkable increase in the number of players at 231% over the time period while also showing the largest increase in the number of new courses at 78%. Combined worldwide totals indicate that the number of players had increased by 99% while the number of new golf courses had only risen by 16% in the same period. Figure 2.2 depicts the worldwide growth of the game.

**Figure 2.2.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Growth in Players (%)</th>
<th>Growth in Courses (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Europe</td>
<td>+78%</td>
<td>+231%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Asia</td>
<td>+34%</td>
<td>+140%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Australia &amp; Pacific Islands</td>
<td>+16%</td>
<td>+123%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>North America</td>
<td>+16%</td>
<td>+87%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Africa</td>
<td>-8%</td>
<td>+63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
<td>-4%</td>
<td>+33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>South &amp; Central America</td>
<td>-19%</td>
<td>+64%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

WORLDWIDE TOTALS: +99% +16%

Source: Golf Digest Almanac 1989
Current participation figures

In 1990, there were an estimated 3.9 million golfers in Canada and this figure increased to almost 4.8 million golfers according to 1996 statistics (RCGA, 1997). These 1996 figures show that Canada has a participation rate in the game of golf of 19.4%, amongst the highest per capita participation rate in the world. Participation rates in the U.S. show their per capita participation rate at 9.4%.

Reasons for the increased number of golfers

What caused this sudden interest and increase in popularity of the game of golf? Several reasons have been identified including an aging population, increases in leisure time, improved socioeconomic status and tourism; and, additionally, an increase in participation rates of women playing golf (BC Tourism, 1992; Argyle et al, 1991; Richardson, 1990; Stoddart, 1991; Travel Alberta, 1988).

Our population is aging and golf has previously been viewed as a sport more associated with the older, more mature person, typically those over the age of 40 years. The increase is due in large part to the "baby boomers" arrival
in golf's target market as this category accounts for 42% of today's golfers. There has also been an increase in public awareness of physical activity and the public's perception of physical activity is more positive today. Golf represents an activity which is not overly strenuous while also being good exercise, thus making it ideal for more elderly individuals and those who do not want to exercise extensively, but who still realize the benefits of being physically active.

The average golfer has been described in previous studies (Richardson, 1990; Alberta Tourism, 1988), as a male, and a white collar professional, socioeconomically privileged with an above average education. An increase in average incomes is another reason for the game's rising popularity and, although golf has always been viewed as a sport played by the more affluent, a major factor contributing to the game's recent popularity is that these stereotypes are being broken and the game has become more accessible to the less affluent. Golfers who have recently taken up the game include more and more women and juniors. The National Golf Foundation reports that in 1987, 41% of all new players taking up the game were female. Additionally, the Alberta Tourism (1988) study found that in Alberta 27% of golfers
were females, 50% of whom had taken up the game within the last four years.

A further reason for the increased popularity of the game is the increased number of tourists and tour packages which include golf as part of a holiday. Tourism is an expanding industry and it has been suggested that in British Columbia it has become the largest business industry passing lumber. Collins, et al (1988) say,

"B.C. was once described as a 'mass tourism market' in the fifties and sixties, but now it has literally splintered into a myriad of micro markets... Instead of categorizing visitors according to their origin, travel marketers are paying attention to the reasons why people visit a destination and the activities and experiences they are seeking to enjoy" (p. 1).

Golf resorts worldwide have become popular vacation destinations recently as more and more golfers are taking their golf clubs with them on trips. Studies show that of the "frequent or core golfers" the 25% of the golfing population who account for 75% of all rounds played, over half will take at least one holiday per year which includes golf (Collins et al, 1988). The states of Hawaii, California, Arizona, Florida and South Carolina all offer comprehensive opportunities for golfing vacations.
In British Columbia, golf and tourism have grown to be big business as golf tourism generated approximately $20 million in 1992 (Pacific Analytics Inc., Strategic Concepts Inc., & Tourism Resource Group, 1992). Regions of the province such as the Okanagan, Vancouver Island and the B.C. Rockies all advertise extensive golf packages for tourists along with opportunities to play the golf courses in the Lower Mainland. Whistler is also promoting golf extensively through the summer months in an effort to make the resort a year-round destination. Four new golf courses have opened in and around the resort municipality since 1993.

While the game has become more accessible to a larger population of players, golfers still tend to have more disposable income than non golfers. In Canada, the average household income of Canadians in 1990 was $42,900, while those golfers classified as 'core golfers' (those who played eight or more games per year) had an average household income of $53,000, and those playing between 1 and 7 rounds per year had an average household income of $52,400 (Monteleone, 1995).

Not only do golfers have more money, but according to the National Golf Foundation in Florida, golfers are a relatively easy group to identify and reach. It is reported
that 87% of golfers watch golf on television, 54% read golf publications at least once per year, 19% subscribe to these publications and 19% belong to private clubs (Collins et al, 1988).

It is well documented that golf is a growth industry, yet the growth of the game will be seriously hampered if the opportunity to play becomes increasingly limited, because the costs of playing keep spiraling and the course conditions become increasingly crowded. Stoddart (1990) states, "The current golf boom could have a relatively short life span because public facilities simply are not being built" (p.387).

Furthermore, to summarize Burbaum's (1989) concerns, as the demand for golf increases, courses are expected to become more crowded, it will take longer to play, tee times will become harder to schedule, and because of overuse, course conditions may deteriorate. Also, here in British Columbia the supply shortage may become even more of a problem in the future as the population of the Lower Mainland is projected to grow by an additional one million people by the year 2011 (Argyle et al, 1991). Olson (1992) states,

"Far too many juniors, pensioners, and public course players are being dissuaded because courses
are too expensive or too crowded. The starkly frightening consequences for a game still bursting with growth: prohibitive costs are driving the price of enjoying it far beyond the average person's means" (p.9).

The growing shortage of golf courses in the Lower Mainland resulted in several applications to build more golf courses (Argyle et al, 1991, Stoddart, 1990). In the period between June 1988 and December 1990, local governments received 56 applications for the construction of golf facilities in the Lower Mainland, including 33 full sized golf courses and 13 executive or par 3 courses (Argyle et al, 1991). Despite the many applications for further golf course development, most were targeted at private membership whereas the shortage was actually being felt by public course golfers. The spiraling cost of suitable land prices was making it an extremely expensive proposition to build mid-range golf courses suitable for public enjoyment, yet 95% of all golfers play on public golf courses. As a result, fewer courses were being built for the pay-as-you-play golfers of today (Richardson, 1990).
Enemies or Partners in the Development Process of New Golf Courses

The preceding review reveals several underlying factors pertaining to the game of golf that stretch well beyond merely playing the game on nicely manicured estates. Connected to those underlying factors are a variety of groups of people whose interests are either directly or indirectly affected by the location of large land areas crafted for recreational use. Some of these groups have organized themselves in ways to more effectively voice their interests through the political process in situations where these interests may be affected.

A classic example of the simplistic approach to the needs of golfers is shown in a study by Alberta Tourism (1988), which did not look at other stakeholders affected by those needs. Other stakeholders might include: government (provincial, regional, and municipal), area residents around the new golf course, environmental protection groups, related businesses (hotels, restaurants, retail outlets, and real estate) and the developers/owners of the golf course (Argyle et al, 1991; Richardson, 1990; Stoddart, 1990; Alberta Tourism, 1988). A hypothetical stakeholder map to summarize the
depicted stakeholders identified in the above studies is shown in Figure 2.3

**Figure 2.3**

**HYPOTHETICAL STAKEHOLDER MAP OF GOLF COURSE DEVELOPMENT**

Source: Stoddart 1991
The identification of these stakeholders comes about primarily through previous work done by Stoddart (1990), and it must be recognized that the stakeholders named in Figure 2.3 may not be the only stakeholders with respect to golf course development.

On the surface, the growing demand for access to the game of golf has a simple solution—build more courses. This solution, in fact, occurred to a number of entrepreneurs who responded to the situation in true market fashion by developing proposals on the supply side to capitalize on the rising demand side. However, the problem cannot be solved by just simply accepting the fact that new courses are necessary and then building them. Several barriers are present and must be overcome before a new course becomes a reality including issues such as cost, golf course location, access, environmental impact issues and those other concerns of the stakeholders involved. Olson (1992) writes,

"Though studies reveal supply isn't meeting demand, least of all with public courses in the province's most densely populated mainland-valley areas, golf has been stifled with a plethora of developmental problems"(p.8).
The Business of Golf

Sport and recreation has become a significant worldwide industry in the past few years and golf is definitely a part of this growth. The golf business is "big" business (B.C. Tourism, 1992; Argyle et al, 1991; Richardson, 1990; Stoddart, 1990; Burbam, 1989; Lewis et al, 1989; Alberta Tourism, 1988). The National Golf Foundation in the U.S. estimated that in 1989, 25 million people spent $20 billion on golf, travel and associated activities in the U.S., while in British Columbia in 1990, the golf industry generated $150 million in revenues with a growth rate of 45% since 1987. The GVRD study done in 1991 estimated that Lower Mainland golfers in one year spend an average of $470 per player, and with a golfing population of approximately 190,000, this amounts to approximately $90 million. Also, membership fees are steadily rising. Membership in at least seven Lower Mainland clubs is currently upwards of $25,000 just for initiation fees, and most clubs have lengthy waiting lists.

Land is one of the most expensive costs in golf course development and can quite easily run well into the millions of dollars (Argyle et al, 1991; Richardson, 1990). Thus, supply is heavily dependent upon the availability of
financing as today's land costs place development costs beyond the capability of the small investor. To build a regulation size golf course requires between 130 and 150 acres (Argyle et al, 1991; Richardson, 1990; Burbaum, 1989). Finding this amount of land in heavily populated areas is difficult, but not only is the land scarce, it is usually far more expensive than land in the outlying areas.

Financing is another obstacle to further golf course development. Andrews (1989) says, "Despite big numbers such as $20 billion a year, some of the golf industry is still run like a mom-and-pop candy store" (p. 114). Golf has only recently reached the popularity stage where more courses are needed and conditions are such that investors view the development of new courses as a rational business opportunity. The golf boom is in its relative infancy and consequently there are no past records to examine and no common denominators to abide by, thus making financing difficult (Andrews, 1989). During the growth of the game in the 1960's, many new golf courses built in the United States were financed by the government (Beditz, 1994).

As a result of high land costs most golf course developers prefer to build golf courses targeted towards private membership. It was shown earlier that demand is highest for
public golf courses, yet most new courses seek to attract private memberships. The reason for this is that with a private golf course the developer can recover invested capital sooner than with a public golf course. Obviously financing is more easily achieved through an investment group of private members, where several hundred members pay $30,000 each up front for a membership, than where the general public may be expected to pay $30 for each individual round of golf after the course is completed. Developers also look to recoup their initial investment through the construction of hotels, housing developments, "pro" shops and clubhouses associated with the golf course.

With respect to recent golf course developments Argyle et al (1991) state,

"Canadian investors tend to look at golf course development as a short term investment. Foreign investors see the investment as longer term and this can be seen in the number of golf courses being purchased or investigated for purchase by off-shore buyers" (p. 11).
Stakeholder Theory

The premise of stakeholder management theory is that by creating compatibility between organizational priorities and stakeholder interests, an organization produces a good fit between themselves and their environment and, thus, increases the probability of the organization's success and survival.

Examples of traditional stakeholders in organizations include owners, employees, unions, suppliers and customers. Recently, organizations have had to expand upon these more conventional stakeholders to include separate groups who may have the ability to negatively affect an organization. Groups such as environmentalists and special interest groups, the media, governments, and competitors are those which could have an adverse affect on an organization.

Freeman's (1984) book, Strategic Management: A Stakeholder Approach is perceived as the turning point for stakeholder and management theory. Freeman's (1984) definition of a stakeholder is the following:

"A stakeholder in an organization is any group or individual who can affect or is affected by the achievement of the organization's objectives" (p.46).
Mitchell, Agle & Wood, (1997), further summarize broad versus narrow stakeholder definitions of a stakeholder. Freeman’s (1984) definition cited above is an example of a rather broad and all inclusive stakeholder definition, whereas Freeman & Reed (1983) offer a narrower definition of the term stakeholder:

"...those groups on which the organization is dependent for its continued survival" (p.91).

In reference to broad versus narrow stakeholder definitions Freeman (1984) states,

"Theoretically, 'stakeholder' must be able to capture a broad range of groups and individuals, even though when we put the concept to practical tests we must be willing to ignore certain groups who will have little or no impact on the corporation at this point in time. Such a broad notion of 'stakeholders' will include a number of groups who may not be 'legitimate' in the sense that they will have vastly different values and agendas for action from our own" (p.53).

Freeman’s (1984) definition of a stakeholder while obviously very broad and general, also recognizes the necessity for managers and organizations to focus upon those stakeholders who are deemed more important to the organization’s success and survival. Given the practical reality of limited time and resources, managers today need focus upon a narrower definition of a stakeholder (Mitchell, Agle & Wood, 1997).

Clarkson (1994) also offers a narrower definition of stakeholders by referring to a stakeholder as an individual
or organization that has something at risk. Stakeholders in this definition can either be voluntary or involuntary risk-bearers:

"Voluntary stakeholders bear some form of risk as a result of having invested some form of capital, human or financial, something of value, in a firm. Involuntary stakeholders are placed at risk as a result of a firm’s activities. But without the element of risk there is no stake" (p.5).

To summarize the broad versus narrow notion of a stakeholder, broad definitions include the general notion that managers must recognize that stakeholder relationships and significance to an organization can change over time. Therefore, managers may choose to focus their efforts in dealing with the more immediate issues and more prominent stakeholders, but analysis of all stakeholders, internal and external, is necessary on an ongoing basis.

**Stakeholder Identification and Salience**

Mitchell, Agle and Wood (1997), examine "who" managers pay attention to, and "what really counts?" They acknowledge that manager’s do pay more attention to those stakeholders perceived to be more important, and they attempt to explain the basis of a manager’s decision in narrowing the number of stakeholders. They propose that stakeholder salience- the degree to which managers give priority to competing
stakeholder claims - is based upon the possession or attributed possession of any of these three attributes: power, legitimacy, and urgency.

Power is difficult to define, but an organization with power can force or coerce another individual or organization to do something that they might not have otherwise done. Power can be based on physical resources of force or violence (coercive power), material or financial resources (utilitarian power) or symbolic power (normative power), (Etzioni, 1964; Mitchell, Agle and Wood, 1997).

Stakeholders might make claims of legitimacy based upon property rights, moral claims or that something is at risk. Urgency is the third attribute and Mitchell, Agle, and Wood (1997) define urgency as “the degree to which stakeholder claims call for immediate attention.” They suggest that urgency is based upon two conditions, time sensitivity, and second, criticality, the importance of the claim or the relationship to the stakeholder.

They propose seven different categories of stakeholder salience, three categories which include only one of the three attributes (latent stakeholders), three which possess two of the attributes (expectant stakeholders) and one
category where a stakeholder possesses all three attributes (definitive stakeholders). They suggest that the greater the number of attributes the stakeholder is perceived to possess, the more salient the stakeholder is to the organization.

Stakeholder Analysis and Management

Successful stakeholder management is dependent upon the ability of an organization to manage their relationships with specific stakeholder groups in an action-oriented way (Freeman, 1984). There are two processes involved, stakeholder analysis and stakeholder management.

Prior to "managing" a relationship with a stakeholder group it is beneficial to gain information and knowledge about that organization through an analysis of the stakeholder. A manager must first know who their stakeholders are and then identify their needs and wants? What is of interest and importance to that specific stakeholder? Knowing this a manager can evaluate and create a narrower focus concerning the number of stakeholders. This might be done based upon stakeholder salience as outlined previously (Mitchell, Agle, & Wood, 1997).
Freeman, (1984) identifies three levels that an organization uses to manage their relationships with stakeholders: rational, process, and transactional levels. At the rational level, an organization identifies who their stakeholders are and the perceived stakes of each. The second level involves the examination of the processes used by the organization to either implicitly or explicitly manage relationships with stakeholders, and whether these processes are in line with the organization's rational "stakeholder map." The third level is the transactional level where the transactions and deals between the organization are analyzed as to their consistency with the stakeholder map and the organizational processes for stakeholders.

The rational level is an organization's stakeholder analysis which requires the organization to identify other groups or individuals who may have an impact upon or are affected by the organization's actions to achieve their purpose. Freeman (1984) uses the term "stakeholder map" for the generic 'spoke and wheel' chart which is formed to depict an organization's stakeholders with the organization located in the centre. He suggests that this is as far as many organizations will go in their analysis, but to be
successful the analysis must be more advanced and specific to be of use to the organization.

Organizations must constantly review their stakeholder maps as new groups appear while other stakeholders such as a specific competitor may disappear or merge with another. A change in government or the introduction of new legislation may impact upon the organization as can be seen in the outlines of the two golf course proposals described elsewhere.

A manager, having done a thorough analysis of the organization's stakeholders, may then proceed to the stakeholder management level wherein they search for appropriate strategies by which to deal with each stakeholder on an individual basis.

Stakeholder management involves effective communication and negotiation with stakeholders in a manner which motivates the stakeholder to act in ways which are beneficial to the organization. It must also be recognized by the manager that the stakeholder will wish to see their needs addressed and will be seeking an outcome which is also beneficial to their situation. Therefore, there is a potential for conflict between the organization and the specific
stakeholder or conflicts with other stakeholder groups based upon negotiations with an individual stakeholder group.

Organizations that have low stakeholder management capability are not aware of who their stakeholders are, and thus do not have processes to deal with their concerns and fail in negotiating transactions with these stakeholders. Conversely, organizations with high stakeholder management capability will be well aware of who their stakeholders are, and be prepared to deal with them regarding relevant issues. Organizations with high stakeholder management capability will also look to the future and try to predict where changes or possible trends might affect the decision making of today. Freeman, (1984) states:

"Successful transactions with stakeholders are built on understanding the 'legitimacy' of the stakeholder and having processes to routinely surface their concerns...There is simply no substitute for thinking through how a particular individual can 'win' and how the organization can 'win' at the same time" (p.73).
CHAPTER III- LOCAL CONTEXTUAL BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Land Use and Acquisition For New Course Development

The geographical constraints of the Lower Mainland pose an interesting example of the problems of land availability for future course construction in relation to population density. Definite borders exist in three directions making population expansion viable only in one direction. Population growth in the Lower Mainland is only possible in an easterly direction due to the mountains to the north, water to the west and the Canada-U.S. border to the south. It is only logical that golf courses be constructed in areas where there is a consumer demand, and where land is potentially still available. Thus the rational location for future golf development in the Lower Mainland is to the east of the City of Vancouver, where the population is steadily increasing. During the period 1988-1991, the majority of proposed golf developments were in fact in this area (Argyle et al, 1991).

While the border is a barrier for development within British Columbia, several golf courses have been built in Washington State relatively close to the international border. The American population is not extremely large in this region
(140,000 in Whatcom County), and it is obvious that Canadians are a sizeable target market for these golf courses. Argyle et al (1991), state that some courses in Washington already accommodate 75% use by Canadians. This is not surprising given the quality of these courses, the availability and access to tee times, and the cost and proximity of these courses to the Lower Mainland area. Some of these courses advertise in both Vancouver daily newspapers promoting attractive course fees for Canadians. For example, Canadian money at par on given weekdays.

The Agricultural Land Reserve of British Columbia

Most of the proposed golf course development in the Lower Mainland fall within an area called the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR). The ALR covers a very large area in the surrounding municipalities around Vancouver and the purpose of the ALR is to prevent the loss of high quality farmland to non-farm or urban uses. Prior to 1988, applications for golf course development within the Agricultural Land Reserve were filed with the Agriculture Land Commission (ALC) for exclusion of the targeted land from the ALR for approval of land for non-farm use. If approved, the land was then excluded from the ALR and owners could then use the land for
any purposes allowable by municipal laws (District of Surrey, 1989).

In June of 1988, the Provincial Cabinet approved Order in Council No. 1141 to amend the Agricultural Land Commission Subdivision and Land Use Regulation, allowing for golf facilities to be included as a permitted use within the ALR. What this meant, in effect, was that the ALC no longer possessed veto power over the use of the Agricultural Land Reserve for the purposes of golf course development which veto power was then passed to municipal governments (District of Surrey, 1989).

While the primary concern of the ALC was and is with the preservation of agricultural land, that of the municipal councils now in control of the application process focussed entirely on local or regional issues. Traditionally the ALC had demonstrated consistency in their decision making toward golf course applications, while the decision making process and its results under the mandate of local municipal councils could change unpredictably according to circumstances (Argyle et al, 1991). For example, the election of a new council may bring forth large disparity in attitudes towards golf course development as witnessed in the Delta municipal elections during November of 1990 when a
new municipal council was elected which, unlike the previous council, was strongly opposed to golf developments (Vancouver Sun, 1990).

A major concern of the ALC regarding golf course development within the ALR is the removal of good agricultural land that may have been suitable for food production. To combat this trend it has been suggested that no golf course development within the ALR be permitted in areas which contain large amounts of Class 1, 2, and 3 soils (District of Surrey, 1989; Argyle et al, 1991). These types of soils are regarded as the highest quality soils and should be preserved for agricultural purposes.

Another concern which transpired was the use of golf courses as "loss leaders" by private interest groups for the purposes of developing other "ancillary" uses such as housing projects, hotels or restaurants. These additional developments may also be viewed as further threats to decreasing available agricultural land. This has led to suggestions that golf course developments be restricted to the edges of the ALR, whereby these ancillary projects would be placed outside the boundaries of the ALR (District of Surrey, 1989; Argyle et al, 1991).
In summary, since the 1988 Order in Council the power for approval of golf course development and the control over the location of golf facilities within the ALR was moved from the ALC to the municipal councils. This adjustment in the golf course development process prompted municipalities such as Surrey and Delta to conduct their own investigations with respect to golf course development applications and to impose their own selection criteria for evaluating applications.

**Socioeconomic Considerations in New Course Development**

Golf course development costs start initially with the price of the land, but then there are several other major expenses to follow, such as course construction, a course designer, and the building of a clubhouse. Construction costs for a proposed golf course in Langley, in 1990, were a monstrous $18.5 million, (Argyle, 1991). There are several other costs which do surface with time, but the picture is clear that golf course development is an expensive venture.

There are also issues of access and gentrification to be considered. It was mentioned earlier that the vast majority of golfers play on public golf courses, but due in part to the high costs of developing a golf course, most new courses are targeted at private memberships. The literature also
makes it very clear that golf is a growing sport. Thus unless some of these public players can afford to join a private club, many will still be left with limited opportunity to play the game. Access will be further limited by increasing costs for the "pay-as-you-play" golfer. Argyle (1991) states,

"The costs of golfing to the private golfer and the general public is increasing at rates well beyond the rate of inflation and will continue to increase in the foreseeable future" (p.81).

In 1989, one could play a round of golf at one of the three municipal courses run by the Vancouver Parks Board (McCleery, Langara or Fraserview) for $14.50, but the following year the price rose to $17 and current prices have increased to $33 for play during the week and $36 on weekends.

Golf has been viewed in the past as a game played predominantly by upper class white males, yet through the past few decades this perception has gradually broken down as increasingly, golfers were represented by both genders, a widening age range, and drawn from many socioeconomic levels as well as a variety of ethnic backgrounds. Yet, with the current situation of increasing membership costs to the private clubs and higher green fees at the public courses,
the game is once again becoming one which can only be afforded by the more affluent segment of society. This is a process called gentrification, whereby there is a shifting, or moving out of the less financially able as the more affluent upper class takes over. Golf, in the future, may run the risk of becoming too costly for the average income player rendering the less affluent unable to afford to play the game, or in fact, forcing them to play the lower quality courses or, as a last resort, to look for other sources of recreation and entertainment.

Although the game of golf continues to grow, there is mounting opposition to this growth especially on the part of environmental groups. With its elitist image and the wealth that accompanies this image, golf courses are easy targets for environmentalists. Andrews (1989) states,

"The days when a potential golf course was hailed as a future greenbelt asset for an area are gone, as various interest groups raise environmental issues that are sometimes perplexing but almost always costly" (p. 116).

According to Olson (1992),

"Golf will remain an affordable, enjoyable pursuit only if grave environmental concerns are addressed by organized representatives of the golf industry and golfing community" (p. 8).
Proposed golf courses can be delayed for years as revisions are made and environmental impact studies are conducted prior to final approval for development. A proposed golf course in Glen Arbor, Michigan, underwent 190 design changes through four years of delay while issues of wetlands preservation and pesticide pollution were explored, thereby increasing the cost of the development by more than $2 million (Andrews, 1989). In the Lower Mainland Municipality of Delta, a lengthy, harshly contested dispute has cost a developer about $1.6 million for approvals, redesigning costs, environmental studies, preservation and improvements to nearby farmland. Even to this date there is still no guarantee that the course will ever be opened (Vancouver Sun, 1990). And, as of this date (1998) the course is still not open for play.

**Environmental Impact Issues**

Land requirements for golf course developments are extensive, usually in the neighborhood of 130 to 150 acres. Typically the land for proposed golf developments is previously undeveloped and often includes an area which, prior to development, may have been a forest or farmland. As a result of golf course construction, several environmental effects may be felt including the possible
destruction of natural habitats, disruption of animal food chains or diminishing acreage of agricultural land. Other environmental concerns over golf course developments involve problems with water supply or contamination of soil, streams and lakes due to the fertilizers and pesticides used on courses.

The Municipality of Delta, for instance, contains wetlands which host approximately 1.4 million migratory birds. The area also neighbors the proposed sight of golf course developments which environmentalists strongly oppose because they say this will have an effect upon the birds living in and passing through the area.

In addition to wildlife and ecological concerns a new golf course impacts on people living in the area, most notably the residents who reside near the new golf course. The effects of a new golf course proximal to one's home can be both positive and negative. From a negative perspective, a golf development in the area of one's home may bring increased traffic on the roads and a greater number of people into the area. As a result of increased human use, other small businesses or commercial interests may also invade the area making what may have been a quiet, peaceful location more congested and less relaxing. While this may
be looked upon as a disturbance to some, it may be welcomed by others.

An obvious benefit to an individual living near to a golf course is the easier access to a game of golf and for those who are not golfers other recreational opportunities may arise from the development. Several golf courses in the Lower Mainland have trails for walking or bike riding which surround the course.

The biggest impact upon residents who live near to a new golf course may come in the form of increased property values, a definite benefit to those who own their home. Argyle et al (1991), state that residential land beside a golf course can increase by as much as 30% because of its proximity to a golf course. In Palm Desert, California, after the PGA West golf course was developed, housing lots which had previously sold for $14,000 began selling for $100,000 (Andrews, 1989).

Examining property costs in the Lower Mainland shows that the highest property costs are located in the west side of Vancouver and in West Vancouver. On the west side of Vancouver there are seven golf courses, four of which are public courses (University Golf Club, Musqueam, McCleery and
Langara), and three of the most established private golf clubs in the country (Shaughnessy, Point Grey, and Marine Drive). Another highly rated and prestigious private golf club, Capilano, is located in West Vancouver.

It is also worth noting that some of the Lower Mainland's most expensive homes and land values are located in the Shaughnessy/Quilchena region of Vancouver, an area where two former golf clubs were previously located, but moved to new locations after selling the land for a sizable profit and relocating to new areas. On this point, Olson (1992) writes,

"On Vancouver Golf Club's heels came Shaughnessy Heights, a luxurious course created by the Canadian Pacific Railway to enhance the property values of the city's first authentic sub-division" (p.5)

The Politicization of the Approval Process For New Golf Course Developments

The Approval Process Prior to Order In Council #1141

(June 1988)

Up until June 1988, all proposals for golf course developments which included land within the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) were reviewed by the Agricultural Land Commission (ALC). Prior to June, 1988, golf courses were
classified as "conditional uses" in the ALR, subject to the approval and conditions set by the ALC. Any development approved by the ALC meant that the land on which development took place was removed from the ALR.

The mandate of the ALC is to preserve agricultural land for the purpose of food production. With the ALC in control of the development process on agricultural land, golf course developers were forced to focus upon marginal land and that which lay on the periphery of the ALR. This meant that any proposals planned for high quality agricultural land, where soil classification was either Class 1, 2 or 3, and those proposals which extended deep into the ALR stood little chance of being approved. This being the case, very few proposals were forthcoming for the development of new golf facilities. The system was self regulating as developers were well aware of the goals of the ALC and their attitudes toward removing quality land form the ALR.

During a ten year period (1978-88), the ALC received 72 applications for golf related proposals in the province of British Columbia. These proposals included expansions upon a current facility, new golf course developments, either par-3 or regulation, and applications to construct a driving range. One third (24 of 72) of the applications were within
the Lower Mainland and of these, only seven were proposals for regulation sized golf courses. Of these seven, three were approved by the ALC resulting in three regulation sized golf courses being added to the Lower Mainland supply of golf courses in this ten year period.

ALC approval of a golf course development did not automatically guarantee that the development would proceed. Developments still had to be approved by the appropriate municipal government and go through the required approval process as with any other major land use development, although once a development had passed through the ALC it stood a strong chance of being approved at the municipal level. The process of golf course development approval by local governments is explained further in the following section which focuses upon the approval process following OIC #1141.

The Approval Process Following Order In Council #1141
(June 1988 - November 1991)

In June 1988, the Socred government passed Order In Council 1141. Order In Council #1141 was an amendment to the Agricultural Land Commission Subdivision and Land Use
Regulation (B.C. Reg. 7/81), Section 2(1) of which stated the following:

Section 2(1) The following land uses are permitted in an agricultural land reserve:

(m) golf, pitch and putt courses or driving ranges, including clubhouses, restaurants, pro shops and similar ancillary facilities necessary for golf purposes, on terms and conditions the Commission considers appropriate for the maintenance of the agricultural potential of the subject lands and adjacent agricultural lands and the mitigation or reduction of impact on adjacent agricultural lands, including terms and conditions with respect to

(i) the design and siting of ancillary facilities,

(ii) the quiet enjoyment of adjacent agricultural lands,

(iii) soil conservation

(iv) removal or placement of trees, hedges, shrubs, buffer zones, green spaces and fences, and

(v) drainage and watercourses

This meant, in effect, golf courses were no longer "conditional uses" on land within the ALR, but were now classified as "outright uses". Another result of this Order was that the ALC no longer held the power to either approve or reject a golf related proposal which power was now passed on to the municipal government in the area in which the proposal was located.
While the ALC no longer made the decision whether a development went forward or not, any proposals which involved land on the ALR were still to be submitted to the ALC so they might set any specific conditions, although the developer was not bound by these conditions.

The municipal government was now in complete control of all proposals pertaining to golf courses, a position which was unfamiliar to them because for so long they had been protected by the ALC to the extent that only those proposals which they had screened and approved came before local council. Accordingly, those developments which did not meet the standards of the ALC would never have to be considered by a municipal government.

Previously, developers had been forced to focus upon marginal land and that which lay on the outskirts of the ALR as the ALC were unlikely to approve proposals on high quality farmland or those proposals which invaded large portions of the ALR. With the ALC no longer in control of screening applications and with golf courses now deemed "outright uses", developers could make proposals utilizing considerably more land within the ALR. Proposals on high quality agricultural land still faced a difficult path to
approval as municipalities were also wary of converting prime agricultural land.

Applications during this period in time were given to the ALC, but only for their recommendations and suggestions which might be loosely adhered to by developers. However, any new developments incorporating housing plans or other ancillary buildings still remained under the jurisdiction of the ALC.

The effect of Order in Council #1141 in loosening up the conditions for golf course use of ALR designated lands was immediate. Whereas, in the 10 year time period prior to the enactment of Order #1141, the ALC received 96 applications for the whole province: the 3.3 year period between the endorsement of Order In Council #1141 and the golf course moratorium, June 1988 - November 1991, local governments around the province received 181 proposals for new golf course developments, (Argyle,1991). In only a year and a half there were 56 applications for new golf courses in the Lower Mainland alone (compared to 24 in the previous ten year time period), which included 33 proposals for full sized courses in contrast to only 7 previously.
The Municipal Approval Process

A golf course development must be approved by the local government in all cases and this has always been such. Prior to the introduction of OIC # 1141 the developer would first get approval from the ALC and then go through the municipal application procedures, but following OIC # 1141 the developer no longer needed the approval of the ALC before submitting the application to the local government. Proposals following OIC #1141 were sent to the ALC only for their review and suggestions, but their recommendations were really nothing more than a wishlist.

Under the new system, for a golf course to be approved by a local government the developer must submit their proposal to the local planning department which then assesses the application and forwards it along with their recommendations to council. Recommendations from the planning department are usually to approve the project subject to conditions or to refuse the proposal. If a proposal is accepted it then goes through a process which involves four readings and a public hearing.

When a development application is forwarded from the planning department to the Council where an initial decision
is made either in favor of, or denying the application. If Council votes positively for the proposal then it is given a first and second reading and a date for a public hearing is set. A public hearing is primarily intended for Council to receive information from the public so as to allow them to determine what impact the proposal might have on the community. All owners of property located within 100 meters of a development application property are formally notified of a public hearing, but anyone interested may attend.

Following the public hearing the proposal goes to third reading where it can be rejected and denied or given approval from Council. Once an application is approved at third reading by Council, the development is in essence approved and the developer must then tie up any loose ends or concerns that Council may have. Finally, once a project receives fourth reading from Council the development is allowed to proceed.

The whole process of gaining approval for a golf course development can be very lengthy as often other departments or agencies are involved and must review the application. Examples include, Department of Highways, Ministry of the Environment or the Department of Fisheries and Oceans.
Following the golf course moratorium in November 1991 (see below), the approval process reverted back to the original procedure of ALC approval followed by permission from local government via the four readings and one public hearing procedure.

The Golf Course Moratorium Act: November 1991

The Golf Course Moratorium was put through by the provincial NDP government in November, 1991, almost immediately following their election victory in October of that year. This was a pre-election promise and a response to Order in Council #1141 put through by the previous Social Credit government.

The moratorium reinstated the power of the ALC and put a freeze on all golf course development proposals and development. All proposals received in the preceding 3.3 years by local governments from around the province prior to the moratorium were then reviewed by the ALC. Eventually all of the new proposals that had already been passed by the local governments were allowed to proceed, but those developers whose proposals had not been given approval via a third reading by their respective councils were informed
that their applications were denied. This represented 60 out of 102 new golf course applications.

The ALC had no authority over any of the courses which had already received third reading as these developments had gone through the proper approval procedures prior to the moratorium. Also, many of these had already begun construction.

During the time period when the ALC had lost the power to rule on golf course developments, municipal governments were inundated with applications for new golf course. Order in Council #1141 came at a time when the increase in the popularity of the game coincided with a severe shortage in golf facilities, therefore developers were seeking to obtain swift approvals for increasing the golf course supply to a more than willing group of consumers.

Two Examples of Golf Courses Which Went Through the Approval Process

Described on the following pages are the procedures endured by two different developers in the two different, although adjacent, municipalities of Surrey and Delta. The narrative attempts to expose the difficulties that these developers
faced, difficulties exacerbated by the counteracting actions of both provincial and local governments; and, the absence of prior planning by developers. Especially apparent was the strident opposition of environmental protection groups along with other groups with a stake in the outcome.

These two examples of the impact of stakeholder groups on course development proposals from the Municipalities of Delta and Surrey provide the backdrop for the focus of this study.

**Boundary Shores Golf Course**

Boundary Shores Golf Course, as the name implies, is located on the shores of Boundary Bay in Delta. As of this date this golf course is not yet open for public play, although the developer expected to have the course finished for the spring of 1996. Given the circumstances and the adversity this project has had to overcome it will be an exceptional day for the developer when this golf course is completed and ready for public play.

The application process for Boundary Shores first started in May 1988, when the developer applied to the Agricultural Land Commission (ALC) for permission to build a golf course on land within the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR). This was the process at the time as Order In Council #1141 was
still a month in the future. Then in June of this same year, the Order was passed making golf courses permissible on land within the ALR, subject only to terms and conditions given by the ALC. Boundary Shores was notified of these terms and conditions in August 1988.

During the two year span between August 1988 and August 1990 the Boundary Shores proposal began progressing through the necessary steps for municipal approval. The proposal needed to progress through the four part hearing process in order to acquire the consent of municipal council before construction could begin. Eventually, in August of 1990, this procedure was completed when Delta council passed a zoning by-law by a 4-2 margin permitting this development to go ahead.

The two year period between August 1988 and August 1990, was by no means smooth for either the developer or Delta municipal council. Boundary Shores was only one of nineteen golf course proposals received by Delta council, but this particular proposed golf course's location was of intense concern for many, especially environmentalists.

The Boundary Shores development covered a 150 acre plot of agricultural land located at the foot of 72nd Street in the East Ladner region of Delta. The golf course is bordered by 72nd Street to the west, Boundary Bay Airport to the north,
Boundary Bay dyke to the south and agricultural land to the east. This golf course is located in an area along the Pacific flyway, an area regarded as extremely sensitive environmentally as it serves as the wintering home and rest stop for approximately 1.4 million migratory birds.

In an agreement made between the developer and the Delta municipal council just prior to the fourth reading on Boundary Shores (August, 1990), the developer agreed to several conditions. Within these conditions, the developer agreed to establish a habitat compensation trust fund of $531,720 and to compensate the Delta Farmers Institute (DFI) $420,000 for a needed irrigation project (Vancouver Sun, 1990). (The payment to the DFI eventually served as a means for which the project landed in B.C. Supreme Court.) These expenses brought pre-approval expenditures to approximately $1.1 million for the project, exclusive of land costs.

The approval of Boundary Shores proved to be one of the final acts for that particular Delta council and then mayor, Doug Husband. In November of 1990 voters replaced almost every member of the previous Delta council with a new group led by the current incumbent mayor, Beth Johnson. Johnson defeated Husband by 9000 votes in the municipal election, (Lees, 1991). This new council strongly opposed golf course developments on agricultural land. The golf course development issue and in particular the Boundary Shores
project proved to be a very important issue in these elections and a prominent reason for the changes made in municipal office.

The newly elected Delta council was opposed to the Boundary Shores development, yet in an ironic twist they found themselves defending the bylaw which had paved the way for the Boundary Shores project to advance. The Boundary Bay Conservation Committee (BBCC) had filed a claim in B.C. Supreme Court against both the developer and the Municipality of Delta opposing the by-law passed by the previous council in August 1990. They contended that the public hearing process was incorrect in that the public was not notified of the agreement of a payment to be given to the DFI by the developer, thus violating the public hearing process. The DFI who were originally against the development, eventually backed the project after the developer's agreement to fund the irrigation project. However, in support of their initial opposition the DFI wrote to Delta council in January 1989 stating, "as an agricultural group we cannot support any golf course proposal, because it erodes the land base that is essential to our business" (Lees, 1991).

While Mayor Johnson and most of the newly appointed council opposed the passing of the bylaw by their predecessors they were obligated to defend it or face possible lawsuit action
from the developer (Vancouver Sun, 1990). The BBCC accusations had more widespread implications than just the case at hand according to the Mayor who was quoted,

"In defending the golf course, the municipality is trying to avoid a dangerous precedent that could tarnish the entire municipal approval process and lead to more lawsuits (Vancouver Sun, 1990).

In January 1991, Mr. Justice Ian Donald ruled in favor of the BBCC over Boundary Shores, overturning the bylaw passed in August 1990. Justice Donald ruled that the original public hearing had been undermined by the $420,000 offer to the DFI and that former Delta council had committed a breach of the Municipal Act in denying further public hearings after the developer had changed the original development application. Further development of the golf course was halted at this point.

In October 1991, there was another change in government, this time at the provincial level as Bill Vander Zalm and the Social Credit Party were defeated by Mike Harcourt and the NDP. It was the Social Credit Party which had passed the controversial Order in Council in 1988, something the NDP attacked in their pre-election campaigns.

The new NDP government wasted little time in dealing with the golf course dilemma. On November 8, 1991, only three
weeks after their election win, they repealed Section 2 (i)(m) of the B.C. Regulation 7/81 which had permitted golf courses use of ALR land. About a week after this, Order In Council #1392/91 was passed, and the Golf Course Moratorium was enacted. At the time all of this had no immediate effect on the Boundary Shores development because no work was being done on the course as a result of the B.C. Supreme Court ruling against them in January of this same year.

Under "the Moratorium" all golf course developments filed since Order in Council #1141 went into effect were once again to be reviewed by the ALC, the same group which had looked at all proposals prior to the enactment of the Order. The NDP’s newly passed Order #1392/91 also restored the previously relinquished power much to the pleasure of many municipal councils.

In April 1992, the provincial government announced that of the 102 golf proposals in the province caught under the Golf Course Moratorium, 42 would be allowed to proceed and 60 would be cancelled. Boundary Shores was declared one of eight proposed projects in Delta to be cancelled (Delta Optimist, 1992). This was not an immediate obstacle for the Boundary Shores developer at this point in time because an appeal of the January 1991 decision had been filed within the B.C. Court of Appeal.
The decision from the Court of Appeal came in June 1992 and the ruling was 2-1 in favor of Boundary Shores, thus reinstating the bylaw previously quashed and paving the way for the development to proceed once again. The BBCC subsequently appealed this ruling to the Supreme Court of Canada where the case was refused to be heard in April 1993.

After clearing another obstacle there still remained yet another to be overcome for the project. While the decision of the Appeal Court upheld the decision by the previous Delta council of August 1990, the ALC was now maintaining that the development could not proceed because the golf course proposal was still caught under the Golf Course Moratorium which had cancelled Boundary Shores Golf Course in April 1992. The developer disagreed and restarted with work on the golf course, thereby setting the stage for yet another court battle.

According to the ALC's position under Order #1392/91- the "Moratorium Act"- Boundary Shores development project, as a result of a B.C. Supreme Court ruling in January 1991, did not have the approval of Delta municipal council; even though, on appeal, this decision of the Supreme Court was reversed in favor of the developer, thus, in fact, giving the project license to proceed under the authority of the previous Delta municipal council.
In November 1993 B.C. Supreme Court ruled in favor of Boundary Shores against the Agricultural Land Commission thus allowing the developer to continue once again to develop his golf course. However, the court did not remove the project from the moratorium. What this decision did, in effect, was to allow the development to continue, while awaiting a final ruling. This was a “stand off.” Eventually, the ALC dropped their legal proceedings in April 1994; whereupon the developer and the ALC struck an agreement in which the ALC would not proceed with the case for project shutdown and the developer would not activate any future legal action against the ALC, (Delta Optimist, 1994).

**Northview Golf Course**

Northview Golf and Country Club is a new 36 hole, first class golf facility located in Surrey. The Ridge course was opened in 1994 and the Canal course opened in June of the following year. Both golf courses were designed by renowned golfer Arnold Palmer.

Northview covers approximately 420 acres and is in the Cloverdale region of Surrey. The entire site is located within the Agricultural Land Reserve. The course is bordered by 160th Street to the west, 168th Street to the
east, 64th Avenue to the south and the Serpentine River to the north.

The development process for Northview began in June 1989, with an application to Surrey council. In January 1990, council denied the original Northview application. Alterations were made to the course design and the proposal was put forth again, only to be rejected once more, (Vancouver Sun, 1991). Both defeats of the project came by narrow 5-4 margins.

Much of the controversy surrounding the Northview proposal was based around a multi-level government project known as the Agrifood Regional Development Subsidy Agreement, or the ARDSA program (Vancouver Sun, 1991.) This project was jointly funded by the federal and provincial government, $550,000 each, and the municipal government, $400,000. The goal of the project was to improve farmland with improvements to existing drainage and irrigation systems.

Approximately 170 acres of the 420 acres of land in the Northview project had been improved by the ARDSA project and represented about one third of the overall agricultural land being improved, (Vancouver Sun, 1991). The developer had agreed to repay $500,000 of the $1.5 million invested into the ARDSA project if Northview was approved, although this was not the major issue for some. Peter Wallin, manager of
resource development for the B.C. ministry of agriculture and fisheries was quoted in the Vancouver Sun, April 12, 1991, "That's not really the point (the money reimbursement)... ARDSA is set up to benefit farmland ... to benefit agriculture."

In November 1990, municipal elections in Surrey resulted in a council member opposed to the Northview project being replaced by a member in favor of the golf development. The developer again, for the third time, submitted the proposal to Surrey council and this time emerged victorious with a 5-4 vote in favor of the project. It was June 1991 when the proposal passed fourth reading, almost two years to the day since the developer initiated the process.

Surrey council, at this time, was influenced by "Surrey Electors Team" members who now held a majority in council. Their opposition included Surrey mayor Bob Bose and other members of "Surrey Civic Electors". The change in Surrey council combined with strong public support for the golf course development at the public hearing proved to be the moving forces making the proposal a reality (Vancouver Sun, 1991). In this public hearing held in early May, 1991, 110 out of 143 people spoke in favor of the development and the developers also submitted a 5,000 name petition supporting Northview.
In November 1991, following the NDP victory in provincial elections and their implementation of the Golf Course Moratorium Act (Vancouver Sun, 1991), Surrey council's endorsement of Northview was challenged by the Western Canada Wilderness Committee, the Boundary Bay Conservation Committee (B.B.C.C.) and two Surrey residents. The environmentalists were arguing that Surrey council had violated the approval process in order to endorse golf course development. The scenario was similar to the previous case wherein the B.B.C.C. took the Boundary Shores developer and Delta council to court over their approval process of a golf course.

In February 1992, Justice Ian Josephson handed down a ruling in favor of the Northview developer and Surrey council supporting the approved bylaws allowing development of the 36-hole golf facility. This decision was subsequently appealed by the environmentalists in the B.C. Court of Appeal, but it too was dismissed.

The first 18 holes of the Northview development were opened for play in the spring of 1994 and the second 18 holes were opened one year later. Northview was the site of the Greater Vancouver Open (GVO) in both 1996 and 1997. The GVO is a new addition to the Professional Golfers' Association (PGA) Tour which has met with great success in the area and
represents the first ever regular PGA Tour tournament stop in Vancouver and the first PGA event in the city since the Canadian Open was last held in 1966.
CHAPTER IV-RESEARCH METHODS

Introduction

This study used semi-focused and open-ended in-depth interviews. Interviews were conducted with individuals from four separate stakeholder groups in two Lower Mainland municipalities, namely Surrey and Delta. Each interview had a duration of approximately one hour and all interviewees were asked prior to the interview for their permission to record the interview on audio cassette for the purposes of transcription.

Interview Methodology

Those individuals interviewed were initially contacted by mail and this was followed up by telephone. Potential respondents were given a brief description of the research on both occasions and were asked for their willingness to be interviewed for the study. Potential interviewees were identified through preliminary research of local newspapers covering stories on golf course development in the Lower Mainland. Prominent individuals and organizations were consistent through many of these articles about golf course development at that time and emerged as the most logical persons to contact for personal interviews.
The interview format was chosen because of the type of information that can be gathered from this type of interview. The goal of the research was to determine the attitudes and perspectives of the members within each stakeholder group. Semi focused interviews allow the opportunity for the interviewee to express their thoughts and opinions in their own words. What is required are rich and descriptive answers and the semi-focused depth interview is the most applicable in this situation.

The Interview Sample

The interview sample consisted of eighteen individuals from four separate stakeholders groups. In total, interviews were conducted with seven developers, five local council members, four members of environmental and wildlife groups and two persons from agricultural groups.

Developers interviewed included four individuals who had made applications for golf courses in either Surrey or Delta, as well as three developers who had made proposals for golf course development in other areas of the Lower Mainland. This was done to gain a perspective of the issues which were of concern outside of Surrey and Delta.
Interviews with council members included individuals who could be considered more flexible or accommodating of golf course development on agricultural land and individuals who were strongly opposed to such development.

For the interviews conducted with members of the other two stakeholder groups, individuals which in a "representative position" of the organization were selected. These interviewees included those in positions such as president, director or secretary of their respective organizations.

**The Interview Process**

Within the semi-focused open ended interview there is no set order or wording of questions. This was necessary in this research because of the different stakeholder groups and their presumed variety of opinions. The interviewer seeks from each respondent an answer which highlights their own perspective of the situation, while each answer may lead the interviewer to develop a new question which is not asked of any of the other interviewees (Kane, 1983). For example, while the questions initially asked of the group categorized as developers will resemble those also asked of the environmentalist group, it was expected that the answers of each would be quite divergent and that the follow-up
questions within each topic area would then draw upon those answers.

The questions posed of the members of the four stakeholder groups were consistent in that they focused upon six issues which are listed in with the interview questions. The interviews allowed for some flexibility in delivering the questions to the interviewee and also allowed for the interviewer to probe for further information dependent upon the response and specific areas of interest that may have been unique to specific development projects.

Krippendorf (1980) describes the difference between two types of data: emic and etic. Emic data are described as data which arise in a natural or indigenous form, while etic data reflect the researcher's imposed view of the situation. Neither type of data can be considered as preferable over the other, but simply different. Unstructured individual depth interviews provide data nearer to the emic side of the continuum as they allow those being interviewed to respond in their own words as opposed to survey and questionnaire research where respondents answer questions according to prescribed answers supplied by the researcher (Stewart & Shamdasani, 1990).

In an article about the usefulness of qualitative research within the field of sport management, Inglis (1992) makes
some useful observations. She points out that the value of qualitative research lies in the meaningful answers that it can provide to problem issues. She also notes that the sport management field is one which is highly connected to people and that much of the work done in this field lies in the concerns and needs of the people served. This is especially true in the research surrounding future golf course development as each stakeholder group have their own attitudes and opinions on golf course development.

The limitations of this type of research are similar to those studies which involve any form of personal interviewing or focus groups (Stewart and Shamdasani, 1990). The small number of interviewees within each stakeholder group represents a limitation in that generalization to the larger population of the stakeholder group may be a problem. While it is hoped that the representatives of any given stakeholder group can demonstrate and bring forth the attitudes and opinions of the larger population, there are certainly no guarantees.

Another limitation comes in the form of the immediate nature of the interview. The live interaction between the interviewer and the respondent may lead the interviewer to place more faith in the findings than is actually valid. Stewart and Shamdasani (1990), state, "There is a certain
credibility attached to the opinion of a live respondent that is often not present in statistical summaries" (p. 17).

A final limitation concerns the analysis and interpretation of the results obtained in this type of interview. The subjective nature of the responses is such that it can pose problems with respect to interpretation of the results.

**Interview Questions**

Listed below are the questions which were asked to the respondents in each interview. These questions represent the “central” question asked about a given theme or topic, and the researcher then had latitude to ask further questions based upon the interviewee’s response. Follow up questions were asked to discover information specific to a situation or uncover the interviewee’s attitude and concerns in greater detail.

**Questions:**

1. **Stakeholder Identification**

   Who would you identify as a stakeholder with respect to golf course development?

2. **Stakeholder goals and objectives**

   What were the goals and objectives of your organization with respect to golf course development?
3. **Stakeholder attitudes and concerns**

From your own perspective, what were your concerns with regards to golf course development? What was the general attitude of your organization towards golf course development and what were some of the frustrations and difficulties that you faced?

4. **Stakeholder interaction and management**

Was there ever any interaction or negotiation between your group and some of the other stakeholder groups that you have identified? If so, what were the results of this communication?

5. **Changes in the process and their effects**

As a result of new legislation, the process for golf course development approval was significantly changed. What are your thoughts about these changes and what were the effects.

6. **Possible ways to improve the approval process**

In your opinion, how could the approval process be improved.

**Why Delta and Surrey?**

The Municipality of Delta and the City of Surrey were chosen to be the two regions examined as examples for this study. These two communities received the largest number of proposals for new golf course development in the Lower Mainland, primarily because of the expansive farmland within their boundaries and their relative proximity to the population of the Lower Mainland.
Both Surrey and Delta represent interesting case studies, not only because of the number of proposals, but the controversial nature of several of these proposals and the similarity of the contentious issues which were largely disturbances pertaining to the environment and the agricultural community. Environmental groups, farmers, developers and local government all had their own vested interests and this made for complex and confrontational stakeholder relations.

The Municipality of Delta is unique in that it is one of the few municipalities in the Lower Mainland area which has not added a golf course to the existing supply within the past decade. A full length, quality, golf course was developed in Delta (Boundary Shores) during the recent period of development around the Lower Mainland, but legal complications have not allowed the golf course to open for public play yet.

After the Order in Council of June 1988, which made golf courses outright uses rather than conditional uses within the Agricultural Land Reserve, Delta council was flooded with as many as nineteen proposals for golf course development while Surrey council received proposals. This is understandable because both Delta and Surrey are municipalities with abundant available land potentially well suited for golf course developments.
Prior to the recent period of golf course applications and subsequent development, the Lower Mainland had a relatively limited supply of quality golf courses, especially those accessible to the public. At that time, Delta had one private golf club, a public facility of poor quality, a higher quality executive style golf course and one pitch and putt style golf course. Surrey's existing supply of golf courses consisted of five regulation sized golf courses of varying quality and a combination of five pitch and putt or executive style golf courses.

The limited supply of quality golf facilities in these two regions combined with the amount of accessible agricultural land and the change in legislation made both Surrey and Delta prime locations for new golf course development. While these areas were seen by many as ideal locations for golf course development and other development opportunities, there are also definite issues which might hinder any development application. Environmental issues are always at the forefront when open or undeveloped land is converted from one use to another and this would certainly be true of these locations. The area in which the majority of the proposals were located was within the ALR, thus any approved golf development would be allowing agricultural land to be converted into a golf course. This represents an important issue with other stakeholders, but another which is equally
contentious is the environmentally sensitive Boundary Bay area and the "Pacific flyway".

These two concerns can be linked in that the majority of the surrounding lands of the golf course applications is agricultural land. Some of this land is actively farmed, while other areas sit dormant which benefit and attract wildlife to these idle parcels of agricultural land. The open fields and old growth are beneficial for birds of prey and the Boundary Bay area of Delta also serves as a winter home for approximately 1.4 million migratory birds.

**Analysis of data**

In the analysis of the data, all interviews were transcribed and the information and responses from each individual interviewed within a specific stakeholder group were combined pertaining to the relevant question. The answers within each question issue were analyzed for any dominant theme(s) emerging from within each stakeholder group. Responses from each stakeholder group were examined independently, but also interdependently for compatibility or contrast between stakeholder groups.
CHAPTER V-RESULTS

Results Part I. Stakeholder Identification

Question #1- Who would you identify as a stakeholder in golf course development?

Originally, six stakeholders were tentatively identified with a vested interest in golf course development: developers, government, environmental groups, golfers, related businesses and local residents. It became apparent during the review of newspaper articles that certain stakeholders played a more important role than others in the approval process of golf courses in the Lower Mainland. This was subsequently supported by the respondents with who they identified as stakeholders. These data are summarized in Figure .1.

Three of the original stakeholders identified (developers, local government, and environmental groups) were recognized by respondents as important groups within the approval process. Three other stakeholder groups (golfers, related businesses, and area residents) were not really evident in the review of documents and this was also supported in the responses from those interviewed. One other significant stakeholder group (agricultural groups) emerged early during the review of documents and was also identified by those
interviewed as a key stakeholder with a vested interest in the approval process.

In the section that follows, the various stakeholder groups that were previously identified and then subsequently confirmed through the interviews are examined as well as the agricultural stakeholder group which was not originally recognized. Those stakeholder groups which were originally identified and were deemed as less important are also be looked at and possible suggestions given as to why they were judged as less meaningful to the approval process.

Figure 5.1 is a summary of who the respondents interviewed in this study viewed as stakeholders in golf course development. Tables summarizing who the respondents interviewed regarded as stakeholders (by stakeholder group) are located in Appendix A.
Figure 5.1
IDENTIFICATION OF STAKEHOLDERS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IDENTIFICATION OF STAKEHOLDER</th>
<th>18 (100%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>* DEVELOPERS</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* LOCAL GOVERNMENT</td>
<td>18 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* ENVIRONMENTAL GROUPS</td>
<td>16 (89%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AGRICULTURAL COMMUNITY</td>
<td>15 (83%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* GOLFERS</td>
<td>9 (50%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CITIZENS</td>
<td>8 (44%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* RELATED BUSINESSES</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* AREA RESIDENTS</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* denotes stakeholders originally proposed after review of literature pertaining to golf course development.

Developers

Developers were identified by all eighteen respondents. This is not surprising given that the developer initiated the whole process with an application. Without their application there would not have been any impact upon the other stakeholder groups.
Local government
The local government stakeholder group was also identified by all eighteen respondents. The local councils were in control of the decision making process over golf course proposals during the time of all the applications.

Environmental and wildlife groups
This stakeholder group was originally given the title "Environmentalists", but as the study proceeded it was recognized that the title was somewhat limiting and therefore altered to include wildlife interest groups.

What also became apparent from this stakeholder group was that there were two different types of groups concerned with the impacts upon the environment and wildlife: private, non profit type organizations and also government bureaus or departments. An example of the government department concerned with environmental impacts with respect to golf course development would be the B.C. Ministry for the Environment or the Federal Department of Fisheries and Oceans. An example of the other type of group found in this stakeholder category would be an organization such as Greenpeace, although in many cases nowhere near the size of this type of organization.
Environmental and wildlife groups were consistently recognized by respondents (13/18) as a stakeholder group in the golf course development approval process. The only group which did not have 100% recognition of this group as a stakeholder was the developer stakeholder group where only 28.6% (2/7) of the respondents identified environmentalist groups.

While the developers identification of “Environmentalists” as a stakeholder within the approval process was low (28.6%), they were the only stakeholder group to identify the government environmental groups (3/7). The identification of these government environmental departments came about through interviews with the developers who were required to abide by restrictions and guidelines placed upon their golf course projects by these government agencies.

Therefore, if we combine those developers who recognized environmental groups as a stakeholder (2/7) with those developers who identified the government environmental departments (3/7), 71.4% (5/7) of those developers interviewed identified environmental and wildlife groups as having a vested interest in golf course development. None of the developers who identified the government type environmental group also identified the private type
environmental group and vice versa. By combining these figures, the strength of environmental and wildlife groups as a stakeholder becomes even stronger with recognition by 88.9% of all respondents as compared to 72.2% (13/18).

**Agricultural groups**

The agricultural community and Agricultural Land Commission (ALC) were not initially identified as a stakeholder group, although it quickly became apparent that they were an important omission from the original group of potential stakeholders. Because the majority of the golf course proposals were on agricultural land within the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) and the former power held by the ALC, the inclusion of the agricultural community as an important stakeholder group became obvious. This stakeholder group can be subdivided since the interests of the agricultural community are specific to a proposed golf course location in their own locale whereas the focus of the ALC is upon the preservation of agricultural land and the viability of agriculture across the entire province.

Local farmers and the agricultural community were recognized consistently by those interviewed (15/18), although the ALC were not acknowledged to nearly the same extent (4/18). This is largely due to the fact that during that period of
time (1988-1991) the ALC were not in control of the decision making process of whether or not to approve new golf course developments as had previously been the case. Thus, they were possibly not perceived to be as important during this time.

**Golfers**

Golfers were initially identified as a stakeholder group because they were ostensibly the ones for whom new golf courses are built. In reviewing local golf course development cases, however, there were few examples of golfers supporting a proposed new golf development during the application stage. This was supported in the identification of stakeholders by the respondents in this study as golfers were only identified by 50% (9/18) of all respondents. Interestingly, only 42.8% (3/7) of the developers applying to build a golf course identified golfers as a stakeholder group. What is even more significant about this figure is that many of the courses built during this time period (1988-1991) were initially intended to be private golf courses for members only.

There was evidence of support from golfers at the public hearing for the Northview golf course, but this was largely due to the perseverance of the developer who recognized the
value of getting the golfing public to come out and support the development. Another example of golfers supporting a golf course during the approval process was the Northlands golf course built in North Vancouver. In this case, a group of golfers formed a society to try and block a housing development that had been initially proposed. Their goal was to have a golf course constructed on the land rather than the housing development and they were ultimately successful. Overall though, golfers as a unified and supportive group rarely appeared as a stakeholder.

Golfers, as a stakeholder group, could well serve a golf course developer through the application process by demonstrating the need and desire for such a development, but the evidence shows this has not really been the case so far. One of the members from a local council offered a possible suggestion why this might be the case:

"The problem for the developers is that golfers as a group are not an outspoken group. They are not the type of people to come to a public hearing and stomp their feet."

Related Businesses

One of the stakeholder groups originally proposed was a "Related Business" stakeholder group, but it was one which was not identified by any of those interviewed for this study. This group would include businesses such as hotels,
restaurants and real estate development companies. This is most likely situational to the Lower Mainland and may be one of the anomalies of golf course development in B.C. where so much potentially available land is designated the ALR. By contrast, in most areas of North America there is often a strong association between the golf course and other related businesses.

All of the new golf courses built recently on ALR land were stand alone golf courses, but recent golf course developments at Whistler offer a prime example of the type of businesses which are associated with golf course development in other areas. The Chateau Whistler golf course was built by Canadian Pacific Hotels and the Nicklaus North course was built in conjunction with a housing development. A Lower Mainland example is the Morgan Creek golf course in Surrey which was built by a development company in association with their housing project, but as a whole, this type of example is rare in B.C.

Although none of these types of companies were directly involved in the process of golf course approval, they still stood to benefit if a golf course was approved in their area. For example, a hotel located close to a newly developed golf course might benefit if travelling golfers
chose to stay there, or by partnering with the golf course in offering packages to the tourist golfer. Many local hotels currently have relationships of this nature with existing golf courses in the Lower Mainland.

Area Residents

The people living in the immediate area surrounding a golf course development were classified as an "Area Residents" stakeholder group, but this group was also not consistently recognized by those interviewed or evident in newspaper articles about golf course development. Citizens of the region or municipality were identified by the environmental groups (3/4) and local government (4/5), but in total only 44.4% of all respondents recognized this group to be a stakeholder.

The logical explanation for this finding may be due to the majority of the golf course proposals were intended for approval on agricultural land, area residents were not impacted as a result of the developments placed in sparsely populated areas. Any effects on the surrounding community as a result of the golf course application for development would therefore be felt more directly by the agricultural community. Not surprisingly then, the agricultural community emerged with serious concerns about golf course development.
in the area around their farming operations. This is similar to the "Related businesses" stakeholder group where they were less important as a result of locational circumstances. In the Lower Mainland it was agricultural land which was targeted for golf course development as opposed to land in residential areas.

Results—Part II.

Emergent themes or patterns and stakeholder management

This next section of the results contains information derived directly from the transcribed interviews with representatives of each stakeholder group. Every attempt has been made to not only extract as much information from these tapes as possible, but also to report it fairly. To this end, quotations have been inserted into the written narrative wherever possible.

Unfortunately, in the attempt to properly contextualize the information derived from each of the stakeholder groups on each of these questions, a certain amount of repetition in the narrative became unavoidable.
Stakeholder Goals and Objectives

Question #2- What were the goals and objectives of your organization with respect to golf course development?

Developers

A golf course development from the perspective of the developers stakeholder group is a business venture and the goal is to operate a viable business. According to those interviewed in this group, only one of the proposed golf courses was built and operated by the local government. All of the other proposals were built or were intended to be built with private funds, although the fact that one course was built with government money does not mean that development costs and eventual economic viability of the golf course operation were not important factors.

Developers were creative with their answers to this question so as to not appear "greedy" or take away from the importance of issues such as environmental considerations, but there were consistent references to development costs, project feasibility and the bottom line.

One developer in Delta made the following comments pertaining to his business philosophy and the fact he was one of the first with an application, but because of
bureaucratic delays his golf course was the last to be built.

"In business, I want to be either the first one in or the last one. As it was, I was pretty much the first one out of the blocks and the last one to get in. I was supposed to be the first one out of the blocks and that is the one that makes money because it is very difficult to be in the middle."

That same developer was looking to set a precedent as well as distinguish his golf course from all of the other proposals in Delta. To do this he negotiated with the local council and the agricultural community and agreed to put up substantial sums of money for the benefit of local farmers and wildlife compensation. This was not a requirement for approval. These were his comments concerning these payments,

"I was not bothered by paying the money to the Delta Farmers Institute (DFI) and the compensation money. I saw it as smart business. By paying this money I was setting a standard for those who followed me, because they too would then have to pay these costs to get their approval as well. There was something like 16 or 18 applications and this money separated my golf course from all of the others."

Another developer who built a golf course on non-agricultural land in Surrey which was part of a housing development made reference to the high costs associated with golf course development and the difficulty of gaining returns on investment with the following quote:

"The only reason we built this golf course was to create the best residential community in the Lower
Mainland. The golf course as a stand alone entity does not make any sense whatsoever. If it wasn’t for the residential component there would not be a golf course, plain and simple!"

Several other developers interviewed also made similar comments in reference to the high costs of development and the limited returns.

Another expressed goal of this stakeholder group was that the golf course they were building was of high quality and it was something they would be pleased to have built. The quality of the golf course will eventually be linked with its economic viability, but in many cases the developers were avid golfers and wanted their names to be associated with a high caliber golf course development. This is supported by the following comment:

"My main goal was to end up with a golf course that was enjoyable to play and to have something that we could be proud of."

**Local Government**

During the time period of all the activity on the golf development scene (1988-1991), local government councils decided the fate of all golf course applications. A change in provincial legislation in June 1988, meant this was the first time they had to deal with land use decisions pertaining to golf courses on agricultural land and this all
came about with little or no warning. Local councils had very little experience or decision making criteria in place for golf course developments on agricultural land, but also very limited experience in dealing with any proposals on agricultural land because of the former decision making power of the ALC.

The responses given by council members about their goals and objectives on these issues focused upon making proper decisions. They were in a position where they had to decide which golf course applications were worthy of consideration. The emphasis of their decision was placed upon the location of the proposed golf course as they were largely concerned about any possible negative impacts upon the surrounding areas of a proposal, specifically concerning the environment and agricultural land. The following two quotations summarize the concerns of two council members about farmland issues,

"...my goal would be to not allow golf courses into the heart of the farmland at any location in Delta."

"I think the first place the decision should be made was on the basis of the viability of the land for the purposes of agriculture."
Agricultural community and the ALC

The local agricultural community had a financial stake in any decisions made with respect to golf course developments on surrounding agricultural land. There is a slight variance in the objectives and goals of the Agricultural Land Commission and the local farming community in that the ALC is concerned with the long term feasibility of agriculture throughout the province whereas the local farmer tends to be more concerned with his own personal situation and the decisions made close to the location of his farming business.

The emphasis of this stakeholder group is upon the preservation of large tracts of high quality agricultural land which are instrumental to viable agriculture. In most cases, both the ALC and the local farmer would be in agreement that the development of golf courses pose a threat to the agriculture industry, but golf courses located appropriately, can have little or no impact on farming.

The following quotations from the ALC member interviewed for this study elicit the goals and objectives of this stakeholder group:

"Our (ALC) goal first and foremost is to protect the agricultural land base. Secondly, and sometimes
people do not realize this as an objective, is to encourage the establishment and maintenance of farms...We have been criticized from time to time that we have been meeting our first objective, but not our second objective and it is difficult in that context because we have limited powers under the legislation as to what we can or cannot do to encourage the establishment or maintenance of farms."

"The emphasis is on the preservation of the land base, that is a long term objective. Some of these lands may not be needed for food production for the next hundred years...it is a reserve for the future, but a lot of people do not understand that. They (developers) see vacant farmland and want to take it out and develop it."

The following quote from a member of the farming community in Delta also supports the above statements,

"We (Delta Farmers Institute) suggested that if the people wanted golf courses then we could handle one or two new courses being built. However, we also wanted to see that those courses went onto land which was not prime agricultural land and that they were located in places which would not disturb farming operations."

**Environmental groups**

The concerns of the Boundary Bay Conservation Committee and the Western Canada Wilderness Committee, the two organizations which protested vigorously against golf course developments, were largely in regards to wildlife habitat and the removal of farmland. The open, uncultivated farmland provides a food source for wildlife. The Boundary Bay area is within the "Pacific flyway" and, additionally,
serves as a wintering home for large populations of birds, as well as being a migratory funnel of great ornithological importance.

These organizations which were trying to stop the development of golf courses focused the majority of their energy on the courses in Delta, specifically those close to Boundary Bay. The Northview course in Surrey also met with heavy resistance in the form of a legal battle fought in the courts.

The main goal of the environmental and wildlife groups was to preserve the wildlife habitat and to stop the golf courses from being developed in areas which they saw as detrimental to wildlife. The persons interviewed from the two organizations which fought against the golf courses expressed their goals and objectives as trying to inform and educate the other stakeholder groups. Their efforts focused primarily on the local council through research studies conducted on the Boundary Bay area. The following quotations emphasize their perspectives:

"Our goal was to fight these things based on the facts. That is why we gathered all this information and we figured that once people knew about the importance of the area that they would listen and leave it alone. We wanted to educate people on the importance of the Boundary Bay area."
"With the BBCC we were very clear in that we worked with information...We really had to present to the public and to the politicians, data to prove or indicate beyond any doubt that this was detrimental to the ecosystem and we still operate that way."

Stakeholder attitudes and concerns

Question #3- From your own perspective, what were your concerns with regards to golf course development? What was the general attitude of your organization toward golf course developments and what were some of the frustrations and difficulties that you faced?

Developers

From the previous question as to the goals and objectives of the developers, it was evident that an application to develop a new golf course was a business proposition. Therefore, the concerns and frustrations of this group focused largely upon issues which had financial considerations, and which often had a connection with environmental or wildlife habitat complications. Another frustration of developers stemmed from the development constraints placed on ancillary buildings.

Many of the developers interviewed raised concerns about their frustrations over environmental and wildlife issues, which ultimately cost them time and money through the developmental approval process. Concern from the developers
stemmed largely from the increased costs to the development project, and related directly to underestimated budgets for environmental obstacles and a lack of planning and information.

Development planning and knowledge of the circumstances with respect to the environment were mixed, depending upon the developer. In the words of one developer,

"Other owners had to realize that the environmental side of things was becoming more and more serious and I think some owners were slow learners... In many cases I think that developers are often uninformed. They lack a great deal of knowledge in the business of golf and often overestimate the financial rewards."

A golf course development in Langley, although outside the study area, illustrates an example of a project which encountered all sorts of problems because of poor planning and disregard for the environment. In the developers' haste to gain project approval they agreed to specific environmental restrictions and then chose to ignore them and it ultimately cost them a $250,000 fine. The following quotation is taken from an interview with an employee of the developers who became involved with the development following the approval of the golf course,

"It was frustrating trying to solve some of these problems after the fact when they should never have come up... They agreed to this and they agreed to that, they were more interested in getting the
approval than what those approvals meant... They should have spent more time, had better advice, and then they would not have had some of the problems.”

Developers also cited frustrations with some of the existing studies and information available at that time over development costs and anticipated revenues. This can be partially blamed upon the fact that there had been very limited golf course development during the previous two decades and there was a lack of experienced people in the industry and no previous figures to overlook.

One of the developers interviewed came across with very strong viewpoints with respect to government intervention in reference to wildlife habitat disturbances. He stated,

“I guess I would be a hell of a lot more pissed off if I was a logger in Washington State and I just lost everything I owned because of some friggin’ spotted owl that isn’t worth anything and if we didn’t have one who the hell would care anyway. Maybe it is just an excuse to save the forest, and they just don’t want to go through the fights of all the reasons of why they want to do it, but when you shut down an entire industry for a friggin’ bird that is that high and has absolutely no use to man other than there is one, then go figure.”

Developers also had concerns about the limited opportunity to build facilities in addition to the golf course, particularly ancillary developments such as clubhouses, hotel or resort style accommodations and housing projects. While golf courses were a permitted use of agricultural
land, any of these other types of development which may have been planned in conjunction with the golf course development were still subject to ALC approval if they were slated for agricultural land use. Clubhouses were usually seen as a necessary building within the development and were permitted, although there were usually concerns with respect to clubhouse size. Other types of ancillary development related to the golf course application were generally not approved by the ALC, much to the disappointment of developers who often required these other pieces in the development puzzle in order to finance the whole development.

These thoughts are summarized in the following comment from a developer,

"Some of the frustrations also related to the constraints imposed in part by the ALC because you were trying to build a golf course with other amenities that you think suited what should happen and which would create a country club kind of atmosphere."

Local government/council

All of the council members indicated that they were not opposed to golf courses, but the key factor was properly locating the golf course to minimize impacts upon agriculture and the environment. The difficulty for the
local councils lay in trying to sort through all of the proposals and choosing the best one. One of the council members who was not particularly in favor of the golf courses stated the following,

"Because of all the controversy, because so many golf courses were inappropriately proposed to be located I’ve always said that I wish one would come along where we could approve one because I certainly don’t have anything against golf courses, I just don’t want to see them for the reasons I have stated out in the middle of farmland."

The local councils were most concerned with the possible impacts that a golf course development might have upon surrounding agricultural lands, the environment and wildlife habitat. There was also concern from council pertaining to the possibility of further development because so many of the golf courses in Surrey and Delta were proposed on agricultural land and the rules and regulations connected to the ALR did not allow for this to occur.

There was also a certain skepticism expressed by council members in both Surrey and Delta with regards to the intentions and integrity of some of the proponents behind the golf course applications. This can also be linked to the above information pertaining to the golf course as the fine edge of the wedge of development. Councils must be cautious of the developers they deal with in any development
project for fear of being exploited and their own reputations tarnished.

Council members all stated their concerns about the possibility of a developer with intentions of receiving approval and then flipping the land soon afterwards for large profits. On this point, one of the Surrey council members interviewed stated,

"There were a lot of proposals that were just speculators, they had no concern for the community or for the ALR. They were just looking to make a lot of money. Many of the valid applications suffered because of the speculators looking to make a quick buck."

A Delta council member made the following comments with regards to his faith in a Delta developer and his thoughts on those who might have intentions of flipping a land development,

"The developer had told me all along that he wanted to build a golf course. It was his land and he wanted to build a golf course, he was not going to flip it. I hate 'flippers'.”

A local council is not a unified group because each member has been elected individually, therefore there are differing opinions and viewpoints amongst council members on matters on which they make decisions. Surrey council was very divided over the golf course development proposals and in Delta almost the entire council was replaced in the
municipal elections (Nov. 1990) during this crucial period of time. In the words of one Surrey council member,

"It was very frustrating trying to resolve our differences in an atmosphere that could best be described as a shouting match of obscenities. A lot of this had nothing to do with the truth, but who could bamboozle who and the logical and scientific arguments carried little weight."

**Environmental and wildlife groups**

The concerns of this stakeholder group focused primarily on wildlife issues and the loss of farmland as old field habitat. The fear of this stakeholder group was that golf courses which displaced farmland would have adverse effects upon the raptors and wintering birds in the Surrey and Delta area. The sheer number of proposals certainly elevated these concerns.

There was also a concern that a golf course might be the edge of the wedge with regards to more urban style developments. This concern was shared also by the local council, the ALC and local farmers. In the words of one of the individuals interviewed,

"Once you start segmenting the ALR, you create huge problems for farming and not only that, that gives the owners more credence to get their land out of the ALR."
The wildlife and environmental representatives interviewed did not express any positive views towards golf courses or any possible benefits accruing from them that would benefit the environment or the wildlife, although they did suggest that they were not opposed to golf courses when they were appropriately located.

**Agricultural community and ALC**

The ALC had strong concerns because the change in the approval process removed their decision making authority for golf courses on agricultural land, yet their mandate was to preserve agricultural land throughout the province. Soon after the Order In Council had been passed, local councils began to receive several applications and many which had no real consideration for agriculture. The following comments summarize the concerns of the ALC on this situation:

"The concern was that it was basically a field day (time period between 1988-91)...During the period when applications were reviewed and approved by the ALC there was a self-policing mechanism."

"There are a variety of concerns that we had depending to a large extent upon locational circumstances...poorer soils, in isolated pockets, on the edge of the ALR, an opportunity to act as a buffer against non-farming uses and in those cases it may be completely appropriate."
The agricultural community in Delta, where there were several proposals, were also concerned about the location and possible impacts resulting from the development of new golf courses. Their concerns were in agreement with the ALC in that the new golf courses were properly located. The Delta Farmers Institute did have consultation and input with Delta council on deciding possible golf course locations. A member of the DFI and local Delta farmer made the following comment with respect to these issues,

"If the people wanted golf courses, we could live with two new golf courses in Delta and they should go on the poorest agricultural land. They should go in places where they would not interrupt farming operations."

The attitudes and concerns of the ALC and local farming community are also evident in responses to question #5, which deals with the change in the application process and its effects.

**Stakeholder interaction and management**

*Question #4*—Was there ever any interaction or negotiation between your group and some of the other stakeholder groups that you have identified? If so, what were the results of this communication?

**Developers**

The majority of stakeholder interaction for the developers occurred with the local council. At the end of the day it was council who would approve or deny their application,
therefore the developer had to see to it that council knew everything they needed to know with regards to the application and that they were satisfied with the proposal. The developer then had to deal with these areas of concern.

Stakeholder interaction and meetings with the other stakeholders were rare and often met with limited success. Most of the developers interviewed suggested that negotiating with the environmental and wildlife groups was useless because these groups were unwilling to negotiate or compromise. One of the developers involved with Northview in Surrey suggested,

"Where is the line of compromise? Some of these environmental people, how do you go about dealing with them? They are not interested in deals?"

This same developer compared the "fast track" approach that Northview took in comparison to another golf course which made efforts to appease other stakeholder groups. The other golf course was eventually unsuccessful because of the time that was consumed by this approach and secondly because of the golf course moratorium enacted in 1991 canceled all current golf course proposals that did not have final approval from their local council.

In the case of a golf course application in Delta, Boundary Shores, the developer went through lengthy court battles
with some of the environmental and wildlife groups and his comments echo those of the developer at Northview regarding the difficulty of dealing with these groups and the resultant time delays,

“There was no communication between the environmental people and my people. It was all decided by the courts eventually. I had nothing to negotiate with them. The Municipality was the one who set the direction. They are the one’s who wanted to do all these studies that took so much time.”

Other developers suggested that difficulties arising from the interests of other stakeholders were limited because applications for golf courses outside Surrey and Delta did not have the wildlife habitat issues that those golf courses in Surrey and Delta faced.

In the case of the Morgan Creek development in Surrey, the developer said that their application was received well by council and that they had cooperation through the process. Not only did this proposal appear after the turbulent times of the Northview application, but it was also not on agricultural land and met with many of the guidelines set forth by Surrey council for golf course development.

For the developers stakeholder group, it was evident that there was very little discussion held with any of the other stakeholders other than local council. Therefore, most of
the contact that did occur between developers and other stakeholder groups occurred at the public hearing. This setting is not an ideal one for meaningful negotiation and dialogue to take place. One of the developers interviewed who acted more in the capacity of a consultant gave these thoughts comparing a public hearing scenario and a planning session organized in Delta,

"I remember going to some planning sessions where they had these environmental groups, they had the DFI, people from the golf course community and other interested citizens that came. Something like that was good because it had some balance to it. This wasn't just someone standing up in the back screaming and yelling which is what happens at some of the public hearings. Here there was no proper discussion because as soon as somebody said something that was against what the environmentalists had to say they would shout it down just from sheer numbers."

**Local government/council**

The local governments were the decision makers on golf course applications from June 1988-November 1991 and therefore had contact with all the various stakeholder groups. The local councils were thus in a position to attempt to balance all the information and conflicting arguments in order to make a decision on what they thought was the best application according to their criteria and which would be most beneficial to their community.
The developers and environmental groups chose to deal primarily with the local councils because in each of their opinions they saw the other as unwilling to negotiate and any sort of compromise was unattainable. The ALC also entered into dialogue with local councils to express their interests over any potential losses of agricultural land. Councils welcomed a relationship with the ALC because of their limited experience dealing with golf course applications and their lack of criteria and reference guidelines.

It was interesting to note council members comments with regards to some of the difficulties they encountered in managing their relationships with some of the environmental groups. This was also a complaint often heard from those in the developers stakeholder group. In the words of a Surrey council member,

"The environmentalists did not support the golf course and I appreciate their point of view, but I also feel that their feelings were: ‘No golf courses anywhere, they are environmentally unsound and that birds were more important than people.’ Tourism and economic development were bad words. When I have to hit that extreme, I go beyond listening. I think some people got a little fed up with the extremism and they know that there has to be a happy medium."

A Delta council member reiterated these comments,

"The environmental community has not learned to compromise...They hug a tree. Well you are not solving anything...Compromise works in relationships..."
with people where you have a dispute you can solve and you can walk away having made a decision. Compromise you end up with both people being happy. There must be conflict resolution at some point in time.”

**Environmental and wildlife groups**

Any interaction that this group had with other stakeholder groups occurred in conjunction with the local council. The approach taken by this group was similar to that taken by the developers because it was the councils who would make the final decision whether a golf course proposal proceeded or not. There was little or no interaction with developers because from the point of view of the environmental groups there was nothing to negotiate. When asked if there was ever any effort made to contact or negotiate with any of the developers the respondent replied,

“This was all done through the municipality, there was not much done onto the actual proponents. We didn’t really get too involved with them at all...basically your concern is with city hall.”

These environmental groups are quite cynical and cautious of the developers because they were aware of the potential financial rewards that a golf course or other type of development could bring to a developer. Referring to previous experience in stakeholder meetings one person stated,
"I go to meetings all nights of the week, you name it, and basically it is to get all the stakeholders around the table. You have all these discussions and in the end they do what they want anyway...they don't listen to you, they don't care...they're just playing the game."

Further skepticism from an environmental perspective is shown in the following quotation:

"From an environmental point of view the stakeholder concept is sort of sitting down and you've got this pie and you are going to divide it up. But from an environmental point of view once you start dividing up the pie it is like cutting up the baby, you destroy it."

These groups stated that their initial intentions were to educate the local councils and make them aware of the threats posed by golf course developments and its potential possible harm to wildlife. In Delta they claimed that the former council did not listen to them and they then put pressure on that council via the media and public hearing process. When an almost entirely new council was elected, the environmental groups cited progress in their relationship with council and the local agricultural community through the formation of an environmental advisory committee and the establishment of the Delta Farmland and Wildlife Trust.
**Agricultural community and ALC**

This stakeholder group showed evidence that it was willing to negotiate with other stakeholders. In Delta, the agricultural community had an established relationship with Delta council through an organization, the Delta Farmers Institute. There was no equivalent type organization in Surrey. The DFI provided the local farmers an opportunity to voice their concerns with council and in the case of the Boundary Shores golf course, the DFI were successful in negotiating the installment of an irrigation system to benefit farmers in the area of the golf course. This came about through negotiations with the developer, council and the DFI.

The farmers in Delta also established a working relationship with the wildlife groups following some of the land use controversies, including the golf course issues. With reference to the established relationship between farmers and wildlife groups, a member of the DFI stated,

"Farmers and the wildlife people came together after much of these controversies and decided that we shouldn’t be fighting anymore. If there was not any farmland, there would not be any wildlife."

The ALC was left in a difficult position during the time the legislative process for golf course development approval was changed. They had previously controlled all applications
for golf courses on agricultural land and this was no longer the case (between 1988-1991) and they were threatened by this. Therefore, with developers no longer coming to the ALC for approval of their golf courses, the ALC set about working with local councils, most of whom had never really encountered these types of applications. The ALC recognized that because of the change in legislation, the local councils were about to receive many applications to build golf courses. A member of the ALC who was interviewed said,

"We alerted the local governments saying the flood gates are about to burst here, be aware that this is coming and it will fall on your shoulders, you are going to have a flurry of activity. We were successful in convincing the GVRD of that fact and it was not just us because at that point Delta was clearly feeling the brunt of it."

Through their discussions with the local governments the ALC was able to help in the development of guidelines and regulations for golf course development.

What was interesting and contradictory within this stakeholder group was that although there had been negotiation and understanding between the local agricultural community in Delta and the wildlife groups, the ALC remained confused with the environmental groups heavy resistance to all the golf course proposals. The following quote is in reference to this,
"Environmental groups are a stakeholder, although I can't really offer any insight into that because it is somewhat confusing to me why they seem to have an almost adamant abhorrence for golf courses. We are not necessarily anti-golf course, but in the proper place at the proper time. Whereas the environmental group seems to me to be saying no golf courses anywhere."

Changes in the process and their effects

Question #5- As a result of the new legislation, the process for golf course development approval was significantly changed. What are your thoughts about these changes and what were the effects?

Developers

The change in provincial government legislation transferring the power to approve golf course developments on agricultural land from the ALC to the local governments was seen as a good opportunity for those looking to build a new golf course. Under the previous situation where the ALC was in control, developers knew that the process of acquiring approval for their proposals was too difficult and too expensive. The ALC was against any development which included large parcels of agricultural land and an average golf course would require somewhere around 150 acres. Therefore, with local councils now given the authority to make land use decisions concerning golf courses (1988-1991) on agricultural land, developers thought they saw a route to approval which was possibly easier than had previously been
the case, especially since the new Order in Council specified golf courses to be an appropriate use of agricultural land.

The opportunity to gain approval may have been easier with the local councils in control rather than the ALC, but this too, became increasingly more difficult as time passed because of the flood of golf course proposals submitted to council. Delta received 18 applications and Surrey received 14 applications to develop new golf courses between 1988 and 1991, and this concerned and threatened some of the other stakeholders as well as council members themselves. The high number of proposals created in the words of one developer, "a political football", for council to deal with.

The number of proposals caused delays in the review of applications and the local councils had few established criteria for evaluating the individual proposals. In essence, what had happened was that the developers had done a disservice to one another with all of their individual applications and their rush to get approval. At the time, developers were concerned primarily with their own applications, although those developers who were interviewed could see where the problem lay from the perspective of the local council. A second problem in addition to the flood of
applications became evident when all of those proposals that were approved were opened at relatively the same time.

The following quote is from a developer who touches upon the rise in the popularity of golf, the golf course development circumstances in the Lower Mainland and the problems created,

“We are in a niche here that is even stronger than any other area in all of North America because we have restricted the building or development of any new golf courses. So we have created a market niche that is even goofier! So in doing all that, you look at it and wonder how can I lose? And really, I guess, ultimately maybe you can’t, until you build 25 more golf courses!”

While most developers initially saw the opportunity to develop a golf course as a viable business and development opportunity on a long term basis, there were others who went in with the intention of making money immediately because of the market situation at the time. One of the persons interviewed in this stakeholder group was involved in the building of a golf course and not in the application process where mistakes were made as a result of the owners haste to obtain approval. This person acted as a consultant to the owners and offered expertise from a golf course development point of view. The original owners eventually bailed out and in his words,

“They never looked at this thing on an operational basis. They built it to flip it.”
The change in legislation allowing for golf courses to be built on agricultural land subject only to the approval of the local council came at a time when interest in the game was near an all time high while the number of golf courses in the Lower Mainland had been constant for several years. Both Delta and Surrey were inundated with proposals for new golf course developments and there was no real warning about the change in the approval process. This was a serious problem because the local councils had no experience, and no guidelines or regulations to go by because the ALC had always handled all land use proposals on agricultural land.

The four council members interviewed all cited their frustrations with the provincial government of the day and their decision to remove the decision making power from the ALC.

One council member stated,

"Frustrating to me was the fact that the Order In Council opened the floodgates and therefore dumped all these people on the doorstep of municipal hall and we had very few tools in which to deal with them."

Another interviewee from this stakeholder group stated,
"We had very few applications for golf courses under the original process and the permission of the ALC made it difficult to oppose a project. When the ALC was left out of the equation I was left in a much weakened position where I could not rely on, and lacked a source of informed opinion. I have relied very heavily on the advice of the ALC and have taken that almost as an absolute. They were the experts."

Delta council began their review process of proposals by acting upon some of the proposals that they had received initially, this then eventually became a problem for them as the number of proposals increased. The decision to take action upon the early applications resulted in mounting pressure for council from all stakeholder groups as the number of proposals increased. Surrey council chose a different route and did not act on any of their applications until they had solidified specific criteria for reviewing golf course proposals.

Commenting on the number of proposals that were received a Delta council member had this to say,

"We could not really come to any decisions and we got so many applications we were almost stalled or paralyzed with what we could do."

That same Delta council member also reacted to the pressure from developers submitting the applications,

"The pressure was overwhelming from the people who wanted to develop golf courses. And the money they were spending on environmental studies, dealing with the agricultural society to do with the farmer issues...They were looking for some decisions."
Surrey council was also subject to pressure from the developers, but not to the degree faced by council in Delta. One reason, was Surrey council’s decision to formulate developmental guidelines, as one of the Surrey council members pointed out,

"We felt that the guidelines would help the developer assess whether they wanted to invest more money in following this process. If we could tell them early in the process that it does not look likely that your proposal had a lot of chance of getting through because it does not fit with our guidelines, that would help them, but would also help us with the backlog."

**Environmental and wildlife groups**

Representatives from this stakeholder group obviously had concerns as a result of the change in legislation regarding golf course applications. These people saw the change in process as a threat to their interests. The ALC had a history and consistency in their decision making on land development issues which was in the best interests of agriculture, but usually also met with the approval of the environment and wildlife groups.

In the opinion of this stakeholder group, the removal of the ALC from the decision making process eliminated this consistency. The local councils were separate entities and
were unpredictable in their views towards, and handling of, golf course developments.

**Agricultural community and the ALC**

The change in the approval process threatened and heavily impacted upon the ALC. Their mandate is to preserve the agricultural land base throughout the province and a single full sized golf course development usually requires a large acreage (minimum of 150 acres).

With the ALC no longer in control to approve golf course applications, the flood gates opened and developers overwhelmed councils around the province with proposals on agricultural land. The number of the proposals and the land area they covered was a severe concern to the ALC. The fact that golf course projects also often include additional facilities such as hotels, housing developments or other recreational facilities also threatened the ALC.

The drastic increase in the number of golf course proposals is evident from the following quote,

"In the 10 years prior to 1988, we had 70 applications, or about 7 per year. In around 1991, there were somewhere around 50 applications per year."
While the ALC were in control of the approval process, developers tended to focus applications on land around the perimeter of the ALR and poorer quality soils, but following the change in legislation this changed and developers looked for locations which proved to be more invasive upon agricultural land and therefore land which was less expensive to acquire.

An employee of the ALC who was interviewed made the following comments about the transformed perspective of developers following the change in the approval process,

"People that wanted to build a golf course in the ALR would say, 'I know I need the approval of the commission, but let's be reasonable about this, obviously if I go buy the biggest farm in Delta and come to the ALC and tell them I want to convert it, it probably won't sit very well with them. Maybe if I look at this other farm which is kind of marginal and not as high quality land, they might have a bit more sympathy with that.' In that sense it was a bit more self-policing as prospective developers given the range of three or four sites would probably opt for the one which was the worst from an agricultural perspective in the hopes the commission would be sympathetic and allow the proposal. Then when the regulations changed it was open house. It was like, "Well we no longer need the approval of the commission so WOW, where is the cheapest land I can buy, I do not care if it is in the middle of the farming community, I don't care if it is the most productive orchard in the Okanagan. It is other locational factors and the price of land which would determine where they would go. In the Municipality of Delta they had something like 13 applications and 18 proposals. I remember that at one time we sort of plotted these things on a map and I thought, my god, there is not a whole lot left of Delta when you consider the average golf course is around 160 acres or so."
The change in the approval process had effects upon the agricultural community in slightly different ways than it did for the ALC. The golf course proposals also threatened the local farmers because these were non-agricultural uses proposed for agricultural land, but for some of the farmers this was seen as an opportunity. The reality of the ALR is that the land prices are considerably less than those outside of the reserve because the land is restricted for agricultural purposes only. This change in legislation allowed for the use of substantial amounts of land other than for agriculture. Therefore, some farmers were interested from the point of view that developers were now willing to pay higher than normal prices for their land because their intended development was not agricultural.

This created some divisions amongst the farmers, but also led to problems for those who entered into agreements with developers pending approval. Some farmers agreed to sell their land for a set price to a developer upon project approval, but lengthy delays in approval (and numerous proposals) left some farmers in a difficult situation. Farmers did not want to invest money into their agricultural business if the land was going to be sold, but by not doing
so they were hurting their farming operations in the short term.

One of the farmers interviewed knew of the opportunity which was present at the time in Delta, but suggested that the farmers in his area were aware of the situation and made the following comments about developers offering attractive sums of money for farmland,

"There was a fair amount of that, although there were no concrete offers. Everybody in Ladner knew the story of Mayfair Lakes in Richmond and how they were having a heck of a time trying to make any money. Ladner farmers knew that story so they were not starry eyed that a golf course was not going to be an incredible gold mine...Many of the people here are worldly people and they were not about to get sucked in."

Possible ways to improve the approval process

Question #6- In your opinion, how could the approval process be improved?

Developers

The developers responses to this question focused on the knowledge and experience gained from the recent growth period of golf facilities in the Lower Mainland. Prior to this recent rapid expansion of golf course supply in the Lower Mainland, only 3 golf courses had been built in the previous two decades. The result was a high demand for
opportunities to play golf which placed considerable strain upon existing golf courses. More importantly, this created a dearth of experience, expertise and information for guiding the present day developer.

Stakeholders from this group identified problems relating to lack of experience in three different areas: quality information, the growth process and environmental difficulties. All three of these factors are present in the following quote,

"First off we are going to have better information and this will allow you to get rid of the fear mongering to a certain extent. We will also have the experience, we will better understand what sort of issues are important to people. I think there will be a better sense of how some of these tradeoffs can take place."

Developers cited several problems, such as the need for accurate information about golf course development in such areas as budgets and revenues as well as statistical data outlining the demographics of golfers and trends associated with the growth of the game. With very little recent development of golf courses in the Lower Mainland until this time, many of these developers were left in the dark, especially over the environmental concerns of the day and the costs associated with being environmentally responsible. There was a consensus that many development budgets underestimated development costs and overestimated revenues.
The growth process and the fact that all of these new golf courses were to be built at the same time was also an area of concern where developers thought improvements could be made in the future. Prior to the change in legislation concerning the approval process of golf courses, the ALC were quite rigid in what they would approve and what they would not. This in part led to a shortage in the supply of golf facilities in the Lower Mainland which ultimately coincided with an increased popularity in the game, but the change in legislation which opened the floodgates for golf course development meant that too many golf courses were built at one time thereby reversing the supply and demand imbalance. This was great for golfers, but potentially difficult for the developers who had financed the project. A change in legislation making it easier to get a golf course development approved resulted in a flurry of golf course proposals as developers raced to get their golf course approved and built first.

As one developer stated,

"The reason for this problem was that you had this orderly system that took place with the ALC. The Order In Council broke the natural flow and there was no longer any order or sense of control."

Another developer concurred making the following comment,
"It was a strange situation that for so many years there were so few golf courses. I do not think we will ever get back into that situation again where we have so many projects looking to come in...Hopefully people will learn from their past mistakes, there was no way all those projects were going to be built in the first place."

Also, once the NDP provincial government came into power in 1991, they initiated a moratorium on all golf course applications and eventually allowed all proposals that had been granted approval by their respective councils to proceed. They also stated that any of these approved courses had to be "substantially" completed within two years or their approval might be revoked. Those golf courses that had received approval, but were then caught in the moratorium and not allowed to do any construction or development on the golf course, had to be basically completed in two years. This meant that all of these golf courses opened for play at basically the same time. In the words of one of the developers interviewed,

"That caused a problem. If they (NDP) had not said that, then maybe these courses would have come on board on a more staggered basis. All of a sudden everyone had to get underway and everyone had to get built...and then everyone comes on the market at the same time."

The most recent phase of golf course development in the Lower Mainland came at a time when public awareness of environmental issues was on the rise. In the past, the general public as well as governments were largely unaware
of what sort of harm developments of any kind were doing to the environment and wildlife, whereas in recent times this is one of the first considerations. Most golf courses built in the past did not face environmental restrictions or regulations and golf courses as a whole were perceived as "environmentally friendly", which was not completely accurate. As a result, golf course developers of today must consider any environmental implications that might be associated with their proposal.

Two developers made the following remarks pertaining to this,

"Developers must get a measure of the environmental considerations. You can no longer stick your head in the sand and hope for the best...There is also a serious underestimating of budgets for environmental concerns as we went through."

"Experience will be a benefit to improve the development process in the future. I have learned a lot through the process. Despite working at golf courses all of my life, I did not realize how environmentaly threatening a golf course was."

**Local government/Council**

The large increase in the demand to develop golf courses was a result of the change in legislation which transferred the power of approval from the ALC to the local government in which the golf course was proposed. According to those
council members interviewed in this study this decision came about with little warning and most had no idea of what was about to happen with respect to the large number of proposals, especially in Surrey and Delta. Therefore, the local councils were inundated with proposals for golf courses and had relatively no experience in dealing with the applications and few criteria on which to evaluate these proposals.

Eventually (1991) the legislation which initiated all of the activity on the golf development front reverted back to the initial process whereby the ALC once again held the power to approve golf course proposals. This was generally met with satisfaction from the council members interviewed because of all the difficulties they had experienced during the three year period in which they were in control of the process. Therefore, the decision to reinstate the ALC with the power over golf course application approval was seen as an improvement in the process.

In the case of one Delta council member, the original decision to give decision making power to local government was initially seen as a positive one, but this attitude changed with time:

"You hate to say that you have to take the decision making out of your area in order to get something
done...the ALC can make decisions because you cannot apply the same pressure whereas you can really apply pressure to a municipal council.”

Another Delta council member saw the change back to the original process as the only real necessary improvement and stated,

"With the ALC back in its rightful place, I think the system for approval is good and as it should be."

One of the Surrey council members agreed with the reinstatement of the ALC, but also suggested,

"I would like to see better rules and regulations, yet flexibility within the ALC."

Experience and knowledge of golf course development and the application process were identified by the developer stakeholder group as a way that the process would be better in the future and this was also identified by the local government stakeholder group. Again, there were very few golf courses built in the 1970’s and 1980’s, therefore there was little information or past history to go by.

Another suggestion from a Surrey council member called for further improvements including continued long range community planning which included more detail about recreational land uses, and specifically golf courses.
Environmental and wildlife groups

This stakeholder group was in agreement with the local government stakeholder group in that they were pleased when the ALC were reinstated to make decisions pertaining to golf course proposals on agricultural land. The thought here was that the ALC had previously ruled on golf course applications and had consistency and criteria in their decision making, but also the goals and objectives of the ALC to preserve farmland met with the approval of these groups.

Members of the wildlife groups also suggested that from their perspective improvements had already begun as a result of the golf course issues and other land use problems, specifically in Delta. An almost entirely new council replaced the previous council in Delta following the period of the golf course proposals—a council which was more receptive to these environmental and wildlife groups. This Delta council set up an environmental advisory committee and there was also the emergence of what is known as the “Delta Farmland and Wildlife Trust.”

While the environmental groups were pleased with the improvements made in Delta they also suggested that an environmental review committee should be established to
evaluate proposals in all locations. It was suggested that while the ALC reviewed applications from an agricultural perspective, there was a void in the process whereby a secondary review should address issues such as wildlife habitat. It could be argued that this occurs via the governmental agencies such as the Ministry of the Environment or the Department of Fisheries and Oceans.

Overall these groups were happy with the changes made by the “new” Delta council and would like to see the same ideas put in place in other jurisdictions. As stated by one of those interviewed,

“If there were genuine concerns and genuine planning it could be done right. That is what a council like Delta’s is trying to do now. I think a municipality like Delta sent out the message to developers that if you are going to come here, you are going to have to deal with these committees and you are going to have to do things properly.”

Agricultural community and ALC

This stakeholder group had very few suggestions as to how the process could be improved. This is obviously due to the ALC being reinstated with the decision making power throughout the province over golf course applications on agricultural land. Therefore the ALC were pleased that they were back in control and the agricultural community were satisfied because the ALC was seen to be acting in the best interests of agriculture.
CHAPTER VI-DISCUSSION

Introduction

The following section builds upon the results that are analyzed for emergent themes and patterns evident in the responses to interview questions by members of the various stakeholder groups. The perspectives of stakeholder groups concerning various issues need not necessarily be in agreement, but simply illustrate what their concerns and opinions are pertaining to a given topic. For example, the developers interviewed have contradictory viewpoints to those respondents from the environmental group over the use of agricultural land. Also in this section, the stakeholder literature is re-visited as it applies to issues pertaining to golf course development.

Stakeholder Identification and Salience

Mitchell, Agle, and Wood (1997), offer a theory of stakeholder identification and salience which has been previously outlined. They suggest that a stakeholder’s importance to an organization’s success and achievement of their goals and objectives is dependent upon the stakeholder’s possession of three attributes: power, legitimacy, and urgency. The greater the number of
attributes that the stakeholder possesses, the greater the stakeholder’s salience.

In this section, the four major stakeholder groups emerging from the study on golf course development are analyzed with respect to these three attributes. A summary in point form is presented in Figure 1.

Developers
The developer was the source of the proposal for golf course development, therefore the actions of all other stakeholder groups were in reaction to the developer’s application to build a golf course. The power of this group was considerable in that they were in control over where the application to develop the golf course was located, and they controlled the design and layout of the golf course. Combined with these factors was considerable financial backing to develop the golf course.

The developers legitimacy lay in that there was a need for new golf courses to be built in the Lower Mainland and the new legislation which had been passed to allow them to make applications to build these golf courses on agricultural land.
There was urgency as the developers wanted their applications approved quickly so that they could benefit from the existing market conditions which showed the supply of golf courses to trail the demand to play. As a result of all the applications to build new golf courses it was important to be amongst those approved early and there was also a fear that this opportunity would only be available for a limited period of time because of concerns over, and opposition to, the new legislation. This proved to be true when the provincial NDP came into power in 1991 and removed the legislation allowing golf courses to be built on agricultural land.

Local governments

The local councils held authoritative power because they were the ultimate decision making authority in the process. As a result they were the focus of lobbying and pressure from the other stakeholder groups wishing to voice their opinions and concerns.

Local council's legitimacy was a direct result of their election by constituency they represented. They were in that position to best guard the interests of their municipality in cases involving difficult and controversial land development decisions.
The urgency for this group came about because of the steadily increasing number of proposals received from developers seeking action and the pressure from other interest groups with serious concerns about development approval.

The Agricultural Stakeholder Group

The agricultural community in Delta have greater power than the farmers in Surrey. Farmers in Delta have an association, the Delta Farmers Institute, which gives them a representative voice to Delta council, whereas in Surrey there was no equivalent type of organization to represent Surrey farmers. In the case of Delta, local council recognized the legitimacy and resultant power of farmer concerns by soliciting their opinions and being receptive to discussing matters with the DFI concerning potential golf course development on the land surrounding farms in Delta.

The ALC had limited power in the process of golf course approval during this time (1988-1991), but their previous 15 years of decision making power over golf course applications and their enduring mandate to preserve agricultural land was not disregarded by local councils. Probably the most important aspect of power that the ALC maintained through
this period was through the stipulation that any golf course development which included housing or other forms of ancillary development on ALR land needed their approval. Therefore, any developer hoping to help finance the golf course development in combination with a housing project still needed to acquire approval from the ALC for the housing component of the development. There were speculative projects which included ancillary components to the golf course development, but quite often the developer did not pursue the project because of the power the ALC maintained over the ancillary portion of the development. Without the subsidiary component, the development of the golf course was often not economically feasible from the developer's perspective.

The agricultural group possessed legitimacy because the majority of the golf courses proposed were on agricultural land adjacent to farming operations in Delta and Surrey and these numerous applications threatened to decrease the overall agricultural land base of the ALR. Furthermore, the agricultural land in these two areas is amongst the best farmland in the country and these applications threatened to convert the land to a non-agricultural use.
There was also an element of urgency present because the golf course development applications were being reviewed by local councils across the province in numbers that had never been experienced before. The change in legislation pertaining to golf course approval came about very quickly and without warning to any of the stakeholders involved. The reaction from potential developers was quick and subsequently they were seeking expeditious approval after submitting their application to local council. The speed in which everything occurred threatened the local agricultural community and the ALC.

The Environmental and Wildlife Stakeholder Group

The environmental and wildlife groups were in possession of considerable power since as a group they were well organized and committed to their cause and able to successfully attract the attention of the media thereby placing considerable pressure on the developer and the local council. Their strong ability to effectively lobby their concerns over the threat to the environment and wildlife gave them positional power. In the case of the previous Delta council, the wildlife groups did not possess a strong link or voice because that council chose to override their concerns, but that changed with the election of a new Delta
council in November 1990. This new council were elected in large part because of their position regarding the environment and wildlife issues and an anti-development platform compared to the previous council. The wildlife groups subsequently had more power with this council in place and paths of communication were created through various environmental and wildlife committees.

In Surrey, there was no real evidence of power for these groups because there were no significant wildlife issues brought forward with the same intensity and resistance as was the case in Delta. There were unsuccessful legal actions taken against the Northview project which referred to the same 'flyway' issue present in Delta, but nothing in Surrey was comparable to the opposition created in Delta.

This stakeholder group's legitimacy lay in their claim that wildlife was at risk if the golf course developments were allowed to proceed. The case for legitimacy was made stronger in Delta than in Surrey by the wildlife organizations there. The legitimate issues were obviously the 'Delta flyway' and the endangerment of a species known as the 'Townsend's vole'. This type of vole is a rodent found in Delta farmlands and serves as the main food source for the raptors wintering in the area. The development of
golf courses would replace large tracts of old, field habitat where the voles are prevalent and would therefore endanger the species, and ultimately the raptors.

They also possessed urgency in the same manner in which the agricultural group did because of the their strong feelings on the situation and the time sensitivity dictated by the developers to which they were responding.

The accompanying table (Figure 4.1) summarizes the four main stakeholder groups and their saliency as stakeholders. It is apparent that all four stakeholders (each identified by the other three as impacting on the proposal approval process) possess considerable salience and in the absence of proper stakeholder management to take into consideration stakeholder concerns, they were bound to collide with one anothers’ positions creating confusion and chaos.

The salience of these four stakeholder groups identified through the interview process can be contrasted with those stakeholders initially identified through the literature as potentially having a stake in the development of more golf courses. A case in point is the golfing public whose salience might have been thought to have been a factor of importance in influencing the decision making process.
However, their salience was compromised by a total lack of organization and knowledge or awareness of environmental issues particularly, and how to counteract them.

**Figure 6.1**

**STAKEHOLDER ATTRIBUTES OF POWER, LEGITIMACY AND URGENCY**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STAKEHOLDERS</th>
<th>POWER</th>
<th>LEGITIMACY</th>
<th>URGENCY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LOCAL COUNCILS</td>
<td>♦ Ultimate decision making authority</td>
<td>♦ Elected body representing constituency interests</td>
<td>♦ Need to sort through and make decisions on multiple proposals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>♦ Source of proposals</td>
<td>♦ Public’s need/demand for new golf courses.</td>
<td>♦ Heed stakeholder concerns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>♦ Financial backing</td>
<td>♦ Order in Council opened flood gates</td>
<td>♦ Lengthy hearing process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>♦ In control of golf course location and design of golf course.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DEVELOPERS</td>
<td>♦ Organized and committed</td>
<td>♦ Pacific Flyway *1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>♦ Authoritative on issues</td>
<td>♦ Species endangerment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>♦ Access to media on emotional issues</td>
<td>♦ Fertilizer &amp; pesticide pollution &amp; runoff</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WILDLIFE &amp; ENVIRONMENTAL GROUPS</td>
<td>♦ Agency controlled *2  ♦ Local voice of farmers  ♦ ALC control over ancillary development</td>
<td>♦ Loss of high quality agricultural land</td>
<td>♦ Counteract flood of proposals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>♦ Loss of high quality agricultural land</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>♦ Threat of a reduction of ALR land</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALC &amp; LOCAL FARMERS</td>
<td>♦ Need to influence council’s decisions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>♦ Alert public</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>♦ Counteract flood of proposals</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*1 Effective legitimacy in Delta, but not to same extent in Surrey.
*2 Effective power in Delta because of DFI. No such organization in Surrey.
Themes and patterns which emerged from the data

The following section addressed the themes emerging from the respondents interviewed from the various stakeholder groups. These included the importance of agricultural land to each stakeholder group, the anomaly of golf course development in British Columbia when compared to other parts of the country and the United States, as well as fears from stakeholders in opposition to golf course development that the approval of a golf course was only the beginning to further urban style developments on agricultural land.

The Importance of Agricultural Land to Each Stakeholder

The change in legislation (Order in Council #1141) allowing for golf courses to be built on agricultural land, subject to the approval of local government, impacted heavily and diversely upon the four major stakeholder groups identified: developers, local government, environmental and wildlife groups and the Agricultural Land Commission (ALC) and agricultural community. Although the effects upon the various groups were diverse, a common theme emerged from each stakeholder group's perspective pertaining to the agricultural land on which the majority of golf course proposals were located.
It will be recalled that there had been very few golf courses built during the previous approval process when the ALC was in control of the decision making process. This led to a limited supply of golf facilities in the Lower Mainland at a time when the demand to play was increasing, and therefore the change in procedures for golf course approval created wide interest and activity among developers for new golf course development.

The agricultural community and the ALC were originally not identified as a specific stakeholder group, but upon further investigation it quickly became evident that these groups were important stakeholders in the approval process in the Lower Mainland. Their importance as a stakeholder group became obvious because most of the proposals were on farmland within the ALR.

Previous to 1988, while the ALC were in control of the approval process, the opportunity to develop new golf courses was limited due to excessive land costs and availability of land. The ALC had golf course development guidelines which compelled developers to focus upon poor quality agricultural soils which were close to, or adjacent to, ALR boundaries. This prevents any non-agricultural use
for projects completely surrounded by farmland. Locating a new golf course on farmland was looked upon favorably by developers because of the lesser costs of purchasing agricultural land compared with that outside the ALR boundaries. The change in legislation brought about an opportunity to access and develop agricultural land for a non-agricultural purpose, something which was previously very rare because of the ALC’s controlling authority.

The change in legislation resulted in numerous proposals for golf course development located on agricultural land in the Lower Mainland and throughout the province. Given the golf course market circumstances at that time, the flood of proposals was not surprising as developers reacted to a new situation which allowed for greater access in obtaining approval for developments on agricultural land. Unfortunately, the local government councils found themselves in a novel position for which they were unprepared and lacked the knowledge that would allow them to proceed. This is summarized in the following comments of one of the local council members interviewed,

"From a purely business point of view it made sense. The business community saw an opportunity to purchase cheaper land. The developers were just doing what developers do and that was finding a location that was suitable with what they wanted to do. I felt it was an unwise decision by the provincial government (Order #1141) and I don’t
think it should have been too difficult for them to imagine what the effects of the decision would be."

Following the passage of Order #1141, there arose a certain optimism for approval from the developer's perspective. There was some validity to this position since the ALC had only permitted the development of 3 regulation sized golf courses during the previous two decades within the Lower Mainland, whereas with the local governments in control, 14 new, full-length, golf courses were approved during a three year period (1988-1991).

While the local governments were more lenient in approving golf courses than the ALC had been, there were still concerns by local councils pertaining to the loss of agricultural land as a result of golf course development. Because of the change in legislation, local councils in Surrey and Delta were bombarded with proposals. This clearly illustrated a strong demand to develop new courses, but councils were not about to approve 19 golf course applications, as was the case in Delta. They were completely aware of the importance of the ALR and the scarcity of, and need for, quality agricultural soils for food production, although the sheer number of proposals was itself intimidating to stakeholder groups who also feared the extraction of agricultural land from the ALR.
The vast number of proposals in regions such as Surrey and Delta actually hindered the developers in their quest for approval. The numerous applications slowed the approval process while local councils sorted through the various applications for those that were worthy of consideration and which were most appropriate. The abundant proposals aroused a widespread concern among environmental and wildlife groups as well as the ALC. During the course of an interview with a member of the ALC, the magnitude of the land involved in Delta proposals was put into perspective:

"The golf course proposals in Delta involved approximately 1600 acres of land within the ALR. Since the designation of the ALR in 1974, there has been a total of about 1062 acres of land excluded from the ALR in Delta."

Inactive agricultural land is important to wildlife groups as the old growth, field habitat represents a feeding ground for raptors. Development of these open fields would predictably result in habitat destruction for rodents which are the main food source of the sizable raptor population. This was the main concern of these groups with the Northview golf course development in Surrey and the Boundary Shores golf course as well as several other proposals in Delta. While there were serious concerns regarding some of these golf course applications, some of those interviewed from this stakeholder group indicated that they were not
completely against golf courses and thought that there were locations which were better suited than others because they were less environmentally sensitive. The following comments are from one of the respondents with wildlife concerns,

"I feel sorry for the genuine golf community who were really seeking to build genuine golf courses because people got on the bandwagon and saw an opportunity to take some land in the ALR and use it for other purposes. In many cases it was much more than just a golf course so the golf course issue became exploited by developers. Genuine golf course developers lost out because of this."

While the golf courses proposed for agricultural land in Surrey and Delta met with considerable opposition from wildlife groups, other golf courses, such as one built on agricultural land in Langley, encountered little resistance from wildlife groups. This was also the case with a golf course developed recently in Richmond. These may have been locations in which there was not any organized environmental or wildlife groups, or the developers may have selected a non-threatening location from the perspective of this stakeholder group. These courses did however have to answer questions from the local councils about environmental impacts and concerns. One of the developers interviewed stated the following about the environmental concerns of a golf course compared with their previous farming operation,

"We proved to them that we would actually use less chemicals, less fertilizers, less pesticides on the golf course than we actually used as an active farming operation. While farming we were never
challenged as far as what we were doing within our normal farming practices, but with intensive agriculture and cash crops and the rotations of those things you are putting a lot of chemical and fertilizer on that land on a constant basis.”

Anomalies of golf course development in B.C.

Through the course of the interviews and in comparing the literature pertaining to golf course development in other areas with that in the Lower Mainland, it became evident that golf course development in the Lower Mainland and the province of British Columbia is in some important ways, quite different from golf course development in other areas of Canada, and especially the U.S.

The most important difference between golf course development in British Columbia and almost any other location is the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR). Land contained within the boundaries of the ALR are to be preserved solely for agricultural purposes. Discussion with the ALC member interviewed for this study identified Quebec and Newfoundland as the only other Canadian provinces with similar conditions where land use decisions are made by an independent organization rather than by a local government.
In describing the differing golf course market circumstances of the Lower Mainland created by the ALR, one developer stated,

"We are in a niche here that is even stronger demographically, than any other group in all of North America because we have restricted the building or development of any new golf courses so we have created a market niche that is even goofier!"

The greatest impact in this condition was felt by the developers because, although the ALC no longer made the final decision on golf course applications, they still controlled all ancillary developments for golf course applications proposed within the land reserve. This included the construction of any housing developments, hotels or resort style facilities, which were especially popular with developers in other parts of North America during this most recent phase of golf course development. Beditz (1994) reported that in 1989 almost 50% (144) of all new golf course openings in the United States were related to real estate and resorts.

Another exception to golf course development in the Lower Mainland compared with other locations is a connection between the ALR, strong land values, and the steady population growth in the area. Land values in the Lower Mainland are amongst the highest in the country and the
majority of the province’s population is located in this area which continues to expand rapidly. The current estimated population is about 2 million people and this is forecasted to grow to nearly 3.3 million over the next 20 years (Vancouver Sun, Oct. 6, 1997).

As the population increases, developers search for available land to build housing projects, shopping malls and recreational facilities to cater to this growing market, but the high costs of available land are restrictive. Because of the high land values in the Lower Mainland, purchasing land outside the ALR strictly for the purpose of developing a golf course is not seen as a viable business venture for developers. Even a developer interviewed from a golf course development that was built in conjunction with a housing development in Surrey suggested that they would hesitate to include the golf course in the development if they were to do it over again. The company would have been better advised economically to build more houses on the land utilized for the golf course.

High land values combined with the development costs associated with building a golf course are the primary reason why very few golf courses were built prior to the change in legislation (June 1988). This change which
allowed developers to build golf courses on agricultural land gave prospective golf course developers an opportunity to access agricultural land at a lesser cost than was previously available outside the ALR.

**Fear of golf courses as the 'edge of the wedge' to further development**

Concerns were expressed by the three stakeholder groups, other than the developers, that a golf course represented a possible beginning to further development. There was legitimacy to these fears as golf courses in other areas, particularly resort areas in the United States, were being developed in conjunction with hotels and housing developments. Beditz (1994) reported that 51 of 131 (39%) total golf course openings in the U.S. in 1986 were related to real estate and resorts. By 1989, the number of golf course openings related to these ancillary developments peaked at 144, accounting for approximately 50% of the total new course openings that year.

With the majority of proposals on agricultural land there were fears that if a golf course was approved, further development would follow, thus further decreasing the agricultural land base and magnifying the impact on wildlife and agricultural production. From the perspective of the
other stakeholder groups, a golf course proposed for location on farmland without any surrounding infrastructure was a major concern. Although the ALC were still in control of all other land development proposals for ALR land at that time, the fear of the other stakeholders was that legislation could change again, just as it had for golf course development approval, and this would lead to further commercial developments on agricultural land.

Stakeholder Management

The following section examines the level of stakeholder management evident in the golf course development application process from 1988-1991. Stakeholder management theory and the hypothesis underlying stakeholder management has been discussed in some detail previously.

The situational context surrounding the recent flurry of golf course development proposals was chaotic and turbulent. Approval legislation had been changed passing the authority to approve golf courses on agricultural land from the ALC to local municipal councils. The once long held authority of the ALC had provided consistency to the approval process for golf course development on agricultural land.
By contrast, local councils had no experience in this area of decision making, lacked systematic criteria for judging proposals and, due to regional differences, were perceived to often act capriciously according to local pressures.

The change in legislation occurred at a time when the popularity of golf was rising and courses in the Lower Mainland were overcrowded. Therefore, developers in reacting to this new opportunity to capitalize on the golf market circumstances flooded the new approval process with applications for new golf courses. Local councils that were given control of the decision making process were suddenly exposed to extensive pressure from stakeholder groups reacting to the rash of new proposals. Locations such as Surrey and Delta, with an abundance of agricultural land, were impacted most by these applications.

The developers seeking approval for their golf courses also had relatively little experience and information due to the prior restrictions on the use of agricultural land.

As the number of applications began to accumulate, concerns came forward from other stakeholder groups impacted by the potential transformation of agricultural land. The result was various stakeholder groups competing diligently so that
their stake in the matter was given consideration before any decision of approval was made by local councils.

The premise for stakeholder management suggests that by creating compatibility between organizational priorities and the interests of stakeholder groups, an organization creates a better state between themselves and their environment. In doing so, the organization enhances its chances of success and survival.

Ideally, responsibility for stakeholder management rested with the developer who was the initiator of a proposal and, as such, the key voluntary stakeholder. Local council and other interest groups would then become involuntary stakeholders reacting to the initiator's proposal.

In theory, this alignment of the various stakeholders is depicted in Figure 6.2. This stakeholder management map depicts the developer/applicant/organization at the head of a stakeholder tree and, as such, having responsibility for not only locating potential stakeholders, but in the present case, as having the responsibility for initiating and maintaining two way communication between and among stakeholders until roadblocks to a proposal are either
cleared or accommodations between interests have been achieved.

In the present situation, developers as a group lacked knowledge to manage involuntary stakeholders. In part, this is attributable to a lack of experience since there had previously been so few proposals for new courses to provide exemplars or precedents to draw from; and, in part to either a lack of awareness for emerging social issues such as the environment, or, to an arrogance that refused to recognize the legitimacy of other stakeholder concerns.

The result was an abdication of responsibility for stakeholder management on the part of developers who routinely failed to submit to their councils, applications that might satisfy their concerns as well as those of the other stakeholders. Local councils were thus invariably forced into making difficult decisions as to whose interests were most valid—those of the developer as voluntary stakeholder, those of the involuntary stakeholders or those of council's own constituency. Surprisingly, some developers were cognizant of the difficulties faced by councils as is reflected in this comment by a developer, "The people in the positions of regulatory responsibility really have a difficult job. Their
constituency is so fragmented they have to appease many different interest groups.”
(Delta Optimist March 29, 1990)

Under the circumstances at the time, it might be said that the local councils were forced into a quasi-voluntary stakeholder position alongside the developers and that it was the local council which in the end was forced to assume a stakeholder management role to the best of its ability. This role, as it eventually emerged in both Surrey and Delta, is summarized in Figure 6.3. This stakeholder management map portrays the confused state as it existed at the time of the study. While two way communication took place between the local government and the developer/applicant, it was the local government which undertook communication with the agricultural and wildlife stakeholder groups. The developers clearly abdicated their responsibility as managers, a conclusion readily derived from an analysis of the interview data for question 4, regarding stakeholder interaction and management. Although both wildlife and agricultural stakeholders might, from the interview data, be seen as hostile to the use of prime agricultural land for golf course development, it nonetheless remained the responsibility of developers to initiate dialogue with these stakeholders and at least determine whether compromise over outstanding concerns was possible. This the developers did not do.
Thus, it was the local councils who became the focal point of communication with the developers, environmental groups and agricultural interest groups. Very little communication took place between the proponents of the project and the various stakeholder groups impacted by the effects of their proposed development. In the rare occurrence that discussion did take place between the developer and either of the other stakeholder groups, it was often at a public hearing and amounted to nothing more than one trying to discredit the other’s opinion.
A PROPOSED STAKEHOLDER MANAGEMENT MAP
OF GOLF COURSE DEVELOPMENT FOR THE LOWER MAINLAND

DEVELOPER/APPLICANT OF A NEW GOLF COURSE

AGRICULTURAL GROUPS
- ALC
- Local agricultural community

ENVIRONMENTAL & WILDLIFE GROUPS
- Non-profit environmental groups
- Government Agencies
  - DFO
  - CWS
  - MOE

LOCAL GOVERNMENT
- Parks & Rec
- Council
- Planning Dept.
Figure 6.3

STAKEHOLDER MANAGEMENT MAP OF GOLF COURSE DEVELOPMENT IN THE LOWER MAINLAND (1988-1991)

DEVELOPER/APPLICANT OF A NEW GOLF COURSE

LOCAL GOVERNMENT
- Local Council
- Planning Department
- Parks & Recreation

AGRICULTURAL GROUPS

ENVIRONMENTAL & WILDLIFE GROUPS

ALC
Local Agricultural Community

Government organizations
Private Non-Profit Organizations

DFO MOE CWS
Enlightenment and Education of Other Stakeholder Groups

This section will discuss some of the problems associated with the golf course development situation in the Lower Mainland (1988-1991), specifically the failure of developers to recognize and deal with environmental issues important to golf course development. These problems have been identified by the golf course development industry and there have been efforts made in recent years to begin to deal with these environmental implications in a proactive manner.

It has been concluded that stakeholder management capability was limited and poorly executed during the recent development of new golf courses in the Lower Mainland. The developers are mostly to blame for the limited stakeholder management, but certain situational circumstances, identified in the previous section, did not help with this situation.

Some of the developers interviewed in this study indicated that negotiation with local environmental groups was difficult, and in many cases non-existent or impossible. When asked if there was ever any effort made by either party to participate in discussion about the effects of golf
courses on the environment and wildlife, a developer responded,

"No, we did not contact them and they made no effort to get in touch with us. The environmentalists will not compromise therefore the politicians are forced to get involved and deal with it."

From the environmentalists perspective, there were times when they felt compromise was not possible because any form of compromise meant that a golf course was being built and the environment adversely affected. This was especially true of the golf course proposals close to Boundary Bay in Delta. In relation to this, one of the environmentalists interviewed said,

"From an environmental point of view, the stakeholder concept is like sitting down, and you’ve got a pie and you are going to divide it up. But from an environmental point of view once you start dividing the pie it is like cutting up the baby, you destroy it. We’d like to talk about it from a whole ecosystem point of view, not from a you want to play golf, and you want to ride your bike and I want to farm and so on."

Golfers and golf courses have been traditionally stereotyped as elitist, pretentious and male dominated, and this often makes them an easy target for criticism. The demographics of those playing the game have changed and the increased access for all to play golf has certainly played a key role in this occurrence, but the average non-golfer has not been made aware of this fact. Respected golf course architect,
Michael Hurdzan, acknowledges that architects have not helped to diffuse this issue,

"We have been building upscale courses that don't allow golfers at the entry level to get into the game. That leads to the idea that golf is for the rich, and only the rich. It becomes politically correct to believe that golf is a bad game, especially for the environment" (Globe and Mail, June 19, 1993).

More specific to golf course developments is the need for the golf course industry to educate the public, and particularly those in the environmental community, about the positive benefits of golf courses and to silence concerns about the use of pesticides and fertilizers.

While in Vancouver to oversee the progress of Northview while it was being built, legendary golfer and course designer Arnold Palmer was quoted,

"It’s a big bone of contention with me personally that we’re not keeping the public informed as to the advantages of golf courses"

(Peace Arch News, Aug. 26, 1992)

At the same time an associate of Palmer’s and an individual who handles much of the golf course development side of their business stated,

"The education of the public and environmental buffs needs to be improved. At least once a month we go to public service groups and to people who object to golf courses, to explain the benefits of golf courses"

One of the developers interviewed for this study was an individual who had actively farmed the land for several years prior to building a golf course and he had the following to say regarding chemical and pesticide use on golf courses,

"We proved that we would actually use less chemicals, less pesticides and less fertilizers on the golf course than we actually used as an active farming operation. While farming we were never challenged as far as what we were doing within our normal farming practices."

There is supporting evidence that the golf industry has made strides in accommodating environmental considerations within the layout of the golf course so that golf courses are recognized as more environmentally friendly and responsible. Regulations and criteria have been established and recommended whereby specific percentages of golf course acreage must be left in an "unkept" condition as habitat for birds or wildlife. Golf course developers must also adhere to regulations of governmental agencies such as the Ministry of the Environment and the Department of Fisheries and Oceans.

In 1990, the United States Golf Association (USGA) partnered with the Audubon Society of New York State to establish the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program for Golf Courses (Snow, 1995). The objectives of this partnership were to
enhance wildlife habitat on golf courses and to enhance learning and participation in conservation programs by golf course superintendents, golfers and the public. Canada's national sport governing body for golf, the Royal Canadian Golf Association (RCGA) has also become affiliated with the Audubon Society and several Canadian courses are also working towards receiving certification through the program.

Major golf organizations such as the USGA and the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America (GCSAA) have spent millions of dollars to investigate golf's environmental impacts and to educate golf course superintendents and others about the issues (Snow, 1993). As well as funding research, producing environmental publications and establishing cooperative agreements like that with the Audubon Society, the USGA has established public relations programs to further promote their findings and programs and have contacted and established relationships with environmental agencies and organizations.

A representative from the Audubon Society stated in a 1993 Globe and Mail article,

"The situation between golf and the environment is still controversial and volatile. But our belief is that courses can be built and managed to provide benefit to all if factored in at the beginning" (Globe and Mail, June 19, 1993).
This type of relationship between golf course developers and environmental groups has not appeared rapidly and could be considered still to be evolving. What is important is that both stakeholders have begun the process of negotiation with each other as opposed to the situation which prevailed in the Lower Mainland during the most recent period of golf course development. Both parties have recognized the importance of the other's stake in the situation thus opening the way for conflict resolution. Freeman (1984), identifies this as paramount to stakeholder relations:

"Successful transactions with stakeholders are built on understanding the legitimacy of the stakeholder and having processes to routinely surface their concerns... There is simply no substitute for thinking through how a particular individual can 'win' and how the organization can 'win' at the same time."
CHAPTER VII- CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

The Order in Council (#1141) approved by the Social Credit provincial government in 1988 (June) permitted golf courses to be built on agricultural land, which had not previously been allowed without approval from the ALC. The legislation was eventually repealed in 1991 (November) by an incumbent NDP government, but during that time period local councils around British Columbia were flooded with applications for golf course development. The 1988 Order in Council legislation was passed at a time when golf's popularity was on the rise thereby creating a demand which exceeded what the existing supply of golf courses could handle.

The Lower Mainland now has several new, high quality golf courses all approved during this three year period of time (1988-1991). The development of these new golf courses has eased the demand for access to play golf. In some areas of the Lower Mainland, the golf course market has actually been oversupplied and saturated (ie. Pitt Meadows/Maple Ridge area).

The numerous proposals submitted to the unsuspecting local councils created several problems for them from the
perspective of dealing with stakeholders affected or threatened by proposals to build a new golf course. Councils were placed in a difficult position because they were without prior experience in dealing with golf course applications since previous decision making authority lay with the Agricultural Land Commission (ALC).

This study identified four major stakeholders involved with issues of golf course development in the Lower Mainland: the local council, developers, environmental and wildlife groups, and the agricultural community in conjunction with the ALC. Much of the controversy over the numerous golf course applications centered on the location of these proposed new golf courses on agricultural land. Each stakeholder group had their own reasons for why the agricultural land was important to them.

The local councils in control of the decision making process during this period of numerous applications (1988-1991) were lobbied heavily by these various interest groups. Developers as a group were seeking to capitalize on the golf course market shortage at the time. Prior to the change in legislation governing the relationship between golf courses and agricultural land, opportunities to build new golf courses on agricultural land had been extremely limited by
restrictions and criteria imposed by the ALC and the high costs associated with golf course development on non-agricultural land. The new legislation specifically targeted golf courses as permissible use of agricultural resources.

Environmental and wildlife groups on the other hand had serious concerns, similar in nature to those of the ALC and the farmers regarding the development of agricultural land for non-agricultural purposes. For the wildlife groups, the development of agricultural land would replace open field habitat crucial for bird populations, especially the raptors located in the Boundary Bay area of Delta. For the local farmers and the ALC, primary concerns were associated with the loss of prime agricultural land, possible negative impacts on existing farming operations and the potential erosion of the overall land base of agricultural land around the province.

This study also examined the extent of stakeholder management during the approval process for new golf course proposals. What became apparent in the study was that in most cases there was very little attempt at stakeholder management. There was very limited evidence of developers either negotiating or dealing directly with any of the
opposing stakeholder groups and vice versa. The local councils, by virtue of their decision making power, became the stakeholder on whom the other three stakeholder groups focused their attention. The local councils, essentially, were placed in the middle between the conflicting opinions of the other stakeholder groups.

Ideally, from the perspective of stakeholder management, it should have been the responsibility of the developers to submit applications which best met the criteria of the local councils. The best thing a developer could do was present an application to council that was easy for the local council to approve. Therefore, the responsibility should have been that of the developer to make an effort to negotiate individually, or in combination, with any of the other stakeholder groups to try and ratify their differences prior to submitting their application.

This being said, it was certainly not an easy time for the developer or any of the other key stakeholders because it was a newly created and chaotic situation where emotions ran high. There were very few local examples or previous experiences of golf course development in the Lower Mainland to compare with, and local councils had no prior warning as to what the ramifications to the new legislation might be.
They were also without criteria to evaluate the proposals they received and they were certainly not prepared for the political ramifications arising from stakeholder objections. These factors combined to make for a lengthy approval process and some developers viewed discussion with multiple stakeholder groups as something which would further delay approval for their proposal. There was heavy competition among developers to gain approval and be among the first new courses built. Also, in some cases there was nothing to negotiate as stakeholders were unwilling to compromise. In the end it was left to the local council to make a decision, and in some cases stakeholder conflict could only be settled in the courts.

The legislation was repealed in 1991 (November) and the ALC was once again reinstated with the authority to deal with golf course applications on agricultural land. Regardless of which organization controls the approval of golf courses on agricultural land, there is much that can be learned from the experiences of the most recent phase of golf course applications and developments that could benefit stakeholder management in the approval process for future golf course proposals.
Recommendations

Currently the market for golf courses has been satisfied as a result of the addition of fifteen new golf courses. With the population of the Lower Mainland expected to continue to grow steadily, the region will continue to face difficult decisions concerning growth and development, the impacts of this growth upon the environment, and the need to provide recreational opportunities and facilities for the growing population. Following are some recommendations for those involved in the decision making and planning process (ALC and local council), and those with golf course development aspirations (developers), as well as those affected by golf course developments (environmental and wildlife groups, and the farming community).

Developers Partnering With Other Organizations

Golf course development is an expensive venture in the Lower Mainland because of high land values and development costs. Therefore it is recommended that developers might seek out other organizations with whom they may be able to partner with in the venture. Examples may include housing development companies, hotels or local government.
The situation in the Lower Mainland as a result of the ALR makes partnerships with hotels or housing development companies a difficult fit, but local governments as partners are a realistic possibility. Thibault, Frisby and Kikulis (1997) examined the parks and recreation departments in three Lower Mainland municipalities and found that they are exploring interorganisational links as one strategy for dealing with the environmental pressures they face. Predominantly because of economic strains combined with increased demands for services and programs, these government organizations are forced to explore possible partnerships with the private sector to provide recreation services and facilities to the community. The Northlands golf course recently built in North Vancouver is an example of a partnership between a group with a golf course development concept and the District of North Vancouver.

**Identification of Locations Suitable for Golf Course Development**

Local councils may wish to consult with the ALC concerning community planning and the establishment of regions primarily for recreational purposes such as golf courses, ice rinks, playing fields, swimming pools or other recreational facilities. A region in southeast Richmond has
recently emerged as an area with multiple recreational facilities on agricultural land.

While the ALC and local councils may not want to actively seek out golf course developers to build golf courses on agricultural land, from their perspective, certain locations, such as poorer quality land are more suitable for golf course development than others. The ALC are generally not sympathetic to applications proposed for quality agricultural soils and which may seriously penetrate the ALR thereby decreasing the agricultural land base, or, interrupting in any way neighboring farming operations. The ALC has established golf course development guidelines to evaluate future applications.

Developers seeking to gain approval for a golf course in the future should consult with the ALC, their local council, environmental and wildlife groups, the local farmers, and/or any other local stakeholders who may be identified. Developers should also undertake a thorough stakeholder analysis of the area before any meaningful stakeholder management or negotiations can take place. This may involve considerable information gathering and preparation, at their own expense, prior to establishing whether a golf course is even economically feasible. Examples of stakeholder
cooperation in the design and development of courses are cited in the study.

There were questions raised by some of the respondents in the study pertaining to the integrity of the developers in dealing with environmental and wildlife issues, but also the developers expressed that many of the opposition groups they faced were unwilling to compromise. Developers should become aware of the environmental concerns surrounding golf course development and be prepared to deal with these responsibly and honestly. At the same time, the other stakeholder groups must be more acceptable and accommodating of a developer’s perspective and intentions. Clearly, there are some locations which would be more acceptable for a golf course than others from the perspective of environmental and wildlife issues and these stakeholder’s concerns should be clearly and reasonably stated. Again examples of cooperative planning are cited in the study.

Involve the Golfing Community in the Process

In the recent approval of several Lower Mainland golf courses, the golfing community was noticeably absent from the process except in a few rare cases. Golfers were the driving force in the development of the Northlands golf course in North Vancouver and the developer of Northview...
golf course in Surrey was active in recruiting the support of local golfers at a public hearing. Aside from these two examples, there was very little evidence of golfers as an active stakeholder in the application process.

The golfers are the ones for whom the golf course is presumably being built, therefore as stakeholders their support should be necessary to aid the process of project approval. If local councils only witness and hear objections from groups opposed to a project, they are likely to decide against a project’s approval.

The provincial governing body of the sport, the B.C. Golf Association (BCGA), was also notably absent in the recent era of course development. In fact, one developer interviewed for this study said that in his efforts to recruit the president of the association to appear in support of the project at a public hearing, he was refused. Developers may also look to form an association within the BCGA in order to give the golfing community a more representative voice at various levels of government as well as being more effective in negotiations and dealings with the concerns of opposition groups.
The Formation of Representative Associations

Previously it was suggested that golf course developers combine forces with one another to give themselves a stronger representative voice. The same can be said for other potential stakeholder groups wanting to make stronger representation before local councils. Certainly, the environmental and wildlife organizations which opposed the golf courses in Delta and the Northview golf course in Surrey were very organized and committed organizations which made sure their concerns were well known to council.

Perhaps, because Delta is both an environmentally sensitive area and an extensively farmed region, the strength of stakeholder groups was understandably, very evident. In addition to the usual environmental groups, the Delta Farmland and Wildlife Trust, and an Environmental Advisory Committee were formed following the election of a new Delta council (1990). Also, the farmers in Delta have a representative group which allows for their concerns to be voiced directly to council, the Delta Farmers Institute (DFI). No such organized stakeholder groups were evident in Surrey.
REFERENCES


Globe and Mail (1993). How Green was my golf course. 19 June.


Vancouver Sun (1990). Delta must defend golf course plan. 13 December.


Appendix A

Respondents Identification of Stakeholders:
By Stakeholder Group and Combined Results

**Stakeholder Identification of Developers**

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<th>Subject</th>
<th>Agricultural Developer</th>
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X-indicates that the respondent identified the group as a stakeholder

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Subject A identified two other stakeholders: Recreation industry and the hospitality and tourism industry

** Subject B identified two other stakeholders: Parks and recreation department and landowners whose land may be purchased for development

Stakeholder Identification of Environmental Group Respondents

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