

SUSPEND THE BRIDGE:
COMMUNITY POWER, REGIME THEORY AND THE DECISION TO BUILD
VANCOUVER'S LIONS' GATE BRIDGE

by

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Abstract

In recent years, regime theorists have begun to examine the question of community power in cities and to address criticisms made against the older elite and pluralist schools of interpretation. Regime theory argues that political power is neither centered in the hands of an elite as suggested by the elite theorists, nor equally distributed among all members of the city as argued by pluralists. On the contrary, regime theory contends that an informal coalition forms between government and private interests to develop and implement urban policy initiatives. Despite regime theory's contribution to the community power debate, it still requires refinement. The interwar decision to build Vancouver's Lions Gate Bridge provides an excellent opportunity to test and refine regime theory analysis. The bridge decision demonstrates that while the pro-development coalition sought alliances and support from typical regime members such as local government and community organizations, opposition from elements within the business community, who were tied to Canada's natural resource sector, arose against the urban initiative. During both the 1926-27 and 1930s attempts to build the bridge, opponents looked to the federal government for support. The opposition succeeded in convincing the federal Department of Public Works to reject the bridge proposal in 1926-27 and Prime Minister Bennett's Conservative government to do the same in 1934. As a result of the opponents' actions, the bridge coalition had to seek compensatory support from the federal Liberal party once it formed the national government in 1935. The larger significance of this case study of urban decision making is that regime theory needs to take into account the national context in regime formation. Scholars employing a regime theory approach to community power should not assume a coherent and united business sector in cities such as Vancouver, and must account for the role of opposition in moulding a successful coalition.

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Introduction

The Squamish Legend of the Two Sisters

"The legend tells that when a great chief who was at war with northern tribes held a feast to celebrate the coming of age of his two beautiful daughters, they begged him to invite these same enemies. And the war canoes came, empty of weapons, full of presents, and women and children, and there was the greatest celebration ever seen. Whereupon the Lord Tyee was so pleased that 'in the cup of his hands he lifted the chief's daughters and set them forever in a high place, for they had borne two offspring - Peace and Brotherhood - each of which is now a great Tyee ruling this land.'

The Two Sisters are known today as the Lions..."¹

Eric Nicol, Vancouver, 1970 from Pauline Johnson's Legends of Vancouver, 1961.

Vancouver Lights

About me the night, moonless, wimples the mountains,
wraps ocean, land, air, and mounting
sucks at the stars. The city, throbbing below,
webs the sable peninsula. Streaming, the golden
strands overleap the seajet, by bridge, and buoy,
vault the shears of the inlet, climb the woods
toward me, falter and halt..."²

Earle Birney 1942, 1948

A source of legends, literary allusion, shipping, urban growth, and romance, Burrard Inlet's Lions' Gate Bridge was officially opened by King George IV in 1939 as the longest suspension bridge in the British Empire. How the bridge came to be is a tale of innocence and deceit, conflict and co-operation, celebration and regret. With financing from the British Guinness family - makers of the legendary Irish beer - a "home-grown" boy from Vancouver Island and his supporters overcame opposition and gained approval to build the bridge. Opposition emanated from the offices of shipping interests and the Canadian Pacific Railway Company, which sought in part to protect its upper class Vancouver neighbourhood of Shaughnessy Heights from a proposed West Vancouver neighbourhood to be built following the bridge's completion. The federal government also opposed the project. To Vancouverites, the bridge became another symbol of eastern Canada's domination of the west. During several years of arduous negotiations, many individuals, organizations, and governments became embroiled in the bridge debate. An analysis of

the 1920s and 1930s negotiations over the First Narrows Bridge provides a remarkable opportunity to explore uncharted parts of Vancouver history, especially that of community power.

As defined by Nelson Polsby, the historical question of community power generally examines "... the capacity of one actor to do something affecting another actor, which changes the probable pattern of specified future events" within an urban community.³ Actors are not only individuals, but also special interest groups, corporations, governments and others. Political scientists, sociologists, geographers, and historians have all participated in the debates over community power. Initially, the debate centred upon a rigorous discussion between the elitist and pluralist schools.

Floyd Hunter's 1953 Community Power Structure: A Study of Decision Makers presented the first significant study to define the elite model. He concluded that a small economic elite discretely undertook all important community decisions in their own best interest. As information gatekeepers, the elite controlled the public agenda by proposing any required policy changes.⁴ Generally, the elite theoreticians argue that "private economic interests" shape and mould the city while government structures play a secondary role. William Issel and Robert W. Cherny argue that these interests achieve their desired results by "... [luring] the people into relatively quiet acceptance of the widespread inequalities of income, wealth, and opportunities that characterize American society. ... political officeholders ... do the bidding of a cohesive upper economic class."⁵

By contrast, other historians of community power argue in favour of a pluralist model. In 1961, Robert A. Dahl published the seminal work of the pluralist school, Who Governs? Democracy and Power in an American City.⁶ Dahl asked the following question: "In a political system where nearly every adult may vote but where knowledge, wealth, social position, access to officials, and other resources are unequally distributed, who actually governs?" He answered that the elite held no more political power than any other group in the city.⁷ Generally, pluralists focus on the dynamics of the democratic process. Issel and Cherny describe pluralist theoreticians as those who argue:

... that a flourishing competition among groups of many kinds ensures equitable representation in the mosaic of occupational, ethnic, and other pressure groups who mobilize themselves to participate in urban policy making. Urban development, in the pluralist reading, emerges from policy forged at the hearth of interest group conflict, bargaining, and accommodation.⁸

Pluralists study those inside and outside the circles of wealth and social status, and the participants' ability to mould policy to suit their own needs.⁹

In his criticisms of elite and pluralist theories, Clarence N. Stone summarized that both schools debate the social costs of control and compliance:

Pluralists discount the possibility that there is a basis for resentment; otherwise they would find mass noncompliance with the regime. Critical [elite theory] scholars believe that there are genuine grounds for resentment, but they credit elites with the ability to manipulate mass consciousness and its expression.¹⁰

Overall, the elitist school is criticized for not acknowledging those who live outside the circles of wealth and social status, or their ability to exert community power. It is also criticized for ignoring the elite's occasional inability to use its power, and for not considering its ineffectiveness. The pluralists are criticized for ascribing too much power to *all* community members.¹¹ Eldon J. Eisenach succinctly outlines the debate between the elitist and pluralist models as follows:

For every institution and practice that defenders of interest-group pluralism could document, the antipluralists could point to potential interests left out and to institutionalized interests unfairly advantaged by privileged access.¹²

Generally, compared to other urban history debates such as relationships between hinterland and metropolis, Canadian historians have paid little attention to the community power debate. The few who have addressed community power from an elitist or pluralist perspective exclude groups who discreetly or indirectly influenced, attempted to influence, or chose not to influence decisions.¹³ This exclusion perhaps results from the historical record. For example, the Boards of Trade's corporate records have facilitated historians in reconstructing the organizations' place in the past. Conversely, lone individuals and *ad hoc* groups and their discreet, indirect, formal, or informal actions are frequently less documented by archival collections. As a result, Canadian historians have largely ignored informal and non-institutional power

exerted by the non-leaders. Granted, Alan F.J. Artibise and Paul-André Linteau briefly mention opposition to the boosters and developers, but they quickly discount it as ineffective.¹⁴ Moreover, by neglecting this subject for more than a decade Canadian historians have failed to keep abreast of theoretical developments south of the border.

Recently, many frustrated American academics have abandoned the elite versus pluralist debate in favour of the regime theory; they have refocused the question from Dahl's "Who governs?" to "How are urban centers governed?" Stone's 1989 study of regime politics in Atlanta has led the way in defining an urban regime as "*the informal arrangements by which public bodies and private interests function together in order to be able to make and carry out governing decisions.*" He defines "governing decisions" as "*managing conflict and making adaptive response to social change.*"¹⁵ Eisenach followed by defining regime theory as a compromise between elitist and pluralist theories:

... a twentieth-century regime perspective must be seen as [a] grouping of mediating ideas which seek intellectual and ideological connection among voluntarist, anti-state, peripheral, and populist values on one side, and statist, center, and progressive values on the other.¹⁶

Regime theory emphasizes the importance of "... gaining and fusing a capacity to act - *power to*, not *power over*."¹⁷ Marion E. Orr and Gerry Stoker effectively compare regime theory to the elitist and pluralist schools as follows:

Unlike elite theorists, regime advocates recognize that any group is unlikely to be able to exercise comprehensive control in a complex world. Unlike pluralists, regime analysts do not regard governments as likely to respond to groups on the basis of their electoral power or the intensity of their preferences. Rather, governments are driven to cooperate with those who hold resources essential to achieving a range of policy goals.¹⁸

Stone emphasizes the importance of coalition members' strategic action and long-term planning.¹⁹

Stemming from a discussion of Bachrach and Baratz's two-faces of power argument, Stone asserts that while coalition members may not appear to make a decision, their silence or delay is often pre-emptive and strategic. This ensured the long-term protection of their interests. "Events," Stone argues "may be made up of many low-visibility actions, spread out over time."²⁰

Many explicit differences exist between the regime theory and the pluralist-elitist theories. Unlike their concern with control, specifically the “cost of control” or the amount of power required to control decision-making, regime theory is concerned with the “social production model.” Stone defines this model as the “capacity to assemble and use needed resources for a policy initiative...”²¹ Regime theory also places the burden to instigate change on the shoulders of those challenging the regime. Opposition must overcome the coalition’s cohesion and the area’s larger desire for the status quo.²² This perspective contrasts with studies written from the pluralist and elitist theories that focus on government’s responsibility to maintain social order.²³

Coalitions form with a union of public and private interests. Stone defines “private interests” as business interests and “Labour-union officials, party functionaries, officers in non profit organizations or foundations, and church leaders” and others.²⁴ Although Stephen L. Elkin and Carl V. Harris differ in their identification of the number of interests in the decision-making process, they both argue that two significant participants, private interests and politicians, hold a natural attraction to each other.²⁵ This attraction creates informal governing coalitions defined as the core group of decision makers. Governments require not only electoral support to succeed, but also support from the private sector with members, such as business, who hold important political resources to make the coalition successful.²⁶ The greater the economic interest of a private group, the stronger their desire to build a coalition with government.²⁷ Harris also qualifies this emphasis on business participation in urban coalitions by explaining that *electoral* politics, rather than post-election *governing* politics, usually addressed social issues. Thus, with Birmingham, Alabama, which Harris studied for the early years of the century, “... the major cleavage in local *electoral* politics [versus the post-election *governing* politics] was defined not by economic interests, but by social groups, particularly ethnic and religious groups, and by such issues as saloon regulation and Sunday observance, which touched deeply-held life style traditions and moral attitudes.”²⁸

Regime theorists have not argued that the government - private alliance is an easy one, an immediate one, or an all-controlling one. On the contrary, Stone writes, “In a fragmented world, the issue is how to bring about enough co-operation among disparate community elements to get things done - and to

do so in the absence of an overarching command structure or unifying system of thought.”²⁹ A strong regime coalition builds consensus with the strategic members of the community. In his study of Atlanta, Stone shows that these coalitions were easier to build if the members had worked together on earlier projects. Frequently, successful coalitions engendered stability because of their “access to institutional resources.” This access brought increased flexibility not offered by government’s resources.³⁰ As Stone states, the creation and maintenance of this coalition was never easy. Co-operation could

... never be taken as a given; it must be achieved and at significant costs. Some of the costs are visible resources expended in promoting co-operation - favors and benefits distributed to curry reciprocity, the effort required to establish and maintain channels of communication, and responsibilities borne to knit activities together are a few examples.³¹

According to Stone, conflict inevitably arises within a coalition and has to be resolved for the regime’s success. More important than inner conflicts, the coalitions have to address opposition and to ensure the legitimacy of the regime. As government requires support from private interests, this support cannot come exclusively from business, but must come from a wide representation of the community. Groups are encouraged to remain within the coalition; outside of the coalition, they would no longer be able to protect their interests. The varied memberships in these *ad hoc* coalitions therefore reduces a government-business alliance’s control over the city’s agenda, but these coalitions most often include business because of its cohesive nature and important institutional resources.³²

A second generation of regime theorists has recently emerged. Largely, they have called for a contextualization of regime theory within the global economy. In the revisionist anthology Reconstructing Urban Regime Theory: Regulating Urban Politics in a Global Economy, the contributors emphasize the need for regime theorists to look beyond urban centres’ legal boundaries and to acknowledge the importance of inter-urban activities and extra-urban forces in moulding the regime and urban centre.³³ Accordingly, regime theory has ignored the “regulation of urban politics in a global economy.”³⁴ Within the anthology, geographer Christopher Leo, one of the few Canadians participating in the regime theory debate, argues that regime theory needs to account for the national government’s influence and intervention in urban affairs to explain local reaction to globalization.³⁵ With the recent modifications such as

contextualization within the global economy, regime theory, unlike its predecessors, provides a useful framework for analyzing community power.

The decision of the interwar period to build Vancouver's Lions' Gate Bridge provides an excellent opportunity to test the usefulness of regime theory analysis. While the coalition to build the bridge sought alliances and support from typical regime members, opposition from elements within the business community, who were affiliated with the natural resource sector in Vancouver's regional hinterland, arose against the coalition. The opponents played a very important role in shaping the coalition by convincing the federal Department of Public Works in 1926-27 and the federal Conservative government in 1934 to reject the bridge proposal. As a result, the coalition had to seek compensatory members outside the urban centre: the federal Liberal government once it took power in 1935. Thus, beyond Leo's argument that the federal government has a position in regimes, the larger national political and economic context plays a role in regime formation and development. Unlike regime theory's assumption that business communities are coherent, possible division may exist. Finally and most importantly, opposition plays a significant role in shaping the regime - an aspect previously ignored by regime theoreticians.

Round One: Competition and Opposition, 1926 - 1927

In the early 1890s, G.G. Mackay initially proposed a bridge across Burrard Inlet's First Narrows.³⁶ His proposal received serious consideration only when two competing companies, the First Narrows Bridge Company Ltd. and the Lions Gate Bridge Company Ltd., sought permission in 1926 to build a bridge across the Narrows. In this period, Vancouver experienced tremendous growth; capital investment rose; shipping from the port rose; demand for B.C.'s natural products rose; and the population grew.³⁷ During this prosperous time, the companies began to approach the various municipalities for their approval and support. Neither company succeeded in acquiring it.

By the end of the 1920s, plans for a bridge remained only a proposal. Despite their best efforts, the companies did not build a strong coalition with local government and appropriate community members, and thus did not gain the necessary public support for either project to proceed. Moreover, opposition consolidated into an organized effort to thwart the companies' goals. This first attempt to build a First Narrows bridge also illustrates division within the Vancouver business sector. Shipping business interests were closely linked to Canada's natural resource industries. They placed their transportation needs, and those of the lumber manufacturing and grain trade sectors in particular, ahead of the city's desire to promote urban growth by erecting a bridge. Finally, this first attempt also demonstrates the opponents' capacity to introduce an extra-urban organization, in this case the federal government, to the coalition-building process.

In June 1926, the municipal governments in and around Vancouver struck an inter-municipal committee to evaluate the bridge proposals submitted by the First Narrows Bridge Company Ltd., under the ownership of Dwight P. Robinson Company of New York, and the Lions Gate Bridge Company Ltd., under the ownership of Armstrong, Morrison & Co. of Vancouver and Harrington, Howard, & Ashe of Kansas City.³⁸ From the outset, the committee's formation approved in principle the construction of a bridge across the Narrows. Beyond this general approval, the committee's decisions demonstrate the

municipalities' demands for cooperating with and supporting a bridge coalition. The municipalities even withdrew the 1926 decision that approved the Armstrong and Morrison's bid for the bridge; they decided to leave such a decision until all details regarding franchises and federal approval had been addressed.³⁹

Withdrawing premature approval kept the municipalities involved in the project as the companies still had to receive final municipal approval. The committee refused to select one proposal over another without further information. If they had selected one company over the other at such an early stage, the municipalities would have removed themselves from the decision-making process and limited their power to shape any further details of the bridge project.

Municipal governments showed only half-hearted support for the initiative. The City of Vancouver, for example, refused to guarantee the project financially.⁴⁰ Unwilling to lend substantial resources to the initiative, the municipalities forced the bridge companies to seek compensatory support elsewhere.

During deliberations before the inter-municipalities committee, the rival companies publicly competed for municipal support. For example, the First Narrows Bridge Company proposed to spend up to \$10,000,000 for the bridge compared with their initial estimate of \$3,500,000.⁴¹ The company later qualified this remark, stating that it would spend this amount "providing the economic conditions of the North Shore and Vancouver ... warrant[ed] such an expenditure."⁴² After the committee had temporarily, and prematurely, selected the Armstrong and Morrison bid, the competing First Narrows Bridge Company Ltd. countered by reiterating the strengths of its offer: to build a second bridge for free, to possibly expand the bridge span to 1,800 feet, to sell the bridge to the City of Vancouver at any time following construction, to forward more revenue to the city than the other company, and to require only a fifteen-year franchise rather than a fifty-year one, as requested by the Lions Gate Bridge Company.⁴³ On the other hand, the Lions Gate Bridge Company offered the committee the opportunity to modify any aspect of its proposal.⁴⁴ As each company was pre-occupied with defeating the other, it expended valuable resources that could have been employed against the larger opposition. Yet, while company rivalry played an important role in the first attempt's demise, the chance for either company to build a bridge across the First Narrows was

thwarted more by municipal and private interests opposition. In particular, the decision of Vancouver-area municipalities not to endorse either application prevented the companies from forming strong coalitions with local governments.

While discussion was taking place at the municipal level, in November 1926, the federal government's Department of Public Works established a Board of Inquiry to examine the proposed bridge across the First Narrows. The Board was created "To hear public representations of all parties whose interests might be affected by the construction of a bridge across the First narrows (otherwise called Lion's Gate), at the entrance to Vancouver Harbour, Vancouver, B.C."⁴⁵ The inquiry actively sought input from the public-at-large by advertising in the local newspapers and by contacting individuals and organizations directly (see Appendix A). Held in Vancouver from the end of November to the end of December 1926, this inquiry reveals the diverse levels of support and opposition that various private and public interests accorded to the bridge project.

The First Narrows Bridge Company Ltd. and the Lions Gate Bridge Company Ltd. both presented their respective proposals to the Board of Inquiry. The companies argued that their proposals were well-researched and that project specifications, such as the location of the road through Stanley Park leading to the bridge and the width of the bridge sidewalks, were negotiable.⁴⁶ Despite offering to incorporate governing bodies' project changes, the companies insisted that their designs were sufficient to accommodate shipping interests. Opposition to the bridge complained that ships would be required to remove their masts before passing under the bridge, but the bridge companies responded that a balance needed to be maintained between the sea and land traffic interests. The companies viewed the mast issue as a "trivial reason" to oppose the bridge.⁴⁷ Although the companies professed to be flexible concerning bridge height and width, they explained that increases in either dimension were expensive. These costs prohibited them from making necessary concessions to gain shipping industry support. Throughout the inquiry, the bridge companies' lawyers emphasized the advantages of a bridge, including access to new "playgrounds" such as the North Shore's Hollyburn Ridge for Vancouver residents.⁴⁸

In addition to conveying the strengths of their proposals and their accommodating nature, the companies also called for support from sectors within the local community. Only a small number of witnesses at the inquiry testified in support of a bridge. All three municipalities on Burrard Inlet's North Shore forwarded motions of support, citing benefits such as the opening of new residential areas for development, improved transportation, and lower shipping costs.⁴⁹ Civic organizations such as West Vancouver's Board of Trade and Ratepayers' Association forwarded motions of support.⁵⁰ One citizen of Vancouver argued that a bridge could not only be useful, and encourage the economic prosperity of the whole urban area, but would also be "ornamental" and "a real attraction" instead of "an eye sore or a detriment."⁵¹

Submissions against the bridge from important Vancouver organizations demonstrate that the bridge companies had alienated a crucial body of support. These organizations had considerable respect from the Vancouver community and from the federal government's Board of Inquiry. Resolution of the Vancouver Board of Trade, submitted on November 23, 1926, stated that since "the Harbour of Vancouver is Canada's greatest Western port, and the existence of any obstruction or even the fear of an obstruction would seriously hamper it, we, the members of the Vancouver Board of Trade, cannot favor the erection of a bridge across the mouth of the Harbour."⁵² The President of the Board testified that his organization saw no reason to build the bridge except for enticing a few tourists to come and visit. He suggested that a bridge would adversely affect the city's development.⁵³ The Board of Trade represented over 1,300 "commercial, industrial and civic" interests in Vancouver and presented, as a result, a strong voice on civic matters. The Vancouver Harbour Commissioners were more conciliatory and agreed to a bridge if a tunnel was not feasible. They requested that the bridge be of sufficient height and span to accommodate any vessel in existence or likely to be built; they did not want a bridge to hamper access to their harbour.⁵⁴ In the commissioners' opinion, construction of a bridge that would benefit a small number of residents on the North Shore did not warrant limiting the lumber industry's development, or the use of the port's new grain elevators.⁵⁵ Overall, opponents argued that trade through Vancouver's harbour had enjoyed significant growth over the preceding ten years.

The most significant and best organized opposition to the bridge proposal came from the shipping industry. It worked hard to ensure that the Board of Inquiry fully understood the bridge's negative repercussions. The shippers hired lawyers to cross-examine witnesses and brought witnesses to the inquiry to support their position. Their witnesses testified extensively and discussed broad issues such as the economic importance of the harbour and the finite details of navigating the Narrows. As the federal government was responsible for protecting navigable water ways, the latter issue concerned them the most. Shippers gained their livelihood from the movement of natural resources from Canada's hinterland, onto ships, and out of the harbour. To obstruct the exit from the harbour would have limited the flow of Canada's wheat, lumber, and other export products through Vancouver and seriously weakened the city's shipping industry. The Vancouver Merchants' Exchange played a strong role in financing the shippers' presentations at the inquiry. In its opinion, a bridge would have harmed the alleged one hundred million dollars of capital invested in grain elevators, piers, and transportation links in the port.⁵⁶ In his testimony, James Edward Hull, President of the Merchants' Exchange, emphasized that the port could sustain tremendous growth in the next thirty to forty years, which any obstruction in the Narrows would temper.⁵⁷

Other members of the shipping sector also testified. The Shipping Federation of B.C., representing thirty members who held interests in the Port of Vancouver, testified that a bridge with a span of less than 1,800 feet would hinder future expansion of the Narrows and the development of the port. In response to suggestions that vessels remove their antenna and masts to pass under the bridge, the Federation argued that this would reduce their communication abilities. In addition, it was nearly impossible to remove masts, let alone inconvenient for a ship to do so prior to entering the port.⁵⁸ Captain I.W. Troup, manager of Coastal Traffic for the Canadian Pacific Railroad, confirmed the Federation's testimony and added that by preventing future dredging, a short bridge span would condemn the Narrows to dangerous tides forever.⁵⁹ Others testified that navigational problems such as the fierce tides would beach vessels on the sandy north shore. Especially with log booms passing through the Narrows and their tendency to swing towards the north, the passage was a dangerous one. A bridge would only increase the dangers by placing piers as obstacles in the Narrows and limiting its future width.⁶⁰

A number of different groups testified against the bridge proposals. The Vancouver Art & Historical Society registered its opposition on the grounds that a bridge would "mar the Natural Beauty of Stanley Park."⁶¹ Generally, most shared fears that a bridge span less than 1,500 feet would prevent future dredging and expansion of the Narrows. Contrary to these specifications, the two proposals were for 1,200 feet and heights of less than 170 feet at high tide.⁶² A bridge with a short height would limit the types boats that could enter the harbour. As the port was quite young and competing with other western ports in Seattle, Portland, and San Francisco, the shipping interests wanted to ensure that any boat, in existence then or in the future, could enter without removing its mast.

The Board of Inquiry submitted its recommendations on January 15, 1927. It concluded "That a bridge over the First Narrows is desirable, and would be of benefit to the citizens of Vancouver and surrounding areas." In addition, the Board's report stated, "... it is perfectly feasible to construct a bridge across the First Narrows that would provide reasonable and adequate protection to navigation."⁶³ However and most importantly, the Board deemed the proposals submitted by the two rival companies to be inadequate because they failed to provide sufficient room for ships to pass. In other words, the bridge companies obtained approval in principle for the project but failed to receive the Board's approval of the projects' specifications. The Board suggested 1,400 feet lateral clearance and 190 feet vertical clearance at the highest tide as minimum standards, and neither proposal neared these requirements.⁶⁴ In essence, the Board members had examined the costs of supporting either bridge proposal and had decided that the resulting losses to Vancouver's harbour were too high. The shipping interests' concerns expressed in the testimony convinced the Board to oppose the proposals. The Board of Inquiry did not completely shut the door on the possibility of a bridge, but did place significant obstacles before the two bridge companies; the final report established height and span specifications that would have greatly increased construction costs.

Despite the Board of Inquiry's rejection of both proposals, bridge opponents were not satisfied with its findings and continued their efforts to have the bridge rejected in principle. The Shipping Federation of B.C. and the Vancouver Merchants' Exchange forwarded their response to the Board's report to the Prime Minister and to Ministers of Public Work and Marine and Fisheries. In it they complained

that any bridge would "relegate Vancouver to the category of a river port, and would give a marked advantage to the competitive port of Seattle."⁶⁵ The Federation and Exchange also published 500 copies of a pamphlet that restated their concern for navigational problems at the Narrows and their belief that the bridge companies and their supporters had failed to present sufficient evidence to justify constructing a bridge. Finally, the Federation and Exchange asserted that if a bridge proved necessary, it would have to be sufficiently long to permit full navigation of an 1,800 foot channel.⁶⁶ E.W. Beatty, Chairman and President of the Canadian Pacific Railway Company (CPR), wrote to the Minister of the Marine and Fisheries to register his company's strong opposition to the bridge and support for the Federation and the Exchange's positions. The CPR had recently invested considerable capital in the port, including the construction of a new Pier B-C at a cost of over five million dollars. Beatty argued that the federal government itself had invested a great deal of money in "lands, docks, elevators and other improvements which will be affected by any action calculated to interfere with navigation."⁶⁷

Opposition efforts convinced the federal government to reject the two proposals, but the bridge issue was discussed in other forums as well. In December 1926, concurrently with the proceedings of the Board of Inquiry, both companies sought franchises from British Columbia's provincial government to bridge the Narrows.⁶⁸ Provincial approval would add another layer of support for and legitimacy to the project. F.G.T. Lucas, arguing at the provincial committee hearings on behalf of the shipping interests, sought to prevent the companies from gaining provincial support while the federal government's Board of Inquiry continued to deliberate.⁶⁹ By delaying provincial approval, the shipping interests inhibited the bridge companies from strengthening a pro-construction coalition. The shippers had mounted a considerable effort to prevent the bridge companies from forming the kind of alliances that would be necessary for them to gain approval for their projects.

The aforementioned inter-municipality First Narrows Bridge Committee also sent a representative to the provincial legislature to testify at the committee hearings on the bridge franchise bills. They requested that the project's financial security be guaranteed. None of the municipalities desired a partially

- completed white elephant spanning the Narrows.⁷⁰ In this instance, the Cities of Vancouver and North Vancouver and the Districts of North Vancouver and West Vancouver, all of which approved of the bridge in principle, continued their role in the approval process. With this action, the municipalities demonstrated their commitment to and strength in the bridge project.

In the newspapers, public support for the bridge appeared to be little more than a peep compared to the "roar" of the opposition. Lauding the virtues of the bridge, a citizen commented that a bridge would create an excellent potential viewpoint and improve access to Hollyburn Ridge.⁷¹ Another suggested that a bridge would improve Vancouver's chances at expansion.⁷² Others supported the shipping interests' concern that access to the docks and piers not be impeded.⁷³ A member of the Terminal City Club called for Vancouver to protect its interests, oppose the construction of the bridge, and assure that new residents purchased homes within the city's boundaries as the city had already invested considerable sums in developing new residential areas.⁷⁴ Another citizen commented that a bridge would encourage urban sprawl in the Vancouver area by providing "persons of wealth, leisure, education, good taste and public spirit" with the opportunity to live further from the city's centre while the centre deteriorated into a "slum."⁷⁵ Others argued that no demand existed for such a bridge, which would also compete with the Second Narrows Bridge.⁷⁶

The proposed roadway to the bridge from downtown Vancouver through Stanley Park met with opposition from a number of groups, not the least of which was the Vancouver Parks Board, the organization responsible for managing the Park. In June 1927, the Board's Superintendent Rawlings submitted a report detailing the Board's opposition to "Anything of so commercial a nature" as a thoroughfare that would intersect with pedestrian trails. The report also criticized the long time required for the area near the road to recover from the construction. A causeway would "be detrimental to the best interests of the park."⁷⁷ For the Board, a causeway's long-term costs outweighed any benefits it could achieve from building a bridge. Members of the public rallied in support of the Parks Board's position to protect Stanley Park. Fred G. Jarrett stated:

From Alaska to the border of Mexico I have heard travellers speak in eulogistic terms of Stanley Park. I now wonder if the desecration of this beautiful heritage is about to be perpetrated in order to build a bridge across the Lions' Gate, erect peanut stands and toll gates, and to extort fabulous prices from the gullible for lots in West Vancouver.⁷⁸

Finally, some concerned citizens demanded the right to voice their positions in a more effective way than through letters in the local newspapers.⁷⁹ Their calls were answered when the City of Vancouver launched a plebiscite for June 25, 1927. The plebiscite question asked the following:

Are you in favour of the construction of a boulevard roadway without cost to the City, through a portion of Stanley Park to afford access to and from the proposed First Narrows Bridge, subject to a satisfactory agreement between the Board of Park Commissioners and the Bridge Company as to location and specifications?⁸⁰

In an effort to gain electoral support and to inform the voters, the Lions Gate Bridge Company published a detailed pamphlet outlining the project's benefits, including the bridge's beauty, the company assuming the construction costs, the increased tourism revenue for Vancouver, the incredible size of the bridge compared to others around the world, and "The proposed boulevard roadway, beautifully laidout [that] will give easy access to woodland depths which it is impossible now to reach."⁸¹ Despite their efforts, the citizens replied with a resounding vote *against* the construction of the causeway: 4,724 votes to 2,099.⁸² With this result, the bridge companies lost all hope of forming a bridge coalition. Neither the City of Vancouver nor the Parks Board would ally themselves with a project rejected publicly by a two-to-one margin. They had little choice but to let the bridge project die.

This first round of discussion about building a First Narrows bridge indicates that the two bridge companies were unable to mobilize the necessary political resources to overcome the project's opponents. They were unable to achieve cooperation from important community members and, as a result, were unable to build the necessary coalition to achieve their policy objectives. Testimony at the Public Works' Board of Inquiry shows that corporate opinion was not unanimous: businesses involved in shipping and servicing the nation's staples industries opposed the bridge idea whereas businesses interested in urban growth supported it. Canada's national economic identity played an important role in generating opposition to a bridge that

would impede access to the country's western harbour. The national economy drove a wedge into Vancouver's business community, making it difficult for bridge proponents to mobilize the sector's political resources into partnership. The Board's decision to support the bridge, but to insist upon increased height and span requirements, encouraged opposition to the bridge. The First Narrows Bridge Company and the Lions Gate Bridge Company failed to find support in other quarters to makeup for the shortfall caused by half-hearted local government support. While the companies convinced Vancouver-area municipalities to endorse a bridge in principle, they failed to receive municipal financing. Competition between the two franchised companies introduced an antagonism that required each to focus energy on company rivalries rather than general opposition to the bridge. Finally, in Vancouver's municipal plebiscite, voters terminated any hope of creating the necessary coalition of public and private interests. The Parks Board refused permission to build the road through Stanley Park and no member of Vancouver's municipal council would endorse a project without electoral support.

With their weak political resources, and facing significant opposition from important potential coalition members such as the Vancouver Parks Board and the Vancouver Board of Trade, both the First Narrows Bridge Company Ltd. and the Lions Gate Bridge Company Ltd. failed to forge a coalition that would champion a crossing at Burrard Inlet's First Narrows. Moreover, this first attempt illustrates the division within the business sector. The shipping interests, important bridge opponents, had little affiliation with Vancouver's urban economy as their allegiance remained with the provincial and national natural resource economy.⁸³ These interests also sought assistance from the extra-urban federal government in their aim to protect the harbour. After the plebiscite, the Province newspaper editorial commented that two things are certain: "the present bridge project is dead" and "the friends of a bridge across the First Narrows will live to fight another day..."⁸⁴

Round Two: Heightened Stakes, 1931 - 1936

The project to bridge the First Narrows fizzled in the late 1920s in the wake of other concerns, especially the 1929 Stock Market crash. But a second attempt to build the bridge began soon after, despite the Depression. The first attempt illustrates, in part, how conflicting economic activities divided Vancouver business opinion towards the bridge and how the shipping interests used the federal government, as an extra-urban organization, to protect their needs. In this second and successful attempt, Canada's federal government played a crucial role in delaying the construction of a First Narrows Bridge. Due to the federal Conservative government's opposition to its initiative, the coalition was required to seek compensatory extra-urban support. This support took the form of the Liberal government that came to power in 1935. Although the coalition had built a strong urban regime, it was not sufficient for the bridge project to proceed without an equivalent extra-urban coalition member. Therefore, the second phase of the Lions Gate Bridge story strongly suggests that regime theory must acknowledge the potential role of the opposition in introducing extra-urban coalition members and issues.

West Vancouver Reeve Leyland stated at the bridge's opening on November 1938: "The Bridge binds closer together the component parts of a growing Metropolis in a common bond of friendship and mutual interests..."⁸⁵ To the contrary, however, those opposed to the bridge did not form "bonds of friendship and mutual interests" with the bridge promoters. Opposition remained strong. Nonetheless, in the 1930s, the coalition was able to rally sufficient resources and thus overcome all attempts to thwart the construction of the Lions' Gate Bridge.

Both attempts to build a bridge included a public plebiscite and federal intervention, but a number of changes occurred in the interim. First, in 1930 the Lions Gate Bridge Company Ltd. and the First Narrows Bridge Company Ltd. amalgamated to end their rivalry and adopted the name of the latter. The new company, the First Narrows Bridge Company Ltd., would no longer be distracted by a competitor; it could focus on building a single coalition to counter opposition.⁸⁶ Moreover, potential coalition members

no longer had to puzzle over supporting the project in principle or selecting one proposal rather than the other. As discussed, this had occurred in the first attempt when the City of Vancouver initially selected one project over another, then had to rescind its decision. Competition had complicated matters not only for the companies, but also for the coalition.

Another change to the First Narrows Bridge Company Ltd. stemmed from British investment in British Columbia. Under the name of the British Pacific Properties Ltd., A.J.T. Taylor, a British Columbia-born entrepreneur, obtained British investment to purchase real estate on the North Shore in November 1931 when he and the investors entered into an agreement with the municipality of West Vancouver. By purchasing the 4,000 acres of municipal land on Hollyburn Ridge, the British Pacific Properties Ltd. received the rights to develop the area. It paid an initial sum of \$75,000 to the municipality and agreed to spend over \$1,000,000 in services to the area within the first five years of the agreement. In exchange, the local government agreed to a fixed assessment of \$100,000 for the same period.⁸⁷ The municipality went beyond offering a fixed tax assessment by purchasing the remainder of the Hollyburn Ridge from the provincial government. This purchase ensured that the ridge would not be scarred by timber companies cutting-down the green velvet that topped the municipality, and thus detract from the beauty of the area.⁸⁸

Despite the short distance between the British Pacific Properties Ltd.'s real estate in West Vancouver and Vancouver's downtown core, only limited ferry service and the Second Narrows Bridge transported people and cars from the north to the south shores. Moreover, the Second Narrows bridge collapsed in September 1930 and significantly restricted already poor access to the North Shore. It would take four years before the crossing was re-opened to traffic.⁸⁹ Since the bridge's inauguration in 1926, the North Shore had experienced significant growth in vehicle traffic from Vancouver, in size and in economic activity. Following the closure, development came to a virtual halt and demand continued to grow for access to the North Shore. Problems caused by the bridge closure were compounded by the economic depression of the early 1930s. A local newspaper commented in August 1931:

“... business concerns, both large and small, have found their sources of revenue sadly diminished and it has indeed been difficult, and in many cases impossible, for them to pay taxes, creating a very anxious position for the Municipal officials who are responsible for financial administration.”⁹⁰

Moreover, residents in West Vancouver who were furthest from the Second Narrows Bridge were only serviced by a passenger ferry.⁹¹ As stated in the West Vancouver News editorial, “It cannot be too clearly emphasized that connection by bridge or bridges with Vancouver is not a matter of convenience but of the continued existence of the three North Shore municipalities.”⁹² The closure of the Second Narrows Bridge emphasized the need for a second physical link to the North Shore.

Another bridge further west would provide the required access and capitalize on the distance between the British Pacific Properties’ suburb and the downtown core. As a result, in 1932 the company purchased the First Narrows Bridge Company to ensure access to its North Shore suburb. While each company had its own purpose, both were owned and managed by the same people. Allegedly, the British Pacific Properties had undertaken a preliminary review of the bridge project prior to purchasing the land in 1931, but it officially invested in the project two years later, in April 1933.⁹³ A bridge would reduce travel time from the properties to the downtown core and generate annual revenue from the toll charged to all who crossed the span.⁹⁴ The British Pacific Properties would build and operate the bridge at a construction cost of \$6,000,000. Access justified its sevenfold investment in the bridge over its initial real estate purchase. The latter would not profit or succeed without the former.

The British Pacific Properties Ltd. decision to fund the bridge demonstrates its commitment to its real estate investment. Its decision stemmed in part from the fact that the company’s investment in British Columbia was for the long-term. With its real estate purchase, it would only reap significant benefits following gradual development and sale of the 4,000 acres of West Vancouver land; the company did not predict an immediate or massive influx of residents to Vancouver. Moreover, the British investors, who were by 1934 principally the beer brewing Guinness family, sought to avoid taxation in Britain. As a result, they viewed their investment as a long-term one and suggested that the profits would be reaped by future generations of Guinnesses.⁹⁵ Their West Vancouver investment was significant and they were not

prepared to sustain a loss.⁹⁶ Therefore, the First Narrows Bridge Company Ltd.'s goal went beyond earning a profit from the tolls. The company's project was the key to the longer-term success of the Guinness family's investment in West Vancouver and the First Narrows Bridge Company enjoyed financial stability as a result.

With the bridge's heightened importance for its investors and increased financial resources, the First Narrows Bridge Company was prepared to be conciliatory and flexible with potential bridge supporters. The company proposed a larger bridge to address the concerns raised in the twenties. A 1,500 foot span and a 200 foot high bridge were significant improvements over the previous plans (See Appendix B). While earlier proposals had estimated a cost of \$3,500 000 for the bridge, the company was now prepared to invest more than \$6,000,000 in the construction. To gain the necessary approval to build a causeway through Stanley Park, the First Narrows Bridge Company suggested that the Parks Board determine the road's location and specifications.⁹⁷ The company had budgeted \$200,000 for the road through the park. Following the Parks Board's modifications, the road would eventually cost the company nearly twice as much: \$450,000.⁹⁸ The company attempted to encourage general project support with others as well. For example, it argued that: "... the structure could be made to appear very pretty and coincide with the natural beauty of its location."⁹⁹ It also offered to pay fair wages to bridge construction workers in accordance with the instructions of the Dominion Government's fair wage office. The company also excluded "Asiatics" from the pay roll.¹⁰⁰ While meeting with the City of Vancouver, the company's lawyer argued that a bridge across the First Narrows would not compete with the Second Narrows Bridge as each would service its own markets.¹⁰¹ Finally, the First Narrows Bridge Company also sought local support so it would not be criticized as illegitimate or unrepresentative; the company requested that the City of Vancouver's project approval be based on a two-thirds majority within council or majority support in a municipal plebiscite.¹⁰² During the period leading to the December 1933 plebiscite vote, the company declared that it would not campaign in order to avoid accusations of manipulating the voter.¹⁰³ However, R. P. Stockton, a representative from the bridge company, sent an open letter to the Vancouver electors prior to the vote and outlined the reasons to build the bridge. In this letter, Stockton also assured voters

that the company was financially stable and the federal government would protect the navigable waterways.¹⁰⁴ The First Narrows Bridge Company's efforts would help build public support for the project.

One issue that greatly facilitated the creation of a pro-bridge coalition in the 1930s was the Depression. As did other areas of the country, British Columbia faced significant economic and social distress during the early 1930s. The province's exports decreased from \$238 million in 1929 to \$100 million in 1934. More specifically, by 1935 Vancouver saw property values plummet 300%.¹⁰⁵ The provincial unemployment level rose as high as 28% and the provincial and federal governments organized relief camps for unemployed transient men.¹⁰⁶ Conditions reached a nadir in 1933 when the Gross National Expenditure bottomed out at 70.2% of the 1928 level.¹⁰⁷ A large-scale infrastructure project, such as the construction of a massive bridge, would provide a capital injection that Vancouver desperately needed. The possibility that a bridge would lift Vancouver out of its economic troubles was never far from the minds of citizens, especially in 1933. In a newspaper article of August 1933 discussing the proposed bridge, the author stated:

For upwards of three years the most severe economic depression in the history of the world has been working havoc in all directions; business has decreased to the lowest level that could be attained and still low it to be said that there is any; unemployment has assumed alarming proportions and the financial resources not only of Vancouver but also of British Columbia and of Canada are strained to the limit to take care of the situation. It is quite possible therefore that the prospect of the expenditure of \$6,000,000 on the construction of First Narrows bridge, involving as it will the creation of a large volume of employment and the placing of large sums of money in circulation locally will go far to counteract those sentimental influences which rendered the ratepayers unwilling to approve the construction of a modern highway..."¹⁰⁸

The economic reality of the thirties significantly modified the environment in which the second round of discussion about a First Narrows bridge took place.

The First Narrows Bridge Company sought a broad-based coalition of support including individuals, organizations, and governments. For example, the British Columbia government's

endorsement was required for the bridge project to continue. When the provincial legislature's Private Bills Committee debated amendments to the First Narrows Bridge Company Act, opposition to the bridge reappeared. The Vancouver Merchants' Exchange mounted a case to ensure that its span and height minimums of 1,800 and 225 feet respectively were included in the legislation. By arguing for these specifications that were significantly larger than those proposed by the company, the Exchange attempted to thwart the bridge company's project.¹⁰⁹ At the end of December 1933, the government approved the bridge company's proposal, despite the Exchange's opposition.¹¹⁰ Premier Pattullo, who remained quiet throughout the bridge deliberations, stated his approval for the project in a letter to a concerned citizen:

"The construction of the First Narrows Bridge would undoubtedly be of much benefit to the area on the North Shore. There are some beautiful sites on the North Shore and there is bound to be such development in the whole area of Greater Vancouver that I think there need be no rivalry between different portions of the city."¹¹¹

However, the provincial governments relative silence in the remainder of the bridge debate demonstrates their limited importance in the coalition. Provincial approval was required, but beyond that, the province played no future role in promoting the bridge.

More important municipal support from the City of North Vancouver and the District of North Vancouver came easily. With the difficulties created by the Depression and the closure of the Second Narrows Bridge, the idea of a new bridge met with little opposition. The two local governments jointly sought advice from the community by calling a public meeting. Former and present municipal councillors, school trustees, members from the Town Planning Commission, representatives of a number of ratepayers' associations, the Board of Trade, and local bank managers attended the meeting and passed a resolution in favour of the bridge.¹¹² The two municipalities also provided information to interested groups and individuals and requested their input prior to a decision on the bridge proposal. After the need for a North Vancouver plebiscite was rejected as expensive and unnecessary, Commissioner Tisdall signed the agreement with the company on behalf of the two municipalities and joined the coalition to build the bridge.¹¹³

Easy approval by the North Shore contrasted with a more complex process in the City of Vancouver. The bridge coalition experienced significant challenges while gaining necessary support from the municipal government, local organizations, and residents of Vancouver. Without this support, the project would not have moved forward. Despite the Vancouver city government's approval in 1926-1927, its support appears to have waned when the company sought an amendment to their provincial franchise. While testifying to the provincial government, the City of Vancouver expressed its disapproval of the company receiving an exclusive franchise to build the bridge.¹¹⁴ The City's initial reticence to support a second bridge project grew into outright rejection of the Lion's Gate Bridge company's proposal in May 1933. A joint meeting of the Vancouver City Council and the Vancouver Parks Board voted twice against motions to consider the proposed bridge across the First Narrows.¹¹⁵ Apparently, they had rejected the project because they had not been given detailed information about it. The following day, in the face of "public disappointment" with the initial municipal decision, Council hastily agreed to review its position and finally carried a motion to consider the bridge in principle.¹¹⁶ Despite the City's hesitation about the second project, City Council members would become important members of the bridge construction coalition, tacitly and actively supporting and promoting the project.

Vancouver City Council set one condition for its approval: the decision to build the bridge had to be approved by a public plebiscite. Although the Council originally rejected the need for a plebiscite, claiming that it would incur an unnecessary cost, it decided that a precedent had been set in 1927, and public consultation was necessary. The vote would occur on December 13, 1933.¹¹⁷

Although public debate regarding the bridge had been on-going, it rose significantly with the announcement of the plebiscite. Through the media and speaking engagements, a number of local organizations and individuals endorsed the project and encouraged others to do the same. From the North Shore, groups supported the bridge project. For example, the West Vancouver Canadian Legion endorsed the bridge as a way to alleviate unemployment problems.¹¹⁸ The North Vancouver Property Owners and the Capilano Ratepayers Association voted in favour of the bridge, and labour organizations endorsed it as well.¹¹⁹ Across the inlet, the Vancouver Trade and Labor Council forwarded its motion of support to the

Vancouver City Council, and consequently strengthened the bridge coalition.¹²⁰ Moreover, the Bridge and Structural Ironworkers Union enthusiastically supported a project that would employ their members.¹²¹ The Native Sons of Canada suggested a plebiscite was not required as local support was sufficiently strong to go ahead without public consultation.¹²² The League of Women Voters approved the bridge project.¹²³ A veteran navigator, Captain W.J. Conway, presented his six reasons for approving the bridge project to the Vancouver Rotary Club. He stated that the bridge would accelerate Vancouver's development that would enhance employment opportunities and expansion of shipping docks to the North Shore.¹²⁴ A member of the Vancouver Town Planning Commission also approved the bridge as a means of improving transportation in the Vancouver area.¹²⁵ In other words, a significant and diverse group of organizations and individuals supported the bridge project.

Arguments for the bridge's construction aimed to increase public and private support. Many commended the company for offering to build a bridge that public institutions could never afford.¹²⁶ Others addressed development issues, arguing that the bridge would prevent the death of the downtown core. Without it, the downtown would move to Broadway Avenue.¹²⁷ Engineering and economic reports identified increased American tourist traffic as another incentive to build the bridge. Indeed, it would contribute to another West Vancouver initiative: a highway leading to Garibaldi natural park, north of Vancouver.¹²⁸ Massive construction of the bridge and the highway to the Garibaldi would increase employment and economic activity at a phenomenal rate. One person estimated that the bridge would bring over two million dollars in jobs.¹²⁹ Finally, in an advertising campaign undertaken in the weeks leading to the plebiscite on 13 December 1933, one message read:

... every registered elector in the City of Vancouver will have a chance to vote in favour of the Greatest Civic Project ever offered to any World Port. If the project carries, Vancouver will come into possession of what will be the largest and finest suspension bridge in the British Empire ... without a single dollar of expense to any local citizen or taxpayer for its construction.¹³⁰

Enthusiasm for the project abounded. Many individuals or groups sought to convince others to support the bridge and endorse the First Narrows Bridge Company.

Bridge supporters had not formally campaigned for the plebiscite in 1927. In contrast, during the second attempt the Greater Vancouver Development Association (GVDA) made a concerted effort to promote the bridge. The association published in the Vancouver Sun, the Province and the North Shore Press newspapers a series of supportive articles for “all who are seeking information and independent comment on the Lion’s Gate Project.”¹³¹ To “inform” the electorate, they addressed a number of issues related directly and indirectly to the bridge. They called upon experts to argue their case. J. Friend Day, an associate professor of economics and commerce at the University of British Columbia, published his thoughts on the issue. In his general discussion of the bridge’s economic contribution, Day discussed the short-term employment opportunities offered by the construction of the road to the bridge and the bridge itself. Such employment would increase demands for goods and services while new employment would alleviate the stress placed on civic relief programs.¹³² The association also referred to the 1929 Bartholemew Plan for Vancouver. The GVDA noted that the plan called for Vancouver to create more “pleasure drives.”¹³³ The association argued that:

... the new roadway through Stanley Park will do for the Park what the Redwood Highway has done for the scenic beauty of the Northern California forest lands. It will bring, within a few minutes by automobile, a series of sylvan vistas, of sheltered coppice and leafy glade, at present entirely inaccessible to all save the more daring who may occasionally venture off the beaten foot trails which thread their way through the underbrush.”¹³⁴

For the GVDA, the Lions’ Gate Bridge would become “a ‘symphony in steel’ leading to the North Shore.”¹³⁵

Although the First Narrows Bridge Company had stated that it would not attempt to earn support for its proposal, a close ally, West Vancouver’s Reeve Leyland, mounted a concerted campaign to convince Vancouver voters to support the bridge. Leyland organized four information offices in Vancouver and provided transportation on voting day.¹³⁶ He also made several public statements by means of radio interviews, letters to the editors, and presentations to groups.¹³⁷ In a speech he delivered the day prior to the Vancouver plebiscite, Leyland stated:

Countless thousands will enjoy from Lions Gate Bridge the entrancing beauty of our matchless sunsets that fade into the intriguing softness of the mellow sparkling purple of the after glow of twilight that attends the peaceful surrender of the day to the quiet dignity of the North Pacific Night.¹³⁸

West Vancouver's local newspaper commended Leyland on his efforts during the plebiscite.¹³⁹

Opposition to the bridge attempted to respond to the pro-bridge faction. Appealing to the authority of a well respected Vancouver family, the Province noted that Henry Bell-Irving opposed construction of a bridge across the Narrows. In his opinion, it would impede access to the harbour.¹⁴⁰ The Lynmour and District Progressive Association, based in an eastern area on the North Shore, asserted that the new bridge would reduce the importance of the Second Narrows Bridge that serviced its area.¹⁴¹ At the end of November 1933, the Vancouver Board of Trade issued a lengthy report that mounted a detailed argument against the bridge.¹⁴² Although portrayed as representative of the Board's opinion, it was written by a small committee and not approved by the entire Board. A number of members resigned in protest over it. Conflict within the Board of Trade illustrates the opposition's lack of cohesion.

Although at least one Vancouver Town Planning Commission member supported the bridge, the Commission as a whole opposed it. The Commission developed a number of detailed briefing papers that outlined its fears of a bridge that spanned the Narrows. To begin with, the Commission criticized the aesthetics of the bridge, the "extremely slender lines" of which,

with its high towers and narrow roadway, between the stiffening trusses, the lack of symmetry ... and the long ramp on the north shore, of similar construction to the Granville and Cambie Bridges, will tend to mar rather than add to the natural beauty of the entrance to the Port.¹⁴³

Commission reports also criticized the bridge for being too small to accommodate the city's transportation needs and identified significant traffic problems on Georgia Street, the recipient of the bridge traffic.¹⁴⁴ Finally, another report warned of the increased competition in real estate and the loss that the province would sustain with the decline of real estate prices in areas such as the University of British Columbia.¹⁴⁵

Many individuals and associations opposed the bridge. Vancouver aldermen R.N. Fraser and A.G. Harvey repeatedly commented in the media and in council meetings that the bridge had a number of

shortfalls.¹⁴⁶ Harvey forcefully put the argument that the bridge would reduce Vancouver's property values. The City of Vancouver held 1,800 lots and had, he explained, lost over two millions dollars in back taxes. Harvey continued that the CPR held over 1,400 acres of undeveloped land and the University of British Columbia held 2,500 acres of land. With this abundant supply of real estate, opening a residential area on the North Shore would only contribute to the decline of Vancouver's development.¹⁴⁷ Harvey also opposed the bridge on the grounds that it was a private project.¹⁴⁸ Others agreed: if the bridge was such a valuable project, perhaps government should fund it instead.¹⁴⁹ Some stated that tolls would "retard people of small means [from] establishing their homes on the North Shore."¹⁵⁰ Others echoed the Town Planning Commission's comment that the bridge was not large enough or suggested that the bridge increased the navigational danger for ships. Consequently, shipping insurance rates would rise.¹⁵¹

Bridge supporters criticized and countered opponents' positions. Regarding the argument that the bridge would lead to reduced real estate values, the GVDA replied that the opened area would only attract a few lonely people who had no friends in Vancouver. Residents would not want to purchase land on the North Shore as the isolation held many disadvantages such as "the necessary extra miles" for a man in his car "and possibly the purchase of a second car so that his wife can maintain touch with her own interests in Vancouver."¹⁵² Overall for the GVDA, the bridge would benefit the greater Vancouver area as a whole.¹⁵³ In a letter to the editor of the Province, J. Sparkes addressed the same issue by stating that Vancouver would eventually require the residential space on the North Shore.¹⁵⁴ Some opposition argued that a bridge across the Narrows would threaten Canada's military security as the enemy could blowup the bridge and close Vancouver's harbour.¹⁵⁵ Bridge proponents countered that the Canadian military could just as easily come along and blowup the downed bridge and re-open the Narrows.¹⁵⁶ Other opponents asserted that a three-lane bridge would be inadequate, but the Vancouver Sun argued that "Boston, New York and other large American cities manage to worry along with three-lane bridges."¹⁵⁷ Some supporters criticized opponents outright. The News Herald insinuated that the Vancouver Town Planning Commissioners were not qualified to comment on bridges.¹⁵⁸ The West Vancouver News was less polite in its comments,

accusing opponents of playing “village politics”.¹⁵⁹ Overall, arguments and counter-arguments were strong and forceful compared to the previous debate in the 1920s.

As with the first attempt, the road through Stanley Park to the bridgehead became a central part of public debate. Those who opposed the causeway’s construction remounted the argument that the causeway would increase danger to pedestrians.¹⁶⁰ In a letter to the editor, one citizen suggested that Stanley Park brought more health and recreational value to the city than any bridge across the Narrows: “Don’t therefore let us sacrifice the last piece of nature’s beautiful work to crude and base commercialism.”¹⁶¹

Others eloquently pleaded to save the park:

If we peer into the future and see Vancouver the city of a million inhabitants and still growing there must also rise before us the nightmare of hot summer days where myriads of men, women and children are tramping the dusty roads seeking in vain green grass under their feet and the cool shade of trees overhead. ... Whether Stanley Park is to remain an oasis of quiet and a place of sunshine holiday for the tired workers of the city is an unexpected question to be urged today.¹⁶²

By contrast, the West Vancouver News argued that the park was “doomed as an example of B.C. coast woodland” and a roadway would make little difference.¹⁶³ To others, the road was a small sacrifice for the economic gains that the bridge would bring Vancouver.¹⁶⁴ Some wrote that the causeway would alleviate weekend traffic problems within the park.¹⁶⁵ An American “forestry expert” had recommended that a road be built through the middle of the park as “the air let into the park by the road would probably be sufficient to save the trees.”¹⁶⁶ One Parks Board Commissioner believed the road would provide access to the interior of the park. Previously, it had been virtually impossible to enter the area.¹⁶⁷ The Commissioner also argued that the causeway would create a firewall through the middle of the park.¹⁶⁸ The Parks Board sided with bridge supporters and approved the construction of the causeway at the end of November 1933.¹⁶⁹ This vote occurred a couple of weeks prior to the plebiscite and lent credibility and strength to the bridge coalition.

In addition to arguments over the causeway through Stanley Park, Vancouver’s First Narrows Bridge debate also addressed the larger question of Vancouver’s relationship with central Canada. The issue rose when E.W. Beatty, president of the CPR, expressed his opposition to any bridge across the

Narrows that would be less than 2,000 feet in span and 220 feet in height.¹⁷⁰ Beatty continued that he preferred to protect Vancouver's harbour than to endorse civic improvements, despite the latter's benefit for his company's local investments.¹⁷¹ In a lighter moment of the bridge debate, the Province joked, "President Beatty is a booster for the First Narrows bridge. He would put it up higher."¹⁷² Criticism of the CPR's position came fast and furious from newspapers, local politicians, and individuals. The Vancouver Sun accused the CPR of protecting its property interests in Shaughnessy Heights.¹⁷³ In the CPR's defense, the Province newspaper argued the CPR's land investments in Vancouver were minimal and not of significant value to the company.¹⁷⁴ Others accused the Province of inconsistency. Initially the newspaper had demanded a plebiscite. The News Herald insinuated that the newspaper made this demand to stop approval of the bridge. Once a plebiscite had been arranged, the News Herald accused the Province of using Beatty and the CPR as another vehicle to oppose the bridge.¹⁷⁵ H.S. Wood, the Liberal candidate on the North Shore, commented, "The development of the North Shore is to be retarded for the sake of tapered steel tubes rising to the sky from Mr. Beatty's ocean lines."¹⁷⁶ The most potent criticism of the CPR turned the bridge into a matter of western Canada versus eastern Canada. Some argued that the Montreal-based CPR opposed the bridge simply to avoid relinquishing control of the West to another group: "... the C.P.R. admittedly have been for many years and still are the controlling factor in the whole of Western Canada, and here are big British interests, which are far too big for them to handle, endeavoring to come in and take a hand in the game."¹⁷⁷ The West Vancouver News lamented Vancouver's dependence on eastern Canada: "... it would be much more appropriate to weep, when one remembers the power possessed by the east over our destinies."¹⁷⁸ The criticism of the CPR and the Province created antagonism and spite in the city towards eastern Canada and discredited opposition to the bridge. Many Vancouverites interpreted the CPR's position as another symbol of Canada's neglect and manipulation of the west.

With this discussion in mind, Vancouver's voters went to the polls on December 13, 1933.¹⁷⁹ Each of the 47 polling stations reported majority support for the construction of the bridge. 17,806 voters endorsed the project while only 7,615 opposed a crossing over the First Narrows.¹⁸⁰ The successful 1933 plebiscite highlights the changes that had occurred within the coalition and the opposition. While debate

was more pointed and engaging than in 1927, the complete reversal of public opinion partly reflects the success of interested groups in building a stronger pre-construction coalition. It also indicates the weakened state of the opposition, revealed by the Board of Trade's internal strife and criticisms of the CPR. As Stone argues, the opposition attempts to undermine the coalition's efforts.¹⁸¹ In this second attempt, opposition faltered and the coalition had gained sufficient local strength to move towards its policy objectives.

Following the successful 1933 plebiscite, the expression of local support from community organizations, municipal governments and the Vancouver Parks Board, and backed by a strong coalition, the First Narrows Bridge Company and its supporters sought approval from the federal government which was responsible for the navigable waterway's protection. Some had postulated that "if the people of Greater Vancouver demand a bridge Ottawa will listen!"¹⁸² The North Shore Press commented, "There is no reason to anticipate any undue delay or ... obstruction to the progress of events at Ottawa."¹⁸³ However, the federal government's expedient approval was not forthcoming. In fact, the federal government withheld approval for three years.

The First Narrows Bridge Company and its supporters approached the federal government from a position of strength. Local, municipal government, and provincial government supporters conveyed their support to the federal government. In terms of regime theory analysis, the federal government's role is twofold. First, it demonstrates how the opposition, specifically the shipping interests, convinced the federal government to reject the proposal and temporarily stop the coalition. Second, it demonstrates how the coalition of bridge promoters had to seek compensatory support elsewhere. In this case, promoters sought support from the other major political party. Opposition continued to shape the coalition by requiring it to seek additional and extra-urban members. The national context, in this case the federal government, also played an important role in the decision to build Vancouver's Lions' Gate Bridge.

While the shipping interests did not participate extensively in the 1933 plebiscite, they and their supporters did lobby the federal government to protect the harbour from a bridge across the First Narrows.

In 1931, they began their efforts by mounting a letter writing campaign. The Vancouver Merchants' Exchange continued its quest for an 1,800 foot span bridge.¹⁸⁴ The Vancouver Chamber of Shipping, the Shipping Federation of B.C., and the Canadian Merchant Service Guild all submitted letters against any bridge that did not meet the Exchange's specifications.¹⁸⁵ These shipping interests submitted a joint letter of opposition to the bridge five days after the 1933 plebiscite. In their submission, they argued that the bridge would harm the harbour's ability to compete economically with other west coast port cities, and would threaten Canada's national defense.¹⁸⁶ The Vancouver Board of Trade's committee, which had prepared the contentious report on the First Narrows Bridge, also wrote an extensive letter to the federal government and explained its opposition. According to the committee, the bridge would adversely affect Vancouver's property values, the Second Narrows Bridge, and the port of Vancouver. It questioned the company's financial stability.¹⁸⁷ Vancouver aldermen Fraser and Harvey forwarded their reasons for opposition.¹⁸⁸ Finally, the CPR also kept the federal government informed of its position. In repeated correspondence, the CPR supported the shipping interests' position and emphasized the bridge's adverse effects on the harbour.¹⁸⁹ While the shipping interests did not participate in the public debate prior to the Vancouver plebiscite, they did ensure that the federal government understood their opposition to the bridge.

In June 1934, opposition voiced its concerns at a small cabinet subcommittee formed by Prime Minister Bennett. This committee was mandated to examine the proposed First Narrows Bridge and both the opposition and the bridge advocates presented their views. Coalition spokesmen included West Vancouver Reeve Leyland, Vancouver Parks Board Commissioner Fyfe Smith, and First Narrows Bridge Company representative R.P. Stockton.¹⁹⁰ Upon the recommendation of Hon. H.H. Stevens, a senior Conservative Member of Parliament and formerly a Member from the Vancouver area, the City of Vancouver sent its solicitor to ensure that the government understood the extent of the City's support for the project.¹⁹¹ A.E. Munn, Member of Parliament for North Vancouver and the North Vancouver Board of Trade, also sent letters of support.¹⁹² The Vancouver Merchants' Exchange, the Vancouver Chamber of Shipping, and the Shipping Federation of B.C. presented their usual arguments that the proposed 1,500 foot span was insufficient and that 1,800 feet would accommodate shipping needs.¹⁹³ The CPR also sent a

solicitor who argued that western Canada required a bridge that would protect the eight million dollars in total invested in the harbour.¹⁹⁴ During the period of the committee meeting, accusations emanated from Vancouver that the bridge was another example of eastern Canadian control over British Columbia: "One would think British Columbia was a penal colony out in Africa somewhere," said one commentator.¹⁹⁵ These criticisms were exacerbated by the committee's membership: two ministers came from Ontario while the third was from Quebec; none represented a British Columbia riding.¹⁹⁶ Cabinet ministers expressed fears that a private company could falter financially and require the federal government to assume responsibility for the bridge. The same had occurred with the Second Narrows Bridge.¹⁹⁷ The committee did not immediately announce its decision regarding the First Narrows Bridge.

Following the parliamentary committee meeting and in the meantime, bridge supporters began to petition the government more aggressively than before. A number of Vancouverites who identified themselves as Conservatives wrote to their party leader, Prime Minister Bennett, and expressed their support for the project. Some simply implored the government to approve the bridge, while the North Vancouver Conservative Party suggested that the party would gain valuable electoral support if Bennett would approve the project.¹⁹⁸ C.N. Monsarrat, Monsarrat & Pratley, the consulting engineers for the bridge company, wrote to Bennett and argued that 1,500 feet would be a sufficient span.¹⁹⁹ A number of representatives from municipal governments presented their thoughts to the federal government, among them Vancouver's Mayor Louis D. Taylor and West Vancouver's Reeve Leyland. Both identified the bridge's economic benefits to Vancouver as an important reason to approve the initiative.²⁰⁰ Vancouver Alderman Walter R. Hamilton wrote to the Prime Minister and refuted arguments against the bridge while also presenting reasons to support it.²⁰¹ Regardless, the coalition was not as strong as the opposition. The latter had mounted a significant argument and convinced Prime Minister Bennett to oppose.

The Bennett government concurred with the 1926 - 1927 Public Works' Board of Inquiry that had accepted the notion of a bridge spanning the Narrows. But despite the 300 foot extension of the 1930s proposal compared to that of 1926, Bennett's government deemed that the bridge's specifications were insufficient. On September 4, 1934, the government "instructed promoters of the First Narrows bridge at

Vancouver to construct their main span 1,800 feet in length, in order that dredging may be carried on at a future date, when required, to widen the channel of navigation.”²⁰² In a personal telegram to Vancouver’s Mayor Louis Taylor, Bennett explained the government’s position: “Vast sums of money have been expended on it [Vancouver’s port] by the nation and the erection of any structure in the channel that might lessen the possibility of widening it to the limit is looked upon as undesirable.”²⁰³ He held this position throughout the remainder of his term in office.²⁰⁴

The First Narrows Bridge Company had attempted to convince Bennett to approve the project. Yet significant local support and a strong coalition would prove insufficient for the federal Conservative government. In addition to its testimony at the committee hearing, the company submitted an extensive document to refute opposition arguments and to emphasize popular support for the project in Vancouver.²⁰⁵ The Bridge company even made an important concession by offering to move both piers north fifty feet. As the water near the Narrows’ south shore was practically unnavigable, the gain on the North Shore would significantly outweigh the loss to the other. While the span would not increase from 1,500 feet, the company had made an important concession to gain federal government support.²⁰⁶ But, in the end, the First Narrows Bridge Company had to concede that it would not receive approval from the Bennett government.²⁰⁷ In a personal letter to Reeve Leyland, Taylor wrote: “... it has been absolutely inexplicable how any administration in Canada could have delayed a great public work like the Bridge during a period when work of any sort was so urgently needed.”²⁰⁸ Supporters waited for the 1935 election in the hope that a change of government would lead to approval.

While the opposition had succeeded in convincing the Bennett government of its concerns, the bridge coalition mounted a concerted effort to ensure approval from the new Liberal government of Mackenzie King. Not only did the coalition have support from the local governments in the Vancouver area, the Vancouver Parks Board, and the residents of Vancouver, but they also succeeded in building strong relations with important and persuasive members of the federal government. A.E. Munn, Member of Parliament for North Vancouver, had extensively lobbied for the bridge while a member of the official opposition during the Bennett years and later as a backbencher during the King government.²⁰⁹ Moreover,

Munn teamed up with Hon. Ian Mackenzie, Liberal Member of Parliament for Vancouver Quadra, who became the Minister of Defense in King's cabinet and was seen as close to the Prime Minister.²¹⁰ Vancouver's Mayor McGeer had also been elected to the House of Commons.²¹¹ In other words, Vancouver and the bridge interests had a strong voice in the new King government. The First Narrows Bridge Company also increased its lobbying efforts in Ottawa. Taylor's contact in London, Lord Southborough, who represented the Guinness investment in the bridge project, entered into personal and frank correspondence with the Prime Minister.²¹² On April 30, 1936, the federal cabinet passed Order-In-Council No. 21 to approve the 1,500 foot span and 200 foot height bridge across the First Narrows. Lord Southborough would thank Prime Minister King, and not Bennett, in the souvenir book celebrating the official opening of the Lions' Gate Bridge.²¹³

This second attempt to build the Lions' Gate Bridge was successful because the coalition had gained strength, addressed issues raised by the opposition, and accomplished its goal. With the amalgamation of the Lions' Gate Bridge Company and the First Narrows Bridge Company, competition had abated. The new company could use resources previously assigned to fight its competitor to build support and address issues raised by the opposition. The British Guinness family, the company's new investors, brought increased financial stability to the project. More importantly, their real estate investment in West Vancouver heightened the importance and need for the bridge. The Guinnesses required a bridge to achieve a profit from their investment. Their support also assigned the company more political resources to build a stronger coalition. The company's concessions - the increase in bridge height and span, increase in estimated capital costs for the bridge, more than twofold rise in expenditures for the Stanley Park causeway, and offer to move the bridge north fifty feet - demonstrate the company's willingness to offer political incentives for others to join the coalition. The 1930s Depression and the collapse of the Second Narrows Bridge had also heightened the need for employment and transportation to the North Shore. For municipal organizations and the public, the project would alleviate these significant problems.

Stone describes the inner workings of a coalition: "Governance through informal arrangements is about how some forms of coordination of effort prevail over others. It is about mobilizing efforts to cope and to adapt..."²¹⁴ No official organization formed to promote the Lions' Gate Bridge. The coalition was informal. In part, this trait appeared through the correspondence between members. None of the coalition members were formally obliged to support the bridge coalition to the extent they did. First Narrows Bridge Company President Taylor was in constant correspondence with West Vancouver Reeve Leyland. For example, in a letter to Leyland, Taylor reflected: "The only disappointment we have had ... has been the attitude of Ottawa on the First Narrows Bridge ... as I have already told you privately..."²¹⁵ Leyland's organization of a bridge campaign during the plebiscite further reveals his cooperation with the coalition. As West Vancouver's reeve, he was not required to undertake the work. Hon. H.H. Stevens telephoned Vancouver Mayor Taylor to implore him to send a municipal representative to address the 1934 federal cabinet sub-committee meeting on the bridge proposal.²¹⁶ On behalf of the British investors, backing the First Narrows Bridge Company Ltd. and the British Pacific Properties Ltd., Lord Southborough entered into personal and frank correspondence with Prime Minister Mackenzie King, providing background and support to the lobbying efforts of A.J.T. Taylor and other coalition supporters in Ottawa.²¹⁷ Finally, the First Narrows Bridge Company's concessions to the Vancouver Parks Board regarding the causeway demonstrate the sense of cooperation among coalition supporters. The company was ready to accommodate the Board in order to have them join the coalition. The concessions show that "public bodies and private interests function together."²¹⁸

The relationships depicted in these actions demonstrate both the coalition's informal nature and the sense of cooperation among its members. Each member organization had its own reasons to belong. The British Pacific Properties Ltd. required the bridge to realize its investment value. West Vancouver required the bridge to ease access and permit the young municipality to become more than a summer retreat. Employment needs in the City of Vancouver encouraged the council to support the initiative. On a personal level, Vancouver Mayor Taylor wanted the bridge to represent his legacy: "If credit is due to anyone

locally I feel I am entitled to it rather than my successor in office.”²¹⁹ Each government, organization and individual had its reasons for joining the informal coalition to build the Lions’ Gate Bridge.

The second and successful attempt to build the bridge demonstrates the importance of achieving extra-urban support for an urban coalition. In the case of Vancouver’s First Narrows Bridge, members of the federal government played an extremely important role in delaying and later ensuring its construction. Moreover, this second round confirms the opponents’ role in introducing these new extra-urban factors. Shipping interests had identified the federal government as a formidable ally in its quest to halt the construction of the bridge.²²⁰ As a result, the bridge coalition had to convince the federal government otherwise. This example suggests that urban regime theory must take into account non-urban coalition members such as other levels of government. After ten years of deliberations, including three years at the federal level, the construction of a bridge across Burrard Inlet’s First Narrows could proceed.

Conclusion

Contrary to previous studies, the decision to build Vancouver's Lions' Gate Bridge demonstrates that regime theory must take into account the national context, possible divisions within the business sector, and most importantly, the opposition's role in ascribing political resources to potential or necessary coalition members. While the bridge coalition sought alliances with and support from traditional coalition members such as civic organizations and the local government, opposition arose from companies affiliated with British Columbia's, and Canada's, natural resource economy. Bridge opponents convinced the federal Conservative government to oppose the bridge; consequently, the bridge coalition had to seek compensatory political resources from the Liberal party once it formed the government.

In the case of the bridge, significant opposition rose within one sector of Vancouver's business community, shipping interests. Although the bridge would bring economic growth to the Vancouver area, the shippers believed that the bridge would adversely affect their transportation of natural resources from the city's harbour. The transportation of staples such as wood from Vancouver, the urban centre of British Columbia's natural resource-based economy, was extremely important. The shipping interests could not endorse the bridge or Vancouver's subsequent urban development, and thus compromise their own sector's needs. As a result, shipping interests set out to prevent the bridge company and its supporters from building a strong pro-development coalition.

During the first attempt to build the bridge, these shipping interests and their supporters had successfully thwarted the actions of the First Narrows Bridge Company Ltd., the Lions Gate Bridge Company Ltd., and their supporters. As Stone argues, the onus to change a coalition's direction is placed upon the opposition's shoulders while the coalition attempts to build sufficient strength to reach a policy objective.²²¹ In this first attempt, competition between the two companies created division within the coalition. While it tried to build a base of support from probable coalition members such as municipal councils and the Vancouver Parks Board, it failed to offer enough political incentives to entice key individuals and associations to join. Limited municipal and electoral support for the bridge demonstrates

this point. As a result, the coalition failed to build sufficient strength while the shipping interests succeeded in convincing the federal government to support their position.

In contrast, the second attempt to build the bridge demonstrates a well organized and successful coalition. The companies amalgamated. The company that emerged, the First Narrows Bridge Company, increased its political resources and its incentive to build the bridge when the Guinness family invested in both West Vancouver real estate and the bridge company. A stronger First Narrows Bridge Company, coupled with the 1930s economic depression and the physical collapse of the Second Narrows Bridge, permitted the First Narrows Bridge Company to build a strong coalition of support. When municipal governments and the Vancouver Parks Board came on side, the coalition and the bridge initiative also gained strong public support in a municipal plebiscite. The coalition then sought federal approval. However, the shipping interests had mounted a significant campaign against the bridge and had convinced the Bennett government to withhold approval of the 1,500 foot span. As the opposition succeeded in having the federal government delay the project, the coalition had to find alternative support. Only when King and the Liberal party formed a new federal government at the end of 1935 did promoters succeed in achieving federal support for the bridge project. The shipping interests, tied to the extra-urban natural resource industry, found in the federal Conservative government an important political resource. Initially the shipping interests gained the government's support. Two years later, the bridge coalition finally succeeded in convincing the new Liberal government to support their initiative.

One may protest that the federal government played a role in this - perhaps extraordinary - narrative simply due to their jurisdiction over the navigable waterway. As a result, one might argue that national identity does not generally play a role in urban regime theory. Such a counter-argument belies the fact that Vancouver businesses involved in the shipping industry opposed the bridge and sought federal government support to protect their interests. Their involvement in natural resource transportation required them to call the federal government for assistance. The division of responsibility between the provincial and federal governments, outlined in Sections 91 and 92 of the British North American Act, has repeatedly been a contentious issue in Canada. Its appearance in the decision to build the Lions' Gate Bridge simply

confirms the role of, and political resources ascribed to, the various levels of government. Should opposition wish to frustrate a coalition or the latter wish to gain strength, both could look to the federal government for important support.

Applying elite or pluralist theory to the decision to build Lions' Gate Bridge illuminates the problems inherent in each. Elite theory would have difficulty explaining the CPR's inability to stop the construction of the bridge. For over forty-five years, the company had paid property taxes to the City of Vancouver. In 1932 alone, the company paid over \$100,000 in taxes to the municipality.²²² The CPR had a legacy in the city. In the early stages of Vancouver's development, the company was responsible for uniting the province with the rest of Canada, moving the downtown core further west, and developing the Shaughnessy Heights neighbourhood to name but a few of the company's contributions.²²³ The newspaper debate over President Beatty's comments regarding the bridge demonstrates that the company still played an important role and had an influential voice within the city. Moreover, the Vancouver Board of Trade's opposition to the bridge project also proves problematic to the elite theory. Why would the largest business organization with 1,300 members not be able to thwart the bridge initiative? An elite theory approach would have difficulty answering this question.

On the other hand, pluralist theory would also meet analytical problems in the decision to build the Lions' Gate Bridge. On two occasions, groups were excluded from the process; not everyone was allowed to play a role in the discussions. To begin with, the League of Women Voters had requested that the "lady member of the [Parks] Board" be assigned to the bridge committee. This request was denied.²²⁴ On the North Shore, a second group was excluded: the Squamish aboriginal nation. The First Narrows Bridge Company purchased 9.513 acres of the Squamish nation's Capilano Reserve No. 5 at a cost of \$3,170.²²⁵ The federal Department of Indian Affairs agreed to the purchase, but the Squamish nation did not receive compensation for the land until almost fifty years later, in October 1983. In the period leading to the construction, the bridge company did agree to build the bridge away from a transformer rock of significant cultural value to the Squamish.²²⁶ The nation's exclusion from the bridge decision-making process would

bring their Chief to protest, in the 1950s on the grass near the bridge's northern on-ramp, their treatment.²²⁷

Pluralist theory would find it difficult to explain these two exclusions.

By contrast, a study of the decision to build the Lions' Gate Bridge confirms the effectiveness of the regime theory's approach to the question of community power. Beyond identifying "who governs?," an analysis of coalition formation and the role of opposition avoids the assumption that power is centered in the hands of an elite or is dispersed in a pluralist, democratic society. Analysis of the Lions' Gate Bridge project permits individuals and groups to appear in the narrative and assume their role, whether as supporter or opponent. Generally, by examining the regime and coalition formation, the question of community power moves beyond "who governs?" to those of "who opposes?," "who thwarts?," "who supports?," and "how does it occur?" A more complex view of decision-making than provided by the elite and pluralist approaches, regime theory does permit players to be inside or outside the governance structure. And finally, while the theory does concentrate on the governing coalition, or "regime," itself, the attention to opposition ascribes members outside of the coalition with an importance in the decision-making process. Regime theory moves from "who?" to the "how?" and permits a stronger understanding of patterning in the history of urban politics.

The application of regime theory to the decision to build Vancouver's Lions' Gate Bridge has limits. To begin with, this paper addresses the bridge question exclusively. In order to make larger claims for the creation and maintenance of a regime in Vancouver, further study of the Vancouver area's history during this period is required. Moreover, application of regime theory to other Canadian cities will deepen our understanding of Canadian urban history, and of extra-urban factors' role in the larger debate about community power.²²⁸

On a local level, the decision to build the Lions' Gate Bridge illustrates a transition period for Vancouver. The city asserted its independence from eastern Canada by refusing to accept the CPR's words of caution about the bridge. Vancouver began to look away from the national resource sector to tertiary sector activities such as tourism and urban services. The period also shows a change in Vancouverites' view of their natural environment. In 1927, they wanted to preserve Stanley Park while in 1933, they were

ready to sacrifice space for a causeway. Furthermore, the construction of the bridge led Vancouver to expand to the North Shore and farther afield. A highway would later link Squamish, Whistler, and Garibaldi Park to Vancouver. As the official souvenir booklet for the bridge's opening tells:

Long before the Lions Gate Bridge was on its way to becoming a reality, far-sighted citizens in Greater Vancouver began agitating for a motor road that would lead out of West Vancouver, along the picturesque shores of Howe Sound, to the northwest, and eventually bring the tourist movement, and today there are indications that before long the Dominion and province, between them, will provide means to build the road.²²⁹

In September 1933, the North Shore Press commented: "It has been said that the business of bridge building lends romance to the progress of civilization. Roaring torrents, mighty rivers, dangerous chasms have all been conquered, and distant communities have become next door neighbors."²³⁰ The torrents, rivers, and chasms were more than the physical obstacles placed by nature; they also represented the opposition attempts to thwart and the coalition's efforts to build the Lions' Gate Bridge.

Ironically in 1954, only sixteen years after it was officially opened, the Lions' Gate Bridge was already failing to meet Vancouver's traffic needs. The debate over a new crossing from Vancouver to the North Shore of Burrard Inlet began anew. In 1997, it has yet to be resolved.

Endnotes

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²⁰ Stone, "Preemptive Power," 83. Stone, "Social Stratification," 282, 283.

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Appendix A

Newspapers, Organizations and Individuals Contacted by Dept. of Public Works¹

Board of Inquiry advertised in the following newspapers:

Vancouver Sun
Vancouver Star
Vancouver Province
Vancouver Journal of Commerce

Board of Inquiry notified the following by letter:

Vancouver Board of Trade
Garfield A. King
Congdon, Campbell & Meredith
Armstrong, Morrison & Co. Ltd
Shipping Federation of B.C.
Vancouver Merchant Exchange
Alderman Dean
Stuart Cameron
James Ollason
R.F. Archibald
Union Steamship Co. of B.C.
B.C. Keely, Canadian Government, Merchant Marine
Canadian Pacific Steamships, Ltd.
B.C. Coast Steamships, Victoria
City Clerk, Port Moody
Municipal Clerk, Burnaby, B.C.
Municipal Clerk, South Vancouver
Municipal Clerk, Point Grey
Municipal Clerk, North Vancouver
Federal Pilots of B.C.
Canadian Pilots, Vancouver
Vancouver Harbour Commissioners
Parks Board, Vancouver
The Indian Agent, Vancouver
Deputy Minister of Lands, Victoria

¹ "Appendix B: List of papers and parties notified of public hearing," "Report on Plans Submitted for Approval to Public Works Canada for Proposed Bridge over First Narrows, Vancouver Harbour, B.C." 15 January 1927, Public Works, Record Group 11, Series B3(d), Vol. 2710, File 6, National Archives of Canada.

Cross-Section of Lions' Gate Bridge

