Regional Planning in British Columbia:  
50 Years of Vision, Process and Practice

by

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Abstract

Through the use of oral and written history, this thesis examines forces and factors contributing to key events and defining phases in the history of regional planning in British Columbia. Regional planning, which emerged in BC in the late 1940s in response to the need to address problems related to urban growth in the Lower Mainland, has taken on a number of forms over the past half-century. During this time the regional approach to planning has been introduced as a means of addressing land-use questions and servicing challenges in rural and urban areas, addressing conflicts over resource use and implementing sustainability objectives. This thesis divides regional planning in the province into three main phases. The first phase (1940s to 1970s) is characterized by the introduction of regional planning legislation, regional planning bodies and processes in response to rapid growth and development. The second phase (late 1970s to 1980s) is marked by the rescinding of regional district planning powers and other setbacks to the regional planning system imposed by the government of the day. The third phase (1990s) is a time of rebirth and redefinition of regional planning priorities and processes in the face of increasing challenges related to urban growth and resource management. While some links to exogenous influences are identified, analysis of key themes and trends in BC’s regional planning history reveals the major roles the province’s geography, economy, system of governance, politics, and the people involved in regional planning processes have played in shaping regional planning policy, process, and practice. Based on this historical review a number of recommendations for future research and direction are proposed.
# Table of Contents

*Abstract* ............................................................................. ii

*Table of Contents* ................................................................. iii

*List of Figures* ..................................................................... vi

*Acknowledgements* .............................................................. vii

## Chapter One: Introduction .................................................. 1

1.1 Introduction ..................................................................... 1
1.2 Problem Statement .......................................................... 2
1.3 Goals and Objectives ........................................................ 4
1.4 Research Questions .......................................................... 5
1.5 Scope ............................................................................ 5
1.6 Research Methods ........................................................... 6
1.7 Research Limitations ........................................................ 8
1.8 Structure of Thesis ............................................................ 9

## Chapter Two: Regional Planning Concept and Foundations ....... 11

2.1 Introduction ..................................................................... 11
2.2 The Regional Planning Concept ....................................... 11
2.2.1 Defining The Region .................................................. 12
2.2.2 Realms of Regional Planning Practice ......................... 13
2.2.3 Institutional Framework ............................................. 15
2.3 Foundational Movements, Theories, Ideas and Practice ....... 16
2.3.1 Regional Planning Precursors .................................... 17
2.3.2 The American Regionalists ........................................ 18
2.3.3 Thomas Adams .......................................................... 20
2.3.4 The Regional Science Movement ............................... 22
2.3.5 Metropolitan Reform and Government ....................... 23
2.3.6 Shifting Perspectives .................................................. 24
2.3.7 The Sustainability Movement .................................... 24
2.3.8 The Bioregionalist Movement .................................... 25
2.3.9 Growth Management ................................................ 26
2.4 Conclusion ..................................................................... 26
### Chapter Three: Phase I - Foundations and Frameworks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.1 Introduction</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2 Post-War Industrial Expansion and Urbanization</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3 Early Movements Toward Regional Planning</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.4 Key Organisations</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.4.1 The Community Planning Association of BC</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.4.2 Lower Mainland Regional Planning Board</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.4.3 Regional Planning Boards Beyond the Lower Mainland</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.4.4 The School of Community and Regional Planning</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.5 The Regional District System</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.5.1 Identifying the Need for a Regional District System</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.5.2 Regional District Form and Function</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.5.3 Tension Between Provincial Planning and Regional District Planning</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.6 The “Camelot Days” of Regional Planning in BC</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.6.1 Encouraging Regional Economic Development</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.6.2 Integration of Decision Making</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.6.3 Land Protection</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.6.4 Public Participation</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.7 Reflections</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Chapter Four: Phase II - Setbacks and Challenge

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4.1 Introduction</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2 Economic Restructuring and Increasing Globalization</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.3 The Bennett Years</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.3.1 Regional District Review</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.3.2 A Proposed Provincial Planning Framework</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.3.3 Entering the “Camelot Days” of Regional Planning in BC</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.3.4 Regional Planning Powers Rescinded</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.3.5 The Rise of Consensus Based Voluntary Planning in the GVRD</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.4 The Vander Zalm Years</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.4.1 Regional District Review and Development Services Legislation</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.4.2 The Island’s Trust Act Rewrite and Waste Management Legislation</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.4.3 Development Regions</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.7 Reflections</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chapter Five: Phase III - Rebirth and Redefinition

5.1 Introduction .................................................. 89
5.2 Globalization and Sustainability ................................. 89
5.3 Regional Resources Planning .................................. 92
  5.3.1 Environmental Legislation ................................. 93
  5.3.2 Integrated Resource Management ......................... 94
  5.3.3 Georgia Basin and Fraser Basin Initiatives ............... 96
5.4 Revival in Regional Settlement Planning ...................... 99
  5.4.1 The Lower Mainland Process ............................. 99
  5.4.2 Growth Strategies Legislation ............................ 101
  5.4.3 Regional Transportation Planning ........................ 106
5.5 First Nations .................................................. 108
5.6 Reflections .................................................... 109

Chapter Six: Looking Backward to Move Forward .................. 112

6.1 Introduction .................................................. 112
6.2 Overview of Phases ........................................... 112
6.3 Key Themes, Trends and Conclusions ......................... 116
6.4 Final Reflections ............................................... 125

References ....................................................... 128

Appendices ....................................................... 140

A List of Interviewees ............................................ 140
B List of Workshop Attendees and Workshop Agenda .......... 142
C Map of Regional District Boundaries .......................... 144
D Map of Suggested Economic Regions 1970 (PIBC Proposal) 145
E Map of Regional Development Planning Regions 1979 (DREE) 146
F Map of Resource Management Regions 1975 (ELUC) ........ 147
H Map of Land and Resource Management Regions 2001 (LUCO) 149
I Map of Georgia Basin 2001 (Georgia Basin Initiative) .... 150
J Map of Fraser Basin ............................................. 151
List of Figures

Figure 3.1 ................................................................. 68
Figure 4.1 ................................................................. 88
Figure 5.1 ................................................................. 105
Figure 5.2 ................................................................. 111
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Chapter One: Introduction

1.1 Introduction:

Over the past half century BC has experienced tremendous growth and change. From 1951 to 2001 BC’s population increased from 1,165,210 to 3,907,738 (BC Stats 2002a). The percentage of residents living in urban centres between 1951 and 2001 increased from 52.8% to 85.0% (BC Stats 2002b). Where there was once a vast hinterland of scattered independent communities, post-war expansion of BC’s resources sector has encouraged the development of a string of communities linked to each other through a variety of economic and socio-economic interrelationships and interdependencies, and dependent on international trade and investment. Vancouver, which had established itself early in BC’s development history as the provincial centre for manufacturing and trade, evolved from focussing on heavy manufacturing, to a more diversified and service oriented economy less reliant on the raw materials extracted from the resource regions. As a centre of knowledge and information based employment, higher value-added manufacturing and administrative functions Vancouver has attracted an ever increasing share of migration from outside the province, as well as population from struggling resource communities.

Growth and change has brought with it a number of problems. Many of these problems concern urban sprawl. Problems associated with urban sprawl include: the consumption of limited agricultural land by new subdivision, environmental degradation in ecologically sensitive areas as a result of development and congestion, and pollution resulting from increased automobile dependence. There have also been a number of problems related to resource and land use. These include: conflicts resulting from disagreements between local and provincial governments concerning land-use objectives and priorities, conflicts between urban, industrial, transportation and energy development on one hand and natural resources management programs on the other, and conflicts between exploitative forms of resource management such as forestry and mining and conservation-oriented resource management programs such as habitat protection, recreation and tourism.
The viability of resource dependent communities is in many cases uncertain. Economic dependence of hinterland communities on exogenous investment and markets have made them highly susceptible to boom and bust cycles. A number of resource based communities, which flourished during the post-war period of economic growth have experienced drastic job cuts or have had to shut down in the face of global market instability.

Addressing these challenges requires an integrated, decentralized and cooperative approach, as encouraged by regional planning activists and professionals. Regional planning, as defined by regional planning pioneer Lewis Mumford, involves “the conscious direction and collective integration of all those activities which rest upon the use of the earth as site, as resource, as structure, as theatre” (Mumford 1938 in Friedmann and Weaver 1979, 33). Ken Cameron, Manager of Policy and Planning for the Greater Vancouver Regional District, defines regional planning as “planning and decision making that will deliver livability, prosperity and environmental quality at the lowest possible [environmental, social and ficsal] cost” (Cameron 2000i). It is a process which is constantly adapting to address the challenges of economic, social, political, and environmental change. Regional planning takes on a number of different forms depending on the goals and objectives to be achieved.

BC has a very fragmented regional planning history which reveals itself through a variety of visions, processes and planning practice. This thesis examines forces and factors contributing to key events and defining phases in the history of regional planning in British Columbia.

1.2 Problem Statement

BC is a province of great diversity. The latitudinal expanse of the province and the variation in landscape, from raincoast to dry interior to the high mountain ranges, has contributed to differences in climate, soils, vegetation and culture. While these environmental factors provide for distinctive regional experiences, the greatest contrasts are found between the metropolitan heart of the province and the expansive
resource hinterland. The core-periphery structure Harold Innis presented in his staples theory describing economic development in Canada has been replicated in BC (Hutton 1997). As a result BC has seen the development of what has been described as a “two economies” industrial structure (Davis and Hutton 1988). On the one side there is the service-oriented economy of the Lower Mainland and the Capital Regional District. On the other side there is the resource-based economy of the province’s hinterland. The different development paths of the southwestern corner of the province and the interior and northern parts of the province have given rise to different types of regional issues. Problems associated with urban growth are of prime concern in the Lower Mainland, whereas in the scattered development of the resource-rich hinterland, resource conflicts have been commonplace and economic instability as well as environmental degradation is a main threat to livability.

Many of the efforts made by regional planners, academics, politicians, and provincial bureaucrats to address the challenges of growth in the urban centres and conflicts over resource and land-use in resource regions have been progressive. Regional planners and politicians in the Lower Mainland have been precedent-setting with their commitment to innovation in growth management. In terms of resources planning, a system has evolved which encourages integration. The Lower Mainland experience and processes addressing resource conflict have contributed to the emergence of important parts of BC’s regional planning framework. This framework contains the Growth Strategies Statutes Amendment Act (GSSAA) and the Land and Resource Management Processes (LRMPs).

At the same time, it can be argued that there has been a lack of enthusiasm and commitment to addressing the development challenges of peripheral regions. Much of the planning at a regional level in the resource hinterland has taken the form of administration of services by regional districts and regulation of land-use by the provincial government. While there have been proposals put forth at different points in the past calling for the establishment of a framework for decentralized regional development these proposals have not had the support needed for effective implementation. Without a framework for addressing regional
development, BC’s regional planning system appears to lack balance. Current problems being faced by resource regions indicate a need for the province to consider regional development as a key regional planning and policy objective.

By understanding BC’s regional planning past we can develop a clearer appreciation of forces and factors challenging the development of a regional planning framework that effectively addresses the issues of both urban and rural regions. To date there has been no comprehensive account of the evolution of regional planning in BC. This history has existed in fragmented pieces in a variety of different publications and in the memories of those who were directly involved in the process. This thesis offers a synthesis.

1.3 Goals and Objectives

The main goal of this paper is to trace the evolution of regional planning in British Columbia thereby providing a framework for further research on the province’s regional planning past as well as a starting point for discussions regarding its future. To realize this goal this paper aims to fulfill a number of objectives. These objectives include:

- Identifying influential personalities, forces and factors in BC’s regional planning history
- Describing benchmark events in BC’s regional planning history
- Defining phases in BC’s regional planning history
- Identifying avenues for future direction and research

Analysis of BC’s regional planning past will help identify factors challenging the creation of a regional planning system which effectively addresses issues related to urban growth, protection of environmental resources as well as regional development.
1.4 Research Questions

The research questions in this section provide a structure for analysing the evolution of regional planning in British Columbia. Using the objectives stated above as a framework for analysis the following questions will be addressed:

1. What are the forces and factors contributing to the evolution of phases in the history of regional planning in BC?
2. What are the key themes and trends emerging from analysis of BC’s regional planning history?
3. What do key trends and themes tell us about BC’s current regional planning system?
4. What recommendations for future research and direction emerge from key themes and trends?

1.5 Scope:

There are a number of factors that were considered in the design of the research approach. The first was the time period to be covered. Through key informant interviews it was clearly identified that the most widely recognized starting point for regional planning in the province is 1948 when amendments were made to the Town Planning Act (1925) to establish regional planning boards. This research, commissioned by a number of key players in BC’s regional planning history, was part of the celebration of the 50th anniversary of regional planning in BC. Given this, this paper focuses specifically on events between 1948 and 1998. However, it does reflect on some past events to provide context and contains some general reflections on more recent events.

The key events, ideas and processes that are discussed are primarily those considered by key informants to be important to BC’s regional planning history. These events pertain primarily to regional planning in settlement areas. However, in recognizing the intrinsic links between regional settlement,
resource management and economic development this paper also provides some insight into the evolution of regional resources planning and regional development planning and their relationship to regional settlement planning throughout the past half century. Specific attention is provided to the development of those processes which have encouraged the integration of local government and provincial planning at the regional level.

In terms of depth, it was decided that this study would try to be broad and look at the “big picture” as opposed to looking at the details of specific regional plans and projects. Details are looked at only in cases, such as with the Lower Mainland, where ideas and experiences have contributed to the development of broader provincial policy and process. While this paper attempts to provide a more comprehensive view of regional planning in BC than has been provided in the past, it is by no means a complete account. Those familiar with the regional planning in BC will agree that the breadth of the subject could fill many volumes and take many years to compile. Accordingly this paper is seen as providing a foundation for further research.

1.6 Research Methods

A number of qualitative research methods were employed to help identify key events, phases, influences and personalities in BC’s regional planning history. Primary research methods included: key informant interviews and a workshop involving a number of planners, academics and politicians who played key roles in the history of regional planning in BC. Hansard and Union of BC Municipality Convention minutes were also used. Secondary research methods involved a literature review including books, monographs, periodicals and doctoral and masters thesis.

Interview and workshop with key informants

“The difficulty in writing about planning systems is that the documentation lies in memoranda, minutes and in planners’ heads” (Corke 1983, 2). Interviews with planners, academics and politicians directly
involved in the regional planning in BC provided insight into provincial and local government planning processes that could not be gained by looking through existing written materials. Through interviews, a more intimate sense of the ideas, forces and factors influencing regional planning decisions was attained and key players and events were identified. A few key players, namely Brahm Wiesman, Peter Oberlander, Erik Karlsen and Gary Paget, were called upon to help identify potential interviewees. The choice of interviewees was based on their participation in BC’s regional planning history and their availability and willingness to participate in this study. Twenty-two individuals were interviewed. Most of these were formal, in-person interviews, a small number were conducted over the phone. A list of the interviews conducted for this research and the main research questions are contained within Appendix A. A number of the interviewees and other participants in BC’s regional planning history, identified by interviewees to be key players, were invited to participate in a Workshop at the University of British Columbia on March 17/2000 sponsored by the Centre for Human Settlements and the School of Community and Regional Planning entitled Regional Planning in British Columbia: Past, Present and Future. The workshop focussed on capturing the record of regional planning in British Columbia over the past half century. The list of workshop attendees and the workshop agenda can be found in Appendix B. The workshop was recorded both on audio and video tape. A copy of the video tape will be left with the School of Community and Regional Planning as a resource for other scholars. Given the constraints of time and purpose, only a small proportion of the information gathered through interviews and workshop has been captured in the following text.

1 Brahm Wiesman is the former Director of the School of Community and Regional Planning and was the first Director of the Capital Region Planning Board. Peter Oberlander is the founder of the School of Community and Regional Planning and was the first consultant for the Lower Mainland Regional Planning Board. Erik Karlsen has over 30 years of experience in regional planning in the province and at the time of this study was the Director of Special Projects for the Growth Management Office of the Ministry of Community Aboriginal and Women’s Service. Gary Paget is the Executive Director of the Governance and Structure Division of the Local Government Department of the Ministry of Community Aboriginal and Women’s Services and played a major role in the development of the province’s growth management legislation.

2 Direct quotes from interviews are referenced with an “i” following the name of the interviewee and the year (e.g. Karlsen 2000i).

3 From this point onward the Workshop will be referred to as CHS/SCARP workshop. 2000w is used to identify quotations made by individuals during the workshop (e.g. Oberlander 2000w).
Review of secondary sources

Secondary sources used in this study included books, journals, newsletters, newspaper articles, Doctoral and Master’s theses, and provincial and local government reports. These sources helped provide insight into relevant theoretical, political and economic contexts and served to corroborate information gathered through primary sources. For this study, a review of books on regional planning provided an understanding of regional planning theory and areas of regional planning practice. Biographies of premiers and overviews of BC’s economic, political and land-use history provided important background to understanding the motivation behind decisions influencing regional planning. Government publications helped in clarifying the visions and actions of the provincial government and local governments. Secondary sources also helped fill in some of the gaps in the information generated through interviews and workshop.

1.7 Research Limitations

While the variety of research methods employed were useful in contributing to a comprehensive examination of regional planning in BC there were, as with all social science research methods, a number of limitations. In regard to the use of interviews and workshop, the researcher acknowledges the inherent subjectivity of these processes. The information provided by the interviewees and workshop participants is influenced by their particular role in regional planning and their personal interests and values. The interpretation of information generated by these sources is influenced by a number of factors including the experience and background of the researcher.

One major limitation specific to this study was the limited participation of individual from regions

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4The researcher entered the planning program at the University of British Columbia with a B.A. in comparative development and environmental and resources studies from Trent University with a focus on the developing world, some experience working abroad and several years of experience working as an environmental educator for the Capital Regional District. Outside of the research process, knowledge about BC and systems and processes governing regional planning were gained primarily through internship with the Ministry of Municipal Affairs (June-August 1999), employment with the Union of British Columbia Municipalities (UBCM), (May 2000-January 2001), and employment with the Richmond/Airport/Vancouver Rapid Transit Project (June 2001-November 2001).
other than the Lower Mainland and the Capital Region. Only a small number of individuals involved with regional planning outside the southwestern corner of the province were identified as potential interviewees. In some cases contact information could not be found. As a result, the majority of interviews conducted were with those who lived and worked in the Lower Mainland and the Capital Region. The same lack of balance was experienced with workshop participation. Given the distance needed to travel, only two individuals from outside the Lower Mainland and the Capital Regional who were able to participate. As a result the discussion focussed more on the experiences of the Lower Mainland and Capital Region than on the other regions of the province. In addition there is very little written documentation of regional planning processes in other parts of the province. The majority of the materials specific to regional planning in BC focus on the Lower Mainland experience. The researcher recognizes research on specific rural region experiences in regional planning as an area in need of further scholarly investigation.

1.8 Structure of Thesis

This chapter has provided an overview of this thesis, the purpose of this research, the research questions, and the research methods employed to address these questions. A brief overview of the following chapters is elaborated upon below.

**Chapter 2.** The purpose of this chapter is first to establish the theoretical context for the study by discussing definitions of the regions, identifying realms of regional planning, institutional frameworks; and secondly to provide an overview of intellectual roots and conceptual foundations of regional planning theory and practice.

**Chapter 3.** The third chapter examines key events and influences during the first phase of regional planning in BC (1940s to 1970s). It will identify forces and factors contributing to growth and change during this
period and highlight key personalities and events contributing to foundational regional planning activities.

**Chapter 4.** This chapter examines the second phase of regional planning in BC (late 1970s through 1980s). This phase saw the disruption of some of the regional planning foundations introduced in the previous phase. Following an examination of forces and factors contributing to changing regional realities, this chapter explores some of the processes and discussions leading up to the introduction of drastic cuts in regional planning process and some of the events that preceded these cuts.

**Chapter 5.** This chapter looks at the third phase of regional planning in BC (the 1990s). During this phase the province reclaims its role as an active participant in regional planning in the province. This chapter looks at the variety of actions taken by the province and other planning bodies at this time which were designed to address urban growth and resource management.

**Chapter 6.** This final chapter provides an overview of the phases in the evolution of BC’s regional planning history, identifies key themes and trends and provides recommendations for future research and direction.
Chapter Two: Regional Planning Concept and Foundations

"Regional planning means many things to many men..... Not surprisingly it tends to be something of an enigma and is often regarded as an intruder in the planning fraternity." (Glasson 1978, 9).

2.1 Introduction

While the concept of regional planning has been around for many decades, its definition is somewhat elusive. A review of the literature reveals that while there are some key ideas and theories influencing regional planning as a field of study and practice there are a number of other factors which help shape and define the regional planning approach. Through interview and discussion with those who have been directly involved in regional planning in BC it appeared evident that perceptions of regional planning, while in some cases reflecting ideas put forward by early theorists, movements and regional planning scholars, are largely derived from individual experience, perspective and vision. The purpose of this chapter is first to establish the theoretical context for this thesis by discussing definitions of the regions, identifying realms of regional planning, and institutional frameworks; and secondly to provide an overview of intellectual roots and conceptual foundations of regional planning theory and practice.

2.2 The Regional Planning Concept

The term regional planning has been used to describe a variety of activities of a number of different government agencies and institutions. As a form of planning, regional planning includes a sequence of actions which are designed to solve problems in the future. It is a process which involves the formulation of goals and objectives, the identification and evaluation of alternatives (Hall 1992, 6-8). Activities considered to be within the realm of regional planning range from those concerned with addressing single issues which cross municipal boundaries such as waste management and health care to those which have multiple objectives such as comprehensive land-use planning. In all cases regional planning responds to spatially
related conditions and/or problems within a large territory: the region.

2.2.1 Defining The Region

In academic writing, popular usage, and planning practice, the term “region” is used in a very flexible and ambiguous fashion. Almost every field of study has identified types of regions. In relationship to regional planning, there appears to be general agreement that the region is a geographic space that is larger than a single community and comprises two or more jurisdictions (Hall 1970; Gertler 1972; Lim 1983; Hodge and Robinson 2001) and “that specific designations of regions must vary according to the needs, purposes and standards involved in the designation” (Perloff 1957 in Branch 1988, xviii). Within the literature three main types of planning regions emerge. These are as follows:

Programming Regions: These are regions designed to achieve specific planning goals. Lim (1983) associates this type of region with the area covered by the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) which consisted of a number of areas grouped together to achieve specific goals. In the TVA case these goals have included improved navigability, reforestation and the proper use of marginal land (8-9). Special purpose districts, such as water districts, which provide specific services also fall into this category, as do regions delineated for political or administrative reasons.

Functional Regions. These regions are composed of a number of heterogenous units such as towns and cities which are interrelated and tied to a central node. They consist of a “highly woven system of cities and their adjoining regions” (Weaver 1984, 81). They tend to be urban centred and concerned with the “ordering of human activities in supra-urban space” (Friedmann 1964, 63). The term commuter-shed referring to the space in which individuals travel on a daily basis, and “city-region” are terms related to functional regions. Functional regions also provide the framework for economic development and tend to be concerned with
Natural Regions. These regions reflect environmental and cultural realities. The watershed is a common point of reference for the delineation of the natural region. Defined by river valley and flow the watershed has been traditionally used to deal with issues related to water control and development. The natural region was an important point of reference for early regionalists such as Patrick Geddes (1915), Benton MacKaye (1928) and Lewis Mumford (1938) who promoted ecological and social balance through regional planning (see section 2.3.1). In recent decades the watershed/natural region has become the framework for the re-emergence of these ideas through movements such as bioregionalism (see section 2.3.8).

Regions are of varying size and in many cases the boundaries of regions will overlap. They evolve over time and new regions are created to address changing conditions. All types of planning regions can be seen as forming "complementary parts of a general effort to deal effectively with such problems as the conflicting uses of renewable resources, releasing development potential, and maintaining and creating effective community environments" (Gertler 1972, 27). Given the variegated terrain of regional issues, there exist a number of different realms of regional planning practice.

2.2.2 Realms of Regional Planning Practice

In his 1994 article "Regional Planning: the Cinderella Discipline" Canadian regional planning scholar Gerald Hodge identified four general realms of regional planning in Canada: regional resources planning, regional economic planning, metropolitan regional planning, rural regional planning. Regional resources planning seeks to achieve balance between human activities and the natural environment. Examples of regional resources planning include the watershed management programs of the Crombie Commission in

The four realms of regional planning identified by Hodge (1994) are elaborated upon by Hodge and Robinson (2001) in their book Planning Canadian Regions.
Ontario and the Fraser Basin Council in BC. **Regional economic planning** involves addressing regional disparities between urban and rural/non-metropolitan areas. As Hodge identifies, in Canada this type of planning has primarily been a function of the federal government, particularly during the 1960s and 1970s. **Metropolitan regional planning** deals specifically with issues related to human settlement. It is concerned with the location of urban land uses and the location of public works in metropolitan areas. The type of planning undertaken by the Greater Vancouver Regional District epitomises this type of regional planning. **Rural regional planning** is another area of regional planning dealing with human settlements. It involves physical planning for rural areas and small towns. This is the type of planning undertaken by regional districts in the non-metropolitan areas of BC (35-47).

For the purposes of this study, realms of regional planning have been interpreted in a slightly different way to what Hodge has put forward. First, the four realms of regional planning have been condensed into three categories. These are: regional settlement planning, regional resources planning and regional economic development planning. **Regional settlement planning** includes what Hodge defines as metropolitan planning and rural regional planning. This is the area to which much of the discussion in the following three chapters is devoted. The definition of **regional resources planning** in this case refers to regional planning directed at resource conservation and sustainability. It includes efforts such as integrated resource management⁶ and land protection. **Regional economic development planning** has been interpreted here to be planning directed toward supporting long-term economic stability in regional communities. These three realms of regional planning are to be seen as interrelated parts of a province’s regional planning system. A balanced regional planning system therefore is one in which each realm is effectively developed and linked to the others.

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⁶Integrated resource management refers to a process in which those responsible for planning in the province engage in collaborative decision-making in regard to land-use and resource management.
2.2.3 Institutional Framework

Another element to be considered in discussions regarding regional planning is the institutional framework. Institutions involved in regional planning, whether regional planning boards, committees or other types of authority, represent different levels of government. A number of regional planning scholars (Cullingworth 1987; Lim 1988; Hodge and Robinson 2001) discuss regional planning at three levels of the government hierarchy: the supra state (in the American context) or interprovincial/federal level, the state or provincial level, and the substate or regional level. At the suprastate or federal level there exist a number of departments and commissions involved in different areas of regional planning dealing most prominently with economic development and/or resources planning. American examples of this level of regional planning include the Tennessee Valley Commission and the Delaware River Basin Commission (Lim 1988, 12). In Canada we can reference the Federal Department of Regional Economic Expansion (DREE) in the 1960s and 1970s. In the 1990s we see federal agencies such as Environment Canada taking a lead role in interjurisdictional regional planning project such as the Georgia Basin Ecosystem Initiative. At the state or provincial level, regional planning activities include coastal zone management, agricultural land preservation, environmental management and in some cases resource development.

At the substate or local level regional planning tends to deal with issues related to human settlement such as managing growth and providing and coordinating services. At this level Lim (1988) identifies several approaches. These include: the consolidation of city and state governments as with the creation of Winnipeg’s “Unicity”; the strengthening of urban counties by expanding their service responsibilities and increasing their tax-raising abilities; the creation of two-tier government system such as that of former Metro Toronto where the urban centre exerts authority over smaller lower-tier communities within the region; the creation of regional governance through federation of municipalities as with regional districts system in BC; and the creation of special purpose districts which provide specific services to the entire region such as the former Greater Victoria Water District or the Greater Vancouver Transportation Authority (GVTA).
Given the interrelationship of types of land use, different regions and regional planning realms, coordination between all levels of government is an essential component of a balanced regional planning system. Institutional frameworks for regional planning and the approach taken, like regions themselves, are constantly evolving to face the challenges of ever-changing political, economic, social and ecological environments. As will be identified in the following section, these influences give rise to new ways of thinking about regions and the way planning in regions should be approached.

2.3 Foundational Movements, Theories, Ideas and Practice

The roots of regional planning extend almost 200 years. During this time there have been a number of defining shifts and changes in regional planning theory. As many other public policy initiatives of the twentieth century, regional planning emerged from the intellectual ferment of social theorists of the late eighteen century and early nineteenth century reacting to adverse conditions brought about as a result of the explosion of unrestricted industrialization. As regional planning scholar Clyde Weaver (1984) observes, the argument of social theorists contributing to the emergence of the first doctrine of regional planning were concerned with political and economic centralization, urban/rural divisions, class conflict, and environmental relations in industrial society (32). Achieving balance between humans and the natural environment by planning from inside regions was a key focus of early regionalists. Following World War II, regional planning theory shifted to focus on hierarchical approaches to advancing economic interests, and shaping and addressing urban development. Later, another shift occurred encouraging regional planning practice to consider the environmental and social implications of development contributing to a re-emergence of perspectives encouraging endogenous planning. The following overview provides an introduction to some of the ideas that have been part of the intellectual capital for those who have been involved in regional planning in BC.
2.3.1 Regional Planning Precursors

"Regional planning, in its classic form, was first and foremost a response to the metropolitan explosion" (Weaver 1984, 2). The emergence of the field of regional planning followed a succession of ideas, beginning with utopian socialism and including anarchism, regionalism, regional geography and regional sociology. Regional planning precursors included: Utopians, Robert Owen (1813) and Charles Fournier (1808) who encouraged the development of "cooperative villages"; Proudon (1840,1863) and his anarchist followers Peter Kropotkin (1899, 1902) and Reclus (1905-1908) who believed in a decentralized self-managing social economy; regionalist Charles-Brun (1911) who encouraged regional autonomy and the respect of regional diversities; and Ebenezer Howard who proposed a way of escaping the dehumanizing environment of cities through the creation of garden cities. It was through the teachings of Patrick Geddes that the regional approach established itself as a mode of intellectual inquiry. Common themes that can be traced from Fournier’s time through the work of Kropotin and Geddes include: a basic revulsion with the industrial city; a strong negative reaction to economic and political centralization; and a strong belief that rural life and culture must be restored and that this could be accomplished through a mixing of rural and urban occupations (Weaver 1984, 51).

Ebenezer Howard was one of the first to recognize the need for planning to move beyond the traditional local level approach and address the problems associated with urbanization at a regional level. The main purpose of Howard’s garden city model was to improve the quality of life of those living in crowded cities and prevent the “emptying” of the countryside. He encouraged the development of decentralized cities set in the countryside surrounded by greenbelts to control sprawl wherein residents would be able to live where they worked. He was directly responsible for initiating the construction of two garden cities near London: Letchworth (1903) and Welwyn (1919) (Weaver 1984, 35-36; Hall 1988, 91-94). Elements of Howard’s ideas are found in different areas in BC from the design of Kitimat to the promotion of town centres and greenspace preservation in the Lower Mainland.
Patrick Geddes expanded on Howard's approach. Like Howard, he had observed the spread of urban development in nineteenth-century Europe. He coined the term "connurbation" to describe the interdependent nature of interlinked sprawled developments (Geddes 1949, 4-5). Geddes' approach to dealing with the expansion of urban conurbations was uniquely ecological as well as sociological. For Geddes, the regional survey was the starting point for planning. The regional survey was a comprehensive collection of information about a region. Biologist Frederick La Play's three-part analysis of community life focusing on the relationship between famille (the people of the region), travail (the economy of the region) and lieu (the geographical dimension of the region) provided the framework for Geddes' regional survey method. Geddes saw the "Valley Section" as the most appropriate framework for regional survey and consequent regional planning. The Valley Section, or watershed region, identified the interrelationship of different human activities to various geographical settings (Geddes 1949, 164-167; Weaver, 1984, 48-50; Hall 1988, 140).

In addition to promoting what can be seen as modern concepts of environmentalism by insisting that planning be rooted in the understanding of geographical realities, Geddes was also a strong proponent of public participation and community empowerment. He argued that the public should have the opportunity to review survey results and participate democratically in major planning decisions (Hall 1988, 140). Geddes' commitment to public participation and many of his convictions were transferred directly to the Regional Planning Association of America through his close relationship with Lewis Mumford (Aberley 1994, 8). As will be discussed in the following chapters, the regional survey approach Geddes promoted has been applied to a number of regional planning activities in British Columbia. The ideas of the watershed as a planning framework is reflected in regional planning activities in BC, such as those of the Fraser Basin Council.

2.3.2 The American Regionalists

While much of the work of the precursors to regional planning was done in France and Britain, it was in "the United States during the 1920s that regional planning first made its appearance" (Weaver 1984, 57).
During this time the Regional Planning Association of America (RPAA) was formed. The RPAA was a very close knit group of architects, housing reformers, institutional economists, urbanists and foresters. While the RPAA was involved in a number of projects in the 1920s and 1930s it was “their role as propagandists which proved most important” (Weaver 1984, 57). The RPAA promoted the concept of regionalism. The defining feature of regionalism was its “central emphasis on place, on the lived environment as a unique historical, cultural, and physical entity, as a key to a fully human life” (Dorman in Mazza 1997, 2). The RPAA’s most influential writings where those of Lewis Mumford and Benton MacKaye. The regional planning vision of the RPAA sought to recover “ecological and social balance between city and countryside, folk culture and civilization, human life and nature” (Friedmann and Weaver 1979, 41). They encouraged co-operation, integration, decentralization and community participation in large-scale physical planning. Like their predecessors, they opposed the predominant trends of market oriented industrial society: the growth of the metropolis, rural decay, massive rural-urban migration, and social polarization.

In the years between the wars a second group in the United States participated in advancing the regional planning cause. This was a group of regional sociologists at the University of North Carolina, under the leadership of Howard Odum, known as “the southern regionalists”. They saw the region as the primary building block of human and social life. Their “new south” movement sought to address disenfranchisement and economic underdevelopment brought about as a result of urban-industrialism. They sought to achieve “regional balance” by restoring a higher degree of equity in the United States through “a program of relatively autonomous institution building, education, and resource development at the regional level” (Weaver 1984, 59).

The Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA), established in 1933 as a part of Roosevelt’s “New Deal”, was one of the first attempts to translate new regional planning strategies into action. The TVA was to undertake the task of planning for development in the Tennessee Valley River Basin which would include the construction of dams, electric power generation, reforestation, promotion of improved agricultural methods, irrigation, and building new towns (Hodge 1989, 271-273). The TVA’s original vision, in keeping
with the ideas of the RPAA and the southern regionalists, was of a cooperative, community centred, environmentally focussed economic development. However, due to the lack of planning authority over the broader aspects of the planning process the TVA could not resist the social and economic forces that had shaped urban America. Into the 1940s the regionalist program encouraging environmental preservation and small scale industry was superseded by large-scale commercial industry (Sussman 1976, 40).

The common thread connecting the original intentions of the TVA, the RPAA and the Southern Regionalists, was their “territorial” perspective (Friedmann and Weaver 1979). Each saw the region as the framework for the improvement of cultural as well as material well being of the regional community. The physical environment, the people and their history, the social and economic setting – essentially the region and its inhabitants – were the primary focus of regional planning from this perspective. Importance was placed on planning the region from inside and making decisions endogenously. This included enabling regional communities to gain some degree of control over market forces. The perspectives of early American Regionalists, particularly the RPAA, are reflected, to a certain degree, in some of the efforts to initiate regional planning in BC. For example, the focus of the province’s first planning school was – the community and the region. This perspective contrasted with the shift in regional planning theory that took place following the Second World War which saw regions from a functional perspective, as parts of a larger economic system to be planned in accordance with higher level (ie provincial/national) economic goals and objectives.

2.3.3 Thomas Adams

Before looking at the shift that occurred in regional planning theory following the Second World War, it is important to mention another individual who had a direct impact on planning in Canada. Thomas Adams, a British planner involved with the Garden City movement, was appointed as town planning advisor to Canada’s Commission of Conservation in 1914 following a request from the prime minister to the British government. Adams’ contributions to planning in Canada included: promotion and passage of planning
legislation; promotion of provincial departments of municipal affairs in a number of provinces; provision of advice on the preparation of general plans; the establishment of town planning commissions throughout the country; and the generation of support for public planning. In addition, he produced a body of planning theory, filling an existing void in Canadian planning. Adams' *Rural Planning and Development* (1917) was Canada's first planning text. The ideas Adams put forward while in Canada stressed the importance of linking the urban centre to rural areas, controlling the use of natural resources, preventing land speculation and meeting social needs (Gunton 1981, 103-111). Adams' promotion of planning, contributions to Canadian planning literature and efforts to establish some foundations for town planning in the country can be seen as indirect influences on regional planning in BC. Adams may have had the opportunity to have more direct influence on planning in BC had he not lost his bid to do Vancouver's city plan to Harland Bartholomew in the 1920s (South 1983, 24/4, 19).

While working for the Commission of Conservation, Adams was frequently invited to speak at American planning conferences. During this time he did much to advance the concept of regional planning in the United States. At conferences in 1916 and 1919 he put forward the notion that a plan for the region should come before city-town planning schemes (Hodge and Robinson 2001, 45-47). In 1923, following his time with the Commission of Conservation, Adams moved to the United States to become the director of planning for the Regional Plan for New York and Its Environs. In this capacity Adams engaged in a form of metropolitan regional planning which was very different from that conceived by the RPAA. As planning scholar Peter Hall observes, Adams did not set out to be revolutionary but rather introduce a moderate set of controls on marked abuses and included some "uncontroversial" benefits such as new roads, parks and beaches (Hall 1988, 156). In 1929, the New York's Regional Plan Association (RPA) was incorporated as a permanent body to implement the proposals outlined in Adams' plan (RPA, 2002). Adams' plan existed as a model for metropolitan regional planning to which planners in other regions could learn from.
2.3.4 The Regional Science Movement

During the post-war era the "regionalism of the 1930s seemed to have vanished from the earth" (Friedmann and Weaver 1979, 90). There had been very little writing on regional planning through the war years. Concern for economic development and the location of economic activity in the decades following the Second World War contributed to the birth of regional science and spatial development planning. The regional science movement, beginning in 1954 with the formation of the Regional Science Association, promoted a top-down, technocratic approach to regional economic growth through induced urban-industrialization. This approach was built upon the ideas of theorists in the United States – Douglas North, Walter Isard, and John Friedmann, and in Europe – Francois Perroux, Jacques Boudeville and Jean Paelinck (Weaver 1984, 79). Regional science assumed that communities could not satisfy their needs with their own labour and resources. It focussed on using quantitative tools to encourage the functional integration of what Isard termed "the space economy" (Friedmann and Weaver, 1979, 97). Regional planning, as a field of study and practice, became concerned with economic location theory, central place studies, urbanization and regional economic development as a means of "concentrating people, resources, and economic activities into a highly woven network of cities and their adjoining regions" (Weaver 1984, 81).

The analytical framework for regional planning shifted from natural regions to city-dominated regions (Friedman and Weaver, 1979, 100). Encouraging a top-down approach regional theory promoted "polarized development" based on extending the sphere of metropolitan dominance. The establishment of growth centres was seen to link depressed areas to economic growth impulses. Regions were addressed in terms of their functional role within a larger urban centred system. It was assumed that the wealth generated in these centres would eventually "trickle-down" through the economy. Rural regions were to take part in "the general process of growth diffusion only to the extent that they were subject to the impact of the metropolitan economy" (ibid). Access to rapidly growing cities was a major factor contributing to rural development (ibid).

One economic development theory elaborated on at this time by Canadian thinkers was "staples
theory". The staples theory was first introduced by Harold Innis in the 1930s to describe the development of Canada’s resource economy. This theory explains the dependence of the Canadian economy on the exploitation and export of five major resources/staples: fish, furs, timber, wheat and minerals. A central feature of the Innisian staple model is the notion of core-periphery inter-regional linkages which as Hutton (1997) suggests implies, at the broadest level, “a highly asymmetrical and dichotomous spacial framework, characterized by a dominant, industrialized, and metropolitan “core” and a vast underdeveloped “periphery” almost wholly dependent on the production and export of staples commodities” (69-70). Linkages include: the processing of staples prior to export; activities such as the building of roads, railways, boats, and rails needed to export resources; and the provision of services, such as housing and food from the core to those employed in the resource communities (McGillivray 2001, 96-97; Gunton 1997, 65-66; Wilkinson 1997, 134). Consistent with staples theory, the BC’s economy has built up upon its role as a resource provider to “heartland regions” (ie Ontario, the United States, Britain and Japan). The core/periphery dynamic has also been replicated within the province (Hutton 1997; Barnes et al.1992).

2.3.5 Metropolitan Reform and Government

The problems of local government coordination and revenue sharing became the focus of another branch of regional theory. Following the Second World War many regions in North America and Europe experienced dramatic urban growth and sprawl. Concerns were being raised by representatives of central cities, suburbs and senior government regarding the need for coordinated planning of rapidly expanding utilities, roads, transit and parks and the delivery of services such as health and police (Boothroyd 1992, 7). It had been seen as “politically impracticable and democratically undesirable” to simply expand the boundaries of major cities (Self 1982, 61). This lead to the introduction of a metropolitan government system wherein the metro authority shares powers with the smaller governments in its area. The Municipality of Metropolitan Toronto, a second tier of governance over 13 original municipalities in the metropolitan area formed in 1953, was one of the pioneers in this area (Self 1982, 66).
2.3.6 Shifting Perspectives

Through the 1970s and into the 1980s a number of events occurred, encouraging a shift in the way planning and development was approached. During this time the world experienced the fall of the welfare state, OPEC oil crisis, recession, increased mobility of capital and the rise of the multinational companies. With the ascendancy of right wing politicians, such as Ronald Reagan in the United States and Margaret Thatcher in Europe, determined to dismantle the welfare state, regional planning programs were placed on the chopping block along with other areas of social spending and regulation. In addition to this, the failure of the welfare state to address regional disparities, and the recognition of limits to growth had contributed to the emergence of new perspectives on development and planning. The early 1970s saw the introduction of a number of critics of the development patterns of the post-war era such as those introduced by the Club of Rome which “conjured up the spectre of a world that was diligently working its way toward self-destruction” (Friedmann and Weaver 1979, 167). A growing body of criticism of post-war development was drawing attention to the need for alternative development approaches. At the same time, ecological considerations were being acknowledged in a new wave of writings which drew upon ecology to stress the interconnectedness of natural systems and the value of natural areas to the city. One such publication was Ian McHarg’s *Design with Nature* (1969) which built upon a number of Patrick Geddes ideas.

2.3.7 The Sustainability Movement

Ideas relating to environment and development were brought together through the sustainability movement. The sustainability movement emerged out of the environmental movement of the 1970s. While originally focused on preserving the natural environment for future generations sustainability theory soon recognized the need to consider economic and social well-being in sustainable development. The term sustainable development was popularized by the Brundtland Commission’s 1987 report on environment entitled *Our Common Future*. The Commission defined sustainable development to be “development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of
future generations to meet their own needs” (WCED 1987, 43). In the past decade and a half sustainable
development has been defined in a variety of ways ranging from the more economically focussed to the more
ecologically focussed. As Wackernagel and Rees (1996) indicate, underlying the message of most definitions
is “the need for humanity to live equitably within the means of nature”(33). As identified in Chapter 5,
international recognition of the need to support sustainability objectives encouraged the development of a new
set of goals and priorities for regional planning in BC. This contributed to the introduction of influential
initiatives such as the establishment of BC’s Round Table on Environment and Economy and the Commission
on Resources and Environment (CORE), and the passing of growth strategies legislation.

2.3.8 The Bioregionalist Movement

Another movement reacting to the negative impacts of development is that of bioregionalism. Whereas sustainable development, emerging as an international response to limits to growth has been identified as an exogenous influence on regional planning (Hodge and Robinson 2001, 23), bioregionism is “rooted in the politics of place” (Plant 1990, 28). The biorgionalist perspective been linked to the planning framework originally inherited from Patrick Geddes by Lewis Mumford and others in the Regional Planning Association of America (Carr 1994, 4). It envisions a future world that is not shaped by rigid, politically defined boundaries but by ecological and cultural diversity. It promotes biologically and culturally defined regions, democratic and responsible local control, locally regulated economic development, self-reliance, appropriate technologies, and sustainable use of resources (Aberley 1994, 9). As bioregionalist scholar Aberley contends, bioregionalism is “not a theory looking for application, but rather a long evolved practice which is just now being articulated beyond the realm of local action” (Aberley 1987, 2). Over the past two decades the principles of bioregionalism have impacted research and practice of a variety of disciplines associated with regional studies and regional planning. Elements of bioregionalism can be found in BC in activities such as community economic development and environmental stewardship programs.
2.3.9 Growth Management

Growth management is another concept emerging in recent decades which has influenced regional planning in BC. The concept of growth management emerged in the United States in the 1970s as a means of reducing stress on the environment and improving natural resource management primarily through growth limiting, land control measures. Oregon’s growth management system considered one of the most comprehensive of the 1970s, had the heaviest influence on the growth management of other states in the 1980s (Degrove 1993, 4) and was one of the systems examined during the development of growth strategies legislation in BC (Paget 2000i, Osborne 2000i). Growth management considers broad quality of life issues such as reducing traffic congestion and containing urban sprawl. Through land use regulations such as zoning, annexation controls, urban containment boundaries and infrastructure service regimes growth management aims to “redistribute growth and development in ways that minimize negative environmental, social and fiscal impacts” (Landis in Wilson 1998, 16). While relying heavily on “top-down” state control in the 1970s, the late 1980s saw a shift to a more co-operative “bottom-up” approach. By the 1990s, a system in which local governments were encouraged rather than forced to comply with state growth goals had emerged. This concept, contributing to local government empowerment, has been identified as the more effective way of encouraging local government compliance to state goals (Bollens 1992, Innes 1992). This was the approach encouraged in the growth management legislation adopted by the BC legislature in 1995.

2.4 Conclusion

As identified above, regional planning is a flexible concept which can be used to address a number of different regional issues. It is influenced by ideas that are constantly debated and refined in relationship to changing perceptions and political, social and environmental realities. A regional planning system can be seen as consisting of three interrelated components: regional settlement planning, regional resources planning and regional economic development planning. Given the different levels of government participating in land-
use decision making, coordination between these levels is essential to supporting effective regional planning.

There are a number of theories and movements contributing to regional planning practice. These theories and movements have emerged in response to various threats to human and environmental health and well-being such as industrialization and overcrowding in cities, regional disparity, and ecological degradation. While the ideas discussed above have been available to the “architects” of BC’s regional planning system and may have had some degree of influence on their thinking, “the system that we ended up with really didn’t come out of text books or articles. It was very much a system that could only have emerged in British Columbia because of the history of regionalism that we have in BC, in particular in the Lower Mainland” (Walisser 2000w).

BC’s “history of regionalism” and the regional planning system that has evolved must be seen in light of the province’s geography, economy, system of governance, politics, and culture. BC is a large province with a long coastline located at great distance from the federal capital. It is mountainous province of which only 5% is habitable. Economic development has focussed on the export of resources. Settlement has concentrated in the southwest corner of the province dominated by Vancouver. The pattern of development in BC has lead to the existence of core-periphery dynamics wherein the growth of Vancouver has been supported by wealth generated in other regions of the province (Barnes et al. 1992). These and other factors such as BC’s polarized political culture, long history of local government autonomy and strong provincial presence in land-use issues (with the province owning over 90% of the land) have contributed to shaping regional planning practice. The type of regional planning emerging from the introduction of ideas and theories into the BC context will be revealed in detail in the following three chapters. Each of these chapters discusses one of three phases in BC’s regional planning history.
Chapter Three: Phase I - Foundations and Frameworks

“From a historical point of view, regional planning [in British Columbia] is an ever changing set of “ground rules” dictated by the pressure of ever spreading urban inconvenience and the ability of the law makers to act appropriately in a political climate pressured by a strongly held minority view that all growth is progress” (Lane 2000).

3.1 Introduction

The above statement is a quote from Bill Lane, one of the many prominent figures in what is defined here as the first phase of regional planning in British Columbia. Lane graduated from law school at the University of British Columbia in 1948, the same year the first regional planning legislation was introduced to BC. He went on to become involved in with the BC Branch of the Community Planning Association of Canada (CPAC), the School of Community and Regional Planning (SCARP), the Agricultural Land Commission (ALC) and the Greater Vancouver Regional District (GVRD). These institutions and agencies are among those established between the late 1940s and the mid-1970s which contributed to the development of the foundations and framework for regional planning in British Columbia. These and a number of other regional planning institutions, processes, and visions of the post-war era (1940s-1970s) will be discussed in the following chapter.

As will be revealed, the introduction and evolution of regional planning in BC during its first phase (1940s-1970s) was strongly influenced by the efforts and experiences of planners and planning advocates in the Lower Mainland. Contributing to BC’s regional planning framework was the introduction of regional approaches to servicing, governance and planning as well as the imposition of provincial authority in the areas of land protection and resource management. Tensions and frustrations emerged as different levels of government struggled to exercise their powers and define their roles in light of shifting spacial realities.

This chapter begins with a look at the forces and factors contributing to growth and change shaping the spacial realities from which issues necessitating a regional approach to planning emerged. The chapter
then looks at the early features of BC’s planning system, the movement encouraging the introduction of regional planning legislation, the regional district system, proposals put forward encouraging decentralization and provincial efforts directed at land protection and integrated resources planning.

3.2 Post-war Industrial Expansion and Urbanization

Two of the main forces of growth and change in BC in the post-war years were industrial expansion, and urbanization. Industrial expansion, during the decades following the Second World War, played a major role in integrating the economies of the province’s resource periphery with that of Vancouver as well as encouraging the concentration of the hinterland population into a hierarchical string of new urban centres (Barman 1991, 298-290). Prior to the end of the Second World War there had been limited integration between the southwestern tip and the rest of the province, which at the time existed in near frontier conditions. Between 1871 and 1940 settlement had progressed at a very irregular pace with very little coordinated or integrated development (Robinson and Hardwick 1973, 12). BC’s resource hinterland was a scattered mixture of canneries, resource towns, logging camps, native communities and mining towns. By the end of WW II many of these communities existed in “near frontier conditions” with limited access to markets, services and amenities such as running water and sewage (Barman 1991, 271). Meanwhile, the southwestern tip of the province was experiencing rapid urbanization and extending its trade links internationally. While Victoria established itself as the province’s administration centre, the City of Vancouver had become the provincial centre for industry and manufacturing and a main port for western Canada.

At the time of the First World War, there existed railway links from Prince Rupert and a number of communities in the interior to Vancouver and other parts of the country (via the Canadian Northern Railway). The northern part of the province was virtually cut off. One of the first movements toward opening up the northern part of the province were military defence actions taken by the American government during the
Second World War which included extending the Alaska highway from Watson Lake to Dawson Creek and the establishment of an airstrip in Fort Nelson and Prince Rupert (Barman 1991, 263). Opening up the north and transforming the province into a single integrated economic region became the main focus of the provincial government in the post-war years.

In 1942 an act was passed in the BC legislature creating the Post-war Rehabilitation Council. The Council’s mandate was to conduct a detailed study of the needs and desires of all the regions in the province in order to prepare for post-war life. An interim report by the Post-war Rehabilitation Council in 1943 provided what historian David Mitchell (1994) refers to as, “a blueprint for the future development of British Columbia” (74). The report called for the creation of a steel industry, the extension of the Pacific Great Eastern railway, the establishment of a publically owned hydroelectric authority, increased emphasis on agricultural development, further development of the province’s mining and forest industry, and increased exploitation of natural resources. From the perspective of Gerard Farry, former City Planner for Vancouver (1952-1969), BC’s post-war reconstruction report was a key document in BC’s planning history.

“It gives us some ideas of where things were going after the war. Not only had we gone through war but we had gone through depression and if you looked at BC it was almost where it was in the 20s in the late 40s in many respects. It was almost impossible to make it by road to anywhere in the province.....it was third world at that stage..BC was in bad shape” (Farry 2000w).

The Coalition government (1947-1952) took preliminary steps to implement the recommendations of the plan. Much of it was incorporated into WAC Bennett’s regional development vision once he became premier. Bennett, while MLA for Kelowna, had been a member of the Post-war Rehabilitation Council and participated in the drafting of the 1943 report (Mitchell 1994, 74). Bennett came to power in 1952 and held onto his position as premier for twenty years. This was a time of unprecedented growth in North America and British Columbia had been swept along with it. Higher standards of living and consumption in North America were placing higher demands on BC resources. “With vigour and determination [WAC Bennett] renovated the province as another person would a house” (Mitchell 1994, 258). Bennett’s vision focussed
on ameliorating regional disparities by opening up the north to provide greater access to BC’s resources. He promoted large scale industry as a means of transforming the province into a single integrated economic region. Bennett’s vision included the building of bridges and highways to provide easier access to resources, and the building of hydro dams to generate power for industry. Bennett felt BC should focus on its obvious comparative advantage as a resource region. His policies and programs reflected his belief that resources and markets were inexhaustible and that impression was passed on to the public. The forestry industry, a well established component of the provincial economy, was redesigned to favour large companies, which were seen to be less likely to go out of business during a recession. Japanese demand for copper concentrates and coking coal renewed interest in mining, contributing to the development of new single resource towns.

As geographer and planning professor Tom Hutton (1997) identifies, the “trajectory of economic development over the post-war period”, in addition to contributing to “massive expansion of resource extraction”, included the growth of Vancouver as the province’s “primate city” (70). Expansion of resource industry in the province’s interior and peripheral regions was supported by public as well as corporate investment. BC was now catering to a growing international export market. By 1959, 40% of BC’s resources were exported to the US, 20% to Great Britain and 14% to Japan (Macdonald 1992, 53). Vancouver’s role included large-scale resource processing in the central city and its surrounding suburbs.

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7 Large dam projects during Bennett’s time in office included: Kemano I which provided energy for the Alcan Aluminium smelter in Kitimat, the Bennett Dam on the Peace River and the Columbia River Project which included dams on the upper end of Kootenay Lake, the lower end of the Arrow Lakes, and at Mica Creek north of Revelstoke (McGillivray 2000, 159-160; Barman 1991, 283-285).

8 “One thing I remember through the 1950s, during my school days, is the sense that the abundance of the province was almost infinite. I remember actually being told in the classroom that we could never cut enough trees that it would actually exhaust that resource” (Cameron 2000w).

9 In 1947 the recommendation of the Sloan Commission to establish a system of forest management licences had been implemented by provincial legislation. Under tree farm legislation companies were given licences under the condition that they would operate the designated area as a tree farm by replanting in harvested areas. The altering of rules for bidding on timber-cutting rights and raising technical standards helped drive out hundreds of the smaller companies (Barman 1991, 286-287).

10 In 1965 the province enacted the Instant Towns Act to encourage self-government, preplanning and local ownership in new communities. Previously resource towns had been controlled by resource companies. Into the early 1970s eight instant towns were built (Gold River, Mackenzie, Sparwood, Fraser Lake, Logan Lake, Tahsis, and Elkford). The last instant town to be built was Tumbler Ridge in 1981 (McGillivray 2000, 205).
(Hutton 1997, 70). It also served as the centre for the distribution of resources and control centre for the coordination of scattered resource sectors (Barnes et al. 1992, 180). The city’s importance as a distribution centre attracted investment in transportation projects such as the development of Roberts Bank and later expansion of Vancouver airport. Another point to recognize is that given that because most of the control of BC’s industries was outside the province, Vancouver often played an interconnecting role with other metropoles. “Vancouver was itself a part of an even larger global periphery” (181).

The urbanizing function of post-war development is another factor of importance to the story of regional planning in the province. Communities which had begun to grow in economic strength and attract rural populations became “mini-metropolises” with their own increasingly accessible resource hinterlands (Barman 1991, 290). For example, in Prince George where large pulp mills were constructed and transportation links to access and transport resources were extended, the population grew from 2,000 in 1941 to 14,000 in 1961 (Macdonald 1992, 53). The closing of one-room school rooms, local sawmills and community post offices signalled the disappearance of hinterland life and the dominance of regional urban centres (Barman 1991, 291). Between 1941 and 1971 the total number of urban centres, outside of the Province’s southwestern tip, of five thousand or more residents increased from seven to twenty-three (290), the percentage of urban population in BC increased from 52.8% to 75.7% (McGillivray 2000, Table 16.6).

Over time a hierarchy of urban centres evolved. Kelowna became the commercial and administrative centre for the Okanagan, Kamloops for the South Central Interior and Prince George for the North Central Interior. As Davis and Hutton (1988) suggest, these were third and fourth order centres. They did not provide specialized commercial services. Given the economic leakages to the provincial core with respect to financial and business services, they had failed to benefit fully from local development initiatives (14). Smaller cities preforming regional services such as Cranbrook, Port Alberni, Prince Rupert, Fort St. John, Salmon Arm, Terrace, Dawson Creek, Kitimat and Williams Lake maintained their dependence on natural resources (Robinson and Hardwick 1973, 56-60).

The urbanization of the province was accompanied by the increasing accessibility to automobiles and
the development of transportation infrastructure to accommodate automobile travel. The impact of these parallel trends was the growth of suburbs. With the increased mobility, housing and shopping areas could be located at a distance from traditional town centres. In the City of Vancouver between 1951 and 1961 the population increased by 12% while the population of the surrounding metropolitan area increased by 87% (MacDonald 1992, 52). On Vancouver Island the number of people living on the Saanich Peninsula, adjacent to Victoria, more then doubled from the beginning of the Second World War to 1971 (ibid).

As a result of rapid growth and change during the post-war years a number of regional issues emerged. In the Lower Mainland consumption of agricultural lands was of particular concern. Urban and suburban growth in the Lower Mainland and other regions had also contributed to increased need for services such as water and sewage, and the need to address other issues that crossed municipal boundaries such as transportation and designation of regional parkland. Another outcome of urban growth was scattered unorganized development on the urban-rural fringe (areas on the edge of municipal jurisdiction). As well with the lack of coordination and cooperation among resource agencies, major resource and land use conflicts in the resource hinterland had become commonplace. Approaches to regional settlement planning and regional resources planning emerged in the 1940s-1970s in reaction to the need to address these issues.

3.3 Early Movements Toward Regional Planning

Prior to the establishment of the first regional planning legislation in 1948 there were a number of significant steps taken toward addressing issues related to population growth. Population growth was of concern in a very small portion of the province’s land area. The province was and continues to be a “habitable archipelago” (Lane 2000i) with only 5% of the province’s land suitable for settlement. Municipal

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11 As early as 1948, when the first Annual Resources Conference was held, it was becoming clear that resource uses were often conflicting. The Annual Resources Conferences (1948-late 1960s) provided an opportunity for academics, government, industry, labour and management to come together and discuss resource challenges. A compilation of papers and discussions offered at the Resource Conferences is presented in Roderick Haig-Brown’s book The Living Land (1961). Resource Conferences continued on into the 1960s.
incorporation can be seen as the first step toward addressing regional growth. New Westminster was the first municipality in British Columbia to become incorporated. Its incorporation in 1860s was closely followed by the incorporation of Victoria in 1862 (Goldenberg 1947, 15; Corke 1982, 50). The first Municipal Act, passed in 1872, provided for the creation of municipalities in BC and empowered them to hold elections, borrow money, provide services and make bylaws. These enabling statues contained no municipal power to regulate private land-use. As a result, there was virtually no planning beyond the establishment of lot survey and grid iron street layout. This contributed to rapid and poorly planned suburban development (Crook and Stachelrodt Crook 1976, 2). Haphazard development encouraged consensus amongst business, planners and reformists to push for greater planning and regulatory powers for municipalities (Corke 1983, 50).

Municipal planning legislation was not introduced until 1925. By this time Vancouver was experiencing tremendous prosperity and growth resulting from the opening of the Panama canal and the expansion in exports to Eastern Canada, as well as large investments in mining (Gunton 1981, 178). Pressure to pass planning legislation was placed on the provincial government by the Vancouver branch of the Town Planning Institute of Canada, the Vancouver Board of Trade, the Real Estate Exchange, the Trades and Labour Council, Professional Engineers of BC, and a subcommittee of Vancouver City Council (Gunton 1981, 179). The Town Planning Act was passed by the provincial legislature in 1925. The Town Planning Act provided municipalities the authority to prepare and adopt an official town plan, to enact a zoning bylaw, and to establish a Town Planning Commission (citizen’s bodies appointed by council to advise on planning matters) if they chose to. Municipal powers were not obligatory and there was no provision made for inter-municipal planning and cooperation (Corke 1983, 52; Christopherson 2000, 59). In addition, municipal planning power was limited by provincial authority further reducing the likelihood of municipal

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12 The Municipal Act (1872) originally covered all British Columbia municipalities in existence with the exception of Vancouver. Vancouver was later incorporated under its own legislation, the 1886 Vancouver Incorporation Act (Corke 1983, 50). The Vancouver Incorporation Act was later superseded by the Vancouver Charter in the 1950s (54).
cooperation\textsuperscript{13}. Some forms of municipal cooperation had emerged previous to the passing of the \textit{Town Planning Act} (1925). The pressures of growth, following the First World War, on the need for basic services had encouraged the development of special purpose boards (Municipal Committee 1968, 1). Special purpose boards were responsible for providing specific services to service areas which crossed municipal borders. The first special purpose board, the Vancouver and Districts Sewage and Drainage District, was created in 1914 by enactment of the provincial legislature. The Vancouver and Districts Sewage and Drainage District provided services to Vancouver, Point Grey, South Vancouver and Burnaby (Christopherson 2000, 57-59). Legislation was passed in 1924 incorporating the Greater Vancouver Water District. Both enactments enabled the provision of necessary infrastructure in the rapidly growing Lower Mainland (Corke 1983, 97). The legislation enabling the establishment of special service boards has been identified to have been the source of aspects of the province’s existing regional district system\textsuperscript{14}.

By 1936 the need to coordinate planning throughout the Lower Mainland had become of great concern to a planning advocates throughout the region. Under the leadership of Harry Jackson, a group of citizens’ organizations and elected officials got together to form the Lower Mainland Regional Planning Association (LMRPA). The purpose of the LMRPA was “to discuss land use and other matters, which were recognized as metropolitan and regional in nature” (Christopherson 2000, 59). Given their mandate and the time of their creation the LMRPA may have been modelled after New York’s successful Regional Planning Association. The LMRPA met several times to discuss a course of action for regional planning in the Lower Mainland. However, having no funds or official status the Association became inactive during the war (Christopherson 2001, 59; Corke 1983, 97; Wilson 1952, 102). The establishment of the LMRPA, seen to have initiated BC’s regional planning movement and was one step in a series of events leading to the introduction

\textsuperscript{13} Under the \textit{British North America Act} (BNA Act) of 1867, the province was provided authority over municipal institutions as well as complete control of the lands it owned (Corke 1983, 6).

\textsuperscript{14} As Collier indicates, the aspects of special service boards that contributed to the current structure of regional districts are: the power to include incorporated and unincorporated territory in one governing body and the inclusion of representatives elected from unincorporated areas and delegates from municipalities on the board (Collier 1972, 29).
of regional planning legislation (Wilson 1952, 102-103).

The regional planning movement gained new momentum in the post-war decade. One function of the Post-war Rehabilitation Council had been to make recommendations on regional planning. The Council's recommendations lead to the establishment of the Bureau of Post-war Rehabilitation and Reconstruction in 1945 which contained a Regional Planning Division (Wilson 1952, 102; Municipal Committee 1968, 4). In the same year, the Regional Planning Division produced a report on a proposed "Lower Mainland Regional Plan" which recorded all the physical and administrative resources in the Lower Fraser Valley as far as Hope and included a short-range projection of the demand for public works following the war (Wilson 1952, 102; Christopherson 2001, 60). At the same time a number of meetings were being held within the region to discuss actions to be taken to legislate regional planning for the Lower Mainland (Wilson 1952, 102).

In 1946 the Vancouver Town Planning Commission produced a clear statement of the need for regional planning in the Lower Mainland. Their report entitled Decentralization and Regional Planning recognized both the urban and rural aspects of the region and urged Lower Mainland municipalities to "recognize and accept the essential unity of the region in which they are located". The Commission concluded that "only as we plan the entire area as a unit can the community attain its highest economic and social usefulness and value" (Vancouver Town Planning Commission 1946, 11).

The need for a regional approach to planning was made evident in another post-war planning report undertaken in 1947 by Carl Goldenberg which revealed the negative impacts of development on the unorganized fringes of municipalities (Goldenberg, 1947). Legislation passed in 1947 established "regulated areas" to deal with the problems of growth in unorganized areas (Crook and Stachelrodt Crook 1976, 2; Christopherson 2001, 60). Regulated areas, later renamed Community Planning Areas (CPAs) were the responsibility of the planning branch of the Department of Municipal Affairs within which Don South was

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15When the Bureau of Post-war Reconstruction Bureau folded in 1947, the Planning Division was transferred to the Department of Municipal Affairs (Corke 1983, 97).
the only planner. By 1964 there were 27 CPAs scattered through the province. While covering both municipal and rural areas CPAs were used mostly in rural-fringe areas of existing municipalities (Nicholson 1974, 23; Collier 1972, 30).

3.4 Key Organizations

One theme that is carried throughout the history of regional planning in BC is the importance individuals have played in advancing the regional planning agenda in the province. Three key organizations bringing together people who would make important contributions to BC’s regional planning history were the BC Branch of the Community Planning Association of Canada (CPAC), the Lower Mainland Regional Planning Board (LMRPB) and the School of Community and Regional Planning (SCARP).

3.4.1 The Community Planning Association of BC

The Community Planning Association of BC played a significant role in attracting individuals to the planning profession and promoting planning throughout the province as well as establishing BC’s first official regional planning body. The Community Planning Association of Canada (CPAC) was formed in 1946 by the federal government with funding from the Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation. Its mandate was to promote town planning throughout the country. The BC Division was founded shortly after the CPAC was incorporated. As one former executive director of the BC Branch of CPAC recalls, while a number of planners were involved with the organization, it was very much a citizen’s group involving individuals from a variety of backgrounds and experience committed to addressing a number of planning issues (Rashleigh 2002i). The main objective of the CPAC was “to foster public understanding of and participation in all forms of community planning” (CPAC BC Division 1952). In the early days of the CPAC

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16 As Don South recalls, when he started working for Municipal Affairs there “wasn’t much planning outside urban areas”. He had argued for better planning in resource regions (South 2000i).

17 For more information on the formation and the function of the CPAC see Gunton 1981, 269-272.
there were very few trained planners in the province. The key force behind the growth and influence of the CPAC was its first executive director Tom MacDonald. Those who worked with Tom MacDonald and/or were around to witness the influence of his commitment to encouraging planning described him as, “the icon upon which [the regional planning] process in BC started” (Oberlander 2000w), BC’s regional planning “spark plug” (Williams 2000w) and the “patron saint of rational planning in BC” (Lane 2000w).

Tom MacDonald was responsible for bringing planners, politicians, bureaucrats and members of the public together to share ideas through conferences which he organized throughout the province. Occasionally MacDonald would invite planners from other places to BC conferences to share their experiences. Peter Oberlander, a former member of CPAC, recalls one of MacDonald’s most memorable guest speakers being Clarence Stein of the Regional Planning Association of New York. “Clarence Stein brought to Vancouver, at that moment, almost 20 years of history of the Regional Planning Association of New York” (Oberlander 2000w). Stein later went on to plan the community of Kitimat in the early 1950s. In addition to organizing conferences, MacDonald encouraged young planners and academics to travel around the province promoting planning in hinterland regions. As Lewis Robinson, who as a young geography professor was one of the people to travel the province promoting planning, recalls “this helped a lot to bring the concepts of regional planning to the hinterland communities. As I heard from many comments later, that was just the beginning of some of the thinking in these cities about their planning problems”

Howard’s garden city concept was one of the influential models contributing to Kitimat’s design (Stein, Mayer and Wittlesey 1954). When founded in 1953 Kitimat was hailed as the “first modern city built in the 20th century” The town was planned to house a population of 50,000; however a surplus of aluminum in 1957 led to reductions in workforce. By 1976 the population had not surpassed 14,000 (Stetler and Artibise, 1982, 433). The City of Kitimat’s population is now 11,000 and that of the Kitimat Valley is 35,000 (City of Kitimat 2002).

In an interview with the author, Bill Lane recounted that as a recent graduate of UBC Law School he had met Tom at a CPAC information booth at the Pacific National Exhibition (PNE). Intrigued by the initiatives of the CPAC he was soon travelling around the province with Peter Oberlander (founder of the school of planning), Jim Wilson (first director of the Lower Mainland Regional Planning Board) and Geography Professor Lewis Robinson encouraging communities to consider planning (Lane 2000i).
3.4.2 The Lower Mainland Regional Planning Board

The establishment of a Lower Mainland Regional Planning Board was one of the CPAC’s main objectives following its formation. The amendment of the *Town Planning Act* (1925) in 1948, recognizing and enabling regional planning, was a result of meetings the CPAC had initiated between the representatives of the metropolitan municipalities and the Minister of Municipal Affairs (Wilson 1952, p.102; Wilson 2000i; Corke 1983, 98). The legislation incorporated provisions for the establishment of regional planning areas and regional planning boards to “prepare plans dealing with the physical, social and economic development of the area” (Corke 1983, 98). Owing to Tom MacDonald’s political connections and personal commitment to regional planning the Lower Mainland Regional Planning Board (LMRPB) was created shortly thereafter. Tom MacDonald’s connections and commitment leading to the creation of the LMRPB is identified in the following reflections.

“Tom was a simply marvellous man and he devoted himself to the cause of planning in BC. Tom was also a politician and he was a member of the Conservative Party of BC. He was very active and very central to the workings of the Conservative party of that time. Before the Social Credit came into power the province was run by coalition of Liberal and Conservative parties. The Conservative leader was a man by the name of Anscomb, Herbert. Tom knew all these people extremely well. After one election Anscomb was so pleased at the results of the election that he asked Tom “Tom, what can we do for you” and Tom,.... said, “yes, I would like you to designate the Lower Mainland Regional Planning Board”. Instead of this kind of favour or that kind of favour he said “ Yes, please set up the regional planning board”.

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20 The CPAC continued on for many years through a succession of executive directors but eventually “fizzled out”. Ted Rashleigh attributes the decline of the CPAC to the removal of CMHC funding and the fact that some of its core members eventually moved on to other things (Rashleigh 2002i).

21 Tom MacDonald had recounted this story to Jim Wilson, the first director of the LMRPB, who was a very good friend of his. This story was recounted to the author by Jim Wilson during an interview in February 2000. Robert Williams, also a friend of Tom McDonald and a former LMRPB planner, told the same story which he recounted at the CHS/SCARP Workshop on Regional Planning in BC, March 2000.
On June 21/1949 the Lower Mainland Regional Planning Board (LMRPB) was created and its planning area formally gazetted by proclamation of the Minister of Municipal Affairs (Wilson 1952, 102; Corke 1983, 98). The boundaries of the regional planning area, expanding from the Lower Fraser Valley to Hope, corresponded with those drawn by the Regional Planning Division of the Provincial Government in 1945 and was comprised of twenty-six municipalities (Wilson 1952, 102). Only fifteen of these municipalities were represented on the board at first. This number grew to twenty-two in 1950 (Corke 1983, 98).

The Lower Mainland Regional Planning Board set a number of precedents for regional settlement planning in the province. Effective regional survey, public education and the achievement of municipal cooperation are a few of their most celebrated, enduring and influential accomplishments. Two of the main factors contributing to these accomplishments were the strong leadership of Jim Wilson and his “home grown” staff and the recognition by the Lower Mainland municipalities of the need for regional cooperation.

Oberlander, while a PhD candidate from Harvard, was hired shortly after the formation of the LMRPB as a consultant to help its small staff “invent the regional planning process” (Oberlander 2000i). His first major step was appointing Jim Wilson as director. Wilson had an engineering background, had worked for BC Hydro, recently completed his planning degree at the University of North Carolina and had done internship work with the TVA. He had also come by strong recommendation from RPAA secretary Catherine Bauer with whom Oberlander had maintained close contact (Oberlander 2000i).

Shortly following Wilson’s appointment as director of the LMRPB in 1951, the LMRPB staff began to systematically collect data on the region, working with municipalities to the point where they were willing to finance their own process. Given that under the legislation, the regional planning board was strictly an

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The LMRPB’s small staff included: A.D. Crerar, a geographer; M. Churchill, a political scientist; J. Eassie former draftsman with the Vancouver Town Planning Commission and the steno Mrs. Boroski (South 1983, 24/5, 14).

At the CHS/SCARP Workshop, Peter Oberlander recounted a story of how in the early days of the LMRPB many discussions around the financing of regional districts happened at the Minister of Municipal Affairs’s shoe store in New Westminster on Saturday mornings. “Jim and I would go on the trolley to New Westminster and confront the Minister behind the cash register. That is where we would settle the budget for the first year and ultimately Jim and I convinced the Minister to
advisory body, the regional planning process was dependent on municipal co-operation. The Fraser River
Flood of 1948 which had flooded one quarter of the Valley’s cultivated land, damaged two thousand homes,
forced the evacuation of 14,000 people and caused $17 million worth of damages (LMRPB 1963b, 11) had
revealed to the municipalities of the Lower Mainland that regional planning was not just “an academic
abstraction but a practical method of addressing problems that could not be addressed by single
municipalities” (Oberlander 2000i). By 1952, the Lower Mainland Board had the active support of 25 of the
26 local governments in the region (Wilson 1952, 104). The LMRPB office in New Westminster replaced
what had been the region’s flood headquarters.

“At the time there was no real definition of what regional planning was. The LMRPB started in the
only way they could, with a survey of the Lower Mainland called The Lower Mainland Looks Ahead”
(Wilson 2000i). The Lower Mainland Looks Ahead (1952) brought together the analysis of factors such as
geographical setting, economic structure, population trends, climate, land and other resources, and political
administration. It recognized the purpose of regional planning as the identification of needs, the assessment
of resources and the presentation of a course of action. It suggested that needs could only be satisfied in
conditions of natural balance. The LMRPB, seemingly ahead of the times, had connected human health and
well-being to ecological process24. It had also identified regional planning as a continuous process responding
to changing needs and resources.

“From there on the LMRPB embarked on studies in the best way they could with a small staff and
a limited budget. Given that there was no municipal base for planning we reckoned that the best thing to do
would be to do research of an educational nature in the planning field. So we did a number of studies”
(Wilson 2000i). Mapping had been an important starting point. The surveyor general, who had been

allow the LMRPB to receive from the municipalities two cents a head as a contribution to the budget of the LMRPB”
(Oberlander 2000w). Given that participation from municipalities was voluntary, the board’s financing was “fundamentally
unstable” (Corke 1983, 98).

24 This approach can be seen to be in line with the ideas promoted by Lewis Mumford who’s book The Culture of
Cities (1938) is referenced within The Lower Mainland Looks Ahead (1952).
involved in planning the D-day invasion of 1944, during his reconnaissance work had taken areal photos of the Lower Mainland. He passed on the photos to the LMRPB allowing them to map the whole region (Wilson 2000i). Faithful to Geddes’ survey method, studies were done on each sector of the region (farming, parks, industry urban, recreation etc.)25. These studies identified crucial factors that needed to be dealt with by a regional plan26 and later contributed to the creation of the LMRPB’s proposed regional plan, Chance and Challenge (1963b)27. The regional plan provided a policy framework within which local plans and bylaws could be formulated, private actions guided and senior government activities co-ordinated. It envisioned “a series of cities in a sea of green - a valley of separate cities surrounded by productive countryside and linked by a regional freeway network” (LMRPB 1963b, 6). The LMRPB’s focus on doing and publicizing research of an educational had contributed to the development of a municipal and citizen body which understood the value of regional planning facilitating the eventual adoption of the plan in 1966 under the directorship of Victor Parker. Changes had been made to the Municipal Act in 1957 which made budget and official regional plans binding on all member municipalities if they received two-third approval from board members28.

Jim Wilson had emphasized keeping the plan “constantly current” (Pearson 2000i). This was a difficult task given the number of changes that would occur with respect to governance and planning in the region in the following decades. The first of these changes occurred following the introduction of regional district legislation in 1965. Despite the division of the Lower Mainland into four regional districts (Central Fraser Valley, Dewdney-Alouette, Fraser-Cheam and Fraser-Burrard (renamed the Greater Vancouver

25 Bob Williams, who shortly following graduation from the School of Community and Regional Planning at UBC went on to work for the LRM, claims to have learned all about Patrick Geddes from Jim Wilson (Williams 2000i).

26 Through their studies the LMRPB staff were able to provide a detailed account of the impacts of urban expansion. As a result, the LMRPB is credited for being the first to use the term "urban sprawl" to describe the haphazard development on the urban fringe (Hodge and Robinson 2001; Karlsen 2000i).

27 The main reports contributing to the 1963 regional plan included Land for Leisure (1961a), Industrial Land Prospects (1961b), Land For Farming (1962), and Land For Living (1963a). Many studies were done before these final four (Jim Wilson 2000i; Pearson 2000i).

28 The 1957 amendments to the Municipal Act had consolidated all acts relating to municipalities into one and included provisions requiring municipal delegates on regional planning boards to be elected members of municipal councils (Corke 1983, 98-99).
Regional District in 1968), the LMRPB attempted to keep previous regional planning efforts alive in the Lower Mainland. They continued to work with the support of the Lower Mainland municipalities until 1969 when conflict between the board, municipal government and the province emerged over the development of Robert’s Bank Port facility, the railway serving it and ancillary industrial lands. The Province had proposed a new railway along a route which endangered farmland and Boundary Bay’s internationally significant ecological areas. As well, it proposed to develop a back up facility on land that had been identified by the LMRPB in their 1966 regional plan to be inappropriate for development (LMRPB 1968a).

Committed to the work that had been done to have the 1966 regional plan unanimously adopted, the planners of the LMRPB decided to “get political” (Oberlander 2000i; Pearson 2000i). Encouraged by supporting municipalities, LMRPB staff did a number of studies and published Our Southwestern Shores which identified the impact of the proposed development on Boundary Bay (LMRPB 1968b). They also organized public meetings to discuss the provincial development plan (Pearson 2000i). The Province, seeing the LMRPB’s activities as threatening their power, dismantled the LMRPB. The LMRPB’s powers were split among the four regional districts in the Lower Mainland. To Pearson, who had been working with the LMRPB at the time, the province’s actions were in keeping with their attitudes toward the regional board from its beginning.

“The last thing on earth the province wanted was a regional plan. They had established legislation for it assuming that someone would paint a pretty picture and adopt it and it would have no teeth in it or no attempt at putting any teeth in it. The idea at that time was “that the queen could not be bound by her subjects” and that line was quoted back at us dozens of times by Municipal Affairs, by Highways and other ministries. It was just a constant battle there” (Pearson 2000i).

In Pearson’s opinion, the regional plan with its long range and short range plans had teeth. However, once the region’s planning power was split into four regional districts, despite the efforts of former LMRPB staff members to work with regional district staff to keep the plan current, the regional plan became “something foreign and unwanted by planners and politicians who were unfamiliar with it” and it “fell into
disrepair" (Pearson 2000i). It was not until over a decade later that the four regional districts in conjunction with the Ministry of Municipal Affairs got together to update the 1966 regional plan. This updated plan, *Plan for the Lower Mainland of British Columbia*, was adopted in 1980 (Central Fraser Valley Regional District et al. 1980).

### 3.4.3 Regional Planning Boards Beyond The Lower Mainland

Between 1949 and 1964 five more regional planning boards were set up in the other more populated regions in the province: the Capital Region (1952), Greater Nanaimo (1956), the South Okanagan and Central Okanagan (1963) and the Thompson Valley (1964). By 1965, an estimated 70% of the Province's population lived within regional planning areas (Crook and Stachelrodt 1976, 3). Success in instigating regional planning in areas outside the Lower Mainland was limited. In these planning regions municipal planning departments did not exist because there had been no municipal planners. There were no resources for base maps, less obvious growth pressures and little propensity for municipal cooperation. The Capital Region was the only one of the five to make significant steps toward initiating regional planning.

As with the LMRPB, Tom MacDonald was involved in setting up the Capital Region Planning Board (CRPB). Macdonald did all the organizational and political work needed to establish a foundation upon which Jim Wilson, as consultant to the Capital Region Planning Board could build upon (Wilson 2000i). Wilson began, with assistance of LMRPB staff, by preparing *The Capital Region Takes Stock* (1954), a general overview of where the region was and what the role of a regional board might be. Following the completion of that report the regional planning office was set up (1954) and Brahm Wiesman took over as director. The Capital Region Planning Board did not seek to follow the same path as the LMRPB in establishing a consultation process in conjunction with the creation of a plan. Regional planning in the Capital Region became more of a top-down exercise in master planning. *The Capital Region Plan*, released to the public in 1959 reflected a classic metropolitan approach to planning (Wiesman 2000i), something similar to the approach taken by Adams in New York but on much a smaller scale. Looking ahead 25 years,
the plan proposed possible growth patterns, basic transportation networks, regional parks, growth nodes and other regional services (CRPB 1959). Given the lack of municipal planners in the Capital Region the staff of the CRPB were on their own in convincing local politicians of the value of the plan (Masterton 1994, 44). *The Capital Region Plan* was not adopted. This was due in part to the fact that there appeared to be no immediate threat to livability therefore no need for a long-term regional plan (45). During Brahm Wiesman’s first encounter with the mayor of Victoria in 1954 “he emphatically stated that the city was complete and no planning was required” (Wiesman 2000i). While it had not been made official, the Capital Regional Plan, given that it was the only vision for the region, did act as a framework for future development. The CRPB’s 1963 review indicated that a number of proposals made in the Regional Plan had been acted upon29. Subsequent to the release of the plan, the CRPB shifted its focus to the development of a regional parks system and health care program, and providing planning advice to municipalities (Masterton 1994, 46).

Regional planning boards were essentially single purpose agencies like sewer and water boards which were dependent on municipal support and funding. Of the other regional planning boards formed, the Nanaimo Regional Planning Board was the only one to publish a regional plan. *Design for Nanaimo Regional Planning Area; A Factual Report to the Nanaimo Regional Planning Board* (1957) provided a review of existing and recommended land use and zoning and presented major road, parking and traffic plans (Christopherson 2000, 24). In the Interior there had been a growing interest in planning. However, strong attitudes of autonomy and a competitive political environment was not conducive to encouraging the degree of local government support needed to create and implement regional planning goals. “Implementation depended on moral suasion, and final authority lay with provincial governmental officials residing in Victoria” (Collier 1972, 31).

With municipalities having limited planning powers and mechanisms for comprehensive planning, growth, particularly beyond the province’s southwestern tip, was shaped by decisions made in Victoria.

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29 Some significant actions included transportation studies and parks proposals. It was also identified that “Some proposals will never be implemented due to conflicting development taking place contrary to the plan” (CRPB 1963, 3).
Given that the majority of subdivisions began along highways, the Department of Highway had approval authority over most development. Development approvals could be made despite potential negative environmental or economic impacts to the region, consideration for the servicing needs of increased residents or the potential impacts of forestry and other commercial activities on living conditions (Rees and Karlsen 1971, 4-5). There appeared to be a “pressing need for a regional body with some coordination and implementation powers at the regional level” (Collier 1972, 31). This would necessitate provincial leadership. In the meantime, the planning profession in BC was growing.

3.4.4 The School of Community and Regional Planning

The School of Community and Regional Planning (SCARP), founded by Peter Oberlander in 1953, provided the province with an academic base contributing to the emergence of the regional planning profession in the BC. SCARP trained planners who approached planning in a different way than it had been approached in BC in the past. Planning at the city level in Vancouver, the only planning department in the province at the time, had been largely influenced by British planners who espoused the British Town and Country approach to planning. Peter Oberlander was determined to introduce a more holistic approach. During his studies in planning at Harvard he had become well acquainted with the ideas of early regionalists such as Howard Odum, Lewis Mumford and Benton MacKaye. The influence of their ideas is reflected in the overarching focus of the school – the community and the region. To support this focus, Oberlander designed the school’s curriculum to be interdisciplinary and included courses from a variety of areas from engineering to ecology (Oberlander 2000i). The LMRPB became the training ground for a number of BC’s first locally trained planners. Some of SCARP’s early graduates went on to work with Jim Wilson and were able to transfer what they learned though their work with the LMRPB to other regional planning activities.
in the province as other planning bodies evolved\textsuperscript{30}.

When Brahm Wiesman became acting director of SCARP in the late 1960s, following five years as Director of the Capital Region Planning Board (1954-1959) and nine years with the City of Vancouver, he was determined to strengthen the regional planning focus of the school. His efforts to do so included the hiring of Doug Webster from the University of California at Berkley who had a background in geography and had done some planning work in the Peace River, as well as Clyde Weaver from University of California Los Angeles who had studied with well known regional planning scholar John Friedmann. While neither Weaver or Webster stayed for very long, Wiesman believes they had some influence on students who later went on to work in sectoral agencies throughout the province (Wiesman 2000i).

While the school’s focus on regional planning fluctuated over the years the “regional planning project” has remained a constant part of the curriculum. In the 1960s and 1970s the regional planning project provided students with the opportunity to study a specific region of the province and propose recommendations for future development. A number of regional studies were produced. These included: \textit{Planning For Regional Development in BC With a Special Application to Northern Vancouver Island} (1965); \textit{Planning For Regional Development on Vancouver Island} (1968); \textit{Planning for the Squamish-Lillooet Region: Fulfilling its Recreational Opportunities} (1970); and \textit{The Sunshine Coast Region: Planning For the Future} (1973). Commenting on the 1973 regional project SCARP professor Bill Rees contended that beyond the actual content of the study it was “tangible evidence of the continued commitment of the students and faculty of the School of Community and Regional Planning to relating [the] academic program to the pressing needs of the wider community” (SCARP 1973). Reflecting on the 1968 regional project Brahm Wiesman indicates that at the time there appeared to be no institutional support of the ideas presented “there were

\begin{footnotesize}
\textsuperscript{30}Dennis O’Gorman, Robert Williams, and Norm Pearson are three SCARP graduates who worked with Jim Wilson and went on to take influential positions in government and other planning bodies (elaborated upon later in this chapter). Jim Wilson guest lectured at the school on several occasions. Robert Williams and Norm Pearson both returned to teach courses at the school later on in their careers.
\end{footnotesize}
ministries, municipalities and crown agencies but nobody to bring it all together” (Wiesman 2000i)\textsuperscript{31}.

3.5 The Regional District System

Heading into the 1960s the province faced two sets of problems relating to regional settlement planning. One concerned a large portion of the province’s land mass which lacked municipal organization. The other concerned the remaining areas which contained the majority of the population (Cullingworth 1987, 55-56). In unincorporated areas, where some 250,000 people lived in scattered and isolated communities, the system of providing planning services through the Department of Municipal Affairs, was inadequate (Lane 1981, 1-2)\textsuperscript{32}. Communities were struggling with rapid growth which was spilling over municipal boundaries (Collier 1972, 32) and there was widespread concern for the lack of local input into the planning processes in unorganized areas (Crook and Stachelrodt Crook 1976, 3). In the urban areas, growth had encouraged the proliferation of single-purpose districts active in areas such as regional water and sewer utilities, regional parks, and regional garbage disposal. The lack of an agency to address the growth challenges of unorganized areas and the apparent lack of coordination of planning activities in urban areas was of great concern to Dan Campbell, who became Minister of Municipal Affairs in 1964.

3.5.1 Identifying the Need For a Regional District System

Upon his appointment as Minister of Municipal Affairs, Dan Campbell appeared determined to introduce a federated system of regional governance. He was “tired of pushing buttons in Victoria hoping something would happen 500 miles up the coast” (Lane 2000w). He was also concerned about what he saw

\textsuperscript{31}In recent years, under the guidance of professor Doug Aberley, the regional planning project has focussed on identifying the various social, cultural, economic, and environmental features of regions in BC through bioregional mapping. The regions in this case correspond with watershed boundaries as opposed to jurisdictional boundaries providing students with an alternative perspective on regions and regional planning.

\textsuperscript{32}The 1957 Local Services Act, replacing the provisions of the Town Planning Act with respect to unincorporated areas empowered the Minister of Municipal Affairs to establish regulations for zoning, subdivision and construction standards as well as organizing services in unorganized areas (Crook and Stachelrodt Crook 1976, 3)
to be the potential inefficiencies of the uncoordinated planning system evolving in the built up areas of the province. In his speech to the UBCM Convention in 1964 Campbell identified this concern. He questioned whether:

".. the functions of regional planning, regional water and sewer utilities, regional parks, regional garbage disposal, regional hospital needs, regional health and regional welfare [could] continue to be solved through a proliferation of single function regional boards with few if any definable inter-relationship" (Campbell in UBCM, 1964, 108).

Campbell made it clear that he did not want BC to experience the same "fragmented character of local government which [was] so apparent in the [State of Washington]" (109). Given his concerns and convictions, he was easily convinced of the value of regional districts (multi-purpose agencies consisting of a federation of municipalities in the urban regions, and municipalities and electoral areas in the hinterland).

In respect to addressing planning challenges in urban areas, there had already been some discussion around the introduction of metropolitan government. The 1957 Municipal Act had provided a mechanism for studying the question of metropolitan government. Although the legislation was general in intent it was clearly directed toward the Greater Vancouver area (Tennant and Zirnhelt 1972, 6-7.). A joint committee under the leadership of Hugo Ray was formed. After much study and deliberation, the Committee concluded that it was practical and feasible to place services such as water, sewage treatment, public health, land use planning for the metropolitan area and regional parks under one board. Despite some support for these recommendations, no immediate action was taken (Municipal Committee 1968, 7). However, it did provide some background for the regionalisation strategies to be pursued by Municipal Affairs under Campbell’s leadership.
3.5.2 Regional District Form and Function

Dan Campbell’s political commitment, combined with Deputy Minister of Municipal Affairs Everett Brown’s pragmatism, resulted in the creation of regional district legislation which would encourage evolution and adaption of regional governments to suit the different needs of the many regions throughout the province. The legislation, which was passed with unanimous approval in 1965, was constructed to be flexible enough to cover metropolitan areas as well as the rural areas. Regional districts were to be a vehicle for advancing political interests for the region as well as providing a framework for inter-municipal and sub-regional service delivery in partnership with municipalities. In rural areas where municipal government did not exist, regional districts were designed to be the local government of these areas providing land-use planning, and other critical services (Collier 1972, 3-4). From a rural perspective this was the first time rural interests were recognized by the province.

"...from a rural perspective the creation of regional districts was the starting place for recognizing that there was more to this province then the Capital and the Lower Mainland...[previously] we had been treated ...as an absence of mind by the central government. Regional districts were empowering" (Harker 2000).

The regional district boundaries were based on what appeared to be the most feasible set of existing administrative boundaries – school districts. Regional district boundaries would include two or more of the 70 school districts which covered the entire province. Regional districts were to be composed of representatives from both municipal and unincorporated areas. This provided a first time opportunity for municipal and rural representatives to sit down at a table together with equal status. Board members representing incorporated municipalities were to be municipal council members who had been appointed to the Regional District Board. Members from unorganized territories were to be directly elected to serve on the Regional District Board at the same time as the municipal elections were being held (Collier 1972, 34; Crook and Stachelrodt Crook 1976, 3-4). The first regional district, Comox Strathcona, was created shortly after
the legislation passed and included most of the minister’s riding. By 1967 all predefined Regional Districts, excluding the Stikine, had been established, each with an elected Board of Directors with members from rural areas and municipal councils (See map in Appendix C).

Regional Districts were not to be seen as another level of government. They were, in the eyes of their creators, a device for combining functions, not a political amalgamation. Their powers were limited to those granted by letters patent from the provincial government and their functions were determined by the municipalities. Provisions were made within the legislation to allow regional districts to “opt-out” of specific services (BC Municipal 1971, 6-7). Regional Districts were to evolve at their own speed and adapt to the needs of the region’s people. As UBCM Convention minutes suggest, most municipalities supported the regional district concept in the beginning, later endorsing regional district membership in the UBCM. In 1967, through the adoption of the Hospitals District Act, regional districts were given the responsibility for regional hospital financing (Christpherson 2000, 63). By 1971 voluntary functions of regional districts ranged from joint trunk-sewer and sewage disposal systems, water supply systems, to garbage disposal for member municipalities, to regional parks and recreation functions. Regional planning was made a mandatory function of regional districts in 1970. Regional plans and other types of land use instruments adopted by the board became land-use allocation by-laws which were binding on all members of the regional district if they achieved two-thirds support by the regional board. Local area settlement planning, referring to planning for electoral areas, was also made mandatory (Corke 1983, 102). It is unclear where the concept of the regional district came from. The published reports of the Ministry of Municipal Affairs do not make reference to theories of regional governance or other regional models except in identifying that BC is not like other jurisdictions and that BC solutions would have to be unique (Gawronski 1999, 10).

A major factor determining the ability of regional districts to effectively engage in regional planning

Regional Districts at this point were officially defined as “a government unit covering a large area of the province established to provide the means by which existing municipalities within a regions, in cooperation with unincorporated areas, can deal effectively with regional problems as well as furnish municipal-type services to small unincorporated communities and rural areas within a regional district” (British Columbia Ministry of Municipal Affairs in Corke 1983, 101)
was the distinction between “metropolitan regions” and “trading area regions”. In metropolitan regions the majority of the territory is under municipal jurisdiction. As a result, in these regions (the Capital Region and the Greater Vancouver Region) local settlement planning was not a major concern. In addition, given that most of the land in these regions in not crown owned, the municipalities had virtually full planning and land use control jurisdiction. However, in the trading area regions (26 of the 28 regional districts) the majority of the territory was unincorporated and the majority of the land was crown owned. Given the need for and lack of provincial support to implement regional plans, regional districts of “trading area region” tended to focus on community planning for unincorporated areas (Corke 1983, 102-103). Most of the “regional planning” in these areas was done by the province.

As Identified by Bill Lane in 1981:

“Since more than 90% of the province is crown land and since regional district boards are subordinate legislatures, effective regional planning at the regional district level is confined to property privately held, both within and without the boundaries of member municipalities. By necessity, much of what constitutes true regional planning is carried on by individual provincial ministries through the application of a system of policies, reserves, licences, land use corridors and the like” (Lane quoted in Corke 1983, 103).

In an effort to coordinate the planning functions of provincial ministries with regional district planning, a Technical Planning Committee (TPC) was set up for each regional district. TPCs consisted of practically all the provincial agencies involved in planning in a region. Where a federal counterpart was also involved in a service in the region its representatives were also invited to attend TPC meetings. The role of the TPCs was to provide input into local land use decisions. The existence of Technical Planning Committees in different parts of the province required that provincial agencies discuss with the regional district board all community planning, regional planning and environmental management issues within the scope of the
regional district. According to East Kootenays planner Alf Miller TPCs were:

"One of the finest tools the planner can have as on side. [TPC’s are] where the pipe dreams of the planner has to pass its test, where it is checked as to feasibility, not only from the planner’s standpoint, but also from every other point of view" (Alf Miller in PIBC 1968, 10).

In addition to providing advice to regional districts, TPCs provided a forum for different ministries to coordinate their regional planning activities. From their inception in the years following confederation provincial departments, particularly those with land-use and resource interests, had pursued independent policies and programs (Crook and Stashelrodt Crook 1976, 2). TPCs were a step toward reducing the fragmentation of the provincial planning system. It has been suggested that over time they may have evolved to effectively support regional district planning and provide for local influence on provincial decisions if they had not been removed in the early 1980s.

3.5.3 Tension Between Provincial Planning and Regional District Planning

In the decade following the introduction of the regional district system, there existed much tension between regional district planning and the provincial government ministries. Expressions of resistance from senior levels of government to regional district participation in regional planning came to a head in 1971. As Erik Karlsen, who was working as a consultant on the regional plan for the Regional District of the Cariboo, recalls:

"After the resource agencies ...... found out that the local government was trying to do regional planning they called in all regional districts in the province to a meeting in the Newcome Auditorium in the provincial

34 A letter sent from Premier Bennett’s office on June 2, 1969 ordered all provincial departments to cooperate with Technical Planning Committees in their regions. This was a way of identifying to some of the powerful agencies in government that they were not solely responsible to the province (Collier 1972, 36).

35 A number of SCARP faculty had also been involved with the creation of the regional plan for the Cariboo (Karlsen 2000i).
museum and one after another the director of planning and chief forester and others stood up and basically told the regional districts to stay out of planning...I remember my predecessor as director of regional planning, Don South, calling those of us involved in the Cariboo Plan into his office and asking us to cease and desist because we were riling up the resource agencies" (Karlsen 2000i).

Despite the resistance on the part of provincial ministries, many regional planners continued their regional planning activities (Karlsen 2000i). It appeared to them that by accepting the narrow role resource ministries had defined for them they would fail to address one of their basic purposes, “taking a comprehensive and coordinated approach to the management of land and resources” (Karlsen and Rees 1971, 11). Realizing this purpose was a challenging task given that the legislative framework within which provincial resource departments and regional districts operated did not allow regional district plans to have any influence over provincial ministry development and planning activities.

While obliged to prepare an official regional plan many regional districts failed to do so (Corke 1983, 108; Karlsen 2000i). To the extent that regional planning occurred in rural areas it took on a defensive role, focussing primarily on keeping urban development out of rural areas. It was naive to expect that regional districts could play a major role in resource planning for resource management given that they had authority over only 5% of the land. Lacking provincial support, regional district planning continued to be disconnected from provincial planning activities. A more realistic model wherein emphasis was placed on the interface between crown and municipal/regional district jurisdictions emerged in the 1990s.

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36 In a paper written for the Centre for Continuing Studies at UBC in 1972, SCARP professor William Rees and Regional Planner Karlsen put forward a set of recommendations proposing ways in which regional districts could play a more prominent role in environmental management in the province. They identified the need for regional districts to co-ordinate their planning efforts with provincial ministries by involving senior government in the early phases of regional district planning processes, encouraging the free exchange of information, and open dialogue between resource users, the various levels of government involved, special interest groups and individual citizens (Rees and Karlsen 1972).
3.6 The "Camelot Days" of Regional Planning in BC

To many involved in planning at the provincial level in the early 1970s, the change of government in 1972 from Social Credit to New Democratic Party (NDP) signalled the beginning of the "Camelot Days". Young, forward thinking planners were taking the place of retiring pre-war professionals. "A lot of the former LMRPB staff became senior officials in the new government... which was a sweet irony given that they had been destroyed by the previous government" (Williams 2000i)\(^{37}\). Newly elected members of cabinet were ambivalent toward the skills and loyalties of the Social Credit bureaucracy and eager to "give their own direction to the machinery of government" (Morley et al. 1983, 172)\(^{38}\). Senior cabinet ministers were provided a lot of space to pursue their initiatives (Tennant 1977). At the same time public pressure was encouraging change. A spirit of activism permeated the country under Trudeau's leadership. "It was a golden age of political and social activism where there was literally an army of young people let loose upon the country to espouse and push forward their view for social justice" (Marzari 2000i). With the growth of the activist and environmental community in BC the province began to experience some of its first large public protests over the harvest of timber in old growth forests\(^{39}\). These conditions contributed to a short term of experimentation in BC. There was a willingness to take risks in all kinds of ways and optimism about what might happen as a result. Integration and decentralization, land protection, and public participation were key areas of vision and experimentation contributing to the province's regional planning framework and process during this time.

\(^{37}\) Former LMRPB staff hired into the new bureaucracy included: Victor Parker who became head of Transit; Norman Pearson who became Deputy Minister of Lands, Forests and Water Resources; and Alastair Crerar who became the head of the Environment and Land-Use Committee.

\(^{38}\) One of the NDP's new cabinet members was former LMRPB planner Robert Williams. His responsibilities included the Ministry of Lands, Forests and Water Resources (1972-75) and Recreation and Conservation (1972-73).

\(^{39}\) One of the earliest controversies over forest land use concerned the Tsitika Valley where logging had been planned to proceed in 1973. Concerned citizens wanted to see the whole watershed preserved (Cafferata 1997, 54).
3.6.1 Encouraging Regional Economic Development

While there had been some attempt at coordinating planning decision making at the regional level through Technical Planning Committees, there was a general sense that "there ought to be more effective provincial government planning on a province wide and decentralized basis" (Wiesman 2000i) in order to address emerging economic, environmental and social challenges. It was recognized at this time that the province should take a more direct approach to addressing regional issues. During the early 1970s a number of ideas and initiatives encouraging the province to take on a stronger role in regional economic development and resource planning were introduced.

The need for decentralized economic development was reflected in a brief, entitled *Regional Development: A Framework For Provincial Policy*, sent by the Planning Institute of British Columbia (PIBC) to Minister Dan Campbell in April 1970. Noting the province's movement "into a 'post industrial' economy, in which the research, thinking, decision-making, recreation and tourist industries will pay a far greater role than they have in the past" (PIBC 1970,1), PIBC proposed a number of changes to the provincial planning system. These changes involved:

- Establishing closer cooperation between provincial departments.
- Dividing the province into eight Economic Regions (see map in appendix D).
- Preparing broad provincial development programmes for the eight regions
- Using development programs as a basis for policy formulation and decision making by the provincial departments, crown corporations, regional districts and municipalities\(^{40}\)

As identified in the brief, it was thought that dividing the province into economic regions would provide common administrative units for all government departments and close the gap between regional districts and the province. To overcome the pattern of scattered resource communities and support a more diverse economy, PIBC suggested that one or more growth centres be identified within each Economic Region in which the population would be concentrated. Decisions regarding the designation of transportation, and location of hospitals, colleges and other public facilities would revolve around these centres. The brief

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\(^{40}\) These point were summarized in the letter to Dan Campbell accompanying the 1970 brief (Pearson and Weisman 1970).
warned that if the province did not establish a better decision-making process and more explicit policies for provincial development it would become increasingly more difficult to meet the demands being placed on natural resources, government financial resources and the space in valleys and urban coastal regions as well as resolve conflicts over land and resource use and make choices regarding government spending on a “rational and equitable basis” (PIBC 1970, 1). This approach “coincided with a time when systems planning ideas were in vogue and planning generally had a good name” (Wiesman 2000i). The proposals made by PIBC “resonated with the minister [Dan Campbell]”(ibid). However, there appeared to no immediate effort to translate the proposals into action.

Another proposal for economic development during the early 1970s, more top-down than what had been proposed by PIBC, emerged from partnership between the federal government and the provincial government. The Federal Department of Regional Economic Expansion (DREE) had been established in 1969 in an effort by the federal government to address regional economic disparities. In 1973, DREE’s highly centralized approach to housing, municipal infrastructure, transportation, education and job creation had been modified to encourage provincial partnership in economic development. In 1974, agreements were signed between BC and DREE to undertake regional development planning for four regions of the province: the Northeast, the Mid-coast, the Central region and the Kootenays (see map in Appendix E)(Webster 1979, 46). Impacts of federal-provincial studies included provincial involvement in purchasing Columbia Cellulose (now Skeena Cellulose) in the Northwest41 and the development of Northeast Coal in the Northeast42.

41 The British Columbia Cellulose Company (BCCC) was created in 1973 as a major government planning tool for the revitalization of the forest based economy in the Northwest (Corke 1983, 14).

42 The Northeast Coal development took place in the early 1980s. It centred on the new resource community of Tumbler Ridge. The project included the construction of a deep-water terminal on Ridley Island near Prince Rupert to take northeast coal transported there by rail to Japan (Barman 1991, 326).
3.6.2 Integration of Decision Making

Another area in need of provincial attention was integrating land-use decision making. With the accelerated development of the post-war years numerous conflicts had arisen. These conflicts included: disagreements between local government and provincial agencies over objectives and priorities; conflicts between urban, industrial, transportation and energy developments on the one hand, and natural resources management on the other; and conflicts between exploitative resource management in agriculture, mining and forestry and more conservation oriented programs such as wildlife and environmental protection (Crook and Stachelrodt Crook 1976, 20; Cullingworth 1987, 359). Recognizing the need to address these conflicts a Land Use Committee of Cabinet was formed in 1970. This cabinet was formalized in 1971 with the passing of the Environment and Land-Use Act. The Act established the Environment and Land Use Committee (ELUC) which was chaired by the Minister of Lands, Forests and Water Resources, and initially included the Ministers of Agriculture, Mining and Petroleum, Recreation and Conservation, Economic Development, Health, Highways and Municipal Affairs (Dorcey 1987, 18). ELUC was a very powerful body given that it had the strength of the Environment and Land-Use Act behind it which, under Section 6, established that any order respecting the environment or land-use would have paramountcy over any other act or regulation in the province (Crook and Stachelrodt Crook 1976, 22).

In 1973, the Environment and Land-Use Committee Secretariat (ELUCS), the staffing body of the Cabinet Committee was created. The creation of ELUCS was due in part to Lands, Forests and Water Resources Minister Robert Williams’ strong will and commitment to a coordinated approach to environmental management. Williams had rejected the idea of creating a single “super department” responsible for environmental issues believing that an environmental approach should be a part of each ministry and that the approach introduced through ELUCS provided a better model for integration (Vancouver Sun May 4/1973; Wilson 1997, 80; Williams 2000i). The ELUCS team, comprised of many staff from the BC arm of the
Canadian Land Inventory Project⁴³ and led by former members of the LMRPB, developed a surveying and research approach similar to that used by the LMRPB. As Bob Williams recalls:

"Alastair Crerar who had been number two in the LMRPB was hired as the Executive Director of the Environment and Land Use Secretariat....They then contracted Dennis O’Gorman from the Federal Parks System, who had also done work with the LMRPB, to be the second in command. It was out of that we built a team of 70 interdisciplinary professionals⁴⁴......that was to my mind the best group of talent we had seen in modern history in this province because they were really, at the provincial level, beginning to think grandly at the larger region level. So we did many projects with this team and basically reached into that history of the LMRPB, yanked it up to the higher provincial level and used the same kind of skills" (Williams 2000i).

As Dennis O’Gorman reflects:

"The secretariat was the place to be in those days. It was so innovative. It was deliberately interdepartmental. It had a real emphasis on planning in the kind of integration way, that recreation, conservation, forests and mines, landscape and water resource all should be coming up with a comprehensive view rather than a view that just.. looked after their own particular interest" (O’Gorman 2000i).

ELUCS consisted of three technical groups: the Resource Analysis Unit, The Resource Planning Unit, and the Special Projects Unit. The regional planning undertaken by ELUCS concentrated on land and resource management with reference to such things as recreation, fish and wildlife, water resources, forestry, mining, agriculture and industrial and to a lesser extent urban development (Crook and Stachelrodt Crook 1976, 22-23). ELUCS engaged in a number of successful projects. Notable achievements include: the establishment of Guidelines for Coal Development; the formation of regional resource management committees; the formation of the modern Whistler; and the Slocan Valley Community Forest Management Project. The Guidelines for Coal Development, requiring industry to provide a coherent account of the development they were proposing, provided a means of assessing the impacts of coal development in the

⁴³The Canadian Land Inventory Program (CLI), established by the federal government in 1962 was a regional-scale survey of existing and potential land uses aimed at providing a basis for land use planning and resource management for agriculture, forestry, recreation and wildlife. The CLI was underway in BC by 1964 (Crook and Stachelrodt Crook 1976, 25-26).

⁴⁴By 1975 ELUCS had 90 established positions (Wilson 1997, 80).
Northwest. This approach was later applied to other areas\(^45\). The *Guidelines for Coal Development* lay the foundation for future provincial EIA legislation.

In 1974 seven Resource Management Regions, with corresponding Resource Management Committees made up of senior regional resource agency officials, were set up to co-ordinate the planning efforts of the departments represented by ELUC (Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Mines, Energy and Petroleum Resources, Ministry of Recreation). These regions, as identified in Appendix F, were based primarily on existing forest boundaries and boundaries for water administration. Resource Management Committees were "very important reference groups because they provided the secretariat with a field connection" (O’Gorman 2000i).

The formation of the modern Whistler and the Slocan Valley Community Forest Management Project are examples of how ELUCS integrated regional resource management with economic development. In Whistler, "the *Environment and Land-Use Act* was used to put an interim development freeze over the whole of Whistler while water and sewer studies and ski area potential studies were done" (O’Gorman 2000i). This was the beginning of conscious planning for tourism-based wealth generation in the region\(^46\). The Slocan Valley Community Forest Management Project was a project that aimed to decentralize the natural resources in forestry and encourage more local control in resource management planning\(^47\). In addition to these projects, ELUCS through a variety of studies, played a lead role in developing an environmental critique of

\(^{45}\)Rising demand and prices had contributed to renewed interest in the extraction of coking and thermal coal for international and domestic markets. Regional districts, municipalities and citizens wanted to ensure that coal development proceeded in a planned manner. ELUCS process included developing biophysical mapping to assess resource capabilities in the region and examining the community development opportunities in the area to accommodate potential population increase (ELUCS 1975, 18).

\(^{46}\)An interesting point to note given the 2010 Vancouver/Whistler Olympic Bid was that in 1974 some of ELUCS’ thinking around Whistler corresponded with an interdepartmental review of an Olympic proposal for the Garibaldi area which was seen to lack merit at that time given the underdeveloped state of the proposed venue (O’Gorman 2000i).

\(^{47}\)The project, while successful in engaging the public in socio-economic study of the area, lost momentum following the change of government in 1975 (Williams 2000i). As Hodge and Robinson indicate further planning for the Slocan Valley was done by the Central Kootenay Regional District. In 1983 the regional district published the *Slocan Valley Plan: A Land-Use and Economic Plan for the Slocan Valley*. The plan, the development of which had involved extensive public involvement, identified a number of areas the community wanted planners to pursue (Hodge and Robinson 2001, 157).
ELUCS was visionary as it had taken progressive steps toward integrating economics with the environment and encouraging inter-agency co-operation. In some areas connections had been made between industry, provincial government, environmental groups, first nations, municipalities and regional districts. However, it is important to recognize that through ELUCS’ activities the province maintained decision making control. ELUCS regional planning was in a sense decentralized provincial planning, and on the whole disconnected from local government planning processes. As the late Herb Verdi, who was a regional planner in the Interior at the time pointed out “when the Resource Managements Committees were formed the regional districts were [not invited to be a part of them]. much of the planning advice came from the Ministry of Municipal Affairs” (Verdi 2000w). In addition, the power of the Environment and Land Use Act to override existing land-use powers, “constituted a withdrawal of regional planning powers from the regional districts, made necessary by resource conflicts arising in the extensive crown lands of the province” (Lane quoted in Cullingworth 1984, 363).

3.6.3 Land Protection

The establishment of the Agricultural Land Reserve was one of two key activities in the early 1970s which focussed on land protection. The establishment of the Agricultural Land Reserve addressed urban growth problems that had been identified decades earlier. In his address to the BC Regional Conference of the Community Planning Association in Vancouver on October 2, 1953 Lewis Robinson had made it clear that BC’s agricultural land was limited, and under threat from urban expansion (Robinson, 1953). As had been identified in Pearson’s What Price Suburbia (1968), it seemed as if municipalities, through zoning changes in the 50s and 60s, had done all they could to open up new lands for development. In the 1970s an agricultural crisis was looming. In the Lower Mainland, where 20% of the most arable land in the province had already been lost to urban development, 3,000 acres were being consumed annually (Petter 1985, 5).
Following the election of the NDP, David Stupich, a long-time supporter of farmland preservation, was appointed Minister of Agriculture. By circumventing traditional bureaucratic processes, he pushed ahead to have agricultural legislation passed. Andrew Petter speculates that due to "the absence of a coordinating mechanism (in the NDP government), it is entirely possible that Barrett and his cabinet colleagues, unless they paid particularly close attention to the newspapers, were not aware of what Stupich was doing" (Petter 1985, 10). A first major step was to place a freeze on subdivision in agricultural land until agricultural legislation was passed. This was facilitated through Section 6 of the Environment and Land Use Act.

Due to political sensitivity around agricultural preservation, drafting the agricultural legislation was a challenging task. It was not clear what form the legislation should take. Further complicating the task of drafting the legislation was the split that existed in cabinet regarding the issue of compensation. Stupich argued in favour of compensating farmers for freezing development on their land while Williams argued that compensation was not necessary. The legislation underwent many revisions, some including compensation and others not. Bill Lane, lawyer for the City of Richmond, was called upon to help revise the final draft of the Land Commission statute. The final draft which went to cabinet did not support compensation. The passing of the Land Commission Act in April 1973 establishing the British Columbia Land Commission (later the Agricultural Land Commission (ALC)), represented the success of values supporting preservation of lands for public good over those which focus on individual economic gain.

The Land Commission had the power to designate agricultural zones which became known as Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR). The agricultural zones were mapped out by the regional district boards, based on data from the Canada Land Inventory (Corke 1983, 16). In addition to overseeing the preservation of agricultural land, the Land Commission was initially responsible for the preservation of parkland, land banks and greenbelts. However, amendments made to legislation in 1977 removed responsibilities for parkland, land banks and greenbelt preservation and the Land Commission Act was renamed the Agricultural

\footnote{Given Bill Lane's active participation with CPAC "he was by far the most able solicitor in the province in terms of these issues" (Williams 2000w).}
Land Commission Act (18).

The establishment of the ALR contributed to the regional planning system in BC in a number of ways. First, through lengthy consultation processes undertaken by the ALC to designate land as Agricultural Land Reserve the issue of greenspace preservation was brought into the public light. In addition to agricultural preservation it started making people think about rural resources, habitat and transportation planning (Runka 2000i). Second, the mapping of agricultural lands provided base maps for other planning processes throughout the province. In some parts of the province this was the first time planners became aware of the size and population distribution in their region (Verdi 2000i). Third, by bringing a halt to the subdivision of agricultural lands, the ALR has also served as de facto urban growth management/containment boundaries.

The second significant action contributing to land protection during the early 1970s was the establishment of the Islands Trust in 1974. Ultimately, through subsequent amendments, the Islands Trust provided residents of islands in Howe Sound, Haro Straight and the Gulf of Georgia as far north as Denman and Hornby Island with authority for land-use control. The Gulf Islands had been overwhelmed by development and subdivision in the early 1960s following the 1963 implementation of a daily ferry service to many of these islands. In addition, with the increase of population in Vancouver and Victoria, and the strong economy there was a higher demand for summer residences on the islands. Being in provincially designated “unorganized territories” the islands lacked zoning and subdivision bylaws. Concerns arose over water quality, sewage disposal, resource use and environmental quality.

The provincial government implemented a 10-acre subdivision minimum in 1969, using the Local Services Act community planning area provisions, and established a steering committee to examine problems affecting the Gulf islands, islands in the Georgia Strait and surrounding waters. In 1971, the impacts of growth on the Gulf Islands were measured through the Gulf Island Recreational Land Simulation project.

49 Under the Municipal Act the Gulf Islands were the responsibility of seven different regional districts which had not exercised their powers (Corke 1983, 32).
(GIRLS). GIRLS, which had involved Peter Oberlander and two other professors from UBC, was one of the first attempts to “mix technology with interdisciplinary study and public participation” (Oberlander 2000i). This modelling activity contributed to the development of a proposal to establish an “Islands Trust”, a small board of trustees both provincially appointed and elected from the islands, to assume responsibility for “land use, future growth patterns, control of development, industrial, recreational and commercial activity, as well as parks and open space, designations” (Advanced Natural Resources Management Seminar 1989, 16-17). The Islands Trust was established in 1974 following the passing of the Islands Trust Act. As stated in the Act the object of the Trust was to “preserve and protect, in cooperation with municipalities and the government of the Province, the trust area and its unique amenities and environment for the benefit of the residents of the Trust area and of the province generally” (19). In serving to “preserve and protect” the natural resources of the Gulf Islands, the Islands Trust has been the source of a number of innovative public participation processes (Essig 2001i).

3.6.4 Public Participation

In response to the need to address issues related to water, land and air pollution and habitat destruction, public participation in planning processes was on the rise throughout Canada during the early 1970s. At this time public participation was beginning to emerge in different areas of planning in BC. The most notable public participation process in BC in the early 1970s was the Livable Region Process of the GVRD directed by Harry Lash (1970-1975). A landmark seminar in the GVRD in the early 1970s saw the emergence of the key concept for future directions for planning in the region “livability and the livable region would be the goals, and the management of growth and change in an ongoing way would be the operational concept” (Lash 1976, 2). To Lash, the first step to achieving these goals was to identify what livability meant to the people of the region by directly engaging the public in the planning process. From Ken Cameron’s

Lash had his first experience with involving citizens in the planning process in Toronto in 1957 and 1959 as staff of the Toronto Planning Board (Lash 1976, 24).
perspective, who later saw the GVRD through its second livable regional strategic planning process, this was the right approach to take given the activism in the region at the time and a number of emerging issues.

"In the early 1970s there was a lot of activism, freeways were a big issue 51, airport noise was a big issue and [Lash] needed to get on the ground and get rooted in things. I think if [he] had asked the municipalities what they wanted in a plan they would have told him basically they didn’t want a plan. So [Lash introduced] a public and consultative approach and the planners in the municipalities bought into that process" (Cameron 2000i).

The public was engaged at a number of stages of the planning process. Nine citizen policy committees were created and took a central role in the development of the Livable Region Strategy. The livable region process succeeded in initiating dialogue between politicians, planners and the public. This contributed to the creation of a framework for developing a transit-oriented transportation system, the creation of regional town centres, and improvements to environmental quality and regional parks. These interests were included in *The Livable Region Plan 1976-1986: Proposals to Manage the Growth of Greater Vancouver* (1975).

The Livable Region Plan proposal was never formally adopted by the GVRD board. Instead, twenty-two board resolutions effectively agreeing to the strategy were passed. Ken Cameron, who joined the GVRD in 1978, believes that not adopting the plan as board policy was one factor constraining its implementation. Other factors included: the lack of support from a number of provincial officials who believed that the role of the GVRD was to administer the *Official Regional Plan for the Lower Mainland Planning Area* (1966); and the fact that following the publication of the Livable Region Plan proposal, a number of those who had been committed to the process, including Lash, “dropped out of the picture” (Cameron, 2000i). The kind of enthusiasm and support which had fuelled the production of the regional planning proposal did not appear to continue into the implementation phase. Despite this, the efforts of those involved in the livable region

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51 It has been acknowledged by a number of contributors to this study that the freeway debate in Vancouver was a key issue encouraging public interest and participation in urban and regional planning. The issue of freeways in the downtown encouraged Mike Harcourt, who later as premier played key role in the rebirth of regional planning in the 1990s, to get involved in urban planning issues. In 1969/70 Harcourt was a lawyer for the Chinese community which wanted to stop the development of freeways in their neighbourhood (Harcourt 2000i).
planning process had provided both a vision and a process which would help guide future planning in the GVRD.

### 3.7 Reflections

The end of the first phase of regional planning in BC follows the change of government from the NDP to Social Credit in 1976. The province at this time was very different from what it had been immediately following Second World War. The post-war years had been a time of reconstruction, vision and innovation. Clear patterns of growth and development had been set. Toward the end of this period the economies of Vancouver and Victoria had entered a tertiary phase while the dependence of resource regions on resource extraction for export had intensified. The impacts of rapid growth and development had encouraged the implementation of different approaches to regional settlement and regional resources planning. Owing to the efforts of a number of committed individuals, BC experienced the introduction of regional boards and regional districts. To address resource issues we saw the introduction of the Agricultural Land Reserve, the establishment of the Islands Trust and the introduction of integrated resource management. These, and other events identified in Table 3.1, had contributed to the establishment of frameworks and foundations upon which regional planners, and planning advocates could continue to build.

Given the continued distance between local government planning and provincial planning, and confusion and uncertainty over the role of regional boards and regional districts it was clear that BC’s planning framework would need more attention. While regional boards and regional districts in the province’s metropolitan regions, particularly the Lower Mainland, had begun to advance the regional planning agenda, local government support in other regions was lacking. Some municipalities felt threatened by what they interpreted as another level of government. In the face of the discontent of provincial ministries, the authority of the regional plan was brought into question. Lack of ministerial interest beyond their own agendas had prevented co-ordination with regional planning boards, regional districts and with each other.
There was, as Harry Lash identifies, a need for “a complementary strategy: a community-regional-provincial-federal-municipal planning process and strategy” in order for livability to be achieved and sustained (Lash 1976, 86). The task of addressing the deficiencies in BC’s planning system became the responsibility of the Social Credit government of Bill Bennett (son of WAC Bennett).
### Figure 3.1

**Phase I: Foundations and Frameworks (1940s-1970s)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GOVERNMENT</th>
<th>SIGNIFICANT LEGISLATION AND EVENTS</th>
<th>THEMES</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Late 40s -1970s</strong> Building of bridges, highways, expansion of railway</td>
<td>- Opening Up the North</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>1946</strong> Establishment of the Community Planning Association of Canada</td>
<td>- Megaprojects</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>1948</strong> Establishment of regional planning boards through amendment to the <em>Town Planning Act</em></td>
<td>Introduction of Regional Planning Boards</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>1949</strong> Lower Mainland Regional Planning Board established</td>
<td>The emergence of the planning profession in BC</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>1949-1964</strong> six regional planning boards were formed</td>
<td>Regional district planning begins</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>1952</strong> <em>The Lower Mainland Looks Ahead</em> (first regional plan in BC)</td>
<td>Tensions arise between Regional Districts/Municipalities and Province</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>1953</strong> The establishment of the planning program at UBC</td>
<td>Land protection</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>1957</strong> <em>Town Planning Act</em> repealed, notion of making regional plans official was added to legislation</td>
<td>Integrated resource management</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>1965-1969</strong> Regional Districts established under legislation</td>
<td>Public participation in planning</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>1966</strong> <em>Official Regional Plan for the Lower Mainland Planning Area</em></td>
<td>Regionalism revitalized</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>1968</strong> Regional planning boards eliminated regional planning for the Lower Mainland transferred to the four regional districts following “Roberts Bank Dispute”</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>1971</strong> Provincial ministries formally express discontent over regional district planning activities</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>1971</strong> <em>Environment and Land Use Act</em>, Environment and Land Use Committee formed</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>1972</strong> Agricultural Land Reserve established</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>1973</strong> Environment and Land Use Committee Secretariat established</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>1974</strong> <em>Islands Trust Act</em></td>
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Chapter Four: Phase 2 - Setback and Challenge

"A lot of people experienced the 1980s as the black hole of regional planning in BC" (Karlsen 2000).

4.1 Introduction

The second phase in BC's regional planning history, which begins in the late 1970s and spans the 1980s, is most clearly identified with the rescinding of regional district planning powers in 1983 and other dramatic changes to the provincial planning system which had built up during the post-war years. There are also a number of other events considered to be important to the history of regional planning during this phase. This phase can be broken down into two main parts, the Bennett administration (1976-1986) and the Vander Zalm administration (1986-1991). Key elements of BC's regional planning history emerging during the Bennett Administration include: the review of regional districts beginning in 1977; proposals put forward by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs to reform the province's planning system; and dramatic cuts to the province's regional planning system. As will be identified, the challenges of this period strengthened the resolve of planners to seize every opportunity to move ahead with regional planning. In the Lower Mainland this contributed to the emergence of a cooperative regional planning approach providing a "glimmer of hope" in an otherwise dark period. Some small contribution to regional planning in BC were made during the Vander Zalm years. These included: a second review of regional districts; the introduction of regional district development services legislation; the introduction of waste management legislation; and the establishment of a policy statement for the Islands Trust.

Following a look at forces and factors contributing to growth and change in BC during this second phase of regional planning in BC, this chapter will identify and discuss events contributing to the evolution of regional planning direction, policy and process under the Bennett and Vander Zalm administrations.
4.2 Economic Restructuring and Increasing Globalization

Heading into the 1980s, BC was swept up by the tide of global change. A series of changes beginning in 1970s contributed to the emergence of a new era of global political relations. These changes included: the collapse of the Bretton Woods agreement in 1971 and the shift to floating exchange rates in 1973; the OPEC oil crises of 1973 and 1979 and the subsequent world recessions; post-fordism and the emergence of “flexible” specialization; the growth of multinational corporations; the globalization of commodity markets; and the integration of financial markets through improved telecommunications. International trade was increased through the lifting of trade barriers. Improvements in information and transportation technologies were contributing to new market relationships. As far as the production and transportation of goods was concerned, the world was shrinking. Large companies sought the most cost-effective locations for the extraction of raw materials and the production of goods, increasingly in regions in the developing world. Multinationals were consuming local business and placing communities, cities, states and nations in positions of dependence. In BC during the 1980s, the four largest fish companies accounted for four-fifths of the salmon canned in the province. Ten large integrated forest companies controlled between 80-93 per cent of the resource in each of the province’s seven forestry districts. Seven of these ten companies were owned outside BC, half of them outside of Canada. Five percent of the manufacturers produced ninety percent of the total product value of goods (Barman 1991, 325).

Two influences of global change important to the story of growth and change in BC regions during the 1980s were urban restructuring and the introduction of new methods of production in the resource sector. Urban restructuring, marked by shifts in capital and labour from traditional manufacturing to service industries and technologically intensive products, was reflected in the City of Vancouver’s focus on international finance, producer services, tourism and air travel and culture and higher education (Barnes et al., 1991). With the help of provincial government investment in projects such as Expo 86, Skytrain and the Vancouver Trade and Convention Centre, Vancouver rose in prominence as an international centre for
business, trade and tourism and a key player in the growing economy of the Asia-Pacific Region. “More than ever Vancouver looked outward to the world rather than to the province from which it derived its sustenance” (Barman 1991, 338).

Provincial development interest was turning more toward the provincial centre. Unlike his father’s government, which had a large percentage of its support from the province’s hinterland community, the government of William Bennett had a strong political base in Vancouver. Bill Bennett had been criticized for not giving representation in the cabinet to the area “from McBride to Prince Rupert” (MLA Cyril Shelford quoted in Barman 1991, 324). By the end of the 1980s the majority of the head offices of the province’s major business corporations were located in Vancouver. Urban centres outside the province’s southwestern tip, lacking Vancouver’s advantages of scale, location, and agglomeration economies, were unable to compete on an equal basis. For example, in 1988 the tonnage passing through Prince Rupert, the province’s second major port, had fallen to less then 20 per cent of that passing through Vancouver (Barman 1991, 338).

Vancouver continued to maintain its role as the service centre of the expansive hinterland from which it derived its sustenance. Forestry and mining were the two principal staples industries. The direction of public funds into coal development in the Northeast was a reflection of the province’s attempt to tap the wealth that was being generated across the Pacific Ocean. Hundreds of millions of dollars were spent on the development of a railway branch line to Tumbler Ridge and upgrades to the CN line from Prince George to Prince Rupert as well as construction of a coal port at Ridley Island (near Prince Rupert) to help transport coal to Asia to satisfy Japan’s growing demand. Forestry accounted for more than half of the exports originating from the province (Barman 1991, 326). Another major project of this period was the building of the Coquihalla Highway as a means of opening up the tourist industry of the interior (Barnes et al. 1992, 189). By the late 1980s tourism had become the province’s second largest industry (Barman 1991, 331).

While all parts of the province were seriously effected by the world-wide recession of the early 1980s the impacts were felt most dramatically by hinterland communities. During the 1980s a large number of large resource companies in BC collapsed (Barman 1991, 325). As resource companies began to rebuild they
introduced new more efficient modes of production. Replacing labour intensive fordist methods of production were more technological post-fordist methods. These changes reduced the amount of jobs available in rural communities and forced some communities to seek alternative and less lucrative economic development opportunities. For example, threatened by market depression in the early 1980s MacMillian Bloedel was forced to shut down its sawmill in Chemainus, laying off about 650 workers. When the new mill, organized around new technological methods of production, opened in 1985 there were only 145 jobs available. To address high unemployment the community of Chemainus focused on developing their tourism industry (Barnes et.al. 1992, 184-185; McGillivray 2000, 101). Despite high rates of unemployment in 1983/84 Vancouver and Victoria experienced healthy population growth through the 1980s. The rest of the province, with the exception of the Okanagan and Eastern Vancouver Island, experienced population declines as a result of reduced demands for resources and changes made to the resource industries (McRay 1997, 12).

As in the first phase of regional planning in the province, the 1980s brought with it different sets of planning challenges. As Vancouver began to take on a more prominent role on the international stage, growth and development at the edge of the city centre was expanding bringing with it increased congestion, pollution and environmental degradation. In resource regions environmental conflicts were intensifying. By the mid-1980s economic divisions between the southwestern corner and the rest of the province were becoming more acute suggesting the need for further attention to regional economic development.

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52Vancouver’s rate of population growth through the 1980s was more than twice that of the rest of the province (4.1% compared with 1.7% between 1984-1987) (Barman 1991, 338).
4.3 The Bennett Years

In terms of regional planning, the Bennett first terms in office were a time of review, reflection and proposal of alternatives. Wide scale criticism of the regional district system had stimulated a regional district review beginning in 1977. The recognized need for a more integrated planning system led to the proposal for anew provincial planning system. No major changes were made until Bennett’s third term in office at which time focus on restraint and the view of regional planning as an unnecessary and even obstructionist activity contributed to rescinding of regional district planning powers and eliminating TPCs and ELUCS. It is at this point that the province entered its “dark days” of regional planning.

4.3.1 Regional District Review

There were a number of factors stimulating the need for a regional district review. As identified in the previous chapter, toward the end of the 1970s the role of regional districts in regional planning was still not clearly understood. The province had downloaded a number of planning responsibilities to regional districts. Regional districts were also obliged to plan around the initiatives of crown corporations. Many municipalities saw regional plans to be a threat to their autonomy. In their subservient role in relationship to provincial planning and with regional district planning never really taking off beyond the two metropolitan areas, regional districts had become a misunderstood form of governance and the subject of intense public scrutiny. Regional Districts were accused of being “Too powerful, bureaucratic and expensive” (Vancouver Sun May 25/1977), “Inflexible and unresponsive to the needs of the people they serve” (Province, June 30/1976), “undemocratic and...not functioning well” (Vancouver Sun, Oct./1975). In addition, with the increasing effectiveness of regional district planning and land use controls in metropolitan areas, regional districts had become an unwanted obstruction to the development programs of the government of the day.

53 As identified by Brahm Wiesman in 1982, “as regional districts and land use controls become increasingly effective the annual Social Credit conventions repeatedly adopted resolutions to disband regional districts” (Wiesman in Corke 1983, 110).
Responding to criticism and concerns, Social Credit Minister of Municipal Affairs Hugh Curtis, a former mayor of Saanich and chair of the CRD, commissioned a Regional District Review Committee (RDRC) to undertake a full review of regional districts. The study of the Regional District Review Committee, which became known as the Farmer’s Commission, was the first comprehensive review of regional districts since their incorporation. The Committee’s report issued in October 1978 clearly reaffirmed many of the observations made by representatives of regional district boards, regional planners and academics (Crook and Stachelrodt Crook 1976; Corke 1983). The committee summarized their thoughts as follows:

"...major problems stem from a general lack of commitment to the regional district concept by the Provincial Government over the years, a lack of support from the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, a lack of cooperation by other ministries and their field agencies, a lack of specific responsibilities set out for regional government, a lack of understanding by the general public and, unfortunately, in some cases, poor performance on the part of regional districts" (RDRC 1978, 13).

Following extensive review, including consultation in 26 communities, and the contribution of all regional districts, fifty-two recommendations were made which ranged from encouraging universities and colleges to examine their planning curricula to ensure they meet the needs of regional planning officers, to providing regional districts with additional responsibilities that would include participating with the province in resource management and development planning, to the introduction of a provincial planning act to consolidate planning related statutes (RDRC 1978). With the cabinet shuffle in 1979 many of the RDRC’s recommendations were placed on the shelf. A handful of these recommendations would resurface in the draft Planning Act and subsequent Land Use Act proposed by the next minister of Municipal Affairs, Bill Vander Zalm.
4.3.2 A Proposed Provincial Planning Framework

The annual report of the Ministry of Municipal Affairs in 1978 suggested the need for a complete overhaul of provincial, regional and municipal land and resource planning in the province (Corke 1983, 117). Bill Vander Zalm, who became Minister of Municipal Affairs in 1979, believed problems encountered as a result of the fragmentation and complexity of the province’s planning system could be addressed with a single piece of legislation. His approach was first identified in *The British Columbia Planning Act: A Discussion Paper*, which was introduced for public discussion in 1980. Vander Zalm went to great lengths to promote the Planning Act and elicit feedback from a wide range of interest groups including municipalities, regional districts, professional and industrial organizations 54. Failing to survive the rigours of debate a scaled down version was introduced to the legislature in December 1981 entitled *Bill 9: The Land Use Act*. For a number of reasons, this bill was not advanced. The *British Columbia Planning Act: A Discussion Paper and Bill 9: The Land Use Act* are discussed below.

The purpose of the draft Planning Act was to provide “a more efficient, fair and easily understood system of planning for British Columbia.” (BC Municipal 1980, 1). To Vander Zalm this meant doing away with what he saw to be “overlappings and duplications in the bureaucracies and their regulations” by providing a single legislative framework for planning and regulation in the province (UBCM 1980a, 113) 55. He wanted to streamline the development process, improve political accountability and enhance public access to the planning process. The Planning Act Discussion Paper outlined a hierarchical approach to planning whereby official community plans would conform with regional plans and regional plans would conform with provincial goals and objectives. Provincial goals would be identified in provincial policy statements, a

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54 According to Gary Harkness who was working of the Ministry of Municipal Affairs at the time, Vander Zalm’s promotion of the draft Planning Act had included a twenty minute promotional video (Harkness, 2000i).

55 Given the piecemeal and incremental development of the system there seemed to exist no sense of unified provincial direction. The system was comprised of: “...twenty-three provincial ministries, twenty-eight technical planning committees, seven regional resource management committees, an environment and land use technical committee and a Cabinet committee. These bodies [had] ambiguous and sometimes conflicting mandates in the land planning area” (Harkness 1981 in Corke 1983, 46).
coherent collection of provincial level ministry and crown corporation goals. The objectives of ministries and agencies at the provincial and regional level were to be co-ordinated by the Environment and Land Use Committee. An inter-ministry planning committee was to be appointed to guide the process and develop procedures for provincial planning at the regional level. The existing 28 technical planning committees would be replaced by 7 or 8 Regional Coordinating Committees. These regional co-ordinating committees would consist of provincial and regional district staff appointed by the Environment and Land Use Committee. They would have the responsibility of preparing provincial regional plans, coordinating settlement and resource planning at the regional level and assisting local planning. Recognizing the differences between urban and resource regions, in at least two areas of the province the regional co-ordinating committee was to be replaced by an urban regional committee. As opposed to extending regional district functions to areas of resource management, as proposed by the Regional District Review, the discussion paper encouraged integrating planning at the provincial level. Local governments would still be responsible for land use planning in their jurisdictions but would be required to conform with objectives identified in provincial policies (BC Municipal, 1980).

As Wiesman (1980) pointed out in his critique of the Planning Act, all authority for planning, with a few exceptions, would flow from the top down. This top-down approach appeared to be the antithesis of the collaborative and participatory approach to regional planning that had been evolving in the GVRD. The Planning Act proposal was seen by the ministry to be a more realistic process for many non-metropolitan regions where “the environment was anti-planning” (Harkness 2000i). While an integrated provincial planning system was welcomed by a number of municipalities and professionals, the proposals made in the draft Planning Act were not well received (Corke 1983, 26; Harkness 2000i). Key concerns included insufficient avenues of expression of regional interests, the potential lack of political accountability, loss of local government autonomy, and inefficiency of the proposed approvals process (Weisman 1980; UBCM 1980b; Corke 1983, 125-126). To those involved in local and regional planning at the time there appeared to be little response from Vander Zalm to these and other criticisms he had received regarding the planning
act proposals (Corke 1983, 127).

The proposed “Land-Use Act”, emerging from revisions of the proposed Planning Act, contravened a number of the concerns expressed but had the general support of the development industry (Corke 1983, 127). Lacking support of the municipalities and other professionals, Vander Zalm had taken a different tangent with the revision of the proposed planning act by establishing a development industry committee to review the land use and regulatory system in the province. Resulting from this process was a “much narrower piece of legislation than that originally debated” (131). The Act, reflecting growing development industry concerns, was almost entirely geared to local official plans, local government land use regulations, subdivision control, plans cancellation, building regulations, charges, levies and fees.

The draft Land Use Act, like its predecessor, was immediately criticized. The UBCM’s major concerns included: the broad brush treatment given to the planning responsibilities of the provincial government; the potential for the views and interests of locally elected officials to be ignored; and the omission of the urban regional committee which had been in the first draft of the legislation (UBCM 1982). According to the draft Land Use Act, regional districts were to remain intact. However, except in Greater Vancouver and the Capital Region they would lose their regional planning function to regional co-ordinating committees (Corke 1983, 121). The final version of the Land-Use Act, introduced to the legislature as Bill 9, included provisions to abolish the regional planning functions of regional districts as, from the Minister’s perspective, they appeared to duplicate the planning functions of local governments. 56

Despite Vander Zalm’s enthusiasm and confidence that the final draft of Bill 9 would be accepted, it was rejected by cabinet. Resistance from other provincial ministries to Municipal Affairs’ proposals was a major force contributing to the demise of the proposed Land Use Act. The Act had “imposed obligations and commitments on the part of other agencies which powerful ministries such as Highways and Environment

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56 In the Face of Bill 9 the GVRD went about identifying a strategy to enable them to retain their role in metropolitan planning. They were presented with three options by the province. Each of these failed to recognise the value of shared decision making between regions and member municipalities (Corke 1983, 137).
were unwilling to accept... In retrospect it was naive to think that a maverick minister that wasn’t part of
the inner cabinet circle could lead this and at the same time come up with legislation that was going to
constrain some powers that the big dirt resource ministries could exercise” (Harkness 2000i). As Erik
Karlsen, who was working in the Ministry of Municipal Affairs at the time, recalls, it was the last minute
adding of a clause to remove the Islands Trust that secured the defeat of the Land Use Act. Responding to
criticism regarding the Islands Trust, Vander Zalm added a clause to remove the Islands Trust into the final
draft of the Land Use bill just prior its introduction to cabinet. Once this was made public, protesters stormed
the legislature. Vander Zalm’s legislation “went out the door” (Karlsen 2000i). Vander Zalm, who later
criticized cabinet as being “gutless” for not proceeding with the legislation was soon removed from Municipal
Affairs and made Minister of Education (Gawthrop 1996, 25; Karlsen 2000i).

4.3.3 Entering The “Dark Days” of Regional Planning in BC

Following the re-election of the Social Credit government in 1983 further attention was given to
addressing the complexities and inefficiencies of the provincial planning system. This would lead to dramatic
legislative changes which, instead of contributing to a more effective provincial planning system, would set
the province back. Following the election in 1983 Bill Ritchie was appointed Minister of Municipal Affairs.
He appeared committed to addressing what he saw to be redundancies and overlaps in the province’s planning
framework. Of particular interest to him was the idea of removing the planning function of regional districts.
This preference appeared to be in line with the general theme of the government of the day – to reduce
spending in areas that appeared, from the government’s perspective, to be unproductive.

Bill Bennett, upon re-election, introduced a program of restraint. His program, which included
reducing expenditures in various levels of government and public services, followed the dominant political
ideology of the time. Britain, under Margaret Thatcher, and the United States, under Ronald Reagan, had
both experienced dramatic cuts to public service and planning. Part of Bill Bennett’s plan was to eliminate
public service positions that were seen to have become “unnecessary in light of changing market conditions”
As Erik Karlsen recalls, emphasis was placed on removing positions held by professionals like planners, sociologists and economists, which, from the government’s perspective, did not provide direct services to the people of the province (Karlsen 2000).

4.3.4 Regional Planning Powers Rescinded

A set of amendments to the Municipal Act, introduced to the provincial legislature in July 1983, marked a huge turning point in BC’s regional planning history. The legislation (another Bill 9, like the Land Use Bill) removed from regional districts their power to enact and enforce regional plans, collect data and assemble planning information for their own purposes. In addition, it provided for the cancellation of all regional plans and official regional plans. From Bill Ritchie’s perspective issues addressed through regional plans could be more efficiently addressed at the provincial and municipal level through co-ordinated development and approval of individual official settlement plans and official community plans (Ritchie in UBCM 1983, 91). Bill 9 also eliminated Technical Planning Committees which were seen by Ritchie to “have become redundant and...another cost taxpayers should not be asked to bear” (Ritchie in UBCM 1983, 91). Overall, amendments to the Province’s Municipal Act were intended to support economic recovery by encouraging development through the application of deregulation principles. Around this time Regional Resource Management Committees were also dissolved as a cost saving measure and the number of resource management regions was reduced from eight to five. ELUCS had been dissolved in 1980. A subcommittee of deputy ministers and a variety of land-related ministries continued to function until 1983 (Cullingworth 1987, 360).

To add insult to injury “not only did [Ritchie] want to abolish regional planning but he wanted to abolish regional planners” (Harkness 2000). Ritchie had drafted legislation, which read “By December 31st, 1983 no planner shall be employed by a regional district. Fortunately it didn’t pass” (ibid.). However, Ritchie continued to do the best he could within his power to reduce the influences of the planning profession. The planners resisted.
"He wanted us to change the name of the [planning] branch. I said well you can change the name of the branch but I am still a planner. So we changed the name of the branch and everyone around the province became development services branches but we carried on as planners" (Karlsen 2000w).

The opposition party and some members of the GVRD board believed that a dispute over development on the Spetifore lands in Delta had been the final step toward introducing the legislation rescinding the regional planning powers of regional districts (Harcourt 2000i; Blencoe in Hansard 1983, 478). This dispute clearly illustrated the tensions that had continued to build between different levels of government over the authority of the regional plan. The Spetifore lands were identified by the GVRD’s regional plan as agricultural. The municipality, supported by the local Social Credit MLA, voted in favour of developing the Spetifore Lands. At the time municipal plans had to be consistent with the Official Regional Plan (ORP). The GVRD, based on technical analysis of costs and benefits of transportation and services, was adamantly opposed to the development. The proposal to amend the ORP was defeated by the GVRD in a vote of 23 to 22. The decision to rescind regional district powers was seen as a form of provincial revenge against the dissenting municipalities (Harcourt 2000i).

Both the UBCM and the opposition party expressed numerous objections to Bill 9. One major concern was the potential erosion of the authority and independence of municipalities. As far as the opposition party was concerned, Bill 9 was “ignorant of the economic, social, political and geographical dynamics of civic government” (Blencoe in UBCM 1983, 102). The removal of regional planning from planning practice in the province was another concern. As Municipal Affairs Critic Robin Blencoe expressed in the legislature, Bill 9 threatened to “turn back the clock 30 years to an era of uncoordinated growth, when municipalities did their own thing regardless of the impact in neighbouring municipalities or the region as a whole” (Blencoe in Hansard 1983, 485). Despite criticisms and UBCM resolutions against the Bill (UBCM 1983, 39), no modifications were made to the legislation which became law on October 21, 1983 leaving BC

57 A potato farmer, George Spetifore, a long standing supporter of the Social Credit Party, owned the land. The land in question had been released from the Provincial Agricultural Land reserve in 1981 in spite of recommendations from agricultural experts that it should remain within the reserve (Odam 1981).
with no formal framework for regional planning or means of coordinating the planning activities of provincial ministries at the regional level.

Following the passing of Bill 9, regional planning in most parts of the province completely dissolved. Planning in unincorporated areas continued in most regions, although in many cases under duress. Keeping regional planning alive depended on municipal cooperation. Unlike in the GVRD, most municipalities in the province did not have a history of working together. With reduced provincial funds available and lacking municipal support a number of regional districts, including the CRD, fired their entire planning staff. In addition to removing the regional planning function of regional districts, changes made to the Municipal Act included an “opting out clause” which enabled municipalities to opt out of paying for a regional planning and electoral area planning creating budgetary uncertainty from year to year. Furthermore, the abolition of technical planning commissions had taken away an important regionally focused inter-ministerial discussion forum. With the eradication of the regional planning function from regional districts, the removal of TPCs, Resource Management Committees and ELUCS, provincial ministries returned to planning in isolation from one another. Regional resource planning and regional settlement planning continued to be distanced.
4.3.5 The Rise of Consensus Based Voluntary Planning in the GVRD

Given that municipalities in the GVRD had experienced the benefits of municipal co-operation, the GVRD was able to resist the changes that had caused regional planning to fade in other parts of the province. The majority of municipalities of the GVRD were prepared to support regional planning even if it would be “as outlaws” (The Province, 12 July/1983). They approached the minister with their interests stressing the communication benefits. The minister said they could continue to support regional district planning under section 770(2) of the Municipal Act which permitted regional districts to do things for municipalities on a contract basis. Then the GVRD “basically got the municipalities together, wrote up a contract...described the work that [they] were intending to do and a process of arriving at a work program on an annual basis” (Cameron 2000i). Fourteen of the fifteen municipalities agreed to enter into contract with the GVRD (Droettboom1984, 10; Cameron 2000w). “A main motivation for participation was commitment right across the board to livability” (Harcourt 2000i). A lower profile Department of Development Service replaced the GVRD’s Planning Department. With municipal financing, the GVRD was able to maintain population, transportation and land use data bases and continue to prepare regional economic, demographic and development forecasts. A major accomplishment during this time was that all authority for regional planning had been transferred to the municipalities re-enforcing the fact that regional planning was a “bottom-up exercise” in which municipalities made the decisions. The regional district had become simply the “agent of the municipalities” (Cameron 2000i). The member municipalities continued to work toward a regional plan (Artibise et al. unpublished, 10).

58 Benefits included: light rail rapid transit strategy, impetus for major new public and private investment, increased potential housing yield on scarce urban land, preservation of a valuable agricultural land resource, identification and preservation of critical natural assets, a program of regional parks acquisition, encouragement of critical thinking about the future of the whole metropolitan area (Droettboom 1982, 8-10).
4.4 The Vander Zalm Years

During the Vander Zalm years some small steps were made toward supporting regional planning. Effort was put into re-writing regional district legislation. Development services legislation, enabling regional district to provide development services to municipalities, was introduced. Re-write of the Islands Trust legislation enabled Municipal Affairs staff to introduce a broad policy statement for the Islands Trust. The introduction of waste management legislation encouraged inter-municipal dialogue and recognition of the value of regional plans. Another event at this time concerning regional planning was Vander Zalm’s attempt to advance the development region concept he had originally introduced through the Planning Act while he was Minister of Municipal Affairs under Bennett.

4.4.1 Regional District Review and Development Services Legislation

In the same year the province removed the regional planning powers from regional districts the ministry also initiated a comprehensive review of regional districts. This process had been led by the political “father of regional districts”, Dan Campbell. This informal review produced a number of recommendations, which ultimately lead to substantial legislative change. Building on Campbell’s work the Ministry of Municipal Affairs, between 1986-1989, engaged in “an extensive consultation process with the UBCM and local governments to totally re-write the regional district legislation” (Paget 1998a, 6). This process helped to solidify regional districts and eliminate “innumerable cabinet approvals of regional district initiatives” (ibid). This process has been identified as pioneering legislative development between the province and local governments.59

59 Precedent for consultative approaches to legislative development had also been set through the effort of the Development Process Review Committee (DPRC) in the early to mid 1980s. The DPRC had been set up by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs following Bill Ritchie’s appointment as Minister. It was responsible for reviewing the land-use planning proposals that had been introduced by Vander Zalm. The Committee consisted of members of the development community, the Planning Institute of BC, the Municipal Law Association and Engineers. As Erik Karlsen, who was working for with the DPRC recalls, Ritchie did not want the ministry to “drive the planning agenda”. By establishing a consultative process the minister could say that those to be effected by legislation introduced to the legislature were party to its development (Karlsen 2000i).
Legislation enabling regional districts to provide development services to municipalities was introduced in 1989. The introduction of this legislation was encouraged by the GVRD’s experience. Into the late 1980s, contractual arrangements between municipalities and regional districts for the delivery of services in the GVRD were becoming unstable. At the same time, the GVRD board was becoming very concerned about the negative impact urban growth and the lack of planning was having on livability. In an effort to re-establish a regional district planning function the GVRD, under Ken Cameron’s leadership, consulted with GVRD municipalities to get their approval for the regional district to provide development services. In 1989, with the assistance of supportive Ministry of Municipal Affairs staff, the GVRD was able to solidify their process by having regional district services inserted into the Municipal Act (Cameron 2000i).

The Minister of Municipal Affairs at the time, Rita Johnson, did not see development services legislation as re-introducing regional planning. Ken Cameron recalls Rita Johnson while speaking to a PIBC dinner saying “we are bringing back this legislation, we hope it will be helpful but it is not regional planning” (Cameron 2000w). While the introduction of development services legislation had signaled a beginning to the return of regional planning in the GVRD, planners in other regions were not as optimistic. Municipalities could still “opt out” of contributing to regional district planning in unincorporated areas. In addition there were a number of services necessary to regional planning in rural regions, such as mapping, that were not recognized by development services legislation (Don Harasym 2000i).

4.4.2 The Islands Trust Act Rewrite and Waste Management Legislation

The Islands Trust re-write and the introduction of Waste Management legislation were small but important steps in advancing regional planning interests in the province. As part of the 1989 Island’s Trust re-write a new planning tool, a trust wide policy statement, was introduced. The Ministry’s main intention for the Islands Trust re-write had been to allow incorporations of municipalities in the Trust areas. With the legislation opened up for change, the ministry staff tried to address a number of outstanding issues “including the absence of a regional planning context for the islands to operate in” (Osborne 2000w). The result was
a policy statement for the Islands Trust which could be interpreted as a type of regional plan.

The introduction of provincial waste management legislation in 1989 is important to the story of regional planning in BC because it identified to municipalities and the province the appropriateness of the regional scale of planning. Under the Ministry of the Environment’s Waste Management Act (1989) regional districts were mandated to develop solid waste management plans by the end of 1995 (Paget 1998b, 5). In addition to identifying that planning for environmental interests was best done at the regional level, the legislation mandated that municipalities, regional districts and electoral areas work together. As well, when issues regarding funding arose, more attention was paid to regional plans (Verdi 2000w). This act revolutionized waste management. However, it was a top-down hierarchical form of planning which exacerbated tensions within regions and between regions and the province.

### 4.4.3 Development Regions

Shortly following his ascendance as premier, Vander Zalm set out to put his concept of provincial regional interest statements and provincial agency coordination, as first proposed in the Planning Act discussion paper, to work. He established eight development regions (see map in Appendix G). The purpose of these regions was to decentralize provincial decision making by establishing a provincial government presence “in every corner of our province” (Vander Zalm in Volkartard and Cox 1987). It was also seen as a way of recognizing the importance of regions in the establishment of economic policy (Palmer 1989). Under Vander Zalm’s plan, aspects of provincial government health care, education, social services, agriculture, environment, justice and highways would be established in each of the eight new regions. Each development region would consist of a grouping of regional districts and be overseen by a minister of state selected from cabinet. While the proposal to bring government closer to the people was welcomed by a number of municipalities, there appeared to be a lack of clarity about the impact Vander Zalm’s plan would have (Volkartard and Cox 1987). Opposition leader Mike Harcourt supported the notion of decentralization but saw Vander Zalm’s proposal as lacking substance. He suggested that the NDP would approach
decentralization differently by working with regional communities to establish an appropriate planning process as opposed to simply decentralizing provincial planning (Cox 1987).

Vander Zalm’s proposal “never really got off the ground” (Karlsen 2000w). Backlash struck immediately after Vander Zalm’s proposal was made public. One concern was the proposed relocation of government staff from Victoria and Vancouver into regional offices, another involved cabinet minister interests. Once Vander Zalm had established eight regional ministers and MLAs other cabinet ministers soon “found they were being sidelined by regional czars” (Palmer 1989). In the summer of 1988 the number of regional ministers was reduced to five and their powers diminished. As Vander Zalm’s interests shifted, the development region concept, lacking the support of cabinet, faded. However, the regional development boundaries that had been identified by Vander Zalm are still used in some contexts today.

4.5 Reflections

The late 1970s and the 1980s were a time of change for BC’s regions and the province’s regional planning framework for a number of reasons. Global influences had contributed to another wave of growth and change in the province. As new growth opportunities emerged in Vancouver, the global recession and the introduction of new methods of production in the resource sector contributing to fewer jobs and increasing depletion of resources threatened the sustainability of resource communities. The dominant political ideology at the time encouraged reduced government involvement in regulation and planning. It was against this backdrop that changes to the province’s regional planning framework were introduced.

In light of concerns, confusion and conflict resulting from the complexities, inconsistencies and inefficiencies of the province’s planning framework a comprehensive provincial planning structure and land use act was proposed but because of, among other factors, the resistance of provincial ministers to potential constrains on their powers this proposal was not advanced. The rescinding of regional district planning powers in 1983 by the Bennett administration signaled the disappearance of regional planning in most of
BC’s regional districts demonstrating the vulnerability of the province’s regional planning model to political shifts. The removal of ELUCS, Regional Resource Management Committees and TPCs left the province without mechanisms to co-ordinate the activities of provincial ministries.

While some small steps had been taken at the end of the decade which advanced regional planning interests to a degree, the province was still many steps behind where it had been prior to the changes made to the provincial planning system in the early 1980s. However, setbacks had strengthened the resolve of planners and municipal politicians to seize every opportunity to advance regional planning interests. This was demonstrated by the establishment of the policy statement for the Islands Trust and with the efforts of planners and municipal leaders in the GVRD to keep regionalism alive. The emergence of cooperative regional planning in the GVRD underscored the importance of a strong regional planning culture in resisting the impacts of legislative change. In the absence of strong provincial leadership, concerns related to regional growth, regional disparity and environmental sustainability intensified. Key events of this decade are summarized in Figure 4.1.

As will be identified in the following chapter in light of ecological limits to growth and the rise of interests in sustainability, some efforts were being made toward the end of the decade to address resource issues. These issues and those concerning urban sprawl would become the focus of the provincial government following the defeat of the Social Credit government by the New Democratic Party in the fall of 1991. The election of the NDP government signaled the beginning of another phase in BC’s regional planning history, one of rebirth and redefinition.
## Figure 4.1

**PHASE II: Setback and Challenge**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GOVERNMENT</th>
<th>SIGNIFICANT EVENTS AND LEGISLATION</th>
<th>THEMES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Premier:** William Bennett  
1980 *Planning Act Discussion Paper*  
1980 Environment and Land Use Committee Secretariat dissolved  
1981 Northeast Coal Development  
1982 Land-Use Bill (defeated)  
1983 Dispute over Spetifore Lands  
1983 Rescinding of regional district planning authority and elimination of Technical Planning Committees through amendments to *Municipal Act*  
1983 Regional Resource Management Committees abolished  
1983 GVRD municipalities continue regional planning as “renegades”  
1983-1986 Campbell Commission review of regional districts  
1986 Expo/Skytrain/Vancouver Trade and Convention Centre  
1987 Bruntland Report  
1988 Dunsmuir I  
1989 *Islands Trust Act* Re-Write  
1989 Development services legislation, legitimized regional districts and “regional development services”  
1989 Amendments to *Waste Management Act* requiring regional districts to prepare solid waste management plans | Review of regional district system  
Proposal of new hierarchical framework for provincial planning  
LMRPB/Provincial tension  
Fiscal Restraint  
Regional district planning powers rescinded  
TPCs, ELUCS, Regional Resource Management Committee dissolved  
Rise of voluntary inter-municipal planning in GVRD  
Provincial focus on Vancouver  
Emerging focus on environment |
| **Premier:** William Vander Zalm  
1986 Expo/Skytrain/Vancouver Trade and Convention Centre  
1987 Bruntland Report  
1988 Dunsmuir I  
1989 *Islands Trust Act* Re-Write  
1989 Development services legislation, legitimized regional districts and “regional development services”  
1989 Amendments to *Waste Management Act* requiring regional districts to prepare solid waste management plans | |
| **Premier:** Rita Johnson  
(April-Nov.1991) Social Credit | | |
Chapter Five: Phase III - Rebirth and Redefinition

Ever since our system of regional planning was dismantled by the previous government, we’ve expected communities to plan for growth individually...But they can’t do it alone. Most of the problems associated with growth - air pollution, loss of green areas and agricultural land, traffic congestion and the lack of affordable housing - are regional in nature. And they need regional solutions” (Marzari in Bohn, 1995).

5.1 Introduction

The third phase of regional planning spans the 1990s. Faced with increasing conflict over resources in the province’s hinterland and increasing sprawl in urban areas, particularly in the Lower Mainland, it was clear that changes needed to be made to the province’s planning framework. Sustainability issues, popularized by the Brundtland Commission following their publication of Our Common Future in 1987, had risen to the forefront of discussions regarding land-use and resource management. Mike Harcourt, a strong advocate of sustainability, was elected premier in 1991. Following the election, a string initiatives was set in motion which encouraged the development of a clear framework for both regional settlement planning, and regional resources planning.

This chapter begins with a look at major forces contributing to growth and change in BC’s regions during the 1990s. It then looks at the initiatives of the provincial government and other planning bodies contributing to the revival of regional planning in BC.

5.2 Globalization and Sustainability

Globalization and sustainability were two major forces influencing growth and change in BC during the 1990s. Globalization marked by the emergence of “an integrated worldwide economy where goods, service, capital, knowledge and technologies are actively traded across boarders” (Tanaka 2001, 59) was having a profound effect on regions throughout the world. Improvements in information and transportation technologies were contributing to new market relationships. Business and industry, having freedom to move
from one location to another, were uninterested in addressing the impacts of their activities on the people, their land and their livelihood. The sustainability movement encouraged international recognition of the need to address environmental, social and economic problems resulting from unsustainable development practices. The Bruntland Commission’s report *Our Common Future* in 1987 urged all nations to “begin managing environmental resources to ensure both sustainable human progress and human survival” (WCED 1987, 1).

Within the network of global economic centres, Vancouver area had emerged as an increasingly prominent city-region. Hodge and Robinson (2001) describe the city-region, as “a product of the late twentieth century” (294). It includes the old central city, its surrounding metropolitan suburbs, and outlying semi-rural and rural developments. It is comprised of interconnected municipalities and characterized by sprawling residential and industrial development. Expo 86 had succeeded in sparking global, and especially Asian, interest in Vancouver as the locale for investment (Ley et al., 1991). This in turn encouraged Vancouver’s growth as a global niche-level centre for information, banking, financial services, high-tech, education and tourism. The Lower Mainland’s increasing economic diversity and human capital made the Vancouver region more resilient to the downswing in the Asian economy of the late 1990s than the rest of the province. The southern tip of Vancouver Island, being so closely connected to the Lower Mainland, also enjoyed advantages of urban scale, agglomeration and diversification and remained one of the strongest regions in the province.

Hinterland communities, reliant on the “old economy”, were the hardest hit by the provincial recession of the late 1990s. The forest industry faced reductions in the amount of wood available and some of the highest production costs in the world for wood products such as pulp. The “Asian economic flu” contributed to lower market demand and prices for forest products, metals such as copper, and energy minerals such as coal, threatening the closure of hinterland communities such as Logan Lake and Tumbler Ridge. Employment in primary industry shrank from 14% in 1987 to 11% in 1997 (Ministry of Finance and Corporate Relations 1999 in McGillivray 2000, 224). Population declines between 1999 and 2000 were experienced primarily in resource dependent areas such as Mount Waddington, Northern Rockies, and Peace
River Regional Districts due to layoffs in mining and forestry (BCStats, 2000). One of the oldest pulpmills in Prince Rupert- Skeena Cellulose- required provincial assistance to prevent closure and, in early 1999 the pulp and paper mill at Gold River, on the west coast of Vancouver Island, closed.

Changes were occurring in terms of how BC’s resources were being perceived. The growing importance of the tourism industry in addition to the escalation of environmental protests against clearcut logging contributed to BC being labeled the “Brazil of the North”. Escalating conflicts between First Nations, environmentalists, and loggers demanded serious attention. This was encouraging the introduction of a more integrated and holistic approach to resource management. NDP leader Mike Harcourt committed to addressing these issues, explicitly praised the Brundtland report. In the spring of 1989 Harcourt had issued a policy paper announcing sustainable development as a party goal. Resource management was one of the two land-use priorities on Premier Harcourt’s sustainability agenda.

Some steps toward addressing resource issues had been made during the late 1980s under the previous government. In light of resource conflicts and the recommendations of the Brundtland Commission, natural resources ministry bureaucrats had begun to take stock of BC’s resources and begin to consider methods in which resources could be managed more sustainably. The 1986 report of the Wilderness Advisory Committee (WAC) stimulated discussion among various governmental and public groups and agencies regarding the development of a more comprehensive approach to land-use planning. In 1989 the Forest Resources Commission was set up to advise the Ministry of Forests on the management of forest lands. Drawing on broad public consultation the Commission recommended a comprehensive land use planning system to reduce conflicts, increase the credibility of decision-making processes, and identify sustainable land uses. A pinnacle event in 1988, Dunsmuir I conference, brought together for the first time forest companies, wildlife ministries, recreation interests and other interested in natural resources to discuss how to advance

60Following the publication of Our Common Future in 1987, existing land use conflicts in BC intensified. Contentious areas included: Clayoquot Sound, Walbran, Carmanah, Hasty Creek, Cariboo Mountains, Caren Range, Nahmint, Khutzeymateen, Kitlope, Tatshenshini (BC CORE 1994a, 9).
their interests in a co-ordinated provincial land-use strategy (BC CORE 1994a, 18-19; O’Gorman 2000; Karlsen 2000). A second event of a similar nature, Dunsmuir II was held in 1991 and a third in 1996. In 1990, the Ministries of Forests and Parks began a comprehensive public process contributing to the creation of new parks and wilderness areas (BC CORE 1994a, 18-19; O’Gorman 1994). These initiatives provided foundation and momentum for change in resource management in the 1990s.

Urban growth management was the other prominent issue on Harcourt’s sustainability agenda. Concerns were being raised by the public regarding quality of life in the face of increasing urban and suburban growth and development. As the issue of livability and sustainability began to rise to the top of the provincial legislative agenda, planners in BC identified planning at the regional level to be a critical gap in the province’s planning framework. As Mike Harcourt suggests, by the time he was elected as premier in 1991 it was obvious that some major changes had to occur at the regional level to address questions related to urban livability (Harcourt 2000).

5.3 Regional Resources Planning

During the first half of the NDP’s term in office their main focus was on resource management. While in opposition they had identified a number of issues to be addressed by legislation. These included; water quality, impact assessment, agricultural lands and forestry. Conflict over resources also needed to be addressed and visions for the future identified. This contributed to the resurrection of integrated resource management in the province, which included the establishment of the Commission on Resources and Environment and Land-Use Co-ordination Committees. Further contributions in the area of regional resources planning included watershed based planning efforts such as the Georgia Basin Initiative, and the Fraser Basin Management Program.

61 In 1988, Dunsmuir I participants laid down the principles of a sustainable land use strategy and recommended steps for implementation. In 1991, Dunsmuir II participants reached consensus on a common vision, principles of a land and water use strategy and components and delivery mechanisms required. Dunsmuir III reaffirmed the importance of the vision and principles expressed at Dunsmuir I and II, and resulted in the development of the Agenda for Action.
5.3.1 Environmental Legislation

The introduction of a variety of environmental legislation in the early part of the NDP’s tenure illustrates the province’s desire to expand provincial authority to address environmental concerns. Provincial authority was expanded in the areas of water, agriculture, environmental impact assessment and forestry. *Bill 24 the Water Amendment Act*, passed in 1992, required approvals when municipalities wanted to make changes in and about streams (BC Municipal 1992). Local government authority in area of agriculture was further constrained through the passing of *Bill 42, the Cabinet Appeals Abolition Act* of 1993 which removed the provincial cabinet from considering appeals of ALC decisions on applications for exclusion of land from the Agricultural Land Reserve (BC Municipal 1993). *Bill 22, Farm Practices Protection (Right To Farm) Act* of 1995 provided a set of tools for dealing with conflict between farming and urban development (BC Municipal 1995). Provincial control in the area of environmental assessment was asserted with the introduction of *Bill 29, The Environmental Assessment Act* of 1994 (BC Municipal 1994).

*Bill 40, The Forest Practices Code of BC Act*, *Bill 32, The Forest Renewal Act* and *Bill 56, The Forest Land Reserve Act* passed in 1994 were part of a comprehensive legislative package designed to enhance provincial authority over the protection of forest resources. The establishment of the Forest Land Reserve, modeled after the Agricultural Land Reserve, responded to the encroachment of urban development into productive forest lands. The *Forest Practices Code* introduced new logging standards, which promised to incorporate environmental constraints into everyday logging practice but which also reduced available timber and increase costs associated with logging. The forest renewal program was put in place to encourage industrial diversification, retraining and assistance to forest-based communities (BC Municipal 1994). The forest renewal program was to be financed by higher stumpage rates. These funds would be directed into enhanced silviculture, community development and new community based economic enterprise (i.e. value-added manufacturing). The forest renewal program can be seen as one step toward one of the goals identified by the province when they came into office, addressing the “problems of resource communities and those
facing major adjustments to their local economies” (Speech from the throne in Hansard 1992, 5). 

5.3.2 Integrated Resource Management

While environmental legislation was being introduced, integrated resource management was being resurrected. One initiative in this direction was the introduction of a protected areas strategy for the province. This strategy, introduced to the legislature in 1993, established a vision for the doubling of the province’s protected areas from 6% to 12% over a seven year period. As Hodge and Robinson outline, the broad goals of the protective areas strategy were:

- to protect viable examples of natural diversity representative of the major terrestrial, marine, and freshwater ecosystems; the characteristic habitats, hydrology, and land forms; and the characteristic backcountry recreational and cultural heritage values of each ecosystem; and
- To protect the province’s natural and cultural heritage as well as its recreational features, including, for example, rare and endangered species and critical habitats (196).

One of the objectives to be met within these broad goals was to reduce jurisdictional complexity and inefficiencies by coordinating the protected areas programs of all levels of government in the province. These programs included provincial and national parks, provincial recreation areas, ecological reserves, forest wilderness areas and wildlife management areas (ibid.). The Commission on Resources and Environment (CORE), established in 1992, helped facilitate the establishment of PAS (O’Gorman 2000i; BC CORE 1994a).

CORE, led by former provincial ombudsman Stephen Owen, was established to develop a strategic land-use planning process and provincial land-use strategy and resolve conflicts between environmentalists, resource industries and communities. Its approach emphasized economic, environmental and social sustainability as well as public participation and respect for aboriginal rights (BC CORE 1994b). To a certain

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62Forest Renewal, while appearing to be progressive, has been criticised for limiting its intent to the mitigating the effects of wilderness preservation and enabling the premier to live up to his assertion that no job would be lost to wilderness set-asides, as opposed to encouraging regional economic development. Funding for and approval of programs still flowed from Victoria. Early allocation of funding went back into industry in the form of siviculture and environmental restoration projects. In the first year, almost no funds were directed into small business or value-added manufacturing (M’Gonigle 1997, 43).
degree CORE was picking up where ELUC had left off. Regional Protected Area Committees were created. Teams of officials were put together to support regional committees, “essentially recreating regional resource management committees by another name” (O’Goroman 2000i). CORE was seen as a mechanism to bring together forest management, environmental preservation, provincial land-use planning, regional land-use planning and growth management. CORE discussions over land use involved representatives from conservation, youth, fisheries, major manufacturers, forest independents, small communities, agriculture, local government, provincial government, first nations, organised labour, tourism, recreation and other interests (O’Gorman 1995).

Of particular interest in understanding CORE’s regional planning perspective is the recognition of the regional and subregional aspects of land-use planning. In CORE’s Strategic Land Use Planning Source Book (1996) a framework providing the context and rational for strategic land use planning is outlined. The framework identifies a continuum of planning from general broad ranging goals at a global level to the more specific implementation objectives at the local level. This framework assumes that a properly functioning planning system will produce plans at each point of the continuum (from the provincial level to the regional, subregional, local and operational level). The plans, policies and processes at each level would encompass those below and be encompassed by those above. The development of regional land-use strategies was initiated in regions of the province identified to be environmental “hotspots” in which regional planning had not yet occurred. It was anticipated that upon completion and legislative acceptance of regional land-use strategies, plans for subregions would be developed through a second process, Land and Resource Management Plans (LRMPs). The development of LRMPs for subregions which did not have substantive land use conflicts began as early as 1992. These subregions are identified on the Map in Appendix H.

The CORE process collapsed as tensions over land-use interests increased. Some participants withdrew and government support weakened (O’Gorman 2000i). By the time CORE disbanded in March 1996, regional land-use strategies had been approved for Vancouver Island, Cariboo-Chilcotin Region and
the Kootenays. Vancouver Island was the first region in the province to have a comprehensive land-use plan in place. The Vancouver Island Plan created a number of protected areas contributing to the establishment of forest land reserves on 81% of the land base composed of crown lands and private managed forest lands (Hodge and Robinson 2001, 208).

Complimenting the work CORE did, is the work of the Land Use Co-ordination Office (LUCO). LUCO was created in January 1994 to coordinate the activities of the former Ministry of Environment, Lands and Parks and other ministries. LUCO focuses on the development of land-use plans for subregions of the provincial regions. LUCO’s process, focusing on resource protection and conservation, involves the integration of programs of different branches of the current Ministry of Water, Air and Land Protection (MWALP) and Ministry of Sustainable Resource Management (MSRM), as well as coordination with First Nations, and local governments in the development of LRMPs. LRMPs aim to protect the natural environment in addition to maintaining resource development. A policy for involving local government in LRMPs was developed in conjunction with the Land Use Co-ordination Office and the Union of BC Municipalities in the late 1990s. By December 2001 fifteen land and resource management plans were completed and five were underway (LUCO, 2002). In resource regions LRMPs effectively replace the regional plans of regional districts which, due to their lack of authority and lack of coordination with provincial planning, had been ineffective.

5.3.3 Geogia Basin and Fraser Basin Initiatives

The Georgia Basin and Fraser Basin initiatives, evolving in BC in the early 1990s, complimented other resource planning activities, helped advance sustainability goals and objectives by introducing new frameworks for regional planning process based on natural features and collaborative planning processes.

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63 The establishment of land-use strategies had not been easy. In the Cariboo a strong anti-CORE movement, opposing the restrictions placed on the forest industry, had developed. Their opposition was revealed in a number of dramatic acts, which included the burning of a Stephen Owen effigy in the Quesnel community parade. In view of this, the province was compelled to work on an alternative plan (Gawthrop 1996, 196).
The Georgia Basin Initiative (GBI), considered its planning area to be an area running north-south along a coastal corridor, stretching from Campbell River and Powell River BC, in the north to Olympia, Washington in the south and stretching as far as Hope, BC and the Cascade Mountains (see map in Appendix I). The regional planning process in this case evolved to involve collaboration with planning bodies, agencies and citizens within BC as well as those in the United States.

The Georgia Basin Initiative was created by BC’s Round Table on Environment and Economy. BC’s Round Table on Environment and Economy was a product of the Federal Task Force on Environment and Economy. Following Canada’s endorsement of the Bruntland Commission report, a Task Force on Environment and Economy was established to consider processes that might be applied to the province to help foster sustainable development. The BC Round Table on Environment and Economy was established in 1990 as an advisory body to: develop a sustainable development strategy for British Columbia; develop processes and mechanisms for the resolution of land and other environment/economy conflict; and heighten the public’s understanding and knowledge of sustainable development (BCTREE 1993a, 62). The Round Table soon advanced a set of principles concerned with long-term economic viability, environmental integrity and fair distribution of the benefits and costs of development. These principles had provided a major reference point for CORE and other projects focused on supporting sustainability of land and resources in BC (BC CORE 1994a).

In 1992 the Round Table was given the mandate by the Provincial government to engage in a consultative process to identify how to manage development in the Georgia Basin. Out of this came the Georgia Basin Initiative. The Georgia Basin was identified as the ecological unit encompassing land and sea in both Canada and the U.S. This was seen to be an appropriate planning unit for a number of reasons including; similar natural features, weather patterns, ocean currents, flora and fauna, and the merging urban growth of cities within the Basin. The central goal of the Georgia Basin Initiative was to promote a sustainable future for the basin through consultation and partnership with the private sector, non-governmental organizations and other governments. The eight guiding principles of the GBI vision are to promote: compact
communities, safe and livable communities, integrated transportation system, healthy natural environment, sustainable use of resources, a vibrant and dynamic economy, land-use certainty and an informed and active public (BCRTEE, 1993). The GBI was administered by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs but did not survive the change in leadership from Harcourt to Clark in 1996 (Karlsen 2000i). The Georgia Basin Ecosystem Initiative, a new initiative focusing on the Georgia Basin bioregion was introduced in 1998 by Environment Canada and the BC Ministry of Environment Lands and Parks. GBEI began pursuing a five year collaborative action plan focused on managing growth to achieve healthy productive and sustainable ecosystems and communities (Environment Canada, 2002).

The Fraser Basin, the large territory drained by the Fraser River, provided another innovative framework for addressing regional issues. The Fraser Basin is an area a quarter the size of British Columbia and is home to almost two thirds of the province’s population. The idea of developing a comprehensive management plan for the Fraser River Basin had been considered by federal and provincial governments following the 1948 flood but nothing substantial was accomplished. Effort was renewed in the early 1990s beginning with the Fraser River Action Plan, part of the federal government’s Green Plan, which committed $100 over a five year period for clean-up of pollution, restoration of habitats and rebuilding of fish stocks. In August 1991, acting on a proposal from the federal government, a thirteen member multi-stakeholder committee, with representatives from all three levels of government, first nations, and environment, industry and public interest was set up, to provide advice on the development of an overall management program to meet sustainability objectives in the basin. Out of this came recommendations for the establishment of a Fraser Basin management board. The Fraser Basin Management Board (FBMB) was established in 1992. It brought together a variety of stakeholders including representatives from federal, provincial, municipal, and aboriginal organizations, non-governmental organizations and the public to engage in experiments in consensus decision making for sustainability in the Fraser Basin (Dorcey 1997, 1-2). A report published by the FBMB in 1996

64 Tony Dorcey, now the administrator for the School of Community and Regional Planning, was involved in the development of the Fraser Basin Management Board and served as the Chair of the Board for its first two years (Dorcey 1997, 1)
indicated urban growth and sprawl to be key challenges to sustainability in the basin. In February 1997, the Fraser Basin Council, the successor to the FBMB was launched. The Council, like the FBMB is made up of a variety of stakeholders. Their mandate is to promote and monitor the implementation of a sustainability charter (Fraser Basin Council, 2001). Like the Georgia Basin Initiative, the Fraser Basin Management Program and Fraser Basin Council provided another avenue for integrating decision making to address regional issues.

5.4 Revival in Regional Settlement Planning

The need to address urban growth was a re-occurring theme in many of the studies done concerning the development of strategies focused on supporting sustainability and livability in BC in the 1990s. Heading into the 1990s the province was ill prepared to talk about urban issues let alone address them. The Ministry of Municipal Affairs, the only ministry directly involved with issues regarding regional settlement, as with a majority of the province’s ministries at the time, was very “rural oriented” (Osborne 2000w). Recognizing that urban issues such as housing and air quality were merging and that there would soon be a demand for provincial action the staff of the Ministry began work on a briefing book on urban issues toward the end of the Social Credit’s term in office. The production of a metropolitan issues briefing book signaled a shift in the approach of the ministry from the rural focus to a more urban focus (Ibid).

5.4.1 The Lower Mainland Process

While the Ministry of Municipal Affairs was shifting focus, the GVRD was taking a lead role in addressing its urban growth challenges. In 1989, building on past regional planning visions and process, the GVRD initiated its Creating Our Future program. The first phase of the process, entitled Choosing Our Future, involved extensive consultation with the residents of the region using a variety of approaches, from public forums to children’s educational programs. The result was a clear vision for the future of the region.
which promoted environmental quality, cultural diversity, community decision making and equal access to food, clothing, shelter security and useful activity. Land use and transportation emerged as critical issues. Land-use was to be addressed through the development of a growth strategy. To effectively address transportation the GVRD joined with the provincial Ministry of Transportation and Highways in a project entitled Transport 2021. This process was intended to identify how transportation requirements could fit in with the GVRD’s growth management objectives and regional vision.

The GVRD’s consultation and planning activities between 1991 and 1993 eventually lead to proposals for a revised regional plan. The plan covered an area extending from Burrard Inlet to Chilliwack. It emphasized planning and implementation through partnership among regional, provincial and local governments, as opposed to a hierarchy of plans and regulations, and placed environmental values before urban growth (GVRD 1994). The GVRD had proceeded with their planning activities without a specific mandate from the province or local government. The province had identified to the GVRD, early in the process, that they would not proceed with regional planning legislation until they had the support of the majority of the province’s municipalities (Cameron 2000i, Marzari 2000i).

Moving ahead, the GVRD began work on a Livable Regional Strategic Plan. Proposals for the Livable Region Strategic Plan identified four fundamental strategies. They were: protecting the Green Zone; building complete communities; achieving a compact metropolitan region; and increasing transportation choice (GVRD 1994, 16-19). Following the drafting of the plan, the GVRD worked to gain support from its member municipalities. They were able to achieve consensus on the regional plan just prior to the passing of the Growth Strategies Statutes Amendment Act (GSSAA) in 1995. The provincial legislation validating the

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65 The vision statement identified through the Choosing Our Future process was as follows "[To make Greater Vancouver] a place where human activities enhance rather than degrade the natural environment, where the quality of the built environment approaches that of the natural setting, where the diversity of origins and religions is a source of social strength rather than strife, where people control the destiny of their community, and where the basics of food, clothing, shelter, security and useful activity are accessible to all" (GVRD 1994, 2).

66 This was the first time the GVRD’s history that regional land use and transportation were being planned in collaboration with local government and provincial authorities (GVRD 1994, 15).
GVRD process was, as Ken Cameron puts it, "the iron fist" to be placed in the GVRD's "velvet glove" (Cameron 2000i). The GSSAA provided strength and force to the GVRD plan.

5.4.2 Growth Strategies Legislation

Through the introduction of growth strategies legislation, amending the Municipal Act, the Vancouver Charter and other associated legislation, the province endeavored to restore regional planning and address "two major deficiencies in the existing local government planning system: the lack of coordination among municipalities and regional districts on strategic issues that transcend and cross local boundaries, and the lack of clear, reliable links with the provincial ministries and agencies whose resources are needed to implement the[se] plans" (Marzari in Young 2001, 75).

As identified by a number of those involved in the development of growth strategies legislation, there were a number of factors contributing to the process. One of these was the existence of a very committed ministry staff which had developed very effective working relationships with one another. The development of growth strategies legislation was a team effort. Ministry staff had a number of sources of information to draw from as they began to consider the development of growth management legislation. The Georgia Basin Initiative and CORE process had identified some of the key factors to consider in addressing issues related to sustainability. The GVRD's process was another important source of input. There had been many discussions between the Municipal Affairs and the GVRD throughout the development of the GSSAA. GVRD staff had also participated in the promotion of the growth strategies legislation to other regional districts. A large portion of the growth strategies research process involved studying literature on growth management in other parts of Canada and the US as well as interviewing planners, politicians and interest groups in Oregon and Washington where growth management planning was underway. While ministry staff were eager to learn from these experiences they were focused on developing a "Made in BC" process. As a result considerable effort was focused on looking at the history of regional planning in BC to identify factors for success and key
weaknesses of past efforts. A number of BC’s “planning elders” were called upon to provide their insights and impressions (Paget 2000i; Osborne 2000i; Marzari 2000i).

Other important factors contributing to the advancement of growth strategies legislation were a very receptive minister and supportive premier. As mentioned previously, Premier Mike Harcourt was eager to address urban issues. His appointed Minister of Municipal Affairs, Darlene Marzari who, having worked in social planning in Vancouver and sat on the GVRD board in the 1970s, was also interested in addressing the challenges facing urban regions. Marzari and Harcourt had been allies in political battles in the Lower Mainland in past decades and had both been involved in the creation of the GVRD’s first Livable Region Plan (Harcourt 2000i; Marzari 2000i). Harcourt brought to the process enthusiasm and support. Marzari, considered by some to be the “Midwife of the BC growth strategies legislation” for her role in delivering the legislation, brought to the ministry openness, encouragement and a commitment to consultation. She provided the mandate and support to ministry staff to move ahead with the work they had initiated years before.

Marzari, known for having an “ear for local government”, emphasized by her earrings made from the emblems of each municipality which she wore during her meetings with them, led the consensus process contributing to the development of the growth strategies legislation. It was her conviction that in order for the legislation to be effective it would have to have buy-in from all municipalities. She believed that, “the closer to home the democracy is, the better the people are served”(Marzari 2000i). The consultative processes initiated by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs in the 1980s to develop regional district legislation had enabled the ministry to develop good working relationships with municipalities. Marzari built upon this process. Meetings where held with each municipality, regional district and other interested parties. As Gary Paget, member of the ministry staff at the time suggests, the result was the emergence of legislation from the "bottom-up" contributing to the creation of a bill which had the support of a broad spectrum of interest groups.

\[\text{From Darlene Marzari's perspective Ministry staff had been quietly "working in the mines". They had been working on putting the pieces together to ensure a smooth introduction of growth management/regional planning legislation when provided the opportunity (Marzari 2000i).}\]
and bipartisan support in the Legislature (Paget 1997, 10).

The *Growth Strategies Statutes Amendment Act* (GSSAA) became law on June 8, 1995. Unlike the hierarchical regional district planning system that existed before 1983, where the regional district prepared the plans to which the municipalities were to comply, the regional planning system introduced through the GSSAA provided a framework for “interactive planning” which relies on local government cooperation with regional plans as opposed to forced compliance. As referred to by Darlene Marzari and Municipal Affairs staff it is a system that favours “carrots” rather than “sticks”. The GSSAA also introduced ways of coordinating local government planning with the province and other agencies. Contributing to these processes are three important planning tools introduced by the legislation: Regional Growth Strategy, Regional Context Statements and Implementation Agreements.

The Regional Growth Strategy (RGS), as illustrated by the GVRD’s *Livable Region Strategic Plan*, is a regional vision that is meant to guide the planning actions of municipalities and regional districts to meet common social, economic and environmental objectives. It is initiated and adopted by the regional district and then referred to the affected local governments for acceptance. A Regional Context Statement forms a portion of the municipalities’ Official Community Plan (OCP). It identifies how the OCP will respond to key policies and how it will be made consistent over time with the RGS (BC Municipal 1995a, 2). Ken Cameron, as a member of the drafting committee for the growth strategies legislation, encouraged the introduction of the concept of the Regional Context Statement. Based on his experiences with GVRD planning it had become obvious to him that regional planning could only be done on a “plan to plan” basis. He wanted to avoid the kind of lack of coordination between the municipal OCP and the regional plan that had been at the heart of the Spetifore dispute (Cameron 2000i). Implementation Agreements (IA) provide regional districts with the authority to enter into an implementation agreement with other levels of government (ie. provincial ministries and agencies) in order to ensure cooperation in areas such as sewer or highway construction, regional parks
and hospitals (BC Municipal 1995a, 2). As had been identified many times over in the past, in order for regional plans to be realistic and able to be implemented the province must be a partner in the process.

In addition to these tools, provisions were made with in the legislation for the establishment of intergovernmental advisory committees (IAC). To compliment its growth strategy process regional districts must establish an IAC to provide advice on the development of the regional growth management strategy and help coordinate the involvement of local governments, provincial and federal governments and their agencies. IACs are comprised of senior staff from these bodies as well as other authorities and organizations that the regional district might invite to participate (BC Municipal 1995a, 11). For those regional districts that have engaged in the development of a regional growth strategy, IACs have provided a forum through which technical decisions, ideas and proposals can be discussed and analyzed before being put forward to regional district boards and the public (Young 2002, 109). Dispute resolutions were also introduced into the growth strategies legislation to encourage consensus on regional planning provisions.

While these tools are a major contribution to the province's planning system, the statement of provincial goals is identified to be one of the biggest achievements of the GSSAA. Provincial goal statements, while not binding, provide a point of reference for the coordination of planning efforts at the local, regional and provincial level. These goals, identified in Figure 5.1, can be traced to a number of sources. They appear to reflect the spirit of goals identified in the 1960s in the LMRPB's Chance and Challenge. Links can also be made to the goal statements produced by CORE and the guiding principles of the Georgia Basin Initiative. In addition to providing a point of reference for the various provincial ministries and local governments and defining provincial goals for growth management, the statement of provincial goals also helped identify gaps in the provincial government's resource management framework. One of these gaps was fish protection which came to dominate legislative change in 1997.

By November 2000 Growth Strategies had been adopted for the Greater Vancouver Regional District,
the Regional District of Nanaimo, the Thompson Nicola Regional District and the Regional District of Central Okanagan. These regional districts comprised 60% of the province's population. The Capital Regional District and the Fraser Valley Regional District are still finalizing their growth management plans. When these are officially adopted, 74% of BC's population will live in areas covered by a growth strategy (BC Municipal 2001a). Some of the more rural regional districts have not found it necessary to engage in the development of a growth strategy. In areas such as the Fraser-Fort George Regional District, North Okanagan Regional District and the Peace River Regional District most of the land-use planning issues faced are being addressed through established planning processes and documents (e.g. official community plans, community plans, land use bylaws and zoning bylaws) (Young 2001, 102-103).

Provincial Goals

- avoiding urban sprawl and ensuring that development takes place where adequate facilities exist or can be provided in a timely, economic and efficient manner;
- settlement patterns that minimize the use of automobiles and encourage walking, bicycling and the efficient use of public transit;
- the efficient movement of goods and people while making effective use of transportation and utility corridors;
- protecting environmentally sensitive areas;
- maintaining the integrity of a secure and productive resource base, including the agricultural and forest land reserves;
- economic development that supports the unique character of communities;
- reducing and preventing air, land and water pollution;
- adequate, affordable and appropriate housing;
- adequate inventories of suitable land and resources for future settlement;
- protecting the quality and quantity of ground water and surface water;
- settlement patterns that minimize the risks associated with natural hazards;
- preserving, creating and linking urban and rural open space including parks and recreation areas;
- planning for energy supply and promoting efficient use, conservation and alternative forms of energy;
- good stewardship of land, sites and structures with cultural heritage value.

Fig.5.1 (BC Legislature 1995, s.942.11 s.s (2))

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68 To assist regional districts to develop growth strategies the ministry created the Regional Growth Strategy Planning Grant Program. Between 1995-2001 the ministry awarded up to $2.5 million to 11 regional districts that have undertaken 35 growth strategies related projects (BC Municipal 2001b).
5.4.3 Regional Transportation Planning

Regional transportation planning in the GVRD was another area of change related to regional settlement planning during the 1990s. As identified previously, the regional planning process undertaken by the GVRD leading to the creation of the Livable Region Strategic Plan had also contributed the creation of a regional transportation plan. Transport 2021, focused on enhancing transportation alternatives such as walking, cycling and bus in the region. The ability to incorporate the direction of Transport 2021 within the regional plan was inhibited by the fact that the regional district did not have the appropriate implementation tools. The Province provided major roads, highways and the region’s transit system, while the municipalities were responsible for local roads and land use. Transportation planning lacked coordination at a regional level. This became evident during initial discussions over light rail in the Broadway-Lougheed corridor. Questions regarding who would pay for transportation infrastructure and planning and who would operate it encouraged the establishment of the Greater Vancouver Transportation Authority (GVTA) in 1998, a board made up of 12 local government representatives and three provincial directors. The establishment of the GVTA now known as "Translink" brought together planning for major roads, all public transit facilities, vehicle air testing, and transportation demand management under a single regional authority. Translink was provided with funding mechanisms such as transit fare, gas tax, property tax, parking tax, vehicle fees and tolls. By law the Translink’s plans and budgets directly support the regional growth strategy connecting regional transportation planning to local government interests (Kellas 2001).

While it has been effective in developing a strategic transportation plan for the region Translink has experienced difficulties securing the funds necessary to initiate these plans. Hugh Kellas, GVRD planner, attributes this to the lack of effective public participation early in the process and unsupportive institutional arrangements. In early 2001, public outcry over the GVTA’s plans to establish a vehicle levy of $75 to
raise funds for transportation initiatives led to the province, close to election time, refusing to cooperate with the Translink's efforts to impose the levy. As with the regional planning arrangements of the past, it had appeared that this regional planning body was provided a mandate but lacked the authority to do what was needed to implement their plans. Reflecting on the Translink experience, Hugh Kellas suggests that transforming ideas to action requires institutional change which supports cooperation between governments and the building of public support (Kellas 2001).

In spite of its difficulties Translink is recognized internationally as a major innovator in transportation governance for a variety of reasons including: the linking of planning and transportation delivery; the provision of a wide range of revenue sources such as fees, gas tax and property tax; and its linking of a variety of transportation modes such as transit, rail and ferries.

5.5 First Nations

Another initiative supported by the NDP government during the 1990s which has implications for regional planning in the province is the First Nations Treaty Process. When the Europeans settled the land now known as BC, there were very few areas where settlers entered into treaties and provided compensation to the First Nations who had lived with the land for centuries. First Nations eventually became wards of the state, being pushed onto federally owned reservations. Toward the late 1980s, the province found itself in conflicts with First Nations over the exploitation of resources in traditional territories. These conflicts leading to court decisions such as prohibiting MacMillan Bloedel from logging Mearse Island until a land claim by the Nuu’chah’nulth people was settled, identified an uncertain future for provincial resource allocations (McGillivray 2000, 76).

In 1990 Vander Zalm established the Ministry of Native Affairs to investigate Aboriginal title. Just prior to their defeat, the Social Credit government declared its willingness to participate in treaty
negotiations in partnership with the Federal government. The NDP government upon election expressed a strong commitment to negotiating land claim on a government-to-government level. Bill 22 established the BC Treaty Commission in 1993. The first agreement-in-principle relating to land claims to be approved by the provincial government was that of the Nisga’a. The Nisga’a agreement-in-principle was approved and accepted as a treaty by the provincial government in 1999 (McGillivray 2000, 75-76).

The December 11, 1997 Supreme Court of Canada ruling on the Delgamuukw case, represented the beginning of a “new balancing of power over the control of land in BC” (Kelly 2000, 18). The Delgamuukw ruling recognized oral history as a evidence of previous land-use. As well, where before Aboriginal title was interpreted to mean having the right to the use of resources, the Delgamuukw case identified Aboriginal title as “a right to land itself” (Supreme Court of Canada 1997 in Kelly 2001, 21). With this established, the resolution of the treaty negotiations in progress in BC today will have several implications for land-use in BC.

5.6 Reflections

Mike Harcourt came to power at a time when provincial leadership was needed in the area of regional resources planning and urban livability. As Harcourt himself suggests, these issues would have had to have been addressed by whoever was in power in the early 1980s (Harcourt 2000i). The publication of the Brundtland Report in 1987, and escalating environmental conflict had initiated moment on toward implementing new land-use strategies. Harcourt’s consultative and cooperative style allowed for an organic evolution of sustainability initiatives into processes and legislation. A number of the ideas and processes

69 The Nisga’a process is separate from the BC Treaty Commission guidelines and rules because it has been in progress with the federal government since 1976. The treaty allocates a portion of traditional land as Nisga’a territory and provides for cash compensation for the other lands. The treaty also gives the Nisga’a responsibility for wildlife management and the establishment of environmental standards (McGillivray 2000, 77-78).
of past decades, such as integrated approaches to resource management and the need for provincial goal statements resurfaced. Some new ideas and approaches, such as the concept of the growth management, collaborative planning and larger regional planning frameworks such as the Georgia Basin and Fraser Basin, were introduced. The provincial government asserted its authority over land-use with a series of environmental regulations. New frameworks for regional resources planning were introduced through CORE and LUCO. Regional district planning powers were re-instated within a regional planning framework which moved away from the hierarchal pre-1983 regional planning model in favour of a cooperative model in which the development and implementation of regional plans is dependent on municipal buy-in. Within this framework, mechanisms for coordinating local government planning with provincial planning were introduced, providing stronger connections between planning and implementation then had existed in the past.

At the time of Harcourt's resignation in 1996, resource planning and regional growth strategies initiatives were well underway. Focusing on urban growth issues and resource management, the Harcourt administration had not had the chance to effectively address the issue of regional economic development planning although it had been a recognized piece of his planning agenda. In his speech to the UBCM in 1987, as leader of the opposition, Harcourt expressed his support for "Regionally Based Economic Development" which he referred to as meaning economic development in which local government's local communities are provided the "resources they need to put into action the plan that might best suit their needs" (UBCM 1987 p.59). The forest renewal program had been the only attempt to develop regional development capacity in rural regions.

In 1996 following Harcourt's resignation, NDP leadership was passed on to Glen Cark. Important contributions to BC's regional planning history during the Clark era included: the establishment of the GVTA; the Fish Protection Act (1997); the passing of the Capital Region Water Protection and Sooke Hills
Protection Act (1997) which facilitated the transfer of water catchment lands in the Capital Regional District up for potential logging into park reserve and protected water catchment areas; and the passing of the Local Government Statutes Amendment Act (1998) which replaced the Municipal Act and recognized local government as "an independent, responsible and accountable order of government" (BC Municipal 1998, i). In the area of economic development, Clark attempted to introduce new industry to the Lower Mainland which focused on the design and manufacture of "fast ferries". Controversy surrounding this project and other large capital investment in the southwestern corner of BC (e.g. new skytrain link to Port Moody) made during the Clark era contributed to the public questioning the integrity of the NDP. Within two years following Clark's resignation in 1999 the NDP, under the leadership of Ujjal Dosanjh, was defeated by the Liberal Government.
## Figure 5.2

**Phase III: Rebirth and Redefinition**

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<td>1992 Georgia Basin Initiative initiated</td>
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<td>1992 Fraser Basin Management Board established</td>
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<td>1993 BC Treaty Commission established</td>
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Chapter Six: Looking Backward To Move Forward

“One cannot forget the powerful grip the past has on the present and that institutional change comes slowly” (Everett Brown, Former Deputy of Municipal Affair 1968 in Walisser 1987, 1)

6.1 Introduction

As suggested by former Minister of Municipal Affairs Darlene Marzari, regional planning in the province can be seen as a “process jigsaw puzzle” (2000i). However, there appears to be no clear fit for the pieces of this puzzle. As well, the framework within which the pieces of BC’s regional planning process emerge is constantly changing in response to new ideas and issues, shifting political focus, economic development patterns and a number of other forces and factors both endogenous and exogenous to BC. Through this evolution, regional planning processes have emerged to address a number of issues. These have included urban sprawl, land-use conflicts, pollution, conservation and environmental degradation. By looking at patterns of past regional planning practice we gain a clearer idea of where we are now and things to consider as we move into the future. The following chapter begins with an overview of phases in the evolution of regional planning in BC. It will then address research questions posed in chapter one, providing a synopsis of key themes and trends and identifying avenues for further research and direction.

6.2 Overview of Phases

The following provides an overview of phases. Some of the key events, forces and factors contributing to the evolution of these phases are identified in this summary, others are elaborated upon in Section 6.3.

Phase I: Foundations and Frameworks (1940s-1970s)

Rapid development and urbanization in BC during the post war years contributed to the establishment of foundations and frameworks for economic development, regional settlement planning and regional resources planning in BC. The development path chosen for the province by the coalition
government and followed up on by the successive Social Credit government focussed on strengthening what had already become the backbone of the province’s economy, its presumed endless resource base. Growth in Vancouver, the province’s commercial and manufacturing centre, had stimulated public concerns for the need for a regional approach to settlement planning encouraging the introduction of regional planning legislation in 1948 and the subsequent establishment of the LMRPB and other regional planning boards in the faster growing regions. Rapid growth in rural regions, encouraged through Premier WAC Bennett’s development program through the 1950s and 1960s, demanded a more decentralized approach to community planning and a coordinated approach to the provision of municipal services. This contributed to the introduction of the regional district system in 1965 which created regional bodies designed to provide regional government for regions, a forum for representation of regional residents and communities, and a vehicle for inter-municipal service delivery. Through the late 1960s and into the 1970s, tensions arose between municipalities, regional districts and the province regarding the role of regional districts. Following the election of the NDP government in 1972, frameworks for resource preservation and regional resources planning in BC were introduced. These include the establishment of the Agricultural Land Reserve (1972) providing de facto growth management boundaries, the efforts of ELUC to encourage intergovernmental cooperation in issues regarding the management and development of regional resources and the introduction of the Islands Trust Act (1974), a step toward protecting the natural resources of the Gulf Islands. While the NDP was quick to introduce a stream of social, economic and environmental legislation they appeared to have no clear vision for BC’s economic future.

**Phase II: Set Back and Challenge (late 1970s -1980s)**

In the second phase of regional planning in BC, regional planning processes faced a number of setbacks. In light of these setbacks, and in the face of increasing challenges related to urban growth and resource management, the resolve of planners to find creative ways to address regional issues was
strengthened. The late 1970s was a time of review, reflection and proposal of alternatives. The 1980s, often referred to as the “Black Hole” of regional planning in the province, fell on the heels of the international oil crisis, decline of the welfare state, the rise of international market capitalism. Fiscal restraint, and reducing the role of government, were the focus of the day. Following the path taken by Margaret Thatcher in England and Ronald Reagan in the United States, Social Credit Premier Bill Bennett, following his re-election in 1983, began to make drastic cuts to government spending. Regional planning, which was seen to be an unnecessary level of public administration, was hit hard. With the rescinding of regional district planning powers and the reduction in planning grants to regional districts, regional planning in areas outside the Lower Mainland faded away. “Cost saving measures”, including the abolishment of ELUCS and Technical Planning Committees, left the province with no mechanism for intergovernmental cooperation. In the Lower Mainland, due to the strong regional planning culture that had developed, municipalities agreed to work together to support regional planning, effectively transferring the authority for regional planning to the municipalities. Some small steps were taken in the latter half of the decade which advanced regional planning interests. However the province was still many steps behind where it had been prior to cuts being made to the province’s planning framework.

Urban restructuring and shifts in the resource industries in the 1980s signalled a second wave of growth and change in the province. As the world’s economy became more integrated and the importance of service industries rose, the provincial development focus shifted from the hinterland to encouraging new investment in Vancouver. While provincial efforts were encouraging job creation in the province’s central city, jobs were declining in the resource hinterland. Changes introduced to resource-based industries following the economic downswing of the early 80s, reduced the number of jobs available in resource based communities. Owing to the lack of provincial leadership in the area of resource management and regional settlement, conflicts over resources were intensifying and urban growth challenges were increasing.
Phase III: Rebirth and Redefinition (1990s)

The third phase in the evolution of regional planning in BC emerges as the global development paradigm began to shift from a focus solely on economic benefits to considering ecological, social and economic sustainability. During the 1990s, the province reclaimed its role as an active participant in regional planning. Addressing urban growth, resource management and sustainable development were top priorities for NDP Mike Harcourt who defeated the Social Credit government in 1991. During this time the integrated resource management approach which had been promoted through the work of ELUC and ELUCS was re-introduced to the province through the initiatives of the Commission on Resources and Environment (CORE) and the complementary work of the Land Use Co-ordination Office (LUCO). Out of the BC Round Table on Environment and Economy, which had been established in 1990 to encourage the development of sustainable development strategies in BC, emerged the Georgia Basin Initiative providing a new approaches to addressing issues concerning urban growth. The initiatives of the Fraser Basin Management Board, pioneering collaboration between federal, provincial, municipal, aboriginal, and non-governmental agencies provided another avenue for addressing issues that crossed jurisdictional boundaries. The recognition of aboriginal treaty rights brought new perspective and values to land-use planning. The GVRD’s preservation of regional planning capacity through the 1980s had enabled it to move ahead with plans to revise their regional plan in the early 1990s. With the introduction of growth strategies legislation in 1995, regional district planning powers were reinstated. While advances were made in regional settlement planning and regional resources planning, very little had been done to address the economic uncertainties of resource communities. These communities, still reliant on the export of natural resources, were hit hard by the downswing of the Asian economy in the later part of the 1990s.
6.3 Key Themes, Trends and Recommendations

While there are a number of different ways in which regional planning in BC can be analysed, identification of key themes and trends has been chosen here as it provides insight into the patterns and processes shaping the direction of regional planning efforts in the province. The following identifies key themes, reviews trends, and provides recommendations for future direction answering the following questions:

What are the key themes and trends emerging from the analysis of BC's regional planning history?
What do these key themes and trends tell us about BC’s current regional planning system?
What recommendations for future research and direction emerge from key themes and trends?

1. Factors such as location, scale, geography, resource wealth, governance structure, and comparative advantage have led to the creation of an asymmetrical demographic and economic development framework contributing to the existence of two regional realities with very different regional issues and challenges. As identified in the body of this paper, there are a number of factors that have contributed to the existence of, at the broadest level of analysis, two types of regional realities. On the one hand there are the service industry oriented metropolitan regions of the southwestern quadrant (CRD and LowerMainland) where a high percentage of the province’s 5% of habitable land is concentrated and about two-thirds of the province’s population resides. The majority of the land is privately owned and administered by local government. On the other hand there are the resource-based rural regions located predominantly in the province’s Interior and the North. Here settlement is scattered through crown land. The province’s metropolitan areas have grown and developed from the profits of the rich resource hinterland. Considerable economic leakage to the southwestern tip has impeded the development of diversified economies in resource regions. Planning and development decisions made by legislators in recent decades have been accused of being “urban-biassed” and made to cater of Vancouver and Victoria
Differences that exist between regions in BC indicate that “one size fits all” approaches to regional settlement planning are not appropriate. While the flexibility for regions to choose whether to engage in regional planning and what their priorities will be has been built into the existing system, it has been suggested that the province’s existing regional planning framework “ignores the context of rural regions” (Harker 2001). Many regions, particularly in rural areas, still face challenges related to lack of municipal commitment, resistance to provincial involvement, lack of adequate funds and negative attitudes toward planning. This situation suggests the need for further research into identifying the conditions which inhibit the ability of local governments in some regions to effectively engage in regional planning.

2. Provincial governance structure has contributed to the creation of a bi-polar approach to planning. Since the late nineteenth century there have been two key players involved in land-use planning in the province. The province, as the owner of the majority of the province’s land (about 95%) has played a dominant role in resource management and development. Meanwhile, local governments have been afforded a high level of autonomy in regard to settlement planning. As experienced following the establishment of the regional district system in the 1960s, the freedom experienced by local governments has made them resistant to hierarchical approaches to regional planning which appear to threaten their autonomy. As a result, the province has learned that recognizing and respecting local government autonomy must be a key component of regional settlement planning legislation and process. Meanwhile, provincial government continues to exert authority in resource management and development sometimes imposing restrictions on local government, as in the case of the agricultural land reserve and forest land reserve. Provincial ministries have traditionally designed programs in isolation from local government contributing
to tension, conflict and confusion.

The need to bridge the distance that has existed between senior and local planning processes has been recognized throughout the past half century. Technical Planning Committees were one attempt. We now have mechanisms for cooperation and consultation built into the LRMP process and growth strategies process. However, there still exist some gaps. For example, while regions engaged in growth strategies processes have the advantage of having intergovernmental advisory committees to help coordinate local government visions with provincial government activities those not engaged in the development of growth strategies do not. As identified in a recent study this situation has been problematic for a number of regions (Gawronski, 1999). These circumstances identify the need for further study into identifying ways of enhancing coordination between senior and local government in areas where no formal mechanism exists.

3. As a result of concerns regarding regional settlement and resource management two regional planning streams have developed in BC. On the one hand there is regional resources planning: on the other there is regional settlement planning. While there has been some cross over in terms of the sharing of ideas regarding process and vision, these two streams have developed separately. Building upon foundations laid by ELUCS and the CORE process, is the provincially lead LRMP process. This process, directed toward issues related to the allocation of crown land among users and the identification of policies for a variety of resources including protected areas, forests, and wildlife, provides a necessary framework for the integration of provincial resource based interests. Building upon experiences in municipal planning, regional board and regional district processes, regional settlement challenges are addressed through the local government led regional growth strategies and community and regional planning processes. While the local and provincial regional plans may cover the same area, each plan has a different purpose, emphasizes different issues, and has different methods for implementation.

Given that there are statutory limitations on the impact of local government plans and land use
regulations on crown land and that provincial legislation can restrict local government authority, consultation and cooperation between different levels of government has become an important component of both regional settlement and regional resources planning. Consultation and cooperation processes attempt to link these separate regional planning streams. How effective are these links? Concerns have been raised regarding the fact that the LRMP process, which dominates regional planning in resource regions, does not consider regional settlement and in light of this, provincial authority in the area of resources planning continues to limit the ability for rural municipalities to effectively engage in regional planning and explore development alternatives. *Given this, further study should be directed toward identifying how effective existing links between regional settlement and regional resources planning are and how closer links, particularly in rural regions, can be developed.*

4. **BC’s regional planning system has exhibited vulnerability to political and economic shifts.** As the past reveals, BC’s political structure enables the provincial government to make definitive political decisions that can alter the course of land-use and resources planning. In some cases, such as with the establishment of the Agricultural Land Reserve, provincial decisions have benefited regional planning, in others, such as the rescinding of regional district planning powers, these decision have had detrimental impacts. Given BC’s polarized political environment it is difficult to anticipate what shifts may occur in the years and decades to come. As exhibited in the past, economic and political shifts have influenced provincial priorities and the ability for local governments to participate in the regional planning process.

Vulnerability to political and economic shifts has necessitated regional planners to adapt to find a robust and resilient planning model. Developing resilience to political and economic shifts has involved gaining bi-partisan support for regional planning policies and involving a mix of stakeholders in regional planning processes. Developing strong public support can be seen as an important component in this process. Lack of public support for regional planning initiatives can lead to political decisions which challenge the ability of regional planning agencies to effectively work toward achieving their goals (as
experienced in the Lower Mainland with the vehicle levy). It is difficult to gain public support if the public feel distanced from decision making processes. *Given this, further attention needs to be given to identifying way of engaging the public in meaningful discussion related to regional issues and the implications of the regional planning process.*

5. The development of regional settlement planning policy and process has been largely influenced by the experience of the Lower Mainland which over time has developed a resilient regional planning culture. As the first region of the province to experience the impacts of urban development, the need for a regional approach to settlement planning was first recognized in the Lower Mainland. This region saw the development of the province’s first inter-jurisdictional service board in 1914 as well as the emergence of a regional planning movement beginning with the Lower Mainland Regional Planning Association in 1936. The growing interest and support for a regional approach to planning in the Lower Mainland following WWII contributed to the passing of legislation enabling the creation of regional planning body in the Lower Mainland and other parts of the province. The Lower Mainland experience can be seen as contributing to a number of other legislative initiatives such as the introduction of regional development services legislation in 1989 and the creation of growth management legislation in 1995. The Lower Mainland’s early experiences with municipal cooperation in regional planning and the development of a strong base of knowledge about the region contributed to the development of a regional planning culture which was able to resist the impacts of the 1983 legislation. This resilience to political and economic shifts enabled the Lower Mainland to maintain the only consistent thread of regional planning through BC’s regional planning history.

In addition to having early experiences with regional planning, the Lower Mainland benefits from having an increasing pool of professionals and public who support and encourage actions directed at strengthening regional planning foundations and frameworks. As well, the Lower Mainland has had the
resources to maintain a consistent and complete source of data about the region. Lack of support for planning, limited planning capacity, heavy provincial influence and a smaller pool of resources for planning are factors contributing to the lack of strong regional planning foundations and culture in many other regions. Given the advisory nature of regional district planning, a strong regional planning culture can be seen as an important factor supporting implementation. *Given that the province's regional planning framework has been largely influenced by the Lower Mainland experience, some attention should be directed toward identifying how well suited it is to encouraging regional planning and the development of a regional planning culture in regions outside the Lower Mainland.*

6. **Regional planning policies and processes have developed incrementally, building on past experience and adapting to changing circumstances and increased understanding.** In some instances regional planning efforts have responded to the need to address existing and perceived crisis such as the Fraser River flood, the loss of agricultural lands and conflicts over resources. Other decisions have advanced step by step incorporating lessons from the past. For example, past resistance to pre-1983 hierarchical regional district planning encouraged the development of the more interactive and cooperative model of the 1990s. Achievements with resource management in the 1970s encouraged a return to an integrated approach in the 1990s. Past challenges with implementation have contributed to the development of stronger connections between planning and action. Some ideas have been incorporated from outside theories and models, however the development of the province's regional planning system has been largely "Made in BC".

While the incremental approach to the development of legislation influencing regional planning has been beneficial in a number of ways, it can also be seen as increasing the complexity of the overall land-use planning system. The actions of different planning bodies to address the need for consultation and coordination have contributed to the existence of a number of overlapping planning processes. Concerns have been expressed that there are too many land-use initiatives occurring at once (i.e. LRMPs, treaty
negotiations, environmental assessment reviews, growth strategies) and that they are not effectively coordinated. This may be seen as causing consultation fatigue and exceeding the capacity for local government, first nations and other planning bodies to effectively contributing. The complexity of the system, with its various levels of decision making has also made it more difficult to encourage meaningful public participation. In light of this, there is a need to examine what the system currently consists of, how existing complexities prevent meaningful participation from the public, first nations, provincial ministries and other stakeholders and identify ways of addressing these complexities.

7. Vision, political leadership and commitment from individuals have been essential to advancing regional planning policies in BC. As Andrew Petter’s account of the process leading up to the establishment of the ALC identifies, “The process of initiating ideas and transforming them into action, no matter how systematic it becomes, is ultimately a human endeavour which can only be fully understood in human terms” (Petter, 1985, 4). Throughout BC’s regional planning history there have been a number of individuals who have had the vision, commitment and patience to initiate and support activities contributing to the design and development of BC’s regional planning framework. The importance of individuals and groups of individuals in the story of regional planning in BC should not be underestimated. For example, many have agreed that without Tom MacDonald and the efforts of the BC branch of the CPAC, the initiation of regional planning in BC would have been very different. Without the leadership of Jim Wilson and the LMRPB staff, the foundation upon which regional planning in the Lower Mainland has developed would not have been as strong. Without Peter Oberlander’s establishment of the School of Community and Regional Planning BC the province would not have benefited from having a “homegrown planning profession” as early in its history. The political leadership of individuals such as Dan Campbell, Darlene Marzari and Mike Harcourt provided opportunities to advance regional planning legislation. Without the patience, commitment and support of regional planning advocates in the provincial bureaucracy and in
regional governments the opportunities to advance regional planning policies may not have been as
effectively pursued. The influence of individuals identified three key ingredients for advancing regional
planning policies and action: vision, commitment and political will.

Formal and informal networks between individuals with vision committed to supporting and
implementing efforts directed toward encouraging sustainability will continue to be a source of innovation
and momentum for regional planning in the future. However, the nature of these networks needs to address
existing realities. As we move into the future it is clear that those outside the system will have an
increasingly important role to play in drawing attention to regional issues, providing alternatives and
monitoring progress. At present there are a number of activist groups, first nations and non-governmental
organizations involved in activities such as bioregional mapping, community economic development, and
environmental stewardship which seek alternative ways to address regional issues. In order to take full
advantage of the energy being directed from both inside and outside the system toward addressing
regional issues, attention needs to be paid to supporting and creating strongly linked networks.

8. While there has been considerable effort made to address problems related to regional
settlement and regional resources, there has been a lack of substantive focus on sustainable regional
economic development planning. WAC Bennett's economic development planning supporting large
scale industry and the development of single resource towns placed hinterland regions in positions of
dependance, making them highly susceptible to boom and bust cycles. Lacking endogenous development
capacity resource regions have been dependent on senior government assistance during low economic
periods. Proposals for province wide decentralized development planning, such as that proposed by PIBC
in 1970s and Vander Zalm in the early 1980s, never materialized. The province has failed to effectively
link community planning with economic development planning. Lacking a framework for sustainable
economic development the vulnerability of resource dependent communities and regions to the shifting
market conditions, resource depletion and limits on extraction have become very apparent in recent years.

Results of the 2001 census identify that the populations of sixteen rural regional districts are in decline, and four BC rural communities are among the fastest declining in Canada. Outside the three fastest growth regions, only 12 municipalities in BC grew. Six of these are in the economic shadow of Alberta: Fort St. John, Taylor, Golden, Radium Hot Springs and Invermere. Now 85% of the province's population live in urban areas, 69% of which reside in the Lower Mainland and Souther Vancouver Island (BC Stats, 2002b). Given the huge contribution of rural regions to the provincial economy, BC cannot afford to loose rural communities. As identified at a recent conference on regional planning in the Lower Mainland, “It does us no good whatsoever to have a rural hinterland that is collapsing....we must reach out to rural communities and try and have some cohesion in this province because the rural/urban split is widening by the day and it’s a poor situation that cannot help us as we look at regional challenges”(Scott 2002). *In light of these trends, immediate attention needs to be focussed on identifying and implementing alternatives for economic development planning in resource regions.*

9. The School of Community and Regional Planning (SCARP) has played an important role in training regional planning professionals and contributing to regional planning process and debates. In 1953, when the School of Community and Regional Planning was established, there were very few planning professionals in the province. Of those that did exist, the majority came from outside the province. The Lower Mainland Regional Planning Board provided the training ground for a number of SCARPs early graduates such as Norm Pearson, Victor Parker, Bob Williams, and Dennis O’Gorman, who later went on to take influential positions in the provincial government and in other regional planning agencies in the province. Those reflecting on connections between their experience at SCARP and their experience as professional planners identify that the interdisciplinary approach promoted in SCARP is well suited for addressing the multitude of issues faced in the field of regional planning. In addition to training planning professionals, we can also see examples, such as with the development of the regional plan for the Cariboo,
where SCARP faculty have contributed to regional planning processes. SCARP faculty have also contributed to debates on provincial planning directions and contributed insight and ideas.

While there have been periods in SCARP's history where there has been a high degree of faculty interest in regional issues, regional planning in BC is currently not a core focus. In addition, as an informal review of recent SCARP theses reflects, there has been very limited student focus on regional issues in recent years. *If SCARP is to play a role in addressing the gaps that exist within the province’s planning framework it will have to look into ways of increasing focus on the BC case with specific attention to the conditions of hinterland regions. One step toward this goal includes looking into opportunities to integrate research and teaching with the University of Northern BC, Simon Fraser University and the University of Victoria.*

### 6.4 Final Reflections

The election of Gordon Campbell in 2001 can be interpreted as having signaled the beginnings of a new phase in regional planning in BC. Gordon Campbell came to power on a platform committed to addressing the decline in economic growth BC had been experiencing through the 1990s. In an effort to reduce BC’s deficit and encourage investment a number of changes have been introduced. Proposed changes to government programs, to be phased in the next four years, will see greater cuts to the civil service than the 25% experienced under Bennett in 1983. A number of changes introduced, such as those that have been made to the regulation of agricultural land and environmental programs, will have some impact on regional planning in the province. Changes to the *Agricultural Land Commission Act*, regionalising decision making regarding the exemption of land from the agricultural land reserve will provide new flexibility on current uses opening the ALR up to the possibility of increased development on agricultural land. Extensive cuts to environment related programs will reduce provincial efforts in the area of watershed restoration, wildlife inventory and habitat protection. Staff cuts will reduce the amount of time available for ministries
to coordinate programs with other ministries and local government. Cuts to staff in regional offices have reduced the already limited provincial government connections in hinterland communities. In light of cuts to provincial services, municipalities may have to take on additional responsibilities reducing resources available for regional planning. Another change which will have some impact on regional planning is the introduction of a Community Charter. The first phase of the community charter process has focussed on providing broader powers to municipalities, strengthening intergovernmental relationships and improving public participation. The second phase will address issues related to regional districts, regional growth strategies, planning and land use. What impact will these changes have on the regional settlement planning system that is currently in place? In terms of economic development, the province does not appear to have a clear vision. Efforts are being made to find new markets for BC resources and promote BC as an attractive place to business. The lifting of the ban on exploration of offshore oil has identified the desire for the province to continue to tap the wealth of the province’s hinterland. Could this contribute to a “re-opening of the North”? Will more sustainable alternatives contributing to the building of development capacity in rural regions be explored?

There are many uncertainties that exist as we head into the future. One thing we can be certain of is that the regional planning practitioners and advocates of the future, like those of the past, will continue to be challenged to find creative solutions to balancing economic, environmental and social interests. As suggested by Brahm Wiesman based on his forty years of experience and reflection on regional planning in the province “realizing [regional planning] opportunities in the future is going to be more difficult then in the past”(Weisman 2000w). The regional planners of BC’s future will be confronted with greater complexity then those of the past. There are now many more interests and voices to balance and many more levels of decision making. Globalization forces are pushing regional interests outward while ecological and social issues, as in the past, will demand focus on the region and its people. With increased immigration and the movement of people from region to region within the province, BC residents have much less connection to the regions they live in. Regional planning practitioners and advocates will have to play a
greater role in encouraging popular education in order to gain support by the electorate for regional planning activities and finding creative ways to encourage effective public participation in planning processes. As we have learned from the past, advancing regional planning in the future will require vision, commitment, political will and continuous evaluation.
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130


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Appendix A: List of Interviews and Interview Questions

**Formal In Personal Interviews:**

Ken Cameron (April 19/2000) - SCARP graduate (1970), CPAC, senior positions with GVRD (1978-present)

Gerard Farry (Feb 25/2000) - SCARP graduate (1953), Vancouver City Planning Department (1952-1969), Director of Planning GVRD late 1970s

Don Harasym (Feb.7/2000) - Extensive experience planning in rural regions in BC, current Planning Manager of Regional District of Central Kootenay

Harry Harker (Dec.15/2000) - Extensive experience planning in rural regions, eight years as General Manager of Development Services in Regional District of the Comox-Strathcona

Gary Harkness (March 2/2000) - SCARP graduate (1964), LMRPB staff, Ministry of Municipal Affairs (1974-present)


Darlene Marzari (Feb.28/2000) - Former Vancouver council member, Minister of Municipal Affairs (1993-1996)

Peter Oberlander (Feb.17/2000) - Consultant to LMRPB 1950, founder of SCARP, CPAC, former SCARP Director and Professor

Denis O’Gorman (March 3/2000) - SCARP graduate (1965) LMRPB, Director of ELUCs, CORE, Environment Ministry (1973-2002)

Alan Osborne (March 6/2000) - Ministry of Municipal Affairs (1986-present)


Informal Interviews

David Essig (Jan 15/2001) - Chair of Islands Trust
Gary Runka (Feb28/2000) - Planner/agronomist, involvement with ALR
Ted Rashleigh (March 22/2002) - Former CPAC Director

Interview Questions

The standard list of questions for each of the formal interviews was as follows:

1. What is your definition of regional planning?
2. What was/is your particular role and experience?
3. What were some of the major planning debates through the decades?
4. What were some of the major influences?

These questions were used to guide the process. In most cases a number of additional questions specific to the interviewees experience were asked.

Informal interviews involved discussion of specific topics.
Appendix B: History of Regional Planning Workshop March 17, 2000
List of Attendees/Workshop Agenda

Workshop Attendees

Early History
Gerard Farry
Gary Harkness
Erik Karlsen
Bill Lane
Peter Oberlander
Denis O’Gorman
Lewis Robinson
Herb Virdi
Brahm Wiesman
Bob Williams

More Current History
Harry Harker
Darlene Marzari
Alison McNeil
Alan Osborne
Gary Paget
Brian Walisser

Academics
Patrick Smith (SFU)
Tom Hutton (SCARP)
Tony Dorcey (SCARP)
Mike Carr (SFU)
Doug Aberley (SCARP)
Peter Boothroyd (SCARP)

SCARP Students
Tina Atva
Narissa Chadwick
Jeff Cook
Deanna Grinnell
Teresa Harding
Andrew Ramlo
Andrew Young
Tim Walls
Workshop Agenda

9:45-10:10  Plenary
   Why we are here...........
   Where this is going........

10:10-12:00  First Breakout Group: Ideas, Influences and Opportunities
   What were some of the major planning debates of the era/region you are most familiar with?

   What were some of the influences (ie, external planning models/theories, economics, politics, dominant personalities etc)?

   What were the conditions supporting and opposing regional planning efforts in the province? Where there any missed opportunities?

10:10-10:40  Personal Impressions (3 min each participant)

10:40-12:10  Small group discussion (era to era)

12:10-12:50  Lunch in large group (provided by SCARP)
   Informal Conversation/ Adding to time-line

12:50-1:50  Second Breakout Group: Challenges
   What were the major challenges constraining regional planning throughout your experience?

   How have these challenges shaped legislation, public support, and other aspects influencing the direction and acceptance of regional planning efforts in B.C.?

1:50-2:00  Break

2:00-3:00  Full Group Discussion: Links
   Opportunity in large group to draw links between significant events, ideas, times, policies etc.. Informal with some drawing on time-line

3:00-3:50  Current Situation
   Identifying Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats in regard to B.C.'s current regional planning framework.

3:50-4:00  Wrap Up and Thank-You to Guests

4:00-6:00  Moving Forward (with panel of respondents)
   Gaps? Alternatives? Where do we go from here?
Appendix C: Map of Regional District Boundaries

Regional Districts:
1 East Kootenay
3 Central Kootenay
5 Kootenay Boundary
7 Okanagan-Similkameen
9 Fraser Valley
15 Greater Vancouver
17 Capital
19 Cowichan Valley
21 Nanaimo
23 Alberni-Clayoquot
25 Comox-Strathcona
27 Powell River
29 Sunshine Coast
31 Squamish-Lillooet
33 Thompson-Nicola
35 Central Okanagan
37 North Okanagan
39 Columbia-Shuswap
41 Cariboo
43 Mount Waddington
45 Central Coast
47 Skeena-Queen Charlotte
49 Kitimat-Stikine
51 Bulkley-Nechako
53 Fraser-Ft George
55 Peace River
57 Stikine (region)
59 Northern Rockies

(Source: Bish and Clemens 1999)
Appendix D: Map of Suggested Economic Regions 1970 (PIBC Proposal)

(Source: PIBC 1970)
Appendix E: Map of Development Planning Regions 1979 (DREE)

(Source: Webster 1979)
Appendix F: Map of Resource Management Regions 1975 (ELUC)

(Source: ELUC 1975)
Appendix G: Map of Development Regions 1987 (Vander Zalm Proposal)

(Source: Volkart and Cox 1987)
Appendix H: Map of Land and Resource Management Regions 2001 (LUCO)

(Source: LUCO 2002)
Appendix I: Map of Georgia Basin

(Source: Environment Canada 2001)
Appendix J: Map of Fraser Basin

(Source: Doreey 1997)