Sharing Contested Space: Participation in the Planning of UBC's University Boulevard Area

by

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Sharing Contested Space: Participation in the Planning of UBC's University Boulevard

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Vancouver, BC Canada
ABSTRACT

Rooted in democracy, the field of public participation has a long history and continues to evolve. In the last fifty years, a huge number of approaches have been created to involve the interested community in decision making. Most recently, contingent strategies and deliberative techniques have drawn the attention of practitioners; so too has the systematic evaluation of participatory processes. The goal of this thesis is to take advantage of these recent developments by building and testing an evaluation framework for public participation that is principled, robust, and responsive to different points of view.

A comprehensive, contingent evaluative framework is developed based on recent community involvement literature and applied to the University Boulevard Neighbourhood Planning process at the University of British Columbia (UBC). For each criterion in the framework, data was collected from interviews, documents, media reports, and participant observation, and triangulated to maximize objectivity. Combining the results for each criterion led to broader conclusions, recommendations for UBC, and lessons for evaluators.

Overall, UBC staff responsible for the consultation process with the community put many of the right elements in place: the process was representative, inclusive, and informative, and was flexible when challenged. However, staff lacked commitment to adopted planning policy and faced time pressure, encouraging them to limit the influence of the community in order to obtain approval quickly. The evaluation of implementation showed that the process was not a credible attempt to involve community members in making planning decisions, and highlighted significant issues with governance of planning at UBC. At the end of the day, the process was only marginally successful, failing to meet many internal goals and meeting few broader social goals despite the eventual approval of a plan for the area. UBC should give the interested community more influence, and enhance accountability, transparency and objectivity if they are to improve results from planning processes.

Overall, the evaluation framework was appropriate to the case study and could be applied elsewhere. Evaluators should be aware of constraints from resources, timing, and access to information in applying the model, and should develop a clearer understanding of the links between contextual factors and process characteristics if they are to improve on this method.
Executive Summary

Background
Idealism and pragmatism are two defining characteristics of planners, who must constantly balance them in reaching for a better future in a political world. The evaluation of public participation in planning decisions is a good example of this balance. The very concept of public participation is contested, with a wide range of philosophies competing to define it. In order to be useful, an evaluation of participation must make a comparison with an ideal. At the same time it must be practical, responding to the situation at hand and to differences of opinion, if it is to be widely accepted as a fair and objective assessment.

Rooted in the great democratic experiment, the field of public participation has a long history and continues to evolve. In the last fifty years, a huge number of techniques and strategies have been created to involve interested members of the public in decision making. Most recently, contingent strategies and deliberative techniques have drawn the attention of practitioners. So too has the systematic evaluation of participatory processes. The goal of this thesis is to take advantage of these recent developments by building and testing an evaluation framework for public participation that is principled, robust, and responsive to different points of view.

The University Boulevard Case Study
Since the mid-1980's, the University of British Columbia (UBC) has been developing parts of campus for residential and other "Non-Institutional" uses. As a result of opposition from the public and the neighbouring municipality of Vancouver, the Greater Vancouver Regional District (GVRD) produced an Official Community Plan (OCP) Bylaw for the UBC area in 1997. UBC and the GVRD also agreed on requirements for planning processes at a more detailed neighbourhood scale in a series of Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs), most recently in 2000. Following the OCP, UBC produced a Comprehensive Community Plan (CCP) that incorporates some neighbourhood-scale planning and campus-wide-infrastructure planning. Planning for neighbourhoods is being completed by UBC in the form of "Neighbourhood Plans," with one for each of 8 areas defined in the OCP.

University Boulevard is one such "Neighbourhood." It is a 3 hectare area located at the social center of campus, and is bordered by a student athletic/recreational/social area, the biomedical precinct, and the science precinct (Figure ES-I). The Student Union Building and bus loop, located there, are important draws for people from across campus. As such, the space represented by University Boulevard is used and

Figure ES-I: University Boulevard
valued by a tremendous variety of people: it is truly a shared space, and one whose future is also contested by its various users.

The community was consulted on Draft #2 of the University Boulevard Neighbourhood Plan (UBNP) in spring 2003, offering a great case study for the thesis to test evaluation of participation and to help the UBC staff improve their planning practice. Planning for University Boulevard began in December 2000 and ended in October 2003, going through three major phases, each of which culminated in the production of a Draft Plan (Figure ES-2). The Draft #2 process had two important sub-phases, of which the first was primarily internal work by UBC staff and the second was the public participation process. The timeline for the entire planning process is shown below; the case study is focused on public involvement in the production and review of Draft #2, marked as a shaded area on the timeline. Because the case study is the middle part of a larger overall process, the investigation considers the planning process to be on-going: the process for Draft #1 is considered as part of the context and the process for Draft #3 as an outcome.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Planning Phase</th>
<th>2001</th>
<th>2002</th>
<th>2003</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Draft Plan #1</td>
<td>J A J</td>
<td>O</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Draft Plan #2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University Boulevard Committee Report</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Draft Plan #2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Draft Plan #3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure ES-2: University Boulevard Timeline

**The Research Project: Design and Methods**

This research considers two questions:

- "To what degree was public participation in the University Boulevard Neighbourhood Planning process successful, and why?" and
- "What lessons does this research teach us about evaluation of public participation?"

To answer them, a comprehensive, contingent evaluative framework is developed based on a review of the public involvement literature. This framework was applied to the UBNP process through the collection and analysis of data from interviews, participant observation, media review and document review. The research follows the "Guiding Principles for Evaluators" of the American Evaluators Association. Ethical research practices were used throughout, and care was taken to ensure objectivity, including selection of a broad range of interviewees and the use of data triangulation. Information collected in the research is applied in three ways: to construct an accurate history of the process, to refine contingent criteria, and to evaluate the process against the refined set of criteria. In this way, the study describes the process, then analyzes its three components: process design, implementation, and outcomes.

**Results**

A conceptual model of public participation in decision-making is developed based on the literature. It describes three inter-related elements of public participation: Context, Process, and
Outcomes (Figure ES-3), which structure the presentation of the study's major findings in three corresponding sections.

Context
Planning at UBC is unusual in that the municipal government — in this case the GVRD — has developed an OCP but has not developed local area plans or land-use bylaws; rather, it has agreed through MoUs that UBC will produce neighbourhood plans through a mutually acceptable process. In their MoUs, UBC and the GVRD have agreed that the GVRD's role will be to review the OCP regularly and to approve Neighbourhood Plans if they are consistent with the OCP, while UBC's role is to conduct the planning process and approve plans subject to consistency as understood by the GVRD. UBC has a much greater role in conducting and governing Neighbourhood Planning than does the GVRD.

The contextual factors are summarized as they were following the production of the University Boulevard Committee's report in April 2002. At the time, the following factors were important to the planning process:

1. a requirement that the UBNP be consistent with the OCP and with CCP principles and overall density allocations;
2. a requirement that the process had to comply with the 2000 MoU with the GVRD;
3. an enormous planning scope, equivalent to zoning, subdivision, and public realm and building design guidelines combined, indicating the need for more public influence and a more inclusive process, commensurate with the potential impacts on the community;
4. a part of campus that was of central importance to many people, indicating a need for a broadly inclusive process that could resolve conflicts among competing interests;
5. a long history of community mistrust, indicating the need for significant community influence over outcomes;
6. adopted policy — *A Legacy and a Promise: Principles for Physical Planning at UBC* — that committed to collaborative planning and therefore to providing significant public influence;
7. a history of presenting a single draft option to the public at any given time, limiting public influence to refining each one;
8. public concerns with Draft #1 and more significant concerns with the University Boulevard Committee’s recommendations, indicating strong potential for public opposition and controversy; and
9. pressure to develop the Dentistry building and transit loop quickly, indicating the need for an expeditious process.

The major results of the context evaluation in the thesis are that the evaluation should consider whether the process was broadly inclusive and if the community had significant influence over the outcomes. It also highlights a conflict between the need for inclusiveness and public influence on one hand, and time pressures and UBC’s history of planning practice on the other.

**Process**

Based on the interviews conducted with responsible administrative staff and the review of available documents, it is evident that UBC staff assumed that the public was satisfied with previous processes and decisions and thought that University Boulevard proposals were improvements. Therefore, anticipating public acceptance, their strategy was to prepare a draft plan internally and then present it to a broad cross-section of the community for approval. Table ES-1 summarizes UBC’s objectives and the activities they implemented to achieve them.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objective</th>
<th>Activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Meet GVRD requirements.</td>
<td>Incorporate the MoU’s requirements into the process.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Be inclusive.</td>
<td>Conduct a large number of accessible meetings between February and April.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inform the public.</td>
<td>Use a website and provide Draft Plan Diagrams and a Discussion Guide to the public.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obtain and document feedback from the public.</td>
<td>Develop and use a Feedback Form. Produce a Consultation Report to summarize feedback.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obtain Board of Governors approval in May.</td>
<td>Schedule the process in time to report feedback to the Board in May.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obtain public acceptance.</td>
<td>Promote and defend the Draft Plan.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table ES-1: UBC Strategy for the Public Process**

**Evaluation of the Strategy**

Four elements of the strategy were critical to the eventual success or failure of the process. These are summarized in the left-hand column of Table ES-2. To the right of each strategic element is a statement (or statements) that summarizes its evaluation; the symbol (✓) indicates a positive evaluation, (~) a mixed result, and (✗) a negative evaluation. This convention is used throughout the Results section.
**Strategy** | **Evaluation**
---|---
Make information readily available. | ✓ Likely to enhance the public's ability to respond meaningfully.
Maximize the number of participants. | ~ Could be seen as a response to calls for improved planning process. However, given known public concerns over the proposals, it was likely to produce significant opposition.
Minimize public influence by limiting their role to reviewing a completed plan. | × Likely to worsen the existing atmosphere of distrust.  
× Did not match internal policy.  
× Likely to worsen the existing atmosphere of distrust, given that incorporation of public input was not possible on this schedule.
Time the process to culminate in Board of Governors approval in May. |  

Table ES-2: Evaluation of Strategy

**Evaluation of the Implementation**

The characteristics of the March process are evaluated against criteria that fall into three categories: representation, information, and procedures. Table ES-3 summarizes the evaluation with a statement for each criterion.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Evaluation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Representation | ✓ Participant selection was fair.  
✓ The process was inclusive.  
✓ With the exception of undergraduate students, participant composition was representative of community composition.  
~ Although meeting signage was poor and advertising uninspired, events were quite accessible. |
| Information | ✓ Written information was accessible and readable.  
✓ Participants were assisted in understanding graphics at open houses. This was critical to their understanding in some cases.  
~ Although individual communications materials did not stand alone, together they formed a complete package.  
× Written communications contained biases and/or omissions, in particular the Feedback Form and the Executive Summary of the Consultation Report. Verbal communications were also biased, often having a promotional or defensive tone. |
The process was flexible when challenged, permitting the extension of the process beyond the original approval date. The process incorporated two-way communication, but it was not of an interactive nature, and both participants and staff were sometimes disrespectful. UBC was unclear and sometimes inaccurate in its communications about scope and constraints. The process was poorly transparent: reporting was biased and incomplete, and reasons for decisions were not communicated by staff. The process lacked accountability, except for the attendance at the public meeting of the Chair of the Board of Governors.

Table ES-3: Evaluation of Implementation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Evaluation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Procedural Rules</td>
<td>✓ The process was flexible when challenged, permitting the extension of the process beyond the original approval date.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>~ The process incorporated two-way communication, but it was not of an interactive nature, and both participants and staff were sometimes disrespectful.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>X UBC was unclear and sometimes inaccurate in its communications about scope and constraints.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>X The process was poorly transparent: reporting was biased and incomplete, and reasons for decisions were not communicated by staff.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>X The process lacked accountability, except for the attendance at the public meeting of the Chair of the Board of Governors.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Key Findings

Looking at the evaluation of the UBNP process as a whole, UBC staff put many of the right elements in place for a successful consultation process, including identifying an appropriate set of public events and selecting potentially useful communications tools. However, their strategy failed to respond to key contextual factors, leading to loss of community trust, significant opposition, and a need to extend their timeline and revise the plan. This analysis of the process identifies two overarching issues: credibility and governance.

The credibility of the process was first raised as an issue because of the bias of UBC's communications. The Feedback Form was particularly aggravating to respondents, one of whom was quoted in the Consultation Report: “You might as well ask if people like apple pie or not.” Two issues with scope and constraints further weakened the University's credibility: (1) UBC insisted that plans comply with the CCP, although that did not reflect actual constraints, and (2) despite the fact that UBC's plan did not comply with the OCP, staff insisted that public input had to. Finally, the inadequate time planned for incorporation of public input confirmed that the process was not a credible attempt to involve the public in making decisions about University Boulevard. Rather, as a member of the administration put it, it was an attempt “to sell our vision in the broadest conceptual terms.”

Governance issues are related to the links between decision-makers, administration, and the public. First, decision-makers were not accountable to the community because there was virtually no formal public access to them, either during the process or at Board of Governors meetings. Second, the administration's documentation of feedback was biased, overstating support for the plan and emphasizing public incapacity to contribute meaningfully. For example, where the Executive Summary of the Consultation Report said that “there was a clear indication of support for the overall vision,” other sources said much the opposite, for example “opposition to the University Boulevard idea is fierce.” Staff also failed to communicate rationales for decisions to the public. Communications to the Board of Governors were similarly biased; in fact, the administration presented less information to the Board than they made available publicly. Because
the process was poorly transparent, the accountability of the administration to the Board and the public as well as the Board's accountability to the public were weakened. The governance of the process was poor.

Outcomes
Outcomes are evaluated based on a review of media articles and UBC documents, personal observations, and interviews. The evaluation of outcomes is limited because the evaluation took place immediately after the process when some outcomes are difficult to measure. Two types of outcomes are considered: UBC's internal goals and broadly accepted "social goals." Table ES-4 shows that UBC achieved only half of its internal goals.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Internal Goal</th>
<th>Evaluation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Implement planned activities</td>
<td>✓ Staff implemented all planned activities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meet GVRD requirements</td>
<td>✓ The process exceeded GVRD requirements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obtain public acceptance of Draft #2</td>
<td>✗ The public opposed most key elements of the proposal, including market housing, residential towers, and opening University Boulevard to traffic. They had concerns with the pool relocation, the underground bus loop, and commercialization.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obtain approval in May 2003</td>
<td>✗ Approval was not obtained for this plan; a revised plan was not approved until October 2003.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table ES-4: Evaluation Against Internal Goals

Similarly, evaluation of UBC's achievement of social goals shows only partial success. However, it also provides useful insights. The evaluation is summarized in Table ES-5.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social Goal</th>
<th>Evaluation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Educate and inform the public.</td>
<td>~ The community was educated only about topics UBC communicated about, for example, they knew nothing of the financial implications of proposals because UBC said nothing about them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incorporate public input and values.</td>
<td>~ While plan revisions incorporated public input, they reflected the values of the decision-makers and the authors of the revised plan more than those of the public.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve decision quality.</td>
<td>~ Although decision quality was difficult to measure, the new plan appeared to reflect compromises rather than improvements. For example, density was reduced, reducing financial returns; the opportunity to explore different forms of higher density was missed.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Social Goal | Evaluation
--- | ---
Enhance trust of the sponsoring institution. | × The process did not reduce the community’s long-standing mistrust of UBC, but may instead have increased their cynicism, despite changes made to the plan.

Table ES-5: Evaluation Against Social Goals

Overall, UBC was only partially successful in achieving internal and social goals.

Conclusion

This research considers the degree of success of the University Boulevard planning process, recommendations for improved planning processes at UBC, and broader lessons about the evaluation of public participation in planning. Each of these is addressed in turn to conclude the Executive Summary.

University Boulevard: Success or Failure?

On examination, it appears that UBC staff lacked commitment to adopted planning policy, and may have had concerns with the sharing of decision-making power required in a collaborative setting. Time pressures particular to the Draft #2 process probably exacerbated those dispositions, encouraging staff to limit public influence in order to obtain approval quickly. As a result, public involvement was limited to commenting at the last minute on a completed draft plan. Timing and biased communications were key in finding that the process was not a credible attempt to involve the public in decision-making. Furthermore, it was poorly governed, making it difficult to hold UBC to account for their lack of commitment.

The outcomes of the process reflected the inappropriateness of UBC’s strategy and the issues with its implementation. While the plan was approved by the Board of Governors, it was significantly delayed; in eliminating the most contentious issues, it eliminated some potentially positive features; while it responded to community input, it failed to reflect important community values; and it failed to reduce the community’s distrust of UBC. In answer to the first research question, the University Boulevard Neighbourhood Planning process was only marginally successful despite the plan’s eventual approval.

Recommendations for UBC

This evaluation indicates how UBC might improve the way in which it involves the public in planning-related decision-making. It is not a matter of making minor adjustments to the process it has used to date, however. UBC needs to change its approach to public involvement as a whole if it is to deal with the issues it faces. In keeping with the themes from the evaluation, recommendations are split into five categories: governance, credibility and relationships, efficiency, and decision quality.

Governance

Recommendation I. Adopt planning processes that improve the accountability of governing bodies.
 Recommendation 2. Improve the accountability of staff by requiring Board approval of the design of all planning processes.

 Recommendation 3. Ensure that communications with the public and the Board of Governors are completely transparent in that they are accurate and include documentation of feedback, decisions made, and rationales for decisions.

 Recommendation 4. Compile and adopt progressive principles and associated techniques for good planning process into a succinct policy statement to guide process design and implementation.

 Recommendation 5. Evaluate participatory planning processes on a continuing basis by building assessment into the process.

 Recommendation 6. To enhance the credibility of the process, use independent facilitators, especially for significant events.

 Credibility and Relationships

 Recommendation 7. Use a collaborative planning process for future neighbourhood planning to reduce mistrust.

 Recommendation 8. Design planning processes on the assumption that public input will result in changes to draft plans; only if the public as a whole accepts the plan should it be forwarded into the approvals process.

 Recommendation 9. Clarify the goals, scope and constraints on the planning process as the first step in developing the decision-making strategy. Communicate these clearly to the public.

 Recommendation 10. Ensure that all documents used in the process, including drawings and text, are unbiased and easy for the lay public to understand.

 Decision Quality

 Recommendation 11. Recognize and incorporate the knowledge and expertise provided by the public. In particular, design processes to engage UBC's extraordinary academic expertise.

 Efficiency

 Recommendation 12. Structure decision-making processes to facilitate the discussion of options, trade-offs and implications in order to make it easier to improve plan quality.

 Lessons for Evaluators

 While these practical recommendations are important, this research is an opportunity to inquire about evaluation of participatory decision-making processes in general, reflected in the second research question. This project adopts a context-process-outcome model of participatory decision-making, and applies a contingent evaluation framework within it. Overall, the approach is successful in that it provides an understanding of a comprehensive set of factors while minimizing philosophical bias. It also provides insights into relationships between context, process and
outcome. At the same time, however, it highlights the need to better understand these relationships, especially those between context and process.

Practically, the evaluation was time-consuming, so replicating the method may not always be practical. On the other hand, the number of interviewees was relatively small, and it is not clear that their opinions mirror those of the entire community despite efforts to be representative. Access to internal information was also limited, which limited the ability to draw conclusions about rationales and strategies. Finally, it was done immediately following the end of the process, so some outcomes could not be evaluated, illustrating the point that practitioners must recognize the constraints timing places on evaluations. These weaknesses and other suggestions are addressed through the lessons for evaluators listed below.

Lesson 1. Adopt best practices of qualitative research and evaluation to minimize bias, but recognize that the evaluation will remain subjective and that its value lies in its meaning and utility.

Lesson 2. Survey participants about criteria in the evaluation framework to complement richer interview data, to identify and minimize potential bias, and/or to reduce the amount of resources required to use the evaluation framework.

Lesson 3. Evaluate participation processes as part of broader decision-making and governance processes. In considering the participatory portion alone, it may not be possible to identify the appropriate evaluation criteria, or to evaluate them effectively.

Lesson 4. Carefully analyze documents that address contextual factors and rationales for process design decisions, and focus a section of interviews with process designers on context and process design.

Lesson 5. To ensure that complete and accurate information is made available about process design and strategy, either work with internal stakeholders to reduce their concerns over release of information to the evaluation, or obtain enough power from the evaluation sponsor to gain access to the information.

Lesson 6. Adopt a systematic evaluation approach based on the context-process-outcome conceptual model.

Lesson 7. Match expectations for results to the type of evaluation being conducted.

A Personal Addendum
At the time of writing, a collaborative planning process is underway for South Campus, and — at this early stage — offers hope for much improved processes. At the same time, UBC continues to resist improvements to the governance of Non-Institutional planning such as University Boulevard, which raises the concern that the South Campus experiment will not be carried on. It is my hope that this thesis will provide an opportunity for the improvement of both governance and implementation of planning processes at UBC. As many colleges and universities are aware, it is no easy task to manage the "town-gown" relationship. I believe that following the recommendations I have made here will benefit both the community and UBC, offering an
opportunity to achieve truly excellent processes and plans, to rebuild strained relationships, and to build UBC's endowment and a sustainable, vital University community.
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In retrospect, the writing of this thesis began long before the project began to take shape. In fact, my interest in the area and my approach to research are rooted in the principles and values ingrained in me by my parents, to whom I am deeply grateful for their love, support and direction. More recently – and I suppose practically – I appreciate the love, support, sense of humour, and enduring patience of my wife Helen in supporting my academic pursuits and in particular in allowing me to explore the implementation of my planning ideals over the last year.

This project would not have been as fun, nor as exciting, without the abiding interest and enthusiasm of Professor Tony Dorcey, not to mention his extraordinary ability to be at once critical and unequivocally supportive of my work. As the end drew near, the thoughtful comments and critiques of Professor Leonie Sandercock also helped to refine and clarify the thesis.

In a qualitative research project such as this one, those who provided information are indispensable. In that spirit, I would like to thank those who agreed to be interviewed about the University Boulevard process: I enjoyed each of the interviews and learned a great deal from each one. Similarly, other participants in this process – both community members and UBC staff – made the planning process what it was and provided valuable information for the thesis. In the last twelve months, I spoke to no one who did not care about the success of the University's eventual development.

Members of the SCARP University Town class must be thanked; especially Norm, whose clear thinking, self-assurance and commitment to principles were a constant inspiration. Other individuals also had significant roles: Susan Milley, who took on a design charrette with me on a moment’s notice; the many students who were involved in the design charrette and the preparation of the drawings for presentation; Laura Best, whose leadership, integrity and sense of fun gave an incredible energy to our conversations; community members on the GVRD/UBC workshop committee... I could go on. Suffice it to say that the list of people to thank is long and that I am grateful to each of you for the large and small ways in which you have enhanced my work.
PART I: Introduction and Conceptual Background
Chapter 1: Starting Points

1.1 Background

In 1922, the University of British Columbia (UBC) was given a large property on the Point Grey peninsula west of Vancouver for two purposes: to build a university, and to provide endowment income to support its mission. UBC developed institutional buildings on its campus, and developed part of the land immediately east of its main gates into what is now known as the University Endowment Lands neighbourhood. From the 1950's to the late 1980's, UBC's development was limited to institutional buildings, student residences, and a research park. Faced with funding constraints, UBC established UBC Real Estate Corporation in 1988 to once more take advantage of its property endowment. The new corporation planned and initiated development at Hampton Place without consultation with surrounding government bodies or the community about its impacts. As a result of the objections raised, UBC and the Greater Vancouver Regional District (GVRD) negotiated the adoption of a municipal-style planning process.

The GVRD initiated the planning process by developing and approving an Official Community Plan (OCP) in 1997, which defined where non-institutional development could occur and what policies applied to university development. The University was responsible for local area planning, and initiated the Comprehensive Community Plan (CCP) to plan for all eight neighbourhoods identified in the OCP. UBC completed the CCP in 2000, but it did not meet all the GVRD’s requirements for local area plans, setting the stage for a third level of planning: eight individual neighbourhood plans. Work on these began in 2001 with the University Boulevard, Mid Campus, and Theological neighbourhoods. The Mid-Campus and Theological plans were approved in 2001, but work continued on University Boulevard, and plans for new areas were begun as the others were approved.

In 2001, four classmates and I assessed the success of public participation in the CCP planning process as a small case study for a first-year planning class. The evaluation framework we used was developed from our own experience and a brief search of planning literature. Nevertheless, it was enough to suggest that there were significant problems with public participation in planning at UBC. The next spring, we followed up with a research project to identify and prioritize methods of involvement for students, hoping to assist the University in improving its performance. The results of this study were presented to senior staff of Land and Building Services, including the Associate Vice-President, Mr. Geoff Atkins.

The next year, another group of first year student planners looked at UBC planning processes again, this time at the Mid-Campus plan. They were so concerned about the project that they asked their instructor, Professor Tony Dorsey, to lead a class focusing on current planning on campus in the spring term, which he agreed to do. That class investigated what had by then been termed “University Town” planning, and began to work on recommendations for improving the planning process. At much the same time, the University began a public consultation process on a new draft plan for University Boulevard. This plan was extremely controversial and elicited an enormous public response that was critical of both process and the plan’s substance. At the invitation of Mr. Dennis Pavlich, who as Vice-President External and Legal Affairs had recently
become responsible for Neighbourhood Planning, the class presented recommendations for an improved process to the Board of Governors in April 2003.

While I had not been involved for almost a year in UBC's planning, I had reservations about the plan, and my earlier research and the other students' concerns led me to question the quality of the process as well. One of my procedural concerns was that only one development option was being presented to the public, so I organized a design charrette in collaboration with a Landscape Architecture student named Susan Milley to explore other possibilities for the area and to raise community awareness of the issues and options. While the charrette was a success, it could not resolve my concerns about the official process. Those were grounded in principles I value including fairness, integrity, respect, and community.

My sense of concern was tempered by realism and pragmatism. I knew that planning processes and public involvement processes in particular are complicated, challenging topics. I asked myself, "How do I know if this was a good or a bad process?" Administrative staff responsible for the process thought it was good — they were meeting with a huge number of groups and individuals, and their website was well-attended. On the other hand, many members of the public were very upset by the process. Was it possible to objectively evaluate the participation component of a planning process? How could it be done? This thesis grew out of my desire to address my sense of concern, and to do so in a fair and objective way to resolve the differences of opinion about the success of the process. Practically speaking, I also wanted to help University staff understand what went right, what went wrong, and what they could do to improve matters.

1.2 Research Problem, Questions and Justification

Public participation in decision-making has been discussed in many fields for some time. A myriad of practitioners now devote careers to the project, and they have remarkably varied approaches to it. They have also been learning as they go, and an immense literature has built up about the philosophies of participation, methodological options, and of course evaluation. Only recently however, have practitioners taken a long, hard look at evaluating participatory processes and arrived at some theoretical frameworks for doing so (e.g. Abelson, et al. 2003). Tony Dorcey and Tim McDaniels describe it as "an infant art" (Dorcey & McDaniels, 2001). This project presents an interesting opportunity: to review and synthesize this recent literature to provide a robust evaluation framework, and then to apply it critically to a participation process. Where it offers UBC an opportunity to understand the strengths and weaknesses of their approach, it offers planning practitioners an opportunity to see how useful recent evaluation frameworks are, to test one way to apply them, and to identify their strengths and weaknesses as they apply to cases like the University Boulevard Neighbourhood planning process.

The thesis, then, asks the following questions:

- To what degree was public participation in the University Boulevard Neighbourhood Planning process successful, and why?
- What lessons does this research teach us about evaluation of public participation?

1.3 Research Design and Methods

The subjectivity and sensitivity of the evaluation of public participation is well known (Webler, 1995). To address those issues in this research, every effort was made to act ethically and
The "Guiding Principles for Evaluators" adopted by the American Evaluation Association in 1994 are reflected in the approach taken in this research:

1. **Systematic Inquiry**: Evaluators conduct systematic, data-based inquiries about whatever is being evaluated.
2. **Competence**: Evaluators provide competent performance to stakeholders.
3. **Integrity/Honesty**: Evaluators ensure the honesty and integrity of the entire evaluation process.
4. **Respect for People**: Evaluators respect the security, dignity and self-worth of the respondents, program participants, clients, and other stakeholders with whom they interact.
5. **Responsibilities for General and Public Welfare**: Evaluators articulate and take into account the diversity of interests and values that may be related to the general and public welfare.

To answer the research questions, a seven-step process was used:
- review of literature to develop a conceptual understanding of participatory processes and their evaluation;
- development of an evaluation framework based on the literature review;
- selection of methods to suit the evaluation framework and criteria;
- collection of relevant data;
- description of the University Boulevard process and relevant related facts;
- evaluation of the process; and
- conclusion about the process itself and process evaluation in general.

### 1.4 Thesis Outline

The thesis is structured to reflect this research design, placing the literature review first, then the discussion of methods, and finally the results and conclusions. This produces a three-part structure:

**PART I:** Introduction and Conceptual Background. This introduction provided a brief setting of the issue and the case. Next is a review of public involvement processes and their evaluation that will permit expansion of the research questions into an evaluation framework and method.

**PART II:** Studying the University Boulevard Case. This part begins with the research methodology in order to clearly define the case study and explain how the research is approached. The case study itself is next, and is split into three parts. First, contextual factors are described. Second, the story of the process itself is told, and the overall strategy and process characteristics are evaluated. Last, the outcomes are described and then evaluated.
PART III: Results and Concluding Thoughts. This part returns to the research questions to summarize the results and to draw conclusions about the usefulness and application of the evaluation framework.
Chapter 2: A Review of Public Involvement

"The idea of citizen participation is a little like eating spinach: no one is against it in principle because it is good for you." - Sherry Arnstein (1969)

Public participation is an area of practice shared across disciplines. It is also contested because of its historical roots in democracy, empowerment, and pragmatism. Some argue that participation's purpose is to ensure the vitality of our democracy; others believe that it is to devolve power to the community at large, and still others promote participation to improve decisions made through established political and bureaucratic systems. While this diversity has created conflict, a rich understanding of public participation has also grown from these roots in fields as diverse as environment, health care, management, and urban planning. This rich mixture of ideas has created enormous potential for participation in a variety of contexts, for example community economic development planning and value-based decision-making about hydro power. It has also illuminated a range of issues that practitioners must consider. The key questions in the conversation about public participation remain (Abelson, et al., 2001; Dorcey & McDaniels, 2001):

• "What is good public involvement?"
• "Why was it (not) good?" and
• "How do we know when public participation is (not) good?"

This chapter reviews the history, characteristics, and key considerations of public participation, and concludes with some recent answers to those key questions.

2.1 History

Public participation must be understood in the context of democracy. The history of public participation is similar in most democratic nations, although the details may vary. In the United States, for instance, the civil rights movement played a significant role, while in Canada it did not. In democracies, the public can and does, within limits, participate in government decision-making. There is a culture of democracy that expects a government to be accountable to its people and that upholds standards and rules that protect citizens' ability to speak freely. Having said that, there is a great deal of variation in what is understood by public participation, and that has its source in different philosophies of democratic governance. This brief history begins by considering the roots of participation in democracy and follows its evolution through legalization and discussions of empowerment in the 1950's and 1960's, towards increased sophistication in the 1970's, and then to more recent trends, illustrating its complex, contested, and constantly evolving nature.

The Early Years: Democracy and Bureaucracy

Public participation in decision-making has been a topic of discussion from the early days of democracy itself:

"I know no safe depository of the ultimate powers of the society but the people themselves; and if we think them not enlightened enough to exercise their control with a wholesom discretion, the remedy is not to take it from them, but to inform
In the early days of democracy in the United States, a very limited constituency had rights to elect representatives. Over the course of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, however, popular movements resulted in broadening of the constituency, first from male landowners to all white men of 'majority' age, then to add white women of 'majority' age, and later, through the civil rights movement of the 1960's, to add blacks to the list of constituents (Langton 1978a). The constituency changed radically from being a group of hundreds or perhaps thousands of people to millions. In Canada, the story follows similar lines.

At the same time, government responsibilities and size increased with the development of a powerful bureaucracy having the discretion to make many of its decisions. In early democratic systems, citizens could communicate fairly directly with their elected representatives and therefore influence decisions. While citizens can still communicate directly with their representatives, the sheer number of decisions, bureaucrats and citizens make indirect communication through the bureaucracy more prevalent. Furthermore, bureaucratic discretion means that the people whom citizens must influence are not accountable to them by election. The participation of the public in bureaucratic decisions can be seen as compensation for the loss of direct connection with elected representatives and for the loss of accountability in decisions made by the bureaucracy. This view illustrates the potential of public participation to ensure that bureaucratic decisions are accountable to those whom they affect (Langton, 1978a; Graham, Phillips & Maslove, 1998). It is the first of three elements in the history of public participation as a way to enhance representative government.

There is a second view of the role of public participation within our established democratic governments: its function as understood by the bureaucrats who invite it. This is the "managerialist" perspective (Thomas, 1995), which developed with the growth of a bureaucracy vested with the power and responsibility to make decisions on behalf of the public. Their decisions go beyond purely technical issues to incorporate values, so they must constantly balance their desire to make the right decision as they see it, and their desire to make the decision the public wants - or thinks it wants (McNally, 1992). The balance is further complicated by the variation of available information and expertise between representatives, bureaucrats and the public, and the value placed on those by different people. The managerialist perspective leads to a second way that public participation can enhance representative government: it has the potential to justify controversial bureaucratic decisions and develop public support for them (Langton, 1978a; Graham, et al., 1998).

Third, public participation offers an opportunity to improve quality of decisions bureaucrats make on behalf of the public (Sanoff, 2000; Thomas, 1995; Graham & Phillips, 1998a). John Clayton Thomas states that "public involvement, though neither for all matters nor always to the same extent, is now essential for effective public management." (Thomas, 1995, p. 2) Implicit in the potential to improve decisions is another opportunity. If people are to make meaningful improvements to a decision, they must know something about the decision being made. Virtually all participation processes therefore incorporate an element of education and information. The

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education of citizens is a potential advantage of public participation that is implicit in the opportunity to improve decisions.

The enhancement of representative democracy points to various potential benefits of public participation in decision-making: enhanced accountability, increased support and justification for decisions, improved decisions, and public education. These provided the impetus that drove increases in public participation through the middle of the twentieth century.

1960's to early 1970's: Legalization and Empowerment

In the United States in the 1950's and 1960's, calls for public participation led to the widespread adoption of legal requirements for public participation in government decisions. As a result, public participation became a widespread practice there in the 1950's and 1960's (Kweit & Kweit, 1981). In Canada, municipal governments adopted participation in the late 1960's and early 1970's in order to improve decisions and increase efficiency. As in the US, participation became legally mandated in Canada as it became common practice (Graham, et al., 1998). Also, as legislation evolved, it began to describe participation in terms such as “early and ongoing” (the BC Local Government Act, 855(2) (BC Local Government Act [RSBC 1996], 2003)). This type of exhortation reflected an increasingly common commitment to a comprehensive participation program.

While requirements for participation programs encouraged their implementation, they also led to the routinization of public participation and the rise of a professional field of public consultation consultants, facilitators, and so on (Graham, et al., 1998; Langton, 1978a). These routine processes were often carried out with the simple goal of meeting legal requirements, often resulting in processes that were ill suited to the situation at hand and that were not taken seriously by those responsible for them.

The reality of participation was that it was often less successful than its potential suggested. Many processes were designed in such a way as to exclude large groups of citizens, especially the poor and sometimes racial minorities like blacks. For proponents of participation, the issue was power. In 1969, Sherry Arnstein wrote a “classic article” (The City Reader, 2000, p. 240) titled “A Ladder of Citizen Participation” in response to participatory processes that appeared to exclude or ignore citizen input. Arnstein equated citizen participation directly with citizen power, stating that “it is the redistribution of power that enables the have-not citizens, presently excluded from the political and economic processes, to be deliberately included in the future.” (Arnstein, 1969) In the same article, she asserted “the fundamental point that participation without the redistribution of power is an empty and frustrating process for the powerless.” For Arnstein and others who worked closely with poor, minority and otherwise marginalized communities, participation’s great potential was to give community members influence over the future of the world in which they live.

Mahatma Gandhi said that “My notion of democracy is that under it the weakest should have the same opportunity as the strongest” (Free Cuba Foundation, 1996). Participation can be viewed as a way to force the system to recognize previously unrecognized actors (i.e. as a way for the disempowered to gain better access to decision-making in the representative democratic governance system). In this sense participation can enhance representative democracy. The Swiss model of representative government, with its reliance on referenda for many decisions, is an example of one mode in which participation can complement representation. Alternatively, it can be seen as a way...
for those who do not believe that the system can recognize or serve their interests to make decisions (Arnstein, 1969); in this sense, participation has the potential to compete with the representative democratic system.

By the mid-1970's, public participation in decision-making had become legitimized through legal requirements and was used in many areas. At the same time, however, its effectiveness had been reduced by routinization and fundamental issues of power had come to the fore. The field was moving from early enthusiasm over potential benefits to a growing recognition that support for participation, rooted in at least three different perspectives — internal improvements to democracy, improvements to decision quality and acceptance, and empowerment of citizens — was inherently conflicted.

Late 1970's to the 1980's: Increasing Sophistication and Conflict

The 1970's and 1980's would see a continuation of the trends begun in the 1960's. Participation processes became more sophisticated through the development of an incredibly diverse range of techniques (Rosener, 1978). Rosener listed close to 30 distinguishable techniques (more recent lists expand the number greatly (e.g. International Association for Public Participation, 2003 and Wates, 2000) and many combinations and adaptations of these exist. These range from surveys to information meetings, open houses, workshops, focus groups, and so on. Their strategic application according to the goals and objectives of the decision-making process in question has since been a mainstay of thought in public participation literature.

Continuing the trend set in the 1960's, participatory processes were increasingly used as advocates extolled potential benefits such as improved decision-making, participant satisfaction, community acceptance, and public education. However, as their experience with participation processes increased, bureaucrats and administrators raised concerns (Dorcey & McDaniels, 2001). These people saw numerous risks: slower decisions, worse decisions, and devolution of power are three of the most significant. Arranging public participation certainly delays decision-making simply by the time it takes to arrange and run the process, let alone the time required to process and incorporate public input from a consultation process, or the time to come to agreement during a deliberative process. Public resistance to a decision may delay a proposal long enough to completely kill it. An ill-informed public, or at least one that does not agree with the bureaucrat, may make a decision worse in his/her estimation. Finally, providing the public with some power to influence a decision necessarily means removing that power from the bureaucracy. This may be viewed as a threat to the bureaucrat and/or to the organization in general on two levels: at the level of a simple loss of power, and at the level of a loss of a professional's status versus that of a lay person.

By the late 1980's, the inherently conflicted nature of public participation was broadly recognized. Twenty years of practical experience had exposed both opportunities:

- increased accountability for decisions;
- justified well-supported decisions;
- improved quality of decisions;
- increased community influence over decisions;
- increased community capacity to make decisions;

and risks of public participation:

2 Deliberative processes involve participants actively and intensely in discussing decisions (Abelson, et al., 2003).
• delayed decisions;
• poor decision quality; and
• perceived loss of bureaucratic status.

By the early 1990's, most practitioners agreed that public involvement was important, but its opportunities and risks had spawned two camps: enthusiasts—who emphasized opportunities—and skeptics—who emphasized its risks (Thomas, 1995).

1990's to Present: Contested Process, Constant Evolution

Since the early 1990's, the field has become broader and has begun to grapple with the conflicts within it. New techniques and approaches are being tried, practitioners are learning from experience, and solutions are being proposed to problems identified so far. Most important perhaps is a move to address the contested nature of participation: philosophical stances of enthusiasts and skeptics are being overtaken by contingent and theoretical approaches to participation.

The field has broadened through the exploration of two new types of participatory processes: multi-stakeholder and deliberative processes. Multi-stakeholder processes are based in a pluralist democratic perspective that believes that a significant role for government is to arbitrate between differing segments of society, usually represented by interest groups (Beierle, 1998). A local example of these processes is the consensus-based roundtable process used in the BC Commission on Resources and Environment (CORE) in the early 1990's (Dorcey & McDaniels, 2001). While these processes permit significant, informed participation of members of the public, they are time- and resource-consuming for both the government and the public. In the mid-1990's, significant use of these processes came to a sudden halt because of burnout of stakeholders involved in a number of different processes at once (Dorcey & McDaniels, 2001).

In the late 1990's, the philosophy of public participation began to emphasize “reciprocal obligation between government and citizen and the assumption of responsibility by citizens and communities” (Graham & Phillips, 1998a). As a result, deliberative techniques have received more attention. Like multi-stakeholder negotiations, these involve smaller groups of people who come to agreement on a topic or topics through a discussion-based process. Unlike multi-stakeholder processes, however, participants are expected to discuss the issues from their own perspective and that of others instead of negotiating from the perspective of their constituents. The small group discussions permit participants to become familiar with issues and technical knowledge, and therefore to come to an informed decision. Citizen juries and deliberative polling are two examples of this type of process:

• citizen juries are public advisory boards randomly chosen on a representative basis, who have a rotating membership. They reflect the idea that citizens have a civic duty to participate in city decision-making, much like jury duty.
• deliberative polling gathers a representative group of people; provides them with background materials that illustrate costs, benefits, and trade-offs inherent in a decision; facilitates discussion over a couple of days; and allows them to challenge technical experts and politicians. At the end of the period, the group is polled to provide informed input into the decision.
Deliberative processes also have their drawbacks, however, and should not be seen as the peak of progress in public participation. Most importantly, they involve only a small number of people, and are time and resource intensive. As participants become more informed and work out their differences, they can easily leave the rest of the public behind, so they may appear to have been co-opted (Beierle & Cayford, 2002). Both deliberative and multi-stakeholder processes must be understood as two more options in the suite of techniques now available to those planning public participation processes. The most significant contribution they have made is to show that it is possible to have fruitful, informed discussions with the public about complex decisions.

Not only has the field of public participation increased its range of techniques, but it has also continued to work on its most fundamental issues, and to formalize these with supporting theory and a greater depth of practical experience. One common approach has been to review the state of the art to better understand what participation is, what its components are, how they relate, and how this informs the different perspectives about participation (e.g. Dorsey and McDaniels, 2001; Abelson, 1999; Beierle and Cayford, 2002; Webler, 1995; and Graham and Phillips, 1998a). Another approach has been to develop an understanding that accommodates both enthusiasts and skeptics, usually through a strategic or "contingent" method of deciding what type of participation is appropriate when. This approach is often used by practitioners in the field (e.g. Rosener, 1978; Canadian Standards Association, 1996; Thomas, 1995; US Environmental Protection Agency, 1996; US Department of Energy, n.d.; City of North Vancouver, 2000).

At the beginning of the twenty-first century, it is possible to reflect on fifty years of experience with participation in public decision-making. It has come a long way from its origins in democratic governance, the rise of government bureaucracy, and empowerment, developing into a vast field of practice and study. Through that time, philosophical approaches and differences, inherent opportunities and risks, and strategies and methods have all become better understood. The field is if anything more complex than it has ever been before, but practitioners are beginning to address its most significant issues. Given its complexity, it is likely to remain a difficult art to master, but one that continues to evolve through efforts to realize its full potential.

2.2 Description

The story so far has described the last fifty years of a search for good public participation. Many people have devoted entire professional lives to this search, and many more have been significantly involved in it. Given its history of conflict, it is not surprising that there is little agreement about the nature and quality of public participation:

- "participation varies in type, level of intensity, extent, and frequency." (Sanoff, 2000, p. 8), and
- "participation is fragmented across a variety of professional disciplines among which there are few shared meanings..." (Checkoway & van Til, 1978).
Despite the apparent lack of agreement about public participation, professionals and academics have refined their practice by developing a much more complete image of public participation over the years. There are two key elements to this image: its definition, and its elements. These are discussed first, and then I touch briefly on barriers to participatory decision-making and current trends before ending by discussing evaluation of public participation.

Definition

There is no one accepted definition of “public participation.” In fact, it seems that few people can agree on an appropriate term, let alone agree on a definition once the term is decided. “Public,” “citizen,” and “stakeholder” are terms often used in definitions, in combination with any of “participation,” “consultation,” “involvement,” and “engagement” (Langton, 1978b; Dorcey & McDaniels, 2001). Sometimes these are used interchangeably, while at others specific distinctions are made between the various terms for clarification. A few definitions are collected here to illustrate their diversity and to make some key points:

- Public participation describes a broader public relating to “public institutions of society or state.” (Langton, 1978b) This is the broadest of definitions, including all modes of participation and all public bodies.
- Citizen involvement is participation requested and organized by government or by private companies to meet government requirements (Langton, 1978a). This definition begins to focus on the organizational context of participation.
- “Public participation...is the deliberate and active engagement of citizens by the council and/or administration...in making public-policy decisions or in setting strategic directions.” (Graham & Phillips, 1998a) This definition builds on the first two to describe the character of the process, in this case as “deliberate and active.”
- “...citizen participation is a categorical term for citizen power” (Arnstein, 1969). In this famous statement, Arnstein focuses on the transfer of power from decision-makers to the public that is inherent in a participatory process in which the public has any degree of influence over decisions.
- “Citizen involvement is processes for the involvement of citizens in advising and making decisions on matters under government authority that augment or supplant decision-making through established channels of representative government.” (Dorcey & McDaniels, 2001). This definition points out the fact that participatory decision-making can either augment or supplant decision-making, and that it deals with matters explicitly under government authority.

What term and definition to use in this discussion? The term “public” is proposed for use here because the subject of this thesis is a decision-making process undertaken by a public institution, not a government body per se, and the term “participation” is proposed because it encompasses alternative terms without specifying the character of a process: it is relatively unbiased. Building on the definitions above, the following definition of “public participation” is proposed:

“Public participation is the participation of the public in advising and/or making decisions that are within the authority of a public institution or government body, through formal processes established by, or in partnership with, that body.”
This definition explicitly recognizes that "public participation" is participation in decision-making that is within the purview of a government body or public institution. It is broad enough to include universities, government corporations that are perceived to be accountable to the public, but are not directly part of government per se. On the other hand, it is limited in that it recognizes only formal processes — not informal ones that include lobbying, influence through personal relationships and so on — and in that it recognizes only processes that are established either by the institution or government body or through a partnership between it and the public. It therefore excludes citizen-driven initiatives whose scope may overlap an area of government authority, but which do not include the government in the establishment of the initiative. This last limitation is not generally a necessary one, as a citizen-driven initiative is still a public decision about a public matter and can probably be evaluated in much the same way as partnerships or government-initiated projects. Instead, the limitation is set to focus discussion on the area of interest in this case study.

Elements

"What public officials should realize is that citizen participation is like a professional sport. It takes place in a public forum where there is competition between individuals and groups with conflicting goals; where the individuals and groups that participate play different roles at different times; where the playing conditions change from time to time; where the planning of strategies is a major activity; where no one group wins every contest; and where there is an ongoing need to evaluate performance in order to succeed." (Rosener, 1978)

Thomas Beierle and Jerry Cayford (2002) identify three elements of this “professional sport” that together create a complete description of a public participation process: context, process, and outcomes. Context refers to the “public forum” and “playing conditions;” Process refers to playing the sport itself, and Outcome refers to the end result. These are the three key pieces of a preliminary conceptual model that can be used to understand and analyze participatory decision-making processes (Figure 1). This section will describe each of the elements and the relationships between them in detail.

Context: The broad context of public participation is governance (Dorcey & McDaniels, 2001). In Canada and other democratic nations, governance sets out a framework of expectations for the actions of public bodies to act in a manner consistent with democratic principles. These expectations have more recently been exemplified in the corporate world by controversies over Enron, World Com, and Hollinger International. Within the governance context, there is a range of influential factors.
Efforts have been made over a long period to identify and categorize these influences. In 1981, Mary and Robert Kweit proposed two categories of contextual determinants of participation success:

- characteristics of the “target organization” — meaning participants and community organizations; and
- characteristics of the environment — including an organization’s structure and governance and the community’s character.

More recently, Julia Abelson (1999) reviewed literature across a number of disciplines to identify influences on the quality of participation. She describes three types of influences on participation quality:

- “Pre-disposing” influences: individual and community characteristics
- “Enabling” influences: participatory culture, the media, and institutional actions (the process run by the institution)
- “Precipitating” influences: interests, interest groups, and issues

Practical guides to planning public participation also offer insight into contextual factors (City of North Vancouver, 2000; Canadian Standards Association, 1996; US Department of Energy, n.d.), which appear in criteria they propose for making decisions about whether to involve the public and how to do so. Some examples are:

- the significance of the decision (Canadian Standards Association, 1996)
- stakeholder interests and positions (Canadian Standards Association, 1996)
- constraints on decisions (City of North Vancouver, 2000)
- degree of controversy (City of North Vancouver, 2000)
- institutional constraints (US Department of Energy, n.d., )
- decision structure (US Department of Energy, n.d., )

The contextual factors that influence public participation can be effectively categorized and related to better understand the breadth of context. Given the preliminary conceptual model, context is defined as “the factors that preceded and may have influenced the nature and outcome of the participatory decision-making process.” It can be broken down into six categories, illustrated in Figure 2 and then described.
1. The Nature of the Community. Community characteristics break down into individual and social elements. On an individual level, people of higher socio-economic class, education, and skill level are much more likely to participate than others. On a social level, the degree of social cohesion, amount of community identity, and level of involvement in community organizations are related to the level of participation (Abelson, 1999; Kweit & Kweit, 1981). In particular, the degree to which the community is organized to participate in decisions, and is inclined to do so, plays an important role in determining the level of participation (see the discussion of the Community-Institution relationship). A final key factor that plays into the dynamics of participation is the presence, power, and focus of interest groups.

2. The Nature of the Decision. Decisions may be more value-laden, or more technical; they may be more or less complex; their geographic scope may be more or less significant; and they may involve more or less scientific/technical certainty. More value-laden decisions generally call for more public input to provide direction to administrators, while more technical decisions are often of less interest and more constrained, calling for less public input (City of North Vancouver, 2000). Decisions with more complexity require more efforts to educate and assist participants if they are to be effective. The geographic scope may include overlaps with other jurisdictions and helps define what stakeholders should be involved. Less certainty may be related to more risk for the sponsoring institution, requiring up-front work and/or early public input of knowledge to reduce uncertainty. A further characteristic of the decision is whether or not it is "structured" (Thomas, 1995): whether limitations exist on what may be decided in the process. The most common of these limitations is a previous decision. It is important to identify the potential and limitations clearly, "indicating what is really negotiable." (Graham & Phillips, 1998a)

3. The Community-Decision Relationship. Community interest in the decision is clearly related to the nature of the issue at hand. Its significance to them, its sensitivity, and the degree to which it will have an impact on them are all key factors that may predispose the
public to participate (Abelson, 1999). Controversial decisions can also bring out more participants, but controversy is more significant in its ability to make the tone of a participatory process more conflictual.

4. The Nature of the Institution. The governance of the government body or institution in question is an important contextual factor. As the historical background made clear, public participation came about in part to compensate for democratic deficiencies introduced by the interposition of the bureaucracy between the public and their elected representatives. The structure of a government body or institution therefore has the capacity to strengthen or weaken the democratic relationship between decision-makers and those on whose behalf they work. Kweit and Kweit (1981) point out that more hierarchical, inflexible organizations are less disposed to invite public participation than flatter, more organic organizations. Similarly, the organization’s culture can have an impact on the quality of participatory processes, depending on the attitudes of administrators responsible for them (Abelson, 1999).

5. The Decision-Institution Relationship. Institutional characteristics specific to the decision are critical contextual factors. First, the institution may be subject to legal requirements that set minimum standards for public involvement. Second, the decision in question may not be entirely within the jurisdiction of the organization, leading to a need to collaborate with other organizations, obtain approval from others, and/or develop public support for the decision. Similarly, the level of political support may reduce or increase the need for administrators to seek public support for a decision. Fourth, previous or concurrent decisions may be closely related to the decision in question, leading to a potential for either complementary or redundant processes. Finally, the organization may lack information about some aspects of the decision and may need to involve the public to obtain it (for instance, public values, local/traditional knowledge, unidentified options).

6. The Community-Institution Relationship. Many writers mention the issue of trust as a key factor in participatory processes (e.g. Thomas, 1995; Beierle and Cayford, 2002). The analysis done by Beierle and Cayford (2002) found that “robust participation processes do a better job of transforming poor preexisting relationships than do less robust processes, but a history of conflict is not itself a significant barrier to the prospects of success.” (p. 39) The condition of the community-institution relationship is an important contextual factor.

This discussion has outlined what contextual factors are important to understanding decision-making processes that involve the public; these are shown in Figure 3. The next two sections describe the process and outcome elements before the relationships between them are explored.

![Figure 3: Conceptual Framework – With Contextual Factors](image.png)
Process:
The second essential component in understanding a participatory decision-making process is the process itself. As indicated at the conclusion of the last section, it is informed by the context in which it occurs. To discuss this component, this section takes a practical approach, following much the same progression that the person responsible for the decision would take:

1. A decision is required.
2. The context in which the decision is assessed.
3. It is decided whether or not public participation is a necessary component of the decision-making process.
4. Goals are set.
5. A decision-making strategy is developed based on the context and goals.
6. The strategy is implemented, resulting in a decision and other outcomes.
7. The process is evaluated and lessons are used to inform future processes.

For the purposes of this discussion, it is assumed that steps 1 through 3 have been concluded and that public participation is a necessary component of the decision-making process. The discussion of process therefore begins with goals for participatory processes, considers strategic issues, and then focuses more closely on the characteristics of participatory decision-making processes themselves. It ends by summarizing key points.

Goals
The goals that people have for participatory processes stem from the historical purpose of public participation, which is to address weaknesses in our democratic governance systems. At this broad level, there are different points of view, grouped nicely into three philosophies by Thomas Beierle (1998). Managerialists see government bureaucrats and elected representatives as people whose responsibility is to "identify and pursue the common good" (p.2). Their goals with respect to public participation therefore focus on making good decisions in a responsible manner. Pluralists see government representatives as "arbitrators" between the people and groups that make up the public. They are therefore interested in managing conflicts and identifying a "relative common good arising out of [discussion among these parties]." Finally, proponents of popular democracy envision the direct participation of citizens in decision-making. For them, this participation strengthens the community and its democratic governance. The different opportunities mentioned in the historical review reflect these different perspectives.

At a more detailed and pragmatic level, the academic literature on public participation identifies widely varied objectives, including for example to:

- make cost-effective decisions;
- to increase public trust and confidence in organizations;
- promote a sense of community;
- meet social needs better; or
- provide more relevant and up-to-date information to decision-makers (Sanoff, 2000);

or to

- generate ideas;
- identify attitudes;
- disseminate information;
- resolve a conflict;
• measure opinion;
• review a proposal; or
• vent emotion (Rosener, 1978).

Clearly, these lists are long but not exhaustive. Instead, they illustrate the enormous range of goals and objectives that people bring to participation processes. Four lessons may be learned from the literature on goals for public participation:

• different people have different goals;
• a short list of goals is common to many, if not most, public participation processes;
• even though there is agreement on common goals, these inevitably conflict with one another; and
• once goals are established, a long list of objectives informs more detailed decisions about public participation.

The first three lessons are discussed next, while the fourth will be dealt with in the following section on method selection.

First, we have seen that at a broad theoretical level there are three major perspectives on the goals of participation in public decision making. At the practical level, two main groups of people who have distinct goals for public process are evident: those running participatory processes, and those participating. Those running the processes are usually concerned primarily with the success of the project, so they emphasize cost-effectiveness, timeliness, increased acceptability, and increased quality of decisions. Those participating on the other hand are more concerned with impacts on their lives, so they emphasize their influence over the decision, enhancement of their knowledge, the incorporation of their values into the decision, and the accountability of the decision and of those making it.

Second, despite the different emphases, the academic literature identifies a short list of goals that are common to many practitioners. To identify these, twenty-eight articles, books, and agency publications were reviewed, seven of which were based on literature reviews of their own. Of these, twenty-four mentioned one or more goals and were used to identify areas of agreement and disagreement about goals. Thomas Beierle's (1998) list of six social goals was used as a starting point because it offered a complete structure with which to compare other frequently less focused discussions. Beierle's list is based on "the premise that the environmental regulatory system has a number of [well-known] systemic ailments to which public participation may provide at least a partial cure" (p. 3). The review compared other authors' explicit statements about what public participation should achieve with the six social goals, attempting to either identify goals that were not shared in others' experience or to identify goals that Beierle had missed. The six goals were well supported in the literature, and one other goal was consistently mentioned: strengthening community. The seven goals are listed below, with a description of each one:

I. Educating and informing the public. This goal is common to almost all participatory processes, with the exception of processes designed only to receive information from the public. It is supported because effective participation requires a public that clearly understands possible decisions and their consequences.
2. **Incorporating public values into decision-making.** This goal reflects influence of the public over the decision, and is related to improved quality. It requires an institution that is interested in and willing to incorporate public concerns, needs, desires, and even dreams (Sanoff, 2000). It is supported when decisions involve value judgments and because public participation has little credibility without commensurate influence (Arnstein, 1969; Shepherd & Bowler, 1997).

3. **Improving the substantive quality of decisions.** There are different interpretations of this goal, as each person is likely to see quality as reflective of their own values. However, it is possible to identify areas where a proposal has evolved in ways that identify and resolve issues, improve solutions to problems, or meet a wider range of needs. For spatial planning, this means an improved quality of the resulting development (The United Kingdom Department of the Environment, 1994). Improving decisions is clearly a concern for all stakeholders, although they may disagree about what “improvement” looks like.

4. **Increasing trust in institutions.** In the long term, this goal envisions institutions and the public becoming more able to work together on issues (City of Vancouver, 1998), reducing the amount of suspicion and the resulting time spent working through misunderstandings.

5. **Reducing conflict.** Like increased trust, a reduction in conflict results in less time and emotional energy spent battling others, either within the public or between the public and the institution (City of Vancouver, 1998). Equally, a reduction in conflict represents an increase in shared values, or at least agreement on a set of decisions that meet different values (Chess & Purcell, 1999). In the long run, it is a part of building community.

6. **Achieving cost-effectiveness.** Beierle dropped this last goal from his list in his later book (Beierle & Cayford, 2002), possibly because it is a characteristic of the process rather than an outcome. Nevertheless, it is included here because it is well supported in the literature, where it is interpreted broadly. From the emerging perspective of a responsible community making decisions together (Graham & Phillips, 1998a), this goal is really better stated “using community resources effectively.” As such it would encompass both community time and energy on one hand and institutional money and resources on the other. In this sense it is a value shared by all participants and a significant social goal.

7. **Strengthening community.** This is a convenient term for a goal that was variously described in the literature as “a sense of ownership” (Gregory & Rowley, 1999), “[build] a sense of community; reinforce community values while building social capital; … increased confidence and skills; better friendships and sense of belonging” (Sanoff, 2000) and “redistribution of power” (Arnstein, 1969). It is included not only because it was noted by a number of authors, but also because it reflects the strong current in theory of public participation begun by Arnstein and carried on by Saul Alinsky and others. In particular, a recent article by Michael Hibbard and Susan Lurie (2000) points out that

“The efficacy of participatory planning... also depends on... the presence of dense social networks of those things that enable the actions of
individuals working toward a collective goal — what has come to be called social capital.” (p. 188)

It is important to point out that one can argue for almost all of these goals from any of the three broad theoretical perspectives. Take the managerialist for example. This person is most interested in the quality (goal 2) and acceptability of a decision (Thomas, 1995), and cost-effectiveness is clearly another important factor (goal 6), although internal costs are likely to receive more attention than costs to the community. Enhanced community consensus about the decision is an indication that a broader constituency finds the decision acceptable (goal 5). Often, controversial issues or a history of poor community-institutional relations can create a conflictual situation; building trust is therefore an important goal if people are to resolve their differences (goal 4).

Returning to the issue of decision quality, many public decisions affect communities and involve value judgments. For this reason, high quality public decisions must go beyond organizational goals to take into account the public’s interests and values (goal 3). In order to effectively identify their interests and values as they pertain to the decision in question, the public needs to understand the potential decision(s), the context, and implications: the public must be effectively informed and educated (goal 1). Finally, although there is more to it than this, the process of educating and informing the public, reducing conflict between groups in the public, and increasing trust in institutions may all contribute to the strengthening of community (goal 7). This last goal is more likely held by institutions that foresee future needs for community support than those that feel able to carry decisions without it. In short, one can argue that for the managerialist, the first six goals, and to a variable extent the last, are important. For the other two perspectives too, most of the goals are important, although their emphasis and reasons may of course be different.

The third lesson about goals is that it is difficult to achieve all of them, even if there is agreement that they are all important. For example, reducing conflict between citizen groups and the sponsoring institution is important to producing a good decision for all concerned. However, time and resource constraints faced by the institution and limitations on the community’s ability to participate at length may restrict the potential for approaching agreement.

In summary, there is agreement on the range of potential goals for public participation, but they are emphasized differently by different people; also, the goals are not entirely complementary — tradeoffs between them are often required. The next section describes careful process design, which is the key to performing as well as possible with respect to these goals, and which follows in part from the detailed objectives.

Method Selection

The first step in developing a strategy for making a decision with the involvement of the public is to define and prioritize process goals, based on the context (the decision, the institution, the community, and the relationships between them). The fourth lesson from the literature on goals addresses the next step: the task of program design, including strategic and methodological issues. The design of an effective public participation program involves the structured application of public involvement methods to meet goals. A process designer must ask themselves some questions:

- Who should be making decisions about the process?
- What are the stages in the process?
- What are the objectives for the various stages?
• How should I (we) select between various participatory mechanisms, for example workshops, advisory committees, open houses and hearings, and combinations of these?
• Once that is done, how should I (we) approach each of the selected methods, with respect to timing, location, length, frequency, agenda, tone, and so on?
• Who should be invited to the events, and how and when should they be contacted?
• What information is needed before, during, and after the process, in what form, and provided to participants by what mechanisms?

While this list is by no means exhaustive, it illustrates the main point about strategy and methods: designing an effective public participation process is not an easy task. It requires significant up-front thought and time, a fact that has been recognized for many years (e.g. Rosener, 1978).

The following tasks are necessary in planning for participatory decision-making.

1. outline the whole decision-making process and define objectives for each stage;
2. identify the stage(s) where the public can best be involved given goals and objectives;
3. select a method or combination of methods to effectively address the goals and objectives throughout the process; and
4. plan implementation of methods with attention to accepted characteristics of effective public processes.

The first step in designing for public participation is to place it in the context of a complete decision-making process. So-called “rational” decisions generally move through a series of stages, for example problem identification, conceptualization, idea generation, identification of options, evaluation and selection of options, refinement of options, and finally decision. Conceptualization, idea generation, and identification of options can be termed “divergent thinking” in which the discussion is widened, while later activities can be termed “convergent thinking” in that they help to narrow the range of possible decisions and move toward closure (Kaner, Lind, Toldi, Fisk & Berger, 1996).

Participation in decision-making can take place throughout the process, or it can be limited to certain stages. In order to decide when to involve the public, the second step is to develop objectives for different parts of the decision-making process. Objectives naturally vary with the decision-making progression, and they build towards the overarching goals identified for the process. For example, for a conventional urban design project, Table 1 shows how objectives could vary with design stages.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage</th>
<th>Objective</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Site Analysis</td>
<td>To understand the site – environmental, social, cultural, symbolic, functional, and other elements/issues.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>To identify community strengths and weaknesses.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>To build community understanding of their neighbourhood.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Options Identification</td>
<td>To identify a range of options that begin to address issues/strengths/weaknesses.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>To learn about the site through design, and to revisit analysis in light of new knowledge.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Objective

Convergent Thinking

Options Evaluation
To assess how well options address needs/issues, and how they relate to other plans and designs.
To discuss trade-offs inherent in each option, and how they are valued by the community.

Option Selection
To decide which of the options is best, and/or what features of options are most desirable in light of values, technical issues, and existing decisions.

Option Refinement
To enhance the selected option.
To incorporate other public values into the option.

Final Decision
To approve the refined option.
To identify ramifications of the option for other plans and designs.

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<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1: Objectives for an Urban Design Project

The third step is to select between different types of participatory mechanisms, or methods. Here, contingent models of public participation become of interest. Recent examples include guides prepared for the Canadian Standards Association (1996), the City of North Vancouver (2000) and the UK Department of the Environment (1994). All use a series of steps and questions to guide the designer through the process of making decisions about public participation. A similar approach, that of John Clayton Thomas (1995), has the advantage that it provides direction about the type of methods that are appropriate in different situations, where others do not do so explicitly. The disadvantage of Thomas' approach is that it is narrowly construed, based on only two goals: decision quality and acceptability, and saying nothing directly about the enhancement of democracy. Despite that theoretical weakness, his application of the model to thirty case studies strongly supported the need for public involvement, usually more than was used by the managers in the case studies (Thomas, 1995, pp. 187-188).
1. [What are the quality requirements?]

2. Do I have sufficient information?

3. Is the problem structured?

4. Is public acceptance necessary for implementation and unlikely without involvement?

5. [Who is the relevant public?]

6. Does the relevant public agree with the agency's goals?

7. Is conflict on the solution likely within the relevant public?

KEY:

A  Autonomous Managerial  B  Modified Autonomous

C  Segmented Consultation  D  Unitary Consultation

E  Public Decision

(Adapted from Thomas 1995, p. 74)

Figure 4: The Effective Decision Model
Because it provides direction on the selection of methods, Thomas' model will be used as an example. It provides a series of seven questions that guide the selection of public consultation methods (Thomas, 1995, p. 41). It is important to note that the second and fourth questions directly reflect Thomas' goals and therefore define the need for public participation as well as selecting the most desirable methods: this model overlaps the goal-setting stage of process design and illustrates the need for process designers to be flexible and iterative in how they plan for participation. Figure 4 summarizes Thomas' model, which he calls the Effective Decision Model, showing how the answers to his seven questions lead to different types and structures of participation processes.

The first question is "What are the quality requirements that must be incorporated in any decision?" It refers to policy or managerial constraints on the decision to be made. These may include technical constraints, previous policy decisions, budgetary realities, and legal frameworks, to name a few. It is important to be cautious here: the "requirements" may actually be long-held assumptions that are hard to identify; these may be constraints only in the mind of the designer, and not in that of the public. An example of this situation is a budgetary constraint on a building development that is seen to limit the capacity to build a green building. Viewed as a simple capital constraint, the budget is restrictive; as a constraint on capital that is offset by operating costs, the budget is much less constraining. It is important to identify these requirements up-front, but it is equally important to be willing to recognize them and to be able to respond when participants in the process see it differently.

The second question is "Do I have sufficient information to make a high quality decision?" One of the most common rationales for involving the public in a decision is to obtain information that decision-makers do not have. There are three types of this information: (1) creative ideas, (2) technical information, and (3) information about public values. If information is required, then public involvement is necessary; if not, then it may or may not be.

The third question is "Is the problem structured such that alternative solutions are not open to redefinition?" Often, a decision is presented to the public as a choice of a limited number of alternatives, based in part on the quality requirements mentioned above. While limiting options makes decisions simpler, they eliminate options or elements of options that may be preferable to the public (and perhaps even the decision-makers). For example, a company that produces hazardous waste may wish to expand a disposal facility to accommodate growth, and may present to the public locational and design options it considers acceptable. A hazardous waste facility is often viewed by the public as a LULU — "locally unacceptable land-use" - leading them to reject all the options out of hand. They might also suggest that the company instead increase its efficiency through re-use and recycling, eliminating its need for a new facility and reducing its dependence on the old one. Reducing unnecessary structure in this case could lead to the adoption and approval of a decision that is better for all concerned.

Michael Hibbard and Susan Lurie studied a comprehensive planning process in Jackson Hole, Wyoming to understand why it failed to reach its potential to resolve differences between community members and arrive at beneficial solutions to problems (Hibbard & Lurie, 2000). One lesson they learned was that "clarity on what is at issue" is essential. In their case study, the community's overriding concern was cultural change, as its composition had begun to reflect rich
owners of holiday or retirement homes rather than the long-term rural residents. However, the land-use planning process was clearly unable to address this issue. They concluded that:

"An early and honest discussion about what [the process] could and could not do might have removed some inappropriate pressure from the system and even generated parallel processes to name and deal with the issue of how social changes were affecting people's sense of themselves in relation to their community."

(p.193)

The next questions are acceptance-related. The fourth question comes in two parts “Is public acceptance of the decision critical to effective implementation?” and “If so, is that acceptance reasonably certain if the manager decides alone?” If acceptance is critical, and it is not certain if the manager decides alone, then public participation is necessary. Even if the manager is quite certain of its acceptability, it is wise to err on the side of caution, for example by checking informally with members of the public before deciding on what level of participation to adopt.

At this point, Thomas returns to his goals by pointing out that if you have enough information, and there is no need for public acceptance, then public participation is not necessary. In a disaster scenario, for example, the existence of the disaster is enough information, and public acceptance is not necessary – nor desirable given time constraints – to making decisions about response. If participation is necessary, then answers to the questions of quality requirements, information needs, problem structure and public acceptance have begun to define the best options. The last three questions go on to define the appropriate method(s) for inviting public participation more clearly.

Like the fourth question, the fifth is in two parts: “Who is the relevant public?” and “Does that public consist of an organized group, more than one organized group, unorganized individuals, or some combination?” It asks both about who should be involved and about how that involvement should be structured. As part of asking who the relevant public is, a process designer will want to ask two further questions: “How representative should participants be of the community as a whole” and “How inclusive should the process be?” These questions highlight the inevitable tradeoff between more shallow, large group discussions, and more in-depth, small group discussions. Between them, the answers to these questions begin to define a method or group of methods to be used for the participation process in terms of:

- the use of large and small forums;
- the degree of focus on one or more groups;
- the degree to which the general public is targeted;
- the use of a combination of methods to balance their strengths and weaknesses in an overall strategy;
- the timing and location of events for accessibility, and the removal of other barriers to access; and
- the character of communications used to inform the public about events, and to communicate with them about matters up for discussion, including the use of more than one language, visual information, Braille, etc.

The sixth question is “Does the relevant public share the agency goals to be obtained in solving the problem?” If the goals are shared, then there is little concern over sharing a significant amount of
decision-making authority with the public; if they are not, then power-sharing should be limited. Sharing power is confounded in practice because the legal framework for public decisions (in Canada at least) often limits the ability of government representatives to devolve their power. At the same time, the retention of power may be in conflict with stated institutional goals such as community-building, in which case the decision may be made to share more power even in the face of possible disagreement on overall goals.

Last but certainly not least, question seven asks “Is there likely to be conflict among the public on the preferred option?” If there is likely to be conflict, participation methods that encourage identification and resolution of those conflicts are preferable over those that treat groups separately. From a pluralist democratic perspective, identification of conflicts may make any compromise in the eventual decision more acceptable because the public is aware of disagreements. From the perspective of a deliberative public working for the good of the community, the resolution of conflicts and development of agreement among the public and the decision-makers is an important asset of methods in which disagreeing groups meet. However, careful management of conflict is important if a timely decision is to be made. A case can be made for separate meetings, at least initially, if conflicts run so deep as to jeopardize meaningful discussions. Equally, separate meetings may permit useful in-depth discussion of issues. Anticipating and responding to potential conflict within the public is a delicate and difficult one for the manager.

Answering the seven questions permits a process designer to select among five general types of decision-making approaches (Thomas, 1995, pp. 39-40):

A. Autonomous managerial decision, in which the manager makes the decision independently
B. Modified autonomous decision, in which the manager gathers information from the public, and then makes the decision independently.
C. Segmented public consultation, in which the manager discusses with public groups separately, and then makes a decision influenced by the various groups.
D. Unitary public consultation, in which the manager discusses with the public together, and then makes a decision based on that influence.
E. Public decision, in which the manager and public discuss the decision and then make it together.

While this model and others like it are useful, they assume that a decision-making process can be defined up front by such questions. In reality, the information required, problem structure, and nature of public conflicts often change over the course of the decision-making period. So too do objectives, and even the context. Also, methods may be complementary to one another, so the use of a number of approaches can together produce a better overall approach. To be most effective, contingent approaches such as Thomas’ need to be applied flexibly and need to be understood within the framework of an evolving decision process.

Having applied a contingent model, the process designer must decide among the myriad of specific methods used today. One could fill a book writing about the pros, cons, and potential uses of the various public participation methods out there. In fact, the Urban Design Group has done just that for participatory methods for urban design (Wates, 2000), and the International Association for Public Participation has prepared a more general list (“Public Participation Toolbox,” 2003). Rather than being familiar with the suite of different methods available, a process designer needs to be creative with the methods of which they are aware, to build on their experience and that of
others, and to learn as they go. Above all, they should not be limited by the conventional
description and use of a method, nor should they feel limited to using only those methods that are
commonly used or legally required.

At this point, a process designer has:
- identified goals and constraints;
- developed a decision-making strategy that responds to the relevant context and builds on
overall goals; then
- worked out how the decision-making objectives and participation in it change over the
process;
- thought through decisions about what general type(s) of public participation methods are
desirable when; and finally
- picked methods to fit within the overall decision-making strategy.

These are the nuts and bolts of a strategic participatory decision-making process. The next
section discusses the essential characteristics of effective participatory processes.

Process Characteristics

Earlier, it was pointed out that participatory decision-making has to be understood first within the
context of a group decision-making process. In the same vein, Thomas Weibler states that “By and
large, participation is interaction among individuals through the medium of language” (Weibler,
1995, p. 40), emphasis in the original). It follows that participatory decision-making is interaction
among individuals through the medium of language (communication) that leads to decisions
(action): it is “communicative action.”

Over the last 20 years, many planning theorists have built on Jurgen Habermas’ theory of
communicative rationality and American pragmatism (Fainstein, 2003) to create the
communicative model of planning. This line of thought has received so much attention that it has
been termed by some “a dominant consensus among planning theorists” (Mandelbaum in Huxley
and Yiftachel 2000). In the same article, Huxley and Yiftachel describe the focus of this
theoretical approach to the practice of planning as facilitating communicative interchanges, where
planning’s importance lies in its ability to contribute to better debate, discussion, and deliberation
about shared futures. They go on to say that “the assumption is that using the right decision­
making process will enable planning (however defined) to reach its progressive, even emancipatory
potential.” (p.334) This widely accepted theoretical approach provides a good starting point for
discussing “good process” in terms of its character.

At the same time, Huxley and Yiftachel (2000), Fainstein (2003), and others (e.g. Abram, 2000)
make some significant critiques of communicative planning. These critiques focus on (1) the fact
that it deals only with communicative processes without considering (directly) power structures or
desired outcomes, and (2) the fact that other types of processes (i.e. that do not communicate with
the public) are in some cases able to make good decisions. Power certainly is a significant issue in
public participation (Arnstein, 1969; Davidoff, 1965; Thomas, 1995; Sanoff, 2000; Checkoway &
van Til, 1978) that is not addressed directly by communicative theory (Sandercock 1998). In fact,
communicative theory deals with how planning is (or should be) done, and therefore cannot
concern itself with contextual power structure directly. However, the exercise of power can be
addressed by communicative theory, as John Forester showed in relation to information (Forester, 1982). Communicative theory can inform good process because it can illustrate the modes through which power is expressed.

Obtaining and using public knowledge and values can enhance decision quality. The question is not whether other (non-communicative) processes can reach good decisions, but whether or not communicative processes can lead to better decisions. In the same way that it relates to power, communicative theory informs good process because it illustrates how better decisions can be made. The discussion of the character of participatory decision-making in this review is grounded in communicative theory, recognizing that it addresses power only as it is exercised in the planning process and good decisions only as they have the potential to result from good process.

Leonie Sandercock's description of the concern of communicative action theorists (Sandercock, 1998) provides a useful framework for understanding good process:

"[Their concern is] critical reflection about the appropriate processes for learning and deciding, such as assuring representation of all major points of view, equalizing information among group members, and creating conditions within group processes so that the force of argument can be the deciding factor rather than an individual’s power or status in some pre-existing hierarchy.” (p. 96)

The first characteristic Sandercock mentions is representativeness. In terms of attendees, some types of participation require more or fewer people — they are more or less inclusive. In terms of the individuals who attend, the democratic roots of participation demand that they form a representative sample of those who may be affected by the decision to be made. However, representativeness in numbers is necessary but not sufficient at a group process level. If their points of view are to be represented equally, participants must be heard equally. This demands that the process ensure that they are heard, and that other participants (including those leading the process) listen, and indeed actively seek out their contributions.

Even at the level of participant composition, ensuring representativeness is not an easy task. Participation varies among people having different power, socio-economic status, and degree of perceived interest (Checkoway & van'Til, 1978). When it comes to organizations participating, community group cohesion and resources are significant determinants of their ability to participate (Hibbard & Lune, 2000). Policymakers everywhere are familiar with the NIMBY syndrome (Not In My Back Yard), and LULU (Locally Unwanted Land-Use) and BANANA (Build Absolutely Nothing Anywhere Near Anything) are only somewhat less common terms. Organized groups or individuals having significant resources (relative to other citizens) can and often do act in their own perceived best interest, often in reaction to decision-makers pursuing the "common good," and sometimes in attempts to stop decisions altogether. In some — but certainly not all — cases, these groups may alter decisions in ways that are detrimental to other groups less well represented (i.e. with less power).

Sandercock's second characteristic is equal access to and competence with information, which is critical in participatory decision-making. John Forester's 1982 article Planning in the Face of Power addressed the role of information as a source of power in planning, pointing out different types of misinformation and suggesting that the planner's role in a democratic process is to
anticipate and counter unnecessary misinformation. In most planning processes, the public has less technical expertise and information than do planners and technicians, resulting in an imbalance of power. In order to counter this imbalance — indeed, simply to ensure that the public can discuss plans in a meaningful, useful way — information for decision-making has to be (1) true and accurate, (2) appropriate and legitimate, (3) sincere and trustworthy, and (4) communicated in a manner that is understandable to the public (Forester, 1982, p. 75). In a complementary way, a participatory process can incorporate a significant educational and capacity-building component to assist participants to become competent in making the decision at hand.

The third characteristic of communicative action is process conditions that permit reasoned argument to overcome the influence of power in decision-making. Forester (1982) identifies three ways in which power is exerted in a decision-making process. The first is in the decision-making itself. The second is in setting the agenda for making the decision: deciding what is and is not to be discussed, and what responses are possible. The third is in defining the “felt needs and self-conceptions [of the public]” (p. 76). An excellent local example of defining felt needs and self-conceptions is the proposition that “Vancouver is a no-fun city.” This statement has been incorporated into the very identity of the city; while it supports the loosening of restrictions on “fun,” it also deflates our community self-image. In an ideal democratic process, participants would have equal power in each of these three respects. In reality, this is never the case and it would be an unfair demand in the context of the existing power structures of government and society. Still, the communicative action analysis suggests the extension of the democratization of decision-making from the decisions themselves to the setting of agendas and scoping of decisions. Communicative action thus extends its concerns about the influence of power from the process itself to decisions about the process.

Transparency and accountability also help to clarify if not reduce the influence of power in decision-making. The first is a mechanism to ensure that the public is aware of what decisions are made and how, such as public access to documents produced by the government. Its dictionary definition is “free of deceit [synonym: guileless]; easily understood or seen through (because of a lack of subtlety)” (Princeton University, 1997). The second is a mechanism to ensure that action is matched to words, that the implementation of a decision or an agreement matches the understanding of those involved in making it. “Accountability in its simplest terms is the obligation to answer for a responsibility that has been conferred.” (1975 Report of the Independent Review Committee on the Office of the Auditor General of Canada (Wilson Committee), quoted in Citizens’ Circle for Accountability, 2003). For example, election is intended to ensure accountability through the threat that a representative will not be re-elected if his/her decisions do not represent the values or opinions of their constituents. Transparent and accountable processes act to level the power exerted in decision-making.

Summary
Decision-making processes are designed through a strategic process that responds to the situation in which they are to take place. Goals and constraints are identified for the process based on its context, after which objectives are set for different decision-making stages. The potential for public involvement is assessed for the different stages, and methods are chosen to suit. Regardless of how and when public participation occurs, processes that incorporate it can be characterized by their representativeness, participant access to and competence with information, and the degree to
which decisions are made based on reasoned argument. These characteristics are shown in Figure 5.

Figure 5: Conceptual Framework – With Process Factors

Outcomes:
The outcome of a decision-making process appears at first glance to be simply a decision or set of decisions. However, the process of making the decision(s) can lead to other outcomes. Decisions that involve public participation in particular have implications for the decision-makers and their relationships with the public. The potential outcomes of a process fall into categories that parallel the goals described in the “Process” section.

- Decision quality: the decision made through a participatory process may be improved or worsened. Quality may be seen differently by different people, who may for instance value financial impacts more or less than environmental impacts.
- Decision efficiency: the process may be more or less cost-effective. This outcome is dependent on the nature of the process as well as the quality of the decision. Because costs are borne differently by different people and because their perspectives differ on quality, this outcome is often contested.
- Relationship to public values: the decision may incorporate public values to a greater or lesser extent. This outcome is related to decision quality in that many people would agree that a better (public) decision recognizes and responds to public values. However, there may be little clarity about public values given the varied nature of the public. Understanding this outcome involves first identifying values held by the immediate and broader communities, then exploring where they conflict and agree, and finally seeing how those are reflected in the decision.
- Community knowledge: the process will usually result in an increase in knowledge on the part of the sponsoring institution and the community. This knowledge may include — but is not limited to — values, contextual issues, technical constraints, and local knowledge.
- Level of trust: in many cases, a public institution and a community begin decision-making processes with a low level of trust for one another. Institutional actors often believe that communities have little knowledge and ability, and that they are unable to see beyond parochial concerns, while communities often have a hard time believing that institutions
are interested in listening to them or in responding to their needs. Processes have the potential to deepen that divide, or to build trust.

- **Amount of conflict:** decisions involving many parties have the potential to address differing values and interests, reducing conflict, but they can also increase conflict between different community groups, and between the community and the sponsoring institution.
- **Community-building:** as a result of participation in making decisions about their community, people develop relationships with one another and enhance their skills and knowledge as a group. These changes may have positive long-term impacts on their sense of community, their ability to work together, and their ability to contribute to the ongoing maintenance and improvement of their community.

Thomas Beierle and Jerry Cayford surveyed some 239 cases to measure their performance with respect to many of these outcomes. They found that

"Considerably more public participation cases in our database produced good outcomes than produced bad outcomes. As a group, the cases were most successful in educating and informing the public and least successful in building trust in institutions. Falling in between were the results for incorporating public values into decisions, improving the substantive quality of decisions, and resolving conflict among competing interests. As an indication of the outcomes of a varied set of stakeholder processes, the case study pool gives an optimistic view of what such processes can accomplish." (p. 33)

In their research, Beierle and Cayford highlighted "[a] tension between achieving social goals among participants and failing to engage the wider public" (p. 33). This manifested itself in a number of ways, for instance avoiding or downplaying some issues in order to agree on others; involving only a small group of participants, and educating small numbers of participants but not doing the same for the general public. This tension between the inclusiveness and intensive discussion is raised by other authors, particularly within literature on deliberative processes (e.g. Abelson, 2003).

Beierle and Cayford (2002) also looked at relationships between the potential outcomes. They found that most were closely correlated. For example, the degree to which trust was built correlated closely with the degree of public influence — measured by the incorporation of public values. "In low-trust situations, then, the public may need to be granted more influence to convince them of the legitimacy of the public participation process" (p. 68).

The research on goals — and therefore potential outcomes of participatory processes — showed a high degree of agreement on what they are, that a given process can achieve most of them, and that processes may make trade-offs in order to achieve their goals. These trade-offs could have long-term impacts on the decision’s acceptance, stability and implementability. While it is important to be aware of the outcomes of a process, it is also necessary to understand the role of context and process in producing them — the topic of the next section.

**Relationships Between Context, Process, and Outcome**

Beierle and Cayford (2002) assessed relationships between the three elements in an effort to learn what factors influenced outcomes. To begin with, context and process generally occur before outcomes, so the relationships between them are most often one-way. However, context may
change during a process, indeed because of it, and some outcomes may develop as the process goes on, so there is some room for bidirectional influences. The strength of the relationships, however, is less defined than the direction of influence. The authors used a case survey method to compare the success of some 239 case studies of participatory processes. They found that contextual factors such as the quality of pre-existing relationships, the level(s) of government involved, and the type of issue were only weakly linked with the eventual degree of success (p. 40). However, it was not possible to conclude that contextual factors have no significant influence on outcome given such a short list of factors. On the contrary, they were able to “infer that preexisting conflict and mistrust have more impact on the success of public participation when the public participation processes are less intensive” (p. 39). This may suggest that one type of process may be more suited to a given context than another, an idea that requires further research with other contextual factors. The emphasis of many practical guides on a contingent approach (i.e. one that is different in different situations (e.g. Canadian Standards Association, 1996)) reflects practitioners’ sense that contextual factors should inform the design of decision-making processes that potentially involve the public.

The influence of process characteristics on success was much stronger than that of context (Beierle and Cayford, 2002, p. 54). In decreasing order of influence, responsiveness of the process sponsor, motivation of participants, quality of deliberation, and degree of public control all had statistically significant impacts on process success. Processes were more successful when:

- sponsor personnel and participants were involved in active deliberation, adequate resources were available, communications were good, and high-level decision-makers were involved (p. 50);
- participants had positive attitudes towards the process (p. 51);
- deliberation quality was rated “medium” or “high,” although there was little data about this issue for processes with poor deliberation (p. 52); and
- when there was a high degree of public control, although the correlation between high public control and success was weak.

In another study, Lauber and Knuth (1999) “studied how citizens perceived the fairness and quality of the process and identified the criteria on which they based their perceptions.” Like Beierle, they were able to show that there was a significant correlation between procedural fairness and outcomes, although it was impossible to say whether or not the relationships were causal. This correlation showed that citizens’ perceptions of procedural fairness are related to their eventual acceptance of decisions.

Beierle and Cayford concluded that more intense, deliberative types of processes were generally more successful, although this success may be due in part to leaving out the general public or ignoring issues.

Summary:

Figure 6 illustrates the conceptual model that results from this review of context, process, and outcome. Participatory decision-making processes can be understood as strategic responses to a range of contextual factors including characteristics of the community and the institution that is sponsoring the process. The strategy is composed of a group decision-making process driven by goals and
objectives and incorporating different methods of inviting public participation. The process is characterized by the representativeness of participants, participant access to and competence in information and decision-making, and the interplay of power and reason in the making of decisions. Most participatory processes have the potential to produce a series of desirable outcomes. The degree to which they are successful in doing so is influenced strongly by process design and implementation.

Evaluation

“Evaluation of [citizen involvement] is very difficult and an infant art” (Dorcey & McDaniels, 2001). While there are a myriad of case studies of public participation, and some broader studies, it was not until recently that serious efforts have begun to be made to evaluate large numbers of cases using similar criteria. Many studies describe cases and draw recommendations for good practice or identify lessons learned without beginning with a robust framework for analysis (e.g. Helling, 1998). Even when an analytical framework is made explicit, evaluation of public participation often incorporates a large qualitative element and is an enormously subjective activity (Webler, 1995). Evaluation of public participation has proven difficult because criteria are often ill-defined and it is difficult to apply them objectively.

Chess and Purcell (1999) state that in many cases, evaluation criteria are based on process objectives, but these are rarely explicit, and even if they are, objectives of participants and planners vary widely. Similarly, Checkoway and van Til (1978) pointed out that “how one views the world through ideological perspectives – elitist, Marxist, or citizen theorist – directly affects how one evaluates any particular participatory exercise.” Managerialists prefer easily measurable indicators of success, and therefore select more quantitative measures, such as the number of people involved or the completion of program activities. Pluralists may assess the degree of stakeholder satisfaction with the process and the plan. Populists in turn may be more inclined to assess the degree of community influence over the process, and the extent to which the community was strengthened by it. It is clear that even the selection of appropriate, objective criteria may be difficult because of philosophical differences over public participation.
Classification

Researchers have attempted to bring clarity to the evaluation of public participation in two ways: by classifying evaluation methods, and by drawing coherent principles from either theory or practice. There are three key ways to classify evaluations of participatory processes:

- Theory- or practice-based evaluations (Chess & Purcell, 1999). Theory-based evaluations build a set of criteria from a theoretical position about what participation should achieve or how it should be conducted, while practice-based evaluations begin with 'best practice' and focus on experience as a source of knowledge about what is 'good' participatory process.

- Process- or outcome-based evaluations (Beierle & Cayford, 2002). Process evaluations focus on how participation happens, including the choice of techniques and how they are implemented. Outcome evaluations focus instead on the results of participation, such as improved decisions or enhanced community. With respect to outcome-oriented evaluations, timing is a critical issue. There are different types of evaluations depending on when they are conducted (Innes, 1999, pp. 632-633): (1) midcourse evaluations to improve process; (2) end-of-process, to evaluate participant satisfaction and identify “first-order outcomes;” and (3) retrospective evaluations, well after a process is over, to identify value and stability of decisions, and durability of relationships. The ability of the evaluation to address outcome criteria is limited by the stage at which it is done. For instance, mid-course and end-of-process evaluations can rarely address how much a community is strengthened because the results of community-building often take years to appear.

- Quantitative or qualitative evaluations. While qualitative evaluations provide in-depth information, they are also time-consuming and may not be easy to repeat in different situations. Quantitative evaluations can permit comparison across different processes in a less time-consuming way, but do not provide the same richness of information (Halvorsen, 2001).

While most evaluations incorporate some qualitative and quantitative aspects, and many also assess process and outcome, theoretical and practice-based frameworks are fairly exclusive categories. In developing a good evaluative framework, it is useful to review some of these frameworks, and to compare the criteria obtained from theory and practice to see if there is a match.

Recent Evaluation Frameworks

In the last few years, researchers have relied on a theoretical foundation to develop a consistent, defensible set of evaluation criteria. The advantage of using theory as a starting point is that a coherent framework is possible, while the disadvantage is that it is only acceptable to those who agree with the underlying theory. Two researchers developed theoretical evaluations based in democratic theory: Thomas Webler for process, and Thomas Beierle for outcomes. A third group of researchers, Bruce Lauber and Barbara Knuth, developed criteria based in social psychology.

- Thomas Webler worked for some time in developing and conducting participation processes in environmental decision-making. He became frustrated with evaluating a
process based on either outcome — because of problems with identifying the common good — or participant satisfaction — because it is inherently subjective. As a result, he looked to theory as an ideal, a ‘yardstick,’ with which to compare real processes, and to the quality of the process rather than the outcome. Starting from a democratic perspective, he identified two “meta-criteria” — fairness and competence, which should be met in any participatory process. He developed these criteria on the basis of Jurgen Habermas’ critical theory, which proposes that communicative action — talk that is action-oriented, like planning and design — should be rational and fair. He called this the “ideal speech” situation. However, Webler recognized that Habermas did not account for the reality that most participants are not equally competent: power, access to knowledge and expertise make it difficult for participants to have a fair, rational discussion. As a result, he changed the “ideal speech” criteria to account for issues of competence. His criteria fall into three categories: representation, including the selection and composition of participants; procedural rules, including quality of deliberation and degree of participant control of decisions about the process; and information, including its selection, quality, and interpretation (Webler, 1995).

- Thomas Beierle, meanwhile, chose to focus on outcomes. He looked for a framework that “identifies the strengths and weaknesses of a number of different participatory mechanisms, is ‘objective’ in the sense of not taking the perspective of any one party to a decision, and measures tangible outcomes” (Beierle, 1998, p. ii). Beierle started with democracy, asking what problems participation was intended to fix. An evaluation would then ask whether participation had achieved its goal of fixing the problems with the democratic system. Based on this analysis, Beierle identified a number of social goals, listed in detail earlier in this paper.

- For a third perspective, Bruce Lauber and Barbara Knuth approached the evaluation from a social psychology perspective, asking what criteria citizens actually use to evaluate participatory processes. In social psychology studies, other types of decision-making, such as legal procedures, have been assessed, and fairness was often found to be “a major consideration in how people form their subjective impressions of these procedures” (Lauber & Knuth, 1999, p. 20). They used these studies to identify criteria that related to the quality and fairness of participatory decision-making, and then refined and checked them with participants in a moose management program, taking the theory into the world of practice. The result was nine independent criteria used by citizens to evaluate participatory processes: (1) agency receptivity to citizen input — incorporating honesty and integrity, (2) participants’ influence over the decision, (3) degree to which the agency was well informed and had good reasons for decisions, (4) adequate participation — equal opportunity to speak, ability to voice opinion, and representation, (5) enhancement of relationships among stakeholders, (6) citizens’ knowledge, (7) cost, (8) time used, and (9) stability of the decision. The first four related closely to procedural fairness, while the others dealt with other aspects of process evaluation.

Despite theoretical differences, there is significant overlap between the criteria. For example, Webler’s starting point in “ideal speech” and Lauber and Knuth’s in social psychology produced similar criteria — participants’ influence, honesty, integrity, representation, ability to speak, and knowledge. Similarly, Lauber and Knuth’s outcome criteria compare well with Beierle’s criteria —
compare "cost and time used" with "cost-effectiveness"; or "enhancement of relationships" with "reducing conflict."

In contrast to these theoretical evaluations, a common approach is to use practical experience as the basis for a consistent set of evaluation criteria. The strength of this approach is the weight experience carries for practitioners, while its weakness is that it may lack coherence and completeness. Practice-based evaluations can be conducted in a host of ways, for example evaluation by participants or by managers responsible for processes, and using a range of methods, for example surveys or interviews. The following list provides a sampling of practice-based evaluations:

- In 1998, the City of Vancouver evaluated public participation in a range of planning processes - from the city-wide CityPlan process to small-scale neighbourhood plans, and decisions about non-physical matters. Criteria were developed by a group consisting of both participants and planners. Criteria covered both process and outcome concerns, including for example representativeness, resourcing, the degree of participant control, quality of information, incorporation of participant input, and development of good, long-term relationships (City of Vancouver, 1998).

- Chess and Purcell reviewed many evaluations of North American processes that incorporated public meetings, workshops, and citizen advisory panels (public advisory committees) to explore definitions of success and to consider the implications for practice. They found a diversity of criteria for success, and distinguished the origins of these criteria as coming from either theory or participants. The researchers concluded that the studies they reviewed supported, but did not prove or disprove some practitioners' rules of thumb: (1) clarify goals, (2) begin participation early, (3) adapt methods to suit process goals, (4) incorporate various forms of participation, and (5) collect feedback on the process. While Chess and Purcell were most interested in what works - and presumably what doesn't work - there is more to be gained from their research: the studies they list had a number of criteria in common. These included for example process-related criteria such as timing, representation, cost, participant control and access to information; and outcome-related criteria such as participant influence (or perceived influence) on decisions and improved decisions. This list of criteria illustrated the range of available measures, but the authors did not attempt to endorse any of them.

- Where Chess and Purcell looked at the broad North American experience, the UK Department of the Environment's Planning Research Programme (1994) looked at "Community Involvement in Planning and Development Process" in Britain. The researchers were asked to assess the effectiveness of community involvement. In a literature review, they were unable to find any examples of the application of criteria for effectiveness of involvement, so the team developed their own criteria, based on their terms of reference, the literature, and the concerns of people who responded to their early work. As work on case studies proceeded, the study team confirmed and refined their criteria, resulting in eight outcome-based criteria: achieving the "objectives of all," resolving conflict, improving product quality, an agreed process, efficient use of resources, stimulates commitment, and builds community capacity. This evaluation framework had the advantage that the criteria have been verified by field-testing.
The Canadian Standards Association (CSA) provided an evaluation matrix in their Guide to Public Involvement (Canadian Standards Association, 1996, pp. 113-114) that focused primarily on operational aspects of public involvement. They asked questions in three categories: relevance — were the right actions taken; results — what were the results and impacts of the process; and cost-effectiveness. “Relevance” questions could be asked during the process, an on-going assessment of its direction and success. One example is “Are the public information, communication, and media relations activities appropriate?” Results questions focused on similar themes, for example asking “What is the impact of communications and media relations activities on the results?” Finally, cost-effectiveness questions focused on what could be done better next time: “What alternative communication strategies could have been used to better support the process?” This approach to evaluation has the advantage that it can be used in virtually any situation, and the disadvantage that it does little to differentiate between good and bad processes: it would be nice to know, for example, what an “appropriate” communications strategy would be.

Towards a Comprehensive Evaluation Framework

It is clear from the preceding discussion that there is a myriad of approaches to understanding public participation and its evaluation, all of which have their advantages and disadvantages. Furthermore, evaluation of participation is as contested as participation itself. The issue has become how to move forward from these different approaches to a complete evaluation framework for participatory processes. Such an evaluation must directly address the conceptual framework used to understand the process in question (Weiss, 1998).

Researchers have used evaluation to directly address different elements of public participation. This research has had two purposes: to learn more about public participation in general (theory-building) and to evaluate actual processes using that understanding (theory-testing). Evaluators have:

- assessed the quality of process;
- assessed the success of outcomes;
- proposed strategic principles for the selection of processes in different contexts;
- assessed the influence of context on outcomes; and
- assessed the influence of process on outcomes.

To date with respect to process evaluations, “it is significant that much of what practitioners have developed over the years through long and extensive experience as rules of thumb is now being found to be consistent with a growing body of literature based on more explicit theorizing and experimentation.” (Dorcey & McDaniels, 2001, p. 292)

As discussed earlier, there is a similarly high degree of agreement on outcomes. However, relationships between elements have received less attention: only Beierle and Cayford (2002) carefully evaluated the relationship of process and outcome, only Thomas (1995) has carefully tested a strategy for selection of processes, and little work has been done to relate context and
outcome. These are the weakest elements of the conceptual model and therefore also the weakest elements of an evaluation framework.

Julia Abelson has recently proposed an evaluation framework for deliberative processes that reflects the strongest points of the conceptual framework, combining Beierle’s criteria for outcomes with Webler’s criteria for process (Abelson, et al., 2003). However, it may not apply as well to less-intensive approaches. The literature has not yet come to grips with evaluation in a contingent world: how to build an evaluation framework that can be applied across different contexts and types of process.

In summary, evaluation of public participation is still in its infant stages. Different researchers use different sets of evaluation criteria, based in part on their philosophical approaches to public participation itself. However, recent theoretical developments have permitted researchers to better structure their evaluations, and it is now possible to see a high degree of agreement about the range of evaluation criteria. Because public participation processes are by nature “contested space,” the issue of subjectivity is unavoidable, but can be addressed in part by using more than one method. It may now be possible to achieve a relatively unbiased evaluation of a public participation process using commonly accepted criteria within a complete conceptual framework.

2.3 Summary

Public participation is a contested, complex and evolving field. It has its roots in often conflicting democratic and management theories and philosophies:

- pluralists believe that direct participation leading to resolution of differences in the community should be used to make decisions;
- populists believe that the community should make decisions itself, through devolution of decision-making power to community members; and
- managerialists believe that bureaucrats — as experts who are given discretionary power by elected government — should make decisions on behalf of the community.

Public participation is a complex phenomenon. It occurs within a broad context of community and institutional characteristics, and within the narrower context of a particular decision or set of decisions. Decision-making processes have varying goals and objectives at various stages, and a tremendous variety of methods are available to permit the public's participation. The implementation of methods is a complicated task, requiring attention to a range of characteristics that may influence the method's effectiveness. At the end of the process, a range of outcomes are possible — some intended, some not. Finally, the contested nature of participation is reflected in different views of participants about the importance of various outcomes and process characteristics, and all of these may interrelate and conflict.

The complex and contested nature of the field has driven the evolution of a greater understanding of the concept. It is now possible to clarify the elements of participatory decision-making processes, to understand the nature of those elements, and to investigate the relationships between them. For instance, practitioners now agree on “rules of thumb” to guide process implementation (Dorsey & McDaniels, 2001). Gaps remain primarily in understanding the relationships between context, process and outcome.
The relationship between context and process has long been addressed through ad hoc contingent approaches – matching methods to context. Recent efforts have been made to develop and test theories about how best to do this, leading to more robust process design. Along with the understanding of relationships between process and outcome, this effort represents a first step in filling the gaps of our knowledge of participatory decision-making processes.

The evaluation of public participation reflects its complexity and contested nature, and remains “an infant art.” Nevertheless, the range of issues to be considered appears to be well-established, and recent efforts to develop and structure a more complete picture of participatory processes have led to more robust, defensible evaluation frameworks.

Let us return to the three questions posed at the beginning of this chapter:

- “What is good public involvement?”
- “Why was it (not) good?” and
- “How do we know when public participation is (not) good?”

This review has shown that there is general agreement about the characteristics of good participation. We also have a general understanding of how contextual factors and process characteristics relate to process success. However, issues of measurement and latitude in interpretation and emphasis make evaluation of the quality of public participation difficult.

Finally, public participation holds great potential to enhance decisions and build community, and to do so cost-effectively. The challenge is, in each individual case, to understand how best to achieve that potential, and to pull together the many elements that are necessary to do so.
PART II: Studying the University Boulevard Case
Chapter 3: Research Methods

This chapter outlines the questions asked by this research, its scope, and its underlying assumptions, and describes the methods used to answer the questions. In Chapter 1, my personal background and resulting potential to be biased were discussed. For an evaluation to be accepted by a wide range of people, it cannot be based on a single philosophical position and it should be well-supported. As a result, it is essential that the issue of potential bias be addressed throughout the research design and implementation. For that reason, special attention will be paid in this section to describing how the potential for biased findings was minimized. There are four main areas in which bias may present itself: the evaluation framework, data collection, data analysis, and reporting. Potential bias was addressed in the following ways:

- maximizing the objectivity of the evaluation framework — maximizing the validity of selected criteria, clearly stating criteria, and using a contingent approach rather than choosing a particular philosophical perspective;
- collecting a range of types of data and using a representative sample of interviewees;
- being explicit about my own bias and background;
- relying on multiple, balanced sources wherever possible in data analysis; and
- reporting in as balanced a manner as possible, presenting direct quotations where appropriate.

The following sections describe the research design, data collection and analysis, and documentation of the evaluation.

3.1 Research Questions

From February to April 2003, the University conducted a ‘public consultation’ process that presented a draft plan for the University Boulevard neighbourhood at the University of British Columbia. The process was the subject of significant criticism from the public and the School of Community and Regional Planning, but the University defended its process, describing it as an extensive consultation that went beyond minimum requirements. This difference of opinion highlighted two questions about the participation of the public in planning decisions: to what degree was this public participation process successful; and how can a public participation process be objectively evaluated? This research was an attempt to answer these questions, and to draw conclusions about evaluation of public consultation that may be applied elsewhere. Two key questions guided the study

- To what degree was public participation in the University Boulevard neighbourhood planning process successful and why?
- What lessons does this research teach us about evaluation of public participation?

Based on the two questions, the goals of the research were:

- to develop a robust evaluation framework for public participation;
- to describe the participatory process in this case;
- to understand what participation process considerations may be particular to this planning process;
- to analyze the process by applying the chosen evaluation framework;
• to provide recommendations for the improvement of public participation in planning processes at UBC; and
• to identify lessons learned about evaluation of public participation processes.

3.2 Scope

The subject of this research is participation in the physical planning process for the University Boulevard Neighbourhood Area at the University of British Columbia in Vancouver, BC. The process began with the development of a first draft plan in 2001, which was rejected by the Board of Governors. A second draft plan was prepared in stages from October 2001 to February 2003, and it was presented to the public from February to April 2003. Although the University aimed to complete planning for the area in May 2003, the plan was revised and presented to the public in June and September. It was eventually approved in October 2003. Rather than consider the entire process, this research focuses on the portion that resulted in the presentation of the second draft plan in spring of 2003. This part began with UBC Board of Governors concerns over the first plan in September 2001, and ended in May 2003, after UBC reported on the consultation process. As such, the research is a snapshot of an unfolding planning process that involves participation of the public.

The scope of the case can be defined first by what it is and what it is not, and second by its characteristics (Babbie, 1998). Here, the case considered a physical planning process, rather than a policy development process: the key result of the process was a plan that had incorporated the arrangement of three-dimensional space in an urban context as a significant element. The design was at a "neighbourhood" scale, not at a regional, municipal, or parcel scale. It considered an area roughly 300 m by 100 m in size, about 3 hectares, and addressed building massing and siting, roadway and building design, land uses, and servicing and transportation. It took place on a university campus in British Columbia Canada, not in a conventional Canadian municipal governance system. The process had elements of public participation, so it was not purely technical. It incorporated a number of types of public participation, including on-line information and feedback, Open Houses, Presentations, Citizen Advisory Committees and Public Meetings. Participation was initiated by the University, not by citizens. Finally, it was an incomplete process, in the sense that one of its outcomes was an extension of the planning and participation process. In summary, the University Boulevard case studied here was: an incomplete physical planning process at a neighbourhood scale that incorporated public involvement, initiated by the University on whose lands it took place, in a governance system that was different from a conventional municipal system.

3.3 Critical Assumptions

Every research project makes some assumptions in order to frame and scope the project; this project is no exception. The following is a short list of the key assumptions that underlie this project.

• It is possible to evaluate a participatory decision-making process fairly.
• It is possible to evaluate one part of a participatory decision-making process, by treating other parts of the process as context and outcomes.
• A method that does not focus on detailed qualities of interpersonal interaction is adequate to evaluate participation when it does not encompass significantly deliberative processes.
• It is possible and appropriate to understand participatory decision-making primarily in terms of formal processes, excluding informal interpersonal relationships and their effect on the design and implementation of the formal processes themselves.

3.4 Type of Research
This was an evaluation of a particular case of participation in physical planning. It was informed by two research methods: evaluation research and case study research, and was primarily concerned with two tasks: description and explanation. In his book *Case Study Research: Design and Methods* (Yin, 1994) Robert Yin defined a case study as “an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context; when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident; and in which multiple sources of evidence are used.” (p. 23.) Further, a case study is preferred when “a ‘how’ or ‘why’ question is being asked about a contemporary set of events, over which the researcher has little or no control.” (p. 20) These criteria were met in this study, and the description of a case study fits very well with the situation at hand. Yin also describes the role of case studies in evaluation research – they serve to:

- explain causal links in real-life interactions;
- describe the context of an interaction;
- describe the intervention itself; [and]
- explore those situations in which the intervention being evaluated has no clear set of outcomes.” (p. 25)

In public participation processes, causal links between context, process, and outcome are common, unresolved issues of study (Beierle & Cayford, 2002). The context of any participatory decision-making process includes established power structures, attitudes of those planning and participating in the process, previous decisions and decision-making processes, and many other factors. A clear description of the goings-on in and around participatory processes is important in any evaluation because they have the potential to significantly affect the process. A complete description of participatory decision-making itself would require analysis at various scales, from its role in participatory democracy to the interplay of different personalities, skills, and attitudes characteristic of small group interactions (Fairness and Competence in Public Participation: Evaluating Models for Environmental Discourse, 1995). While some of these characteristics may be measured quantitatively, most require qualitative information – like that available from case study methods – for effective evaluation. Finally, participatory processes rarely have clearly articulated goals, and often different participants have different goals for the process: there are no clear outcomes. Participatory decision-making processes such as this one are an excellent subject for evaluation using case study research methods.

3.5 Evaluation Strategy
Qualitative research like this case study generally follows a four-stage process (Kirk & Miller, 1986): research design, data collection, analysis, and documentation. In this research, these stages were broken down further into a seven-step process. The following list shows the research steps and their relationship to the four stages.

**Research Design:**
- review of literature to develop a conceptual understanding of participatory processes and their evaluation;
• development of an evaluation framework based on the literature review; and
• selection of methods to suit the evaluation framework.

Data Collection:
• collection of relevant data.

Analysis:
• description of the University Boulevard process and relevant related facts; and
• evaluation of the process,

Documentation
• documentation of analysis and conclusions

This section describes each of the seven steps to explain how the research was structured and conducted. It begins with a statement of principles and then describes each of the seven steps outlined above.

Guiding Principles for Evaluation
Carol Weiss (1998) defines evaluation as “the systematic assessment of the operation and/or the outcomes of a program or policy, compared to explicit or implicit standards, in order to help improve the program or policy” (p. 18). The American Evaluation Association adopted a set of guiding principles for professional evaluators in 1994. These principles assume “that evaluators aspire to construct and provide the best possible information that might bear on the value of whatever is being evaluated. The principles are intended to foster that primary aim” (p. 1). These principles are reflected in the methods used for this evaluation. Together with the definition of evaluation, they provide a framework to guide the selection and implementation of an effective evaluation.

“Systematic Inquiry: Evaluators conduct systematic, data-based inquiries about whatever is being evaluated.

Competence: Evaluators provide competent performance to stakeholders.

Integrity/Honesty: Evaluators ensure the honesty and integrity of the entire evaluation process.

Respect for People: Evaluators respect the security, dignity and self-worth of the respondents, program participants, clients, and other stakeholders with whom they interact.

Responsibilities for General and Public Welfare: Evaluators articulate and take into account the diversity of interests and values that may be related to the general and public welfare.” (“Guiding Principles for Evaluators,” 1994)
Research Design

Research design consists of the first three steps of this research process: literature review, development of an evaluation framework, and selection of data collection methods. These were necessary before research was begun in earnest.

Step 1: Literature Review

Both academic literature and practice-oriented documents were reviewed to develop an understanding of the “state of the art” in participatory decision-making processes and their evaluation. In the first phase, immediately available review articles and books were read to develop basic knowledge of the field. To deepen and broaden that review, two methods were used to find more references: identifying and obtaining relevant work cited in documents from the first phase, and searching article databases and libraries for works that referenced public participation and related topics. More recent documents and those that dealt specifically with evaluation were selected. The process of reading documents and obtaining the most relevant citations from them continued iteratively throughout the evaluation as unanswered questions or previously unidentified issues arose. The understanding of public involvement developed through the literature review increased the evaluator's competence in evaluation of public participation and provided a basis for systematic inquiry into the University Boulevard process itself.

Step 2: Development of the Evaluation Framework

Having identified research questions, the first step in research design was to select a general approach that is appropriate to the subject of the research. First, critical information about participatory decision-making processes is highly qualitative in nature, so an appropriate evaluation approach had to be compatible with a qualitative subject. Second, the University Boulevard neighbourhood planning process had already begun when the decision was taken to evaluate it, so an experiment would have been difficult or impossible to do. Furthermore, the fact that participatory processes are so closely related to their contexts makes it virtually impossible to replicate them, making experimental design inappropriate. Participatory decision-making processes are decision-making processes, so their outcomes include decisions. Although they often impact participants, they are distinct from programs whose primary aim is changing participants, such as medical programs that improve participants' health. Therefore, the overall research design could not be limited to comparing participants and non-participants. A different sort of comparison might have been to compare two similar processes in different contexts, or two different processes in a similar context. However, resource and time constraints inherent in a master's thesis made such comparisons impossible for this project.

Given the nature of the research subject and the constraints on the research, a “one-group” design that takes place after the program is complete was selected. The disadvantage of this approach for many program evaluations is that “it leaves room for differing interpretations about how much change has occurred and how much of the observed change was due to the operation of the program” (Weiss, 1998, p. 193); the advantage of such a design is that it can provide a good preliminary assessment of the program. It was used for this research on the understanding that the

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3 As noted in Chapter 2, many terms are used to describe public participation. At various times, searches were made using the terms “public participation,” “citizen participation,” “citizen involvement,” “public involvement,” “community participation,” “community involvement,” “public consultation,” and “community consultation.”
evaluation would be preliminary, and that significant efforts would be made in each phase of the research to ensure objectivity despite its preliminary nature.

Starting with the “one-group” approach, the next steps were identification of an evaluative framework and then selection of data collection methods to suit the criteria to be evaluated. The development of an evaluation framework can rely to a greater or lesser extent on theory about how a program works, what its outcomes are, and the relationships between process and outcome — program theory (Weiss, 1998). Weiss stated specifically that “qualitative evaluation is highly compatible with the idea of program theory” (p. 265). For this project, the conceptual framework developed in Chapter 2 provided a ready source of accepted theory on which to base an evaluation framework. The combined process-outcome framework suggested by Julia Abelson et al. (2003) was used as a starting point for this research (Table 2).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Representation</th>
<th>Procedural Rules</th>
<th>Information</th>
<th>Outcomes/Decisions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Legitimacy and fairness of selection process</td>
<td>Degree of citizen control/input into agenda, rules, selection of information and experts</td>
<td>Characteristics (accessibility, readability, digestibility)</td>
<td>Legitimacy and accountability of:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Representativeness (geographic, demographic, political, community)</td>
<td>Deliberation (amount of time, emphasis on challenging experts, mutual respect)</td>
<td>Selection and presentation (who chooses information and experts)</td>
<td>• decision-making</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant selection vs. self-selection</td>
<td>Credibility/legitimacy of process (what point in decision-making is input sought, who is listening)</td>
<td>Interpretation (Adequacy of time to consider, discuss, and challenge the information)</td>
<td>• communication of decisions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inclusiveness vs. exclusiveness</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• responses to decision and input</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2: Initial Evaluation Framework

In the interests of systematic inquiry, the American Evaluators Association (1994) states that:

- “Evaluators should adhere to the highest appropriate technical standards in conducting their work, whether that work is quantitative or qualitative in nature, so as to increase the accuracy and credibility of the evaluative information they produce.
- Evaluators should explore with the client the shortcomings and strengths both of the various evaluation questions it might be productive to ask, and the various approaches that might be used for answering those questions.”

In order to “increase the accuracy and credibility of the evaluative information,” the first challenge was ensuring that the initial evaluation framework was as objective as possible. There are different ways of ensuring objectivity. One approach is to maximize validity (it gave the right answer) and reliability (yielded the same answer repeatedly under the same conditions) as applied to qualitative

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research (Kirk & Miller, 1986). If it was not already a complete and objective framework, the challenge was to improve it. To do so, validity and reliability were assessed in turn.

**Validity**

In their book *Reliability and Validity in Qualitative Research*, Jerome Kirk and Marc Miller define three types of validity (p.22-23):

- apparent validity — when a measurement is obviously accurate;
- theoretical validity (or "construct" validity) — when a measurement obtains a result predicted by a strongly supported theory (e.g. a thermometer is calibrated in boiling water on the theoretical assumption that water always boils at the same temperature); and
- instrumental validity (or "criterion" validity) — when a measurement obtains the same results as a measurement that is accepted as valid.

To assess the validity of Abelson's framework, the three measures of validity were taken in turn. In this case, the literature review suggested that evaluations of participatory processes are never obviously accurate because of the subjectivity of the subject matter and the evaluation, meaning that the framework could not be apparently valid. Second, while there certainly are theories about public participation, the support for a given theory may depend on one's perspective. Furthermore, some of the theories are new and relatively untested. The lack of a strong and accepted theory made it impossible to measure theoretical validity in this case. Similarly, the measurement of instrumental validity was confounded because "...there is little comprehensive or systematic consideration of these matters in the academic literature..." (Rowe & Frewer, 2000).

In his book *The Practice of Social Research* (1998), Earl Babbie identifies another weaker but useful measure of validity that is related to instrumental validity:

- content validity — a measurement is valid if it is based in a commonly agreed meaning.

Essentially, content validity is a measure of the degree to which people agree that a term is appropriately defined. Three measurements of this validity are important: the number of people who agree on the measure, the degree to which they agree, and the degree to which those people are representative of the group of people who are competent in the field.

In order to measure the framework's content validity, the criteria were listed and compared to criteria found in the literature. Twenty-seven documents were reviewed, seven of which incorporated literature reviews of their own. Because the philosophies of public participation are so varied, it was crucial to compare Abelson's criteria to criteria that span the range of philosophical approaches as well as covering both practical and theoretical work. The references included both theoretical frameworks and practical evaluations, covered the health, environment, risk management, and planning sectors, represent a variety of people from a government body to a

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participant group to a multi-agency committee, and represent a broad mixture of perspectives from populists to managerialists. While they are a relatively small sample, they are representative of those who are competent in the field.

The following process was used to structure the assessment of content validity:

1. additional criteria were identified from the review to complete the framework;
2. the number of people who mentioned the criterion was used to gauge agreement;
3. the relative similarity of descriptions of each criterion was used to gauge agreement; and
4. where there was less agreement, the perspective of the sources and their descriptions were used together to clarify sources of disagreement.

The results of this analysis were:

- Additional criteria were identified; these were usually practical in nature, dealing with issues of process design. One example was the criterion that methods should be matched to goals, which was mentioned by most sources.
- It was possible to clarify the meaning of the criteria.
- About half the criteria were strongly supported, including about half the process and outcome criteria and most of the criteria relating context to process design.
- Some criteria received medium levels of support, despite the fact that they appeared to reflect “common sense,” for example the criterion that adequate resources should be available to conduct the process well. In many of these cases, mention of the criteria varied with the source’s emphasis either on evaluation or practice. Resourcing was mentioned regularly by sources with a practical emphasis and infrequently by evaluators.
- A few criteria were weakly supported. These appeared to be more appropriate for some types of participation than others, for example participant control over agenda-setting, which was supported for deliberative or community-driven processes. Because they appeared to be more descriptors of the process than evaluation criteria, they were treated in the framework as criteria whose definition was contingent on the type of process, an approach used by the Canadian Standards Association (1996) to broadly characterize processes (p.29-30). The CSA showed how a characteristic such as “Roles and responsibilities are clearly defined and understood by everyone associated with the process” maps across a range of purposes: if the purpose was to “Share Information,” then the proponent is responsible for setting roles and responsibilities and communicating them; if the purpose was to “Share Decisions,” then the stakeholders agree on the establishment of roles and responsibilities. This use of weakly supported criteria in this way fits well with the contingent model outlined in Chapter 2.

The analysis was both difficult and useful. On one hand, it illustrated the difficulties in developing a defensible, comprehensible set of evaluation criteria given the wide variation and lack of systematic approaches in the literature. On the other hand, it suggested that there is a relatively strong level of agreement about what aspects of participatory processes to consider in an evaluation if it is approached in a contingent manner. In summary, it was not possible to assess the validity of Abelson’s framework except as regards its content, but the exercise provided a greater degree of clarity about the range, use, and definition of evaluation criteria.
Reliability

"Reliability depends essentially on explicitly described observational procedures" (Kirk & Miller, 1986). As such, assessment of the reliability depends on how it is applied to a case. Earl Babbie (1998) suggests that using previously tested measures, based on an accumulation of the literature, is one way to ensure reliability of a method. In this case, the criteria have been applied in various different ways in various different situations and assessing each of them is impractical within the constraints of a Master’s thesis. Rather than attempt to assess the reliability of the framework itself, then, the focus turned to ensuring the reliability of its application. Therefore, reliability will be dealt with in more detail in the discussion of method selection.

Verifiability

Some researchers prefer to ensure “verifiability” in qualitative studies (Creswell, 1998). Morse et al (2002) defined and described the term:

“Verification is the process of checking, confirming, making sure, and being certain. In qualitative research, verification refers to the mechanisms used during the process of research to incrementally contribute to ensuring reliability and validity and, thus, the rigor of a study.”

In keeping with that description, Creswell (1998) suggests that at least 2 of 8 methods be used in a study to ensure verifiability:

- prolonged engagement and persistent observation;
- triangulation of data sources;
- peer review and debriefing;
- refinement of the hypothesis in light of negative or disconfirming evidence;
- clarification of researcher bias;
- confirmation of information with informants;
- use of thick, rich description; and
- external audit of the research.

Triangulation of sources, faculty review, refinement of the hypothesis (for each criterion), clarification of bias, and confirmation of information were all used to ensure verifiability in this research.

Summary and Description of the Proposed Framework

The assessment of validity and reliability produced two results. The first was a generally supported evaluation framework having a greater degree of clarity about the range, use, and definition of criteria. The second was an understanding that special attention had to be paid to the application of the framework if the evaluation was to be reliable.

Before proceeding to discuss the collection of data and its use in the evaluation, it is useful to describe both the framework and the approach necessary to its successful application. The evaluation framework is itself contingent, reflecting the understanding of participatory processes developed in Chapter 2. It is shown in Table 3, and is split into four sections: criteria respecting response to context, contingent criteria, process criteria, and outcome criteria. The first section consists of criteria that evaluate the strategy employed in the development of the process itself.
The second section consists of criteria whose definition must be refined to suit the evaluation to its subject. The process section is next, and is further broken down into three categories. The first category is Representativeness, which evaluates how participants are chosen and in what ways they are representative of their community. Procedural Concerns is the second category. It addresses issues of legitimacy (relationship of participants to decision makers), reasonableness (flexibility and resourcing), accountability, and transparency. Communication and Information is about both the type and quality of information as they affect participants' ability to participate. The last section consists of a list of the social goals of public participation, expressed as potential outcomes.

Finally, Table 3 shows the degree of agreement next to each criterion. These ratings are very general and should be understood only in the context of the preceding discussion of the assessment of content validity.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Application</th>
<th>Criterion</th>
<th>Agreement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Criteria</td>
<td>The choice of approach and techniques reflected organizational and planning goals.</td>
<td>H</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regarding</td>
<td>Timing of participation was congruent with stages in the decision-making process and followed from process goals.</td>
<td>H</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Response to</td>
<td>Goals were established and process and decision constraints were identified at the beginning of the process.</td>
<td>H</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Context</td>
<td>The process design responded to resource limitations, the nature of the community at hand, local circumstances, the type of decision, and issue-specific concerns.</td>
<td>M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contingent</td>
<td>There was an appropriate level of inclusiveness (i.e. number of people participating) (Representation section).</td>
<td>M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Criteria</td>
<td>Participants were assisted in understanding relevant information (Information section).</td>
<td>M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>There was an appropriate level of citizen control over goal-setting, participant selection, information gathering and dissemination, selection of experts, and boundary definition (Procedural Rules section).</td>
<td>M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Process</td>
<td>Participants were representative of the entire community across an array of characteristics such as demographic, cultural, political and geographic characteristics.</td>
<td>H</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Criteria</td>
<td>Access to events was assured through elimination of barriers, including provision of resources to community members.</td>
<td>M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Selection of participants was fair and legitimate.</td>
<td>L</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Representation</td>
<td>Information was easy for participants to understand, easy to access, made available in a timely manner, and unbiased.</td>
<td>M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information</td>
<td>Information was complete and expert.</td>
<td>M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Procedural Rules</td>
<td>Goals, constraints on the process, and constraints on the decision were clearly communicated to all those involved in the process.</td>
<td>H</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Application Criteria**

- The process was honest, incorporating two-way communication with respectful relationships.  
- Decisions were transparent: the ways in which public input was interpreted and in which it informed decisions were communicated clearly to all those involved in the process.  
- Adequate resources were made available for the process.  
- Decision-makers were accountable: they were directly involved in the decision-making and participation process, not indirectly via bureaucrats.  
- The process was flexible within a framework in that it could adapt to changing context and lessons learned.

**Outcome Criteria**

- The decision was broadly accepted, and conflict within the community was reduced.  
- Public input and values were reflected in the decision.  
- The process was cost-effective.  
- Participants were educated and informed.  
- The substantive quality of the decisions was improved.  
- Trust of the sponsoring institution was enhanced.  
- The process provided tangible benefits to the community: closer relationships and an enhanced sense of community.

1. H = High; M = Medium; L = Low. These are qualitative assessments based on the analysis described in this Chapter.

**Table 3: Evaluation Framework**

There are clearly interrelationships between different categories and criteria. For example, high-quality deliberation is more easily achieved in a smaller group, so it is related to inclusiveness; equally, the ability to reach consensus is usually enhanced with greater opportunity for deliberation, so it is also related to inclusiveness. However, the criteria stand alone to a large extent: it is also possible to have quality deliberation and greater inclusiveness in a larger group through discussion in a set of sub-groups. In this case, of course, cost will increase. These examples illustrate the interdependence of the criteria as well as their distinctiveness.

Because the evaluation framework is contingent, it must be applied in two steps. The first step is to evaluate the response to context. The context is first described, and elements of a process design appropriate to it are established. Then the response to context is evaluated using the process elements as a benchmark. The second step is to evaluate the actual process and outcome(s). First, the contingent criteria are suited to the type of process that actually occurred. Then process characteristics and outcomes are described and evaluated. The second part of the evaluation fits it to the actual circumstances, permitting the evaluation of intense small group processes differently from broadly inclusive processes, and even of processes that combine the two. The contingent approach is useful because it allows the evaluator to evaluate both the process design and the process itself fairly.

**Step 3: Selection of Methods**

In the development of the evaluation framework, it became clear that the reliability of this evaluation would depend on its careful application – on the data collection, analysis, and reporting.
This section begins by describing issues of reliability in qualitative research and what was done to address those issues through the selection of data collection methods.

Kirk and Miller (1986) identify three types of reliability: “quixotic reliability,” “diachronic reliability,” and “synchronic reliability.” “Quixotic reliability” refers to a single method of observation that yields the same measurement every time. A quixotically reliable measurement, however, may be inaccurate whatever its reliability, for example a “party line” response to a researcher’s question. “Diachronic reliability” refers to the coherence of two observations made at different times. Unfortunately, this measure of reliability assumes that relevant conditions remain the same over time, something that is very rarely true in human relations. Finally, “synchronic reliability” refers to coherence between observations made in the same period. This measure of reliability suggests the comparison of observations made by different methods to identify agreement and disagreement between methods or sources. Like validity, reliability is a difficult issue in the evaluation of participatory processes. However, in this one-group research design, “diachronic reliability” does not apply, leaving considerations of “quixotic reliability” and “synchronic reliability” to guide the evaluation. In this case, it was anticipated that “party lines” were likely from both institutional actors and members of the public who were concerned about process. This likelihood suggested that collecting data from sources on all sides would be necessary if the results could be considered reliable. “Synchronic reliability” would be the measure of choice to ensure the reliability of the evaluation.

The data sources available for the evaluation were:

- individuals involved in the process: administrators and participants (in interviews);
- my personal observations as a participant in the process;
- relevant documents produced before, during and after the process; and
- media reports about the process.

To maximize reliability, each of these was used in the application of the evaluation framework. Table 4 lists the criteria and the data sources consulted for their evaluation (Frechtlin & L. Sharp, Eds., 1997), and illustrates the reliance on multiple sources of data for virtually all of the criteria.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Individuals</th>
<th>Personal observations</th>
<th>Documents</th>
<th>Media</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The approach and techniques reflected organizational and planning goals.</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation was timed to be congruent with the decision-making process and it reflected goals.</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goals were established and process and decision constraints identified at the outset.</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The process responded to contextual factors.</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There was an appropriate level of inclusiveness.</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There was an appropriate level of citizen control.</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participants were assisted in understanding relevant information.</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participants were representative of the entire community.</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access to events was assured through elimination of barriers.</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Selection of participants was fair and legitimate.

Goals, constraints on the process, and constraints on the decision were clearly communicated to all those involved in the process.

The process was honest and respectful, incorporating two-way communication.

Decisions were transparent.

Decision-makers were accountable.

The process was flexible within a framework.

Information was easy for participants to understand, easy to access, made available in a timely manner, and unbiased.

Information was complete and expert.

Adequate resources were made available for the process.

The decision was broadly accepted, and conflict was reduced.

Public input and values were reflected in the decision.

The process was cost-effective.

Participants were educated and informed.

The substantive quality of the decisions was improved.

Trust of the sponsoring institution was enhanced.

The process provided tangible benefits to the community.

Table 4: Potential Data Sources for Evaluation Criteria

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Individuals</th>
<th>Personal observations</th>
<th>Documents</th>
<th>Media</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Selection of participants was fair and legitimate.</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goals, constraints on the process, and constraints on the decision were</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>clearly communicated to all those involved in the process.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The process was honest and respectful, incorporating two-way</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>communication.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decisions were transparent.</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decision-makers were accountable.</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The process was flexible within a framework.</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information was easy for participants to understand, easy to access,</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>made available in a timely manner, and unbiased.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information was complete and expert.</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adequate resources were made available for the process.</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The decision was broadly accepted, and conflict was reduced.</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public input and values were reflected in the decision.</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The process was cost-effective.</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participants were educated and informed.</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The substantive quality of the decisions was improved.</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust of the sponsoring institution was enhanced.</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The process provided tangible benefits to the community.</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data Collection

This is the fourth of the seven steps in this research. Ethical concerns are often significant in evaluation research (Weiss, 1998). These become particularly important in data collection and subsequent research steps, and are the subject of UBC's Behavioural Research Ethical Guidelines, administered through a review process. Therefore, special attention is paid to reliability and ethical concerns in the data collection phase. These issues are also discussed in subsequent sections on data analysis and reporting. The collection of data from each of the data sources is discussed in more detail below: interviews, document review, media review, and participant observation.

Interviews

The primary considerations in selecting and conducting interviews were maximizing reliability through representativeness and ensuring confidentiality, particularly for “expert” interviewees – those who were responsible for the design and implementation of the planning process. Interviewees were selected to be as representative as possible of the community involved in the process. The research plan called for interviewing at least two members of each of the following groups:

- faculty;
- staff;

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This project was approved by the Behavioural Research Ethics Board in July 2003.
• students;
• nearby residents; and
• members of the University administration responsible for planning.

As research progressed, the number of interviews varied from the original intent, leading to an eventual total of eleven interviewees:
• because of time limitations and conflicting schedules, only one nearby resident was interviewed; and
• because it became clear that verifiable information about events leading to the participation process was important, four members of the University administration were interviewed.

It was desirable to interview participants having a range of experiences of University planning processes and having a range of perspectives about them. Of seven participant interviewees, the perspective of only two were known in advance of their interviews; nevertheless, they were a diverse group on a variety of criteria. Table 5 lists key characteristics of the participants (some details were withheld to protect anonymity).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Designation</th>
<th>History (long-time &gt; 10 yrs)</th>
<th>Previous involvement in UBC planning processes</th>
<th>Level of trust before the process began</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Faculty 1</td>
<td>long-time faculty</td>
<td>long-time</td>
<td>low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty 2</td>
<td>long-time faculty</td>
<td>long-time</td>
<td>low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resident 1</td>
<td>long-time resident</td>
<td>about a year</td>
<td>open-minded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff 1</td>
<td>long-time staff</td>
<td>none, but involved in internal decision-making</td>
<td>high</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff 2</td>
<td>long-time staff</td>
<td>long-time awareness, little involvement</td>
<td>low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student 1</td>
<td>undergraduate student (&lt; 4 yrs at UBC)</td>
<td>involved in tuition consultation</td>
<td>low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student 2</td>
<td>graduate student (&lt; 2 yrs at UBC)</td>
<td>none</td>
<td>high</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5: Participant Characteristics

Because the interviewees were drawn from participants, and few participants were supportive of the draft plan, a bias against the substance of the draft plan was anticipated. Questions of participants about substantive matters therefore only compared the quality of the plan before the process with that of the revised plan produced after the process.

Ethical research procedures were used throughout the interviewing process. During the participation process, a variety of people from the various stakeholder groups were encountered. Interviewees were recruited from those personal contacts. The interviews were requested by mail, and were given a week to decide whether or not to be interviewed. Meetings were then scheduled via email or phone. At the beginning of each interview, a “subject consent” form was read by the interviewee and signed (if clarification was necessary, it was provided). Interviews were conducted in private, and documented by means of hand-written notes and an audio recording. In one case,
The audio recording did not work, and in another, the recording ended before the end of the interview. Audio recordings were combined into a type-written transcript. Where no recording was available, notes were used as the basis for a transcript. In every case, the transcript was sent to interviewee for their review. It was made clear that corrections were welcome, but none were requested. Electronic transcripts were password protected and audio tapes and paper transcripts and interview notes were kept in a locked filing cabinet. These will be retained for five years and then destroyed.

The interviews were structured to match the framework for description and evaluation of the process described earlier. They were tailored to the type of interviewee: interviews for administration interviewees included questions about the conduct of the process and its context, while interviews with participants focused on their experience and reaction to the process. The interview forms are attached as Appendix F. The interviews generally followed the interview forms, although the order and wording of the questions changed from interviewee to interviewee in order to enhance the flow of conversation during the interview. In some cases, questions were added to confirm information obtained in a previous interview or to obtain more details about a topic addressed by someone else.

Document Review

Publicly available materials, including consultation materials and reports, meeting minutes, and publicly available memos were collected. These included:

Minutes from:
- University Boulevard Neighbourhood Planning Technical Advisory Committee meetings between September 4, 2001 and December 19, 2002
- University Boulevard Neighbourhood Planning Advisory Planning Committee meetings between May 3, 2001 and July 2, 2003
- UBC Board of Governors meetings between November 16, 2000 and May 15, 2003
- Public Open Houses dated May 29 and September 10, 2001

Planning documents for the University Boulevard Neighbourhood, including:
- for the 2001 draft: draft plan and drawings
- the Findings and Recommendations Report of the UBC Committee on “University Boulevard,” (February 2002)

Other relevant planning documents:
- UBC Main Campus Plan (1992)
- Governance Study for Electoral Area ‘A’ (undated, circa 1998)
- Official Community Plan for Part of Electoral Area ‘A’ (July 1997)
- Principles for Physical Planning at UBC (July 1999)
- UBC Comprehensive Community Plan: Issues and Options Report (DRAFT, 1999)
Planning documents for the March 2003 Draft Plan were assessed for readability, digestibility and accessibility. Readability was assessed using the Flesch-Kincaid readability scoring tool included in Microsoft Word 2000 (version 9.0.2720, copyright 1993-1999 Microsoft Corporation). “Reading Ease” rates text on a 100-point scale; the higher the score, the easier it is to understand the document. “Reading level” rates text on a U.S. grade-school level. Digestibility and accessibility were measured by asking participant interviewees. Finally, documents were compared to measure their completeness.

Documents were used as a source of demographic information about the University community. The consultation report provided an analysis of demographic information about participants in the consultation process collected via feedback forms. While data was available about participants’ membership in general categories such as faculty members, students and residents, no information was available about participant gender, cultural background, age, or other common demographic information, and it was not possible to distinguish between faculties, nor between different resident groups. Furthermore, many residents were part of the institutional community, making it impossible to clearly break down the community into component parts.

Media Review
Published articles were retrieved from the Ubyssey student paper’s website archive and from the Can News Net search engine. Can News Net includes local coverage by the Vancouver Sun, the Province, and the Courier newspapers. Articles from June 1988 to December 2003 were collected from Can News Net and from January 2001 to December 2003 from the Ubyssey.

Participant Observation
In his book *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design*, John Creswell (1998) describes observing as “a special skill.” DeWalt and DeWalt (2002) define participant observation as “the use of the information gained from participating and observing through explicit recording and analysis of this information” (p.2). For them, both participating and observing skills are important. Participation encompasses a range from non-participation to complete participation (p. 18-23). They describe observation as “explicitly and self-consciously attending to the events and people... it also includes a kind of self-observation” of the researcher’s experience, biases and impacts (p. 68). They suggest mapping scenes, counting, actively listening to conversations, and taking extensive field notes. Similarly, Creswell suggests defining a clear role for yourself, developing protocols for recording both descriptive and reflective information and your own reactions.

Although I attended various events and observed what went on, I did so as a simple participant, without the intention of using observations for research purposes. Therefore, I was a “complete participant.” Because I was not planning to use my observations for research, however, I did not clarify my role as a researcher, nor take notes or photographs, nor journal my experiences. My role and lack of intention meant that my memories of the events could have been subject to significant
bias, and these would not have been transparent because they were not recorded. Because my participant observation techniques were not rigorous, the evaluation relied as little as possible on this data source, except for easily verifiable and non-contentious information.

**Analysis**

The analysis covers two steps in this research: the description of the process and its evaluation. The two are similar because the questions asked are similar; the distinction is that the evaluation draws a conclusion from the information, while the description focuses on the facts as presented in the data.

**Step 5: Description**

Data from each of the four sources — interviews, documents, media and observation — were used as appropriate to describe the process, its context and its outcomes. For much of the background material, official public documents provided a reliable source of information. Information regarding decisions leading up to the process, the characteristics of the process, and its outcomes came from more varied sources, guided by Table 4.

To sort the interview information, interview transcripts were analyzed using *Atlas Ti* software to identify and tag segments of text that related to each of the criteria in Table 4. Segments of text that related to elements of the conceptual framework and other significant themes that arose during interviews were also identified. For example, for the decision context, information about the committees most closely involved in the process was identified and tagged. Information from all interviews was then compiled into quotes relating to each criterion, element, or theme. Documents and media articles were also reviewed for information relating to each of the criteria, as were my own observations. Together with interview data, these formed the basis of the description of the process.

Having collected a broad base of information, the accuracy of results was ensured by checking for consistency among data sources. For example, information obtained from an interviewee was checked against other interviewees’ statements, documents and other available evidence.

**Step 6: Evaluation**

The process was evaluated criterion by criterion, based on the balance of evidence available. As patterns or themes emerged, they were highlighted. As with the criteria, information relating to themes was then compiled and checked to ensure balanced conclusions were drawn about them. A summary was written for each phase of the evaluation.

**Documentation**

Documentation of the process and its evaluation was broken into three elements — context, process and outcome — following the conceptual framework. Throughout the documentation, descriptive and evaluative text was distinguished as much as possible, and data was presented first, without analysis. That approach permits the reader to weigh the evidence presented with a minimum of prejudice. Furthermore, quotes were often substantial to allow the reader to understand the context in which statements were made. In order to maintain confidentiality, quotes were identified only by the broad group to which the speaker belonged (e.g. administration, community member). This approach provided enough information that the reader could evaluate the
appropriateness of the source, but protected interviewee identity (Frechtlin & L. Sharp, Eds., 1997). Conclusions were drawn about the research questions after all of the evidence had been gathered, analyzed, and summarized. In keeping with the preceding approach to the evaluation, the conclusions were based on the balance of available evidence.

3.6 Summary

This research considered the questions “To what degree was public participation in the University Boulevard Neighbourhood Planning process successful, and why?” and “What lessons does this research teach us about evaluation of public participation?” To do so, an evaluative framework was developed based on a review of literature on public participation. This framework was applied to the University Boulevard participation process through interviews, participant observation, media review and document review. Ethical research practices were used throughout the study. Interviewees were selected with the intent to obtain a range of perspectives, and the characteristics of selected interviewees reflected that intent. Care was taken in the research design, data collection, data analysis, and reporting phases of the research to ensure objectivity to the greatest extent possible. Identity of interviewees was protected as much as possible. Information collected in the research was applied in two ways: to construct an accurate history of the process, and to analyze against the evaluation criteria. In this way, the study described the process, then analyzed its three components: process design, implementation, and outcomes.
Chapter 4: An Introduction to the University Boulevard Case Study

4.1 Introduction
At its inception in 1908, UBC was established in central Vancouver near the Vancouver General Hospital. In 1922 it moved to its present site on the tip of the Point Grey peninsula. UBC is situated within the Greater Vancouver Regional District (GVRD) in Electoral Area 'A,' which includes areas within the regional district but outside municipal boundaries. Electoral Area 'A' includes Pacific Spirit Regional Park and the University Endowment Lands (UEL), which includes the neighbourhood of University Hill (Figure 7). The park forms a strong physical edge between Vancouver to the east and the community that includes UBC and University Hill to the west.

Since 1922, UBC's developed areas have expanded to cover over 400 hectares, including substantial residential and student housing, academic areas, farmland, and some private research facilities (“A Brief History of the University of British Columbia,” 2003). At the same time, the University Hill neighbourhood to the East has developed into an affluent suburban enclave, consisting mostly of large single-family homes with a small mixed-use center just east of Wesbrook Mall on University Boulevard. In the mid 1980's, major provincial cut-backs resulted in the resignation of Dr. K George Pederson as President and a huge increase in tuition of 75% over three years. Dr. Pederson was replaced by Dr. David Strangway, who developed a number of strategies to secure more funding for UBC. Among those strategies was the founding of the UBC Real Estate Corporation in 1988 to develop the University's real estate assets for capital fund or endowment purposes (“A Brief History of the University of British Columbia,” 2003).
UBC Properties' first project, initiated in 1989, was a “mixed density urban village” (UBC Properties Trust, 2003) called Hampton Place (Figure 7). The University began the development with no consultation with neighbouring residents, other municipalities, or the University community (Cavanaugh, 1989). When they started clearing the land of trees, community groups, the Musqueam nation, and students protested (Moya, 1989), with some climbing the remaining trees to prevent further cutting (“TERN,” 2003). Although residents have gradually become part of the University community, the development of Hampton Place spawned suspicion and distrust of the University among its neighbours (Griffin, 1996d). As the scale of development plans became more clear, the City of Vancouver became concerned that University residents would rely

Figure 7: UBC Planning Areas

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on City amenities but would not pay taxes to support them (Bula & Gram, 1995). The City called on the Provincial government to conduct a study of governance at UBC, citing a potential conflict between UBC's dual roles of developer and legal approval body (Griffin, 1996c). Concerns over governance were echoed by the student Alma Mater Society (AMS) and others (Griffin, 1996a), who called for a moratorium on campus development until governance issues were resolved. As a result, a governance study was commissioned in 1997 (Ford, 1997), and concluded in 2000 with the decision to maintain the status quo with minor adjustments (University of British Columbia, n.d.; Munro, 2000).

The GVRD responded to community concerns by requiring the development of an Official Community Plan (OCP) prior to any further development on UBC lands (Griffin, 1995). During the development of the OCP, the community raised concerns over competition with merchants along 10th Avenue (Griffin, 1996a), loss of forested area in South Campus ("Point Grey 'new town' planned," 1996), transportation and housing types and occupants. These were partly but not completely addressed through revisions (Griffin, 1996b).

The OCP was followed by a more detailed Comprehensive Community Plan (CCP) in 2000, and a series of eight Neighbourhood Plans (NPs), two of which were completed in 2001 (University of British Columbia, 2003). This planning process was jointly laid out by the GVRD and UBC and is implemented by the University ("GVRD - UBC Memorandum of Understanding," 2000). The history of planning at UBC was summed up, in a Vancouver Sun editorial in April 2003:

"[In the 1990's, President Strangway] didn't show any respect for public process in his effort. And when his administration bulldozed ahead with its Hampton Place residential development on the edge of the campus without any regard for community opinion, public anger boiled over. One result was the comprehensive consultation process that resulted in the current area plan. A lot of issues needed to be addressed. UBC has been for all intents and purposes an electorally distinct little fiefdom on the edge of the city of Vancouver. It has conducted its affairs without much regard for either local residents or regional objectives." ("Let's get on with it: Community plan may not be perfect, but it represents real progress," 2003)

The University Boulevard Neighbourhood was the third major neighbourhood to be planned by UBC, beginning with a first draft in 2001. A second draft was presented to the public in the spring of 2003. The plan and the process spawned significant interest on- and off-campus, major controversy, media coverage, petitions (George Spiegelman, personal communication March 22, 2003), and student projects (Anhorn, Caswell, Enns & Davidson, 2003). The public rejected the plan presented by the University, which was forced to revise it substantially and to extend the public participation a full five months. A revised plan was eventually approved by the UBC Board of Governors in October 2003 and by the GVRD Board of Directors in November 2003.

The University Boulevard process presents an interesting opportunity to inquire about the quality of the planning process, and to understand what happened and why. This chapter provides an overview of the neighbourhood planning process for University Boulevard and makes clear the scope of the case study. The next chapter describes the University Boulevard neighbourhood planning process as it actually occurred, including context, process, and outcomes.
4.2 The Neighbourhood

The University-Boulevard Neighbourhood planning area is located along University Boulevard between East Mall and Wesbrook Mall at the eastern edge of campus (Figure 8). It is approximately 300 x 100 m, or 3 hectares in size, about the same as 3 Vancouver city blocks.

Figure 8: Oblique Aerial Photo of University Boulevard and Area

The area is situated at the main entrance to the campus. Immediately north is a student-centered service and recreation area; to the East is the commercial center of the University Hill neighbourhood; the other two sides of the plan area are institutional in nature, with biomedical buildings to the South and science buildings to the West. Currently, all transit buses terminate at the bus loop at East Mall and University Boulevard. All in all, its location gives University Boulevard a central role in the University, and adjacent University Hill.

4.3 The Process and the Plans

The planning process for the University Boulevard Neighbourhood Plan began officially after the approval of the CCP in December 2000. At the time, work had already been done on the Dentistry building which was to be built on the Southwest corner of University Boulevard and Wesbrook Mall. A first draft plan was produced in June 2001, and a President's committee recommended changes to that plan in 2002. A second plan in March 2003 and a third in June 2003 have since been prepared and presented publicly. Consultation on the last plan continued into September of 2003, and the Board of Governors endorsed the plan at their October meeting. The timeline in Figure 9 shows the entire planning period.

adapted from the June 2001 draft University Boulevard Neighbourhood Plan, Figure P-2
### Plan Phase
- Advisory Planning Committee Meetings
- Technical Advisor Committee Meetings
- Open houses and Presentations
- Public Meetings
- Board of Governors Updates
- Internal Planning Activities

### Scope of this research (shaded area):
- October 2001 – April 2003
- EXCLUDES: Transit Plan and Draft #3 and related meetings

### Plan #1 Highlights
**Key Elements**
- Role as social center for campus
- Mixed use buildings (retail at grade, institutional and residential above) throughout
- Maximum height, 5 storeys
- Housing only for faculty/staff/students
- At-grade transit
- Road widened for parallel parking and bike lanes
- Acknowledged possible reconfiguration for transit
- Greenway on South side of University Boulevard

**Committee Recommendations**
**Key Elements**
- Role as social center
- Mixed use buildings, with total retail space more than permitted by the OCP
- Maximum height 18 storeys
- Market housing in addition to university housing, doubles OCP housing allowance
- Improve automobile access
- Re-open University Boulevard to cars through to Marine Drive
- Bus loop relocated out of the area
- Road widened for parallel parking and bike lanes
- Plaza at East Mall
- No identifiable greenway area

### Plan #2 Highlights
**Key Elements**
- Role as 'social hub'
- Mixed use buildings throughout
- Market housing in addition to university housing, doubling housing allowed by the OCP
- 3 towers, maximum height 18 storeys
- Re-open University Boulevard to cars through to Marine Drive
- Bus loop underground
- Road widened for parallel parking and bike lanes
- Plaza at East Mall and plaza near SUB
- Greenway on South side of University Boulevard

### Plan #3 Highlights
**Key Elements**
- Role as 'social hub'
- Mixed use buildings within amounts allowed by the OCP
- Maximum height, 5 storeys
- University Boulevard closed to cars west of East Mall
- Bus loop underground
- Road widened for parallel parking and bike lanes
- Plaza at East Mall
- No identifiable greenway area

### Figure 9: University Boulevard Planning Timeline
- October 2001 – April 2003
- EXCLUDES: Transit Plan and Draft #3 and related meetings
- Public meetings, open houses
- Presentations ("special meetings")
- Advisory Planning Committee meetings

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For the purposes of this study, only the portion of the planning process focused around the second plan is considered in depth, beginning after the 2001 draft plan was rejected by the Board of Governors in the fall of 2001 and ending after the May 2003 production of a report on the public consultation process for the second draft plan. As such, it is viewed as an on-going process.

Figure 9 shows the time period under study as a shadowed area corresponding with the Draft Plan #2 planning phase. It includes Advisory Planning Committee (APC) and Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) meetings, public open houses, special presentations, a public meeting, updates to the Board of Governors, and the activities of a committee of the President of UBC named the “UBC Committee on University Boulevard.”

In keeping with the conceptual framework described in Chapter 2, the case study is split into three sections: context, process, and outcome. The contextual factors include community characteristics, institutional and legal arrangements, and the planning framework and history. The Draft Plan #1 process is therefore included in that discussion. The process section includes both strategy and characteristics, and is a detailed description of the Draft Plan #2 process. Finally, the outcome section includes changes in the process, substantive changes, and impacts on the community. The Draft Plan #3 process is therefore described there.

4.4 Summary

University Boulevard is centrally located on campus, and consists of approximately 3 hectares of land alongside the street of the same name, between Wesbrook Mall and East Mall. It is designated in UBC's Official Community Plan as an area where non-institutional planning may go ahead pending the development of a plan. The plan was accordingly developed, beginning in late 2000, in a series of three drafts:
- Draft #1 – December 2000 - September 2001;
- Draft #2 – October 2001 – May 2003; and

The case study is focused on public involvement in the production and review of Draft #2, which included:
- internal UBC planning activities;
- activities of the UBC Committee on University Boulevard from October 2001 – March 2002;
- public involvement activities, including Advisory Planning Committee meetings, open houses, presentations, and public meetings from October 2001 – May 2003; and
- the production in May 2003 of a report on public consultation.

This focus on the second of three draft plans meant that the case study considered the planning process to be on-going. As a result, the process for Draft #1 was considered as context of the process under investigation and the process for Draft #3 as one of its outcomes.
Chapter 5: Context

As described in Chapter 2, there are generally three elements of the context of a decision: community characteristics, institutional structure and governance, and aspects of the decision itself. The relationships between these three elements are also important contextual information. In this case, the study considered the development of only the second of three draft plans for University Boulevard. As a result, the development of the first draft plan is an additional contextual element in this case. The individual elements are described first, followed by their relationships, and finally the development of the first draft. The chapter concludes with a summary of the context of the Draft Plan #2 process.

5.1 Community Context

UBC's community consists of four major groups totaling close to 50,000 people, as shown in Figure 10 (University of British Columbia, n.d.(a); CEI Architecture, 2003; University of British Columbia, 2003):

- faculty (2,000);
- residents, including some students, staff, and faculty, and other residents not affiliated with the University (9,500 on-campus, 2,700 off-campus);
- staff (4,500); and
- students (32,000 undergraduate, 7,000 graduate; about 25% live on-campus).

Figure 10: Community Composition

Of the four groups, faculty, staff and residents are generally longer term community members, while students are generally shorter term community members. Students nonetheless make up a significant portion of the population at any given time. Fewer students, faculty, and staff are on campus during the summer than during the school year. If the community grows as envisioned by the OCP, the on-campus residential population will nearly double to 18,000 by 2021.

Two elements of community context are discussed next: individual and social elements. The discussion is a very brief overview, and provides a general sense of what the community is like. A detailed review was beyond the scope of this thesis.
Individual Elements

Individuals in the University community are a unique group. A few characteristics are of particular interest:

- **Education** — the University community is much better-educated than the community-at-large. A much higher proportion of residents are university-educated than is typical of British Columbians, and a high proportion are students ("2001 Census," 2002). In particular, UBC includes schools focused on planning and related fields, providing specific expertise in areas related to neighbourhood planning.

- **Transience** — Residents of Electoral Area 'A' are substantially more transient than average British Columbians ("2001 Census," 2002). This is especially true of students. The transience of students means that they are less familiar with ongoing planning processes than long-time community members. However, their level of education may make it easier for them to understand complex concepts such as those presented in planning processes. High levels of community involvement in public decision-making are often correlated with higher income and education levels (Checkoway & van Til, 1978), so significant involvement may be expected for any planning process at UBC.

Social Elements

As with individuals, the social elements of the University community are unique. Some characteristics of particular interest are described here, based for the most part on my own observations for ten years at UBC:

- **Social cohesion** — as might be expected for a community of this size, cohesion is variable. Within faculties, student clubs, community organizations, and staff groups, community cohesion is quite strong. On the other hand, gaps are often large between larger community groups: the different resident groups, students, staff, and faculty do not appear to inter-relate very much.

- **Degree of organization** — The community is highly organized within different groups. UBC is divided into faculties and departments; within those units, people are further organized through their roles as students, faculty and staff. Students, faculty and staff have formal associations and governing bodies. Residents are grouped into different organizations: the UEL Ratepayers, the University Neighbourhoods Association (UNA), and the UEL Tenants’ Association.

- **Presence, focus and power of interest groups** — A great many interest groups exist on campus, but members are as interested in activities well beyond UBC’s borders as they are on activities on campus. A set of interest groups are relevant to this case, coming from both on- and off-campus communities. In the on-campus community, students and faculty in departments and schools related to planning and development are key interest groups. Off-campus, the afore-mentioned residents groups are focused on UBC development because of its scope and potential for impacts. Residents further away also have interests. The degree of involvement of the different groups varies depending on the issue at hand, and their power depends in part on the arena in which the issue is raised.

- **Community flux** — As mentioned earlier, the campus population varies over the year. Student and faculty time constraints also vary with the school term. This forms a structural constraint on the ability of the community to engage in planning activities at
particular times of the year, especially during exams in December and April, and during summer months when many people are away from campus.

Summary
The community at and around UBC is a complex one. Transience, population fluxes, and structural issues constrain public involvement. On the other hand, high education levels, faculty/student expertise, high degree of organization are key opportunities for public involvement processes.

5.2 Institutional Context
The institutional context of the decision-making process consists of the organizational framework for planning at UBC. The foundation for this framework is provincial legislation, within which the organizational structure and policy of the University are a further influence. UBC's powers to "make rules respecting the management, government, and control of real property, buildings and structures" on land that it owns ([BC University Act [RSBC 1996] Chapter 468, 2003]) significantly overlap with municipal powers under the BC Local Government Act ([RSBC 1996], 2003).

This overlap became a significant concern as a result of the University's development of Hampton Place. Rather than enact regulations applying to UBC's property, the GVRD signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with UBC in 1994 to outline roles and responsibilities with respect to planning on UBC's land. In the memorandum, the two parties recognized the mandate of the University to direct its development as an institution, and the responsibility of the GVRD to the community — present and future — to manage development. The result was a definition of responsibilities that maintained UBC's control over development of institutional areas, and gave the GVRD final approval for the planning of non-institutional areas (GVRD Bylaw 840, 1996). The parties agreed that the GVRD would develop an Official Community Plan (OCP) to guide development on campus. Other Memoranda of Understanding were signed by the GVRD and UBC in 1996, 1997, and 2000 to further clarify and/or adjust the roles and responsibilities of the two parties.

Essentially, the Memoranda established structures and processes for planning. They indicate that UBC is responsible for conducting detailed planning, while the GVRD is responsible for ensuring that plans produced by UBC comply with the OCP. In this way, a "municipal-style" structure and planning process is established, as well as an approval process to ensure compliance with accepted goals ("GVRD - UBC Memorandum of Understanding," 1994; "GVRD - UBC Memorandum of Understanding," 1996; "GVRD - UBC Memorandum of Understanding," 2000). Essentially, the GVRD has agreed not to enact zoning and related bylaws, relying instead on UBC's development of Neighbourhood Plans to regulate land use and account for impacts on the community.

UBC Organization and Policy
As the key institutional actor with respect to detailed planning, UBC's organizational structure and policies are key elements of the institutional context for planning on campus. This section reviews
those elements to clarify planning-related roles and responsibilities of individuals and groups within the University.

**Organization:**

The University Act provides for a President and two governing bodies — the Senate and the Board of Governors. The President is responsible for the University’s operations, while the Senate is responsible for academic matters and the Board manages the University's administration, property, and business affairs. Figure II shows how they relate. (University of British Columbia, 2003d; *BC University Act [RSBC 1996] Chapter 468*, 2003).

![Diagram of UBC Governance Structure](image)

**Figure II: UBC Governance Structure**

The Senate works through appointed committees which present reports for consideration by the Senate as a whole to be accepted, amended or rejected. Its powers are restricted to the academic governance of the University (University of British Columbia, 2003e).

In contrast, the Board of Governors has significant land-use planning and development powers. These include powers to:

- "maintain and keep in proper order and condition the real property of the university,..."
- "erect and maintain buildings and structures,..."

It is composed of fifteen appointed and elected members, of whom nine are appointed and six elected — two each from faculty and students, one from staff, and one from the convocation ("UBC Board of Governors," n.d.; *BC University Act [RSBC 1996] Chapter 468*, 2003).

The Board establishes the policies within which the administration operates, and monitors their implementation. The Board uses a Committee structure through which most decisions are made, then referred to the full Board for information, discussion, and sometimes decisions. The Properties and Planning sub-committee deals with physical planning and development issues. In 2003, its membership included six appointees and one elected representative (Nina Robinson,
personal communication October 29, 2003). Prior to Board and Sub-Committee meetings, a “Docket” of information pertaining to various items is circulated to Board members. Minutes of Board meetings include consent, approval, and information items. Consent and approval items state Board resolutions, whether they were or were not carried, information in the docket, and sometimes include a few lines of comments. Information items include a few lines of comments indicating significant points but do not describe discussions of issues. No minutes are kept of the sub-committee meetings. Minutes show that the Board has held 4-6 meetings per year since 1995 (University of British Columbia, n.d.). Up to fifteen members of the public may attend Board meetings, subject to availability, but they are not permitted to make representation to the Board unless they are specifically invited to do so.

Given that land-use planning is usually conducted by local governments in BC, it is important to compare UBC’s land-use governance with theirs. Where UBC’s Board of Governors is vested with powers to plan and develop land at UBC, local Councils can plan and regulate land-use development in local government. Where the Board includes a minority of elected members and meets quarterly, Council members are all elected and meet on a more frequent basis. Where public access to the Board is strictly controlled, the public is expected to make representations to Council, and the Local Government Act mandates forums in which they may do so. UBC’s governance system incorporates significantly less representation and public access than do local governments in BC. As such, it is not accountable to an electorate in the way local governments are.

The Administration is led by the President and five Vice-Presidents. The Vice-President Academic and Provost is responsible for Institutional (research and academic) development. Up to January 2003, planning and development for Non-Institutional (residential and commercial) areas—termed “Neighbourhoods”—was the exclusive responsibility of the Vice-President, Administration and Finance. Since then, however, the VP External and Legal Affairs has been responsible for Neighbourhood Planning, while the VP Administration and Finance has continued to be responsible for development.

Under the VP External and Legal Affairs, the Associate Director for University Town coordinates neighbourhood planning activities. Three administrative units are involved: University Town, Campus and Community Planning, and UBC Properties Trust. The working relationship between these units was described by Linda Moore (personal communication August 20, 2003) as a collaboration under the direction of Dennis Pavlich (Figure 12).
UBC has a number of policies, intended to guide the activities of the University. A number of these apply to planning and development at UBC, beginning with the TREK 2000 mission and vision. Those elements of UBC’s policies that are most significant to community and land-use planning are excerpted here.

**TREK 2000: UBC Mission and Vision.**

This document is a statement of values and intent for the University. It also details five principles that will ground strategies and actions at UBC (University of British Columbia, 2003d). In its mission statement, UBC states that:

"[The University of British Columbia] will cooperate with government, business, and industry, as well as with other educational institutions and the general community, to create new knowledge, prepare its students for fulfilling careers, and improve the quality of life through leading-edge research. ... [The graduates of UBC] will recognize the importance of understanding societies other than their own. As responsible citizens, the graduates of UBC will value diversity, work with and for their communities, and be agents for positive change."

The two most relevant principles and related strategies are:

"[UBC will further] the social, cultural, and economic interests of Greater Vancouver, British Columbia and Canada. To this end, it will cooperate with other educational institutions, as well as with industries, governments, and
agencies to advance learning and research and further the transfer of knowledge. The University also recognizes that it must be accountable to those who use our services, participate in our processes, share in our governance, and provide our revenues."

"[UBC will] keep both the campus community and the external community fully informed about developments in the Official Community Plan, and ensure that proper consultation procedures are followed. The communities both on and off campus should be apprised of all proposals relating to increases in population density, traffic, and commercial development, and their needs should be taken into account."

**A Legacy and a Promise: Principles for Physical Planning at UBC**

More focused than UBC's Mission and Vision, this document is intended to guide all decisions about the form and character of development on campus. There are eight principles ("Principles for Physical Planning at UBC," 1999). The last two are most relevant to this discussion:

7. "The process of physical change must be flexible and responsive to the changing needs and values of society. The University will experiment with new ideas, establish precedents and provide outstanding leadership in urban planning, architecture, and landscape and building design."

8. "The process of physical change must invite the participation of all who have an interest in the outcome and be exemplary in every respect. UBC has the mandate and the strong desire to work in collaboration with all members of the University community and neighbouring communities."

**Academic Plan.**

The Academic Plan touches only briefly on physical planning issues. Nevertheless it includes two overarching goals that relate directly to planning issues (University of British Columbia, 2000). Like the Physical Planning Principles, these provide a sense of the University's identity and values in more concrete terms than does TREK 2000.

"[The University will] improve links between the University and the communities it serves, for our mutual benefit."

"[UBC will] improve university administrative processes and decision-making to better serve the people and [its] mission."

**Policy #5 – Sustainability Policy**

Like the Academic Plan, this policy is not specific to land use planning and development, but does guide the University. In it, UBC commits to (University of British Columbia, 2003b):

"[be] mindful of the need to balance ecological, social and economic imperatives, in an open and transparent decision-making process with the involvement of all stakeholders."
Summary

The legal, organizational, and policy frameworks for planning at UBC are summarized here to capture the institutional context to community planning.

- Legally, UBC's powers to manage and direct land development conflict with those of the GVRD. This conflict has been resolved through an evolving set of Memoranda of Understanding between the two parties. These Memoranda have defined roles and responsibilities as they pertain to planning and development.
- UBC's organizational structure changed at the beginning of January 2003, with responsibility for neighbourhood planning being moved from the Vice-President, Administration and Finance to the Vice-President, External and Legal Affairs. The three units involved in planning and development are Campus and Community Planning, University Town, and UBC Properties Trust. While their relationship is collaborative, the roles and responsibilities of the three units in neighbourhood planning are not clear.
- Taken together, UBC's policies describe an organization that values:
  - cooperation/collaboration with the community;
  - the creation of new knowledge, provision of leadership in planning and design;
  - exemplary decision-making processes;
  - inclusivity, transparency and accountability; and
  - the interests and needs of the community at large.

However, most of UBC's policy statements are non-specific when it comes to the type of participation. The only policy statement to provide specific direction in this regard is "A Legacy and a Promise: Principles for Physical Planning at UBC," which sets out a mandate for collaboration with the University and neighbouring communities.

5.3 Decision Context

The background to the decision itself consists of four elements:
- the geographical scope;
- the complexity of the issue(s);
- how technical and/or value-laden the decision is; and
- constraints on the decision.

These elements can be understood on the basis of information about previous decisions relating to the planning area. The overall planning framework for UBC is introduced here first, providing a brief history of planning decisions and a description of how different planning areas relate to one another. Next, related UBC planning documents are described with particular reference to University Boulevard. These include the Official Community Plan (OCP), the Comprehensive Community Plan (CCP) and the Main Campus Plan (MCP). The section concludes with a summary of the four elements of the decision context, based on this discussion.

Planning Framework

Recent planning for UBC has followed a comprehensive planning model commonly used in municipalities in British Columbia. The plans produced through this model usually address general and specific areas and focus on land use, transportation, environment, and to a lesser extent social policy (Kaiser & Godschalk, 1995). At UBC, planning begins for an area at a large scale with broad policy and land-use decisions. Individual parts of the original area are then planned at
smaller scales with more refined land-use decisions and policies about the physical organization of space. For smaller areas and at a still smaller scale, details of the design of buildings and other spaces and structures are completed at later planning stages. The process is normally linear, with policies from early, large-scale plans informing later, smaller-scale plans. It is not uncommon, however, for smaller-scale planning to come to conclusions that are different from those made earlier, either because circumstances have changed since the first plan was done, or because new information uncovered at the more detailed level changes decisions made at the broader level. In this way, the process is conceived to be a rational, iterative planning process. In practice, it is less certain than this, because it involves complex trade-offs, value judgments, and the exercise of power, which make it nearly impossible to make purely 'rational' decisions and plans. Nevertheless, it is a process that generally progresses in detail over time, through a series of distinct, nested plans.

In BC, regional districts can adopt Regional Growth Strategies that apply to the municipalities and unincorporated lands within their jurisdiction. At the next level of detail, municipalities can adopt a Official Community Plan (OCP) bylaw that covers the entire municipality and must respond to the Regional Growth Strategy. Finally, more detailed neighbourhood plans may be produced to provide finer details for smaller areas; these plans must be consistent with the OCP.

UBC lies within unincorporated Electoral Area ‘A’ of the Greater Vancouver Regional District. At UBC, the plans start at the broadest scale with the GVRD’s Livable Region Strategic Plan (LRSP). The UBC Official Community Plan (OCP) of 1997, which covers the entire campus and part of Pacific Spirit Park, and the UEL Community Plan Bylaw, which covers the University Endowment Lands, respond to the LRSP. Although it sets some policies for “Institutional” areas and development, the UBC OCP is focused on the “Non-Institutional” development of eight “plan areas.”

At the same scale of planning, a pre-existing Main Campus Plan (1992) and needs arising from the Academic Plan guide development of the Institutional lands. In 2000, the Comprehensive Community Plan (CCP) was approved, providing an infrastructure and servicing plan for the campus as a whole, and planning objectives, principles, and density allocations for Non-Institutional areas.

At a more detailed level, eight individual Neighbourhood Plans provide details about physical organization of space for Non-Institutional sub-areas of the OCP. The physical relationships between Institutional, Non-Institutional, UEL, and Pacific Spirit Park planning areas are shown in Figure 13. After the planning is complete, site and building designs guide development of individual sites.
Three major planning documents are significant to the University Boulevard area: the Official Community Plan, the Comprehensive Community Plan and the Main Campus Plan. The timing, scope, and main elements of each of these are outlined below as they pertain to the University Boulevard area.
Main Campus Plan:
The most recent in a series of physical campus plans, this plan was completed in 1992 through an internal process. Because it preceded the OCP, it made no distinction between Institutional and Non-Institutional development, and it assumed total University control over development. The plan proposed a set of strategies that were "definitive in intent but not as to final form" (University of British Columbia, 1992, p. 1). It incorporated "Demonstration Plans" to illustrate how its policies might be implemented over 10 to 20 years.

A demonstration plan was prepared for University Boulevard, and it set the stage for later planning documents. This plan envisioned a new role for the University Boulevard area as the "Town Center" of campus in the form of a conventional street lined with medium-density mixed-use buildings. The Main Campus Plan provided an early sense of UBC's intent for University Boulevard.

Official Community Plan (OCP):
The OCP was prepared by the GVRD in 1997 through a consultative process involving the GVRD, UBC, and the public. It covered UBC and two foreshore lots in Pacific Spirit Park, and set objectives for land-use and transportation based on UBC and GVRD goals. It envisioned significant academic and residential growth on campus, increasing the on-campus residential population from 9,500 to 18,000. Eight sections of the campus were designated as "Plan Areas" because of significant anticipated development or sensitivity. Local plans would have to be prepared for each of these areas, one of which is University Boulevard (GVRD Bylaw 840, 1996).

The document began with an overall vision for the campus community and its planning:

- it includes living, working, playing, and learning;
- its planning respects the land and its patterns and harmonizes with its setting, academic context, and neighbouring communities;
- it evolves through creativity, innovation and renewal, following ecological cycles;
- it is diverse, and encourages interaction;
- it leads by example, building on the interrelationship between academic and community activities; and
- its planning requires meaningful participation of the public (later described as "ongoing public consultative planning and decision-making."

Like the Main Campus Plan, the OCP saw University Boulevard as a commercial center on campus consisting of a mixed-use corridor, but it described the street as a greenway and defined permitted development more clearly. The area is shown in context of the land-use designations of the OCP in Figure 14. The OCP identified the following policies for University Boulevard:

- University Boulevard is part of a Greenway corridor;
- individual stores should be small-scale (100-350 m²);
- the maximum ground-floor retail space is 4500 m²;
- maximum building height is 5 storeys, with commercial limited to the bottom 2 floors;
- "the area will emphasize transit, pedestrians, and cyclists as part of the greenway;" and
- the area will accommodate high capacity transit.
All subsequent plans, development controls, and public works subsequent to the OCP (including Neighbourhood Plans) must be consistent with it because it is an adopted Official Community Plan of a local government (BC Local Government Act [RSBC 1996], 2003). This consistency requirement means in practice that if a proposed Neighbourhood Plan is not consistent with the OCP, then either an amendment to the OCP or a change to the Neighbourhood Plan is required. An OCP amendment has the same requirements for public involvement as the adoption of an OCP and would be led by the GVRD as the local government.

**Comprehensive Community Plan (CCP):**
The CCP was the first step in developing Local Area Plans for the eight Plan Areas identified in the OCP, so it dealt only with Non-Institutional development. There are three important aspects related to the CCP: product, process, and requirements for Neighbourhood Planning.

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*Figure 14: OCP Land-Use Plan*

Adapted from Schedule 'A' of the OCP.
The CCP provided more details for the Plan Areas, in the way of Principles, Strategies, and Guidelines for Plan Areas. For University Boulevard, the CCP set out a number of policies. The following list provides a sense of how the CCP filled out the OCP’s vision for the University Boulevard:

- (3.1.1) provide gateways to UBC which give a sense of arrival, establish pedestrian/bike priority, and slow traffic;
- (3.1.4) retain a transit-exchange in the vicinity of East Mall and University Boulevard;
- (3.2.2) University Boulevard as the primary East-West greenway; and
- (3.3.2) encourage mixed-use areas incorporating housing, educational facilities, services, and amenities.

The Neighbourhood planning principles for University Boulevard (Section 4.4) responded to both the Main Campus Plan and the OCP. Here the CCP identified some key planning objectives, for example:

- The area is the front door of the University, and is “envisaged as a highly pedestrian-focused entrance into the University.”
- The area includes both “campus core” and “university commercial” land-use designations in the OCP, so it should include commercial, residential, and institutional uses.
- The commercial designation is extended along University Boulevard from East Mall to Wesbrook, a change from the OCP, which showed it as a node at East Mall. Commercial uses should meet the needs of daytime and evening users of the campus. [emphasis added]
- A pedestrian plaza at East Mall is an opportunity.
- The street should be narrowed, with improved pedestrian and bicycle environment.
- Vehicular traffic should be discouraged with the exception of transit and traffic necessary to support local retail.

Process

The CCP was developed through a process that included the preparation of an Issues and Options report, four public meetings, three draft plans, meetings with stakeholder groups, and meetings with a TAC and APC. It was approved in December 2000 (University of British Columbia, 2000).

The CCP Issues and Options report discussed University Boulevard:

“The OCP envisions a commercial ‘node’ at University Boulevard and East Mall. The 1992 Campus Plan envisions a ‘town centre’ on University Boulevard extending from East Mall to Wesbrook Mall. Choices will need to be made between these options, to be incorporated into the [CCP].” (p.59)

CCP meetings followed a presentation format with a question/answer period, incorporating 3-4 slides for each Neighbourhood of 60-80 slides total. This format meant that little time was spent discussing each neighbourhood plan: community concerns usually revolved around general
considerations such as infrastructure, sustainability, and environmental impacts. Over all four meetings, a total of two questions were asked about University Boulevard.\footnote{Source: minutes from March 25 1999, March 31 1999, November 25 1999, and April 22 2000 public meetings}

With respect to University Boulevard in particular, an administration interviewee described how it was treated by UBC during CCP meetings:

“Because of the Master Plan, and because of the absence of any major development sites, the option presented was essentially the Master Plan, on the basis that it was fairly recent and the OCP was intended to emulate it.”

In short, one option for University Boulevard was presented to the public during the CCP process, and it received little attention because it was a small part of a much larger planning scope.

\textit{Requirements for Neighbourhood Planning}

In addition to planning policies, the CCP outlined requirements for Neighbourhood Plans in Section 6.0. The plans had to include:

1. policy context and goals;
2. density controls — neighbourhood and site-specific;
3. building siting, massing, and heights;
4. streets and circulation details;
5. parking standards; and
6. building design guidelines.

As such, they encompass regulations municipalities spread between local area plans, municipal zoning bylaws and building design guidelines. Minor changes from general configurations in the CCP are permitted. To be accepted, Neighbourhood Plans must comply with (University of British Columbia, 2000, p. 67):

- the OCP;
- CCP principles; and
- The CCP’s overall density and parks allocations for the area.

\textit{Summary}

Based on the preceding discussion of the planning framework and relevant planning documents that set the context for the University Boulevard Neighbourhood, the following are the elements of the decision context:

The geographic scope of the decision is defined by the boundaries of the University Boulevard Neighbourhood. The decision is complex:

- Jurisdictional and organizational boundaries make it difficult to make links between institutional, non-institutional, and off-campus areas. Three different bodies head up three different planning processes for three different areas: the GVRD and UEL Administration plan and regulate development off-campus; on-campus, UBC Properties Trust and Campus and Community Planning lead processes for non-institutional development, and the Vice-President, Academic and Provost leads planning for institutional development through Campus and Community Planning.
• Linkages are difficult to make across boundaries between jurisdictions and planning areas. Two boundaries are key to the University Boulevard areas: (1) the Institutional/Non-Institutional boundary and (2) the UBC/UEL boundary. At a larger scale, the CCP’s analytical planning diagrams show contextual information in a general way. However, the document does not analyze density or building form across boundaries, and planning diagrams (i.e. those that indicate what is planned for development) do not address relationships between Non-Institutional, Institutional, and UEL areas, showing only the Non-Institutional areas on the overall density plan. In the materials reviewed, there is no documentation of integration between the different planning areas prior to the Neighbourhood planning processes.

The decision includes both value-based and technical considerations. It is value-laden:
• the position of the Neighbourhood at the intersection of bio-medical, athletic, science, social, and residential activity makes it a space owned by a wide range of interests;
• a historically significant building (War Memorial Gym) is present; and
• the site is the main entrance to campus.

The decision has technical elements:
• major underground utilities run under the street, including water and electricity;
• the site is a major transit entry with a significant anticipated increase in ridership; and
• complex financial and market analysis is associated with proposed residential, commercial, and institutional development.

The decision is constrained by planning documents and the planning framework:
• The UBC OCP, CCP, and Main Campus Plan provide policies specifically for the area, as well as for adjacent areas. This planning history presents a generally consistent vision of University Boulevard as the major east-west connection on campus, with the eastern end as a low-scale (4-5 storey) mixed use “town center” and the central core a pedestrian area. According to these documents, University Boulevard should:
  o be a greenway, including a green space on the South side of the street in front of the Wesbrook Building;
  o prioritize pedestrians, cyclists, and transit over private vehicles, and include a significant transit node;
  o include a mixture of uses – institutional office, University-oriented retail, and rental accommodation for faculty, staff, and students;
  o have a maximum density of 1.6 FSR, including 4500 m² ground-floor commercial and 326 residential units;
  o not incorporate buildings having heights greater than 5 storeys; and
  o respond to its function as a very significant entry to the University.

• The planning framework constrains the decision in that Neighbourhood Plans must be consistent with (Figure 15):
  o the OCP (in combination with the CCP);
  o CCP principles; and
  o overall density and parks allocations set by the CCP for the neighbourhood area.
If the combination of the CCP and NP does not comply with the OCP, an amendment to the OCP may be obtained through the legal OCP amendment process, with the GVRD as the local government having authority. Similarly, the CCP can be revised, although the requirement to be consistent with CCP principles is not as strong a requirement as that to be consistent with the OCP and leaves room for flexibility.

5.4 Relationships Between Contextual Elements

The relationships between the three contextual elements also provide important background information for consideration in the Neighbourhood Planning process for University Boulevard. These relationships highlight four important contextual factors: the historical relationship between the community and UBC; requirements for the planning process; impacts of other processes; and the level of community interest in the decision.

The UBC – Community Relationship

Non-Institutional development began with the development of Hampton Place, which led to protests and distrust of the University (Moya, 1989; Griffin, 1996d). Not long afterward, UBC’s proposal for a new hazardous waste incinerator also led to protests (Bell, 1991), and community opposition led the University to abandon the project (Howard Seto, personal communication, 1998). The community’s level of trust remained low through the development of the OCP (Griffin, 1995; Bula & Gram, 1995; Todd, 1997; University of British Columbia, 1999).
Looking in more detail at the CCP process, procedural concerns raised by the public were documented in meeting minutes (from meetings on March 31 and November 25 1999) and the Issues and Options report (University of British Columbia, 1999):

- the lack of academic involvement and input into the plan and its development;
- the timing of CCP meetings during the April exam period and over the summer; and
- the lack of opportunities for public input.

Continued community mistrust was documented in media reports on that process as well (Krangle, 1999).

Moving on to the initial stages of the University Boulevard Neighbourhood planning process, similar concerns were raised. For example, the concerns of one attendee at the May 29, 2001 public meeting to discuss Draft #1 were documented in the meeting minutes: “Much of the talk here is evasive. You are not listening to what we are saying, you are only here to defend.”

These documented concerns were echoed by interviewees with long histories at UBC. One said “the University [knew] – the administration knew, and the Board knew – that their public relations were the pits.” Another explained his own level of distrust, going back over ten years:

“[The Campus Master Plan] was the second time I’d been angry with the University, so as an individual I carried a lot of distrust about the manner in which the President’s office – those around the President through to the Board of Governors (of a different Board and President [Strangway]) – operated. So as a member of the University community that has become a fairly deep-seeded part of my psyche which doesn’t go away very easily.”

A third interviewee described past processes from the community’s perspective:

“In the old days, you got the impression that you would have a planning process, but it was all a charade… There’s always a sense at this University that it’s fait accompli, that we’re [the University is] just doing this because someone told us we had to, and that we’ll be glad when we get out of here and get on with what we want to do. All their meetings just smell of that.”

The history of the relationship between UBC and the community about non-institutional development is one of significant ongoing distrust.

The UBC – Decision Relationship: Requirements for the Neighbourhood Planning Process

As discussed earlier, requirements for land-use planning processes arise from the overlap between the Local Government Act and the University Act, and are described in the Memoranda of Understanding (MoU) signed by the GVRD and UBC in 1996 and 2000. In 1996, they described area planning and development approval processes and agreed to follow them (“GVRD - UBC Memorandum of Understanding,” 1996). In December 2000, the two parties updated the planning and development processes that the two parties agreed to follow (“GVRD - UBC Memorandum of Understanding,” 2000).
Memorandum of Understanding," 2000). The next sections of this chapter provide more details about the area (neighbourhood) planning process by reviewing the 2000 Memorandum.

**Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) 2000:**

Following on the 1996 MoU’s recognition that the purpose of municipal planning processes is to give consideration to impacts on the community (p.1), the consolidated MoU recognizes that “UBC will continue to manage its own land use for both Institutional development and Non-Institutional development” (sec. 2.2) in a manner that “substantially replicates the process in place in municipalities in British Columbia” (sec. 2.1). In many municipalities, plans are arranged in two levels: the OCP and the Local Area Plan (LAP). In this MoU, the parties agree that a combination of the Comprehensive Community Plan (CCP) and the Neighbourhood Plan (NP) are equivalent to a LAP for Non-Institutional development.

The MoU sets out a “municipal-style” structure for neighbourhood planning that is “based upon shared decision-making between the GVRD and UBC, with significant public involvement” (Schedule 3, sec 1.2). It involves seven groups of people in different roles, recognizing that the process can be adapted if circumstances merit it. The groups are listed below, with their composition and roles, and Figure 16, which consolidates information from both the flowchart and the text in the Memorandum, shows how they interrelate in the process:

1. **UBC Planning Team:**
   - Role: to conduct the planning process and chair public meetings.
   - Composition: UBC staff, consultants, and any agency staff required by UBC.

2. **UBC Board of Governors**
   - Role: to receive updates throughout the planning process; to review and approve plans.
   - Composition: 15 members, of whom 6 are elected and 9 appointed.

3. **GVRD Board**
   - Role: to confirm that proposed plans comply with the OCP.
   - Composition: 36 members – members are elected representatives in GVRD member municipalities who have been appointed to the Board by their Councils. Electoral Area ‘A’ has one representative on the Board.

4. **GVRD-UBC Joint Committee:**
   - Role: to help resolve issues that arise; to establish and consider the input of the Advisory Planning Committee; to review plans for consistency with the OCP and Academic Plan; and to make recommendations to the GVRD and UBC Boards.
   - Composition: 6 members, 3 from each of the GVRD and UBC Boards. They are appointed by their Boards from time to time.

5. **Advisory Planning Committee (APC):**

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11 Municipal processes are quite varied. Appendix G describes a range of neighbourhood planning processes used in BC municipalities.
• Role: to provide comments on (1) planning process; (2) plans; and (3) other matters referred to it.
• Composition: “7-9 members selected by the Joint Committee from members of the neighbourhood in question, broader campus interests and adjacent communities in the UEL.”

6. Technical Advisory Committee (TAC):
• Role: to provide technical information as required by UBC.
• Composition: reduced to “7-9 members selected by the Joint Committee from members of the neighbourhood in question, broader campus interests and adjacent communities in the UEL.”

7. The general public:
• Role: to attend “a public meeting or meetings sponsored by UBC at a significant point in the process.”

The 2000 MoU is ambiguous about the character and purpose of public involvement in the planning process. The key requirements for public participation are:
• UBC must refer plans to the Advisory Planning Committee for comment after preparation of a draft plan and after preparation of a revised plan (if applicable); and
• The flowchart shows a “Public Information Meeting” following preparation of a draft plan. This may correspond with the meeting(s) at a “significant point in the process” described in the text of the Memorandum.
Figure 16: Neighbourhood Planning Process

12 Adapted from the 2000 GVRD – UBC Memorandum of Understanding.
Summary of key points

The requirements for the University Boulevard planning process are outlined in the 2000 Memorandum of Understanding between the GVRD and UBC. Taken as context for the process, a number of points are key:

- The GVRD's role in Neighbourhood planning is limited to ensuring that the plan was consistent with the OCP.
- The UBC Board of Governors has the authority to approve or disapprove of a plan. In this respect, the Board of Governors acts in the same manner as a municipal council.
- The 2000 MoU is vague in its requirements for public involvement, describing only a public information meeting "at a significant point in the process."
- The 2000 MoU limits the involvement of decision-makers to review and approval of plans brought to it by the UBC Planning Team, which independently conducts the process and chairs public meetings.
- In the 2000 MoU, required public involvement consisted of commenting on prepared draft plans.

The UBC—Decision Relationship: Impacts of Other Processes

Planning processes for different areas and activities are always going on; on campus, these include land-use, academic, recreational, social, and other planning. In the University Boulevard case, two processes were important factors affecting the Neighbourhood Planning process. The first was planning for the development of a new Dentistry building, and the second was transit planning. Both of these processes evolved as the Neighbourhood Plan was being drafted, so their impacts on the process changed over the period studied.

The Dentistry building was to be built on the southwest corner of University Boulevard and Wesbrook Mall. A site feasibility study was done in 1999 (Atkins, Sumner, McBride & Poettcker, 1999). The schematic design was delayed from July 2001 to January 2003 (Sumner, Atkins & Poettcker, 2002b; Sumner, Atkins & Poettcker, 2002a). This process had two impacts: it had the potential to constrain the physical layout of space at that intersection; and the delay was a source of pressure on the University to move quickly with the Neighbourhood Plan, which had to be approved before construction could begin (Fred Pritchard, personal communication, August 14, 2003).

UBC committed to implementing a U-Pass program for the University in 1997 ("GVRD - UBC Memorandum of Understanding," 1997). The program was expected to substantially increase demand for transit services, necessitating improved and enlarged end-of-route facilities, and possible re-routing of buses and/or relocation of the bus loop. Like the Dentistry building, this would affect the physical layout of space, particularly roads (Richard Drdul, 2002). In September 2002, partway through the process of developing Draft #2, a Transit Planning study was begun to explore options for transit service to campus. It was decided to coordinate the Neighbourhood Planning process with the study (Sumner & Atkins, 2002). The U-Pass was approved overwhelmingly by student referendum in November 2002, making changes to transit infrastructure imminent. Both the transit and Dentistry building processes created pressure on the timing and outcome of the Neighbourhood Planning process.
The Community – Decision Relationship: Interest in the Decision

The University Boulevard neighbourhood is a large site located near the center of campus, on main transit routes to campus, and near the established community of the UEL. It is a central place both physically and in terms of the varied activities around it, which include social, recreational, and academic activities. As such, the potential for community interest is very high, both on- and off-campus. The potential for conflicts is also high with so many different people sharing ownership of the space.

Summary

The relationships between major contextual elements highlight four important contextual factors:

- the planning history reveals long-standing distrust of the University;
- the Memorandum of Understanding of 2000 set flexible requirements for the Neighbourhood Planning process; it
  o required public involvement only to comment on prepared draft plans; and
  o limited the involvement of the Joint Committee and the public;
- the needs of the Dentistry faculty for a new building in the area and the looming U-Pass program created significant pressures on the process; and
- University Boulevard is of interest to a wide range of people both on- and off-campus because of its location – there was potential for significant public response and conflict about the area.

5.5 The Draft #1 Planning Process

The process of developing the first Draft Plan for the University Boulevard neighbourhood began in 2000 and ended in September 2001. UBC developed a draft plan in the spring of 2001 and then presented it to the public in open houses and at a public meeting. It ended when the Board of Governors deferred approval of the draft plan and the President appointed an advisory committee to address issues relating to the entry to the University. The process is described in detail below.

Internal Development of an Initial Draft Plan

In a March 12 2001 memo to the UBC Planning Team, Fred Pritchard summarized the initial planning steps for University Boulevard (Fred Pritchard, 2001):

- December 11, 2000 – planning staff meeting to discuss issues.
- December 21, 2000 – staff meeting with consultants.
- January 22, 2001 – workshop attended by:
  - 24 University planning/development staff and consultants;
  - the UEL Manager;
  - 4 University staff (not planning or development staff);
  - 4 faculty; and
  - the AMS President.

- February 6, 2001 – President’s Property and Planning Advisory Committee (PPPAC) meeting.

At the end of the memo, Mr. Pritchard summarized the issues as:
1. “Location of the bus loop.
2. Realignment of University Boulevard to create larger development parcels on the north side.
3. Size and design of pedestrian plaza at University Boulevard/East Mall intersection.
4. Whether Empire Pool should be relocated.
5. How the Dental Building at Wesbrook and University Boulevard affects the relocation of the street.
6. How timing of the development is critical relative to: not obstructing future changes made possible by future revisiting of the OCP [and] future potential development of a tower adjacent to south west corner of GSAB.”

Issues noted elsewhere in the memo included:
• the poor entry to campus;
• various transportation and transit-related issues;
• retail frontage, critical mass, and intended customers;
• the degree of importance of the “grassy mound;”
• the future of War Memorial Gym;
• attracting people to University Boulevard itself; and
• intersection design at East Mall and street design in general, particularly with respect to street parking and auto traffic.

An initial draft plan was prepared by consultants in the spring of 2001.

Presentation of the Initial Draft Plan
Two Advisory Planning Committee (APC) meetings and a public meeting were held in May to discuss the draft plan. Concerns raised included:
• street design and transportation issues: safety, parking amounts and options, and bus traffic and loop location;
• provision of retail and the type of retail envisioned;
• high-rise development;
• pool relocation; and
• defensive staff.

Development and Review of the June 15 2001 Draft Plan
On June 21, the APC met a third time to discuss changes to the plan, now dated June 15, 2001. The main elements of the revised plan are described in Box I.
Box I: June 2001 Plan Elements

- Role as social center for campus emphasized
- Mixed-use buildings (retail at grade, institutional and residential above) throughout
- Maximum height 5 storeys, density 1.6 FSR; maximum ground-floor retail of 4500 m²
- Greenway on South side of University Boulevard
- Priority to non-auto transportation, with at-grade transit and the road widened for parallel parking and bike lanes
- Acknowledged possible reconfiguration for transit
- Housing only for faculty/staff/students

The APC recommended approval of phase I of the draft plan, which was limited to two buildings at the corner with Wesbrook Mall (University of British Columbia, 2001). As related in minutes of their 2001 meetings, key issues were:

- concerns over bike conflicts with parked cars (the issue of most concern);
- the commercial orientation of the plan;
- pool relocation;
- quality of the entrance to the University; and
- location of the bus loop.

A final public open house was held at the Asian Centre on September 10, 2001, and included three neighbourhood plans under development: University Boulevard, the Theological area, and the Mid-Campus area. 71 people commented on the three plans over six hours. With respect to University Boulevard, they raised issues with (documented in meeting minutes):

- too much paved area;
- outdoor pool relocation;
- bike lane safety; and
- on-street parking.

The plan was deferred pending a University Entranceway study. The deferment ended the planning related to the first draft of the Neighbourhood Plan.

5.6 Summary

This summary consists of two parts. The first is a review of the most important contextual factors identified in the preceding discussion. The second is an analysis of how those factors relate to public participation in the Draft #2 process.

Review

As a Neighbourhood Planning process, the University Boulevard process had to meet the flexible requirements for the planning process laid out in the 2000 Memorandum of Understanding (MoU). UBC had to involve the public “at a significant point in the planning process,” shown in the MoU as a public information meeting after the preparation of a draft plan. It also had to be consistent with UBC’s policy mandate for collaborative processes.
Similarly, the Neighbourhood Plan itself was constrained by the need to be consistent with the OCP and with CCP principles and overall density allocations unless UBC was willing to seek approval of amendments from the GVRD. For that reason, the University Boulevard Neighbourhood planning process focused on the area within the Neighbourhood boundaries defined in the OCP; however the process could also produce ideas for surrounding areas.

Located centrally, the area is used by a large part of the community. The process therefore had the potential to receive a lot of public attention, bringing with it attendant conflict and controversy. The central location also had complex relationships with neighbouring jurisdictions and other planning processes.

The University Boulevard Neighbourhood Planning process was technical, value-laden and complex. It occurred in a complex institutional and community environment that created both challenges and opportunities.

- The community's high level of education, expertise and organization had the potential for a high degree of participation, and high quality public input; however, it could equally produce highly organized and informed opposition.
- Community transience, the academic schedule, and population fluxes were all likely to pose potential challenges to an effective process.
- A long history of community distrust of UBC over planning and development was a significant potential challenge.
- UBC's policy provided a good set of broad principles for planning, but incorporated only one specific statement about how to involve the public.

The process that led to Draft Plan #1 changed the context somewhat because of the eventual deferment of the decision. As a result, other processes impacted the Draft #2 process:

- the development of the Dentistry building had been delayed, creating the potential for pressure to resolve University Boulevard planning quickly; and
- transit planning was recognized as a significant upcoming issue for the area and therefore had to be accounted for in the University Boulevard planning process.

The Draft #1 planning process began with an internal discussion of issues. A few invited members of the public were involved through a workshop on options prior to development of an initial draft plan. That draft was presented to the TAC, the APC, and the general public in the spring, and was then revised and presented to the APC and the public again in the summer. Its approval was deferred after the administration proposed that a task force be appointed to advise the President about the entry to the University. At the end of the process, a history of public involvement had been established, and a number of issues had been identified with the existing draft plan:

- with the exception of the options workshop, the public was involved only in reviewing draft plans; and
- the public had raised issues with: parking, traffic, commercialization, bus loop location, entrance quality, possible high-rises, pool location, and defensiveness of UBC staff.
Analysis

With the knowledge of the context in which the University developed and consulted on the second draft plan, it is possible to more clearly express the contingent criteria which must form the basis of part of the process evaluation. These criteria are:

- the level of citizen-control over the process (a procedural rule);
- the level of inclusiveness (a representation characteristic); and
- the degree to which participants were assisted in understanding information (an information characteristic).

To assess the appropriate degree of citizen control over the neighbourhood planning process, Thomas's contingent model, Beierle and Cayford's (2002) advice on design, and the City of North Vancouver's guidelines were applied to the design the process. Beginning with Thomas, there was sufficient information and the problem was structured, but public acceptance was necessary, indicating a need for public involvement. Similarly, Beierle and Cayford (2002) indicate that the public should be involved when resolving conflict and building trust are important considerations, and this was the case here. Therefore some degree of citizen influence over the process design was important. Moving on to the question of the type of involvement in process design, it is not clear what strategy would have been appropriate. On one hand, a public decision in which decision-making authority is shared is indicated by Thomas for this situation because the public probably agreed with the agency's process goals. Similarly, the City of North Vancouver's public involvement guidelines (2000) suggest collaborative public involvement for complex decisions such as process design. On the other hand, the City of North Vancouver suggests public input instead of collaboration when time is short, the decision is technical, and there is an established or required process, which are also characteristics of process design decisions. In summary, although it is clear that the public should have been involved to some degree in process design, it is difficult to say how they should have been involved (i.e. what the appropriate degree of citizen control over the process should have been).

Although the 2000 Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was not specific about the purpose and character of public involvement, it set requirements for the planning process. It incorporated a public meeting or meetings, which enables a large number of people to participate, and an Advisory Planning Committee, which is an intensive, but less inclusive method of involvement than public meetings. Beyond the required elements, the fact that the Neighbourhood was an area of central importance to many elements within the community suggested that a broadly inclusive process was appropriate.

The degree to which participants were assisted in understanding information presented in the process relates to the level of education and familiarity of potential participants with the material presented. Community members had a higher level of education than the general public; so there was less need to simplify language than there would be in a conventional municipal context. However, the community was no more familiar with planning concepts and drawings than other communities would have been. Explanation of planning jargon and planning concepts should have been an important consideration in the process design. Few in the community would have been familiar with planning drawings, making their explanation equally important.
One other factor was important in the selection of an appropriate strategy for public participation in the University Boulevard case: the atmosphere of mistrust. For such a situation, a process in which the public has significant influence over the outcome and/or which occurs early in the decision-making process would have a higher likelihood of success than one in which influence is restricted. Such an approach would have matched well with UBC’s eighth Planning Principle, which calls for collaboration:

“The process of physical change must invite the participation of all who have an interest in the outcome and be exemplary in every respect. UBC has the mandate and the strong desire to work in collaboration with all members of the University community and neighbouring communities.”

At the beginning of the Draft #2 process, then, the context suggested that contingent criteria and criteria regarding the response to context needed to be clarified. They are listed below, with the location of each criterion in the evaluation shown in parentheses. Note that the last criterion is added to emphasize a particular element of the criterion of ‘response to resource limitations, the nature of the community at hand, local circumstances, the type of decision, and issue-specific concerns’:

- the public should be involved in the planning of participation activities (procedural rules);
- the process should be broadly inclusive, and include elements required by the MoU (representation);
- participants should be assisted in understanding planning jargon and drawings (information); and
- the public should have significant influence over the outcome of the process (strategy).
Chapter 6: The Draft #2 Process

The process of producing and consulting on Draft #2 of the University Boulevard Neighbourhood Plan took place over a period of sixteen months. It began where the Draft #1 process ended, with the appointment of a committee in September 2001 to advise the President on the University Boulevard entrance to the campus. The “Committee on University Boulevard” met from October 2001 to February 2002, and their recommendations were presented to the Board of Governors in March 2001. Little work was done between March and December 2002, when the University hired consultants to develop a draft plan for public release. From January to April 2003, the University consulted with the public. The University’s production of a consultation report completed the planning process for this draft plan.

This chapter considers the process in two parts: internal developments leading up to public consultation, and the consultation itself. The first part describes the process from September 2001 to December 2002, then focuses on two important contextual elements that evolved during that period and on the scope and constraints on the process as they were understood at the end of it. The second part focuses on the details of the process itself, describing and evaluating the process across the range of characteristics identified in the literature review. The description and evaluation of the process concludes in Chapter 7, which provides an overview of the Draft #3 planning process and outcomes, and evaluates outcome criteria.

6.1 Internal Developments: Fall 2001 to Winter 2002

There were three important developments in the planning process between September 2001 and December 2002, two of which were discussed in the Context chapter. Transit planning and Dentistry building development were mentioned earlier; the new development was the establishment and activities of the UBC Committee on University Boulevard. This section begins by describing the planning process associated with the UBC Committee. It then reviews the evolving context of transit planning, the Dentistry building and UBC’s new organizational structure, and clarifies UBC’s understanding of the scope and constraints for the process. The section ends with a summary of the context, scope, and constraints faced by UBC as it began to plan for public participation late in 2002.

The UBC Committee on University Boulevard

At the May 2001 Board of Governors Property and Planning Committee meeting,

"the importance of the entrance to the University, and the need to retain heritage elements, was emphasized. It had been requested that the entrance concept be brought forward at the same time as the neighbourhood plans.” (Board of Governors Minutes May 17, 2001)

In September 2001, “an update on University Entranceway Planning was received for information” by the Board. In the update, the administration informed the Board “that the university executive will establish a task force, advisory to the President and chaired by the Associate Vice President, Land and Building Services, to guide the implementation of the [University Entranceway] project.” (Board of Governors minutes September 24, 2001)
Following the meeting, the President struck the UBC Committee on University Boulevard, consisting of:

- VP Administration and Finance (Terry Sumner);
- VP External and Legal Affairs (Dennis Pavlich);
- AVP Land and Building Services (Geoff Atkins);
- Director, UBC Planning (Fred Pritchard);
- CEO, UBC Properties Trust (Al Poettcker);
- 2 Board of Governors members (Joe Wai and Tieg Martin, a student); and
- Community member at large (Harold Kalke, former Board of Governors Chair).

This committee’s purpose was “to evaluate and make recommendations on the identity, character, functional, land use, built form, and landscape components of University Boulevard from West Brook [sic] to East Mall... A central component of this evaluation process will be the consideration of appropriate entrance features...” (University of British Columbia, February 2002, p. Appendix A) “It was to take input from experts, be guided by the relevant policy documents, but it was not to involve the public in any way. “Rather, the committee’s recommendations would serve as input to a variety of initiatives, and approvals, some of which may involve varying forms of public participation.” The committee’s product would be a concise report incorporating sketches, concept drawings, and other visual aids, and would be taken as guidelines rather than a final solution, informing the future development of solutions.

The committee completed their report in February 2002. As promised, they made a number of recommendations. These included six significant changes from the OCP and CCP, which were further illustrated in their Phase III Plan. The changes listed in Box 2 are drawn from the Executive Summary of the committee’s report and the plan drawings in the body of the report. Along with those changes from the OCP and CCP, the committee also proposed to locate a large plaza at East Mall and University Boulevard, and to relocate the bus loop with bus routing along both East Mall and University Boulevard.

### Box 2: University Boulevard Committee Recommendations

1. Configure University Boulevard to serve as a major automobile entry to campus.
2. Extend auto and transit access along University Boulevard to Marine Drive.
3. Provide market housing in addition to University housing.
4. Allow two buildings above 5 storeys, illustrated as 18 storey towers.
5. Make the maximum commercial space “flexible” subject to fit, character, streetscape and identity issues (the plan indicated a doubling of commercial space).
6. Address the greenway requirement through street treatments, and eliminate the dedicated greenway area.
7. Locate a large plaza at East Mall and University Boulevard.
8. Relocate the bus loop and route some buses along East Mall.

Although the Committee did not involve the public in any way during its deliberations, the APC had asked to review the completed report. In April 2002, they made mostly negative comments based on a presentation by Joe Redmond of UBC Properties (source: April 4 and 17 2002 minutes):
“Circulating the buses through campus would enhance safety and security for people traveling at night. . . .

Hopefully this plan will not greatly increase the number of vehicles traveling through the medical precinct. . . .

[There is] concern about opening up University Boulevard to vehicular traffic across campus. Main Mall and University Boulevard as the main intersection of campus would be destroyed if it became vehicle dominated. . . .

The entry, as illustrated, is not interesting or exciting enough for the front door of the University. . . .

[Could the plaza] be extended at the intersection of East Mall, adjacent to the bookstore. . . .

The original OCP did not include towers in this area. . . .

Safety of cyclists along University Boulevard, as is conceived in this plan, is still of serious concern.”

At the April 17th meeting, the committee recommended:

“[that UBC should plan to] minimize any disruptions that the project will cause, and that formal consultations be undertaken in this regard with all affected parties, including surrounding neighbourhoods;”

“that the minimum width of sidewalk be increased from 15 feet to 20 feet, where at all feasible;” and

“[that] UBC Committee on ‘University Boulevard’ report [should go] forward to the Joint Committee, subject to due process with the University community, with further consideration to be made to the specific design of the entry gate, with regard to scale and surrounding context.”

The University Boulevard Entrance Committee’s recommendations were also forwarded to the TAC for comment; this quote from their meeting minutes exemplifies their concerns:

“The UEL community would likely have concerns about proposed increase in density, increased commercial, and height. Residents will be concerned with the transportation and traffic impacts, such as the possibility of buses looping onto Wesbrook. . . .

These proposed changes are enormous, from Translink’s perspective. There are clear operational issues.”
In the spring of 2002, the University told the APC and TAC that a public consultation process to consider the Committee’s recommendations was planned for the fall of 2002 (source: APC and TAC Minutes dated April 2002). In September 2002, the Properties and Planning Committee of the Board of Governors requested an update in the status of work on the University Boulevard Neighbourhood Plan; the administration responded in December, stating that a consultation process would occur in the fall of 2002, with “an Open House and Public meetings to begin in the latter part of November 2002.” It would “be designed to discuss the proposals with, and seek input from, all interested parties....” The update also recognized that OCP amendments may have been required to implement the recommendations of the Committee on University Boulevard (Board of Governors minutes dated September 24, 2001).

**Evolving Processes: Transit Planning and the Dentistry Building**

The Dentistry development had been delayed due to the need to coordinate it with the Neighbourhood Planning process. One interviewed administrator highlighted its importance:

“There are a number of critical elements here. One is Dentistry and the Faculty of Dentistry, which had been stuck on a rock for the past three years, there’s a large part of the University in the Faculty of Dentistry that needs more, and nothing is happening.”

Meanwhile, the imminent approval of the U-Pass program and resulting impacts were significant considerations, as related by two of the administration interviewees:

“There were discussions about U-Pass that started in fall of last year, and there was an understanding that there would likely be quite a few potential impacts.”

“We were in a position where we had to assess the potential impact that U-Pass would have on University Boulevard. So this is when things were moving — as is often the case in planning processes — you have to anticipate things which aren’t always clear.”

“If you really strip away the issues, it’s really about transit options and about whether commercialization, whether retail is an appropriate use on that street.”

The significance of transit meant that neighbourhood planning had to be coordinated with the transit planning being undertaken by the consulting firm of Urban Systems (Sumner & Atkins, 2002), potentially slowing the planning process somewhat.

The University felt pressured to move ahead with the plan quickly in response to the needs of the Dentistry faculty, and the imminent U-Pass program was anticipated to have a significant impact on the plan. As U-Pass was to be implemented in September 2003, with accompanying facility improvements, it was a second source of pressure to complete the plan quickly.

**Clarification of Scope and Constraints for Public Participation**

The scope and limitations for the decision-making process as set out in the OCP, CCP, and 2000 MoU were clarified by administration interviewees, who explained the scope in various terms:
"We could design the process in a way... that we could have people comment on the two issues I mentioned to you — whether there was appropriate compliance with the OCP and the CCP and whether it was reflective of what they thought was 'universityishness' which was a word I would use to express the University."

"Broadly speaking, [the scope was] land-use, transportation, and community needs. ... From a logistical and an approval point of view, all of the neighbourhoods have clearly defined boundaries, but from a realistic point of view, all of the planning we have done for University Boulevard has gone well beyond the boundaries. ... I wouldn't describe it as being set in stone. The way I would describe it is the OCP and the CCP provide the foundations on which the neighbourhood planning process can proceed, and does proceed."

"A lot of this was the University really trying to determine how best to satisfy the OCP, deal with the CCP and begin to create a neighbourhood that's going to satisfy both the academic community and the residential community and all those diverse interests."

These comments describe a scope that extended informally beyond the boundaries of the defined Neighbourhood, and emphasized the relationship between the Neighbourhood Plan, the CCP, and the OCP.

The administration explained their perspective on OCP and CCP amendments in interviews. As the following quotes suggest, some were resistant to amending either of those documents, others were not, and the former opinion was reflected in the eventual strategy.

"I've checked out the process with regard to both the OCP and the CCP, not in any great detail mind you but in some detail and I was satisfied that that had been done properly.... We had had a lot of students involved in the previous one, and it seemed to me entirely disrespectful to suddenly say that your views aren't worth a whole lot, we have a new group now, and we're going to put those in."

"I think amendments are a normal matter of business in doing any land-use plan. However, there was a clear indication that any amendment was seen to be a problematic thing, so the University has chosen to accept the outline of the OCP and the policies that were set in there and said, 'OK, we will not seek an amendment, we will proceed with the neighbourhood plan without amendment.'"

The University presented a single option for public comment. One administration interviewee argued that a single option was shown because "it wasn't so much a new plan as an improvement to the existing plan." Another argued that the decision to discuss only one option was taken because options had already been discussed in the CCP process:
"[People asked] why aren't we dealing with options, why aren't we revisiting some of these options? And we said, well the public had a chance to participate [in the CCP process] ... ‘if you went and reviewed the planning and consultation process for the CCP, there was a very defined program to review issues and options.’

Summary
In late Fall 2002, the University faced the development of a new draft plan in an altered context. The consolidated elements of the context were:

- policy that supported collaborative public participation;
- challenging community characteristics;
- University Boulevard was a central area of campus, important to many different people;
- a CCP process that had presented only one option for University Boulevard;
- a Draft #1 process that had involved the public almost exclusively in reviewing prepared plans;
- identified public concerns with Draft #1;
- recent committee recommendations that required OCP amendments and that received fairly critical reviews from the APC and TAC;
- a long history of community mistrust; and
- pressure to move quickly in response to Dentistry and transit concerns.

With respect to the scope of the process and constraints on the decision, there was a strong commitment to previous decisions based on an assumption of the quality of the processes that led to those decisions. As a result, UBC limited the scope of the process to review of a draft plan based on previous recommendations and OCP amendments were resisted. The scope, then, was:

- decisions were about the area within the boundaries of the University Boulevard Neighbourhood but could informally address adjacent areas;
- the resulting plan had to include goals, density controls, building siting, massing, and height regulations, street and circulation details, parking standards, and building design guidelines;
- decisions had to be consistent with the OCP, CCP principles, and overall density and parks allocations set in the CCP;
- a single option would be presented to the public for review; and
- the process had to meet requirements set out in the MoU for public participation.

In the situation defined by this scope and context, the University proceeded to develop and implement the public consultation process outlined in the next section.

This section consists of three parts, following on the conceptual model of public participation in decision-making. The first is an overview of the Draft #2 process. The second is an evaluation of its strategic elements. The last part evaluates the characteristics of the process itself.

Process Overview
As noted in the Context Chapter, the University re-organized in January 2003 to give the Vice-President of External and Legal Affairs – Dennis Pavlich – responsibility for Neighbourhood
Planning. Soon after, Mr. Pavlich hired Linda Moore as Associate Director for University Town to coordinate neighbourhood planning. After that, work on Non-Institutional planning and development was done by a core team consisting of Geoff Atkins, AVP Land and Building Services, Fred Pritchard of Campus and Community Planning, Linda Moore of External and Legal Affairs, and either Al Poettcker or Joe Redmond of UBC Properties (Linda Moore, personal communication August 7, 2003. See Figure 12, p. 70). The role of the group was described by an administration interviewee as: “the operational group that moves, but when you say final decisions, none of this is final… it’s final to take to different groups.” A second administrator explained that the “VP External Affairs leads, and Properties and Planning are in a support role.” When asked about the different mandates for UBC Properties and Campus and Community Planning, the interviewee’s response was “I don’t know that any one of us can say we make decisions on the land use plan. What we do is provide input, advice, it’s mulled over collectively. It’s a collaborative process.” However, a third administrator clearly distinguished the roles of the different units:

“[UBC Properties] work with [Campus Planning] to ensure that [UBC Properties’] public material is either compliant or has an acceptable basis for being presented on a non-compliant basis with the OCP, CCP and University objectives and community objectives. … [Campus Planning’s] responsibility is to report to the executive of the University and the Board of Governors and advise whether [UBC Properties’] plans that are being put forward can be supported or meet in their opinion the requirements of the various documents.”

Internally, Dennis Pavlich set up two other “informal and advisory” (personal communication August 8, 2003) groups to assist in the planning process: the University Town Steering Committee, and an ad hoc academic committee. The ad hoc committee’s role was to field Mr. Pavlich’s ideas and provide feedback in a very informal manner. It met periodically as requested by Mr. Pavlich, and consisted of seven faculty members from the design and planning professions (Tony Dorsey, personal communication, March 17, 2004). Linda Moore, Joe Redmond, and Fred Pritchard sometimes attended as well.

The University Town Steering Committee was more formal. It was chaired by Dennis Pavlich and met weekly during the process. Based on conversations with Dennis Pavlich, Linda Moore, and the AMS representative on the committee, it included eighteen regular attendees, who were:

- External and Legal Affairs staff, including University Town and Public Affairs (3 people);
- Land and Building Services staff, including the Associate Vice-President, Campus and Community Planning, the Sustainability Office, and the TREK Transportation Office (5);
- other staff and consultants (4);
- UBC Properties Trust staff (2);
- faculty (1); and
- students (2).

A third internal group was the UBC Planning Team. It met when requested by the core team, usually to review a draft plan. Its role was similar to that of the Advisory Planning Committee (Linda Moore, personal communication August 7, 2003). The Committee included representatives from Land and Building Services units.
The Neighbourhood Planning process for University Boulevard, from January 2003 on, is shown in Figure 17, which is a combination of information from the text and figures in the 2000 GVRD-UBC Memorandum of Understanding and personal communications with Dennis Pavlich and Linda Moore in August 2003.

Core Team
- C&CP
- UBC Properties
- External and Legal Affairs

works collaboratively to:
coordinate the process;
hire consultants; and
make planning decisions

Draft Plan(s)

University Town Steering Committee — advises core team, meets once a week from February to April

UBC Planning Team — comments on matters referred to it

TAC — comments on matters referred to it

APC — comments on matters referred to it

Public — comment on official draft plans at open houses, presentations and community meetings

Revised Plan

UBC and GVRD Boards — review and approve plans

Figure 17: University Boulevard Neighbourhood Planning Process March 2003

In conjunction with their consultants, the core team produced a second draft plan for presentation to the public in February 2003 — termed the “March plan” here for simplicity. The substantive planning objectives for the neighbourhood are found in background planning and policy documents and are consolidated in the Consultation Report (University of British Columbia, May 2003, p. 5).

The plan was similar to the recommendations made by the UBC Committee on University Boulevard. As recommended, it showed the area as a mixed use corridor on a conventional street, with a plaza at East Mall and residential housing in towers. Rather than remove transit, however,
this plan proposed to route it to an underground loop. It also featured three towers rather than two, and half the housing units would be for sale on the open market, not built as “non-market” housing for faculty, staff, and/or students. Box 3 summarizes the key elements in the plan, showing important changes from the June 2001 Plan as bold, underlined text. Plan diagrams are provided in Appendix B.

Box 3: March 2003 Plan Elements

- Role as ‘social hub’
- Re-open University Boulevard to cars through to Marine Drive
- Mixed use buildings throughout, with total retail space more than permitted by the OCP
- 3 towers, maximum height 18 storeys
- Bus loop underground
- Road widened for parallel parking and bike lanes
- Market housing in addition to university housing, doubling housing allowed by the OCP
- Plaza at East Mall, over bus loop
- No identifiable greenway area

Evaluation Against Strategic Criteria

The evaluation of the general approach or strategy is done with the contextual factors summarized on p. 107 in mind. The four original strategic criteria and one additional criterion are, succinctly:

1. establishment of goals and process and decision constraints at the beginning of the process;
2. choice of approach and methods to suit organizational and planning goals;
3. participation timed to be congruent with decision-making stages;
4. decision-making process designed for significant public influence over the decisions; and
5. decision-making process designed to respond to contextual factors.

Each of these criteria is addressed below.

Were goals established and process and decision constraints identified at the beginning of the process?

Establishment of Goals

The University’s goals for the public participation process are found in official documents, but not all of UBC’s goals were expressed officially. In a report to the Board of Governors in December 2002, Land and Building Services stated that the consultation process would “be designed to discuss the proposals with, and seek input from, all interested parties...” (Sumner & Atkins, 2002). The official goals were consolidated in more detail in the Discussion Guide and were documented in the Consultation Report produced following the process, quoted in Box 4 (emphasis in the original).
Box 4: Documented Consultation Objectives

- "To inform and engage the campus and broader community in an open and transparent dialogue;
- To initiate a broad and inclusive public consultation program as a means of obtaining feedback to input the draft neighbourhood plan;
- To ensure broad notification to internal and external stakeholder groups regarding the scope of consultation activities/opportunities through extensive local advertising (V6T, Ubysee, UBC Reports, Courier, Georgia Straight);
- To provide a range of opportunities to become informed about the draft neighbourhood planning process and to provide feedback;
- To analyze the feedback received during the consultation phase;
- To document the findings of the consultation phase in a summary report; and
- To post the findings from the consultation on the website for broad public information."

Goals to consult the public, inform the public, record and summarize public feedback, and report to the Board of Governors and back to the public were mentioned in a February 28, 2003 letter to the Campus Community, in advertisements (University of British Columbia, May 2003, pp. 9, 14), and in the Discussion Guide (p. 2, 9), although they were not described as goals per se in those places.

The four UBC administrators interviewed described the process goals:

"First of all we have to do it anyway. ... Our goal was really to ascertain what people thought of this particular plan in relation to it as a product of the OCP and the CCP which of course is tied in to the location to the space involved. ... We were trying to ensure that you get community buy-in. It's not only compliance that we were looking for, the community's view of compliance, ... we want[ed] the community to be satisfied, in fact more than satisfied, we'd like them to whoop and yell and shout with joy and say 'this is very exciting and lovely, and this will express UBC.' ... We are looking for the views of people, we are trying to put in place what people want but it's not just these people, it's also the people that preceded it, with the CCP and the OCP."

[The administration as a whole] had a shared commitment to ... a more open and transparent process. ... There's clear direction about providing more information. ... [Our goal is] to give people the opportunity to share their ideas and/or voice their concerns. ... The objectives are to inform, to inspire, and to receive feedback."

"[Our goals were] to get approval from anyone who had an interest in the plan... [and to seek] as broad an input as possible."

"The first [goal] is integrity. I think it's absolutely essential that the public be given a complete understanding of what is being intended. There's a couple of reasons for that. One is that there are a couple of Supreme Court decisions that
make it clear that if you introduce information after a public meeting, you could
easily have a plan that is overturned. ... So obviously from a very practical point
of view, I have a desire for honesty and integrity. I think the second is I see the
public process as an opportunity to sell our vision in the broadest possible
conceptual terms. ... I think that residents deserve the right to be informed fully,
that they be given the right to make accurate criticisms, or criticisms based on the
facts...."

The official goals of informing and receiving input were reflected in the interviews. However,
administrators identified three other goals. The first was described as to “get community buy-in”
or “get approval from anyone who had an interest.” The second was to “inspire” or to “sell our
vision in the broadest possible conceptual terms.” The third was to meet requirements; as
indicated by the statement that “we have to do it anyway” and the explanation of a practical
response to Supreme Court decisions.

The first goal can be termed “community acceptance” and is an accepted social goal, but the goal
can be achieved in a range of ways, illustrated by two extremes. The first extreme is a process in
which issues raised by the community are acknowledged, understood and resolved, resulting in a
plan that meets the community’s needs. It is accepted because it is appropriate to the community.
The second is a process in which a plan is promoted to the community in a way that emphasizes
its advantages and either ignores or downplays the disadvantages to obtain acceptance. Interviews
with administrators suggested the latter approach was the one adopted by UBC. The timing and
tone of the process provided further evidence about UBC’s approach.

Turning first to timing, the consultation period began after sixteen months of internal activity and
lasted just under two months, from February 10th to April 1st 2003. At the March 23rd Advisory
Planning Committee (APC) meeting, Judy McLeod of Campus and Community Planning stated
that “[the Board] set a deadline for May 2003” (APC Minutes, March 23, 2003; p.4). One of the
administration interviewees explained the University’s assumptions about the consultation:

“When we do a plan, we assume that it’s going to get approved. We assume that,
When we find that in fact the changes that are needed are so fundamental that you
can’t take that to the Board, then on each of those occasions we change the
‘approval’ to ‘information.’"

In planning the consultation, UBC administrators assumed they would get approval of the plan at
the Board of Governors meeting on May 15th, six weeks after the end of the consultation. Material
for the Board had to be submitted approximately three weeks before the Board meeting (Board
deadline drawn from a personal communication with Nina Robinson, Secretary for the Board of
Governors, in November 2003). Therefore, the consultation period concluded three weeks before
the final plan had to be submitted for approval. The executive summary of the consultation report
was completed in time to be submitted to the Board. However, revisions were not completed until
late May or early June. UBC staff statements and the timing of the decision-making process
indicate that UBC assumed that the plan would be approved without incorporating any public
input. Instead, it intended to obtain public acceptance by promoting the plan.
Tone is an important descriptor of process (Abelson, 1999). Participants in the process related how the plan was presented to them. One described University staff and the presentations at the public meeting. She said that the people on the panel showed through body language that they were not interested in public comments, and that they were defensive and didn't look up at public presenters. She added that the presentations seemed to show the plans as a done deal. Others made similar comments:

"Dennis Pavlich, I think we've already talked about that. I think it [his presentation] was a sales job more than anything else. 'Envision this, and... '— it was just trying to sell the plan."

"I felt that the university was pushing a product, it felt like a commercial for University Boulevard, and that was presentations, public meetings, and open houses."

My own observations reflected these comments with respect to presentations, but I found staff at open houses to be genuinely helpful and interested in providing and receiving information. This dichotomy was echoed by interviewed participants with respect to open houses and APC meetings:

"[At open houses] they came across very professionally. [They were] friendly and approached people, didn't hide in a corner."

"[At APC meetings] if I had a question, it was answered properly and with respect."

However, two other participants made different observations about the tone of staff communications, saying that they became more defensive when asked critical questions:

"[UBC representatives'] attitude was helpful in that they wanted you to understand the plan from their perspective, but sort of dismissive if you wanted to challenge the plan."

"There is not a high degree of respect for individuals who are participating in this process and critical of what the University is doing and the way that they're going about it.... For some reason, they feel threatened by the questions that are being posed to them. They view the critics of the plan as the enemy."

The tone of UBC's communications varied. When asked for clarification or information about a plan, as would often be the case in an open house or APC meeting, the tone of their responses was neutral. However, when questioned or criticized, they responded more defensively, and their presentations were promotional.

The timing of the process and administration statements were significant indications that UBC staff intended to request approval without incorporating public input. In the same vein, the tone of many of UBC's verbal communications support the proposal that they intended to promote and
defend the Draft Plan. In short, UBC's plan was to promote and defend its Draft Plan to maximize public acceptance and then request approval of the plan without revising it.

Projects have different levels of goals, such as those outlined in the LogFrame method for project management (Dolf, 1999). In this case, some of these goals address activities to be undertaken by UBC, such as informing the public, while others address overall objectives for the process. It is useful to categorize them in this fashion in order to show which apply directly to implementation and which to outcomes of the process. The following list summarizes UBC's goals based on official statements, administration interviews, and its actions:

Activities (implementation-related):
- involve the public in a broad and inclusive way;
- inform the public about the plan;
- obtain feedback and summarize and communicate it to the public and the Board of Governors; and
- promote and defend the draft plan.

Objectives (outcome-related):
- meet requirements for public process;
- complete the process (i.e. obtain approval) in a timely way; and
- obtain public acceptance.

Before concluding this section, it is important to make two points. First, it is clear that the University's goals potentially conflict. In particular, a broadly inclusive process often entails a time commitment, as does incorporating feedback into a plan. It is very difficult to achieve these goals in the context of a goal to have a plan approved in a short timeframe. Second, while these goals reflect policy statements about inclusiveness and transparency, they do not reflect policy commitments to taking the needs of the public into account, nor to engage in a collaborative process.

Establishment of Goals, Scope and Constraints

The goals for the UBC Committee on University Boulevard were established before it was initiated in 2001. Overall goals for the Draft #2 consultation process were established in the fall of 2002. Official goals for the Draft #2 consultation were identified before the process began, including consulting the public, informing the public, recording and summarizing public feedback, and reporting to the Board of Governors and back to the public. In short, official goals were established for the Draft #2 process before it began. There is no information about when unofficial goals were established.

Legal process constraints were laid out in the 2000 MoU. Similarly, the requirement for consistency with the OCP was clearly stated in the BC Local Government Act. Decision constraints were laid out in the OCP and CCP and the degree to which they constrained the process was made clear in the CCP. These constraints were identified on the University Town website ("University Town," 2003). Last, the University was time-constrained: a May 2003 deadline had been set for completion of the plan (APC Minutes, March 26, 2003). These constraints were established before the process began.
The scope of the decisions for the Neighbourhood Plan area was also laid out in the CCP. However, the informal inclusion of surrounding areas was not made clear and was not communicated in public planning documents. The scope was not completely established before the Draft #2 process began.

Did the choice of approach and methods reflect organizational and planning goals?

Approach and methods

Under its new leadership and with the advice of the University Town Steering Committee, UBC’s core planning group developed an extensive process for the March plan which they termed “public consultation.” The effort ultimately included (University of British Columbia, May 2003):

- a University Town website;
- 11 open houses (one cancelled due to unrelated staff picketing);
- 22 other meetings —
  - 14 presentations to stakeholder groups;
  - 4 meetings with interested individuals, including a professor of Planning and the MLA for the area;
  - 4 presentations to UBC committees responsible for planning-related matters, such as the President’s Property and Planning Advisory Committee;
- attending a presentation of a design charrette set up and run by students in Planning and Landscape Architecture; and
- 1 public meeting, held at the end of the consultation on April 1, 2003.

As per the Memorandum of Understanding, UBC also held two meetings with the Advisory Planning Committee (APC), of which the first did not meet quorum and was informal and short, and one with the Technical Advisory Committee. The Terms of Reference for the APC described its role and responsibilities:

“The purpose of the Advisory Committee is to provide public input in the University Boulevard Neighbourhood Planning process. The committee would be responsible for providing comments to the UBC Planning Team and the GVRD/UBC Joint Committee on the neighbourhood planning process and any other matters referred by the Joint Committee.”

The Advisory Planning Committee shall:

a) Choose a chairperson from among the members;
b) Meet as required to carry out the Neighbourhood Planning Process as described in the GVRD/UBC Memorandum of Understanding;
c) Identify issues and neighbourhood concerns, needs and goals, neighbourhood strengths and assets, and to address land use planning and service delivery issues;
d) Use a consensus-based approach to decision-making; and
e) Maintain meeting minutes that, where appropriate, record votes.”

A member of the APC described their meetings in an interview:
"Most of the time there was consensus, occasionally we’d take a vote. It was more of a discussion of what the issues were. We’d bring the issues up, and they would be sent off to CP&D to the person who organized the input to some of the planning processes. …[I don’t know that we as a group] often resolved issues, you know I don’t think that was for us to do. But it was for us to raise concerns or questions.

To think about the issues, that’s one of the values of the committee meetings, where we would have discussions, people would bring different points of view to the foreground, and I think it would have been nice at some of the meetings to have more discussion time. [The amount of discussion time] depended on whether the meetings had presentations or not. A lot of the meetings had presentations and then discussions and food afterward. So often we were presented with new information, and it takes some time to digest before you can make some comments on it. … For some of them [the presentation] would take almost the whole meeting… [and for others] a half hour or so of an hour and a half meeting.” Stfl

The selected communications materials included (see Appendices A - E for copies):

- a *Discussion Guide* that provided a textual explanation of the plan and information about the consultation process;
- *Draft Plan Diagrams* that provided an illustration of the physical layout under the proposed plan;
- a *Feedback Form* that included a variety of questions about the plan;
- a new website that contained basic information about the consultation process, links to relevant webpages, and copies of the *Discussion Guide*, *Draft Plan Diagrams*, and *Feedback Form*; and
- presentations made by Dennis Pavlich that described the plan’s vision and elements.

The open houses were held throughout the March 3 – March 25 period, some during the day, some late afternoon to evening, and others at night. Locations varied, and included the UBC Bookstore, rooms in the SUB, and the War Memorial Gym foyer. Attendance at the open houses varied from 14 to about 150. The open houses were advertised between 2 and 14 days in advance, sometimes more than once, in the Ubyssey, UBC Reports, and Vancouver Courier (University of British Columbia, May 2003).

Through my attendance at a number of open houses, I was able to observe further details. Open houses at which attendance was higher were at highly visible and/or busy locations. Elsewhere, such as upstairs rooms in the Student Union Building (SUB), no signage was provided by UBC to indicate the presence of the open house. Only a simple 8-1/2x11 sign posted by the building manager at the top of the SUB stairs indicated the presence of the open house. During the event, presentation boards showing the plan drawings were displayed, and UBC Campus & Community Planning and UBC Properties staff were on hand to respond to inquiries. The boards included four plan drawings and three cross-sections. Some staff wrote notes to document inquiries, while others did not. Feedback forms and black-and-white copies of the plan drawings were available at a table at each open house.
Based on my observations and a conversation with a Landscape Architecture student who attended several sessions, presentations to stakeholder groups consisted of a slide presentation, usually given by Dennis Pavlich, followed by a question period. Rooms were generally set up lecture/theatre style. Feedback forms and black-and-white 8-1/2x11 copies of the plan drawings were available to attendees.

The public meeting was held in the SUB Ballroom on April 1, from 7-10 pm. It was advertised, generally well in advance, in 6 different local publications (University of British Columbia, May 2003). The meeting was well-attended, with an estimated 150-200 people. As illustrated in Figure 18, I observed that the room was set up with the entry at the back of the room. A sign-in table was placed at the entry, and copies of the Feedback Form and drawings were available. The display boards were arranged at the back of the room; in front of them was seating facing the front of the room lecture/theatre style. UBC staff sat at a long table at the front of the room facing the public audience, and a podium, projector, and screen were located to the right of staff. A microphone was placed at the front of each of two aisles for the use of the public.

Figure 18: Community Meeting Layout
The meeting began with an informal period during which people viewed the display boards, and UBC staff responded to questions. The formal part of the meeting was chaired by Larry Bell, the Chair of the Board of Governors. It began with two presentations, one by Harold Kalke acting as former Chair of the University Boulevard Committee, and one by Dennis Pavlich, similar to others given to stakeholder groups, on the proposed University Boulevard plan. After that, Mr. Bell allotted three minutes to each of about 30 speakers, for a total of 90 minutes of comments from the public. Following the speakers, a short period of less formal question-and-answer ensued. Mr. Bell closed the meeting by thanking the audience for their comments.

Following the consultation process, a summary and analysis of quantitative feedback was conducted by Brooks Development Planning Inc (Linda Moore, personal communication, August 2003). Based on that information, University Town staff prepared a report on the consultation process and results titled \textit{Campus and Community Consultation: University Boulevard DRAFT Neighbourhood Plan} (henceforth termed the \textit{Consultation Report}). It included a listing of the public consultation activities and a qualitative and quantitative analysis of public comments. The executive summary of the report was released in early May 2003 and the report itself was released in late May.

In summary, the public consultation effort incorporated a large number of opportunities for public review of the Draft Plan, including many presentations and open houses, a website, and a public meeting. During the process, information was provided in the form of a \textit{"Discussion Guide," \"Draft Plan Diagrams,"} presentations, and responses to questions. Information was received from verbal comments and through the \textit{Feedback Form}. The program concluded with a report describing the process in detail and summarizing the input received.

\textit{Selection of methods and materials}

Interviews with administrators provided the main source of information about how and why different methods were selected. In terms of the general approach, one administrator stated that

\begin{quote}
"this is pretty well in conformity with what other municipalities do, so I don't, want to suggest that we're starting from scratch here, we weren't doing anything but proceeding from what was the ordinary. [We wanted] to do it in a way that is consistent with our planning process that we agreed to with the GVRD. I don't want to make major structural changes to that."
\end{quote}

Another explained that the consultation plan was based on a more general communications plan:

\begin{quote}
A communications plan... had been prepared, and it obviously focused around consultation... [But] inevitably due to context and issues and options and all of the whole planning and design process, there is a need to tailor-make a consultation plan.
\end{quote}

Discussions with two other administrators revealed the rationales for selecting each of the adopted methods.

\begin{quote}
"Open houses and special meetings [presentations] are very effective means for providing information and obtaining feedback.... We knew we wanted to
\end{quote}
provide diversity, a range of opportunities. So open houses provide the flexibility for stakeholders to come and go according to their schedule. Special meetings [presentations] provide the opportunity for more of a one-on-one meeting situation with a focused presentation. ... The public meeting is more of a formal meeting, where people who feel that they haven’t had enough of an opportunity through special meetings or open houses, to come forward and express their point of view, be it positive or negative.... In the case of the public meeting, the first and foremost objective is to hear from the campus and the broader community. there is no doubt however, that for us to be able to respond to some of the concerns they bring up would be helpful holistically speaking. ... [Our objectives for open houses and special meetings (presentations) were] to inform, to inspire."

"[Open houses] can be instrumental in satisfying people’s curiosity and legitimate questions. ... The public meetings are expected if not required by the GVRD...."

Within the consultation plan, there were different reasons for selecting the different communications materials:

"Given the community that we’re dealing with - at least the major groups, that is faculty, and students, who are very computer-savvy and technology savvy - we figured that we could make great use [of the web]."

"The full purpose of a discussion guide is to take the planning, the actual planning report, with all the verbiage and the drawings, and try to create a layman’s document that would highlight the key concepts and the key planning issues."

"[In the Draft Plan Diagrams,] there is an indication of detail as to the siting of buildings and to what the character of buildings might be, a suggestion of what it might look like.... there’s always those questions from constituents about what it’s going to look like, how you would do that. So in order to provide that information, the University would provide additional information that would suggest how the buildings might be sited, even a suggestion of what the buildings might look like, and that led to other discussions about character and form and what was meant by university character."

The overall approach and the particular methods for involving the public were chosen based on what is usually done in other municipalities, to be consistent with GVRD requirements laid out in the Memorandum of Understanding, and to implement activities planned by the University. These activities included: providing a diverse, flexible range of opportunities for involvement, providing information, and receiving feedback. The communications materials were chosen to suit the community’s expertise and education and to inform the community about the plan through a combination of readable text and illustrative drawings.

Relationship to organizational and planning goals
Each of UBC’s activities and objectives is addressed below. With respect to activities, the process:
was designed to inform the public about the plan by making information available to the public on the web and at meetings and open houses; and by fielding questions at open houses;
- was designed to involve the public in a broad and inclusive way by using a number of different techniques at different locations and times, including targeted presentations to a variety of groups;
- included mechanisms to obtain feedback and communicate it to the public and the Board of Governors. Feedback was obtained through the Feedback Form and notes taken in meetings. A report on the consultation process and results was prepared and made available to the public. The executive summary of the consultation report was made available to the Board of Governors; and
- included visionary presentations designed “to inform, to inspire.” As such, it was designed to promote the draft plan.

Turning to the objectives, the process:
- met requirements set out in the Memorandum of Understanding (2000) in that it employed an APC and a TAC in review of successive drafts and in that it incorporated at least one public meeting at a significant point in the process;
- was designed to be completed in time for the May Board of Governors meeting; and
- was designed to obtain public acceptance by inspiring participants to buy into UBC’s vision.

Overall, the process was well-designed to achieve UBC’s goals for the process, but only some of the goals mandated by policy.

Was participation timed to be congruent with stages in the decision-making process? Did it follow from process goals?

There are two components to the timing of participation: timing in the entire Neighbourhood Planning process, and timing in the Draft #2 process. The starting points for the overall process were the plans outlined in the OCP, CCP and Main Campus Plan. Figure 19 chronicles public influence through the entire planning process, showing that with one exception, UBC consistently prepared plans and then presented them, limiting public participation to providing comments on finished plans. The timing of participation in the Draft #2 process, including the activities of the APC and TAC, was no exception. Looking at both the overall process and the Draft #2 process, the University relied almost exclusively on late consultation, and almost never planned collaboratively.

Participation was consistently congruent with the stage of decision-making concerned with reviewing a draft plan or refining a decision. In the Draft #2 process, it would have been impossible for UBC to receive, compile, analyze, and report on feedback, and then change the plan in response to input in the short time available between the conclusion of the consultation and submission to the Board, precluding revisions before submission for approval on the intended timeline. The timing of consultation followed from the process goal of obtaining acceptance by promoting a completed plan.
Did the process respond to resource limitations, the nature of the community at hand, local circumstances, the type of decision, and issue-specific concerns?

This criterion essentially concerns whether the process responded to key contextual factors. The factors evaluated included available resources, diversity, and transience.

Little data was collected about the resources available in the process. Some information was available about key staff and funding, and more about time availability. Staff in the core planning group included an architect with some experience in managing development projects that incorporate public involvement, a planner/architect with long municipal planning experience, a developer with many years of experience, and a lawyer with considerable experience with UBC governance matters and some experience with development issues. Overall, the core group had considerable experience in planning and development, but the details of their experience are not known. On funding, in response to the question of whether he had adequate resources for the process, Dennis Pavlich said “Yes, but I didn’t realize it at the time that I did.” Finally, time constraints in various meetings were acknowledged by administrators and participants alike. Two administrators commented “time is always a constraint” and “open houses and special meetings... are time-constrained.” An APC member described constraints on time in meetings and outside them:
"if I wanted to delve farther — which I didn't for lack of time — I could have gone and got more information. ... The other issue for many of us was the meetings were set for an hour and a half, and there was a reluctance for people to stay beyond that.”

Based on this information, it appears that the financial resources were adequate to implement the process and that staff had significant related experience. Time, however, was a constraint both in meeting design and for participants.

In facilitating the involvement of a variety of stakeholder groups in a variety of ways, the process responded well to the diverse nature of the community. The effort to reach a wide range of people also recognized the important role that University Boulevard plays in the University and its neighbouring community. Finally, the process took place primarily during February and March, which are relatively good months for students and faculty to become involved.

The Executive Summary of the Consultation Report suggested that the transience of participants meant that they were not familiar with previous planning processes. If so, then an appropriate response might have been to inform participants of the conduct of previous planning processes, and key information about decisions made through them. The administration mentioned the OCP and the CCP in general terms in their presentations, but they did not explain why those decision-making processes were credible. Furthermore, their presentations did not mention the 2001 process or its results at all. Printed documents, such as display boards (plan drawings) and the Discussion Guide, also neglected previous public consultation on the plan, and it was not mentioned on the University Town website. As a result; when asked what they knew about previous decisions, community responses ranged from “not at all aware” to “only the sketchiest details... in the broader sense I know about it.”

In summary, UBC provided adequate resources for the process and responded well to the community’s diversity, but did not address the issue of transience.

Was the process designed to give the public significant influence over the outcome of the process?

The process design included the use of open houses, presentations, a public meeting, and an Advisory Planning Committee (APC). The APC’s Terms of Reference states that it is intended to “identify issues and neighbourhood concerns, needs and goals, neighbourhood strengths and assets, and to address land use planning and service delivery issues.” This role reflects the most common role of such advisory committees: “[they] are used to rationalize established power through some degree of shared governance.... [it is possible] for a CAC [Citizen Advisory Committee] to influence institutional decisions by flagging errors made by technical experts or political leaders, and/or demonstrating that substantial public opposition exists. Ultimately, CAC recommendations can be ignored by governing bodies or regulators.” (Lynn & Kartez, 1995). In this case, the APC represents a consultative method, in which advice may be accepted or ignored by the sponsoring organization. Specifically, their role was restricted to raising issues, not to offering advice as to how to resolve them. Similarly, the structure and contents of the consultation report indicate that UBC used other events to identify community concerns rather than solutions to problems.
The process was designed to give the public some degree of influence over the outcome. In contrast to UBC's policy support for collaboration but very much in keeping with UBC's description of the process as "consultation," the public's influence was limited to critiquing the proposed plan and depended on their ability to convince administrators of the legitimacy of their critiques.

**Evaluation of Process Characteristics**

Criteria respecting process characteristics, including three of the contingent criteria, fall into three categories: "Representation," "Procedures," and "Information." These structure the evaluation of the characteristics of the University Boulevard process. The three categories are addressed in turn below.

**Representation**

*Was the selection of participants fair?*

There were two aspects of participant selection: the selection of Advisory Planning Committee (APC) members, and that of participants in the rest of the process. Turning first to the APC, the 2000 Memorandum of Understanding states that "The committee would have 7-9 members selected by the Joint Committee from members of the neighbourhood in question, broader campus interests, and adjacent communities."

I attended the July 2003 Joint Committee meeting, at which the process was clarified. It was explained that University staff identified 7-9 key stakeholder groups, then asked each of them to nominate a representative, whose name was then submitted to the Joint Committee for approval.

To explain participant selection for the rest of the process, an administrator explained that:

"[there were] three categories, which we always refer to as (1) open houses (2) special meetings, and (3) the public meeting. For special meetings, we always say 'If you would like to arrange a special meeting, please contact us.'"

The consultation report further described this process of inviting previously identified stakeholder groups and formal committees. "Invitations were broadcast via email February 28, 2003 & March 24, 2003, to stakeholder groups..." These included "Internal (Campus Community)" and "External (Broader Community)" groups (University of British Columbia, May 2003, pp. 6-7). Advertisements also informed the community that "your group can request a presentation by contacting Linda Moore..." (University of British Columbia, May 2003, p. 14).

The consultation described a significant advertising campaign in campus newspapers and in off-campus community newspapers. The advertising informed the public at large about the consultation process and allowed other interested individuals to attend. Essentially, although it did not select people directly, the advertising campaign had the potential to draw individuals who were interested in University Boulevard: it could be said to select for interested individuals who were not members of identified stakeholder groups. UBC directly selected participants who were members of a broad range of previously identified stakeholder groups and review committees and solicited the involvement of members of the public who were interested in University Boulevard.
Participant selection relied first on staff’s identification of stakeholders and then on a stakeholder self-selection process. It also provided for the possibility that staff did not identify all interested stakeholders by inviting requests for presentations and consultation with the public at large. Overall, it appeared fair.

Were the meetings comfortable and convenient for participants: were they accessible?

Access to the process can be provided by informing the public and through timing and selection of event locations. UBC informed the public about the process through invitations and advertising. The invitation process was described in the previous section. As documented in the consultation report, advertising usually came out 1-2 weeks before the events, and was placed in a variety of publications. A sample is provided in Appendix E. The advertisements were described by a student interviewee:

“When you see the ads in the Ubyssey, and they have the UBC logo on them, they all look exactly the same. Students get so many communications from the University that after a while, unless they’re highlighted in a way that students can understand, they just start to tune them out.”

Signage was another potential way of informing the public about events. For the Open Houses I attended in the Student Union Building (SUB), UBC relied on 8-1/2 X 11 black and white text signs provided by SUB management to inform the public of the events. These signs were located at the top of the stairs on the upper floor of the building, an area which in my experience is visited primarily by those who already have a reason to be there, especially in the evenings when these open houses took place.

Turning to event timing and location selection, presentations, open houses, and the public meeting were examined. UBC made presentations at established meetings of organized community groups. Group members would have been likely to be able to attend these events because they were regularly scheduled and therefore expected. Open houses were scheduled for a variety of locations in both day and evening time periods. All locations were wheelchair-accessible. The visibility of open house locations varied widely. For instance, events on the upper floor of the SUB were visible only to those who passed either a sign or the entrance to the rooms in which they were being held, while those in the Bookstore lobby were visible to the many students, faculty, staff, and visitors who were at or passing by the store on other business. The more visible locations (the Bookstore, War Memorial Gym, and the Aquatic Center) had more participants than the less visible locations in the SUB (University of British Columbia, May 2003, p. 16). The public meeting was held in an upstairs room in the SUB in the evening of April 1, 2003, in the last week of classes before final exams. This timing was viewed by some participants as a potential constraint on student involvement.

One student said that “[the timing of the public meeting] pretty much guaranteed that no student’s going to show up,” while a resident said “I know the students expressed a frustration with the scheduling of the April 1st meeting.”

The March process was accessible in that it provided a variety of convenient forums, times and locations for involvement. However, the process could have been made more accessible through
more engaging advertising, better signage, and by holding the final public meeting at a more convenient time for the academic community, for example a week earlier.

*Were participants representative of the community that has an interest in the decision/issue? Was the perspective of participants representative of the community?*

As noted in the Methods section of Chapter 5, demographic data on participants was limited. Nevertheless, useful demographic information was available. As shown in Figure 20, the composition of participants was different from that of the whole University community. In particular, undergraduate students were very under-represented in the planning process. If undergraduates and 'other' participants are removed from the comparison, graduate students were under-represented and faculty over-represented.

Looking specifically at the APC, it was composed of nine community representatives of the following groups (sources: APC meeting minutes from May 2001 to March 2003):

- The Faculty of Dentistry
- The Faculty of Medicine
- UEL – Ratepayers Association
- Broad Campus Interest (the representative was the Assistant Dean of Law)
- Hampton Place Resident
- UBC Business Operations (beginning in 2002, the representative was the Director of the UBC Bookstore)
- The Alma Mater Society (the representative was a Planning student)
- UEL – Tenants Association
- UBC Athletics and Recreation

The APC was intended to be representative of interests, and had representation from obvious interest groups.

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13 University of British Columbia, n.d.(a); CEI Architecture, 2003; University of British Columbia, 2003
Another important aspect of the representativeness of participants was their perspective. In general, participants' comments were "constructively critical" or "negative" in tone (University of British Columbia, May 2003, p. 4). Breaking that down, the perspectives of participants in different meeting types could have been different. Two interviewees suggested that participants in the public meetings were more critical than those in open houses. For instance:

"[Open houses] have a downside, and that is that people who support you will not show up at public meetings, so you end up with your public meeting largely comprised of people that you have not satisfied."

A review of the content of comments documented in the consultation report showed that it was similar in comments from open houses, special meetings, and the public meeting. The exception to that rule was the public meeting, at which there was a greater emphasis on concerns with commercialization of University Boulevard and the public consultation process. In terms of tone, my own experience from attending three open houses, and from a public exhibition of ideas from a student charrette, was that support in the community at large was lukewarm, and that community reaction was generally negative. At the charrette exhibition, one of about a hundred attendees expressed support for UBC's proposal. At the public meeting, a straw poll showed three people—all planning/development staff—in favour, and eighty opposed, while the Chair of the meeting noted that those who were neutral were in the minority (Peter Russell, personal communication, April 3, 2003).

Because it is recognized that intensive groups may not be representative of larger community interests (Beierle & Cayford, 2002), the APC's perspective as reflected in their March 2003 meeting minutes was compared to comments documented in the Consultation Report. In general, their comments reflected the same issues raised by the broader public. However, the APC did not discuss a number of important issues, including commercialization, personal security concerns with the transit station and market housing, and were less critical of others, such as building heights. Minutes of 2001 APC meetings indicate that issues of building heights, parking, transit-pedestrian conflicts, and the nature of new retail/social spaces had been discussed in this forum before the Draft #2 process.

In summary, participants in the process did not represent community composition well, especially with respect to undergraduate students. Despite that difference, the perspectives of participants appeared to be consistent with the overall community reaction to the plan. The perspectives of participants did not vary among types of meetings, except that the APC did not bring up some issues identified by other participants.

**Was participation broadly inclusive?**

The criterion of inclusiveness was understood to refer to the number of people who participated. Indeed, this was a focus of the Consultation Report, which documented the number of participants in the process by counting the number of attendees at meetings, the number of feedback forms completed, and website activity (University of British Columbia, May 2003):

- approximately 800 people registered at planning events (including formal review and advisory committee members and repeat registrations);
- 481 feedback forms were received;
• 6,900 hits were recorded on the University Town website; and
• the Discussion Guide was downloaded 4,800 times and the Draft Plan Diagrams 4,100 times.

Unfortunately, these measurements may not be clear indicators of the number of people who participated. For instance, people who visited the University Town website may have stopped at the introductory webpage and not looked at University Boulevard information. Although the number of downloads of the Discussion Guide or Draft Plan Diagrams seems to be a more accurate measure of participation, it says nothing about whether someone read and understood the diagrams, never looked at them in the end, or they tried to do understand them and gave up in frustration. Given the definition of participation adopted here as “advising and/or making decisions” (p. II), measures of the number of people who received information do not adequately describe inclusiveness. Based on meeting attendance and Feedback Form completion, 500 to 800 people participated in this process, of a daytime population of close to 50,000.

Information

Information was presented in the website, Discussion Guide, Draft Plan Diagrams and presentations, and was received through the use of the Feedback Form (except for the website, copies may be found in Appendices A - E). The important aspects of information provision are the qualities and timing of the communications. These aspects are discussed in turn in this section.

What were the qualities of communications materials

The important qualities of the communications tools are readability, digestibility, accessibility, and completeness. Turning to the website, it provided a brief background to overall non-institutional development, an introduction to the consultation process, and a schedule of events for University Boulevard. It also provided downloadable copies of the Discussion Guide, Draft Plan Diagrams and Feedback Form. Community members began to access the website within a day of its announcement in the Ubyssey (University of British Columbia, May 2003, p. 22). My own experience was that it was easy to find the site, and relatively easy to navigate either using links on one side of the page or within the text. One participant commended UBC’s use of the web: “UBC has been up-front and pro-active about putting all the plans and the stuff on the web: there’s lots of information up there.” Another echoed that comment and commented about access within the site: “logistically, it was excellent that there was a website that was devoted solely to this issue. . . . The link to University Boulevard was on the left and is pretty small, so it wasn’t that clear where you were supposed to go . . . it was not very easy to navigate.” A third interviewee focused on access to the site: “I saw this after the April 1st meeting. Nothing got me to the website independently.” The following quote summed up the accessibility of the website:

“[The website was] fairly accessible, but you have to know it’s there. . . . You had to find your way 2-3 steps before you found specifically what you were looking for, but I don’t remember now if it was difficult to find. [It was] fairly accessible.”

The amount and complexity of information on the website was described by one interviewee: “it wasn’t overwhelming as I recall.” It was written at a Grade 12 Flesch-Kincaid reading level and
had a Flesch-Kincaid reading ease score of 28.4 (see p. 56 for more information about this measure of readability).

The Discussion Guide provided an overview of the consultation, outlined the OCP and CCP policies for the area, described the plans, and then outlined the next planning steps. Much of the Guide’s language is accessible, while some terms — “way-finding” for instance — was not clear. In the following example, the term “landscaped feature” did not adequately describe what was proposed:

“The draft plan suggests opening University Boulevard between East Mall and Marine Drive to campus shuttles and personal vehicles as a means of improving cross-campus way-finding. University Boulevard would be designed to provide traffic calming through this corridor, including a landscaped feature at Main Mall.” (p. 8)

The description of the plan was five pages long and included three pages explaining the transit element. For some interviewees, the detail in that section made the guide as a whole less digestible:

“[When] it goes into huge depth about the buses, you get lost up in all of that. It’s not clear that the bus loop is an element, like the through street or housing. After you hit the bus stuff, which was long and confusing, you just didn’t make it to the rest of it.”

Other interviewees found the Discussion Guide to be “OK” or said “I don’t think it’s a problem.” It was written at a Grade 12 level and scored 30.9 for reading ease. The Guide was available on the website and at all planning events.

The Draft Plan Diagrams (the same as the display boards shown at events) included plan views and cross-sectional drawings. Plan views showed building footprints, used colours to distinguish uses (and shape in the case of residential towers), and distinguished trees, green areas, streets and sidewalks. Buildings were labeled with names and descriptions, such as “residential tower” and “residential over shops.” The through street to Marine Drive was not labeled, and shading, critical for the new pool location, was not shown. As a result, the Consultation Report said that “some respondents said they felt the plans did not show the intention to connect the area with the street” (p.32). Cross-sectional drawings gave a sense of scale near the street level, showing lane and sidewalk widths, distinguishing uses by labels and colours, and showing important underground features. However, both cross-sections were taken at or right next to proposed-towers, and neither showed construction above five storeys. Asked about the drawing quality, one interviewee raised the possibility of bias in the drawing:

“With a bit of cynicism, they knew that the towers were going to generate a lot of controversy, ...so someone would have thought that maybe these might be lightning rods in the public presentation. I don’t think someone forgot them. The level of this presentation is such that somebody probably made a decision not to show them.”
The set of drawings were understood by some interviewees better than by others. However, interviewees found it difficult to evaluate them after the fact because they were so familiar with the plans. For example, when asked what the drawings showed, one interviewee explained in great detail how people would move through the space and what retail was contemplated — features not shown in drawings at all. Nevertheless, some useful comments emerged from interviews, particularly because two interviewees were trained as design professionals. The drawings were described by one of them as “very schematic... [they] would inform somebody essentially of the location of things and the general amount of things.” The other said that they were “quite vague... the diagrams needed quite a bit of explanation as to what was there.” One of the other interviewees explained the lay perspective:

“It’s very difficult to conceptualize that a yellow square means an 18 storey high-rise and so it’s very difficult to picture what was going to happen to University Boulevard, unless you have that certain eye — you’re trained to have it or you just are creative — so I thought that the they were not as helpful as they could have been.”

As a design professional pointed out:

“[they didn’t] show buildings by height. Typically you would show building sizes by showing longer shadows.... It doesn’t tell us about the experience.... It says ‘field’ here, and I have no idea if that allows some sort of regulation activity to take place, or is this just a general all-purpose play field....

[By comparison,] a great piece of urban design drawing that helps people understand a place, demonstrates the relationship between the inside and outside of buildings, demonstrates the scale of the various levels of intervention, illustrates how the different spaces and rooms are likely to be used at different times of the day and night, and gives some sense of the character and the aesthetics as well as the function of the place.”

The presentations made by Dennis Pavlich were of a general nature, describing the overall conception of the plan and asking audience members to envision a wonderful, lively future for the plan area. These presentations were digestible and quite accessible to interviewees. However, participants found that they were “not very informative,” or expressed frustration over the contents:

“I was confused and very frustrated that evening in the presentation of University Boulevard that Dennis [made], because there was an enormous amount of rhetoric being tossed around and the reality was to me very shallow.”

Turning to the Feedback Form, it consisted of eight substantive questions and two demographic questions. The substantive questions included four specific Yes/No questions about the plan, a question asking for shops and service preferences, one asking for suggestions for improvement, one asking how respondents wanted to be kept informed of involvement opportunities, and an open-ended request for comments and questions. The form was written at a Grade 10 level and had a reading ease score of 44.7.
In the words of Brooks Development Planning, who wrote Section 5 of the Consultation Report, "Comments captured on the feedback forms suggest an overall dissatisfaction with the questionnaire used in the consultation process... It is extremely difficult to interpret the quantitative data in a way that helps define a consolidated response to the specific plan proposed." (p. 24).

Brooks Development Planning quoted one respondent directly, who said "You might as well ask if people like apple pie or not." A participant interviewed for this research described it as "a set up." Others echoed that description:

"The form asked questions that were so confusing and seemed to be coaching an answer. [For instance,] 'Are you in favour of increasing transportation access to University Boulevard?' ... What a ridiculous question! The answer of course would be yes. But I felt that it was really manipulative because if I put 'Yes' for something then they would interpret that in a way that proved that their plan was what students wanted."

"Very lame, very lame. I thought, there really wasn't an opportunity, it felt like they were structuring things in their favour. ... I felt the questions were extremely vague, and as a result I felt that they were trying to lead people in a specific direction."

"By default you have to say yes to a lot of these. I wonder if it's been engineered so that when it's all compiled they just support a kind of yes, let's go and let's have growth."

From these comments, it is clear that interviewees found the Feedback Form to be biased, even manipulative.

In summary:
- The materials used by UBC in the Draft #2 consultation process were available at the website and at all public events, and were accessible, as evidenced by the large number of documents accessed.
- The level of readability of written documents varied from Grade 10 to Grade 12 on the Flesh-Kincaid scale. For comparison, Chapter 2 of this thesis and three articles about UBC planning and development were found to have a Grade 12 readability level, while sports newspaper articles had a Grade 9 level. On the "readability" scale, UBC's planning documents scored between 28 and 37 and the Feedback Form 45. For comparison, sports articles scored 70, the UBC articles 39 and the thesis chapter 25. Written documents were at an appropriate reading level for the generally well-educated community at hand.
- Graphic communication was not as readable for those interviewees who lacked training in reading drawings. Furthermore, they lacked many characteristics of good communication about urban design, as described by a design professional who was interviewed.
- Generally, written materials were digestible. The Discussion Guide's emphasis on transit made it harder to digest, but it provided concise descriptions of other elements of the plan.
Because most participants already knew a lot about the plans, it was difficult to assess the digestibility of the drawings.

- Although the material was complete as a whole, individual pieces were not. For example, the drawings did not provide complete information, failing to label the through road on University Boulevard and failing to illustrate the towers in cross-sections. The Discussion Guide provided good descriptions, but regularly referred the reader to the drawings.

- The presentations were easy to understand but their promotion of a grand vision was poorly received by participants.

- The Feedback Form was seen as being strongly biased by the public, and was considered to be "extremely difficult to interpret" by Brooks Development Planning Inc.

- The drawings appeared to have a degree of bias in that they did not identify some controversial elements clearly, or did not illustrate them clearly.

Was there enough time for participants to understand and respond meaningfully to information they received?

The first presentation was held February 4th, and five more took place before information was first available on the website on February 28th. No data was collected about whether or not drawings and the Discussion Guide were made available to participants before those meetings. The first advertisements were published on February 28th (University of British Columbia, May 2003). The first open house took place on March 3rd and the last planned open house on March 13th. Additional open houses were scheduled up to March 25th, and the public meeting was held on April 1st. With respect to the APC, one member said:

"We got the plans about that time, not a whole lot before the meeting date. We had some time to look at it beforehand, to get the concept. ... Basically everything I was able to read for the first time."

Interviewees' ability to understand information varied considerably. One of the interviewees, a design professional, said:

"You have to be able to read that drawing and it takes a level of skill,... but a lot of people, when they look at the plan, they're just struggling to understand the overall proposal."

Another interviewee who was familiar with plan drawings of the type presented was able to form a basic opinion of the plan before commenting on it. A lay interviewee described her experience with understanding the information, particularly the drawings.

"[The 3-4 week consultation period] offers people an opportunity to go and view [the plans] a couple of times, or go to the website and review it, so that when you are going to the meeting, you were a lot more prepared for the meeting."

For her, staff assistance at the open houses was an important factor in understanding the plans, and in her ability to provide meaningful feedback. In that context, presentations that took place before the website was up may not have provided enough time for participants to respond meaningfully. Equally, people who were not aware of the website may not have had enough time to respond. In
general, however, the process provided enough time for participants to access information before they needed to respond.

Were participants assisted in understanding planning jargon and drawings?
The process provided opportunities to clarify information in the Discussion Guide and plan drawings at open houses and presentations, although time was constrained at many presentations. At the public meeting, time constraints and the scheduling of speakers left a short period of time for answering questions at the end of the meeting. Over the entire process, participants were assisted in understanding the information provided, and the level of assistance varied depending on the time constraints at each event.

Procedural Rules

Was the public involved in the planning of participation activities?
In any process, there is potential for the public to influence the process and the outcome. Turning to the process, Dennis Pavlich struck two committees to advise him about the consultation program: the University Town Steering Committee (UTSC) and an ad hoc group. He described the two groups in these terms:

"[The UTSC] was our committee that would deal with all University Town matters as it related to planning and related issues, broadly based, but the idea behind it is to try to help us [the core planning group] deal with this process. ... It was a body that would give ideas, gave us the opportunity to chat ... [and] give planning advice."

[The ad hoc group is] a very loose group — but I use it purely as an advisory group, it doesn’t have any kind of formal role.... And I want to make it clear, they had no decision-making role."

The Advisory Planning Committee (APC) could also advise on process, according to its Terms of Reference: "[The APC is responsible] for providing... comments on the Neighbourhood Planning Process." However, meeting minutes indicate that the APC did not discuss the consultation process in any of their meetings up to the end of the Draft #2 process. Based on this information, the public was able to influence the process through the four non-staff members of the eighteen-member UTSC, which advised Dennis Pavlich.

The public was involved to some degree in the planning of participation activities, through the student and faculty members of the University Town Steering Committee (UTSC). However, their influence was lessened because one faculty member did not attend regularly and because they were a substantial minority on the committee. Furthermore, the UTSC was struck after the draft plan had been developed, and was therefore not able to advise UBC about public participation in any earlier decision-making stages.

Were goals, scope, and limitations clearly communicated to participants?
To evaluate the quality of this communication, two elements were addressed: how UBC communicated to participants about these issues, and how the communications were received (i.e. what was said and what was heard).

The goals, scope, and limitations of the process were summarized earlier. In the case of the goals, both the goals and UBC's communication of them have been discussed. UBC communicated its official goals of involving and informing the public and obtaining and reporting feedback formally through letters, advertisements, and the Discussion Guide, although they were not identified as goals in those documents. In interviews, the administration identified the goals of meeting process requirements, acceptance and timely completion, but these were not stated publicly, either before or after the process.

The scope and limitations for the decision-making process were geographical boundaries, content requirements, compliance with the OCP and CCP, focus on a single plan, time constraints, and MoU process requirements. They were communicated via the website, Discussion Guide, and Draft Plan Diagrams:

- The geographical scope of the decision-making process was not described in any documents reviewed for this study, except by the name “University Boulevard Neighbourhood.” The Draft Plan Diagrams did not include a diagram showing the borders of the neighbourhood area, nor of the area studied by the design consultants.
- The University Town website described the contents of Neighbourhood Plans as “a detailed land use plan, development controls, design guidelines, and servicing and transportation strategies.” These requirements were not communicated in other documents reviewed here.
- The need for compliance was communicated through the website, which stated that “Neighbourhood Plans must be consistent with the University’s Official Community Plan (OCP),” and the Discussion Guide, which stated that “a Neighbourhood Plan must be... approved as compliant with the OCP and CCP.” The Discussion Guide also explained that an OCP amendment would be required to pass the proposed Draft Plan (p.9). As related by an administrator, the scope was also described in presentations:

  “All of our presentations referenced the OCP and CCP... without going into too much detail, we would refer to the 1992 Master Plan, the OCP and the CCP, and try and let people know that this neighbourhood plan had this foundation.”

- My personal recollection was that the University's stance on timely completion was communicated through responses to questions at various meetings. However, these topics were not discussed in UBC documents. As a result, it was difficult to say with certainty how the flexibility of the process was communicated to the public.
- Although the consultation process itself was described in the Discussion Guide, the overall process requirements were not explained or described.

Turning now to how the community received UBC's communications about goals, participants:
• recognized the University's desire to inform the public of the plans, and to do so in a broadly inclusive way, for example "[the goal] is to seek as broad a community input as possible;"

• were divided on whether they believed that obtaining feedback was a goal. For example, one "[felt that] some of the elements of the plan were put in so they could say 'look we listened and took it out,'" while another believed that "[the goal was] to get input from the community..."

• thought that the University was involving the public because they had to, saying for instance, "they have to," "they needed a check-off box so they could tell the Board they had it," "[they involved the public] so when they took it to the Board, they could say 'we consulted;'

• believed that selling the plan was a goal of the University, for example "primarily [the goal] was to sell," "[the University] attempted to do as good a job as it could in the sense of winning it over"; and

• recognized the University's desire for a speedy resolution — "[I think that Dennis Pavlich] felt the need on behalf of the University to move this thing forward," "[their goal seems to be to] get it over as quickly as possible and get on with the job."

Community members also described their understanding of and reaction to UBC's communications about the scope and limitations of the process. With respect to OCP and CCP compliance, one said:

"I was really confused about how far back you could go, how much you could change, because they seemed to be able to change the OCP regulations but if it needed to change because of student concerns, it didn't seem like it could."

The comments of an administration interviewee may explain the community's confusion, and also illustrates confusion on the part of the administration:

"One of the responses by the community was 'by the way, you're asking for this to comply with the OCP and the CCP and it doesn't actually. And they were right, it didn't! We were saying, telling people 'you can't change that because it's not in the OCP' and yet we were doing something that was not in the - sorry - the CCP."

There was a significant difference between UBC's message about the constraints presented by the OCP and CCP on one hand, and the reality of the constraint on the other.

The community commented on the University's contention that people were involved and dealt with options at the CCP and OCP level. One exclaimed: "People did not [deal with options], people did not. It's just not true." Community members also spoke about the content of the plans in different terms from those used in the CCP. In their words:

"They've continually said that this is nothing space, and all the activities that go on in there are also non-activities. They probably want them all to go away..., this whole plan doesn't acknowledge this [student] nature."
"The programming was a business program, not a community program. If it had been a community program, more would have been said about the SUB, the Pool, the Gym and so on, and about the spaces and the places that they were creating."

The community wanted to talk about elements of the plan not clearly addressed by the "nuts and bolts" description of the scope in the CCP, such as the essence of the area as it is experienced.

Although the process was flexible, this was not made clear to the public:

[I found] that they spoke in terms of "these plans were final." It was not a case of an evolving process. Other neighbours also came away with the feeling that these plans were final. That's the way it was presented to us.

Even the administration recognized that the community did not think that the process was flexible.

"I don't think people believed that at the end of the first process, we were going to do changes.... In fact I know that's the case because they told me that so often."

Furthermore, the administration seemed reluctant to acknowledge any flexibility, as one participant explained:

I was surprised that the administration was deliberately vague about the planned approval, because I thought that this was a positive thing. They were vague about moving the approval date... instead of coming out and saying, "we were going to ask for approval, but we've changed because of your input."

Although the process was flexible, it was not presented as such to the public. As a result, the community thought the plans were final.

In summary, official goals were communicated to participants through the website and Discussion Guide without being identified as goals per se, while unofficial goals were not communicated publicly. The geographical scope and process requirements were not communicated to participants, the content requirements were mentioned in only one place, communication about the compliance requirements was confused, and UBC resisted clarifying the degree of flexibility in the process. Goals were well-understood by the public; regardless of whether or not the University communicated formally about them. Scope on the other hand, was not well-understood, as a result of the limited and confusing nature of UBC's communication about it.

Was the process honest, incorporating two-way communication with respectful relationships?

The process used some one-way communication methods and some two-way communications methods:

- the Discussion Guide and the Draft Plan Diagrams are one-way methods for providing information to the public;
- the Feedback Form is a one-way method for receiving information from the public;
• although presentations and open houses are categorized as methods used primarily for provision of information, when notes were recorded by UBC staff, these methods functioned as two-way communications; and
• the APC is categorized as a primarily two-way communication method.

As a whole, the process incorporated substantial communication both to and from the public. However, with the exception of the APC, this communication was rarely interactive. Instead, provision of information to the public was independent of receipt of information by the University: it never consisted of staff collaborating (i.e. working together) with the public.

Turning to the issue of respect, interviewees made quite different comments about different types of events. With respect to APC meetings, a committee member said, “If I had a question, it was answered properly and with respect,” and at open houses, a participant said that “They came across very professionally, [they were] friendly and approached people, didn’t hide in a corner.” On the other hand, comments about presentations were less positive. For example:

[The presentation] wasn't dealing so much with the actual details of the plan, he was talking in general terms in this glorified vision . . . and I think a lot of people found that insulting. I found that insulting too.

In terms of the administration members’ communications in general, community members said:

They are respectful in the sense that they are not combative. They are not respectful in the sense that they didn’t go there to listen.

[With] people who were angry with elements of the plan, . . . they wouldn’t respond or they would respond in a really condescending way. ‘Oh, you just don’t get it.’

A couple of the neighbours who are really good friends with Dennis said they were embarrassed for him because of the way he spoke to people. And some of the neighbours who didn’t know him at all were really angry, . . . they said ‘who is this man, and why does he think he can speak to us in this manner?’

There was a real sense from day 1 [on a University planning-related committee] that UBC Properties and in particular some of their managers who were representing them had no respect for us.

These more general comments illustrate the disrespect participants felt in general through the process, with the exceptions of the APC and open houses.

A lack of respect on the part of planners and administrators may have caused community members to be unwilling to participate, as a faculty member explained about his peers:

“Nobody wants to be seen to be a fool, and if you stand up and make a clever and impassioned speech to somebody and they just ignore you, you’ve been made a fool of, and that’s the place we’re at . . . there are all kinds of folks I
know who just hate this, ... You say well, you know, why don’t you come out to a meeting and say something, and they say, well, it’s a waste of time. And it’s not that they don’t want to criticize the University, they just think it’s not worth it. ... They expect when they say something that they’ll be listened to and they know they won’t.”

On the administration side, interviewees also felt a lack of respect, saying for example that “some of this communication isn’t at all constructive. It was not helpful. It is just angry,” and “[the public meeting] almost developed into a rant, it was not productive.”

In summary, although administration staff were respectful when participants were requesting information or clarification, at other times, they were disrespectful of the community through their tone of voice, body language and attitude. An administrator suggested that “in this process it’s very easy to move to conflict, to battle positions.” The observed lack of respect may have been a product of the decision-making and participation strategy.

Was the process transparent, communicating input, responses to input, decisions and the reasons for them clearly and in a timely fashion to participants and the community?

The decision-making process that followed the consultation consisted of two steps: compilation and analysis of feedback, and revision of the plan. During this process, four major communications were made to the public. Two administration interviewees explained that the first step in making decisions following the March process was to consolidate and report on it. Brooks Development Corporation analyzed the Feedback Form, and identified nine main themes. These guided analysis of other meetings.

The first release of information was through an Executive Summary of consultation, provided to the public at the beginning of May. It set the scene by describing the vision for the plan as “including improvements to transit infrastructure in association with a new mixed-use neighbourhood at the University’s ‘front door,’” by reminding readers of “the extensive consultations that led to the OCP and CCP and that “[this] process has engaged many people” (p. 3). The first section also focused attention on the transient nature of students and their resulting lack of familiarity with past planning processes. It described the consultation activities and then identified nine major themes within the public comments. The themes were:

- consultation process;
- height of residential buildings;
- market housing;
- relocation of Empire pool;
- services and shops;
- sustainability;
- underground bus loop;
- University identity; and
- University Boulevard as a through road to Marine Drive.

The Executive Summary described comments as ranging from “constructively critical” to “more negative in tone.” It summarized results of the consultation for each theme, emphasizing the lack of understanding of participants in many cases. A good example is the theme of Market Housing:
"In the open houses and special meetings, some people supported the concept of adding market housing to the area while others raised concerns about it serving non-University users. Responses via Feedback Form and correspondence reflected similar concerns. The benefits of introducing market housing did not seem to be understood." (p. 4)

The Executive Summary concluded that "while there was clear indication of support for the fundamental vision, many people expressed a desire to see specific parts of the plan changed or improved" (p. 4).

The second release of information was the full consultation report, provided to the public in late May. In the full report, two other themes, not mentioned in the executive summary, were identified from common repetition in meetings:

- parking supply – concerns over adequate supply for retail and athletics and opposition to parallel parking; and

- bicycling – concern over conflicts with cars entering and leaving parallel parking spots.

The full consultation report related comments directly and provided thematic summaries for the feedback forms, correspondence, open houses, presentations, the APC and TAC, and the public meeting (University of British Columbia, May 2003). In the section on feedback forms, Brooks Development Planning Inc. made the general statement that

"Responses varied. ... Responses to the open-ended questions were mostly critical and often negative. Considering the publics most directly affected — students, faculty, staff and residents of the University area — this tone is not surprising. Yet although comments were often negative, they do not necessarily imply a complete rejection of the plan. (p. 22-23)

Once responses had been compiled, analyzed and reported, the core planning group's next decision-making steps were to decide how to respond to criticism it had received, then to instruct consultants on that basis:

"We ourselves [Dennis Pavlich or Linda Moore, Fred Pritchard, Joe Redmond or Al Poettcker, and sometimes Geoff Atkins] decided what needed to be done ... we responded to what we thought was rational criticism."

"What the University chose to do was to say, well, we heard what you said, let's take a look at some of these issues, and if there is a good reason for making a change, taking the issues into account, then let's take a look at that. Having taken a look at the issue, if it's still a sound thing to proceed the way we were, then ok, that's what we'll do."

After the decisions had been made, information about the decisions was released in two ways. The third release of information came at the beginning of the next consultation phase, in June. The decisions were shown on a display board prepared by VIA Architecture, titled "What We've
Heard" and containing the text shown in Box 5. The last way information was released to the public was through the June Discussion Guide, quoted in Box 6.

Box 5: Text from Display Board Titled “Introduction – Recommended Plan Revisions”

What We’ve Heard…

Transit station and plaza:
- Improve integration of plaza with existing greenways and buildings
- Improve transit access in public square

Eliminate high rises
Eliminate through-road to S.W. Marine Drive
Refine mixed-use strategy of shops and services
Optimize siting for the relocated pool:
- Reduce shading
- Create sense of place in new pool area

Explain impact of transit options on urban form
Improve bus entrance in front of Dentistry building
Create greenway on South side of street — consistent with OCP and CCP
Replacement of market with University housing

Box 6: June Discussion Guide Section on Changes from the March Draft Plan

CHANGES TO THE PLAN

The updated draft Plan differs from the March 2003 draft plan in a number of key areas, including:
- Vehicles will not be permitted to travel along University Boulevard between East Mall and SW Marine Drive
- Building heights will be limited to a five-storey maximum
- While services and shops will be located within the Dentistry Building, the remaining streetscape on the south side of University Boulevard will be preserved as a park/greenway
- The relocated Empire Pool will be positioned further north to ensure minimum shading conditions
- Housing for sale has been replaced by university housing for rent
- The assignment of uses for the shops and services on University Boulevard have been further examined to ensure the enhancement of the University identity and character

The transparency of communication of feedback varied. The Executive Summary set the agenda for discussion because it was released to the public well before the full report and because it was the only information about public comments provided to the Board of Governors (source: Board
of Governors minutes dated May 15 2003). Its emphasis on student transience and the public’s lack of understanding diminished the importance of their feedback:

“The evaluation of the feedback wasn’t very clear, it kept referring to people misunderstanding this and that, so was it transparent? Not really.”

The Executive Summary acknowledged the public desire for significant changes to the plan, but its conclusion that “there was a clear indication of support for the fundamental vision” overstated support for the plan, as compared to my own experience and the following excerpts from newspaper articles:

“Opposition to the University Boulevard idea is fierce. At a public meeting held April 1, 39 of 40 speakers spoke against the idea. A petition with 4,000 signatures has also been collected. ...Opponents say the envisioned development will worsen traffic, create competition for student-run businesses, destroy the existing Empire Pool, and reduce recreational facilities and academic space.” (Read, 2003)

“The initial proposal attracted opposition from thousands of students and professors, some of whom argued the project would turn UBC’s entrance and a significant part of campus into a downtown-style sprawl.” (O’Connor, 2003)

Furthermore, the concluding statement masked the fact that the community-voiced opposition to virtually every element of the plan. It is difficult to understand how there could be such opposition to almost all of the “main elements” of the plan while the plan’s “vision” was clearly supported. What may have been supported was the OCP vision, which was a much more general statement of intent but was different from the CCP plan and Draft #2. The combination of focusing attention on the public’s incapacity to participate effectively and overstating the support for the plan reduced the impact of public opposition as seen by both public and Board of Governors readers.

Nor was the Executive Summary accurate in its reporting of feedback in some themes. For instance, the Market Housing summary quoted above did not match feedback documented later in the report, which included no statements of support.

The consultation report was more objective than the Executive Summary, providing direct quotes from respondents and listing comments. However, it frequently mixed analysis with public comments although the analytical material bore little relation to the comments, as in the example below.

Theme No. 6 Consultation process
Another recurring theme involved concerns about the process used to consult with the community. In general, these appeared to focus on “the breadth of the community engagement and the lack of a real understanding or choice about the notion of a University Town.” It seems clear the transient nature of much of the affected population means many people are not aware of the

130
process of community engagement that generated the OCP and CCP and have no ownership of its results. As well, the academic nature of some of the publics means they would view a University-led process as one that should reflect the leading thought in the area of public consultation.

From written submission from Tony Dorcey, Director of the School of Community and Regional Planning: "...British Columbia has been a leader in developing these approaches and there are people in the University’s departments with considerable experience in implementing them...To seize this opportunity we have to draw on all the resources..."

As with other themes, comments on the consultation process indicated some gaps between the publics’ understanding of issues the plan attempts to address or of the plan and process itself.

"There is much skepticism surrounding your “consultations” to date. Consultation is a two way process.”

(p. 31)

It was difficult, even in the body of the report, to separate the writer’s opinion from what people had said themselves.

Moving on to communications about decisions and the rationales for them, the relevant documents were the June display board and Discussion Guide. Both listed changes to the plan (i.e. the decisions that had been made). For the pool and commercial uses, the Discussion Guide provided a rationale for decisions. However, all other decisions were simply stated without reasons in both places.

The University reported public comments and acknowledged criticism, but did so in a way that was incomplete, was sometimes inaccurate, diminished the level of public criticism, emphasized community members’ incapacity, and overstated support for the plan. It reported decisions, but in most cases did not present the rationales for them. Overall, it was partially transparent.

Were decision-makers accountable in that they were directly involved in the process, rather than indirectly through bureaucrats?

Dennis Pavlich explained who the decision-makers are as far as neighbourhood planning is concerned, and what the role of the administration is:

“The decision-making role of the public is in the Board. The Board is the decision-maker. We’re really helping the Board.”

As noted in the Process Overview section, the Chair of the Board of Governors chaired the public meeting on April 1. This was the only involvement of decision-makers in the Draft #2 process, except receiving updates from staff at regular Board meetings. In that they were not directly involved in the process, decision-makers were not accountable, reflecting the lack of public access and representation noted in the review of UBC’s organizational structure.
Was the process flexible to adapt to contextual changes and changes brought about by the process itself?

An administrator described the process as

"entirely flexible in that [we could make] the changes that we felt needed to be made. . . . When we have a plan, we assume it's going to get approved. When we find that in fact the changes that are needed are so fundamental that you can't take that to the Board, then on each of those occasions we change the 'approval' to 'information.'"

In fact, the final approval date was changed from May to October, and the process run in June and September to consult on a third Draft Plan was somewhat different from the March process. It is clear that the process was flexible in that it could change if challenged.

Summary of the Participation Strategy and its Implementation

The evaluation has so far examined the decision-making and public participation strategy and its implementation. The strategic evaluation indicated that the University identified goals and constraints, then planned and executed the public participation process according to its goals, and provided enough resources to do so. The University's objectives were to:

- meet requirements for public process;
- complete the process in time for a May approval by the Board of Governors; and
- obtain public acceptance.

In accordance with its goal of obtaining public acceptance, UBC first prepared a plan and then promoted and defended it: the timing of participation in the process was congruent with the 'plan review' decision-making stage. While UBC responded to some community characteristics by using an inclusive and informative process, it failed to address community mistrust. First, the public's influence was limited to critiquing the proposed plan, and second, the short time-frame before the assumed approval date did not allow for plan revision in response to public input. The strategy addressed some elements of the context, but failed to address the critical issue of mistrust.

The evaluation of the implementation of the March process addressed characteristics in the categories of representation, information, and procedures. The results are summarized here.

With the exception of meeting signage and student representation, evaluation of representativeness criteria showed a degree of success:

- participants were selected fairly;
- events and information were reasonably accessible;
- although students were under-represented, participants generally reflected the community; and
- many people participated, making it a broadly inclusive process.

Evaluation of information-related criteria indicates that UBC's efforts to inform the public were partially successful, in part because of assistance provided to participants, and despite questions of
bias in drawings. It also showed, however, that materials used to receive input and communicate about it were biased.

- Communications materials were accessible to the campus community.
- Written materials were readable but participants varied widely in their ability to understand the graphic illustrations without help. The open houses were critical for some participants in this regard because they provided an opportunity for clarification and explanation that was less available at more time-constrained events.
- As a whole, communications were complete, although individual materials were not.
- Some materials were biased, in particular the Feedback Form and the Executive Summary of the Consultation Report.

Evaluation of procedural criteria fit well with the evaluation of strategy. For instance, the strategy may have made people more likely to communicate disrespectfully, and the lack of clarity over scope and constraints became an issue. However, it also showed that the process design was flexible under pressure, essential to the eventual granting of some public influence over the plan.

- Although all the goals and almost all of the constraints were understood by UBC, only the goals were clearly communicated to the public, who were confused by the University's communications about the scope, process requirements, and flexibility.
- Although the process incorporated two-way communication, little of it was interactive and participants and administrators noted a lack of respect, possibly due to the strategy of completing a plan and then requesting feedback.
- The process was flexible when challenged.
- The process was partly transparent: UBC reported on feedback, but did so incompletely and inaccurately; and decisions were reported but not the reasons for them.
- Except for the presence of the Chair of the Board of Governors at one meeting, it did not incorporate any degree of accountability.

Looking at the evaluation of the UBNP process as a whole, UBC staff put many of the right elements in place for a successful consultation process, including identifying an appropriate set of public events and selecting potentially useful communications tools. However, their strategy failed to respond to key contextual factors, leading to loss of community trust, significant opposition, and a need to extend their timeline and revise the plan. The evaluation revealed that the weakness of the process lay in two areas: its credibility, and its governance. The problems with credibility included issues with timing of participation, and bias, clarity and tone of communications. Governance issues were related to the links between decision-makers, administration, and the public: accountability and transparency.

Credibility

The first execution problem that led to questions about the credibility of the participation exercise was timing. There were two elements to this problem: the timing of participation vis-à-vis stages of the decision-making process, and timing of consultation vis-à-vis the intended approval schedule.

In the 1996 Memorandum of Understanding, UBC agreed to hold an initial public information meeting to involve the public in discussing “issues, options and process.” However, that requirement was eliminated, leading to the process outlined in the 2000 Memorandum. That process only required the public to comment on a completed plan, be it through open houses,
public meetings, or the APC. In the University Boulevard process, UBC administration indicated that they assumed no significant changes would be required. In other words, they assumed the public would have no significant influence over the plan. The response of three participants illustrated the community’s perception of the consultation process:

“If they want any input, I would say it’s [at the] point where they can do some minor tweaking and so people can feel as though they have been in some way acknowledged. We’re supposed to respond to the plans, rather than participate in the planning project.”

“They were not seeking input, so I don’t think they actually wanted input. They’re letting the public know what it is they’re doing, and they’re doing that after the point where they’ve established the concept that they can put on paper.”

“We’re kind of at where you’re being involved at 75% complete, where they solicit public participation really only to ratify their own ideas and conform to what someone’s told them is now the process in order to play the game.”

The first interviewee distinguished between responding to plans in this process and genuine public involvement in planning. The second and third quotes described the perception that UBC did not want input, but were rather simply informing the public of their decision and meeting process requirements. These quotes show that community members questioned the credibility of UBC’s willingness to respond to community input.

The second element of timing, documented earlier, was that the period of time scheduled by UBC for collecting, analyzing, and responding to input before approval was not adequate. Without enough time to incorporate input into the plan, the consultation plan was not a credible attempt to involve the public in decision-making.

The second execution problem involved the tone, bias, and clarity of communications. As noted earlier, presentations were promotional, the Feedback Form was biased, and the Executive Summary of the Consultation Report was incomplete and inaccurate. In total, the tone and bias of communications considerably undermined the credibility of efforts to obtain and respond to feedback.

Problems with the clarity of communication related to both the scope of the process and the decisions made through it. As two community members put it:

“They make decisions in certain venues and then they ask you about design criteria for decisions that have already been made and what you wanted to do was to ask about the decisions themselves. [The decision] was whether this thing should have been commercialized... The kind of input they were going to get was at a different level of planning than they were asking.”

“So the plan was clearly something they could change when they wanted to, and if they didn’t want it changed, it wasn’t going to.”
Communication about the decision constraints was also an issue. A member of the administration admitted that it had been difficult to describe them satisfactorily:

“It's very hard to just simply say, 'Oh by the way, this comes out of the OCP and CCP.' That statement is meaningless to most people. So then to what level of detail do you go? It's a challenge, that one.”

The choice of scope was significant in determining whether it was possible for the University to hear and respond to community input, a common pitfall in the design of public involvement processes (Thomas, 1995). The lack of clarity about scope and constraints compounded the problem and led to questions of credibility.

As mentioned earlier, flexibility was critical in granting the public some degree of influence over the plan. In fact, the planning changes made by the University improved its credibility somewhat despite the fact that it did not clarify its reasons for changes. Nevertheless, interviewees were suspicious of UBC’s motives:

“I just thought they pulled stuff out because they thought there was a pretty strong opposition force against it.”

“It was pretty clear that they couldn't get away with some elements of the plan, so they had to scrap them. ... So the reasons for the output seemed very clear, like the OCP said there could only be buildings on one side of the street.”

There was a perception that changes had been made to mollify the community or to avoid the need for an OCP amendment. It is not surprising that the latter rationale was echoed by an administration member:

“The University has chosen to accept the outline of the OCP and ...[to] proceed with the neighbourhood plan without amendment.”

In summary, UBC’s efforts to obtain and respond to feedback were weakly credible. The public questioned them because:

- public participation was limited to commenting on a completed draft plan;
- the period between the consultation process and the intended approval date was too short for UBC to compile, analyze, and respond to feedback;
- while UBC personnel were open to public requests for clarification, they were often defensive in the face of critiques;
- presentations were promotional in tone and content;
- the Feedback Form and the Executive Summary of the Consultation Report were biased; and
- the scope of the process and rationales for decisions were not well-communicated.

A faculty interviewee described his experience with decisions in the academic realm in an effort to explain what went on in the University Boulevard process:
"You can see how this happens even with people who are doing things that I think are right, they say, 'We'll design this, produce a plan, and see how people like it, and if they don't, if there are no objections then we'll just go out and do it.' Sure, but the question is, 'Are you really engaging the people before you create the plan?' Because if you're not, you automatically become attached to your plan because you developed it."

With the exception of Linda Moore, all members of the core planning group had been part of the University Boulevard Committee that developed the recommendations on which Draft #2 was based. It may be that they had become attached to the ideas that they were presenting. Time constraints from Dentistry and transit issues put additional pressure on these people to move quickly, possibly increasing their commitment to this plan and subtly influencing them to promote the plan to ensure its acceptance.

Nevertheless, the long-term strategy described in Figure 19 (page 11.1) indicates a different explanation: key staff favoured a strategy of designing, then defending plans. The CCP process evolved in much the same way, and it is the strategy described by the 2000 MoU, if you discount the phrase "consultation with the neighbourhood" in the first box of Chart I (p.43). In the end, it is difficult to dispute this explanation for the strategy adopted for Draft #2, indeed for almost all phases of the neighbourhood planning process.

**Governance**

There are many definitions of governance (World Bank, n.d.). The World Bank defined governance recently as:

"the processes and institutions by which authority in a country (or a local municipality) is exercised for the common good."

Accountability and transparency are two elements of these processes (The World Bank Group, 1999). Like governance, accountability can also be defined in a wide variety of ways. However, the concept can be simply stated (Citizens' Circle for Accountability, 2003):

"Accountability in its simplest terms is the obligation to answer for a responsibility that has been conferred." (1975 Report of the Independent Review Committee on the Office of the Auditor General of Canada (Wilson Committee), quoted in Citizens' Circle for Accountability, 2003)

In the local government context, another definition for accountability identifies two levels on which it operates:

"[Accountability] is the degree to which local governments have to explain or justify what they have done or failed to do.... Accountability comes in two dimensions: that of government workers to elected officials; and that of the latter to the citizens who elect them." (World Bank, n.d.)

Transparency can also be simply defined, as in a dictionary definition:
"free of deceit [synonym: guileless]; easily understood or seen through (because of a lack of sublety)" (Princeton University, 1997)

The criteria used in the literature for evaluation of participatory processes took a narrow view of transparency: the clarity and accuracy of communications between administrative staff and the public. Based on that view, the evaluation found that such communications were poorly transparent because of bias and omissions. However, it did not consider transparency in communications between the administration and the Board of Governors. In keeping with the dictionary definition, this second aspect of transparency is evaluated briefly here to deepen the examination of governance. According to minutes of the Board of Governors’ May meeting, the Board received:
- the Executive Summary of the Consultation Report; and
- a record of media.

The minutes of the July meeting list the documents they received:
- "Executive Summary [of Draft Plan #3] dated July 2, 2003
- Previous Board History
- Record of Meetings
- Website Activity
- Planning Context and Concept Plan Drawings
- Fact Sheets
- Feedback Form"

The Board received less information than the public in that they did not receive the full Consultation Report nor the June Discussion Guide. Therefore, where the transparency of communications between the administration and the public was poor, the transparency of communications between the administration and the Board was worse.

In the literature, and hence the evaluation, accountability was taken to entail a direct connection between decision-makers and the public whom they represent. Such a connection could provide a means to obligate decision-makers to answer to the public for their responsibilities: the public could “hold them to account” for their decisions. The evaluation found that only one member of the Board took part in the Draft #2 process (as Chair of the public meeting), so there was very little direct connection between the public and decision-makers at the Board of Governors.

As with transparency, accountability in the relationship between UBC’s administrative staff and the Board is as important as accountability in the relationship between the public and the Board. The evaluation found that there was little direct connection between the public and the Board, limiting that aspect of accountability. As for the accountability of staff to the Board, it would entail the Board holding staff to account for their actions. The staff in turn are responsible for implementing policies and programs approved by the Board.

According to minutes from September 24, 2001 and December 2, 2002, the Board received items “for information” describing the University Boulevard planning process. In 2001, the Board was told that “the University Executive will establish a task force… to guide the planning
implementation of the [University Boulevard] project." In 2002, they were given a list of "Further Actions Required" that summarized the administration's decisions about how to proceed in no uncertain terms, for instance "The Planning Team will prepare..." and "Campus and Community Planning will organize..." (Sumner and Atkins, 2002; emphasis added). Staff's choice to submit these items "for information" and the language in their submissions suggest that the planning process was defined by staff, with little or no input from the Board, and with no need nor desire for Board approval.

At first glance, it appears that the Board did not keep staff accountable; however, minutes from Board meetings are concise, and may have left out details. A more critical assessment of staff accountability would consider whether staff adhered to Board-approved policies in their work. The evaluation indicated that the planning process was inclusive and informative as required by the Sustainability Policy, A Legacy and a Promise, and TREK 2000, but was neither collaborative nor transparent, as required by A Legacy and a Promise and the Sustainability Policy. Furthermore, the Board was not accountable to "those who participate in our processes," as required by TREK 2000. Staff were selective in their implementation of Board-approved policy, and the Board did not hold them to account for that.

In short, the process was only partly transparent and there were significant issues of accountability in relationships between the public and the Board, and between the staff and the Board. Based on this analysis, the governance of public participation in the decision-making process for University Boulevard was weak.

As outlined in the discussion of the institutional context, the Board of Governors is significantly less representative and less accessible to the public than Councils in local governments: by its nature, it is less publicly accountable. The Board's responsibilities lie in "the management, administration and control of the property, revenue, business and affairs of the University" (BC University Act [RSBC 1996] Chapter 468, 2003: subsection 27(1)), and "[a University is] a corporation, having the rights, powers, duties, and liabilities set out in this Act... [although] the Company Act does not apply to a university" (BC University Act [RSBC 1996] Chapter 468, 2003: section 3, italics in the original). Given that the University is described as a corporation and has a Board of Governors that operates in much the same manner as that of a corporation, it should come as no surprise that it is subject to the same criticisms that have led to so much controversy in the corporate world. The poor governance of the University Boulevard process is surely also a reflection of the mismatch between a corporate-style governance system and a "municipal-style" planning process.

The criteria-based evaluation of the process strategy and characteristics was a systematic way to document an array of critical elements of the process while highlighting broader issues. It revealed that UBC met only some criteria for good process, and showed that the process was poorly credible and poorly governed. It also provided enough data to explain these results, suggesting that staff favoured the chosen "design, announce, defend" strategy over one that permitted a higher degree of public influence, and that governance issues may have been due in part to the juxtaposition of a municipal process within a corporate governance system. The next chapter will consider the outcomes of the process, providing an opportunity to see to what degree UBC's performance on process affected the results.
Chapter 7: Outcomes

As with the Process section, this discussion of Outcomes reviews the outcomes of the process first, then provides an evaluation of outcome-related criteria. The overview briefly describes the revised Draft Plan (#3), the process of consulting the public about it, and the approvals process. The evaluation is split into two parts to address internal UBC goals as well as established social goals.

7.1 Overview of the Draft Plan #3 Process

In May 2003, VIA Architecture was hired to develop a third draft plan for University Boulevard on the strength of their experience with the design of underground transit facilities such as the Burrard Street Skytrain station (Linda Moore, personal communication August 13 2003). The plan had some significant differences from Draft #2, shown as bold, underlined text in Box 7.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Box 7: June 2003 Plan Elements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Role as social center for campus emphasized</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed use buildings (retail at grade, institutional and residential above) throughout</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No residential towers are planned, and only 326 residential units are planned, per the OCP. Housing is rental “University housing.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plaza at East Mall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A greenway is planned for the South side of the street, opposite the bus loop or plaza.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Major automobile entry to campus, but with no access to Marine Drive across Main Mall: University Boulevard terminates in a parking lot just West of East Mall.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A maximum of 4500 m² of ground floor commercial is planned, per the OCP.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Below-grade transit and the road widened for parallel parking and bike lanes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pool north of War Memorial Gym, but moved further north to address shadowing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

VIA developed a series of illustrations for a new public consultation process to take place in June 2003. This process lasted a little over two weeks. In the first week, boards displaying conceptual drawings and a list titled “what we’ve heard” were presented in two open houses and on the website. In the second week, those drawings were supplemented with more detailed drawings, including well-labeled plan drawings, sections, and a shadow study. A public meeting was held on June 23, on the Monday of the third week.

Open houses were held in the SUB concourse, a very high-traffic location. They were similar in format to those held for Draft #2, but included a presentation and question period. All open houses took place in the daytime, but there were none in the evening.

The public meeting had the same layout as the April 1st meeting, but was chaired by Chuck Brook of Brook Development Inc. instead of the Chair of the Board of Governors. It was well-attended, with an estimated 150-200 people. Fact Sheets (dated between June 16 and 23) were made available to the public, with details about planning issues, such as the OCP and CCP, or the Strategic Transportation Plan. The meeting began with two presentations, one by consultant Richard Drdul of Urban Systems on the choice of a transit option, and one by Al.Poetcker of UBC Properties on the plan itself. These were followed by opportunity for public comment. Members of the public were given two minutes each to speak, resulting in a meeting that ended at
9 pm. In some cases, someone at the head table would respond to a comment or question posed by the public.

The consultation process was extended to include four more daytime open houses over the first two weeks of September 2003 and another public meeting on September 15th, when most students and faculty had returned to campus for the fall term. Board of Governors approval was given to the plan two weeks later at their meeting on October 2nd, and the GVRD Board of Directors approved it on November 28th.

7.2 Evaluation

Different goals are important to different people. In this case, broadly accepted social goals were identified as an objective source of criteria for evaluation — essentially an external standard of performance. UBC's outcome-related goals were also identified, and provide a useful second source of evaluation criteria — an internal standard. (Implementation-related goals were addressed in the evaluation of Process Characteristics.) The evaluation of outcomes discusses these sets of criteria in turn.

**UBC's Outcome-Related Goals**

Did the community accept the plan as presented?

The following quotes taken from the Executive Summary of the Consultation Report (University of British Columbia, May 2003) summarize public feedback as understood by the University. Each one relates to a substantive theme identified in the feedback.

“A small number of people supported [the through-road] proposal while the majority voiced strong opposition....

People expressed concern about the height of the buildings....

People responded positively but were concerned about how an underground transit station would be a safe and healthy environment....

Some people applauded the increased liveliness [the shops and services] part of the proposal could bring, while many — especially students — criticized the commercialization as being out of character with the University....

People generally supported the idea of creating a new and larger pool facility; however, they were concerned with the potential impacts elements of the proposal could have on the proposed pool....

Some people supported the concept of adding market housing to the area while others raised concerns about it serving non-University users.....

14 As mentioned earlier, the summary about Market Housing did not reflect the fact that no positive comments on this theme were recorded elsewhere in the report.
A theme that emerged was that the proposed plans were not in keeping with the respondents' perception of the University's identity, based on the addition of commercial and residential uses, as well as high-rise buildings. The draft plan was perceived as a significant departure from the institutional character of the campus.

People raised concerns that portions of the plan do not adequately reflect the principles of sustainability.” (p. 3)

The themes relate closely to many key elements of the plan: the through-road to University Boulevard, high-rise residential towers, and underground transit station, retail development, a relocated, expanded pool, and market housing. The last two themes were more general in nature.

The public expressed solid opposition in four theme areas. In two theme areas, public opinion was somewhat divided, but negative overall. The seventh theme was the transit station. The public supported the idea but had concerns about personal security. The last plan element was a new, regulation-sized pool located north of War Memorial Gym. The public supported the idea of a new pool but had concerns about its location. The community did not accept the plan as presented. In fact, they opposed most of its elements and had significant concerns about the others.

Was the plan approved on the University’s desired schedule?
UBC's goal was to obtain public acceptance of the plan through the public consultation process and then to request approval at the May 15th Board of Governors meeting. The plan was approved by the Board on October 2nd, five months later.

The plan was not approved on the desired schedule.

Did the process meet GVRD requirements?
The April 1 public meeting met GVRD requirements for a public information meeting at a significant point in the planning process, and the open houses and presentations went beyond that standard. Similarly, consultation in June 2001 APC meetings throughout the process met Memorandum of Understanding requirements.

Overall, the process met and exceeded GVRD requirements set out in the Memorandum of Understanding.

Did the University achieve social goals through the process?

Did the process contribute to a stronger community?
This criterion includes the development of closer relationships and an enhanced sense of community. Little information was available from interviews because respondents were unable to draw conclusions themselves. For instance, one participant said:

"It did generate a lot of interest, but at the end I couldn’t tell if we’re a better or worse community."
During the fall of 2003, the student Alma Mater Society developed and ran two workshops with the assistance of students from the School of Community and Regional Planning (SCARP) and the participation of other stakeholders and University administrative staff. Over the April to December 2003 period, community interrelationships became closer through these initiatives. However, it is difficult to attribute this outcome directly to the March process, or even to the entire University Boulevard process. One respondent made it clear that in her opinion relationship-building was a result of community initiatives. Another was more critical:

"[The process] seemed to really divide people – 'This is what faculty wants, or the students want this but what about UEL residents, or this is what the students want, but the University can't do this because of revenue.' They tried to divide stakeholder needs and discourage working together. ...[Relationship-building] is going on, but not facilitated by the University, it's more [facilitated] by initiatives taken on by certain people."

My observations added somewhat to those comments. With the exception of the APC, the involvement techniques chosen by the University were not well-suited to building community. Although administration staff were open to participating in and contributing to community-led events after the process, they did not initiate community-building activities related to neighbourhood planning.

It is possible to conclude that community relationships have grown stronger since the University Boulevard process. Although there are indications that the relationship-building was community-driven and reactive, there is not enough information available to determine the role of the University Boulevard Neighbourhood planning process in that change.

**Was the community educated through the process?**

As mentioned in the evaluation of information characteristics, participants were able to get help when they did not understand something, and there were a large number of opportunities to become informed and to get help. A number of interviewees agreed that they had learned through the process, and mentioned learning about both process and substance. With respect to process:

"I learned some of the process issues that go into the planning world that I was not aware of."

"I learned that there was a process, ... I learned how to look at maps aerially. I learned how important the U-Town is to the university, and how much they need buy-in,..."

As with elements of process, the public certainly learned about the plans. However, the consultation report emphasized the fact that the public did not learn about some topics, stating:

"The relationship between the value of high-rise residential buildings, and the funding required to construct infrastructure improvements (e.g. the underground transit facility) was not understood,..."
The cost of the transportation improvements was not understood, nor was the need to fund the facility with residential and commercial development revenues.

There appeared to be no clear understanding or agreement on how benefits of university-related retail and service would contribute to a vibrant University Boulevard Neighbourhood, infrastructure improvements or a more sustainable university community.

There appeared to be little understanding reflected on the feedback forms of the need to replace the pool in order to create a new facility that would meet current competition standards and accommodate Pan Am Games competition in 2006.

The benefits of introducing market housing did not seem to be understood.” (p.4)

These topics were generally rationales for decisions or links between issues. The March Discussion Guide did not discuss any financial aspects of the plan, nor financial links between plan elements such as the high-rises and the underground station. From my experience of meetings, these links were mentioned in general terms, but specific financial information was never made available by the University. I did not recall any discussion of non-financial benefits of market housing, although I was told that nice views made apartments in upper floors more attractive and hence more valuable; I assume that these sorts of financial discussions were held with other participants. Turning to the pool discussion, the consultation report was contradictory. It cited community support for the notion of “a new and larger pool facility” shortly before stating that the public did not understand the need for it. My own recollection was that the public were firmly in support of a new, larger pool. On balance, it seems that the public did understand the need for a new pool.

This information suggests that the lack of understanding may have been overstated with respect to the pool and market housing. Rather, the public understood the rationale behind these decisions but disagreed with them. With respect to financial links between plan elements, the information suggests that the University failed to communicate about them effectively.

In sum, the public was informed about many aspects of the plans, with the exception of financial linkages between some plan elements. Participants were educated about both process and the plans themselves, again with the exception of linkages between elements.

**Was the process cost-effective (i.e. did the benefits of the process make its costs worthwhile)?**

Little information was available to assess this outcome. No cost information was requested of interviewees or compiled, and the measurement of benefits of a process such as this one is difficult and extremely subjective. Rather than evaluate it formally, it was assessed only on the basis of responses by Administration interviewees. Two administrators addressed the question directly:

“Yes [it was cost-effective]. Any robust consultative process is going to be more time-consuming and time means money... and the University has to absorb that cost.”
"In terms of the development potential the cost-benefit of the process was not successful... [but] given the magnitude of the issues being discussed, it was worth it."

Based on this information, it is possible to conclude that UBC administrators felt that the process was cost-effective.

Were community values and input incorporated into decisions made through the process?

The June 2003 Draft Plan was dramatically different from the March 2003 Draft Plan. By this simple criterion, the community influenced decisions inherent in the Neighbourhood Plan. While participants agreed that the plans had changed, they noted some subtlety in the relationship of the changes to community values and input:

"I think [community values were incorporated into decisions] because many of the concerns about traffic going through campus were about disturbing the academic heart of the campus, the calm of the campus. ... Those concerns valued the essence of what UBC is about, which is studying and research."

"The fundamental objection that people have had to the plan was the commercialization of an academic space. ... So they took out the big towers and put in little towers but that hasn’t changed the fundamental objection."

"The SUB has to be acknowledged as the students’ home away from home. And so this whole plan doesn’t acknowledge this nature. ... This is a place where students should voice their social activism, which students have a great deal of, en generale, and this plan negates all of that. It pretends that none of that happens. ... I think that the form of the built environment has changed, but I don’t think that [the plan is] acknowledging the social dynamics of this precinct."

Participant interviewees did not so much disagree on the incorporation of values and input as focus on different aspects of the plan. It appears that it may have incorporated some values more than others, and some of those values represented “fundamental objections” voiced by the community during the process. This subtlety in the incorporation of values, and in fact in participants’ focus, should not be surprising if one understands that the plans themselves are ridden with values: they are political. In a 2000 article, Katherine Jones explains that all plans are political, and that even drawings and descriptions reflect the values of those who produced them:

"Urban planning is a practice that is intimately connected with places, and with ideas and representations about those places. Planners influence urban places through the physical changes they help to enact, but these physical changes do not emerge from a vacuum. The images of urban places that show up in plans are influenced by theories and ideologies about cities and spaces. ... There is therefore embedded within urban plans an epistemology of space, a way of knowing and representing space." (Jones, 2000, p. 380)
The revised plan, like any other, reflected the ideologies, values, experience of place, and so on of its authors and the decision-makers. The subtlety is that the June plan responded to public input, but responded to the values expressed by the public only as they fit within the conception of place held by the decision-makers and design consultants.

Was there more consensus or less conflict over the decision than before the process occurred?

When asked, three participants felt that it was difficult to assess the degree of conflict because much of the community was gone over the summer, when interviews were conducted. Others felt able to comment despite the possible lack of clarity:

"I think it's improved dramatically."

"Now that the new plan is out, and a lot of the elements of concern have either been dealt with either through more information or through a change in the plan, I feel like people are a lot happier and there has been a lot more consensus."

"I don't know anybody who objected to the plan who's feeling satisfied."

The range evident in these comments reflects the timing of the interviews shortly after the June plan had been presented and before the process was completed. As such, it falls somewhere between the mid-course and end-of-process evaluations described by Judith Innes (2000). Where end-of-process evaluations can identify changed attitudes (e.g. greater agreement) among participants, mid-course evaluations can only find out if participants can see possibilities for agreements. It is not possible to draw a conclusion about the attainment of this goal given the available data.

Were decisions improved through the process?

Like the evaluation of cost-effectiveness, the measurement of plan quality is difficult and very subjective (Smith, Nell & Prystupa, 1997; Greene, 1992). Neither administrators nor the community were certain whether or not the decisions were improved through the process. The administration said:

"I think the current iteration will allow and enable universityishness to come through."

"I think the June plan in the end was better from a social point of view but it had ramifications in terms of the economics of the project, so we solved problems and we created problems."

"Firstly it is more consistent, virtually compliant, with the entitlements that had been previously granted, so from that perspective, if compliant is good, then it is better. ... The plan is better because it has more detail. ... I think that the plan responds much better with respect to the transit options. I think the relocation of the swimming pool, the configuration of the playing field, are all extremely positive. The plan now relates more closely to Main Mall and SUB Boulevard. It
has a better sense of context and of integration. It deals much more effectively with how the station would work. I have mixed feelings about the high-rises."

For the administration, the character, social aspects of the plan, and some technical details were improved, but financial aspects of the plan, including those related to the loss of the high-rise residential developments, were worse.

On the community side, many but not all interviewees felt that the plan was better. One reacted positively to the plan after the end of the interview tape recording, describing the new greenway, elimination of high-rises, decreased retail, and increased green space as improvements. Others said:

"[The June plan is] better. I think what ended up happening with the bus loop was definitely better. Probably not opening University Boulevard to Marine Drive is better. It could have gone either way, but in not opening it up we preserve the academic core. ... Not having the high-rises at the entrance is probably a good thing."

"The mixing of academic core and town are not finding, the right interface. ... The plan seems to me to be more evolved, still with the basic characteristics. Still the plan doesn't really ever move your sense of imagination to it. ... I think that the form of the built environment has changed, but I don't think that acknowledging the social dynamics of this precinct...."

"[It's] better because the really obvious negative elements are gone. [But] if we weren't constrained by the OCP, we could come up with something really innovative, something really vibrant..."

"I don't know anybody who objected to the plan who's feeling satisfied. So again it's that same fundamental problem that people were objecting to something that they're not discussing so it's not going to change."

For the community, the elimination of "obvious negative elements" made the plan more acceptable, and they welcomed some of the changes as being in keeping with their conception of the University. However, they thought that the decisions could have been improved beyond the changes adopted by UBC, especially with respect to the social character of the place.

The June plan appears to have been better than the March plan in most respects, based on interviewee perceptions. Loss of density and related financial concerns remained for the administration, while the community had continuing concerns about the social character of the space and commercialization of campus. The plan was better in some ways and worse in others.

Was trust in the sponsoring organization enhanced through the process?

To answer this question, it is important to know what the levels of trust were before and after the process. As described in Chapter 5, the process took place in an atmosphere of distrust. Two administration interviewees recognized that context, saying that the "climate was of an enormous distrust and cynicism" and that "historically [people] were suggesting... that the University must
have a plan in its back pocket and it's just going to try to slide that through, forget about whatever process it's going through.” This sense of distrust was supported by participants:

“In the old days, you got the impression that you would have a planning process, but it was all a charade.”

“I think students felt very disempowered when it came to university consultation processes”

Many participants described their level of trust both before and after the process, as summarized in Table 6.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interviewees who trusted UBC at the outset:</th>
<th>Before</th>
<th>After</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Staff 1</td>
<td>“I have a lot of trust for them.”</td>
<td>“I believe they're very intelligent people, very diligent to see that UBC is getting the best result in the end.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resident 1</td>
<td>“I thought that UBC would be approachable and interested in public reactions.”</td>
<td>“The more involved I got, the more frustrated and angry I got with the way things were being handled.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student 2</td>
<td>“[I had] high expectations of the University.”</td>
<td>“[I trusted them] less.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interviewees who did not trust UBC at the outset:</th>
<th>Before</th>
<th>After</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Faculty 1</td>
<td>“As an individual I carried a lot of distrust about the manner in which the President's office... operated.”</td>
<td>“I felt a little bit like you're having the discussion on the outbreak on SARS, and you're the expert on SARS, and you've been asked to come in and talk for 3 minutes on the affair.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty 2</td>
<td>“[I had] a low level of confidence in campus planning and development.”</td>
<td>“The public process this spring was a prime example of the lack of hearing on the part of people who claimed to be listening.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff 2</td>
<td>“[I had] a sort of cynicism... In the old days, you got the impression that you would have a planning process, but it was all a charade.”</td>
<td>“I don't have any trust at all in [UBC Properties Trust] as being the planning people... I don't think [External Affairs will] ever be impartial to anything the University tells them to do.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
“People felt very disempowered when it came to university consultation.”

Table 6: Participant Trust Levels

Of the interviewees who trusted UBC at the outset, one retained that level of trust, and the other two became more cynical. Of those who had originally mistrusted UBC, most remained distrustful, although it was hard to tell or the level of distrust varied depending on the administrative unit in question. Overall, the community trusted UBC less after the process despite changes made to the plan.

Summary

The outcomes of the process may be summarized in three stages: implementation of UBC’s planned activities; achievement of UBC’s objectives, and the achievement of social goals.

- UBC involved the public inclusively, informed them about the plan, obtained and reported on feedback, and promoted and defended Draft Plan #2: UBC implemented its planned activities.

- UBC met requirements for public process, but did not complete the process in a timely fashion, nor did the public accept the plan as presented. They did not achieve their internal objectives for the process.

- The achievement of social goals was mixed:
  1. although it appears that community-building activities occurred after the process, it was not clear whether or not that was an outcome of the process;
  2. participants were educated about the plans, but UBC’s communications did not offer the community an opportunity to learn about the rationales behind them;
  3. administration interviewees thought that the process was cost-effective;
  4. community input was incorporated into Draft Plan #3, but the values inherent in the revisions reflected the ideologies and knowledge of the plan’s authors and decision-makers and not necessarily those of the public;
  5. revisions made the plan better in some ways and worse in others; and
  6. the process did nothing to improve the pre-existing atmosphere of mistrust, and appears to have worsened community cynicism, despite plan revisions.
PART III: Conclusions
Chapter 8: Conclusion

In drawing to a conclusion, it is important that I return to the questions that guided this research. I listed two research questions in Chapter 1:

- To what degree was public participation in the University Boulevard Neighbourhood Planning process successful, and why?
- What lessons does this research teach us about evaluation of public participation?

This chapter begins by summarizing the methods and results of the evaluation, then looks for lessons, both for the University of British Columbia's (UBC) participatory process in particular and for the evaluation of participatory processes in general. It concludes with a look at broad planning themes.

8.1 The Research Methods

Through this research, I attempted to evaluate a participatory planning process objectively, a task that is recognized as difficult (Webler, 1995). To do so, I built a research strategy around accepted principles for evaluation (American Evaluators Association, 1994), using an evaluative framework composed of widely accepted criteria. The framework was applied to public participation in decisions associated with Draft #2 of the University Boulevard Neighbourhood Plan.

Research Strategy

My research strategy was built on principles of a systematic, honest, ethical, respectful, and responsible evaluation. It consisted of a number of key elements:

- My purposes for the evaluation were to help improve UBC processes and to learn more about evaluation of participatory process. The purposes required a balanced approach, strongly based in the theory and practice of participation.
- My evaluation of public participation in the University Boulevard process was subject to potential bias from a number of sources, including my own perspective as a student, alumnus, and participant in the process. To reduce bias, the strategy relied on a range of data sources, used ethical research practices, and explicitly recognized researcher bias.
- A participation process is a program, not a policy, so an evaluation appropriate to programs was necessary.

It is helpful to understand the implications of the strategy:

- Public participation rarely consists of routine procedures, so information from an evaluation of one process cannot be transferred directly to another. However, it can inform future policy and program design through learning what works, what does not, and why.
- I conducted the research as an evaluator external to the institution that conducted the process (UBC), so my access to information may have been limited due to concerns over confidentiality or protection of UBC's perceived interests.
- My resources for this research were limited because this was an unfunded Master's thesis. As a result, data from participants was limited to a small number of interviews and analysis of costs and benefits was superficial, so the evaluation was preliminary in nature.
- I conducted the evaluation immediately after the second of three public consultations about Draft Plans was complete. As such it was a mid-course or end-of-process evaluation, so it had a limited ability to consider long-term effects of a participatory process.

**Evaluation Framework**

My review of literature on public participation in decision-making made clear that there is a range of philosophies about participation in decision-making. In turn, these philosophies are reflected in approaches to the design and evaluation of participatory processes. The review also revealed that there is a high degree of agreement on many criteria for evaluation and design of participatory processes. Furthermore, it identified the recent trend of the adoption of contingent approaches to resolve philosophical differences (Dorcey & McDaniels, 2001).

Following a "program theory" model of evaluation (Weiss, 1998), I built the evaluation framework around a conceptual model of participation in decision-making. The framework encompassed elements of context, process, and outcome (Beierle & Cayford 2002), and reflected contingent models (e.g. Thomas, 1995) by incorporating criteria that were contingent on the context and type of process. As with the research strategy, the implications of the chosen framework are important:

- The breadth of the framework necessitated significant data collection and analysis efforts and therefore significant resources were required to assess each criterion in depth.
- The breadth of the framework meant it was possible to link contextual, process, and outcome elements, and to suggest causal links.
- The nature of relationships between context and process are only loosely known, based on the literature. Therefore it was not possible to clearly identify the contextual elements that could have been critical to process success.
- The evaluation of the quality of decisions was difficult because of its enormous subjectivity. The evaluation of the quality of planning decisions may remain difficult because they incorporate so many trade-offs and value judgments (Greene, 1992).
- The evaluation of the cost of the process was superficial because it was based only on perceptions of administration interviewees.

In combination, the evaluation strategy and framework provided a good method for evaluation of public participation. Given the constraints in this research project, some elements of the evaluation were more robust than others. Evaluations of links between context and process, and of some outcomes (community-building and cost-benefit) were preliminary in nature. However, the evaluation of process characteristics, other outcomes (incorporation of input and values, educating and informing the public, decision quality, and enhancement of trust) and of links between process characteristics and well-understood outcomes was robust.

### 8.2 Research Results

This section outlines the participation strategy adopted by UBC, summarizes the results of the evaluation, and analyses the results to understand the reasons behind the adoption of the strategy and the elements that led to the outcomes.
The University Boulevard Neighbourhood Planning Process

The University Boulevard Neighbourhood planning process took place at UBC from January 2001 to October 2003. The Neighbourhood Plan was produced through three successive iterations, each one consisting of internal production of a draft plan followed by public consultation. This study considered the process of decision-making and public consultation about the second draft plan, which occurred from September 2001 to May 2003. During the study period, the context changed due to transportation and development pressures. Context therefore included information about the situation in September 2001 and information about the situation UBC faced late in 2002, just before UBC staff developed the draft production and consultation strategy. Outcomes included events that occurred after mid-May 2003.

In late Fall 2002, the University faced the development of a new draft plan for a very important area of campus in the context of the situation prior to September 2001 and more recent developments:

- challenging community characteristics — high levels of education, expertise and organization; community transience; and the academic schedule and related population fluxes;
- a long history of community mistrust;
- policy that supported collaborative public participation;
- an organizational structure that did not clearly distinguish development and planning roles;
- a Comprehensive Community Plan (CCP) process that had presented only one option for University Boulevard
- a Draft #1 process that had involved the public almost exclusively in reviewing prepared plans;
- identified public concerns with Draft #1;
- recent University Boulevard Committee recommendations that required Official Community Plan (OCP) amendments and that received fairly critical reviews from the Advisory Planning Committee (APC) and Technical Advisory Committee (TAC); and
- pressure to move quickly in response to Dentistry and transit concerns.

The scope of the process and constraints on the decision were based on a strong belief that the public was satisfied with previous processes and decisions. On that assumption, a draft plan was developed internally, leaving the public to review the completed draft plan. The elements of the scope were:

- decisions were about the area within the boundaries of the University Boulevard Neighbourhood but could informally address adjacent areas;
- the resulting plan had to include goals, density controls, building siting, massing, and height regulations, street and circulation details, parking standards, and building design guidelines;
- decisions had to be consistent with the OCP, CCP principles, and overall density and parks allocations set in the CCP;
- a single option would be presented to the public for review; and
- the process had to meet requirements for public participation set out in the 2000 Memorandum of Agreement with the Greater Vancouver Regional District (GVRD).
Faced with this scope, UBC adopted a “consultation” process that:
• lasted six weeks, from February 10 to April 1, 2003;
• incorporated a large number of open houses, APC meetings and presentations, and one public meeting;
• provided information about the plan to the public; and
• received and documented feedback on the plan and the process.

The plan was not accepted by the public as presented, and UBC revised it to produce a third Draft Plan in June. It was eventually approved by the Board of Governors in October 2003.

Evaluation
The evaluation began by defining the contingent evaluation criteria based on the context and scope to produce a ‘customized’ evaluation framework. Then the process strategy and characteristics were evaluated, followed by the outcomes. In the first part of this section, the process and outcome evaluations are summarized. In the second, the links between process and outcome are discussed to investigate the reasons for the successes and failures of the University Boulevard process.

Summary of Findings
The decision-making strategy was evaluated first. Based on interviews with the responsible administrative staff and a review of available documents, the strategy was to prepare and then defend a plan through an informative and broadly inclusive process. UBC’s choice of various meeting types, times, and locations addressed the community’s diversity well. However, information provided by UBC failed to address community transience because it did not communicate effectively about earlier planning processes. Most important was that despite the existing atmosphere of distrust, UBC’s strategy nearly eliminated public influence in that it allowed less time for plan revision than was necessary to compile and report on feedback.

Next, the characteristics of the March process were evaluated based on a review of media articles and UBC documents, personal observations, and interviews. There were three categories of characteristics: representation, information, and procedures. With the exception of meeting signage and student representation, evaluation of representation criteria showed some success. With respect to information, UBC successfully informed the public, in part because of assistance provided to participants. This success was marred, however, by possible bias in drawings. The biased Feedback Form and Executive Summary of the Consultation Report made the receipt and communication of input much less successful than the provision of information. Finally, the process did not perform well against procedural criteria. UBC’s communication of the scope and constraints was unclear, resulting in community misunderstandings. Participants found UBC’s communications to be disrespectful, and the reverse was also true at times. The transparency of the process was limited, as was the accountability of decision-makers. However, the process was flexible when challenged, allowing UBC to extend the deadline and revise the plan.

Looking at the evaluation of the UBNP process as a whole, UBC staff put many of the right elements in place for a successful consultation process, including identifying an appropriate set of public events and selecting potentially useful communications tools. However, their strategy failed
to respond to key contextual factors, leading to loss of community trust, significant opposition, and a need to extend their timeline and revise the plan. The evaluation revealed that the weakness of the process lay in two areas: its credibility, and its governance.

The credibility of the process was first raised as an issue because of the bias in UBC's communications. Two issues with scope and constraints further weakened the University's credibility: (1) UBC's insistence on compliance with the CCP did not reflect actual constraints, and (2) despite the fact that UBC's plan did not comply with the OCP, staff insisted that public suggestions had to. Finally, the inadequate time planned for incorporation of public input confirmed that the process was not a credible process for the involvement of the public in making decisions about University Boulevard. Rather, as a member of the administration put it, it was an attempt “to sell our vision in the broadest conceptual terms.”

Governance issues were related to the links between decision-makers, administration, and the public. First, decision-makers were not accountable to the community because there was virtually no formal public access to them, either during the process or at Board of Governors meetings. Second, the administration’s documentation of feedback was biased, overstating support for the plan and emphasizing public incapacity to contribute meaningfully, and rationales for decisions were never communicated to the public. Communications to the Board of Governors were similarly biased; in fact, the administration presented less information to the Board than they made available publicly. Because the process was poorly transparent, the accountability of the administration to the Board and the public as well as the Board’s accountability to the public were weakened. The governance of the process was poor.

Outcomes were evaluated based on a review of media articles and UBC documents, personal observations, and interviews. UBC implemented its planned activities and exceeded GVRD requirements for process, but did not achieve its own goals of public acceptance and timely approval. As for social goals, the evaluation of some was difficult due to the timing of the evaluation and the resources available, but others provided useful insights:

- the community was educated about some topics and not others;
- while plan revisions incorporated public input, they reflected the ideologies and values of the decision-makers and the authors of the revised plan more than those of the public;
- although decision quality was difficult to measure, the new plan appeared to reflect compromises rather than improvements; and
- the process did not change the community's mistrust of UBC.

Overall, UBC was only partially successful in achieving internal and social goals.

**Analysis: Why These Results?**

This analysis considers two elements in understanding why the University Boulevard process achieved the success described above:

1. process strategy – why did UBC respond as it did to the context?
2. outcomes – what process elements led to the outcomes?

The first important aspect of process strategy was the restriction of public influence evident in its timing and in the emphasis on feedback as critiques of the plan. Three contextual factors may...
have contributed to these results: community mistrust, UBC's policy, and time pressures. The atmosphere of mistrust suggested significant public influence. UBC's policy, particularly "A Legacy and a Promise," also supported such an approach. On the other hand, the time pressures might have suggested limiting public influence for fear that it might lengthen the process. There are three reasonable explanations for UBC's response to mistrust: first, staff may not have recognized that public influence was necessary to enhance trust; they may not have thought it important to enhance it; or they may have been so opposed to public influence as to refuse to consider increasing public influence. While this research was not able to clarify which of these was the primary reason for their strategy, the opinion of one administration interviewee suggests that it may have been the third one: "I think that the notion that residents should be empowered is fatal."

The inclusiveness of the process was the second important aspect of the strategy. Given the central location of the neighbourhood, the potential for controversy, and the late timing of participation, an inclusive process risked the development of significant opposition. Although this research was not able to clarify why this process was designed to be broadly inclusive, it may have been seen as a way to respond to public calls for better process: perhaps an inclusive approach was selected in response to community mistrust.

Where rationales for strategic choices were not clearly identified through this research, links from process characteristics to outcomes were easier to understand. Each of the four key outcomes is addressed below:

- Participants learned about some topics but not others because UBC communicated about some topics and not others. For example, people were well informed about the elements of the plan such as towers and a relocated pool because they were described in documents and through oral communications, but were poorly informed about financial implications of planning decisions because they were neither presented nor discussed.

- Flexibility, time pressure and the gap between professional and lay expertise collectively explain why public input was incorporated but not public values. Although the process was not originally expected to result in plan revisions, UBC's flexibility to extend the process permitted the incorporation of public input. However, the revised plan did not reflect public values as to campus commercialization or student ownership of space. This partial incorporation of feedback may have occurred because of time constraints or the administration's values. Addressing concerns over commercialization may have involved a more time-consuming revisitation of the basic concept of a mixed-use street. Alternatively, "designers' priorities and aspirations may not be congruent with those of users" (Carmona, Heath, Oc and Tiesdell, 2003; page 267). If that was the case here, it would simply confirm observations from other planning processes (Jones, 2000).

- The revisions were a compromise rather than an improvement because of the participation strategy. Improvements require decisions based on trade-offs and rationales, neither of which was discussed during the public consultation. Instead, the strength of public critiques was weighed against staff's perception of the importance of various elements.

- The community continued to lack trust in UBC because the process lacked credibility. The reasons for these failures, discussed above, were principally lack of public influence and biased communications.
The interest in multi-stakeholder processes in the 1990's reflected the fact that multi-party negotiations and public participation are not dissimilar. In fact, the definition of negotiation in Webster's New World Dictionary (1983) could easily describe public participation in decision-making: “discussion with a view to reaching agreement.” Negotiation theory provides an interesting and concise summary of the evaluation of this process. In Getting to Yes, Robert Fisher, William Ury, and Bruce Patton describe positional and interest-based negotiation strategies:

“[Positional negotiation] depends on successively taking — and then giving up — a sequence of positions.” (p. 4) ... “[Interest-based negotiation involves] focusing on basic interests, mutually satisfying options, and fair standards.” (p. 14)

They argue that positional negotiation is generally inefficient, producing unwise decisions and endangering ongoing relationships, while interest-based negotiation is efficient, producing wise decisions and enhancing relationships.

In this case, UBC's strategy was positional: it developed a succession of draft plans (positions) and then consulted (negotiated) about them. The approved plan was a compromise (a relatively unwise decision), took significant resources and time to achieve (it was inefficient), and engendered suspicion and maintained the pre-existing atmosphere of distrust (it endangered relationships).

8.3 Recommendations for UBC

This evaluation indicates how UBC might improve the way in which it involves the public in planning-related decision-making. It is not a matter of making minor adjustments to the process it has used to date, however. As a whole, UBC must change its approach to public involvement if it is to deal with the issues it faces. In keeping with the themes from the evaluation, recommendations are split into four categories: governance, credibility and relationships, efficiency, and decision quality.

Governance

Recommendation 1. Adopt planning processes that improve the accountability of governing bodies. For example, require a public hearing similar to a municipal public hearing at the end of all planning approval processes, including approvals and amendments to the OCP, CCP, and Neighbourhood Plans (Development Permits should continue to be reviewed in open public session, with invited public comments). The public hearing could be either (a) held by the Board of Governors or (b) by the UBC/GVRD Joint Committee.

Recommendation 2. Improve the accountability of staff by requiring Board approval of the design of all planning processes. Provide the Board with excerpts of all relevant policy statements along with the proposed planning process so that they may more easily evaluate proposals against adopted policy.

Recommendation 3. Ensure that communications with the public and the Board of Governors are completely transparent in that they are accurate and include documentation of feedback, decisions made, and rationales for decisions.
Recommendation 4. Compile and adopt progressive principles and associated techniques for good planning process into a succinct policy statement to guide process design and implementation. These principles should include: (a) principles enshrined in existing policy; (b) principles agreed to by the community; and (c) broadly accepted principles.

Recommendation 5. Evaluate participatory planning processes on a continuing basis by building assessment into the process, using mid-course and end-of-process evaluations (Innes, 2000).

Recommendation 6. To enhance the credibility of the process, use neutral facilitators, especially for significant events.

Credibility and Relationships
Recommendation 7. Use a collaborative planning process for future neighbourhood planning. This matches Principle 8 of “A Legacy and a Promise: Principles for Physical Planning at UBC” and has the potential to reduce community mistrust.

Recommendation 8. Continue to provide the flexibility of the University Boulevard process and improve the approach to flexibility: design planning processes on the assumption that public input will result in changes to draft plans; only if the public as a whole accepts the plan should it be forwarded into the approvals process.

Recommendation 9. Clarify the goals, scope and constraints on the process as the first step in developing the decision-making strategy. Communicate these clearly to the public.

Recommendation 10. Ensure that all documents used in the process, including drawings and text, are unbiased and easy for the lay public to understand.

Decision Quality
Recommendation 11. Recognize and incorporate the knowledge and expertise provided by the public. In particular, design processes to take advantage of unique opportunities at UBC to engage academic expertise in developing and implementing truly excellent processes and plans.

Efficiency
Recommendation 12. Structure decision-making processes to facilitate the discussion of options, trade-offs and implications in order to make it easier to improve plan quality.

8.4 Broader Implications
While these practical recommendations are important, this research was an opportunity to inquire about evaluation of participatory decision-making processes in general. This inquiry leads to lessons for evaluators and to suggestions for further research.

Lessons for the Evaluation of Participatory Decision-Making Processes
Even given a particular evaluative framework, it is difficult to ensure objectivity in evaluation of participation processes because of evaluators' subjective judgments (Renn & Weblor, 1995). Power and values are inescapably part of judgments made in all evaluations of social programs.
(Greene, 2000). In this case, bias — subjectivity — was reduced to the extent possible in the framework and its application. Given the inherent subjectivity of this type of evaluation, however, reduction of bias should be understood in the sense of enhancing credibility. The aim of a program evaluation that incorporates a significant qualitative element should be to provide a credible, meaningful, and useful description and analysis of events (Greene, 2000).

Lesson 1. Adopt best practices of qualitative research and evaluation to minimize bias, but recognize that the evaluation will remain subjective and that its value lies in its meaning and utility.

As mentioned at the end of Section 8.1, some aspects of this research were considered preliminary because of the use of a small number of interviews: it was difficult to know if the interviewees' perspectives were representative of those having an interest in the process. Researchers have addressed this issue by interviewing a large number of people (Tuler & Webley, 1999) or by surveying participants (Halvorsen, 2001; Lauber & Knuth, 1999). First, interviewing more members of the administration, or conducting follow-up interviews with them, would have provided useful information about the rationales for decisions they made and filled gaps in related aspects of the evaluation. Second, while many interviews are resource-intensive, surveys can complement interviews by “[distilling] complicated information from a variety of people into a simple, quantitative form.” However, a “rather complex and carefully-crafted” survey would have to be used to avoid bias (Innes, 1999, p. 664). Lauber and Knuth (1999) refined their survey based on a pilot with a sub-set of participants, an approach that makes sense given the range of interpretations possible for evaluation criteria.

Lesson 2. Survey participants about criteria in the evaluation framework to complement richer information obtained in interviews and to identify and minimize potential bias.

Verifiable information on context and process design was difficult to obtain for two reasons. First, it was not an initial focus of interviews because I began the research without considering participatory events and their outcomes as part of a larger decision-making process. As the interviews progressed, the larger process became a greater focus. Second, interviewee comments sometimes conflicted with other data, indicating that interview data was not always a reliable source of information about the story behind the process design. These conflicts may have been partly due to a reluctance to speak frankly to me, a common issue with an external evaluator (Weiss, 1998). Because of issues with interview focus and reliability of data, it was not possible to draw conclusions about some aspects of process design, weakening analysis of the context-process linkage.

Lesson 3. Evaluate participation processes as part of broader decision-making and governance processes. In considering the participatory portion alone, it may not be possible to identify the appropriate evaluation criteria, or to evaluate them effectively.

Lesson 4. Carefully analyze documents that address contextual factors and rationales for process design decisions, and focus a section of interviews with process designers on context and process design.

Lesson 5. To ensure that complete and accurate information is made available about process design and strategy, either work with internal stakeholders to reduce their concerns over release of
information to the evaluation, or obtain enough power from the evaluation sponsor to gain access to the information.

In this evaluation, the systematic qualitative analysis of all three elements of participatory processes (context, process, and outcomes) permitted the assessment of linkages between them, including some causal links.

Lesson 6. Adopt a systematic evaluation approach based on the context-process-outcome conceptual model.

A strength of the evaluation was that the experience was generally quite fresh in the minds of interviewees, leading to rich information about the process. On the other hand, it came too soon after the end of the process to permit effective evaluation of some outcomes. This research reflected Innes' (1999) typology of mid-course, end-of-process and retrospective evaluations.

Lesson 7. Match expectations for results to the type of evaluation being conducted.

Areas for Further Research
Public participation in this evaluation was seen as an element of a contingent decision-making strategy, in keeping with the "contingent" and "structured decision-making" approaches to the practice of participation. A third approach is the use of "progressive" practice to address inevitable power imbalances (Forrester, 1982), and these were reflected in the process criteria. The three approaches are thought to be complementary (Dorcey & McDaniels, 1999). The University Boulevard evaluation was successful in that it provided a comprehensive, thorough understanding of participation in the process. As such, the evaluation confirmed that the three approaches to participation are complementary, and that they form a strong basis for the evaluation and probably also the design of decision-making processes that incorporate participation. This study suggests that the evaluation framework may be a useful starting point for other research to test and refine it.

The approach was not without its weaknesses. In particular, its scope was limited to formal processes. The degree of citizen influence was probably a product of both formal and informal factors, including for example the (formal) advisory role of a committee and the (informal) degree to which the administration listened to the advice of its members. Further removed from the formal aspects of the process, informal meetings are an example of the venues in which decisions may have been made or at least influenced. This is a significant omission, because power is exercised through these informal channels with little balance from rational or democratic systems. In Rationality and Power, Bent Flyvbjerg studied the exercise of power over fifteen years of transportation planning in the city of Aalborg, Denmark. He found that planning decisions were made mostly on the basis of the exercise of power through informal channels, and not for rational, technical reasons. Overall, "when we understand power, we see that we cannot rely solely on democracy based on rationality to solve our problems" (Flyvbjerg, 1998, p. 234). An investigation of the exercise of power in a participatory decision-making case study would be a valuable addition to the participation literature.

Within the chosen approach, the least understood parts of the conceptual model were the links between context and process, and the evaluation provided little data about them because their importance was not initially recognized. A better understanding of these links would help
practitioners choose more effectively between participatory decision-making strategies. Further research about these links was proposed by Beierle and Cayford (2002, p. 41) and would enhance our knowledge of the role context can and does play in determining process and outcomes.

Use of a contingent evaluation to match the contingent model of participatory processes permitted the successful application of a broad evaluation framework to this case study. One element of its success was that each criterion was clearly stated. Despite that clarity, there is room for interpretation of the criteria. In this case, that was useful because it allowed participants to respond in ways that reflected their understandings, enriching the study. However, if the framework is to be useful in comparing different processes, it will be important to get agreement on explicit criteria, and to clearly understand the nuances in what they mean and how they are applied (Rowe & Frewer, 2000). This conclusion suggests two areas for further research: following in Rowe and Frewer’s footsteps by clarifying the proposed criteria and the range of their interpretation; and testing the framework as a tool for comparing processes. Criteria could be clarified through a survey and/or focus group of practitioners and researchers in the public participation field, a review of the literature, and/or asking process participants what they think it important. (e.g. City of Vancouver, 1998; Tuler and Webler, 2000).

8.5 Conclusion

In conclusion, this research showed that the evaluation strategy and framework provided a good method for evaluation of participation. Although the use of more interviews with administration members and/or participant surveys would have provided more insights, the evaluation provided many robust conclusions and insights into the University Boulevard case study.

I would like to draw attention to the broad themes raised by the evaluation of the University Boulevard planning process. Beginning with themes specific to participatory processes, the evaluation showed that the big picture is important. Planning for a neighbourhood scale project can be understood as a negotiation between planners, project proponents, and the public. Such an interpretation can explain the fact that participatory decision-making can be costly, inefficient, and relatively ineffective: the overall approach to participation as an element in a decision-making strategy is critical to its success or failure. The evaluation also showed that the devil is in the details. Goals, constraints, timing, document bias, and tone of communications are just some of the details that were important determinants of the outcome of this process.

With respect to planning and urban design more generally, the evaluation illustrated the well-discussed fact that in planning, the exercise of power interacts and often conflicts with rationality and democracy (Flyvbjerg, 1998). Broadly speaking, the University Boulevard process illustrated the exercise of power in examples such as the control of decisions and information, while rationality and democracy were dependent on the granting of community influence over decisions and the timely provision of complete, accurate information. More specifically, the process illustrated the conflict between power, rationality and democracy at a personal level. Based on the long history of land-use planning at UBC, and the more detailed information about University Boulevard, it appeared that members of the administration were unwilling to share influence, and therefore power, with the public, resulting in the adoption of an inefficient, ineffective, and antagonistic “design-announce-defend” strategy analogous to a positional negotiation.
Finally, planning takes place in a political sphere in which significant pressures are brought to bear on the process and its outcome, and in which the outcomes of the process often have significant impacts on people. The balancing of objectives and accountability for impacts are significant elements of most, if not all planning decisions. Governance is an important element of participatory planning processes and must be considered if a process is ever to be considered truly democratic.

I would like to end on a personal note. This thesis has been an incredible learning opportunity, made possible by the gracious assistance of my interviewees and faculty advisors. I know that each one of them is interested in achieving UBC's enormous potential for excellence in planning process and outcome. It is my hope that this study will help all involved to better understand how to make public planning processes work better, and hence to improve the quality of decisions made through them, for the benefit of those who come after us.
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Appendix A: Discussion Guide

University Boulevard
DRAFT Neighbourhood Plan
and Consultation

Discussion Guide
March 2003
CONSULTATION OVERVIEW

This Discussion Guide provides information on the proposed draft plan option and phasing for University Boulevard Neighbourhood. Please see Appendix 1: Draft Plan Diagrams for the drawings which accompany this discussion guide. A Feedback Form is also available in electronic and printed formats for your comments and suggestions.

Dates, locations and opportunities for open houses, small group meetings and a public meeting are highlighted on Page 2 of this guide. Please check the web site at www.universitytown.ubc.ca or call the University Town inquiry line at 604.822.6400 for possible additions or revisions to the schedule.

UNIVERSITY TOWN VISION

The University of British Columbia aspires to be the best university in Canada and one of the world's finest public universities. One of the many important strategies to achieve this vision includes the creation of a University Town on campus. University Town will be an academically and culturally rich collection of University Neighbourhoods supporting the academic core as the primary intellectual, social and economic center. Eight neighbourhoods will add housing, shops, parks, etc. as part of a compact, transit and pedestrian-oriented, sustainable community, woven into the academic and cultural fabric of campus life. UBC is often characterized as a 'commuter' campus and the University Town vision seeks to address this perception.

UNIVERSITY BOULEVARD AREA PLANNING TO DATE

The Official Community Plan (OCP) for Part of Electoral Area A was prepared by the Greater Vancouver Regional District (GVRD) and adopted as a bylaw in 1997. The OCP was prepared through a consultative process involving the GVRD, UBC, interest groups from both on and off campus, and the public. The OCP is intended to guide future decision-making towards the creation of a unique University community.

The OCP sets out objectives for land use and transportation, particularly in relation to non-institutional development. The OCP specifically refers to the University Boulevard area as a pedestrian oriented commercial and transit center. This commercial centre would provide a focus for activity connecting the academic core with uses oriented to the day and evening convenience needs of the university community.

The Comprehensive Community Plan (CCP) builds upon the OCP and was adopted by the UBC Board of Governors in 2000, and approved as compliant by the GVRD. The CCP provides further guidance for campus development and provides further parameters for building within eight local areas.
PUBLIC CONSULTATION PROCESS

We are Seeking Your Input on the Draft University Boulevard Neighbourhood Plan

Information on the proposed draft plan option and phasing of University Boulevard Neighbourhood is contained in this discussion guide. Please see Appendix 1: Draft Plan Diagrams for the drawings which accompany this Discussion Guide. Information is also being provided, and feedback sought, through the Web site at www.universitytown.ubc.ca, and through a series of meetings and open houses as outlined below.

We expect to report on the results of this public consultation process, with recommendations to the Board of Governors in May of this year.

Open House Dates and Locations

- March 03, 2003: 9:30 am to 3 pm at the BOOKSTORE
- March 04, 2003: 9 am to 3 pm at the WAR MEMORIAL GYM FOYER
- March 06, 2003: 9 am to 3 pm at the WAR MEMORIAL GYM FOYER
- March 10, 2003: 6 pm to 9 pm in the STUDENT UNION BUILDING (Room 212A)
- March 11, 2003: 6 pm to 9 pm in the STUDENT UNION BUILDING (Room 214)
- March 13, 2003: 9 am to 3 pm at the AQUATIC CENTRE

Campus and Community Public Meeting

- April 01, 2003: 7 pm in the STUDENT UNION BUILDING (Room 214)

Possible Schedule Updates

**Please check the web-site at www.universitytown.ubc.ca or call the University Town inquiry line at 604.822.6400 for possible additions or revisions to the schedule.

Contact Options

For further information, or if your group or organization would like to meet with UBC representatives to review the Discussion Guide or Draft Plan Diagrams, please contact:

Linda Moore
Associate Director, External Affairs
University Town
Tel: 604.822.6400
Fax: 604.822.8102
E-mail: info.universitytown@ubc.ca
THE OCP VISION FOR THE UNIVERSITY BOULEVARD NEIGHBOURHOOD

As the principal entrance to the Point Grey Campus, University Boulevard should convey a strong sense of place, of having arrived at a unique, distinct, exciting hub of campus life. The Boulevard is intended to be a lively, year round main street. The vibrant, mixed-use community would be focused around an urban “greenway”. Transit buses would carry their passengers below ground level to a central bus loop, freeing the surface for wide sidewalks for pedestrians, and dedicated lanes for cyclists and other traffic.

Institutional uses would be permitted on all sites to reinforce the academic character of the area. Service and retail uses would be located on the ground and second floors, some of which would be University affiliated such as the Dentistry Clinic or Continuing Studies. Although the OCP permits University housing in the University Boulevard Neighbourhood, market rentals and the sale of long term leases for faculty, staff, students and market residents would also be located in this neighbourhood. Housing in the Boulevard area would add vitality and life to the street at times when the campus is otherwise quiet.

Landscaping, courtyards and plazas would be located along the street in keeping with the University’s landscape and design heritage. New buildings would reflect a university character of welcome, permanence, durability, timelessness, animation, and dignity.

Principles to guide the planning for the area include:

- Creating a strong sense of arrival
- Maintaining the transit exchange in a single location on campus
- Increasing the capacity of the main transit exchange on campus for U-Pass
- Ensuring that the transit exchange is inviting, safe, accessible and secure for users
- Enhancing campus shuttle connections between the transit exchange and the rest of campus
- Maximizing sunny places
- Creating a central gathering place
- Providing services to the University population
- Protecting the view to the south facade of War Memorial Gym
- Preserving a view corridor from University Boulevard west of East Mall, to the mountains
- Creating a vibrant area which is aided by year round residents and activity
- Providing on street parking for convenience and traffic calming
- Minimizing pedestrian/vehicle conflicts
KEY ELEMENTS OF THE DRAFT PLAN

The University Boulevard Neighbourhood Plan, once adopted, will shape the form, function and character of this important hub of the University for years to come. A number of the key elements of the draft plan are described in the following pages.

A Mix of Land Uses

Consistent with the Official Community Plan, the draft plan proposes a mix of land uses to create a vibrant, year-round main street. Proposed uses for the area include a transit exchange, recreational uses, restaurants, shops and services in addition to student, alumni, faculty and institutional uses. New housing is also proposed to serve students, staff and faculty and market residents attracted to living in the University's town centre.

A Central Gathering Place

The UBC Campus would be enhanced by the creation of a central gathering place, where people come to gather, meet and exchange ideas. The draft plan proposes that such a gathering place be created to the northeast of the intersection of University Boulevard and East Mall. This central “plaza” would be integrated with the existing plaza located to the west of the Student Union Building (SUB) and would provide access to the below grade transit exchange. The plaza would be framed by new mixed-use development to provide street level animation. The proposed plaza would also provide improved pedestrian and landscape links to the SUB and the future Irving K. Barber Learning Centre.

The Proposed Relocation of Empire Pool

Empire Pool is currently in need of costly repairs or rebuilding, and the configuration of the pool no longer meets international swim competition standards.

The draft plan recognizes the importance of the outdoor pool and proposes its relocation to the northeast of the Aquatic Centre. The proposed location ensures that the pool remains in sunlight at key times while maintaining a relationship with the Aquatic Centre, and an entrance from University Boulevard. The relocation of the outdoor pool would provide swimmers with a more compatible location next to MacInnes Field, while providing handicapped access into War Memorial Gym, which is currently not available. The pool, field, War Memorial Gym, Aquatic Centre and Recreation Centre would form a compact and convenient relationship of recreational functions around the east side of the SUB.
Improvements to Transit and Transportation

UBC is the second largest transit destination in the Lower Mainland, second only to downtown Vancouver. Almost 30,000 trips per day, or 26% of all transit trips are made to and from UBC. Transit ridership is expected to increase this fall, especially with the recent adoption (by referendum) of the U-Pass, a mandatory universal transportation pass for students which provides unlimited access to TransLink Bus, SkyTrain and SeaBus services (all zones).

With the success of U-Pass, TransLink has committed to increase transit capacity to UBC by 30%. This presents UBC and TransLink with challenges to accommodate more transit ridership while retaining the central core of the campus as a pedestrian and cycling friendly place. The bus loop and many buses are now at capacity at peak times, and there is increased congestion and conflicts between pedestrians, cyclists, cars and buses.

Continuing growth of UBC's on campus academic, residential, recreational and cultural opportunities means that it is timely to examine our on-campus transit and community shuttle service needs. Consequently, UBC and TransLink are working jointly to develop an effective and efficient transit service plan for UBC. Transit service to the bus loop is central to the work being undertaken. The transit planning study, which is expected to be complete this spring, addresses transit service options other than the below ground level option proposed in this Discussion Guide and illustrated in the Draft Plan Diagrams.

Campus Transit Planning Study

Please refer to 'Transit Service Concepts' presentation (available at www.universitytown.ubc.ca) for an overview of the campus transit study. Transit service options under current review include:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service Concepts</th>
<th>Service Concept Description</th>
<th>Buses Below Ground Level</th>
<th>Buses At Ground Level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Concept 1</td>
<td>Below ground option; bus loop is below ground beneath present location;</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>NO*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concept 2</td>
<td>Hybrid option: some below ground level, some at ground level, including transit on East Mall;</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concept 7</td>
<td>Two loops option: one loop at ground level in present location; a second loop near 16th &amp; Wesbrook;</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>YES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concept 13</td>
<td>Bus stops only option: buses stop on various campus roads throughout campus;</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>YES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concept 15</td>
<td>Dispersed option: buses stop on various campus roads, and bus routes follow one-way loops around and through campus;</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>YES</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* There would still be some local community/campus shuttle vehicles at ground level.
Below Ground Level Bus Loop

The bus loop is an important hub of campus activity. While this plan does not contemplate the relocation of the transit exchange, there is a desire to reduce congestion and pedestrian/vehicle conflict.

The draft University Boulevard Plan incorporates the transit study option which places transit below ground level on University Boulevard, carefully designed to allow easy access and to promote safety and security. Placing buses below ground level would reduce the noise and visual impact of buses at ground level, and would allow for the design of a pedestrian and bicycle greenway on University Boulevard that would include:

- Sidewalks at least five meters wide on either side of the Boulevard;
- Substantial landscaping along both sides of the boulevard as well as a central median;
- A dedicated cycle lane in each direction;
- On street parking for convenience and traffic calming;
- One vehicular travel lane in each direction.

Why not keep Transit Buses on the Surface of University Boulevard?

The University Boulevard Draft Neighbourhood Plan proposes to implement an option identified by the Campus Transit Study which includes a below ground level, high-capacity transit station. The Campus Transit Study identified other at ground level and hybrid at ground level / below ground level options which are not being recommended. An overview of the below ground level versus at ground level bus loop options are summarized on the following page.
Comparison: Below Ground Level and At Ground Level Bus Loops

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>ADVANTAGES</th>
<th>DISADVANTAGES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BELOW GROUND LEVEL BUS LOOP</td>
<td>• Buses not delayed by traffic congestion or pedestrians</td>
<td>• Capital cost</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Conflicts eliminated between buses and other road users, especially pedestrians</td>
<td>• Shuttle service required to bring transit users to the station</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Fare paid zone means passengers can load through all doors, reducing loading times</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Weather protection and heated waiting area for transit passengers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Enhanced security</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Minimized travel times = more attractive transit service</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Lower annual operating costs and vehicle capital costs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Simple for passengers to understand</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Coffee and newspaper stands will be available in secured areas of the station</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• All bus routes are centralized in one location</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Passengers leaving campus can choose between two or more routes to same destination</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AT GROUND LEVEL BUS LOOP</td>
<td>• Increased coverage of campus by TransLink buses</td>
<td>• Noise and emissions from (diesel) buses affect pedestrians and land uses on University Boulevard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• More direct service to / from campus locations and shorter walking times for bus users</td>
<td>• Noise and emissions from buses affect uses next to bus stops</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Lower capital costs</td>
<td>• Aesthetic impacts of full-size and articulated buses and trolley wires</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Buses delayed by traffic and pedestrians</td>
<td>• Buses increase congestion on University Boulevard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Buses increase congestion on University Boulevard</td>
<td>• Increased travel times</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Different bus routes will service different parts of the campus</td>
<td>• Dispersed service concepts more difficult for passengers to understand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Noise and emissions from (diesel) buses affect pedestrians and land uses on University Boulevard</td>
<td>• Different bus routes will service different parts of the campus</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


University Boulevard as a Through Street

The transit option that the UBC Board of Governors have asked be taken forward for consultation recommends placing transit buses below ground level on University Boulevard between Wesbrook Mall and East Mall, and also proposes opening University Boulevard between East Mall and Marine Drive to vehicle traffic with integrated traffic calming controls.

The draft plan suggests opening up University Boulevard between East Mall and Marine Drive to campus shuttles and personal vehicles as a means of improving cross-campus way-finding. University Boulevard would be designed to provide traffic calming through this corridor, including a landscaped feature at Main Mall.

At present the OCP does not contemplate University Boulevard as a through street. Traffic on University Boulevard must either turn and exit via University Boulevard, or travel north or south on East Mall.

Please see Appendix 1: Draft Plan Diagrams for the drawings which accompany this Discussion Guide.

Proposed Building Heights and Buildable Areas

While the Official Community Plan limits heights on campus to 53 metres or 18 storeys, University Boulevard area is limited to five storeys. The CCP further prescribes 326 units and 30,350 m² of gross buildable area for this neighbourhood.

The University Boulevard Draft Plan proposes an OCP amendment in height to 53 metres or 18 storeys. The draft plan also proposes revising the CCP to increase the building area to allow for approximately another 300 residential units and 30,000 m² of residential gross buildable area. These amendments will permit the evolution of a residential base that will enliven the street at times when the campus is otherwise quiet, and support sustainable neighbourhood objectives.

Sustainability

The University Boulevard Draft Neighbourhood Plan supports the University’s goals of social, economic and environmental sustainability with policies to promote a mixed-use neighbourhood, living and working on campus and the efficient use of land. In addition, the draft plan emphasizes energy-efficient building practices, and promotes transit, pedestrians and cyclists.

The Character of University Boulevard

As UBC’s “front door”, the University Boulevard area must project a strong, positive and enduring image of UBC. The draft plan proposes that future buildings, landscape styles and amenities should convey a sense of dignity and permanence, and reflect a “University” character which includes elements of historic significance in relation to the University’s traditional roots. Building styles would reflect aspects of signature buildings such as the Main Library and the historic Chemistry Building. A significant entry feature at University Boulevard and Wesbrook Mall will mark the arrival on to the UBC campus.
FEEDBACK

Your feedback is very important to the planning process. We encourage you to attend the Open Houses (see dates and locations on Page 2), and to take the time to give us your comments.

➢ Online form: www.universitytown.ubc.ca

➢ Printed Format:
Available at public meeting and open houses, or call 604.822.6400.
Your completed form can be mailed or faxed to:
University Town
External Affairs
6328 Memorial Road
Vancouver, V6T 1Z2
Fax: 604.822.8102

NEXT STEPS: PLANNING FOR THE UNIVERSITY BOULEVARD NEIGHBOURHOOD

All feedback will be compiled and summarized for the Board of Governors to consider, and will be used to guide revisions to the draft neighbourhood plan. The results of the public consultation process with recommendations will be presented to the Board of Governors in May of this year.

The next step in the planning process is to draft a revised Neighbourhood Plan for the University Boulevard area. A Neighbourhood Plan must be approved by the UBC Board of Governors, and approved as compliant with the OCP and CCP by the GVRD, before any non-institutional uses can be built.

In order to implement the draft University Boulevard plan, UBC would need to request that the GVRD amend the Official Community Plan. The requested amendments would include increasing the height of future buildings on University Boulevard to more than five storeys, permitting market rental housing and the sale of long term leases in the University Boulevard area, and opening up University Boulevard to vehicles between East Mall and Marine Drive.

Contact Options

For further information, or if your group or organization would like to meet with UBC representatives to review these plans, please contact:

Linda Moore
Associate Director, External Affairs
University Town
Tel: 604.822.6400
Fax: 604.822.8102
E-mail: info.universitytown@ubc.ca
Appendix B: Draft Plan Diagrams

5 YEAR PLAN
Transit Centre in Retail Plaza
& Limited Retail on Crescent

University Boulevard Urban Design Study
CIVITAS Urban Design & Planning Inc.
CIVITAS Architecture Inc.
10 YEAR PLAN
Transit Centre in Retail Plaza
& Added Retail on Crescent

University Boulevard Urban Design Study
CIVITAS Urban Design & Planning Inc.
CIVITAS Architecture Inc.
15+ YEAR PLAN
Transit Centre in Retail Plaza
Added Retail on Crescent & Potential
New Buildings on South Side

University Boulevard Urban Design Study
CIVITAS Urban Design & Planning Inc.
CIVITAS Architecture Inc.
ALTERNATE 15+ YEAR PLAN
Transit Centre in Retail Plaza
Added Retail on Crescent & Potential Replacement Buildings on South Side
ROW varies 32.5m min.

University Blvd. Looking East at Underground Bus Entry on Crescent
15+ Year Plan

University Boulevard Urban Design Study
CIVITAS Urban Design & Planning Inc.
CIVITAS Architecture Inc.
Feb. 2000
Appendix C: Feedback Form

University Boulevard Draft Neighbourhood Plan and Consultation

FEEDBACK FORM

An online version of this form is available at www.universitytown.ubc.ca. The content of the online version is identical to the printed form, so please do not re-submit your answers electronically if you have already completed a printed form.

Thank you for taking the time to provide feedback.
Your ideas are important to us.

1. TRANSPORTATION
   Are you in favour of improving transportation access to University Boulevard?
   □ Yes –OR– □ No
   Are you in favour of a below ground level bus loop? □ Yes –OR– □ No

2. WALKING & CYCLING
   Are you in favour of improving pedestrian and cycling access throughout the University Boulevard area? □ Yes –OR– □ No
   Are you in favour of a dedicated bicycle lane on University Boulevard? □ Yes –OR– □ No

3. PUBLIC OPEN SPACE
   Are you in favour of creating a central pedestrian plaza at ground level at East Mall and University Boulevard? □ Yes –OR– □ No

4. HOUSING
   Would you approve of you or others living in the University Boulevard area if residential units were available? □ Yes –OR– □ No

5. NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES AND SHOPS – What type of services and shops would you like to have in the University Boulevard area? (Check all that apply)
   □ Coffee shops □ Bank or other financial institution
   □ Book stores □ Food store
   □ Academic Support Services □ Convenience store
   □ Flower shop □ Drycleaner
   □ Restaurants □ Bike shop or sporting good store
   □ Other, please specify ____________________________

6. Would you like to see changes or improvements to the plans? □ Yes –OR– □ No
   If ‘Yes’ – what would you suggest?

_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________

Please turn over and complete page two...

THANK YOU FOR YOUR FEEDBACK!


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7. CONSULTATION – Would you like to be kept informed of the University Boulevard consultation events and planning process? □ Yes □ OR □ No
   If “Yes” - how would you like to be informed of opportunities for involvement?
   □ E-mail □ Campus Newspaper □ Mail
   □ Telephone □ Other, please specify

8. Do you have any additional comments or suggestions?


9. RESPONDENT INFORMATION (Optional – requested for updates and/or mailing lists)
   Name:
   E-mail:
   Phone:
   Address: Postal Code

10. COMMUNITY INFORMATION (Check all that apply)
   □ Resident:
       □ UBC
       □ UFL
   □ Student:
       □ UBC undergraduate student; Department
       □ UBC graduate student; Department
       □ Other, please specify
   □ Faculty Member; Department
   □ UBC Staff Member; Department
   □ Other, please specify

Please return your completed feedback form by fax or mail, as follows:
> Fax: 604.822.8102
> Mail: University Town, External Affairs, 6328 Memorial Road, Vancouver, BC V6T 1Z2

For further information, please contact Linda Moore (Associate Director, External Affairs)
University Town inquiry line: 604.822.6400.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR FEEDBACK!
University Boulevard
Draft Neighbourhood Plan
Summary Report

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Overview

Over the course of seven weeks starting February 10, 2003, Harold Kalke, as Chair of the University Boulevard Entrance Committee, led a team exploring a draft plan option for University Boulevard Neighbourhood. The vision for the plan, which included improvements to transit infrastructure in association with a new mixed-use neighbourhood at the University's "front door", drew comments from a wide range of stakeholders through a process more complex and exhaustive than any used since the UBC Official Community Plan was drafted. The largest single group responding was students, a group which is largely transient in nature. The majority of students may be unfamiliar with the extensive consultations that led to the OCP and CCP.

The Consultation Phase

During the consultation period, meetings were advertised in The Courier, The Ubyssey, UBC Reports, VST Community News and the Georgia Straight. More than 1,000 people attended 10 Open Houses and 26 Special Meetings with stakeholder groups such as the AMS, the President's Advisory Committee, the Committee of Deans, the Faculty Association, the VP Students' Directors, MADHU and SCARP. A Special Open House was also organised for the residents of the URL. Stories covering the meetings were carried by The Sun, The Courier, The Ubyssey, The Province, Business in Vancouver, and VST Community News.

At those meetings stakeholders asked questions, made comments and raised issues that have been incorporated as part of the overall summary of feedback on the proposal. Participants also had the opportunity to fill out a feedback form that encouraged specific and open-ended comments. Findings from the 491 feedback forms collected from February 28 to April 7, 2003, include data on a quantitative and qualitative nature.

In addition to these in-person encounters, more than 6,900 people explored the University Town website (www.universitytown.ubc.ca) during March to view an online, web-based version of the proposal. More than 4,800 web visitors downloaded the Discussion Guide, more than 4,100 downloaded the Draft Plan Diagrams, and 329 submitted an online feedback form.

Findings From the Consultation

For the last four weeks, the consultation team has worked to understand and synthesise feedback from the meetings, from the quantitative and qualitative responses on feedback forms and from miscellaneous correspondence. After reviewing the material, nine themes have emerged as the expression of predominant issues. These themes, noted below, have provided the backbone for analysis of all feedback received.

In general, comments received in open houses and special meetings tended to be constructively critical. In contrast, comments received through the feedback forms, though they dealt with the same issues, were more negative in tone. Overall, responses were positive regarding improved transportation access to UBC, adding a bike lane on University Boulevard, and creating a central pedestrian plaza at ground level at East Mall and University Boulevard. Responses were split on the proposal of a below-ground-level transit station, and about adding housing to the University Boulevard area. Meanwhile, similar issues raised in miscellaneous correspondence tended — even if negative — to be more constructive.

Many of the ideas and issues raised through the consultation process have been instructive, whether on improving the consultation process or on the importance of security concerns relating to the proposed below-ground-level transit station. Clearly, many people have been engaged by the process. Almost without exception, those who submitted comments via the feedback forms have also asked the team to keep them informed of developments.

The salient issues associated with the themes that emerged throughout the consultation are:

Theme No. 1: University Boulevard as a through road to Marine Drive

In the open houses and special meetings, a small number of people supported this proposal while the majority voted strongly against. Responses via feedback forms and correspondence raised similar concerns and were largely negative. Respondents were not convinced that the need for wayfinding and the opening of University Boulevard were connected.

Executive Summary
**Theme No. 2: The height of the residential buildings**
In the open houses and special meetings, people expressed concern about the height of the buildings. Responses via feedback form and correspondence reflected similar concerns. The relationship between the value of high-rise residential buildings, and the funding required to construct infrastructure improvements (e.g. the underground transit facility) was not understood.

**Theme No. 3: The below-ground-level transit station**
In the open houses and special meetings, people responded positively but were concerned about how an underground transit station would be a safe and healthy environment. Responses via feedback form and correspondence ran along similar lines. The cost of the transportation improvements was not understood, nor was the need to fund the facility with residential and commercial development revenues.

**Theme No. 4: Services and shops**
In the open houses and special meetings, some people applauded the increased liveliness this part of the proposal could bring, while many — especially students — criticized the commercialization as being out of character with the University. Responses via feedback form and correspondence tended to be negative and were often mixed with other themes. There appeared to be no clear understanding or agreement on how benefits of university-related retail and service would contribute to a vibrant University Boulevard Neighbourhood, infrastructure improvements or a more sustainable university community.

**Theme No. 5: Relocation of the Empire Pool**
In the open houses and special meetings, people generally supported the idea of creating a new and larger pool facility; however, they were concerned with the potential impacts elements of the proposal could have on the proposed pool. Responses via feedback form and correspondence most often focused on the role the pool plays in enhancing quality of life, as well as its symbolic importance in defining the character of the University. There appeared to be little understanding reflected on the feedback forms of the need to replace the pool in order to create a new facility that would meet current competition standards and accommodate Pan Am Games competitions in 2006.

**Theme No. 6: The consultation process**
In the open houses and special meetings, people raised many concerns about the consultation process. Of particular concern were the methods and materials used to consult. Responses via feedback form and correspondence reflected similar concerns.

**Theme No. 7: Market housing**
In the open houses and special meetings some people supported the concept of adding market housing to the area while others raised concerns about it serving non-University users. Responses via feedback form and correspondence reflected similar concerns. The benefits of introducing market housing did not seem to be understood.

**Theme No. 8: University Identity**
In the open houses and special meetings a theme that emerged was that the proposed plans were not in keeping with the respondents' perception of the University's identity, based on the addition of commercial and residential uses, as well as high-rise buildings. The draft plan was perceived as a significant departure from the institutional character of the campus. The addition of commercial and residential uses was not seen to enhance the character of University Boulevard. Responses via feedback form and correspondence reflected similar concerns.

**Theme No. 9: Sustainability**
In the open houses and special meetings people raised concerns that portions of the plan do not adequately reflect the principles of sustainability. Responses via feedback form and correspondence reflected similar concerns.

**Theme No. 10: Others**
In addition to the above, a variety of miscellaneous issues have been grouped together for reporting purposes as "Other Themes" (see consultation summary for details).

**Concluding Comments**

While there was clear indication of support for the fundamental vision, many people expressed a desire to see specific parts of the plan changed or improved. The top of mind themes raised in the qualitative responses included on feedback forms (based on incidence of frequency) are the idea of introducing services and shops on University Boulevard, the concept of the below-ground-level transit station and the consultation process. These concerns are helping refocus the plan as it moves through its next iteration.

**For further information please contact:**
Linda Moore, Associate Director
External Affairs (University Town)
6328 Memorial Road, Vancouver, BC V6T 1Z2
Ph: (604) 822-6831 Fax: (604) 822-6102
Email: linda.moore@abc.ca

**Executive Summary**
Appendix E: Sample Advertisement

University Boulevard Neighborhood Plan

Tell us what you think.
In keeping with UBC's evolving University Town, a draft neighbourhood plan is being developed for the University Boulevard local area.

A campus and community consultation process is being conducted to gather feedback on the draft plan prior to its finalization and presentation to the UBC Board of Governors in May, 2003. You can participate in this consultation in a number of ways:

1. Internet: You can access the University Boulevard draft plan by reading the Discussion Guide at www.ubc.ca/universitytown and give your opinion via the online feedback form.

2. Open Houses
   March 6, 9 am to 3 pm at the War Memorial Gym
   March 10, 6 pm to 9 pm in Room 212A of SUB
   March 11, 6 pm to 9 pm in Room 212A of SUB
   March 13, 9 am to 3 pm at the Aquatic Centre

3. Small Group Meetings (Feb. 10 – March 31)
   Your group can request a presentation by contacting Linda Moore at 604.822.6400 or linda.moore@ubc.ca

4. Campus and Community Public Meeting
   Tuesday, April 1 – 7 pm
   Room 214 – Student Union Building

How Campus & Community Feedback Will Be Used
Feedback gathered through this consultation via the web, fax, campus publications, open houses, small-group meetings and public meetings will be recorded and summarized in a Consultation Summary Report, which will be presented with a Technical report and revised neighbourhood plan to the UBC Board of Governors. The Consultation Summary Report will also be posted on the web.

For further information contact:
Linda Moore
Tel: 604.822.6400 or info.universitytown@ubc.ca

Source: Consultation Report, p. 14
Appendix F: Interview Forms
An Evaluation of Participation in the University Boulevard Urban Design Process.

General Interview Questions (to be accompanied by a consent form)

Opening Questions
- [The participation process is described as a whole, and the portion of it under investigation is delineated specifically, using a diagram]
- Can you tell me your name, and what group you are part of, if any?
- Tell me about your interest and involvement in the University Boulevard planning process.
- How long have you been involved?
- How have you been involved, and in what role or roles?
- What planning events did you attend?

[For the remaining questions, please keep in mind each part of the process in which you participated. I am hoping for comments on each type of event as well as internet communications and so on.]

Representation
- How did you feel during the events? (comfort)
- How convenient were the meeting times and locations?
- Do you think this process enabled a full range of people to participate? Why or why not?

Information and Communication
- Was information provided and used in the process [including website, discussion guide, display boards, and presentations]:
  - accessible?
  - readable?
  - digestible?
- Did you have enough time after first seeing information about the project to understand and respond meaningfully?

Procedural Concerns
- What were your goals for this process?
- What were the goals of the process, as you understood them at the time? Were these clearly established?
- What was your understanding of what was covered (and not covered) by the process? [i.e. what topics were 'off-limits'?] Was this clearly established? Did you agree with this scope?
- As you understand it, where in the process was your input being sought? Why do you think this?
- Were you able to have constructive discussion through the process?
- How easy was it to challenge expert opinions during the process? Explain.
- How easy was it to challenge other information presented during the process? Explain.
- Were participants, staff, and professionals mutually respectful? [e.g. did you feel welcomed, could you speak freely?]
• Were community values and input incorporated into decisions made throughout the process? How can you tell?

Outcomes and Decisions
• Did you find the process to be transparent?
• How much do you know about the information, public input and decisions that led to the plan presented in March?
• Were reasons for decisions made through this process clear to you?
• Is there more or less conflict or consensus after the participation process than before?
• Did you feel 'heard' in the process?
• Were decisions improved through the process, and why or why not?
• Was the June consultation process better or worse than the March process? Why?
• Do you trust the UBC administration more or less after the process?
• Did you learn through the process? What did you learn?
• Did the process contribute to a stronger community?

Closing Questions
• Overall, were you satisfied with the March public involvement process?
• Do you have any other comments to make?
• What, if anything, am I missing?
• Do you have any questions for me?
An Evaluation of Participation in the University Boulevard Urban Design Process.

Administration Interview Questions (to be accompanied by a consent form)

Opening Questions
• [The participation process is described as a whole, and the portion of it under investigation is delineated specifically]
• Tell me about your history and role in the planning for University Town.
• How do you fit into the overall organization, vis-à-vis other people who play significant roles in planning at UBC?
• What is the context of the University Boulevard planning process?

Representation
• How were participants selected - e.g. how did you decide where special presentations would be made, and when meetings would be scheduled?
• Overall, do you believe that you reached a representative sample of the community through the process? Were parts of the process more or less representative?
• Was your goal participation by a broad or narrow segment of the community? Was participation in fact broad or narrow?

Information and Communication
• Explain how information received from public consultation is processed, who receives it, and in what form.
• How were communication materials selected?
• How were experts selected (e.g. urban design consultants, others)
• How was the release of communication materials scheduled?

Procedural Concerns
• Where in the overall decision-making process did the participation process fit?
• Was the process planned to meet the particular needs of the situation? In what ways?
• What were the goals of the process, as you understood them at the time? How were these communicated to participants?
• What were the scope and limitations of the process? How were these communicated to participants?
• Were participation methods chosen to meet the process goals?
• Was the process flexible and in what ways?
• How were decisions made about the components of the process? Specifically:
  o goals
  o structure
  o rules for meetings
• Was the process adequately resourced in terms of time, money, and expertise?
• Describe the role envisioned for community participants in the consultation process.
• To what extent did the process encourage or discourage discussion of issues between community members and staff?
• Were participants, staff, and professionals mutually respectful?

Outcomes and Decisions
• In what ways was the overall process transparent?
• The June consultation process was different. Why? What has the reaction been to the changes?
• The plans changed as a result of community input.
• How were earlier decisions and responses to earlier input communicated to the community in this process?
• How were reasons for decisions resulting from this process made clear?
• How did you communicate reasons for the key decisions to the community?
• Was the process cost-effective? Why or why not?
• Were community values and input incorporated into decisions made throughout the process? How can you tell?
• Were decisions improved through the process, and why or why not?
• Is there more or less conflict or consensus after the participation process than before?
• Do you feel that you were more or less trusted by the community following the Feb-April process?
• Did the community learn through the process? Did they understand the plan or its elements better?
• Did the process contribute to a stronger community?

Closing Questions
• Do you have any other comments to make?
• What, if anything, am I missing?
• Do you have any questions for me?
Appendix G: Municipal Neighbourhood Planning Processes in BC

To provide some context for UBC’s neighbourhood planning processes, a number of BC municipal websites were surveyed for information about how develop neighbourhood plans. There is some variation in the degree of public involvement, but most processes involve the public throughout the decision-making process, from visioning and information collection to draft plan review. Open houses and advisory/steering committees are common features of the municipal processes reviewed. Table C-I summarizes the survey results, with the University Boulevard process included for comparison.

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<th></th>
<th>Nanaimo</th>
<th>Richmond</th>
<th>Surrey</th>
<th>Vernon</th>
<th>Victoria</th>
<th>University Boulevard</th>
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</table>

* Municipalities approve these plans at Council meetings at which the public may make representations to Council. At UBC, the public may not make representation to UBC’s Board of Governors, but they may do so at the GVRD Board of Directors; however, the GVRD Board is only responsible for ensuring that the proposed plan is consistent with the adopted OCP for UBC, and as such is not responsible for plan approval.

Table C-I: Public Involvement in Municipal Neighbourhood Planning Processes in BC

The processes reviewed are listed below.

Richmond –

West Cambie Area Plan Review:
1. Background research and presentation at 3 open houses for issues identification
2. Preparation of 3 development options
3. 2 public open houses to discuss the 3 options
4. Refinement of preferred option and presentation at open house
5. Finalizing and approval of plan by Council.

Vernon –

Waterfront Neighbourhood Plan process:
1. Background research and presentation at open house for issues identification
2. Preparation of 3 general planning directions and discussion of options and key options at open house
3. Preparation of detailed concept plans based on preferred planning direction and decisions on key options, and discussion at an open house to identify a preferred option
4. Refinement of preferred option and presentation at open house
5. Phase 5 – Finalizing and approval of plan by Council.

Surrey –

South Westminster Neighbourhood Concept Plan process:
1. Formation of Business Advisory Committee (BAC)
2. Preparation of 3 plan options and presentation to BAC and public at an open house
3. Refinement of preferred option and inclusion of servicing study
4. Staff workshop on waterfront development
5. Consultation with the South Westminster Ratepayer’s Association
6. Public open house to review the final draft plan, servicing and funding requirements
7. Finalizing and approval of plan by Council.

Nanaimo –

Generalized neighbourhood planning process:
1. Citizen request for development of a neighbourhood plan (process initiated by broad-based citizen group)
2. Council approval of request and provision of staff support
3. Identification of Neighbourhood issues and opinions.
5. Choice of preferred options.
6. Initial plan drafting.
7. Plan presentation and review with the Neighbourhood.
8. Finalizing and approval of plan by Council.

Victoria

Gonzales NCP process:
1. Issues and opportunities workshop held and workshop report produced and distributed
2. Steering committee appointed – had 30 meetings and 4 site walkabouts – formulated, discussed, and reviewed the plan
3. 2 youth mapping sessions held
4. Stakeholder meetings held
5. Website developed
6. Preparation of draft plan
7. Presentation of draft at open house; questionnaire feedback
8. Finalizing and approval of plan by Council.