THE REGIONAL DISTRICTS OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

by

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ABSTRACT

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Regional planning is one of the functions most often affected by the dilemma of how to provide services and resolve conflicts that transcend municipal boundaries. Most existing solutions, while they accept the consensus that power should be decentralized, have limited applicability and the greatest need is for institutional innovations. This report critically examines such an innovation — the regional districts introduced by British Columbia in 1965. The new concept employs the identical institutional framework to provide regional services not only in metropolitan and non-metropolitan municipalities, but also in the unorganized areas which cover more than 98 percent of the province.

A review of the literature led to the conclusion that before a province introduces regional institutions it should consider five key factors. These were: the selection of criteria to delimit administrative boundaries; participation by local governments and by citizens; coordination with other levels of government; the delegation of adequate powers; and the flexibility to adapt to different conditions. Regional districts were evaluated in this context.

The inductive approach chosen to generate data documents the history of regional planning and regional districts in the province, then analyzes five of the districts in more detail, and finally solicits the views of the directors of the regional boards. The latter form a second tier or federation of local areas governed by locally elected representatives. The study concludes that the size or configuration of the districts is not always rational, that the provision
for local participation is satisfactory but, with the exception of inter-municipal liaison, the coordination of programs with provincial departments is not. Most of the power delegated to regional districts appears to be really a transfer of powers from local governments, with the exception of powers acquired by residents of unorganized areas. The flexibility of the new system was judged to be its outstanding feature.

A conspicuous phenomenon was the speed with which regional districts were voluntarily adopted. It was concluded the tactics employed by the province to "sell" the concept, together with the impetus provided by linking hospital financing to regional districts through complementary legislation were important contributing factors. The failure to provide any overall provincial planning policies with which the programs of the regional districts might have been integrated was perceived as a major weakness. A summary of legislation adopted by three other provinces is included to illustrate the diversity of potential solutions available within Canada's form of federation.

The report does not consider regional economic planning, the property tax, the role of the planner, or liaison between various levels of government are within its terms of reference, although brief comments on all of these are made on occasion.
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"IT IS BUT A SMALL PORTION OF THE PUBLIC BUSINESS
OF A COUNTRY WHICH CAN BE WELL DONE, OR SAFELY
ATTEMPTED, BY THE CENTRAL AUTHORITIES ..."

- John Stuart Mill
CHAPTER ONE

LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND REGIONAL SERVICES.

Introduction

A prominent effect of the fragmented political jurisdictions found in metropolitan areas is the difficulty of providing services such as planning on an intermunicipal or areawide basis. It is suggested regional planning for non-metropolitan areas will encounter similar problems for essentially similar reasons. Since, as will be seen, political amalgamation or the delegation of more than nominal powers to planning agencies is resisted by local governments, an effective solution must be one which respects local autonomy, yet provides an appropriate system for the implementation of regional planning.

The most promising approach is the introduction of innovative institutional arrangements. The regional district concept of British Columbia is an example of such an innovation. The present report examines whether or not it has the potential to resolve regional problems in non-metropolitan areas.

Although regional districts were first introduced in 1965 and rapidly adopted, published information about them is scarce. A major purpose of the study was to correct this deficiency. An inductive approach was used and three strategies for generating data employed. First, the evolution of the regional district idea was documented. Next, five regional districts were examined in detail. Finally, a mailed
questionnaire was forwarded to a majority of the board members of the 26 districts located in non-metropolitan areas. The first two chapters discuss some of the theoretical considerations affecting local government and regional planning, and conclude with a description of three alternative institutional changes introduced in other Canadian provinces.

The local government dilemma

It has been suggested that, since central governments are too big and their powers too centralized, the appropriate (and perhaps vital) role of local government is to resolve conflict and provide services at the local level. Many municipalities find the latter task increasingly difficult, partly because of the greater variety and sophistication of services now required, and partly because of the limited sources of revenue available to local government. A third factor is the fragmentation of jurisdictions which occurs when the urbanized areas of a community expand into -- and often meld with -- one or more neighbouring municipalities. If the political boundaries remain unchanged, the result is a complex urban entity administered by a multitude of governments. This situation -- sometimes referred to as, "the metropolitan problem" -- creates many inequities and conflicts. For the municipalities concerned the dilemma is how to provide the array of services their residents expect without ceding power or even, by amalgamation, ceasing to exist.

It is a dilemma which is neither unique to Canada and its form of government, nor is it exclusively a, "metropolitan problem". Small, non-contiguous communities and their adjacent rural municipalities may also encounter intractable financial or jurisdictional constraints and these may create an overriding need to cooperate where the provision of
a particular service is concerned. Regional planning is a widely recog-
ized example of a service in which the area of concern transcends local
political boundaries. In fact the "interaction" of various activity
sets between communities is one of the key criteria used to help define
planning regions. 8

Alternative institutional arrangements

A municipal government which is unable (or unwilling) to provide
the level of services expected of it, has at least five options available.
It may:

1. Voluntarily agree to share the administration and costs of a
   particular function with a neighbouring municipality.
2. Contract one or more services to private enterprise.
3. Amalgamate with, or annex, one or more neighbouring areas to
   form a larger, more viable unit.
4. Delegate the administration of one or more services to special
districts.
5. Form a federation of local governments with other municipali-
   ties to handle the administration of a variety of services.

The first two options, voluntary agreements and the employment of
private enterprise, are only practical in a limited number of situations.
For example, fire protection in the first instance and solid waste dispo-
sal or engineering services in the second. The third alternative, annex-
ation or political amalgamation, would often seem to be the most rational
solution. In Alberta, for example, a community is permitted to annex
adjacent rural lands if it can demonstrate a valid need. 9 In all provin-
ces voluntary amalgamations occasionally take place. However, local
governments generally place a premium on retaining their autonomy and when the pressure to provide a particular service, "... can no longer be avoided, (they) have a stake in pressing for the narrowest possible solutions." 10

The fourth option, the creation of a special service district, has proven by far the most popular of these narrow solutions. 11 It allows responsibility to be transferred to an independent, appointed authority rather than another government body, but it has also been subjected to severe criticism. Special districts have been accused of insulating decision-makers from the electorate, and of increasing the frequency with which unilateral decisions by one authority conflict with perceived municipal or regional objectives. Another notable feature is their tendency to proliferate, especially in metropolitan areas, thus exacerbating the effects of already fragmented jurisdictions. 12

Yet special districts are not without their supporters. One of them, Robert C. Wood, believes they play a constructive role since:

... in the less than mature system a transitional device may be to select one or a group of powers, institutionalize them, and nurse them along in such a way that they lead to a greater cohesion for the region, and as a consequence, to a more general power to govern. 13

While special districts undoubtedly have their merits; it can be seen that even their supporters tacitly concede they do not offer a long-term solution.

The observation by Wood could also apply to federations of local governments. Such federations appear to be more sophisticated versions of his, "transitional devices" in the sense that, unlike a special district authority, the decision-makers are elected rather than appointed. These units may have quasi-governmental powers delegated to them by the
As for the province concerned; for example, the statutory authority to pass by-laws. It would seem such an arrangement is closer to being a "mature system" than any special district.

However, Wood does not describe what the characteristics of a mature system would be and, while the phrase is intuitively appealing, it is only possible in this context to judge the relative maturity of a system by comparing it with other systems. For present purposes maturity is assumed to be equivalent to stability or equilibrium, (recognizing that from a historical perspective no institution is permanent). The whole subject is complex and little understood. For instance, no consensus exists on what constitutes a "government"; if direct election to office and the power to tax are assumed to be immutable conditions, then neither special districts nor federations of local governments would qualify, even though the term "government" is sometimes used to describe them. Neither have demonstrated they are mature systems. Conversely, the fact Metro Toronto has survived for two decades suggests it may be the forerunner of a stable, and therefore mature, institutional form. This could only be confirmed if it were successfully replicated in a number of other metropolitan areas. The few comparable experiments which have been undertaken include: Atlanta, London, Minneapolis/St. Paul, Tokyo, Vancouver and Winnipeg. They differ from both Toronto and one another in their organizational structure, although it might be possible to generalize about their characteristics.

Politics and planning

Since the planning and political processes are closely related, a certain amount of conflict is inevitable when responsibility for
planning is delegated to an intermunicipal planning agency. This usually occurs because, while local governments are preoccupied with retaining some degree of autonomy in a rapidly shrinking world, regional planning agencies are striving to regulate -- or at least influence -- land use planning decisions. Since the objectives of the two institutions are not always congruent, any additional power vested in one can easily be perceived as a threat by the other. Under these circumstances effective regional planning requires more than the allocation of funds and the delegation of regulatory powers; it must have the support of the municipalities concerned. In practice, most metropolitan and regional planning agencies are limited to an advisory role. Their success is gauged by the amount of consensus they can achieve among member communities. Melvin Levin, commenting on their impotence, suggests they are accepted only as long as they pursue their goals by a process of gently persuasion. If they become too militant and clash with vested interests, then matters shift from, "a gentlemanly forum into chaotic stalemate." 

While the reluctance of municipal governments to come to grips with the problem is understandable, the attitude of the planning profession is not so easily justified. As Donald H. Webster observes:

> Although community planning has often failed because of unsatisfactory areas for planning administration, planners have not as a rule devoted much attention to finding a solution to the problem. For the most part, they have tended to accept the fact of political boundaries and have sought to work out their plans within those boundaries without trying to develop a better organizational scheme for the entire urban community.

As with other writers cited, Webster appears preoccupied with the problems of urban areas. It is time to consider these problems in another context.
The non-metropolitan problem

Although comparable situations abound in non-metropolitan milieus, almost all of the published discussions of planning in the context of jurisdictional problems focus on metropolitan areas. This predilection is also reflected in much planning legislation and in policy decisions by central governments. That solutions applicable to metropolitan areas are not necessarily those most suited to other parts of the country has not, apparently, been seriously considered. Certainly a large segment of the population is affected:

Although a great deal of attention centres on metropolitan areas and their planning problems, more than half of Canada's population and much more than three-quarters of its settled land area are accounted for by non-metropolitan regions; i.e. where people live in small cities or towns or in the countryside.

In these areas the local political institutions are virtually identical to those found in metropolitan areas. They also share a common problem with the larger centres; it was perceived almost twenty years ago by Eric Hardy when he wrote:

In rural areas local services could perhaps be vastly improved by replacing the many small and weak units of government by a larger unit of government. . . (there is) a growing conviction that local government administration can be improved without any necessary loss in local control by the establishment of regional units of government which are able to carry out or coordinate certain municipal functions throughout such larger areas.

These remarks, written in 1955, reveal a certain prescience since they describe fairly closely the solution adopted by British Columbia when it introduced regional districts ten years later. As noted earlier, one of the functions which might benefit most from such an arrangement is planning.
The term regional planning has more than one connotation. It may either refer to planning for regional economic development or to the coordination of programs among two or more contiguous municipalities. A succinct distinction has been made by A.R. Kuklinski, who refers to, "the disaggregation of national plans", as opposed to, "the aggregation of local plans."^22

In Canada, the former could refer to either federal or provincial programs, but responsibility for facilitating the latter (through enabling legislation) rests solely with the provinces. At the most elementary level, this could mean ministerial approval of any joint planning endeavours between municipalities. Spontaneous requests of this sort are rare and their goals inevitably limited. To effect any meaningful regional planning, "strong provincial leadership is required", not only in regard to the introduction of new institutional mechanisms, but also in regard to the overall policy framework within which planning must function. "^23

Any government that contemplates introducing such innovations faces some difficult decisions in choosing the most appropriate format. A number of authorities have suggested guidelines in this area. Although comparison is hampered by various authors assigning different labels to similar proposals, it was possible to infer five common denominators from among their comments and pose them as questions. They are:

1. Have criteria for delimiting the administrative boundaries of the new regions been devised?

2. Has adequate provision been made for the involvement of
local councils (or citizens) in the decision-making process?
3. Is there provision for the hierarchical, collateral and functional coordination of programs, especially local to regional, and regional to provincial?  
4. Will the new units have a "strong administration" in the sense that they have been delegated adequate power and authority to carry out their assigned functions?  
5. Will the new system possess the inherent flexibility to adjust to changing conditions and planning imperatives?  

One other question is whether they should be concerned only with regional planning or should be multi-functional units. This would have to be the subject of a separate discussion, but it is suggested it would strengthen rather than weaken the planning process.

In the next chapter the approaches employed by Alberta, New Brunswick and Ontario are summarized in order to place the discussion in a broader perspective and illustrate the options available. Chapters Three and Four describe the regional districts and the research results, while in the final chapter; the data obtained from the study is used to evaluate the concept. Some substantive areas that are beyond the scope of the study include: problems of regional economic planning; municipal financing and taxation; planning for metropolitan areas; the role of the planner; and liaison and coordination between various levels of government. All have some relevance to regional planning and comments are made whenever it appears appropriate, however the focus is on regional districts, their evolution, characteristics, and suitability to regional planning in British Columbia.
CHAPTER TWO

REGIONAL PLANNING AND REGIONAL INSTITUTIONS

Delimiting a service region

The first of the five key factors which, it was proposed, must be considered before introducing services on a regional scale is the selection of criteria for defining the territorial boundaries of the new units. It is axiomatic that any good or service, public or private, has a finite number of consumers and its range or distribution can be encompassed within one or more discrete areas. However, while goods or services provided by the private sector can continually adjust their range in response to demand and thus achieve maximum efficiency,¹ the situation in regard to public goods and services is not so simple since:

Given the size of the area required to internalize a public good, the appropriate provider of that good is the government whose territorial jurisdiction coincides with the requisite area. Assuming that no two public goods can be internalized fully over exactly the same area and that the universe of public goods totals n, then n levels of government will have to exist if efficiency is to be maximized.²

It follows from this that there would be not only n levels of government, but also n regions -- possibly none of them with identical boundaries. In theory, three approaches are possible. The first is to create n regions with their corresponding units of administration and ignore overlapping and non-congruent boundaries. The second is to fit all services into municipal or provincial territorial jurisdictions,
(services provided by the federal government are ignored for present purposes).

The third approach and the one which is, in practice, almost universally adopted fits most public goods and services into existing administrative boundaries of local or provincial governments. Where this is judged to be impractical, special districts are created. Yet the decision to allocate a particular service may or may not be guided by specific policy considerations such as assigning jurisdiction to the smallest (territorial) unit of government capable of administering it. Another policy might to minimize the number of regional or other administrative units created and thus avoid proliferation of "governments". With or without these goals a decision to provide a new public service, or a decision to change the distribution pattern of an existing one, cannot be finalized without also deciding whether existing administrative boundaries are to be employed or entirely new ones defined. Some advantages of employing existing boundaries are the fact there is already an administrative machinery, they are familiar to the public, and (possibly) the rationale for establishing them in the first place is relevant. A major disadvantage is that they may prove quite inappropriate for the proposed service.

If it is assumed that the number of units to be created should be minimized, then a logical approach is to consolidate two or more services with a common boundary and a common administration. However, since it has been postulated that no two services will be "internalized" over exactly the same area, it will be necessary not only to compromise in respect to boundaries, but it may also be necessary to decide which
services -- or which criteria -- are to have priority. The most likely criteria include minimum population, an integrated transportation network, economies of scale, number of local units involved, the presence of one or more regional centres, the nature of the economic base, and the "interaction" between and among local units. Although thresholds for such items as minimum population have been proposed, little empirical data exists to support them. In regard to methodologies for obtaining such data, a particularly interesting source is the literature of the economic and social geographers. Even if this data constraint could be overcome, in most cases boundaries could not be established solely on the basis of objective, quantifiable information; some arbitrary judgements would have to be made. The latter will be affected by other, more intangible considerations including which service (or services) are to be given priority.

Coordination of policies and programs

A regional institution is like any other public agency or government; it does not exist in isolation, but is part of a complex decision-making system. As Lowden Wingo, Jr. summarized it:

(Under a federal system) allocation of political power exhibits three important dimensions: one, hierarchical, in the sense of federal-state-local 'levels' of government; two, collateral, or the sharing of political authority among units at a given level; and three, functional, as authority is distributed among the agencies of each government in accordance with its mission. Problem regions, far from having appropriate governmental entities, are almost defined by the failure of their problems to fit well in one or more of these dimensions . . .

He goes on to suggest that the system, (and this applies equally well to Canada's federal system), was conceived at a time when social and economic independence rather than interdependence was the standard in
most communities. Today we are, "enmeshed in a single, complex, inter-
dependant, national society", and as a result our institutions must adapt accordingly. To simply create regional institutions will not be sufficient, even if it is judged necessary. The plans of individual provincial departments, plans sponsored by other planning agencies, local plans, and also regional economic plans -- whether provincially or federally sponsored -- must all be integrated with one another if a regional planning agency is going to be effective.

If the institution is designed to embrace more functions than just regional planning, then an opportunity exists for planning to be more closely integrated with them in the decision-making process. Some degree of coordination and integration is inevitable, but to what degree it occurs will be influenced by how a particular regional system is conceived and implemented. This is pertinent in both monocentric, (e.g. metropolitan), regions and polycentric regions where a single urban centre does not dominate. In either consensus and cooperation among the various actors is crucial since, "until such a consensus exists, all parties are free to suboptimize, and all concerns are parochial, or non-regional."9

It was already noted in the previous chapter that regional planning agencies tend to be given an advisory rather than an administrative role. This is not altogether surprising since, unlike most other functions delegated to special districts, their activities will impinge directly or indirectly on many aspects of civic decision-making. While such an advisory role may be politically expedient it is not, as Leonard Gertler points out, always conducive to effective planning:
(in an area of divided municipal jurisdiction) the planning process is split between preparation, based on the study of a comprehensive area, and implementation, based on the consent of each constituent governmental unit. The regional planning function remains voluntary, advisory and usually ineffective. 10

There is evidence to suggest that in some parts of Canada this characterization is not altogether correct. As will be discussed, in some provinces — including British Columbia — regional planning may have commenced by being voluntary and advisory yet, over a period of years, evolved into an effective institution.

Local government involvement

The concerns involved here were elaborated on in the first chapter. The alternatives to local governments being directly involved in the decision-making process are: the special district approach, the relinquishing of a particular service to the province, or the creation of a new level of government. Increased interest is being shown in a modified form of the latter. This is the two-tiered regional body forming, in effect, a federation of local governments. One or more members from each of the municipal councils involved is seconded to a regional council with a mandate to administer designated regional functions. Part of the rationale of this is to ensure more direct involvement than is offered by either of the other two options, yet stop short of creating a fourth level of government. While it could be argued that a directly elected fourth level of government provides still more direct voter participation, it has its liabilities. It would, for instance, further complicate the already delicate issue of what powers and what financial resources are to be allocated to local governments by the province. Voter apathy would likely increase.
Finally it is not unreasonable to assume that once such an entity was in existence, local governments would decline in importance, while the provincial level might perceive them as a threat. An obvious virtue of the two-tier arrangement is the potential the decision-makers have for resolving regional issues while safeguarding whatever they perceive to be the perquisites of local government.

A strong administration

This fourth consideration separates the often ineffective system of advisory units from those with real influence. In the present context, a strong administration means the delegation of substantial powers from the province to the regional institutions; it also means they have a clear mandate and access to the necessary resources to fulfill their function. Even though local governments might have to ratify the transfer of a particular function from the local to the regional level, the initial impetus -- in the form of statutory powers -- must come from the province. Since in this respect regional bodies are, like local governments, "creatures" of the state, these powers can be as comprehensive as the province wishes to make them. Aside from the power to regulate functions *per se*, provision for adequate financing is vital. A possible corollary of this is the power to allocate, within the region, the funds provided for a particular service, (e.g. school boards, hospital boards and recreation boards are example of special districts sometimes granted such powers). A different kind of mandate -- and ultimately one just as vital to the system's success -- would evolve over time as it developed traditions, a list of achievements, and popular support, all of them helping to reinforce it.¹¹
Flexibility and adaptability

The inclusion of this latter category is related to the long recognized problem of achieving some equilibrium between centralization and decentralization of functions. Central government (in this case the province) can and should establish broad policy outlines; details should be left to the local or regional level. In order to handle such details effectively, as much flexibility as possible must be preserved. No two regions will possess the same physical geography, the same economic base, identical social and cultural values and, over time, any regional institution is certain to encounter demands for change. The more readily such change can be accommodated and the more elastic the institutional structure then, it is argued, the more effective the institution is likely to be. The appropriate instrument for achieving this goal of flexibility is the enabling legislation establishing a regional system. A precedent exists in the wide latitude normally given municipal governments in the by-laws they may adopt if and when a need is perceived.

Regional economic planning

The five considerations discussed above have all been made from the perspective of "aggregating" local plans and services. The problems of regional economic planning, while beyond the scope of this study, are certainly relevant. It is, of necessity, a "top down" program initiated by the federal or provincial level of government and may involve larger regions than those being discussed. It could be argued that this is a less than ideal situation, particularly in respect to the coordination of policies and programs. Yet while there
is a considerable literature on the subject, this aspect is seldom recognized, let alone discussed.

Institutional innovations in Canada

If the preservation of local autonomy is to be reconciled with the introduction of regional planning or other services on a regional scale and these services are to be effective then, it has been suggested, not only are institutional innovations a necessary prerequisite, but the active involvement of central government is also needed. The research conducted for this paper revealed several examples where the provinces have taken the initiative and interceded in regional planning, economic planning, local government structure, or all three. British Columbia's regional district concept is, of course, the example that will be examined in some depth. To place the discussion in a national perspective and to demonstrate the variety of possible approaches, the policies adopted by Alberta, New Brunswick and Ontario are summarized here.

Alberta's regional planning commissions

Alberta has a long tradition of interceding in local affairs. In 1918 incorporation into municipalities was made mandatory in many of the province's numerous unorganized areas; in 1936, 3,771 school districts were consolidated into 50 school divisions; and in 1942 the 143 rural municipalities then in existence were forcibly merged into 60 larger, more viable units.

In 1950 the province initiated two new programs with regional implications. The first was to assimilate special districts such as school boards and hospital boards into rural municipal councils. Other
criteria for the new "counties" were discussed (e.g. a balanced assessment base), but in practice few of the existing boundaries changed. Hospital boards proved unassimilable and the major result has been that approximately half the province's rural municipalities have absorbed schools as a local government function. Although they fell far short of becoming truly regional institutions, it is notable that their adoption was gradual and permissive; initially only four counties were formed on a "trial" basis. The second innovation, regional planning commissions, were also introduced in a low-key, permissive manner.

The first two were created to serve the areas surrounding Calgary and Edmonton. Others followed, and today most of the province's populated areas are served by one of seven commissions. First introduced as purely advisory agencies, the commissions were given the power to adopt regional plans in 1957 and in 1960 made the subdivision approving authorities for their regions. Membership is voluntary and costs are shared by the province and the local governments. The commissions themselves are formed of local councillors seconded from member municipalities together with a handful of representatives from provincial government departments who, although they have a vote, perform primarily in a liaison capacity. Outside of the metropolitan areas, regional populations range from 45,000 to over 120,000. It should be noted that Alberta had the first, and for many years the only, province-wide system of regional planning in Canada. It is also pertinent to observe that while most local governments situated within a planning region have voluntarily joined the commission, it has been a gradual process; acceptance of the institution has been going on for over twenty years.
Municipal reform in New Brunswick

New Brunswick's experience is of interest primarily because it illustrates just how much latitude a province has in effecting institutional change. For over two hundred years local and regional affairs in the province were administered by a moribund county system; only six separately incorporated cities were unaffected by it. In 1966, all local functions outside of the six cities were pre-empted by the province. It subsequently retained direct control of property taxation, education, public health, justice and welfare. The remaining local functions were delegated to ninety newly created villages and a number of sparsely populated unorganized areas. Rather surprisingly, the new legislation made no provision for regional administration, planning or otherwise.

Ontario's regional governments

Following the report in 1967 of the Ontario Committee on Taxation, (the Smith report), a program to divide the whole province into twelve "regional municipalities" was introduced. These units were to complement the existing balanced economic development policy by, among other things, a massive reorganization of the municipal structure. Numerous school boards and many small units of local government were to be amalgamated or their areas of jurisdiction reapportioned. Each new unit would have a minimum population of 150,000. Among its mandatory functions would be public health, welfare, assessment, arterial roads, and regional planning (in addition to such "conventional" service functions as water and sewer systems). As in Alberta, a two-tiered system is employed with the representatives on the regional body seconded from local councils. However, in Ontario the votes of
delegates are weighted according to the number of constituents they represent.

Although membership is mandatory, the formation of each new unit has been preceded by considerable publicity and discussion. They have also been introduced incrementally. The first one was incorporated on January 1, 1969 and since then they have formed at the rate of one each year. Regional planning is a key feature of the system, but planning goals must be subordinated to the province’s economic development goals. In harmony with this, local planning is expected to mesh with regional planning objectives. These directives are representative of the great stress placed on liasion and coordination between planning and other public services. Explicit provision for such integration of activities must be included in official regional plans which will eventually be prepared by the new units.

Summary

It can be seen from the above outline that in Alberta and Ontario, two provinces where regional systems have been introduced, several disparities exist when they are compared in the context of the five key factors. First of all, in Alberta the administrative boundaries coincide with those of existing rural municipalities, while in Ontario the entire system is being revamped. Second, while Ontario has made explicit the province’s concern for coordination and integration, there is no provision for this in Alberta’s legislation. Both provinces involve local governments through a federated, or two-tier, system. In Ontario it appears the new units will have a strong administration on the basis of the various functions assigned to them (no
empirical data was available to confirm whether or not this was true in practice); in Alberta regional planning commissions have been given more than a token, advisory role. Finally, both provinces appear to have made some provision for adapting to different regional needs. In Ontario the regional units are separately created and the functions and internal reorganization varied to suit the situation. While a detailed examination was beyond the scope of this study and the very recent introduction of Ontario's system makes any conclusions premature, the legislation appears to have a bias towards centralization which might prove too rigid to meet changing needs and conditions. In Alberta, although only one regional service is involved, the various commissions have been granted relative autonomy is setting regional policies.  

In each example, including New Brunswick, it has been provincial -- not local -- initiative which has done away with or greatly modified existing institutions. In the remainder of the study still another approach, the regional district concept, is examined.
CHAPTER THREE

BILL 83: THE INTRODUCTION OF THE REGIONAL DISTRICTS

Introduction: the need for regional solutions

In June, 1965, the legislative assembly unanimously approved Bill 83, a proposal to divide the whole province into regional districts. The concept was intended to provide the means of resolving regional problems, while retaining local control through a federated approach. The legislation appears to have been the logical outcome of several discernable trends. These included:

1. The province's geography impedes centralized administration.
2. The precedent set by existing regional planning agencies.
3. The failure of attempts to introduce new approaches to governing the province's two metropolitan areas.
4. The chronic problem of servicing and administering the province's extensive unorganized areas.

In British Columbia regions have already been demarcated by the rugged topography and relative scarcity of arable land. Early communities located either in small enclaves along the coast, or in the more accessible parts of the interior plateau. An emphasis on natural resource development and the prohibitive costs of constructing roads and railways also affected the settlement pattern. This situation, together with the location of the provincial capital in the extreme southwest corner of the province, made some decentralization of provincial
administration inevitable. In fact, until air travel became commonplace, it often took two or three days to reach many communities.

The regional district is only the most recent approach to regional planning in the province. A provincial planning office was first established in 1946, and a year later "regulated areas" (later renamed Community Planning Areas or CPAs) were introduced for the benefit of the residents in unorganized areas. By 1964 there were 27 of them scattered throughout the province. New regulations introduced in 1959 allowed neighbouring CPA's to make joint planning agreements with one another and encouraged any group of residents in an unorganized area who perceived a community of interest to petition for the establishment of a CPA.

The planning branch of the Department of Municipal Affairs provided local planning assistance and was also empowered to set the minimum parcel sizes in any subdivision within a designated Community Planning Area. However, other provincial departments possessed, and continue to possess, a great deal of influence on land use decisions made in the unorganized areas. For example, any subdivision must be reviewed and approved by an appointed, "approving officer". Since most of the residents concerned live close to the highways, this task is normally delegated to the district highway engineer. Although public health standards and possible conflict with such resource developments as forestry are considered, his primary concern is safe and orderly access to the highway.

The regional planning boards

In addition to the provincially administered CPA's, the province
had six regional planning areas under the direction of Regional Planning Boards. These were established between 1949 and 1964 to serve the more heavily populated areas of the province. By the time the last one was formed, they contained approximately three-quarters of the province's population. The board members were seconded from member municipalities, with each delegating one councillor. Unlike the regional districts, or Ontario's regional units, voting was not weighted by population, nor were residents of any unorganized areas lying within a regional planning area represented on the planning board. As institutions the boards were fairly typical of the "advisory" planning commissions alluded to earlier. They had to rely on consensus and cooperation among their members to implement any regional planning program, although the legislation did permit boards to adopt regional plans which would be binding on all members. In spite of these constraints their influence was not negligible and one of them, the Lower Mainland Regional Planning Board (or LMRPB), proved remarkably successful.

The LMRPB, incorporated in 1949, was the first and by far the largest of the six boards. Its planning area included all of metropolitan Vancouver and extended almost 100 miles inland to encompass the whole Lower Mainland. During the nineteen years the LMRPB operated, its staff released an impressive number of planning studies and reports. In 1964 they decided enough preliminary studies were available to undertake the preparation of a regional plan and in 1966 the, "Official Regional Plan" for the Lower Mainland was adopted. By designating land uses in several broad categories, (e.g. urban, urban reserve, industrial, agricultural, recreational, etc.) the plan guided and defined land uses
for the whole metropolitan area and its immediate hinterland. It undoubtedly checked the indiscriminate subdivision of prime agricultural land which had been occurring.

The board's activities were widely and favorably publicized, especially by Vancouver's daily newspapers with their province-wide readership. It is reasonable to conclude that this publicity, prolonged over a number of years, contributed to a general awareness of the planning process among both elected representatives and the general public. More localized publicity about the activities of the province's other planning boards would have reinforced this awareness. The most prominent of these was the Capital Regional Planning Board, formed in 1951 to serve the Greater Victoria area. These other boards were eventually phased out and their planning functions transferred to the planning departments of regional districts whose boundaries enclosed the former planning areas. An exception was made in the case of the LMRPB; its area of responsibility has been allocated among the four regional districts which now serve Greater Vancouver and the Lower Mainland, (see Figure 2). Its demise was accompanied by widespread resentment and disappointment.  

The metropolitan problem in British Columbia

Neither Vancouver nor Victoria have been spared the fragmentation of local governments which confounds so many metropolitan areas. In Vancouver, the practice of employing special service districts as a solution to intermunicipal problems has a long history. In 1914, a special authority, the Greater Vancouver Sewage and Drainage District was introduced.  

A second, unaffiliated, agency -- the Greater Vancouver Water District was formed in 1926. Eleven years later, seven local
Councils agreed to form the Lower Mainland Regional Planning Association: one of the first regional planning institutions organized in North America. Shortly afterwards the provincial government began to hint at the possibility of introducing regional planning legislation—an initiative that was interrupted by World War II. The interest in land use planning was delayed, but not defeated. In 1943 the province appointed a Postwar Rehabilitation Council (the Perry Committee). Its recommendations led to the creation of a Regional Planning Division, which in turn prepared, "A Proposed Lower Mainland Regional Plan" (the Graham Report). In this same period private consultants retained by the cities of New Westminster and Vancouver released a complementary report entitled, "Decentralization and Regional Planning". The latter document, "... drew no sharp distinction between the metropolitan areas and the Lower Mainland region, other than to describe the former as (urban) and the latter as rural." The intensive urban growth and increased pressures on land use which followed the war led to the passage, in 1948, of the long promised regional planning legislation—the first legislation of its kind in Canada.

It soon became obvious an advisory planning agency such as the LMRPB could not cope with Vancouver's burgeoning growth and the increasingly frequent conflicts with adjacent municipalities. In 1954 a proposal to introduce a two-tiered form of metropolitan government was previewed by the province at the annual convention of the Union of B.C. Municipalities. Earlier that same year an ad hoc committee of mayors, known as the Reeves and Mayors Committee, had begun meeting to discuss problems of mutual interest in the metropolitan area. While the group may have been trying to revive the spirit of the prewar regional
planning group, it was hostile to any form of metropolitan government. The province, ignoring the committee's objections, reaffirmed its intention to introduce metropolitan government at succeeding annual conventions, and the enabling legislation was included in the new Municipal Act of 1957. A three stage approach was selected: assessment of the problem by a committee, followed by provincial review and approval, and finally submission of the proposal to a public referendum. The first stage was initiated in Vancouver almost immediately with the formation of the Metropolitan Joint Committee, (better known as the Hugo Ray Committee, after its chairman). The committee sponsored a series of detailed, well-researched reports on all aspects of local government functions. While it generated a lot of interest and discussion, the committee was unable to arrive at any firm recommendations and in 1962 it was disbanded.

Unorganized areas and the joint services board

The administration of the province's unorganized areas may well have been the most critical of the four factors which, it was suggested, led to the creation of regional districts. These areas cover over 98% of the province and contain almost 15% of its population. All but a handful of the organized rural districts are found outside the populous southwestern corner, while the urban communities tend to be widely scattered. In several instances substantial communities have evolved on the fringes of incorporated communities and, since they often lie within unorganized territory, the province assumes the role of municipal authority. Their residents have never had local government nor, apparently, have they missed it. A more recent phenomena has been
the creation of numerous country residential subdivisions, many of them well removed from any trade centre and often containing relatively little in the way of urban services.

The province, cognizant of the problems posed by the unorganized areas as well as its commitment to introduce some form of federated government to the metropolitan areas, initiated a new strategy in Victoria in June, 1964. This city, unlike Vancouver, contains sizable areas of unorganized territory well within its metropolitan ambit. In recognition of this situation, representatives from both organized and unorganized areas were invited to a provincially sponsored conference to discuss the establishment of a, "joint services board."14

The territory to be administered by the proposed board would be virtually identical to that then within the Capital Regional Planning Area, however under the new system the residents of the unorganized areas would be given full representation with the votes of members (in both organized and unorganized areas) weighted to reflect the populations of their constituencies. The services to be provided would be based on what were identified as the five, "common problems" of the participating communities. These were:

1. Sanitary sewage and solid waste disposal.
2. Public health, including control of air pollution.
3. Regional parks and recreational facilities.
4. Hospital financing.
5. Regional planning.

With a few minor reservations the delegates endorsed the concept in principle and preparations were made to follow up with, "confidential talks" on cost-sharing and other details. In comments made at the time, the
newly appointed Minister of Municipal Affairs, the Honourable Dan Campbell, hinted that the conference was only the prelude to new provincial legislation. He stressed the egalitarian as well as the planning implications of the joint services idea when he declared: "We can't approach something like planning on a regional basis and leave gaps where these special (unorganized) areas exist; there is also the question of fair play for all." 

The strategy presented in Victoria was significantly different from that employed in the study of metropolitan government for Vancouver. What was being proposed was the consolidation of several specific functions under a single, politically responsive authority. In sharp contrast to the years of interminable committee meetings in Vancouver, delegates hammered out and adopted the new concept during an intensive three day workshop which commenced in Victoria on June 20, 1964. The positive response was apparently considered an omen, if not actually a mandate from local government and the new idea was quietly and informally communicated to councils throughout the province by means of visits from Department of Municipal Affairs personnel. 

Almost exactly a year later it was formally introduced in the legislature as Bill 83.

The first regional district

Regional districts provide a "vehicle" that allow a group of communities to share, if they wish, the costs and benefits of one or more services on a regional or sub-regional basis. The initial step of incorporation as a regional district involves only a nominal commitment on the part of member units. Where most services are concerned, (e.g.
public works, local planning) a member unit may contract the service from the regional district or administer it locally. Possibly as a result of this low-key approach to institutional change, the formation of the early districts drew little attention from the media.\textsuperscript{17} It was subsequent conflict over the adoption of particular functions that sometimes became widely publicized.

The first district to be incorporated, Comox-Strathcona, is an excellent example of this. It was officially formed on August 9, 1965 and the records would suggest that this step had been overwhelmingly approved by a public referendum. A more careful examination of the circumstances leads to the conclusion that the voters were actually unaware of the fact they were committing their communities to membership in a new joint services district.\textsuperscript{18} This seeming paradox resulted when a local controversy over hospital financing coincided with the regional district proposal. The highly emotional hospital issue dominated the local press for weeks, and it was this -- not the regional district concept -- that was apparently perceived as the main purpose of the referendum.

The situation began in April, 1965, when local leaders from the three neighbouring communities of Comox, Courtenay and Cumberland commenced a series of "closed meetings" with municipal affairs personnel to discuss the formation of a regional district.\textsuperscript{19} On May 17 the council of Courtenay, the regional trade centre, unanimously adopted a resolution favoring the creation of a regional district. This was a full month before Bill 83 was passed by the legislature. Then, at the beginning of July, all three communities approved two questions for inclusion in a public referendum about hospitals. Substantively the
voters were asked if they favored:

1. ... (the creation of) a regional district for hospital purposes . . .

2. . . . a 2.5 mill assessment (to finance construction of a new private hospital).

Since the area already contained a public and a private hospital, the two questions were not mutually exclusive; what was required were additional facilities. The private hospital would have replaced fifty three year old St. Joseph's hospital in Cumberland. Between the announcement of the referendum and the vote, a bitter debate raged over whether the taxpayer should be asked to support public or private hospitals. The local press gave generous coverage to advocates on both sides, but hardly clarified the purpose of the referendum when it declared editorially:

If you desire a regional district for hospital purposes you may vote yes to that. If you decide . . . that you would prefer a publicly owned, publicly administered hospital, you may vote no to the second part of the plebescite.20

The residents voted overwhelmingly in favor of the first proposal, but were almost evenly divided on the second one. The seemingly innocuous regional district proposal was thus completely overshadowed by a more topical issue and blithely adopted. It was only subsequent to this decision that the local press began to speculate about the implications of membership in a regional district.21 Rather ironically, the final decision on which hospital to finance was left to the province which, after some hesitation, approved funds for both hospitals.

Characteristics of the regional districts

The confusion attending the birth of the first regional district was probably atypical, as in other areas they were quickly and even enthusiastically adopted. A review of the dates of incorporation reveals
a distinct pattern, with 11 of the 28 districts (or 40 percent) being formed within the first nine months, (see Table I). There is then a break of over a year before the remaining districts began to incorporate one by one. By August, 1968, 28 of the designated 29 districts were in operation; it had taken just three years for virtually the whole province to accept the new institution. No explanation for the interruption could be found, although the introduction of the "companion" Regional Hospital Districts statute which occurred during this period could have had an influence. This is suggested by the fact that the legislation makes hospitals a "local" responsibility (with provincial financial assistance) and provides for the regional hospital districts and regional districts to have common board members including electoral area representatives, (i.e. from the unorganized areas).

The criteria announced by the province for establishing the regional district boundaries were: a population of at least 30,000; an assessment base (taxable for school purposes) of at least $40 million; a well-integrated transportation infrastructure, and the presence of at least one trade centre. Very few of the districts could be construed as natural geographic or economic regions. Their borders are based on what may have been the only feasible set of existing administrative boundaries -- the school districts -- because they cover the entire province. As a result each regional district encompasses two or more of the 70 school districts into which the province was already divided. While on the one hand the presence of immense unorganized areas, some of them heavily populated, made the use of municipal boundaries impractical, the most likely rationale for employing school districts was simply one of expediency. Certainly education was never seriously discussed as a
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Regional District</th>
<th>Date of Incorporation</th>
<th>Population (June, 1966)</th>
<th>Assessment Base (1969)</th>
<th>Electoral Areas</th>
<th>Incorporated Communities</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>Alberni-Clayoquot</td>
<td>April 21, 1966</td>
<td>27,810</td>
<td>80,222</td>
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<td>Bulkley-Nechako</td>
<td>February 1, 1966</td>
<td>19,771</td>
<td>50,856</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>14</td>
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<td>Capital Regional District</td>
<td>February 1, 1966</td>
<td>181,366</td>
<td>485,538</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>18</td>
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<td>Cariboo</td>
<td>July 9, 1968</td>
<td>31,257</td>
<td>82,012</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central Fraser Valley</td>
<td>October 17, 1967</td>
<td>41,167</td>
<td>97,577</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central Kootenay</td>
<td>November 30, 1965</td>
<td>44,632</td>
<td>99,348</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>21</td>
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<tr>
<td>Central Okanagan</td>
<td>August 24, 1967</td>
<td>33,854</td>
<td>125,129</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>11</td>
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<tr>
<td>Columbia-Shuswap</td>
<td>November 30, 1965</td>
<td>25,463</td>
<td>49,877</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Comox-Strathcona</td>
<td>August 9, 1965</td>
<td>38,838</td>
<td>136,952</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>17</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cowichan Valley</td>
<td>September 26, 1967</td>
<td>32,464</td>
<td>124,934</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>14</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dewdney-Alouette</td>
<td>October 27, 1957</td>
<td>32,512</td>
<td>68,728</td>
<td>5</td>
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<td>9</td>
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<tr>
<td>East Kootenay</td>
<td>November 30, 1965</td>
<td>30,593</td>
<td>90,481</td>
<td>7</td>
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<td>12</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fraser-Cheam</td>
<td>September 29, 1967</td>
<td>39,256</td>
<td>80,976</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fraser-Fort George</td>
<td>March 8, 1967</td>
<td>50,993</td>
<td>196,026</td>
<td>7</td>
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<td>Greater Vancouver</td>
<td>June 29, 1967</td>
<td>891,365</td>
<td>2,769,464</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kitimat-Stikine</td>
<td>September 14, 1967</td>
<td>25,338</td>
<td>97,670</td>
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<td>Kootenay Boundary</td>
<td>February 22, 1966</td>
<td>31,147</td>
<td>81,773</td>
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<td>Mount Waddington</td>
<td>June 13, 1966</td>
<td>8,396</td>
<td>26,370</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nanaimo</td>
<td>August 24, 1967</td>
<td>39,219</td>
<td>158,031</td>
<td>9</td>
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<tr>
<td>North Okanagan</td>
<td>November 9, 1965</td>
<td>27,046</td>
<td>63,475</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ocean Falls</td>
<td>July 16, 1968</td>
<td>5,923</td>
<td>26,098</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Okanagan-Similkameen</td>
<td>March 4, 1966</td>
<td>45,196</td>
<td>152,326</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>16</td>
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<tr>
<td>Peace River-Laird</td>
<td>October 31, 1967</td>
<td>40,042</td>
<td>142,662</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Powell River</td>
<td>December 19, 1967</td>
<td>16,168</td>
<td>59,731</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Skeena A</td>
<td>August 17, 1967</td>
<td>20,452</td>
<td>65,793</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Squamish-Lillooet</td>
<td>October 3, 1968</td>
<td>9,588</td>
<td>28,926</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stikine</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Sunshine Coast</td>
<td>January 4, 1967</td>
<td>8,039</td>
<td>42,101</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thompson-Nicola</td>
<td>November 24, 1967</td>
<td>56,178</td>
<td>175,917</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>21</td>
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Figure 1
BOUNDARIES OF REGIONAL DISTRICTS
regional district function. An alternative to school districts would have been agglomerations of the .80 "economic areas" employed for some years by the province's Bureau of Economics and Statistics. These in turn are grouped into the economic regions. Even if some compromises were made to accommodate local preferences or to achieve a more "balanced" assessment base, somewhat larger (and therefore fewer) districts might have been seriously considered — and publicly discussed.

Some of the most conspicuous anomalies are the Squamish-Lillooet district which encompasses part of the coastline and part of the interior plateau and is not even linked by public road. Its population and its assessment base are both well below the proposed minimums (see Table 1). It would have been far more logical for the Squamish half to have been linked to the Sunshine Coast and the Lillooet end made part of the Thompson-Nicola district (see Figure 1). Another example is the Mount Waddington district covering the northern tip of Vancouver Island. It has a relatively small population and assessment base and might well have been included with Comox-Strathcona (see Figure 1). The above two cases have an overriding logic that is difficult to refute. Other combinations were allegedly discussed including Powell River and the Sunshine Coast; Kitimat-Stikine and Skeena A; a single regional district for the Okanagan; and possibly two, rather than four districts for the Lower Mainland. In each instance political pressures from the local or provincial level were apparently decisive. Although never made explicit, it is possible that the potential of developing a regional perspective also influenced the decisions to establish particular boundaries, especially in those districts where the presence of a single, regional trade centre was found.
Organization of the regional districts

The decision-making arm of the regional district is the Regional District Board. In order to ensure that there is equitable representation on this board from both organized and unorganized areas, a formula of representation by population units is employed, with each member entitled to a maximum of five votes, depending on the size of community he represents. A few very large communities have more than one representative: for example, the City of Vancouver has five, Victoria, Penticton, and Oak Bay have three each, and several other centres have two representatives. The unorganized areas are divided into "electoral areas", generally corresponding to census subdivisions (upon which in turn school district boundaries are often based) and the board representative is directly elected by residents at the same time as municipal elections are held. Incorporated municipalities second one of their council members to the board. The number of members on any given board ranges from 5 to 21, (see Table 1). The number of representatives from electoral areas varies from one in the Central Fraser Valley to fourteen in the Thompson-Nicola regional district. In five districts members from electoral areas actually hold a majority of the votes and in several other districts they fall just short of having a majority. In this respect at least, citizen participation in regional decision-making seems assured.

Another of the basic considerations proposed in this study, coordination between and among different levels of government appears rather uneven. Because of the board structure described above, liaison with local governments is well provided for. A reasonably good interface with the Department of Municipal Affairs also seems likely both by direct contact (regional districts are under its purview) and because of mutual
concerns with the residents of electoral areas. Other than this the only formal provision for liaison between the districts and the province is by means of the Technical Planning Committee system. It brings staff members of the regional districts, e.g. the planning director and/or the secretary-treasurer, together with the regional supervisors or other representatives of provincial departments and agencies in order to discuss and coordinate their respective programs. Normally a representative of the Planning Division of the Department of Municipal Affairs also attends the monthly meeting of the committee. However, unlike Ontario, there is no provision in the regional district legislation (or any other legislation) which requires the various programs to mesh with one another or with an overall provincial policy. As will be seen, this has been perceived by a number of informants as one of the concept's most serious shortcomings.

In theory the powers delegated to the regional districts by the province appear to be a mandate for them to take on a host of traditionally municipal functions ranging from fireworks control and solid waste disposal to planning and building inspection (see Table II). In practice, regional planning has become the only mandatory function. Any other functions adopted are voluntary and may involve two or more member communities (or areas). A conspicuous advantage is that if the provision of a particular service involves heavy capital costs, the assessment base of the whole district, not just the area concerned, can be used as security. The province's Municipal Finance Authority, established in 1969, and whose members are appointed by the boards, now handles this type of financing. Debentures are issued by the Authority and areas or communities requiring assistance borrow directly from it.
### TABLE II:
SERVICES AND STUDIES ADOPTED BY REGIONAL DISTRICTS (to December 31, 1970)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service or Study</th>
<th>Number of Districts Adopting It</th>
<th>Service or Study</th>
<th>Number of Districts Adopting It</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<td>A. Service Functions</td>
<td></td>
<td>C. Planning Services</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water Supply</td>
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<td>Regional Planning</td>
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<td>Sanitary Sewage</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Local Community Planning (contract)</td>
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<td>Solid Waste Disposal</td>
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<td>Urban Renewal</td>
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<td>Transportation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Contract Services (to members)</td>
<td>24</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Works and Services</td>
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<td>Pest Control</td>
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<td>Electrical Distribution</td>
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<td>Airport Management</td>
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<td>Grants-in-Aid</td>
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<td>Cemeteries</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>D. Health Care Services</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Regulatory Functions</td>
<td></td>
<td>Ambulance</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building Inspection</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>Home Nursing</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fireworks Regulation</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Health Regulation</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Air Pollution</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Emergency Answering Service</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Court</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>German Measles Immunization</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soil Removal Regulation</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Elderly Citizens Housing</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Firearms (Discharge of)</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Untidy Premises</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nuisance Removal</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Noise Control</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oyster Bed Leases (pending)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dog Licensing (pending)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>E. Special Studies</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Water Resources</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Functions and Boundaries (of Regional District)</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Library Services</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Ecological Study (pending)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Taxation Study (pending)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>F. Parks and Recreation Functions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Parks (Regional Parks)</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Recreation Facilities</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Recreation Program</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**NOTE:** Regional parks are administered under the Regional Parks Act; like the Hospital Districts, a "companion" statute to the legislation establishing regional districts.
Members may also contract services directly from their regional district, (e.g. local planning). In some electoral areas the regional district has almost become a surrogate local government in the sense that a number of local services may be provided by it and the costs recovered from the province which, in turn, passes them on as local taxes to the area involved. What apparently is involved is a voluntary transfer of powers from the local to the regional level in the case of incorporated areas, but in the case of the electoral areas it is difficult to say whether or not it should be characterized as a transfer of provincial responsibilities to the regional level. The element of doubt is created by the fact that while the province established the framework to facilitate (among other reasons) the provision of services to unorganized areas, it is still up to them whether or not they request a particular service. Since the services, or functions, are added incrementally if and when a particular district perceives a need for them and because the districts are registered as corporations, a device known as Letters Patent is employed; these can be amended by ministerial order whenever a board decides to take on a new function -- subject, of course, to provincial approval.

It is the provision for the delegation of power to administer almost any municipal or regional function that leads to the great flexibility which has, in a sense, become the hallmark of the regional district concept. The legislation also provides for the amendment of district boundaries if requested. In most circumstances and for most functions, a request from the local council or councils concerned, and in the case of an electoral area, a referendum, help to ensure local control is retained as an integral part of the decision-making process.
In some instances, such as the adoption of a regional plan, decisions which will affect the whole of the region require the approval of a majority of the directors having a majority of the votes. Except for this, a majority of the votes is sufficient. There is also provision for an appeal by a council or electoral area delegation against any decision or by-law passed by a particular board. The appeal lies to the Inspector of Municipalities, and is a further constraint on the apparent amount of power delegated to the districts.

Thus, in summary, the regional districts could be perceived as glorified municipalities since, in spite of their undoubted advantages, they remain very much the creatures of the Department of Municipal Affairs. Their policies and decisions cannot be reviewed by or appealed to any form of interdepartmental committee or board,²⁹ nor can decisions made by another department or agency which might conflict with regional goals be challenged by the district.
CHAPTER FOUR

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE REGIONAL DISTRICTS

A. Five regional districts -- a review

Introduction

In addition to preparing a history of the regional districts two other strategies were employed to generate information. The first was to select five districts possessing a variety of characteristics as a more or less representative cross-section of the province's 26 non-metropolitan units. The five were the Central Fraser Valley, Dewdney-Alouette, Comox-Strathcona, Sunshine Coast and Cariboo regional districts. The populations range from the second smallest district in the province (the Sunshine Coast) to the third largest, (the Central Fraser Valley). They include the first and last districts to be incorporated. Two districts were formerly part of a planning region, two more are on the edge of a metropolitan area; two are on the coast, and one is located on the interior plateau. They contain a diversity of economic bases. Three districts rely heavily on forestry and associated industry, one is traditionally an agricultural area, while the fifth is popular as a resort and retirement area. While five examples do not constitute a large enough sample to attempt any statistical inferences, they do indicate the diverse areas which have been incorporated into regional districts. The information can also be used to suggest hypotheses which might be
tested in future studies.

Central Fraser Valley Regional District

This district has a common boundary with the metropolitan Greater Vancouver Regional District and is directly in line with the logical eastward expansion of the metropolitan area. Several sizable nodes of urbanization have already appeared since, outside of peak traffic periods, no part of it is more than an hour's drive from downtown Vancouver. The district contains the two small, incorporated communities of Abbotsford and Langley, three rural-urban municipalities -- the Districts of Langley, Matsqui and Sumas -- and one small electoral area. The rural municipalities control 17 of the regional board's 21 votes; a good indication of how urbanized they have already become.

Exploratory meetings between provincial representatives and councillors began in November, 1966 and the idea of forming a regional district was, apparently, quickly endorsed. The following year some councils, already in conflict with the LMRPB, asked to have the new district absorb the planning function, and this was done December 31, 1968, just three months before the formal dissolution of the LMRPB.

In an interview, the planning director suggested that in spite of resentment towards the LMRPB, most councillors appreciate and support the Official Regional Plan, but otherwise have little grasp of the planning process and are generally reluctant to take a stand on land use policies, (similar sentiments were expressed by planning directors interviewed in other districts). It was suggested by the director that in spite of urbanization, many decision-makers in the area still have a strongly parochial attitude towards regional planning. Other incidents support this. For example, three municipalities,
Matsqui, Langley, and the City of Langley, employ private planning consultants rather than contract for local planning with the regional district. Furthermore, the District of Langley has declined to adopt a zoning by-law because this will exempt the municipality from compliance with the Official Regional Plan's regulations. A final symptom is the scarcity of Municipal Planning Commissions; the two existing ones apparently never meet. One result is that the planning director comprises the entire planning staff for an area whose population is estimated to be in excess of 50,000 people (in 1971: see Table I).

Dewdney-Alouette Regional District

Located across the Fraser from the Central Fraser Valley district, residents of this district are also within easy commuting distance of Vancouver (see Figure 2) and its incorporated areas were also formerly members of the LMRPB. Like its neighbour across the river, it was formed in October, 1967 and the event was preceded by a number of informal meetings with civil servants. Otherwise, there are few points of similarity between the two.

The rural-urban municipalities of Maple Ridge and Mission have almost 90 percent of the population between them. The remainder of the district is divided between the small farming municipality of Pitt Meadows and five sparsely populated electoral areas. The economy is fairly diversified with the forestry and wood products industry the largest single employer. Less than 10 percent of the population resides on farms compared with 30 percent in the Central Fraser Valley.

About the time of incorporation the proposed establishment of a Regional Hospital District received a lot of attention in the local press. The fact there are two hospitals in the district, both
competing for government funds, paralleled the situation encountered in Comox-Strathcona. In fact, once the hospital dispute was resolved, the paper began to give generous coverage not only to the potential of regional districts, but also to outstanding local planning issues. The new concept received grudging acceptance, e.g. "(it will work the same way the province) made school districts work twenty years ago -- by legislation."\(^7\) There was also some pointed criticism. A typical editorial suggested, "one thing seems clear: Victoria wishes to transfer a much larger percentage of government capacity to the local level."\(^8\) The context implied this benevolence was not necessarily doing local government a favor. It was evident from repeated references that the paper lamented the demise of the LMRPB.

The district hired a planning director in April, 1969 and, in an interview, he suggested two-thirds of his staff's time was spent on local planning contracted for by member municipalities. The integration of local and regional planning activities in the district is greatly simplified by the fact the district's two service centres, Haney and Mission City, are politically amalgamated with the rural-urban municipalities surrounding them and further segregated from one another by a spur extending from the nearby mountains. Current planning issues include influencing -- if possible -- the routes selected for a proposed four lane highway and a hydroelectric transmission line; protecting the natural environment in the mountain wilderness that covers much of the district; and coping with growing pressure from recreational visitors. The latter is the result of the area's proximity to Vancouver. There are many day visitors and local councils are adamant about not spending money on amenities which primarily benefit
A tentative comparison between these first two districts shows that Dewdney-Alouette, while it has a smaller population and assessment base, has a larger staff and budget for planning purposes, enjoys public support (judging by the media), is deeply involved in local planning, and shows much less evidence of being hampered by negative, parochial attitudes. It might be hypothesized that the strong agricultural tradition found in the Central Fraser Valley municipalities has had a significant effect on the respective attitudes of the two districts.

Comox-Strathcona Regional District

This district contains a portion of northern Vancouver Island, several islands in the Gulf of Georgia, and a large, almost uninhabited area of the mainland. Its unlikely configuration can be rationalized by the presence of a fairly coherent transportation infrastructure which includes land, water and air routes. Over 80 percent of the population lives in the vicinity of either Campbell River or Courtenay, the two district service centres. The story behind its incorporation has already been told. No evidence was uncovered in the research to show why a larger region wasn't created, although transportation and local attitudes may have been factors.

In spite of the apparent enthusiasm for regionalism (noted in the previous chapter), a planning director wasn't hired until 1970. The planning staff has since grown to four people (in 1971) and the planning director indicated that some problems in establishing planning priorities existed, since the district board had not yet assigned a planning committee to give political direction in this area. In
spite of the transportation linkages, he felt the diversity of interests and fragmentation of the area made evolution of a genuine regional perspective unlikely. The most immediate need was for community rather than regional planning studies. Two outstanding conflict areas were the perceived prerogatives the logging industry held over such potential activities and capabilities as recreation and the preservation of wilderness areas and, second, the almost unregulated subdivision of land for vacation cottage sites, particularly in the unorganized areas where subdivision approval was still being administered by the district highways engineer.

Sunshine Coast Regional District

A population of a little over 8,000 people makes this the smallest district in terms of population. Located less than ten miles by air from the edge of metropolitan Vancouver, it is separated from it by Howe Sound and the two hour trip (from the city centre) by highway and ferry makes commuting impractical. Virtually all the population lives along the highway which parallels the coast. The villages of Gibsons and Sechelt form the nominal "service centres" and, except for the employment provided by a pulp mill on Howe Sound, it remains an area of retirement homes and weekend cottages.

Although incorporation did not take place until January, 1967, members had already passed resolutions at earlier meetings to adopt local works and services, garbage disposal, and parks and recreation as regional services. The minutes of the board meetings show evidence of a tremendous zeal for regionalism. This has sometimes manifested itself in clashes with would-be developers and provincial government departments, (e.g. the Department of Highways over access to
a solid waste disposal ground). In its short history the board has also survived two threatened libel suits and successfully expropriated the assets of a local water board. Its incorporation was delayed by the fact this district and the Powell River district, lying along the coast to the north, were initially conceived of as a single district by the province. Local leaders in both areas rejected this proposal.

A planning director was hired in 1971 and the biggest issue he had to contend with at the time was a projected multi-million dollar sand and gravel operation which would involve loading barges in the middle of the small, remarkably pretty bay that lies off the resort village of Sechelt. Since the project is on an Indian Reserve and thus under federal jurisdiction and the activity itself regulated by the Mining Act rather than the Municipal Act, the prospects of the district preventing it are poor. The directors generally are strongly in favor of environmental protection, at least partly because, as a retirement area, an unspoiled environment represents a great asset.

With an average of 16 meetings a year since its inception, the board of directors is possibly the most active one in the whole province. To account for this phenomenon, it is postulated that with 8,000 people aligned along some thirty miles of coastal highway, the granting of regional district status transformed the Sunshine Coast into a linear municipality rather than a true region.

Cariboo Regional District

The Cariboo covers an immense area of the province's interior plateau. Three service centres, Quesnel, Williams Lake, and 100 Mile House, contain a third of the district's population with the remainder
fairly evenly distributed among ten electoral areas. Although forestry and recreation contribute more to the economy, it is traditionally cattle country and ranchers still exert a great deal of local influence.\textsuperscript{12} In many ways the Cariboo retains a "frontier" culture and many of the residents are genuinely baffled by the concept of land use controls. These suddenly became an issue some eighteen months after the district was formed when a member of the board's technical planning committee began to press for the adoption of a, "Rural Zoning By-Law", he had drafted.\textsuperscript{13} While there was a legitimate urgency for some form of regulation to check the endemic urban sprawl and creation of scattered recreational subdivisions, a clause in the proposed by-law limiting subdivision to parcels of ten acres or more touched off a storm of protest at increasingly frequent, and increasingly acrimonious, public hearings.

The by-law was presented late in 1969. In February, 1970 a firm of planning consultants was engaged. They rejected the by-law as unsuitable, but endorsed the idea of a land freeze limiting all subdivision to a ten acre minimum until a comprehensive planning study could be carried out. Faced with mounting opposition, the board rejected both the proposed freeze and the by-law. They retained the consultants, however, and the latter adopted a strategy of encouraging public involvement in the planning process through numerous public meetings and the generous distribution of carefully prepared brochures. The firm also engaged experts from several other disciplines to make the study more comprehensive.

The introduction of the regional district concept to the Cariboo is especially interesting for two reasons. First, the Cariboo and the
Central Fraser Valley were the only two of the five districts to show a definite antipathy to regional planning. They were also the only two with a sizable agricultural component in the economic base which also meant large areas of privately owned rural land (as opposed to the vast areas of forested, Crown-owned land found in the other three districts) were affected. The second reason was the decision of the consultants to employ a multidisciplinary approach to regional problem solving. This cannot be dismissed as simply the *modus operandi* of the firm involved, since the planning directors in Comox-Strathcona and Dewdney-Alouette indicated that they also leaned towards including professionals from other disciplines on their staffs.

**Summary**

The examination of the five districts was only exploratory in scale. A more rigorous, comprehensive study of a carefully selected group of regional districts would undoubtedly be rewarding, if only to analyze adaptive mechanisms and the diffusion of innovation into different milieus. Some general observations are presented here in point form.

1. Although the LMRPB acquired immense prestige both in the areas under its jurisdiction and elsewhere in the province, there was no apparent correlation of favorable attitudes towards regional planning and prior membership in a regional planning agency.

2. There was no apparent correlation between proximity to a metropolitan area and attitudes towards planning or regionalism.

3. It could be tentatively hypothesized that a correlation does exist between essentially agricultural rural areas, (i.e. Cariboo and Central Fraser Valley regional districts) and a negative
attitude towards planning.

4. A positive correlation may exist between concern for the protection of the natural environment and the amount of undeveloped land in a particular district.

5. The influence of civil service personnel from the Department of Municipal Affairs was very apparent in the early, formative stages of almost every regional district contacted. This "personal touch" may have been crucial in the relatively painless adoption of the concept.

6. While regional district staff apparently enjoy excellent cooperation from the Department of Municipal Affairs they indicated, during interviews, there was often a sense of frustration in dealing with other provincial government departments.

7. While the planning philosophies of the directors contacted varied, one consistent suggestion was that a regional planning agency should have a variety of disciplines represented on the staff -- not all of them necessarily planners.

8. The study provided ample evidence that, as suggested in an earlier chapter, the planning and political processes are closely interrelated.

B. Attitudes of the members of Regional Boards

Questionnaire design

The purpose of the questionnaire was to generate information, rather than test specific hypotheses. For this reason a panel study was felt to be highly appropriate both to the subject and the circumstances. The role of the panel study has been well defined:
"Panel studies do not aim for great precision and frequently do not have control groups; their function is more often to throw light on processes of slow, informal influence and change or to illustrate the stages through which people go in adapting themselves to a new variable."\textsuperscript{14}

In the present study there were two variables which it was assumed would be perceived as important by the respondents. These were the introduction of the planning function and the introduction of a new institutional structure, the regional district. The questionnaire was addressed to a majority of the board members of the province's 26 non-metropolitan regional districts.

The questions themselves were grouped into four categories, beginning with generally worded questions and narrowing down to more specific ones.\textsuperscript{15} Section "A" concerns the general level of activity of members in regional affairs and their opinions on some key options. The next section seeks to determine which specific activities and functions they feel the districts should become involved in. Section "C" solicits comments about their attitudes towards their own community and its needs, in view of the fact each board member plays a dual role as either an elected councillor or an electoral area representative and as a member of a regional board. The final section requests a minimal amount of biographical information and ends with an open-ended request for further comments.

Since it was to be a mailed questionnaire, and since it was hoped to receive data from a variety of categories of respondents, a high response rate was judged extremely desirable. To achieve this objective it was reasoned that an overly long, bulky manuscript might seem intimidating to the recipient and be ignored, if not promptly discarded. Conversely, the more questions that could be included, the
better the prospects of obtaining a usable amount of data. A strategy of making the questionnaire appear shorter than it actually was, was adopted by typing the original in a narrow format, then having the five double-spaced pages reduced slightly on an electronic copier and printed on both sides of a single sheet of paper. (see Appendix A). To further encourage high returns, and to expedite coding and tabulation, check-off replies were employed as far as possible. Finally, a stamped, self-addressed envelope was included with each questionnaire. Out of 195 questionnaires mailed out, 106 (or 55%) were completed and returned.

**Distribution of the questionnaire**

The boards of the 26 districts being studied contain exactly 300 members. Among the districts themselves the representation from electoral areas and organized municipalities differs widely from one to another. The number of electoral areas in a given district varies from one to twelve and the size of the organized communities from less than 300 to over 30,000. One result is that even though voting is weighted to reflect the population represented, in fully one third of the districts the votes controlled by delegates from electoral areas equal or exceed those controlled by municipalities. It was found that even the most generous random sampling tended to omit or under sample either a district or a category that might generate useful data. To overcome this problem questionnaires were forwarded to all board members representing municipalities as well as to a randomly selected one third sample of the representatives of electoral areas in each district. This resulted in a total distribution of 195 questionnaires.
### TABLE III

**DISTRIBUTION OF QUESTIONNAIRE RESPONSES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Electoral Areas</th>
<th>Directors of Electoral Areas</th>
<th>Directors of Municipalities</th>
<th>Total Number of Directors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sampled Replied</td>
<td>Sampled Replied</td>
<td>Sampled Replied</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alberni-Clayoquot</td>
<td>2 (6)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bulkley-Bechako</td>
<td>2 (7)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cariboo</td>
<td>3 (10)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central Fraser Valley</td>
<td>1 (1)</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central Kootenay</td>
<td>4 (11)</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central Okanagan</td>
<td>3 (9)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Columbia-Shuswap</td>
<td>2 (4)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comox-Strathcona</td>
<td>3 (10)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cowichan Valley</td>
<td>3 (9)</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dewdney-Alouette</td>
<td>2 (5)</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Kootenay</td>
<td>2 (7)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fraser-Cheam</td>
<td>2 (6)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fraser-Fort George</td>
<td>2 (7)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kitimat-Stikine</td>
<td>2 (3)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kootenay-Boundary</td>
<td>2 (5)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mount Waddington</td>
<td>2 (4)</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nanaimo</td>
<td>3 (9)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Okanagan</td>
<td>2 (6)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ocean Falls</td>
<td>2 (5)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Okanagan-Similkameen</td>
<td>3 (8)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peace River-Liard</td>
<td>2 (5)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Powell River</td>
<td>2 (4)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skeena A</td>
<td>2 (4)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Squamish-Lillooet</td>
<td>2 (5)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunshine Coast</td>
<td>2 (6)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thompson-Nicola</td>
<td>4 (12)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTALS</strong></td>
<td><strong>61 (168)</strong></td>
<td><strong>35</strong></td>
<td><strong>130</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. The numeral in brackets indicates the total number of directors of electoral areas from which a sample was taken. Since questionnaires were sent to all the directors of municipalities, the samples in that column are equal to 100%.
Results and analysis of preliminary question

Since they contain comparable material in their replies, the first and final questions are described and analyzed as a separate group. Both were open-ended questions concerning what the directors perceived as the goals and problems of the regional districts. The tabulation of replies to both questions concentrated first on grouping all identical, or nearly identical answers, then aggregating the resulting categories into more general ones for comparison and analysis.

Question A asked, "Briefly, what would you consider to be the major goal or goals of the regional district concept?" Out of 106 respondents, 99 replied to this question -- a response rate of 94%. Initial tabulation produced 32 categories. These were reviewed and the ones judged substantively similar consolidated into the nine categories listed on Table IV. The first seven describe broad regional district goals, while the final two, labelled "critical of regional districts" and "miscellaneous" respectively, are considered residual categories. Ranking is on the basis of the frequency with which goals were mentioned. Of the seven identified, six are very close and only the final one has significantly fewer supporters.

A chi-square test for significance was carried out for each response category to determine if there were meaningful variations in the response from organized and unorganized areas respectively. In three categories, (see Table IV) there was a significant difference at the 0.10 level of significance between the attitudes of respondents for organized and unorganized areas. Brief comments on these and the remaining categories follow.
### TABLE IV

GOALS OF THE REGIONAL DISTRICTS PERCEIVED BY RESPONDENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal</th>
<th>Electoral Areas</th>
<th>Organized Areas</th>
<th>Total Replies</th>
<th>Significant Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Encourage Regional Perspective</td>
<td>9 (27%)</td>
<td>15 (23%)</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Protect the Environment</td>
<td>12 (36%)</td>
<td>19 (18%)</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Introduce Regional Planning</td>
<td>6 (18%)</td>
<td>17 (26%)</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Provide Joint Services</td>
<td>5 (15%)</td>
<td>17 (26%)</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Promote Democratic Ideals</td>
<td>3 (9%)</td>
<td>2 (29%)</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Introduce Land Use Controls</td>
<td>9 (27%)</td>
<td>19 (15%)</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Serve Smaller Communities</td>
<td>4 (12%)</td>
<td>1 (12%)</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Criticized Regional Districts</td>
<td>4 (12%)</td>
<td>2 (2%)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Miscellaneous</td>
<td>1 (3%)</td>
<td>8 (8%)</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**NOTE:** Percentages are weighted by relative number of respondents: 33 from electoral areas and 67 from organized areas.

1. **Encourage Regional Perspective**

   The replies in this group were almost equally divided between those employing such terms as; "regional outlook", "regional development", "unite and integrate (activities)", and those proposing better liaison between municipalities. Both groups appeared to emphasize a regional perspective.

2. **Protect the Environment**

   This category includes the following goals, ranked in order of frequency: ecology and conservation; optimal use of land and resources; control of pollution. It could be noted that representatives from
unorganized areas showed somewhat more concern in this regard than did those from organized municipalities. Since twice as many replies were received from organized areas overall, the relative percentages were 36 percent and 18 percent (see Table 4).

3. Introduce Regional Planning

Of the 23 replies included here, 12 categorically gave planning as a goal; 6 gave "zoning", and 5 more referred to "planning for rural areas". A somewhat arbitrary decision had to be made in assigning responses to this category; if the replies grouped under the heading, "strengthen land use controls" (see below) were combined with it the total would then increase to 37. There was no way of determining if some of the respondents perceived them as different goals or considered them to be synonymous. The replies were placed in a separate category, first because they represented a sizable body of opinion and ought not to be "hidden". Secondly, because it was reasoned that in the minds of most non-planners, zoning and planning might have similar connotations, but the control of land use might not.

4. Provide Joint Services

The phrasing of the replies in this category was quite diverse; the common denominator employed was some reference to reduced cost; an increase in efficiency, or other improvement in the provision of public services at the local level. It seems remarkable that a greater number of elected representatives, particularly those from municipal councils, did not note this potential of regional districts.

5. Promote Democratic Ideals

This category was introduced because a number of replies expressed
concern with either bringing elected government "closer to the people" or at least providing the residents of unorganized areas with some form of direct representation. The latter sentiment was predominant among representatives from the organized areas, in a ratio of three to one. The results of the chi-square test were significant at the 0.10 level, (29 percent of the respondents from organized areas, but only 9 percent from electoral areas gave this as a goal).

6. Introduce Land Use Controls

   As noted earlier, this could have been subsumed under the general goal of planning. The most frequently used term was, "orderly control of development". Two replies specified control for rural areas, while others may have been equating land use control primarily with protection of the environment.

7. Serve Smaller Communities

   The essential difference between this category and the one labelled, "provision of public services", was one of emphasis. One group expressed concern about effecting economies of scale; the second wanted unorganized areas to have (or contribute to) public services. It was fairly apparent that in most instances the "communities" referred to were those lying in unorganized areas. Five of the twelve respondents selecting this goal suggested more equalization of tax loads or responsibilities were necessary, clearly implying the unorganized areas delinquent in this respect.

8. Criticized Regional Districts

   Critical comments were received from five respondents who suggested, in every case, some disenchantment or lack of faith in the new
system. It is felt they reflect not only a distinct point of view but a strongly held one in the sense that the question was hardly phrased to stimulate this kind of answer. It seems significant that four of the five were from electoral areas.

9. Miscellaneous

Six replies were judged too unique to be placed in any of the general categories. One mentioned parks, another building inspection, and the remainder lists of individual local services.

An even broader generalization of the goals as perceived by the directors is obtained by combining categories (3) and (6), i.e. planning and land use controls, as well as categories (4) and (7); i.e. those concerned with provision of public services. When this is done two very prominent categories are formed with 42 and 34 respondents contained in them. These results are plausible in view of the publicity accorded regional planning in the province (see previous chapter) and the widespread concern about providing public services discussed in Chapter One.

Of the remaining categories, protection of the natural environment is consistent with contemporary social values and concerns. The suggestions of regional perspectives and democratic ideals as goals were not anticipated and no rationale for them could be adduced from the study.

Issues involving the regional districts

In the second open-ended question, respondents were asked to indicate, "the most important situations, issues or problem areas that involve, or in the near future might involve, the regional district." All but 4 of the 106 questionnaires returned offered comments, many of them in considerable detail. The preliminary tabulation yielded 44
categories. These were consolidated into the 13 more general classifications listed on Table VI. Three categories, planning, pollution, and provision of public services are very prominent. Another three, regional recreation, major regional functions, and land use control appear to be considered fairly consequential by board members.

1. Planning

Although this was the most frequently mentioned item, it was invariably phrased so as to suggest a function rather than an issue. It could, of course, be argued that the respondents included it in the sense that a lack of planning was an issue. It was typical of many replies to this question in that they also suggested various functions the regional districts might adopt. This tended to increase the overlap with question A 1, which had asked for goals. Comparisons with the latter question were made in each questionnaire and when the duplications were cancelled out, it was noted that 28 respondents had categorically mentioned planning as a desirable function in one context or the other. Since this represents 26% of all replies received, it can be concluded that a reasonably strong endorsement of planning exists.

2. Pollution

The term, "pollution" rather than, "environmental concerns" has been used as a heading deliberately as only 3 of the 32 replies referred to protecting the environment; the remainder specifically mentioned pollution as an issue to be tackled by the regional districts. Almost twice as many replies (proportionately) came from organized areas -- precisely opposite to the previous results (Table VI) where protecting the environment was a goal not a problem.
3. Municipal Services

The items mentioned in this category (see Table V) are logical in the sense that one or more of them have already been adopted by some of the regional districts. Garbage disposal is by far the most frequent service problem, with 63 percent of the 27 respondents in this category mentioning it.

4. Regional Recreation

Although regional parks have been included, slightly more respondents mentioned recreational facilities as a perceived need. Some directors may feel the two are virtually synonymous, but such specific amenities as community arenas were also noted on occasion.

5. Major Functions

The functions listed under this category in Table V were not assigned to the, "municipal services" group mainly because they were judged to be beyond the resources of all but the largest non-metropolitan areas to provide. Thus they must logically be considered as regional functions. It could also be noted that such functions as assessment, and approving the location of transportation and utility right-of-ways are not likely to be ceded to a regional body. This was clearly a problem the organized areas were more conscious of.

6. Land Use Control

The earlier comments under the discussion of this category in question Al also apply here.

7. Taxation Issues

The comments were mostly expressions of discontent over the levying of taxes and the inadequacies of municipal revenues. Some
TABLE V

ISSUES THAT INVOLVED OR MIGHT INVOLVE THE REGIONAL DISTRICTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Electoral Areas</th>
<th>Organized Areas</th>
<th>Total Replies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Planning: including zoning and subdivision control.</td>
<td>11 31%</td>
<td>24 36%</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Pollution: including pollution; industrial pollution; water pollution and ecology.</td>
<td>7 20</td>
<td>25 37</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Municipal Services: including garbage disposal; water supply; sanitary sewer; fire and ambulance; and nuisance control by-law.</td>
<td>8 23</td>
<td>19 28</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Regional Recreation: including regional parks.</td>
<td>7 20</td>
<td>12 18</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Major Functions: including building inspection; assessment; transportation; locating utilities; and welfare administration.</td>
<td>3 9</td>
<td>16 24</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Land Use Control.</td>
<td>7 20</td>
<td>10 15</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Taxation Issues: including more revenue; more equitable tax sharing; and taxing mobile homes.</td>
<td>4 11</td>
<td>7 10</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Liaison Among Governments.</td>
<td>6 17</td>
<td>4 6</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Promote Industrial Development.</td>
<td>1 3</td>
<td>3 9</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Promote Regionalism.</td>
<td>1 3</td>
<td>4 6</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Province Unloading its Responsibilities.</td>
<td>4 11</td>
<td>- -</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
perceived the regional district levy added to the mill rates as just another form of provincial taxation.

8. Liaison Among Governments

There were three distinct variations in the replies received. The lack of lateral communication and coordination between different government departments as well as between different levels of government was criticized. On the other hand it was felt that liaison between municipalities has been enhanced by the regional district system. The preponderance of replies from electoral areas is notable.

9. Promote Industrial Development

Although only one of the seven respondents was from an electoral area, no other pattern was discernable; the remainder came from communities of every type and size.

10. Promote Regionalism

There is a sharp contrast between the fact only five respondents mention this item here yet 24 advocated regionalism as a goal in the previous open-ended question.

11. Province Unloading Its Responsibilities

This rather trenchant comment emanated exclusively from unorganized areas. It is interesting to note that one of the newspapers and two of the planning directors cited earlier made a similar accusation.

Miscellaneous comments and issues

These include 12 of the categories in the initial tabulation of replies. They tend to reflect either more localized issues or the apprehensions of individual directors. The hardship of travelling long distances to the monthly board meetings is a conspicuous problem in a
few districts; it was particularly mentioned by members from Bulkley-Nechako. The replies from another district indicate that board meetings there have become the arena for a bitter intermunicipal conflict.

Other issues were noted by no more than one or two respondents, and although they could be aggregated into categories, it was suspected most of them reflected "personality" conflicts: individual biases rather than legitimate regional issues. They included accusations of parochialism, domination of boards by executive committees or cliques of mayors, and also accusations of the domination of electoral area representatives by members from organized communities. Four wanted to, "educate the public"; three feared a loss of local autonomy; and one feared (and another favored) a fourth level of government. It would be futile to speculate about the relevance of these comments. Further inquiries or interviews and a review of local newspaper files would undoubtedly reveal further interesting data about each district's growing pains.

Multiple choice questions

The remainder of the questionnaire consisted of multiple choice questions. Section "A" contains general questions designed to elicit information about the attitudes of the respondents towards regional activities. Section "B" contains more specific questions about planning and other services respondents may feel the regional districts should become involved in. In Section "C" an attempt was made to discover how respondents felt about particular local, as opposed to regional, concerns. It is felt this is valid, since each director must play a dual role,
responsible both to the electorate in his own community and to the region as a whole. The final section requested a minimal amount of biographical information and the open-ended request for comments already presented.

Replies to the multiple choice questions were classified on the basis of two dichotomies: urban/non-urban and organized areas vs. electoral areas. The results are summarized in Tables VI, VII, and VIII. Comments on the more notable results follow:

Section "A"

Question A2 yielded two significant results. Both non-urban areas and electoral areas showed a tendency to rely on, "prominent local citizens" as preferred sources of information. Secondly, electoral areas were decidedly more dependent on local newspapers as sources of information.

The typical director from an electoral area attended an average of 44% more meeting than did his counterpart from organized municipalities, (see A3). On the other hand those from urban areas attended 75% more than did the ones from rural areas. In contacts with the general public members from the Okanagan-Similkameen district reported an average of 27 contacts per member (out of 6 respondents). This tends to corroborate the previously noted evidence of intense intermunicipal conflict.

Questions A5 and A6 show an overwhelming proportion (89%) think the chairman of the Regional Board should not be elected directly; almost as many (77%) believe the board should "gradually acquire more real legislative powers". The negative replies to question A7 were virtually all from regional districts that were too large for convenient
contact between members. The Bulkley-Nechako, Peace River-Liard and Thompson-Nicola districts are the ones most affected.

TABLE VI

MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTIONS: SECTION "A"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Electoral Areas</th>
<th>Organized Areas</th>
<th>Urban Areas</th>
<th>Rural Areas</th>
<th>Total Replies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A2 Sources of Information</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Board Members</td>
<td>16 46%</td>
<td>35 49%</td>
<td>13 54%</td>
<td>38 46%</td>
<td>51 48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regional Staff</td>
<td>22 63%</td>
<td>46 65%</td>
<td>18 75%</td>
<td>50 61%</td>
<td>68 64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Organizations</td>
<td>16 48%</td>
<td>31 43%</td>
<td>9 38%</td>
<td>38 48%</td>
<td>47 45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Newspapers</td>
<td>18 51%</td>
<td>22 31%</td>
<td>9 38%</td>
<td>31 38%</td>
<td>40 38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Public</td>
<td>15 40%</td>
<td>24 34%</td>
<td>8 37%</td>
<td>31 37%</td>
<td>39 36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prominent Citizens</td>
<td>10 29%</td>
<td>7 10%</td>
<td>1 21%</td>
<td>16 21%</td>
<td>17 17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A3 Attended Meetings</td>
<td>28 80%</td>
<td>51 72%</td>
<td>17 71%</td>
<td>62 76%</td>
<td>79 75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average Attendance</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5.5 (Average)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A4 Public Contacts</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>10 (Average)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A5 Do not elect Chairman</td>
<td>32 91%</td>
<td>60 87%</td>
<td>21 79%</td>
<td>72 91%</td>
<td>93 89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A6 Legislative Powers to Regional Board? Yes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NOTE: Percentages are based on total number of respondents: 35 from electoral areas and 71 from organized areas. Respondents from urban communities (population 2,500 or more) totalled 24 compared to 82 from rural areas.

Section "B"

In reply to questions B1 and B2, 66% of the respondents, favored assigning service functions to the regional district rather than a special district. There appeared to be some doubt in the electoral areas
TABLE VII
MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTIONS: SECTION "B"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question Number</th>
<th>Electoral Areas</th>
<th>Organized Areas</th>
<th>Urban Areas</th>
<th>Rural Areas</th>
<th>Total Replies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>B1 Some functions in the district should be on a regional basis (Yes)</td>
<td>11 31%</td>
<td>30 42%</td>
<td>13 54%</td>
<td>28 34%</td>
<td>41 38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B2 Some functions should be controlled by a special district (Yes)</td>
<td>9 26</td>
<td>12 17</td>
<td>4 17</td>
<td>17 21</td>
<td>21 20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B3 By 1975 the district will employ:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- 5 people or less</td>
<td>9 26</td>
<td>19 27</td>
<td>6 25</td>
<td>22 27</td>
<td>28 26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- 6 to 10 people</td>
<td>12 34</td>
<td>24 34</td>
<td>7 29</td>
<td>29 35</td>
<td>36 34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- over 10 people</td>
<td>11 31</td>
<td>22 31</td>
<td>8 33</td>
<td>25 30</td>
<td>33 31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- don't know</td>
<td>2 6</td>
<td>5 7</td>
<td>3 12</td>
<td>5 6</td>
<td>8 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B4 To make planning a compulsory function was:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- long overdue</td>
<td>9 25</td>
<td>27 38</td>
<td>11 46</td>
<td>25 30</td>
<td>36 34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- overdue</td>
<td>13 37</td>
<td>21 30</td>
<td>7 29</td>
<td>27 33</td>
<td>34 32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- well timed</td>
<td>8 23</td>
<td>19 27</td>
<td>5 31</td>
<td>22 27</td>
<td>27 25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- premature</td>
<td>1 3</td>
<td>3 4</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- not appropriate</td>
<td>1 3</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B5 Our regional district should adopt:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- ambulance</td>
<td>19 57</td>
<td>43 61</td>
<td>.6 67</td>
<td>46 56</td>
<td>62 58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- fire protection</td>
<td>34 48</td>
<td>18 51</td>
<td>.7 71</td>
<td>35 43</td>
<td>52 49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- garbage disposal</td>
<td>26 71</td>
<td>50 70</td>
<td>.6 67</td>
<td>60 73</td>
<td>76 72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- education</td>
<td>4 11</td>
<td>15 21</td>
<td>6 25</td>
<td>13 16</td>
<td>19 18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- public works</td>
<td>5 14</td>
<td>7 10</td>
<td>3 12</td>
<td>9 11</td>
<td>12 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- none of these</td>
<td>5 14</td>
<td>11 15</td>
<td>1 4</td>
<td>15 18</td>
<td>16 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B6 In electoral areas there should be:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- a water supply</td>
<td>5 14</td>
<td>17 24</td>
<td>3 12</td>
<td>19 23</td>
<td>22 21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- a sewer system</td>
<td>21 60</td>
<td>42 59</td>
<td>13 54</td>
<td>50 61</td>
<td>63 59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- a regional plan</td>
<td>15 43</td>
<td>49 69</td>
<td>17 71</td>
<td>47 57</td>
<td>64 60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- zoning</td>
<td>19 54</td>
<td>62 87</td>
<td>24 100</td>
<td>57 70</td>
<td>81 76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- regional board regulations</td>
<td>5 11</td>
<td>30 42</td>
<td>8 33</td>
<td>27 32</td>
<td>35 32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- none of these</td>
<td>3 9</td>
<td>2 3</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>5 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B7 Regional board should control land use (Yes)</td>
<td>27 75</td>
<td>50 70</td>
<td>18 75</td>
<td>57 70</td>
<td>75 71</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: See Appendix "A" for original questions. Percentages are based on the relative number of respondents from each type of area.
where the majority was reduced to 55%. Although question B3 (anticipated staff requirements at the end of five years) drew a wide range of responses, it is significant that most respondents thought staffs would increase, implying an expectation that regional district activities would continue to grow.

The responses to question B4 suggest the prospects for regional planning are very promising. Two thirds of those replying to the question felt the decision to make regional planning a compulsory function of the regional districts was either, "overdue" or "long overdue". Slightly less enthusiasm was encountered in the electoral areas and slightly more in the urban ones. Only 5% of the respondents felt it was, "premature" or "not appropriate".

Under question B5, garbage disposal, ambulance services, and fire protection all rated highly (in that order) as suitable functions for a regional district to administer. Urban areas seemed especially concerned about fire protection, (71% of respondents vs. 49% overall), possibly because of costs or possibly because they felt a moral obligation to attend fires in neighbouring rural areas. It is remarkable that 18% of the directors overall and 25% of those from urban areas implied they are willing to do away with the traditional separation between school boards and local government by making education a regional function.

Question B6 concerns the desirability of introducing various land use regulations into unorganized areas. There is general consensus in support of: a regional plan; regulating sanitary sewage; and not regulating water supplies. In the case of requiring the unorganized areas to conform to, "regional zoning or subdivision regulations", there
is a definite polarization of opinion. Over 87% of the directors from organized areas, (and 100% from urban areas) favor such a move in contrast to only 56% of their colleagues from electoral areas. The same pattern appears when regulation of residential development by the Regional Board is proposed (as an interim measure). 42% of the directors from organized areas concur, but only 11% of those from electoral areas. Finally, in question B7, a majority (72%) agree that all land-use control should eventually be handed over to the Regional Board.

Section "C"

There is nothing of apparent significance in the responses to question C1 and C2. It could be noted that "tourist potential" and "industrial growth" were given almost equal ratings. Question C3 was essentially exploratory; it sought to discover if attitudes on a number of potential civic issues varied appreciably among the different groups. Again, nothing of significance was noted. The negative attitude of the electoral areas towards a surcharge for sewage treatment is plausible, since many of them may not require it. It is suggested the lack of enthusiasm for regional parks (23% overall) was stimulated by the suggestion of a two mill contribution. A proposed contribution of a quarter or a half mill might have received a more positive response.

In question C4 the first two choices were deliberately worded differently to disguise the fact that virtually the same question was being asked. The replies received are revealing. Just over one half of the directors (51%) will accept a, "fairly flexible zoning plan", but only 15% will consider a, "closely adhered to", master plan for their own community. Also, in question C4, 7% of the respondents were willing
### TABLE VIII

**MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTIONS: SECTION "C"**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Electoral Areas</th>
<th>Organized Areas</th>
<th>Urban Areas</th>
<th>Rural Areas</th>
<th>Total Replies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>C1</strong> Has the regional district benefited your community? (Yes)</td>
<td>22 63%</td>
<td>53 75%</td>
<td>18 75%</td>
<td>57 71%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>C2</strong> Which are the preferred community goals?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- long range policy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- flexible approach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- industrial growth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- tourist potential</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- minimize taxes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- provide amenities</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>C3</strong> Favor the following proposals for their community.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- fluoridation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- industrial growth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Sunday sports</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- mobile home park</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- sign control by-law</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- sewage treatment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- regional park</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>C4</strong> Preferred approach to land use regulation in their community.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- comprehensive plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- flexible zoning plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- a land use plan exists -</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- regulation by the regional district</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- no present need</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: See Appendix "A" for original questions. Percentages are based on the relative number of respondents from each type of area.
to place land-use regulations, "under the regional district", yet when asked the almost identical question in B7, (should, "all land-use control, i.e. zoning power . . . be transferred eventually to the Regional Board"), where the question was not in the context of their own community, 70% stated that it should. The wording of the questions undoubtedly accounts for some of the discrepancy, but it can be inferred that many representatives favor land-use regulation far more readily if its enforcement is not imminent — at least not in their area.

Section "D"

Nothing of particular significance could be extracted from the biographical data. The mean age of the directors was 51 and they had served an average of 3 years on the Regional Board. Not surprisingly, directors from organized areas had more experience in public elected office than those from electoral areas; the figures were 9.5 years and 6 years respectively. There were very few responses to the query about service on civic boards or committees.
CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to compile a history of British Columbia's regional district concept and evaluate it as an example of an institutional innovation in the context of regional planning for non-metropolitan areas. It has been suggested that if a regional planning institution is to be successfully, "created, fostered, and supported" it will require not only sponsorship, but an initial stimulus. It seems evident from what has occurred in British Columbia, as well as in Alberta and Ontario, that in a Canadian setting both the stimulus and the necessary support must emanate from the provincial government level. It was postulated that any province contemplating the introduction of regional institutions must take five key considerations into account. These were: the delimiting of suitable regions; provision for local government involvement; coordination between and among different government levels; the delegation of adequate power to the new units; and a reasonably flexible structure. Whether regional districts meet these criteria is reviewed here on the basis of the data obtained.

Delimiting a planning region

This is probably the most fundamental and yet one of the most elusive of the criteria. For many purposes, (e.g. trading areas, or
watersheds) the boundaries of a region are more or less elastic, but for administrative purposes they must be made explicit. In British Columbia, where less than two percent of the province is organized into municipalities, school district boundaries were employed as the "building blocks" of the regional districts. The decision to include virtually the whole province, rather than only its populated areas could have been rationalized on the basis that man and his activities have permeated virtually everywhere (or have the capacity to do so). However, such a rationale -- assuming it existed -- would have been far more persuasive if all government activities had been subsumed under the regional districts. Since they were not, it remains an open question what relevance the vast, virtually uninhabited hinterlands of the province have for a system of regions which are primarily oriented towards municipal activities and services.

If it is tacitly accepted that the whole province was included on the grounds of expediency, then a considerable latitude remains in how the boundaries themselves were to be delimited, even using school districts as the basic units. The province announced that population, assessment base, transportation infrastructure and trading areas were to be the key factors.

The first two are somewhat related. The proposal that 30,000 people is a suitable minimum appears to be as arbitrary and unsupported by empirical data as examples found in the literature. Since municipal financing is beyond the scope of this discussion, it will be assumed that the minimum assessment proposed is realistic for most municipal or regional requirements that might be encountered. The questionnaire results do suggest that because of the province's rugged topography,
the existing transportation network is, in some areas, a valid constraint on the size and configuration of a regional district. For example, some board members found travelling to board meetings was a definite hardship. Since no indication was provided of whether a distinct regional service centre was considered desirable, the significance of the reference to trading areas seems minimal; in several districts no such centre exists.

It is significant, when these various factors are considered, that a number of anomalies -- such as Squamish-Lillooet -- were tolerated. In effect, it appears that of the four proposed factors, population, trading areas, and transportation linkages are all negotiable. The one area where there does not appear to have been any real compromise is in the minimum assessment base. As can be seen from Table I, the three districts which drop below the minimum all have very small populations. With the establishment of the Municipal Finance Authority in 1969 it becomes questionable whether assessment base remains a relevant factor.

The question of why the particular configuration of districts was set up remains unanswered, although evidence was obtained to suggest that the wishes of local leaders influenced some decisions. It might be inferred that a maximum, not a minimum population was considered appropriate for non-metropolitan districts. While a case can be made for allowing a very small population to form a regional district, (e.g. the very isolated community of Ocean Falls) in order to provide an equal opportunity for all populated areas to benefit from the new system, it does not account for the fact that the largest of the non-metropolitan districts contains just over 50,000 people (Table I). If interaction among component units is assumed to be as crucial (or more crucial) than the four factors cited, then in several cases existing districts might
very well coalesce into larger units. Since the identical structure is operational in metropolitan areas, increased population and assessment base are not a matter of concern. A multitude of trading areas already exist in some districts (although conflict between larger regional centres could develop). This leaves transportation, which is almost by definition a prime component of any regional interaction. If the above reasoning is accepted, then prime candidates for consolidation would be, in addition to those discussed in Chapter Three, the Central Kootenay and Kootenay-Boundary districts, the three non-metro Lower Mainland districts, and also the Alberni, Cowichan, and Nanaimo districts. In addition, Columbia-Shuswap might be divided between the East Kootenay and an amalgamated (or reorganized) Okanagan area. Whatever the virtues of such proposals they could not hope to be implemented without considering the role local governments would play.

Local government involvement

Citizen participation either directly or through the medium of local government has been repeatedly noted as a vital factor in the successful introduction of regional planning and regional institutions. The province appears to have laid great emphasis on such involvement. This is apparent from the frequent meetings between local councils and civil servants during the formation of the districts as well as from the readiness of the senior government to defer to local pressures in allowing two or even three districts where only one had been envisaged. The questionnaire results suggest that citizen participation and the local government involvement aspects of the decision-making process were on the minds of more than a few respondents. Finally the permissive approach
taken towards membership in the districts and the adoption of services as regional functions can be perceived as another aspect of this desire to ensure and even encourage local participation, especially by the residents of the unorganized areas.

**Coordination and integration of programs**

The comments of planning directors interviewed as well as those of a number of respondents to the questionnaire suggest that while lateral coordination between municipalities was enhanced, serious problems remain in the interface between regional districts and various government departments. The technical planning committee was apparently intended to help resolve this situation but, since the employees of a provincial department are locked into a hierarchical structure, those at the regional level seldom have the discretionary powers to make policy commitments, and in fact may be uninformed concerning policy matters.⁵ Possibly the only "adequate" solution to this is to adopt a more holistic approach such as the one apparently introduced in Ontario. In that province, overall social and economic planning and other policy guidelines, for example capital spending programs, are established at the provincial level so that local and regional units can operate within an overall policy framework. The absence of this appears to be a conspicuous deficiency in British Columbia's approach to regionalism.

**Delegation of adequate power**

Power was undoubtedly delegated to the regional districts, both in the form of financing and in the form of regulatory authority, (e.g. the passing of by-laws governing land use). However, it is debatable to what extent this represented power transferred from the province down
to the regional level and how much represented a reapportionment of powers previously held by local governments. The only circumstance where provincial powers -- and responsibilities -- were clearly delegated was in the province's relinquishment of the administrative chore of caring for the unorganized areas.

Some parallels can be drawn with the approaches adopted by the other three provinces reviewed during the study. New Brunswick obviously withdrew delegated powers from the local level and subsequently retained many of them. In Ontario a complex arrangement occurred and it would not be practical in this discussion to assess whether there was a net gain or net loss of local or regional authority. In Alberta there has been some transfer of power from the local to the regional level, but little (if any) power was ceded by the province. A tentative generalization might be made from this: the reorganization of administrative and institutional structures at the regional level seldom involves the concession of any provincial powers. What may occur is, as some comments in the study suggested, an "unloading" of irksome responsibilities by the province onto the new institutional structure -- particularly those normally handled by the Departments of Municipal Affairs. If and when other departments, such as those concerned with agricultural, resource development and transportation functions are made answerable to regional units (or even made to integrate their programs with regional policies), then a genuine redistribution of the power structure could take place.

What remains obscure, in a rapidly shrinking world, is whether it is still possible -- or will ever again become possible -- to distinguish what are purely "local" concerns. By extension, it must then be asked, how are regional concerns, planning or otherwise, to be defined. These
are bound to be even more intractable, since they must mesh with poten-
tially competing institutional structures both superior and inferior to
them in scale and authority.

Flexibility as an institution

This appears as one of the strongest features of the regional
districts. The strategy of employing an almost entirely permissive,
open-ended approach seems to have proven highly successful. The strong-
est evidence in support of this conclusion is found in the array of
functions already undertaken voluntarily by the various districts. With-
in five years of the passage of the enabling legislation, not only had
the 28 districts formed, but they had collectively adopted no less than
37 different services or functions and no two districts had adopted the
identical combination of services. This situation, together with the
allocation of a certain amount of power to the regional level, suggests
the system has the capacity to cope with changing needs for some time.

Conclusions of the research

The most conspicuous result was the evidence of the rapid accep-
tance of the innovation. It required less than three years for 28 re-
gions, many of them with widely divergent geographic, economic and
cultural characteristics to voluntarily adopt the new system. The
following are proposed as the most pertinent factors which contributed
to this phenomenon:

1. The permissive aspect towards the adoption of functions.
2. The proselyzing by provincial civil servants at local meetings.
3. The prospect of being able to borrow against a larger
assessment base.
4. The opportunity perceived by the unorganized areas to participate in decisions affecting them.

5. The awakening of a latent sense of regionalism in some areas.

6. The placing of regional functions under the control of an elected rather than an appointed body.

7. The inherent logic of the concept, in the sense that a device for taking care of patently regional functions was being offered.

It should be noted that no clear cause and effect relationships could be established to confirm whether or not one or more of the above were crucial factors.

The advantages of the regional districts include a solution to the chronic problem of meshing local government activities with regional programs, including regional planning. They also brought land-use planning, or at least the opportunity for land use planning, to many areas of the province which previously had had to rely on provincial assistance. A third advantage was the successful introduction of the identical administrative framework into metropolitan and non-metropolitan milieus. This tends to support the contention discussed earlier that the "metropolitan problem" and the "non-metropolitan problem" are basically similar and thus amenable to common solutions. Finally, they provide an opportunity for regional planning to be integrated with other programs originating or being administered at the regional level.

One major disadvantage, in addition to those already discussed, is that the new concept did not address the question of regional economic planning goals. Although they are not necessarily precluded, it is felt this is a serious shortcoming, as some way of resolving this dualism
inherent in regional planning would be highly desirable.  

Summary

The regional district concept is far from being a panacea where the conundrum of achieving a balance between centralization and decentralization of powers is concerned. At the present stage, it can only be regarded as a promising experiment. The results, when compared and contrasted with the results of other experiments such as Ontario's regional units and the various forms of metro government now extant, will provide the raw material from which more "mature systems" can be evolved. Even though a number of weaknesses were suggested by the research results, they do not detract from the most innovative and potentially rewarding feature of the concept; the scrupulous care taken to keep the system from being made too rigid and thus unable to adapt to different needs and changing conditions. It would, in any instance, have been a considerable challenge to design a regional system which could cope with British Columbia's diverse problems. It may even be that the flexibility of the regional districts is as much the result of complying with existing circumstances as it was of inspiration.

None of this weakens its potential as a model of institutional innovation. Its designers recognized, implicitly or explicitly, that the pundits of regionalism are still a long way from answering the questions of what constitutes an "optimum" population or trade area or, for that matter, what constitutes a region. Most important of all, they appear to have recognized that in manipulating the roles and powers of local and provincial levels of government they were dealing not with economics or geography, but with politics — "a congeries of evolving complex processes which no human's actual experience can adequately comprehend". They
thus decided to leave well enough alone, assume no pat answers, and quietly establish the simplest possible framework within which a new regional institution could develop. The regional district is not, by any means, a perfect instrument; it does have the potential to become an effective one. One very real risk is that, in spite of the provisions for change and flexibility, regional districts may become too well entrenched and, when threatened with change, such as the amalgamation of districts, follow the classical behaviour pattern of institutions and make their survival the highest priority.

Suggestions for further research

This report has focused on the generation of data, rather than the testing of rigorous hypotheses. It has also, perhaps inevitably, raised more questions than it answers. These questions can provide the departure point for further research into a subject area that has been perceptively described by Leonard O. Gertler:

"... every provincial planning system has its own history and its own inner logic. (And) the inner logic of a system that produces regional or joint planning boards with neither the authority to dispose of the matters that are its unique concern nor, because of financial strictures, with staffs qualified to do a competent job, leads not to joint planning but joint frustration -- accompanied by public disrespect and demoralization. This is not to lose sight of the advisory form as a step in the evolution of regional planning and as a continuing feature in the form of technical advice on local matters. There is room for criticism only when the advisory form of planning is considered a terminus." 

In the context of the research and Gertler's comments, the following questions may be asked:

1. If the regional districts are assumed to have an "inner logic" (because of the province's history and geography) where is this logic likely to lead? What should be the next stage?
2. Which of Canada's two markedly different approaches to regional institutions (i.e. British Columbia and Ontario) has the most general applicability? Do either?

3. Is it reasonable to assume that urban areas are more receptive to innovation than rural areas, or is there a more subtle distinction associated with whether or not the "rural" area has an agriculturally based economy? Is British Columbia's hinterland comparable to an, "underdeveloped country"? 9

4. Do the perceptions of the role of the regional district held by planners differ appreciably from those of the secretary-treasurers or the regional directors? If so, in what way?

5. What, employing various sets of criteria, are "optimum" planning regions for British Columbia? How do they differ from existing ones?

6. How can the dualism inherent in regional planning, i.e. the "agglomeration" of local plans versus the implementation of regional economic planning goals be integrated? In British Columbia? Elsewhere?

7. If, as was discussed, regional institutions must safeguard local autonomy, should they (and if so how can they) safeguard the "autonomy" of various provincial departments and agencies?

8. What should the role of the professional planner be in the initiation or encouragement of institutional innovations for the provision of regional planning and other regional services?

9. If the property tax system were modified (e.g. as in New Brunswick, where the province took it over in many areas), what would be the implications for regional institutions?

The above represent only an introduction to the many lines of inquiry that could be followed in pursuit of the goal of a, "mature system".
Chapter One


8 Hans Blumenfeld, "Regional Planning" in Spreiregen, ed., op. cit., 84-87.

9 The boundaries of the area to be annexed and the terms of annexation are arbitrated by a provincially appointed Local Authorities Board who normally hold a hearing to receive submissions from the local authorities and landowners affected. The comments are based on the author's personal experience.

10 Altshuler, op. cit., p.410.

11 For a comprehensive discussion see: J.C. Bollens, Special District Governments in the United States (Berkeley, University of California Press, 1967).

12 Bollens, ibid.


14 The articles in Arthur Maass, Area and Power, op. cit., and the section in Feldman and Goldrick, op. cit., entitled "Administrative Structure" are especially relevant.

15 A discussion of this subject in a global context is found in Frank Smallwood, "Metropolitan Political Systems and the Administrative Process", in Simon R. Miles, ed., Metropolitan Problems: op. cit.


20 Hardy, op. cit., p. K-12 (this form of pagination is used in the report).

21 See Hans Blumenfeld, "Regional Planning" in Spreiregen, ed., op. cit., for a discussion of this point.


The five common denominators are essentially a composite of criteria suggested by various authors. They include: Hans Blumenfeld, esp. in "Some Lessons For... Regional Planning . . . "(above citation); L.O. Gertler, "Regional Planning and Development," in Resources for Tomorrow: Conference Background Papers, Department of Northern Affairs and Natural Resources, (Ottawa: Queen's Printer, 1961) Vol. I, 401-402; Regional Districts in the Lower Mainland, (Vancouver: Lower Mainland Regional Planning Board, 1969), Mimeograph,7-20; A.R. Kuklinski, "Regional Development . . . " (above citation), esp. pp. 274-275; Donald C. Rowat, "Proposal for Regional Government," Municipal World, (June, 1968), 169-170; and Lowden Wingo Jr., "Regional Planning in a Federal System", op. cit., 153-154. This by no means exhausts the writers who have touched on the subject; the ones cited have, however, prepared lists of what they feel to be necessary conditions (or specific weaknesses) where regional institutions are concerned.

Lowden Wingo Jr., op. cit., 153. His concept of the hierarchical, collateral and functional aspects of policy making are enlarged on in Chapter Two.

Chapter Two


2J. Stefan Dupre, "Intergovernmental Relations and the Metropolitan Area," in Metropolitan Problems . . . , Miles, ibid., p. 353.

3J.C. Bollens, Special District Governments in the United States (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1967). For further discussion see Dupre, ibid., esp. 347-349.


Hans Blumenfeld, op. cit., p. 86.


Wingo, ibid., p. 154.


The Lower Mainland Regional Planning Board was a good example. Its history is summarized in the following chapter.

Gorynski and Rybicki, op. cit., pp. 310-312


Hans Blumenfeld and A.R. Kuklinski are among the few exceptions, (see earlier citations).

Eric J. Hanson, *Local Government in Alberta* (Toronto: McLelland and Stewart, 1956) is the source for the exposition of Alberta history. Comments about the current status of planning commissions in Alberta are based on the author's personal experience on the staff of a commission.


Kreuger, ibid., feels this was a serious oversight, although he generally endorses the change.


In sharp contrast to British Columbia, as will be seen, a great deal of publicity in the form provincial government publications and studies preceded incorporation of each unit. Issues of *Municipal World*, the provincial government's monthly magazine, provide many details, including transcripts of speeches by the Minister concerned.

Based on the author's personal experience on the staff of one of Alberta's planning commissions.

Chapter Three

This theme has been reiterated in speeches by the Honourable Dan Campbell, (former) Minister of Municipal Affairs and in the few government documents on regional districts. For example, Government of British Columbia, Statistics Relating to Regional and Municipal Governments in British Columbia (Victoria: Queen's Printer, 1970).

Based on an interview with Mr. Don South, Director, Planning Division, Department of Municipal Affairs on February 17, 1971.

Ibid.

Within five years, 27 of these agreements were concluded; eighteen of them for the provision of home nursing care, (ibid.).

Estimated from population statistics quoted in, Statistics Relating to ... , op. cit.

Based on interviews (cited below) and numerous newspaper accounts in the latter part of 1967 and early 1968.

D.M. Churchill, Local Government and Administration in the Lower Mainland Metropolitan Community, Report to the Metropolitan Joint Committee, Volumes I and II, (Vancouver, 1959). Much of the following exposition is based on this report.

The first was allegedly the New York Regional Planning Commission founded in 1929.


In a speech by the Minister of Municipal Affairs. Churchill, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 43.

In addition to Churchill (cited above), companion reports were prepared on the functional and financial implications of metropolitan government.

The population figure was suggested by Mr. Don South, op. cit.

The Honourable Dan Campbell made pointed remarks about this on more than one occasion. For example, see text of an address to the 1964 Union of British Columbia Municipalities conference. Minutes of the 61st Annual Conference, pp. 108-119.
The conference was held on June 22, 23, and 24, 1964. Over fifty representatives from municipal and unorganized territories in the Greater Victoria area attended. The description is based on the accounts which appeared in the Victoria Daily Colonist at the time.


Interview with Mr. Don South, op. cit.

This assertion is based on a review of the library indices of British Columbia's three metropolitan dailies: The Daily Province, the Vancouver Sun, and The Daily Colonist, over a six year period (to 1970).

The following exposition is largely based on news items and editorials appearing during 1965 in the weekly Comox Free Press, Courtenay, B.C.

A responsible informant in Courtenay referred to these meetings and later interviews (see Chapter Four) suggested they were not uncommon.


The Sunshine Coast Regional District, which incorporated in January, 1967 is an exception. However, as will be discussed in Chapter Four, they had made a resolution to form a district almost two years earlier.

The regional district of Stikine, which covers a large, almost unpopulated area in the extreme north of the province, remains unincorporated and under the direct administration of the Department of Municipal Affairs (see Figure 1).

This was inferred by Mr. Don South in an interview, op. cit. A prelude to the legislation was the creation of new hospital district in Vancouver in 1966. Article, The Vancouver Sun, Oct. 30, 1971, p.6.

Interview with Mr. Don South, op. cit.

For data on the latter see, Bureau of Economics and Statistics, Regional Index of British Columbia (Victoria: Queen's Printer, 1966).

Ibid.

For a detailed discussion see, Lower Mainland Regional Planning Board, Regional Districts in the Lower Mainland (Vancouver: LMRPB; 1969).

In contrast; for example, to the interdepartmental Provincial Planning Board in Alberta which acts as an appeal body above the planning commissions.
Chapter Four

1 Based on an interview with the planning director, Mr. Eugene Lee, February 26, 1971.

2 There are unsubstantiated accounts that the influence of local councils in this area led to the decision to create four rather than two regional districts for the Lower Mainland.

3 Interview with Mr. Eugene Lee, op. cit.

4 Based on articles appearing in 196 in the weekly Haney Gazette.


6 A review of the newspaper files during this period shows an article or editorial appearing at least once a week on the subject.


9 See Table I.

10 Based on an interview with the planning director, Mr. Robin Sharpe, March 6, 1971.

11 The following exposition is based on a review of the minutes of the Board meetings over a three year period and an interview with the secretary-treasurer, Mr. C.F. Gooding on February 20, 1971.

12 The account here is based on an interview with Mr. Ron Mann, the district's consultant planner, on February 10, 1971 and on various informal discussions with Mr. David Zirnhelt (a fellow student) who had acted as recording secretary at a number of the public hearings.

13 Technical planning committees, required under the regional district legislation, are comprised of regional representatives of various provincial government departments and one or more staff members of the regional district.


15 An approach recommended by Oppenheim, ibid., pp. 41-43.

16 Urban areas are arbitrarily defined as those with a population of 2,500 or more. A review of the populations of the communities in the province showed some evidence of a modal split in this area, i.e. there were only three communities with populations between 2,001 and 2,500 compared to seven with populations between 1,501 and 2,000 and eight with populations between 2,501 and 3,000.
Chapter Five


2 This is discussed in Chapter Two.

3 This example, particularly, could have been strongly influenced by local political pressures, (see earlier discussion).

4 This issue was cited by virtually all the authors whose criteria inspired the five key considerations used in the study, (see footnote 24, Chapter One).

5 This assertion is grounded in the author's personal experiences in communications with provincial government departments in Alberta:

6 The term dualism is used in the sense of regional planning being perceived as either the coordination of planning among local units or the decentralization from the provincial or federal level of regional economic planning programs, (see discussion of this point in Chapter One).


8 Leonard O. Gertler, "Regional Planning and Development," in Resources for Tomorrow: Conference Background Papers, Department of Northern Affairs and Natural Resources (Ottawa: Queen's Printer, 1961). p. 402.

9 This analogy was suggested by Mr. Robin Sharpe, planning director for Comox-Strathcona regional district. He referred to it in the sense that, unlike most other Canadian provinces, B.C.'s hinterland is exploited for raw materials rather than agriculture. Much as the developed nations have only a narrow vested interest in the resources of the third world, so might a provincial government view the province; specifically those areas not in privately owned land.
SOURCES CONSULTED

Books


Ranney, David C. Planning and Politics in the Metropolis. Columbus: Charles E. Merrill, 1969.


Articles in Journals


Published Reports


Unpublished Reports


Interviews

Interview with Mr. Eugene Lee, planning director Central Fraser Valley regional district, February 26, 1971.

Interview with Mr. Ron Mann, planning consultant, Cariboo regional district, February 10, 1971.

Interview with Mr. Robin Sharpe, planning director, Comox-Strathcona regional district, March 6, 1971

Interview with Mr. Don South, Director, Planning Division, Department of Municipal Affairs, February 17, 1971
APPENDIX "A"

4. THE REGIONAL DISTRICT IN GENERAL

1. Briefly, what would you consider to be the major goal or goals of the regional district concept?

2. Among the following potential sources of information, which ones do you refer to most often to keep up to date on local matters that might concern the regional district?
   - Other Board members
   - Local newspapers
   - Regional district staff
   - The general public
   - Representatives of prominent local organizations
   - Local citizens
   - Other (specify)...

3. Besides meetings of the Regional Board and its committees, did you attend any other gatherings during the last six months of 1970 where the regional district or regional problems were the main topic of discussion? If "yes", approximately how many?

4. Could you estimate how often during December, 1970, members of the general public - either as individuals or as groups - contacted you about regional matters?

5. Do you feel the chairman of the Regional Board should be elected directly by the voters?

6. Should the Regional Board, which is essentially a coordinating body, gradually acquire more real legislative powers?

7. Are the present boundaries of your regional district satisfactory? If not, please indicate what changes you believe would be desirable.

B. REGIONAL DISTRICT ACTIVITIES.

1. Are there any functions now handled in your district by a single purpose board or commission which, in your opinion, would be better handled by the regional district? If "yes", which ones?

2. Conversely, do you think there are functions which would be better controlled by a single purpose authority than by the regional district? If "yes", which ones?

3. Every regional district now has a secretary-treasurer and some also have other staff members. Do you anticipate that in the near future - say by 1975 - your regional district will employ: - a total staff of 5 people or less. - a staff of between 6 and 10 people. - more than 10 people on the whole staff. It is too early to try and anticipate.

4. The planning function was recently made compulsory for the regional districts. Do you feel this decision was: - Premature. - Far too premature. - Long overdue. - Overdue. - Well timed. Planning is not an appropriate regional function.

5. Indicate which, if any, of the following functions should be adopted by your regional district.
   - Ambulance services
   - Fire protection
   - Garbage disposal
   - Education
   - Public Works

6. Indicate which of the following methods of regulating residential (non-agricultural use) development you think is appropriate for the unorganized area of your regional district at the present time. (Check one or more)
   - Permission to build would depend on:
     - connection to a municipally approved water supply
     - connection to a sanitary sewage system of approval of septic tank field by a health officer
     - conforming to an official regional plan
     - conforming to regional zoning or subdivision regulations
     - approval by the Regional Board in the absence of regional regulation
   - At present none of these measures seem to be necessary in your regional district.

7. Do you feel that all land-use control, i.e. zoning power should be transferred eventually to the Regional Board? If "yes", in what way?

C. THE LOCAL COMMUNITY

1. Until the present time, at least, has the existence of the regional district benefited your community? If "yes", in what way?

2. Which of the following do you feel are the most desirable goals for your community? (Check one or more)
   - Anticipate long-range needs and allocate policies accordingly
   - Maintain a flexible approach and adapt policies to changing conditions
   - Attract clean, desirable industry and commercial investment
   - Develop and attract investment in recreational and tourist potential
   - Keep taxes as low as possible while maintaining essential services such as roads, water supply etc.
   - Try to create a high level of amenities such as parks, good street lighting, recreation centres etc.
If the following proposals were made for your community, and you were asked to comment on each of them, what would your reaction be:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Proposal</th>
<th>In Favor</th>
<th>Not In Favor</th>
<th>More Data</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fluoridate the local water supply.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Form an industrial development committee</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legalize Sunday sports.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Permit development of a new mobile home park.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regulate by by-law the size and location of signs and billboards.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A two mill tax increase for new sewage treatment facilities.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A two mill tax increase to help purchase a new regional park.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Which of the following is, in your opinion, the most suitable approach to land-use regulation in your community at the present time? (Check one):

A. Comprehensive, or master plan for land-use, closely adhered to.
B. Fairly flexible zoning plan with changes approved on their merits.
C. The community already has a comprehensive land-use plan in effect.
D. At present, land-use regulations in the community should be under the regional district.
E. There seems to be no need for zoning or land-use regulations at the present stage of development.

5. BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

How would you describe your regular occupation?

In which of these age groups are you?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>Under 35</th>
<th>35 to 45</th>
<th>46 to 55</th>
<th>56 to 65</th>
<th>Over 65</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
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<td>No</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

If "yes", please indicate which ones and the approximate length of time served with each.

How many years have you served on the Regional Board?

How many years have you held elected public office?

Have you served on any elected or appointed civic boards or commissions, such as a Ratepayer's Association, Planning Commission etc.?

If "yes", please indicate which ones and the approximate length of time served with each.

Please indicate briefly what, in your judgment, are the most important situations, issues or problem areas that involve or in the near future might involve the regional district. These may or may not have been touched on in the preceding questions.