

Presentation on the Greater Vancouver Regional District Livable Region Strategy

Vancouver City Manager's Policy Committee

**A Manuscript Report Prepared for the
Canadian Environmental Assessment
Research Council
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PRESENTATION OUTLINE

1. The Livable Region Plan (1975)
2. The Current Review
3. Regional Challenge Seminars (7)
4. Attitudes Survey
5. Choosing Our Future Forum - Summary
6. Next Steps - Surrey Actions on Livability
7. Committee Discussion

THE LIVABLE REGION PLAN

- Adopted by GVRD Board in 1975
- 5 Point Strategy:
 1. Achieve Residential Growth Targets in Each Part of the Region.
 2. Promote a Balance of Jobs and Workers in Each Part of the Region.
 3. Create Regional Town Centres.
 4. Provide a Transit-Oriented Transportation System Linking Residential Areas, Regional Town Centres, and Major Work Areas.
 - 5: Protect and Develop Regional Open Space.
- Regional Planning Function Removed in 1983 (Bill 6).

REVITALIZING THE REGIONAL STRATEGY

- March 1989 "The Livable Region - A Strategy For the 1990's" (Draft)
- April-June 1989 Review by GVRD Municipalities
- District of Surrey Response
- Trend scenario not realistic
 - Population projections?
 - Shift in population
 - Goals and sub-strategies too vague
 - Sustainable development, waste management
 - Future of agricultural land?
 - Second major regional centre south of the Fraser
 - Implementation?
 - Information program
- July 1989 GVRD Board Adopts Seven Livability Goals:
1. A Region in Nature
 2. An Economy of Growth and Change
 3. Accessibility for People and Goods
 4. An Equitable Region
 5. A Healthy and Safe Region
 6. A Region of Diversity and Vitality
 7. An Efficient Region
- December 1989 - April 1990 "Choosing Our Future" Public Consultation Process
- July 1990 New Regional Strategy

REGIONAL CHALLENGE SEMINAR ON URBAN MOBILITY

DECEMBER 6, 1989

- Obstacles: Geography, multiple jurisdictions
- Transportation problem is a land use problem (coordinate)
- Subdivision design not suitable for transit
- Need to improve goods movement system
- Need for regional transportation plan
- Is "living close to work" a realistic objective, given households with multiple wage earners?
- Need to match housing with jobs
- Importance of mobility/accessibility to independent living

REGIONAL CHALLENGE SEMINAR ON URBAN MOBILITY, Cont'd.

Presentation by Ken Orski, Urban Mobility Corporation

- Cannot build our way out
- 3 strategies:
 - Incremental expansion of road capacities
 - Reducing travel demand
 - Controlling **pace** of development ("adequate public facilities ordinances")
- Private investment (toll roads)
- Approaches to managing demand:
 - Rethink concept/expectation of unlimited mobility
 - Gasoline taxes
 - Higher parking costs
 - Flex-time
 - Dedicated bus lines
 - M.O.V. lanes

REGIONAL CHALLENGE SEMINAR ON THE ENVIRONMENT

JANUARY 12, 1990

- Issues:
 - Automobile emissions (80% of air pollution)
 - Burrard Thermal Plant (nitrogen oxides)
 - Burrard Inlet petrochemical industry
 - Increased tanker traffic (oil spills)
 - Hazardous wastes/dangerous goods
 - Methane gas from landfills
 - Conflicts between urban uses, ALR, wildlife
 - Security and purity of drinking water
- Solutions:
 - Pollution controls - zero effluent
 - Motor vehicle testing; alternate fuels
 - Reduce need for automobile
 - Economic support/marketing programs for local farmers
 - Environmental assessment procedures
- Treat cause, not symptom: consumerism vs. sustainable development
- Cost of environmental protection, willingness to pay?

REGIONAL CHALLENGE SEMINAR ON THE ENVIRONMENT, Cont'd.

Presentation by Dan Harvey, Climatologist

- The Greenhouse Effect: Climate warming, increased precipitation, rising sea levels
- Municipal Initiatives:
 - District heating
 - Building permits → energy conservation
 - Energy audits
 - Public transit, bicycles, walking
- Need for regional open space plan
 - Protect natural areas from urban encroachment
 - Outdoor recreation a cultural trademark (Supernatural B.C.)
- Automobile is No. 1 threat to livability/environment
- Earth Day - no use of automobiles?!

REGIONAL CHALLENGE SEMINAR ON
A HEALTHY REGION, AN AGING REGION
JANUARY 26, 1990

- Issues
 - Financial squeeze (1/3 provincial budget)
 - Shortage of health care professionals
 - Focus on hospital planning vs. community health care
 - Deinstitutionalization without adequate support services
 - Opposition to group homes

- Solutions
 - Shift from treatment to prevention
 - Outpatient/home care: adult day care, granny flats
 - Coordination amongst community service groups and hospitals at local level
 - Design for independent living
 - Training and support for caregivers
 - Public education: Attitudes/expectations re universality and entitlement

REGIONAL CHALLENGE SEMINAR ON A HEALTHY REGION,
AN AGING REGION, Cont'd.

Presentation by Dr. Ian Morrison, Institute for the Future

- Canada has a relatively good health care system:
cost, access, quality
- Major impact of aging: Demand for nursing home and
home care (75 years & over)
- Real cause of health care inflation → expanding
technological services
- Canada's system of a public monopoly on the payment
system for health care has contributed to keeping down
costs.

REGIONAL CHALLENGE SEMINAR ON URBAN DESIGN

FEBRUARY 19, 1990

- Critique of Suburban Design
 - Automobile oriented/dependent
 - Densities too low: land and energy consumptive
 - No identity; lack of public places; no edges
 - Inappropriate housing forms

- Household Types (USA, 1980's)
 - 51% single persons
 - 22% single parents
 - only 27% married couples

REGIONAL CHALLENGE SEMINAR ON URBAN DESIGN, Cont'd.

**Presentation by Doug Kelbaugh, Director, Architecture
Department, University of Washington**

- Proposed a "new" model for suburban design: pedestrian pockets
- Key features of pedestrian pockets:
 - Low rise, high density housing, 20-25 upa
 - Mixed use "Main Street"
 - Light rail transit line
 - Regional shopping mall or computerized offices (1 million square feet)
 - 50 - 100 acres
- Similar to town centre concept, but more pedestrian-oriented
- Metrotown: not a great success. Public spaces privately controlled, auto oriented.
- Livable Region Strategy: distinguish between town centres (size, character). Regional open space plan.

REGIONAL CHALLENGE SEMINAR ON COSMOPOLITAN CULTURE

FEBRUARY 9, 1990

- "Regional Social Issues: Considerations for the Livable Region Strategy" (SPARC)
- Regional population is becoming more multicultural (Vancouver, Burnaby, Richmond)
- Major countries of origin, 1974-78: USA, Britain; between 1984-88: the major sources were Hong Kong and India
- Problems: increasing racism, need for services (ESL, counselling, employment training)
- Next 5 - 10 years critical in dealing with race relations
- Possible municipal actions:
 - Multicultural policy (OCP)
 - Multicultural events
 - Public education programs
 - Consultation in planning/civic affairs
- Need to emphasize benefits of immigration:
 - Economic growth (cheap source of labour)
 - Diversity and interest (enriches our lives)

REGIONAL CHALLENGE SEMINAR ON CHANGING PUBLIC VALUES

FEBRUARY 23, 1990

Comments of Seminar Participants

- A new "Counter Culture" opposed to or against things
- Social Conscience of 1970's + Greed Ethic of 1980's = Selfish Conscience of 1990's (NIMBY)
- Aging of Population → conservatism of values, entrenchment of attitudes
- Economic and Environmental Stress + Rapid Change/Growth → increasing intolerance
- Values of immigrants will play important role in shaping region's future
- Emerging activism/militance - growing demand for open government, a local perestroika

REGIONAL CHALLENGE SEMINAR ON CHANGING PUBLIC VALUES, Cont'd.

Presentation by Alan Gregg, Decima Research

- Urban issues paramount in 1990's
- "Manhattanization" of Canadian cities
- Demographic factors and trends that will shape attitudes and values in the 1990's and beyond:
 1. Baby Boomers - born 1946 - 1964. Hallmarks: well-educated, disloyal, distrustful, predisposed to experimentation.
 2. Women - increased participation in work force.
 3. Aging of Population - population pyramid will be inverted by 2020.
 4. Immigration - shift from Europe to Asia as predominant source.
- Emerging Attitudes and Values
 1. Crash of expectations/cynicism
 2. Loss of faith - in traditional institutions and solutions
 3. Opposition - to growth and change
 4. Cocooning - response to stress
 5. Quality vs. quantity
- Major urban issues of 1970's: infrastructure, housing, public facilities
- Major urban issues of 1990's: social and environmental (decline in moral fibre, social fabric, homelessness, poverty, crime, illegal drugs, pollution) - More difficult to solve.

REGIONAL CHALLENGE SEMINAR ON COMMUNITY LIFE

MARCH 1, 1990

- 5 Challenges of Community Life:
 1. Municipalization of social service responsibilities (without funding)
 2. Polarization of labour market - skilled/unskilled
 3. Polarization of human services - public/private
 4. Ambivalence and distrust of government
 5. Increase in single parent and all parent working families
- Myth of adequacy
- Recommended actions:
 1. Longer hours of service
 2. Availability without stigma
 3. Better use of existing community facilities
- Still not a livable region for women
- Young adults (18 - 24 years) disenchanting/disenfranchised

PUBLIC ATTITUDES **SURVEY**

(DR. WALTER HARDWICK)

- First survey 1973; second survey 1989
- 1,350 households interviewed
- Findings:
 1. Some Issues Environmental concerns top priority, followed by housing and health care
 2. Gender Differences Women rates these issues higher: affordable housing, day care, assistance to homeless, housing for elderly
 3. Willinanness to Pay Yes to tolls, user fees, but no to taxes on income, general property
 4. Government 56% had no confidence in 1973; 70% had no confidence in 1989
 5. Work and Home 53% said where I work does not influence where I live.

CHOOSING OUR FUTURE FORUM

- March 9 - 10, 1990
- Robson Square Conference Centre
- Attendance - 450 persons

SUMMATION (Ken Cameron, GVRD)

The Vision

- A region in nature that welcomes newcomers, that cares, that is self reliant.

Evaluation

- Livable Region Plan was successful, has made a difference
- Environment is a critical issue
- Cannot pay or buy our way out
- Need for action now
- Public insistence on inclusion

The Choices We Have Made

1. We want to manage growth (not stop it)
2. Local and regional governments will be the primary actors
3. We **will encourage** alternatives to private automobile

The Choices We Need to Make

1. How will we conserve our land base? (densification, ALR, mountain slopes)
2. How can we improve environmental management
3. What will we do to enhance our suburban environments?
4. What is the best structure of the town centre hierarchy?
5. How will we provide affordable housing?
6. What constitutes a sustainable environment?
7. How can we encourage people to work close to home?
8. What changes to authority and structure of government are required?

CLOSING REMARKS

- A valuable and enlightening process
- Confirmation of issues
- Reaffirmation of goals and values
- Re-thinking of strategy
- Developing consensus
- Support for regional planning/cooperation
- Useful information base and context for proceeding with major review of Surrey's OCP
- Economic future (knowledge industry) is dependent on maintaining livability
- Community meetings (6) March and April
- July 1990 target date for revised Livable Region Strategy

SURREY ACTIONS ON THE LIVABLE REGION

- Transportation planning for the bicycle in Surrey?
- Promotion of Whalley as Second City.
- Incorporate ESA study into development approval process.
- Revisit OCP concept of low density suburban areas.
- Rethink subdivision design → mix of housing.
- Resolve secondary suite issue.
- Expand social planning function.
- Reaffirm policies/future of ALR.
- Define role of Surrey in Region in OCP.
- Establish local area planning committees.