

Regional Values and the Politics of Growth Management  
in the Pacific Northwest

by

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B.S.A.D., Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 1990  
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Submitted to the Department of Urban Studies and Planning  
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ABSTRACT

The Pacific Northwest is home to two major US cities, Portland and Seattle, respected for their innovations in urban planning. Awareness of the need for growth management has been strengthened through the public perception of the impacts of rapid growth upon the landscape, upon traditional settlement patterns, upon the regional economy and upon the familiar way of life. Ecological and historic factors have created distinct social characteristics common throughout the region. Conservative pioneer attitudes, environmental awareness and the presence of a large in-migration population from California have combined to create a sensitivity to growth issues.

Analysis of regional values and the political processes involved in the growth management policies of Portland and Seattle provides invaluable lessons for planners and politicians throughout the US. Sustainability has emerged as an important guiding principle for regional planning efforts. With the realization that effective long-term growth management depends upon sustainable planning processes, emphasis has been placed upon the public participation process and the creation of a supportive partisan public constituency, an essential element for growth management. Through the public's involvement in the planning process, the general population has developed a fairly sophisticated understanding of land use planning issues and has become more supportive of planning initiatives. Political leadership in Oregon has had the courage and the wisdom to introduce land use planning as a moral issue, framed within the language of local values. Common causes were found to unite a wide variety of advocacy groups likely to be concerned with the effects of growth management planning. The establishment of a regional government, Metro, for the Portland metropolitan region has made it possible to plan effectively for the region. In Seattle, politicians and planners have made sophisticated use of public relation techniques and have found justification for growth management through the public participation process and the moral imperative of sustainable practice.

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*Thesis Contents*

<b>CHAPTER 1 OVERVIEW OF GROWTH TRENDS AND CONCEPTS IN THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST</b>	<b>10</b>
<hr/>	
<b>COMPACT DEVELOPMENT FORMS</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>SUSTAINABILITY AS AN EMERGENT ISSUE</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>REGIONAL-CULTURAL INTERPRETATIONS OF URBAN SPACE</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>REGIONAL DEMOGRAPHICS</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>CHAPTER 2 REGIONAL VALUES</b>	<b>21</b>
<hr/>	
<b>THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST CULTURAL REGION</b>	<b>21</b>
HISTORIC VALUES	21
POLITICAL INVOLVEMENT AND LIBERALISM	24
ECOLOGICAL AWARENESS IN THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST	26
<b>OPINION SURVEYS</b>	<b>31</b>
CORE VALUES	32
PERCEPTIONS OF GROWTH	34
ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION VS. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	36
TRANSPORTATION ISSUES	38
RESIDENTIAL PREFERENCES	38
<b>VOTING TRENDS</b>	<b>39</b>
OREGON BALLOT MEASURES	39
VOTER INITIATIVE CHALLENGES TO COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING	40
FORMER-CALIFORNIAN VOTING TRENDS	41
<b>CONCLUSIONS</b>	<b>42</b>
<b>CHAPTER 3 THE DEVELOPMENT OF GROWTH MANAGEMENT IN OREGON</b>	<b>43</b>
<hr/>	
<b>EARLY DEVELOPMENT</b>	<b>43</b>
BEGINNINGS - SENATE BILL 10	43
THE FORMATION OF LCDC	45
THE PROTECTION OF RESOURCE LANDS	48
IMPLEMENTATION TECHNIQUES	51

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION AND ACTIVISM	52
<b>RECENT PLANNING INITIATIVES</b>	<b>56</b>
PORTLAND METRO	56
METRO CHARTER AND THE RUGGOS	57
METRO 2040 GROWTH CONCEPT PLAN	58
OREGON TRANSPORTATION PLAN	69
TRANSIT CHOICES FOR LIVABILITY	70
LUTRAQ - LAND USE, TRANSPORTATION AND AIR QUALITY	71
SUMMARY TIME LINE	73
<b>CONCLUSIONS</b>	<b>75</b>
<b>CHAPTER 4 GROWTH MANAGEMENT IN SEATTLE</b>	<b>77</b>
<hr/>	
<b>SUSTAINABILITY</b>	<b>83</b>
<b>URBAN VILLAGES</b>	<b>84</b>
<b>IMPLEMENTATION</b>	<b>87</b>
<b>PUBLIC PARTICIPATION</b>	<b>88</b>
<b>VALUE IMPLICATIONS</b>	<b>89</b>
<b>CONCLUSIONS</b>	<b>91</b>
<b>CHAPTER 5 LESSONS FROM THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST</b>	<b>93</b>
<hr/>	
<b>IS IT REALLY DESIRABLE TO EMULATE THE LAND USE PLANNING SYSTEMS OF THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST?</b>	<b>93</b>
<b>IS IT POSSIBLE TO EMULATE THE GROWTH MANAGEMENT SYSTEM OF THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST?</b>	<b>95</b>
<b>WHAT CAN BE LEARNED FROM THE HISTORY OF LAND USE PLANNING WITHIN THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST?</b>	<b>98</b>
STRONG POLITICAL LEADERSHIP	98
IMPLEMENTATION AND ADVOCACY GROUPS	99
ADAPTATION TO LOCAL POLITICAL CLIMATE	100
REGIONAL METROPOLITAN GOVERNMENTS	102
COMMITMENT TO PUBLIC PARTICIPATION	102
EDUCATION OF THE PUBLIC	106
THE FUTURE OF "SUSTAINABILITY"	108
<b>CONCLUSIONS</b>	<b>110</b>



<b>APPENDICES</b>	<b>113</b>
<b>CALIFORNIA IN-MIGRANTS BY OREGON COUNTY</b>	<b>113</b>
<b>VOTING RECORDS - CALIFORNIAN POPULATION REGRESSION ANALYSIS</b>	<b>117</b>
<b>LCDC GOALS</b>	<b>119</b>
PLANNING PROCESS	119
CONSERVATION	119
DEVELOPMENT	120
COASTAL RESOURCES	120
<b>SOURCES</b>	<b>121</b>

## **Chapter 1**

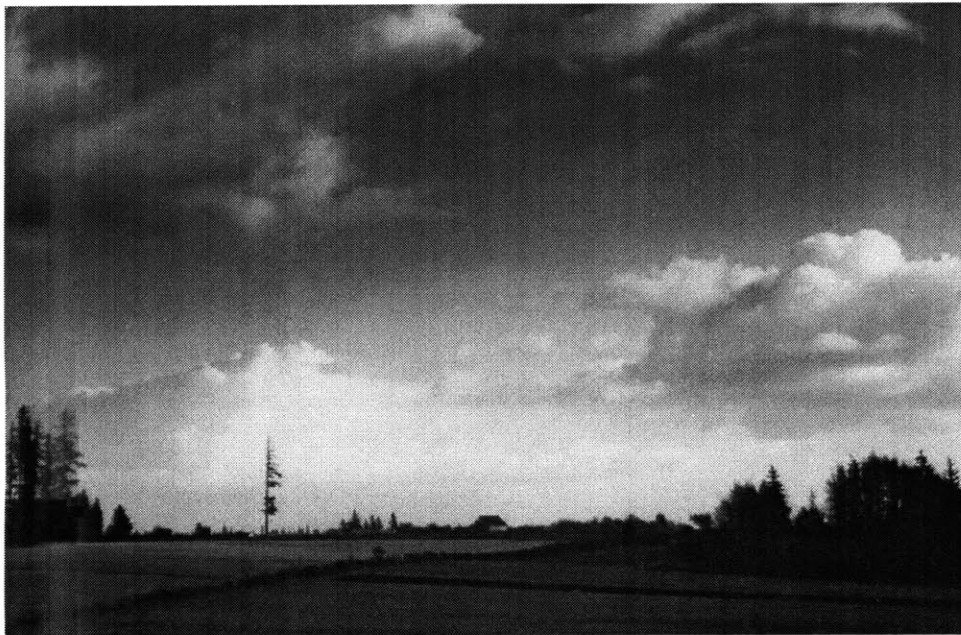
### **Overview of Growth Trends and Concepts in the Pacific Northwest**

The Pacific Northwest has produced within recent years, several examples of progressive land use planning. Recently Seattle has come to national attention for the Sustainable Seattle Comprehensive Plan. Since the 1970s Oregon has been upheld as a national model for its land use planning system. Vancouver BC has had a developed land use system in effect for even longer. Through these plans, the region is addressing a shift from a historic economic dependence upon natural resources to an economy based upon emerging information based industries. Residents of the Pacific Northwest have recognized the conservation of land as central to the protection of their quality of life, to the region's economic prosperity and to its attractiveness as a residential setting.

The potential benefits of comprehensive planning are amplified by the region's relative wealth and the presence of one of the most intact natural systems within the industrial world. It is no accident that growth management, as a national issue, has emerged in areas that share a combination of spectacular natural setting and strong growth pressure. Early land use management programs were developed in Oregon, Florida, Hawaii and Vermont. More recently, Washington has adopted similar policies and has brought sustainability in to the forefront as a national issue. San Diego has also adopted regional growth management procedures from the Pacific Northwest, suggesting as awareness of the region's experience with land use planning increases, it's system could become a model for other parts of the nation.

## Overview of Growth Trends and Concepts in the Pacific Northwest

The threat of rapid growth to the traditional settlement pattern and way of life in the region has redefined the local conception of progress and clarified the need for growth management. The negative impacts of suburbanization have been linked directly to a perceived decline in the quality of life. Individual consumers, acting without complete information, often prefer suburban housing forms, but there is growing evidence that for many, the social losses of the suburban lifestyle outweigh the individual gains. While greater land use planning seems to be increasingly desirable, it is also increasingly becoming necessary in response to the finite nature of natural resources and particularly to the limited availability of land most suitable for development. The development of public participation within the land use planning process has proven to be an essential element for effective growth management. A committed effort to the encouragement and cultivation of citizen initiative and participation in the planning process has enabled sustainable planning processes. Education is an important part of the participation process and is also a result of the public involvement in the production of regional growth management plans. The development of sophisticated planning processes within the region provides important lessons for planners throughout the US.



The Willamette Valley, 1949  
Source: Lynch

### *Compact Development Forms*

Preservation of a rural or agrarian landscape for economic, ecological, esthetic or environmental reasons, has been the principle motivation for growth management. With a growing population and a growing economy it becomes necessary to accommodate more jobs and more people within a limited amount of space. Thus the marketing of two models for higher density development is closely related to the proponency of growth management practices. The first, the "Urban Village" has become in recent years a popular description for an urban design approach that combines elements of mixed land-use planning and neo-traditional design, modeled in part upon an idealized vision of established European towns. A second model for higher density development is the Transit Oriented Development (TOD), energetically advocated by the architect, Peter Calthorpe. This approach focuses development into areas within walking distance of mass transit with the goal of reducing automobile dependency. Demarcation of an Urban Growth Boundary (UGB) or Urban Growth Area (UGA) is a method for encouraging compact growth at the regional level.

### *Sustainability as an Emergent Issue*

Intertwined within the primary justification for land use planning is the concept of sustainable practice. Sustainability requires a way of life such that current actions do not endanger future well being. Historically in the Pacific Northwest, natural resources have existed in a seeming abundance and for the most part residents have lived accordingly. The gradual depletion of these resources, sometimes in unpredictable fashion, has impressed upon the region's population that the current life style is not a stable state. A growing population will require even greater resources for its sustenance while our ability to increase the production of those resources is in decline. While science has done much to increase agricultural production and forest management has allowed the timber industry to attain a level of sustainability, there is a limit upon the ability of these industries to grow to meet increasing needs. Further, as more land is consumed for residential use, less is available for agriculture or timber or to provide living space. The concept of sustainability has emerged as an important guiding principle for regional planning efforts.

The sustainable development approach advocated by urban designers, such as Peter Calthorpe, includes some very good ideas that are capable of improving the organization of physical urban space with both social and ecological benefit. But this approach addresses only a segment of sustainable practice. The land-use plans for Portland and Seattle both develop meaningful

environmental indicators for sustainability, based upon measurable environmental qualities (such as air quality and per capital vehicle miles traveled) and provide further insight into the necessary components of sustainability. What neither plan consciously addresses is the need for sustainable planning processes. The future of "Sustainability" ultimately depends upon a long-term commitment to land use planning, a planning process that is itself sustainable and thus requires substantial support among the public. Both planners and the public need a better understanding of the necessary elements for sustainable urban living.

Sustainability consists of several attitudes that govern our use of the land. Mankind has a moral responsibility to practice stewardship or wise use of the earth's resources for the sake of future generations and perhaps also as a form of respect for the earth as a living system itself. Wise use of the land requires an intimate and scientific understanding of the geographic, ecological and cultural associations of a particular place. In anticipation of future technological advance, allowances can be made for current consumption that exceeds current production, but in recognition of our limited understanding of the Earth's natural systems and our limited ability to predict that technological advance, it is important to conserve and to reduce consumption whenever possible. Sustainable political process are necessary as well. As democracy has politically sustained the US for over 200 years, sustainable practice anchored within public involvement can sustain human settlement. Sustainability requires that individuals be informed in order to make wise use of personal resources and that individuals be involved in the development of public policy in order for that policy to be effective. Sustainable policy requires maintenance over time and maintenance requires an engaged public realm. Citizen ownership of public policy is the result of citizen initiative and citizen involvement in the planning process. Finally, sustainability requires that our society produce an organization of physical space that will support the social structure of our society. The well-being of our political and cultural institutions requires a settlement pattern that will sustain those institutions.

Added to the argument of necessity, is one of benefit. Proponents of sustainable practice believe that limits upon the consumption of natural resources improve conditions for this generation as well as the next. Specialists within various disciplines have identified different costs that result from Suburbanization. Suburbanization is responsible for increasing municipal costs from the point of view of the economist, the destruction of habitat for the environmentalist, the disintegration of community for the social scientist, the introduction of toxins into our environment for the scientist, the loss of pleasurable urban space for the architect and a blight upon the landscape for the average citizen. Land use planning and growth management policies provide means to address all of these costs and to guide us toward practices that will protect or improve the quality of life in the near future as well as for over the long term.

### *Regional-Cultural Interpretations of Urban Space*

The public spaces of the urban setting are a physical expression of the social and cultural environment. While commercial interests have fostered the design of "public spaces" based upon the entertainment of potential shoppers, urban planners have not abandoned the idea that good urban design is based upon the existence of good *public* urban spaces and that good public urban spaces are a necessary part of the functioning of a Democratic society. Traditionally for many the urban plaza has been considered central among public spaces.

"The plaza is a manifestation of the local social order, of the relationship between citizens and between citizens and the authority of the state. The plaza is where the role of the individual in the community is made visible, where we reveal our identity as part of an ethnic or religious or political or consumer-oriented society, and it exists and functions to reinforce that identity."<sup>1</sup>

But it is also possible that public space goes beyond being a means of self-expression. Public spaces can also inform the social structure as the physical environment engages the dynamic nature of culture in a two-way discourse. While human beings may have some universal physical needs, historically people have found it important to shape their environments in unique and culturally specific ways. This diversity has made the world an interesting place. But with the increasing flow of information across regional boundaries and the legacy of the Modernist movement, regional distinctions, including the production of culturally specific urban space, has become increasingly threatened. If such a deconstruction of culturally specific space occurs, cultures have been deprived of a means of self-expression. Further, it is possible that as physical forms conform, regional social distinctions will be lost.

"Wherever we go in the contemporary landscape we run across these signs: boundaries, roads and places of assembly. We read them at once, and we not only read them, we create them ourselves, almost without realizing that without them we could not function as members of society. To me this universal need - and universal ability - to organize space, to divide it into microspaces, assemble them into macrospace, is impressive evidence that there is a common, unchanging human nature. But each age, each society develops its own unique kind of spatial organization. These are societies which cannot rest until they have defined every space, natural or man-made, in conveniently human or political categories."<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Jackson, 1984, p.18

<sup>2</sup> Jackson, 1984, p.28

The development of localized processes that determine the settlement pattern is important for the preservation of regional diversity. A strong understanding of regional character can enable planners and urban designers a legitimized process for responding to localized needs. Further, experience suggests that a localized understanding of ecological and social processes, often imbedded within the local character, is a key ingredient in the development of sustainable practices.

*Regional Demographics*

Census population data for the Pacific Northwest provides some insight into the form of the region's population growth. Since the second world war, the population of the Pacific Northwest has grown fairly consistently, keeping pace with the growth of the US population. During this period, the US population has shifted towards the West and the South. Oregon's population growth has more or less followed the national growth rate. Since 1970, the strength of the Washington economy has caused the state's population to grow at slightly faster rate than the general US population.

**Population**

Population of (in 1,000s)	1940	1950	1960	1970	1980	1990
the US	131,669*	151,326	179,323	203,303	226,542	248,718
Oregon	1,736	2,379	2,853	2,092	2,633	2,842
% of US	1.3%	1.6%	1.6%	1.0%	1.2%	1.1%
Washington	1,090	1,521	1,769	3,413	4,132	4,867
% of US	0.8%	1.0%	1.0%	1.7%	1.8%	2.0%
Greater Portland**				1,047	1,298	1,478
Greater Seattle**				1,837	2,093	2,559
Portland City	305	374	373	383	368	437
Seattle City	368	468	557	531	494	516

\*conterminous US

\*\*Figures from 1995 Census definition of metropolitan area.

Population increase in Oregon, rather than through consistent growth, has occurred through large, periodic in-migrations, from the time of the Oregon Trail to the recent boom of the 1990s. During the periods between economic booms, the state in fact tends to experience net out-migration, such as was seen in the years immediately following the second world war and during the state's recession in the late 70's and 80's. While between 1960 and 1970 the state population decreased, the Portland central city area actually gained population, suggesting that the state's new growth management policies may have been effective at directing development into the existing urban areas.

## Overview of Growth Trends and Concepts in the Pacific Northwest

While Washington's population grew rapidly in the '70s and '80s, in the absence of comprehensive growth management the population of the Seattle central city area declined, indicating that population growth took place either in the greater metropolitan region or in more rural parts of the state. Between 1960 and 1980 the central city areas of Portland and Seattle lost population, but both central city areas have experienced recovery in the past decade, particularly Portland which grew by 16% between 1980 and 1990. Suburbanization definitely occurred between 1970 and 1980 as both central city areas lost population but the two metropolitan areas grew. This was particularly true for the Seattle region which in grew by 500,000 people between 1980 and 1990, an increase of 22% and reached 3,225,000 in 1994<sup>3</sup>.

### Population Growth Rates

	'40-'50	'50-'60	'60-'70	'70-'80	'80-'90
US	13%	16%	26%	10%	9%
Oregon	27%	17%	-36%	21%	7%
Washington	28%	14%	48%	17%	15%
Greater Portland				24%	14%
Greater Seattle				14%	22%
Portland	18%	0%	3%	-4%	16%
Seattle	21%	16%	-5%	-7%	4%

The number of employed persons grew for Oregon from 1,138,425 in 1980 to 1,319,960 in 1990 (14% increase). In Washington, the number moved from 1,794,354 in 1980 to 2,293,961 in 1990 (22% increase). In both cases, the employment increase is greater than the state's population increase during the same period. For Oregon, the percentage of the work force involved in agriculture grew slightly from 3.5% to 4.0% while the fishing, forestry and mining industry occupation levels remained stable. As might be expected, manufacturing declined and the service sector grew in percentage employment of the work force. Washington experienced a nearly identical shift from manufacturing to service sector employment and a slight decline in agricultural employment. The increase in agricultural employment in Oregon may be accounted for partly by the growth of high-cash crop agriculture (such as vineyards) that some attribute to the positive impact of LCDC policy upon the price of agricultural land.

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<sup>3</sup> Figures from US Census Statistical Abstract, 1994

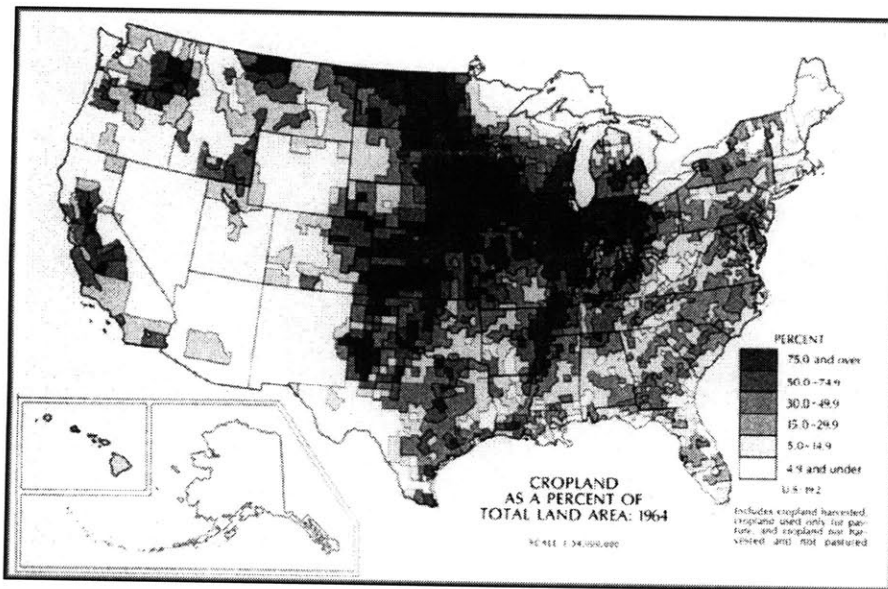


## Overview of Growth Trends and Concepts in the Pacific Northwest

### Industry of Employed Persons

Industry	Oregon		Washington	
	1980	1990	1980	1990
Agriculture	3.5%	4.0%	3.2%	3.1%
Forestry and Fisheries	1.1%	1.1%	0.6%	0.6%
Mining	0.2%	0.2%	0.2%	0.2%
Construction	6.4%	5.6%	6.8%	6.3%
Manufacturing	19.5%	17.7%	19.5%	17.5%
Transportation, communications & other public utilities	7.2%	6.5%	7.8	7.3%
Wholesale Trade	4.7%	4.7%	5.1%	4.7%
Retail Trade	17.9%	18.1%	16.9%	17.1%
Finance, insurance & real estate	6.3%	6.0%	6.2%	6.4%
Services	28.3%	32.1%	28.8%	31.8%
Public administration	5.0%	4.1%	4.9%	4.9%

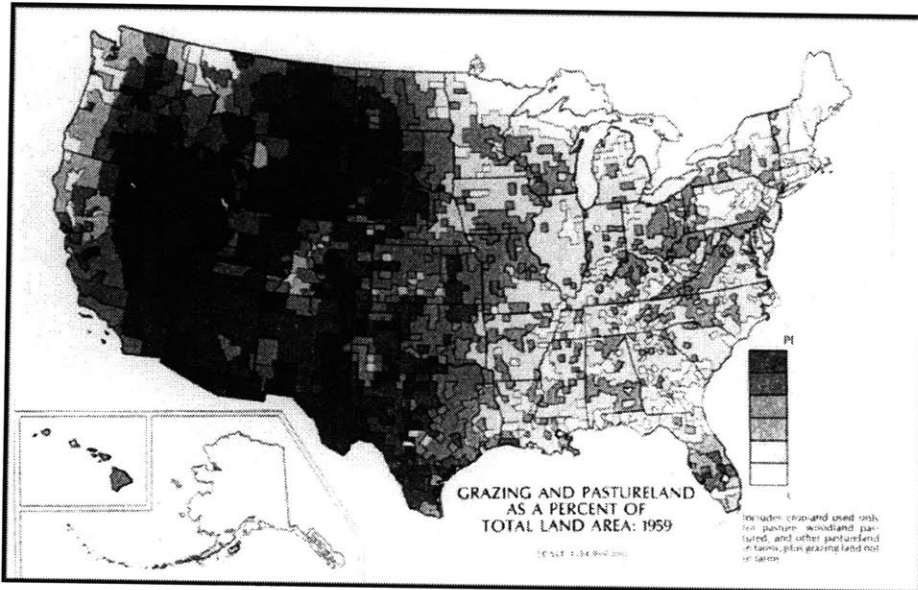
While the regional employment share for agriculture is relatively small, it remains one of the region's larger industries. In Oregon in 1994 agriculture accounted directly for \$3 billion in annual sales and for \$8 billion when transportation, equipment, services, supplies and food production are included. The region's major crops include Christmas trees, grass seed, filberts, peppermint, cane berries, apples, strawberries, hops, onions, prunes, plums, cauliflower and pears.<sup>4</sup>



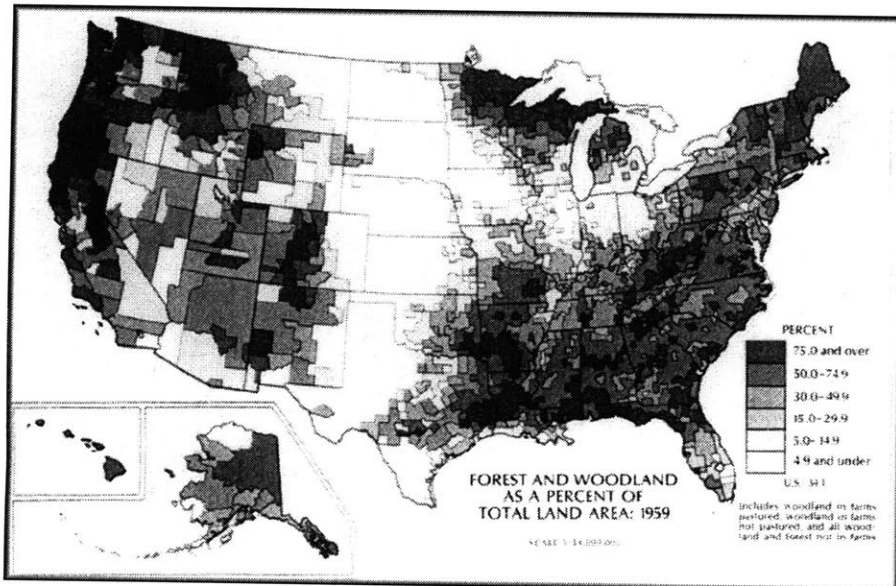
**US Land Use Maps - Crop Lands**  
Source: The Atlas of the United States

<sup>4</sup> Oregon League of Women Voters, 1995, p.4

Overview of Growth Trends and Concepts in the Pacific Northwest



**US Land Use Maps - Pasture Land**  
Source: The Atlas of the United States



**US Land Use Maps - Forest Land**  
Source: The Atlas of the United States

The Portland downtown grew from 56,000 jobs in 1975 to 90,000 jobs in 1995 despite a declining trend in Oregon’s traditional industries. During the same period, air quality improved and traffic congestion levels have remained constant, evidence that the state’s land use policies have been effective in mitigating the environmental impacts of population growth and suburbanization upon the urbanized region. However, sprawl has not been eliminated and since 1972, the number of people

living in suburbs has increased. With occasional exceptions, Oregon's cities, including Portland, in terms of density appear similar to other cities in the US. "According to a (1995) State of Oregon study, growth inside the UGB is occurring at only 70 percent of planned densities, intensifying the pressure to expand the boundary."<sup>5</sup> The state experienced a net out-migration of 86,000 people between 1980 and 1986, significant for a state with a population of only 2.6 million in 1980. As a result there was little development pressure in the '80s to challenge the UGB. In contrast, between August 1989 and July 1991, the Oregon population gained 100,000 new in-migrants. This migration had several components including the expansion of the tourist industry and the relocation of California retirees, particularly along the coast and on the east slopes of the Cascade range. But also, among this in-migration, was a number of skilled workers who provided an expanded labor pool for businesses within the Portland metropolitan area. This increased labor availability has been an important factor in the region's recent economic growth. In the next 50 years, the Portland metropolitan region is predicted to gain 350,000 new jobs and 720,000 new residents reaching a population of 1.8 million in the year 2040. Similar growth is expected for Seattle. The Seattle Comprehensive Plan sets population growth targets of 603,000 for the central city area with 610,000 new jobs.

Oregon is somewhat unique that since the second world war, it has experienced two periods of rapid population growth that were not driven by an expanding local economy or regional job availability. Both periods of growth, the first in the late '60s and the early '70s and the second in the '90s, took place when the economy was poor in other regions of the US. When job availability decreases in other areas, the quality of life available in Oregon may become a more attractive incentive for regional migration even when work opportunities are scarce in Oregon. As people move to Oregon, they prompt economic growth in order to meet the new associated consumption. It might be possible to observe a similar phenomena in Arizona or Florida, where the perception of superior quality of life has prompted an initial population growth which then spurred economic growth, rather than the typical, more iterative mutual growth process.

In Portland, transit is used for 40% of downtown trips, but only 3.6% of all trips and 7% of work trips within the greater metropolitan area. By comparison, in the metropolitan area of Vancouver, Canada's fastest growing city, transit is used for 10% of all trips and 17% of work trips.<sup>6</sup> While Portland's policies have been effective, the greater land use planning authority granted to the

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<sup>5</sup> Tri-Met's Strategic Direction, 1995

<sup>6</sup> Tri-Met's Strategic Direction, 1995

## Overview of Growth Trends and Concepts in the Pacific Northwest

Canadian government for Vancouver BC has allowed a more compact city that can serve the region as a local example.

“Through careful planning, clustered development and a pervasive commitment to transit, the metropolitan area (of Vancouver, BC) has become a thriving, growing region that works - a bustling place as renowned for its charm, mobility and livability as for its spectacular beauty.”<sup>7</sup>

The significant differences in political systems and philosophies that separate the US and Canada make difficult the direct adoption of Canadian policies within the US context. While Vancouver BC has provided US planners with insight into positive urban settlement patterns, this paper will focus more upon the political processes related to planning within the US.

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<sup>7</sup> Tri-Met’s Strategic Direction, 1995

## **Chapter 2**

### **Regional Values**

It is possible that the popular political support for comprehensive planning in Oregon and Washington is a reflection of a particular set of values held by residents of the Pacific Northwest region. While Oregon and Washington are different in many ways, it is also commonly perceived that they share similar regional values. These values can be examined through the three different methods of study presented here: analysis of the conclusions of cultural geographers, analysis of public opinion surveys, and analysis of voting trends.

#### *The Pacific Northwest Cultural Region*

#### **Historic Values**

Cultural geographers such as Raymond Gastil, and more recently Michael Conzen, have devised criteria for dividing the United States into "cultural regions" based upon social indicators, type of local industry, immigration patterns and self-identification. While the defining boundaries of

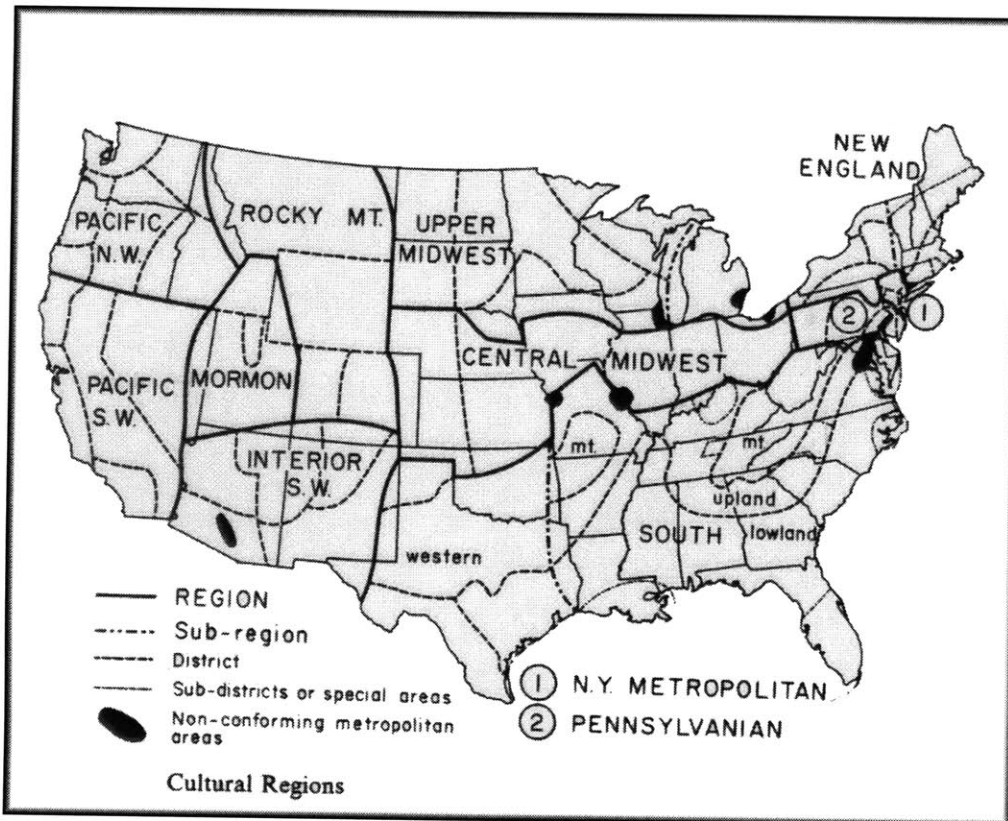
these cultural regions are often ambiguous, the Pacific Northwest, including Oregon and Washington, has a particularly strong regional identity and is in general readily identifiable for both local residents and scholars. Scholars identify various sub-regions within this region, but generally agree upon the distinct identity of the Willamette Valley and the Olympic Peninsula. The former, which includes Portland, is particularly well defined through the topography, while the latter, which includes Seattle, relies more upon climate and the local, traditional industries to form its identity.

Gastil argues effectively that the "first effective settlement" produces the predominant culture within a region.<sup>8</sup> In this view, the original settlers provide a region's underlying ethics and political structure with lasting effect upon regional identity. In the case of the Oregon territory, the first European settlement was by New England Methodists, missionaries who tended to view government and the landscape in moralistic terms. The mix of early settlers also included New England merchants who had arrived by ship, Southern farmers who crossed the plains in covered wagons, British businessmen and soldiers accustomed to a somewhat luxurious lifestyle, Catholic French Canadian trappers and American trappers (the Rocky Mountain Boys) who often had Native American wives. Later settlement was dominated by people from the northern central states and from northern Europe including the Scandinavians who settled on Oregon's northern coast in the 1850s and along the Puget Sound. Fishing and dairy become their primary industry in coastal towns such as Astoria and Tillamook. Inland, Germanic people settled and became the farmers of central and eastern Oregon and Washington. The missionary groups, Germanic farmers, and Scandinavian settlers were people who considered a common value orientation an important element in the establishment of community. The result was a moralistic community which tended to "conceive of politics as a public activity centered on some notion of the public good and properly devoted to the advancement of the public interest. Good government (for such groups), thus, is measured by the degree to which it promotes the public good."<sup>9</sup> Demonstrated service to the public good serves to legitimize government regulations, including growth management. The historical importance given to the conception of public good, to the importance of public participation and to normative governmental intervention can be traced to the values of the first Europeans to settle in the region.

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<sup>8</sup> Gastil, 1975

<sup>9</sup> Elazer 1972, pp. 96-97



**Cultural Regions of the US**  
Source: Gastil

While the agrarian Oregon Territory attracted conservative, Protestant farmers who valued the promised rewards for hard labor, California generally attracted the more adventurous and opportunist of the pioneers. The often expressed distaste for Californians found in Oregon and Washington may have its roots in this historic separation. Such expressions date to an 1838 letter to the US congress from the Oregon Territory which indicated a preference for additional settlers from the Midwest or East rather than from California.

Notions of political independence also were evident in the region's early history. Oregon became an official US territory in 1849, after struggles with the local indigenous population pushed the pioneers to request military support from the US government. Prior to that, the region had been governed almost exclusively by the local population, balanced between US and British settlers. Britain attempted to exert influence over the territory from the colonial government centered in Vancouver, British Columbia and to discourage non-British settlement. The local British

administrator however ignored much of the British policy, claiming that it was either impractical or in violation of his conscience.<sup>10</sup>

A cursory study of politics in Seattle and Portland will reveal the usual degree of political corruption and self-serving political action that one would expect to find in any metropolitan area. Both Oregon and Washington have a history of urban political corruption including heavy influence from legitimate and less legitimate industries. The underlying moralistic side to politics and associated political idealism was ascendant from 1950 to 1970 in Oregon. Wayne Morse, Tom McCall, and Mark Hatfield were bold Oregon politicians of this era who were willing to take strong and controversial positions. These "moralistic" politicians provided the initiative for Oregon to develop its innovative land use management and growth control policies.

Tom McCall is particularly remembered for his "value-laden discourse." Quotes, such as the description of suburbanization he gave in an address to the state legislature in January of 1973: "shameless threat to our environment and to the whole quality of life - unfettered despoiling of the land," have become famous. The strength of this rhetoric lies in part in its appeal to a variety of sentiments: "Sagebrush subdivisions, coastal condomania, and the ravenous rampage of suburbia in the Willamette Valley all threaten to mock Oregon's status as the environmental model for the nation.... The interests of Oregon for today and in the future must be protected from grasping wastrels of the land."<sup>11</sup> The call for planning was couched in the vocabulary that will best appeal to the local sense of regional pride and an early sense of national environmental leadership. Further, it is a moralistic plea rather than a rational argument employing emotive, personalized terminology. Based upon such emotive language, land use planning was introduced as a necessity to the Oregon public.

### **Political Involvement and Liberalism**

Oregon has been described as having a "general policy liberalism." Geographers David Klingman and William Lammers created an index "based on levels of social service and welfare spending, anti-discrimination and consumer protection laws and programs, date of ratification of the

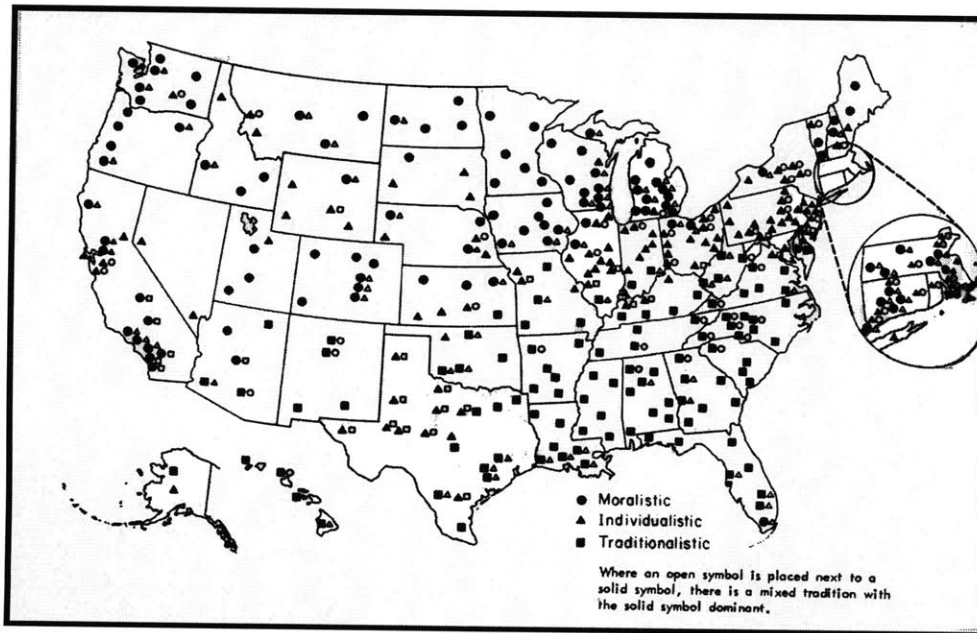
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<sup>10</sup> Oregon Blue Book, 1995-1996

<sup>11</sup> McCall and Neal 1977, p.196



Equal Rights Amendment, and overall policy innovation to 1965<sup>12</sup> according to which Oregon was the sixth most politically liberal state in the nation. In contrast, Washington did not appear among the top ten states according to such criteria. Nevertheless, it has also demonstrated the legislative will to enact comprehensive planning mandates.



Moralistic Influences upon Regional Character  
Source: Gastil

Similar analysis of the criteria responsible for Portland's high livability ratings reveals high levels of civic involvement and a politically proactive community. Portland residents desire active involvement in the creation of public policy and so are more likely to support planning efforts based upon a guarantee of public participation. As observed by Carl Abbott of Portland State University: "It is not just the content of the statewide goals that is rooted in Oregon's political culture. The goal-setting process used in Oregon planning draws directly on the state's core values. It has tended to be participatory and explicitly rational."<sup>13</sup>

A significant contribution to the social conscience of the Pacific Northwest is the mix of two population groups.<sup>14</sup> The first, who have inherited attitudes from the original pioneers, contribute a

<sup>12</sup> Abbott, 1994, p. 208

<sup>13</sup> Abbott, 1994, p. 210

<sup>14</sup> Lawrence interview, 1997

practical conception of nature that tends to overestimate nature's ability for self-replenishment. Such a view provides an overly optimistic or romantic view of the resources available to our future, but also makes possible a rational management of land resources. A strong view of property rights and unwillingness to subjugate property rights to public interest also are a part of this world view and two of the myths that challenge land use planning have most likely descended from this group: "property rights are inviolable" and that sprawl equals growth.<sup>15</sup> The second population group consists of the region's new-comers. These people, many of whom are from suburbanized regions of California, have witnessed first hand the destruction of the environment within their former residential neighborhoods and may feel partly responsible for that destruction. This group considers the protection of the environment a priority, but may overly romanticize the more verdant past.

Both contradiction and a surprising commonality exist within the environmental political landscape of the Pacific Northwest. While the region has high membership levels in national environmentalist groups, conservative values are also evident. This general conservatism, however, is connected to the protection of the environment, much as was the environmental conservation movement at the beginning of this century. The desire to protect the environment and to prevent change in the landscape fostered land use planning within the region. Land use planning programs in return educated the region's population and led people to be more sensitive to environmental issues.

### **Ecological Awareness in the Pacific Northwest**

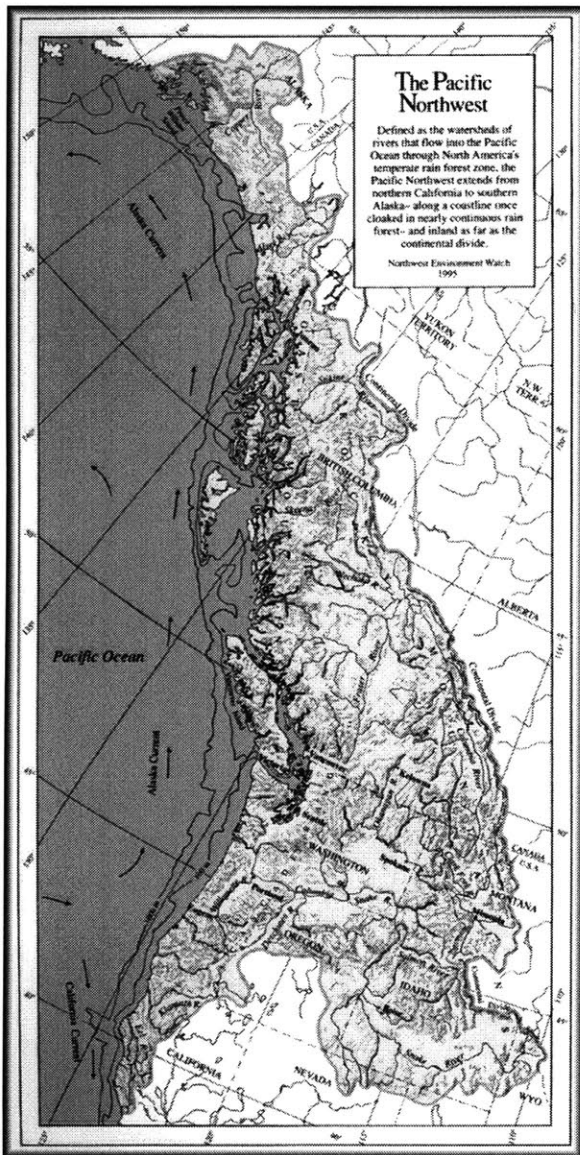
More recently, Bioregionalists such as Alan Thein Durning have defined the Pacific Northwest in terms of geographic features rather than according to political or cultural boundaries. The Pacific Northwest Bioregion is bounded by the Pacific Ocean to the West and includes the land that lies within the Northwest's temperate rain forest and the watershed of the Columbia river. Durning suggests that if one particular identifier exists for the region, it is either the presence of salmon or the rainy weather. While the cultural geographer's model recognizes topography as important in shaping the cultural landscape of the region, the bioregionalist model recognizes the importance of understanding the region in terms of the function of its natural eco-systems and of finding regional strategies for sustainability based upon the functioning of those systems.

"Bioregionalism (whether or not it is called by that name) is based on the premise that 'biology,' 'ecology,' and 'culture' are abstractions which can only be learnt in a particular place which itself is the result of a unique geological, biological and cultural history. The earth is full

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<sup>15</sup> Durning, 1996

of an almost infinite number of such places, though we can identify large 'bioregions' fairly easily. Usually, bioregions transcend political boundaries, which have been imposed for other reasons. Watersheds, for example (all the land drained by a river system between two ridges or mountain ranges), are 'bioregions,' known and respected by ancient inhabitants, but usually overlooked by our political boundaries."<sup>16</sup>



Map of the Pacific Northwest Bioregion  
Source: Durning

<sup>16</sup> Wilkinson, 1991p.195

Bioregionalism has further implications concerning the potential for modifying human behavior. Durning argues that the region's self-identity comes primarily from the relationship between the local inhabitants and the natural landscape. This self-identity is the focal point upon which a moralist "love of home" can be established. Such a love of home or love of place is the only successful motivation through which human behavior can be swayed toward sustainable practice. Local action should be motivated by a recognition of the inherent value of a place. As a corollary to this argument, political boundaries are recognized as arbitrary obstructions to the effective management of the regional ecology.

Durning also uses many of the common characterizations describing the Northwest's advantages for planning: The region's ecological systems have suffered the least of any within the industrial world. The population tends to be well educated and sensitive to the environment. There are strong traditions of participatory democracy, political and business innovation and also public tolerance and solidarity. The region is not particularly dependent upon industries with high ecological impact and is becoming less dependent upon resource extraction industries while the information sector of the economy grows. The scale of the region may also be conducive to regional identification and to thinking and planning for the bioregion. While the Pacific Northwest is perhaps "the greenest part of the richest society in history,"<sup>17</sup> Durning argues that other regions can also benefit from adapting sustainable practices developed within the region.

"The Pacific Northwest. No part of the industrial world has as large a share of its ecosystems intact. And no other place on the continent matches its depth and breadth of sustainability initiatives, efforts undertaken by businesses, citizens, communities, and governments. A single biological region stretching from Prince William Sound to the Redwood Coast of California and from the Pacific Ocean to the crest of the Rockies, an economic region encompassing fourteen million people and \$300 billion of annual production, the Pacific Northwest can be the test case for sustainability."<sup>18</sup>

The economic potential of the natural resources of the Pacific Northwest provided the initial attraction for Europeans. Trappers came first for the sea otter, whose pelts provided a valuable commodity for trade with the Chinese. The pelts were so valuable, that by 1810 the otter had been trapped to near non-existence, a population depletion that continues to affect the coastal ecology. Following the otter, the Northwest's beavers were targeted to supply the European fashion for beaver skin hats. The fashion lasted long enough to greatly reduce the region's beaver population, a demise that was accelerated in the political struggle between the British and American claims upon the

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<sup>17</sup> Durning, 1996

<sup>18</sup> Durning, 1996, p.289

Oregon Territory. The British pursued a policy of trapping the beaver to extinction in the Pacific Northwest in order to discourage the in-migration of American trappers. Following the beaver industry, economies based upon mineral extraction, timber and salmon harvest each had their period of seemingly unlimited prosperity. The California gold rush, beginning in 1848, provided an important early impetus to the development of the local timber and agricultural industries. In the 1990s the salmon population has become scarce enough to eliminate most commercial fishing. Today forestry and agriculture employ only a small portion of the region's work force but continue to play a prominent role in forming the regional identity.

In the consciousness of the Northwest resident, the depletion of one natural resource has always been offset by the development of a new, seemingly ever abundant one, so that only recently has the general population began to rethink the early settlers' and pioneers' assumption of the "endless bounty of nature." The early settler also perceived a struggle for survival wherein nature was man's chief opponent. Tied to these assumptions is the attitude that human intervention within the landscape is, for the most part, an improvement of the land.

"In the Pacific Northwest, as elsewhere in North America, the commonly held worldview is an old one from the frontier. It comes from the rearview mirror, reflecting times when the world was big and people were few. Through this lens, the world looks empty and indestructible. The environment and human community appear subordinate to the economy, as things worth protecting if you can afford to after paying the bills. In this worldview, production looks like the creation of tangible objects that meet basic human needs. Resource industries - logging, farming, mining, energy production - seem to be the locomotive that drags the entire economy along. This view is familiar and comforting, and demonstrably false."<sup>19</sup>

Many in the Pacific Northwest maintain such a perspective and view environmental protection as an unnecessary and meddlesome interference with the economy. The decision by a federal judge in 1981 to restrict logging in areas known to be spotted owl habitat is a recent example of a case where an environmental protection act resulted in a strong negative public reaction. (In this case, public reaction was likely intensified because the intervention was viewed as originating at the federal rather than regional level.)

Durning argues for a contrasting world view in which the "economy and human community are subsets of the broader ecosystem" of a more fragile world. While such moral arguments tend to change world view at a very slow pace, other forces have resulted in a greater change in behavior.

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<sup>19</sup> Durning, 1996, p.248

Economic necessity has changed both the behavior and to some degree the philosophy of Northwest farmers. In the '90s, farmers have found that they need to reduce costs significantly in order to remain competitive. Reducing the use of chemicals, possible through a greater sensitivity to soil conditions, is one method for reducing cost. As a result, farmers are now thinking more in terms of cooperation with the land. Similarly, economic competition has led to the production of more fuel efficient cars.

Ecological awareness in the Pacific Northwest, as it does in most of America, traces its heritage to the publishing of Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring* in 1962. Carson sought to change behavior through rational argument. While this book has had an enormous impact upon environmental awareness, many serious environmentalists are dissatisfied with the ability of rational argument to affect significant changes in human behavior and political policy and have adopted more emotive or spiritual arguments for their cause. The influence of Bioregionalist thinking upon planning in Seattle is suggested in the emphasis made by Gary Lawrence, former chief planner for Seattle, upon changing human practice and the integration of natural and social ecology:

"In Seattle, Washington USA we find, through a lot of luck, some good decisions, and the luxury of what used to be an abundant natural margin for error, that discussions of sustainability and sustainable development are possible when making many of the choices we face. We have a highly educated population who care about the natural environment; an abundance of resources (including capital); we haven't lived here long enough to have irrevocably lost what nature has given us; and we have political systems which encourage the involvement of citizens in decision-making. Even here, however, old habits, myths and the desire for stuff makes sustainability a hard sell."<sup>20</sup>

While it is unclear that the more normative arguments of bioregionalists, such as Alan Durning, will lead to more extensive changes in human behavior, in the Pacific Northwest the information produced by these groups is playing a very important informative role in on-going land use planning discussions.

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<sup>20</sup> Lawrence, <http://www.sustainable.doe.gov/articles/susseat.html>

*Opinion Surveys*

City planners in Seattle and Portland seek to establish clear connections between public values and the development of public policy. The commitment to public input has emerged as an important factor for the implementation of progressive and innovative public policy developments. Opinion surveys have become an important tool for planners and politicians to understand public opinion regarding land use and growth control issues. As the mix of the region's population changes, the need for continual evaluation of public values is recognized and made a part of the ongoing planning process. These surveys also provide valuable insight into the popular values for the region.

As part of a public communication effort that began in 1992, Portland Metro conducted a survey for the development of the Metro 2040 Growth Concept.<sup>21</sup> An attempt was made to contact 500,000 households in the Portland metropolitan area and 17,000 responses were actually collected. While this may be a low response percentage, it provides a significant representation of the views of concerned citizens.

A similar citizen outreach program was conducted for the Seattle Comprehensive Plan. Seattle residents were contacted by mail and asked to contribute their opinions as part of the public participation in the city's planning process. Sustainability was adopted as the central theme for the Seattle Comprehensive Plan based upon the survey's results.

The Seattle Housing Preference Study differs from the other surveys described here by having a more proactive element. While this survey seeks to anticipate public reaction to the Seattle Comprehensive Plan's urban village strategy, it also studies methods for improving public acceptance of the urban village living condition. The central role of the urban village strategy, public acceptance of the urban village, is essential for the successful implementation of the Seattle plan. The Seattle Planning department found through the study that the urban village became significantly more attractive to the public as a residential option if particular conditions are met.

A fourth survey was conducted by the Oregon Business Council (OBC), "a private non-profit organization comprised primarily of chief executive officers of Oregon's largest companies,"<sup>22</sup> in 1993 with the belief that it is critical to understand public values within Oregon, to inform public debate regarding the creation of new policy, and to create a baseline for measuring changes in core

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<sup>21</sup> Metro Facts, Fall 1996

<sup>22</sup> Oregon Business Council, 1993, p.1

values, all within the context of significant anticipated growth for the regional population. For the study, 1,361 adult Oregonians from all regions of the state were surveyed through an extensive “face-to-face” opinion interview. The findings of the survey indicate that there is significant concern about changes in livability due to growth and the impact of new development upon mobility.

Generally consistent with census figures for the state, 22 percent of the Oregon Business Council study participants were newcomers, having lived in Oregon for 10 years or less. While some difference were found in the survey responses of new-comers and more established residents, it was concluded that much of that difference could be accounted for by differences in age and income. Newcomers were found to slightly favor spending for government services and more strongly to favor the replacement of logging with tourism, but also to consider economic growth more important than do longer term residents. New-comers also voted less (46%) than longer term residents (56%) in the May 1992 primary.

Other relevant surveys include the Western Attitudes<sup>23</sup> survey commissioned by Metro in 1993 as part the on-going planning process for Portland and a poll commissioned in 1996 by Portland General Electric.

### **Core Values**

The OBC survey identified relatively conservative Core Values for Oregon that are fairly consistent with values one might expect to find within the US in general. Throughout the survey’s responses, families and family life were consistently valued above other interests, such as the presence of presence of diversity within the population. Employment and economic conditions, while clearly second to family in terms of importance, were also considered quite central among survey respondents. In recognition of the relationship between skills and income, the quality of education and the need to improve existing educational institutions were a third priority. Livability, a concern for the physical quality of the state and an associated fear of growth impacts, accounted for the fourth core value category.

The Metro 2040 study compiled a slightly different list of values for Portland Metro residents. This list places more emphasis upon planning issues and also provides considerable

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<sup>23</sup> Western Attitudes Survey, 1993



support of Metro's planning agenda, a reflection of the way in survey questions were presented, while also suggesting that Metro residents are quite concerned about the impacts of growth:

Portland residents value a sense of community

Natural areas, farm lands and forest areas should be preserved.

Neighborhoods should be quiet and accessible to shopping, schools, jobs and recreational opportunities.

Open spaces, scenic beauty and small town atmosphere give the region a positive "feel."

The unique character and assets of communities within the region should be preserved.

The region needs a balanced transportation system that incorporates a range of travel options, including mass transit, bicycle, and automobile.

Growth has a negative impact upon quality of life.

Changes in neighborhood form are acceptable in order to protect the region against urban sprawl, but most residents want to avoid major increases in density near their own homes.

From the survey conducted for the Seattle Comprehensive Plan, a fairly broad, abstract and more progressive list of "Basic Values" was generated:

Continuity

Diversity

Economic Security

Education and Life Long Learning

Environmental Quality

Freedom

Good Government

Opportunity

Health and Safety

Progress

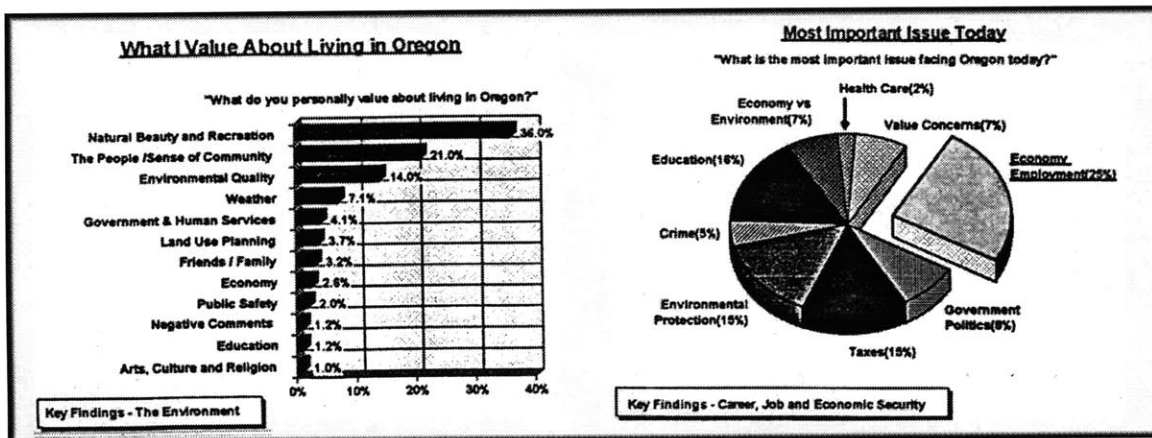
The slightly more liberal agenda of these values is ultimately reflected in the philosophic framework of the Seattle Comprehensive Plan. The basic values seem to have been interpreted somewhat to meet a progressive planning agenda. These values were articulated as a set of "Core Values" which became the key components for the plan's emphasis upon sustainability. Because this list of values was generated through a public participation process, it is considered indicative of the strongest concerns among the public regarding Seattle's future. The definition of sustainability developed for the Seattle Comprehensive Plan is expressed through these four, core values:

Community - the region's prosperity is linked to the strength of community, a sense of belonging and diversity.

Environmental Stewardship - quality of life depends upon good spaces, and the quality of air, water, and soils as well as the built environment. Seattle residents should seek to modify their behavior to foster sound environmental practices.

Economic Opportunity and Security - other city goals should not be pursued at the cost of the economy. A balance must be made between economic and other needs. The city should have a good share of economic growth within the region.

Social Equity - the city should not practice discrimination. Public participation, and the equitable provision of city services, and infrastructure are important foci for improving social equity.



**Core Values for Oregonians**

Source: Oregon Business Council

**Perceptions of Growth**

The results of the OBC survey strongly suggest that Oregonians are quite concerned about the impacts of population growth upon the region’s quality of life but reluctantly accept that population growth is quite likely. While few respondents considered population growth as inherently desirable (20%), the vast majority (96%) conceded that it was likely. In response to a second open-ended question, “As the population in Oregon grows....” a long list of negative conclusions was generated. The number one response, “there are fewer jobs to go around” indicates that economic growth is not believed to be generated by population growth, a conclusion inconsistent with economic indicators.

When respondents were asked to complete the question: “My biggest fear for Oregon is...”<sup>24</sup> The three most popular responses were: “overpopulation” (12%), “becoming like California” (9.5%) and “environmental destruction” (7.7%). These three responses each support some of the arguments in use by advocates of growth management. The fear of overpopulation is one of the central tenets of the Bioregionalist philosophy. Countering rapid suburbanization, “becoming like California,” is one of the chief aims of those who advocate compact development. Environmental protection is used less frequently as a direct rationale by land use planners, probably due to the associated controversy, but certainly can be a direct outcome of growth management. While there are mixed feelings about environmental protection, a part of the population and particularly new-comers feel that it is important to preserve the state’s undeveloped areas. There is also a reasonable amount of concern for the local economy, but in general the survey provides considerable evidence for the existence of a large constituency surprisingly supportive of growth management.

In the Metro 2040 survey, Portland citizens were presented with the four “most viable options” for accommodating the city’s future growth (detailed earlier) and feedback on these four options was gathered through mail responses, open houses and public hearings. A fair degree of inconsistency can be found in the results of this study as the public expressed desires for conflicting types of development and lifestyle. While there is a dislike of sprawl, high density residential development was not attractive to many people either. A similar ambiguity is expressed in the Western Attitudes survey of residents in metropolitan Portland, in which 34% of respondents favored retaining the UGB while 36% thought it should be expanded and 28% were undecided or unsure. Essentially, many people indicated a preference for no growth and a desire to keep both the existing farmlands and low density residential neighborhoods in their current condition. Results from the Metro 2040 household survey suggested four growth management strategies:

- 1) 83% favored increased development along transit lines. (The transit system has become a source of local pride.)
- 2) 77% supported the encouragement of new growth in established urban centers. These centers will serve as community foci.
- 3) 58% supported the reduction of the average size of new lots. (It is significant that the established, current residents are less likely to be affected directly by the size of new lots.)
- 4) 55% supported reductions of parking for retail and commercial development. (A reduction that will affect current residents!)

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<sup>24</sup> Oregon Business Council, 1993, p.18

The Portland General Electric survey suggests a more even distribution between those who favor and those who oppose growth. Oregonians were evenly divided when asked if growth is good (50%) or bad (45%) for Oregon. Respondents in the Portland Metro region were also equally divided, 48% in favor, 48% opposed. Residents of the metro region were more supportive, however, of laws to limit growth in their community. Within the state 43% supported such laws while 50% did not, but for the metro region, 50% said “yes” and only 41% “no.” In the same survey, a solid 56% of metro region respondents want to maintain the current urban growth boundary, while only 37% favor its expansion.<sup>25</sup> It is not particularly surprising for most that residents of the Willamette Valley and particularly of the urban areas, the areas most impacted by recent growth, have been the biggest supporters of comprehensive planning.

### **Environmental Protection vs. Economic Development**

While many Oregonians consider environmental protection both inevitable and detrimental to economic development, a significant segment of the population consider environmental protection to be beneficial to the state's economy. When Oregonians were asked in the OBC study to identify the "most important issue today," the largest group (24%) indicated either the economy or employment. Another 7% suggested some fear that environmental protection was negatively impacting the economy. During the period of the study, Oregon was more successful than the nation as a whole at “keeping jobs” but was rated poorly on this issue by survey respondents, indicating a perceived failure in state policy to protect the economy.<sup>26</sup> When environmental protection was considered as being in competition with economic development, about half of respondents (54%) “considered (increasing) environmental protection very to somewhat desirable over the next 10 years” while slightly more (64%) considered increased protection “very to somewhat likely to occur.”<sup>27</sup> For another group, environmental protection is cooperative with development of the state economy, and will be so increasingly in the future. Respondents considered it likely (70%), while not particularly desirable (49%), that the state’s economy will shift from logging toward tourism. Additionally, when asked to choose between “Relax environmental regulations to make it easier for companies to do business or Maintain a quality environment to attract people and companies to Oregon” 75 percent

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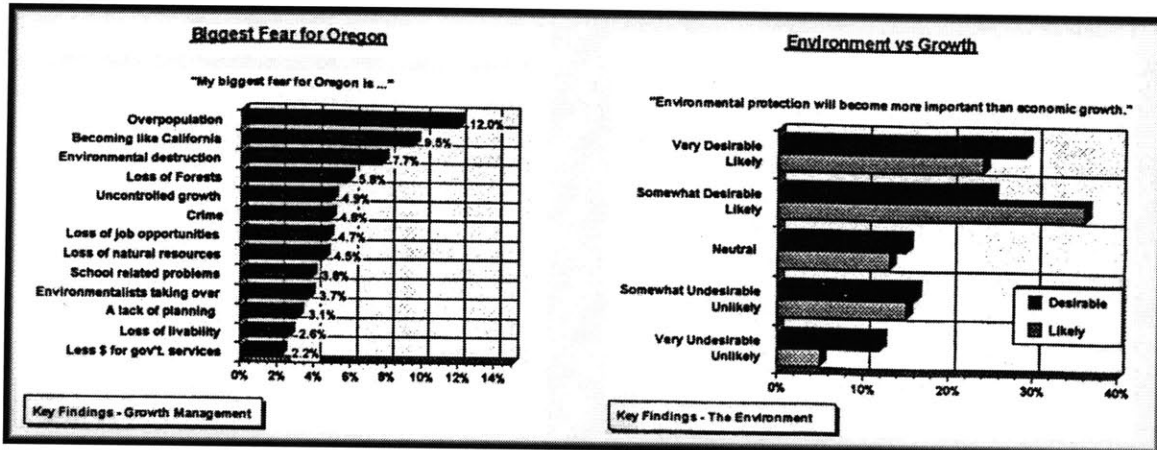
<sup>25</sup> [http://aea\\_web1.aeanet.org/homepage/or-news/215a.html](http://aea_web1.aeanet.org/homepage/or-news/215a.html)

American Electronic Association, Impact Newsletter, August 1996

<sup>26</sup> Oregon Business Council, 1993, p.9

<sup>27</sup> Oregon Business Council, 1993, p.17

of respondents chose the latter and only 16 percent the former as more likely to lead to economic growth.



**Perceptions of the Environment in Oregon**

Source: Oregon Business Council

The environmentalist stance identified in the OBC study is a fairly complicated mix of beliefs. As might be suggested from the population mix of pioneers and new-comers described above, different groups of Oregon residents view the environment or the natural landscape as something to protect with different purposes in mind. When prompted in the OBC study with the open-ended question: "What I Value About Living in Oregon," "Natural beauty and recreation" accounted for 36% of responses. "Environmental quality," describing perhaps the more traditional concern of environmentalists, was the third most common response (14%). Protection of the environment is thus closely associated with recreational opportunity. When important issues for the state were ranked, environmental protection (14%) tied with taxes for third. This suggests a significant number of environmentalists, but also a larger population segment for whom environmental protection is not a priority. Concern for the environment, as an important personal value for many Oregonians, was found to be much stronger in the Portland Metro area, while residents of the southern and eastern parts of the state, where industry is more resource dependent, were less sympathetic to environmental protection. Certainly it is not surprising to find environmentalists among the state population given the current national awareness of environmental problems and the natural beauty of the region.

## Transportation Issues

Oregon residents recognize the value of using forms of transportation other than automobile, but are still automobile dependent by either choice or necessity. The OBC study respondents indicated that they consider movement by transit “better” than movement by cars. But of 24 government services provided by the state, mass transit was ranked 21st, immediately preceded by local roads and then highways in terms of importance, indicating that the development of transit is not considered a high priority. Similarly, in the Metro 2040 study, even though 89% of trips within the region currently are by car, the public indicated a preference for transportation alternatives.<sup>28</sup> The Western Attitudes survey indicated that 45% of Portland residents sometimes use the Tri-Met bus and light rail system, suggesting a fair number of occasional users. A fairly large number of respondents (20%) also indicated that they sometimes bicycle or walk to work. Not surprisingly, the group in this survey who use Tri-Met also favor improvements of the transit system while non-users prefer improvement of the highway and road system. Thus, roughly more than half of the Portland population prefers the development of automobile transportation over transit alternatives.

## Residential Preferences

The Seattle Housing Preference Study found three nearly equal groups within the Seattle population. Roughly, these groups can be described as consisting of people who most value (detached) housing type, those who most value home ownership regardless of housing type and those who most value urban amenities. While more dense residential types, such as urban villages, are consistently considered less desirable, if urban amenities are added to the equation, the urban village model becomes a desirable housing type for the third population segment. Implementation of the Sustainable Seattle Plan becomes considerably more likely, if the public is convinced that urban village successfully provides all of the promised amenities:

“If city schools and city crime were perceived to be no worse than suburban schools and suburban crime, and if urban villages became places with a strong sense of community, the urban village share will increase dramatically. Under these conditions, more than 1/3 of the metropolitan area population would prefer an urban village apartment, condominium, or townhouse to multifamily housing outside the city or to a single family house anywhere.”<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> League of Women Voters, 1995, p.10

<sup>29</sup> Seattle Residential Preference Study: Executive Summary, 1994, p.2

Thus, high density residential development becomes a good possibility through use of the urban village form.

### *Voting Trends*

Election results provide a somewhat skewed representation of regional values since not all cultural groups participate equally. The early development of citizen initiative, referendum and recall in Oregon has become a source of pride for established residents, promoting a fair degree of electoral activity, while new-comers are less likely to vote according to voter participation records.<sup>30</sup> The Oregon Business Council study found that consistent with national trends, older people, the married, home-owners and the more educated were more likely to vote. These “Motivated Voters” have predominantly conservative stances on issues related to the value of diversity, educational opportunity, the environment, and the provision of health care.<sup>31</sup>

### **Oregon Ballot Measures**

But ultimately elections provide the most important indicator for regional planning. Politicians and planners are most free to pursue regional growth management policies when they have the moral support of the popular vote. Beginning with the passing of the Scenic Waterways Bill in 1970 through the recent defeat of a transit funding bond measure, planning issues have experienced mixed results in the polls. Bills must usually be well worded and well lobbied in order to succeed. Funding for mass transit measures were not approved while bills to protect fish or waterways were. With some exceptions, those bills which are approved are done so by relatively small margins.

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<sup>30</sup> Oregon Business Council, 1993, p.26

<sup>31</sup> Oregon Business Council, 1993, p.35

Ballot Measures related to planning:

- 1970 Scenic Waterways Bill, approved 65% to 35%
- 1974 Highway Fund Use for Mass Transit, defeated 34% to 66%
- 1974 Vehicle Tax for Mass Transit Use, defeated 24% to 76%
- 1978 Metropolitan Service District, approved 55% to 45%
- 1988 Water Development Fund Loans for Fish Protection, approved 72% to 28%
- 1988 Scenic Waterways System, approved 54% to 46%
- 1990 Local Vehicle Taxes for Transit with Voter Approval, defeated 48% to 52%
- 1990 Metropolitan Services District Right to Home Rule, approved 51% to 49%
- 1996 Portland Light Rail Bond, defeated 47% to 53%

**Voter initiative Challenges to Comprehensive Planning**

Through the citizen initiative process a number of challenges to the Oregon state comprehensive planning system have been brought before the state electorate. The first three initiatives were defeated by increasing margins. The 1982 challenge, which attempted to shift land use planning authority from the state to the local level rather than eliminate the planning system, was defeated by a smaller margin. The failure of the most recent petitions to gather enough signatures to prompt a vote and the more recent absence of initiative attempts suggest that land use planning has becoming generally accepted.

Ballot Measure Challenges to the Oregon Planning System:

- 1970 Measure 11, defeated 56% to 44%
- 1976 Measure 10, defeated 57% to 43%
- 1978 Measure 10, defeated 61% to 39%
- 1982 Measure 6, defeated 55% to 45%
- 1984 failed petition
- 1986 failed petition



### Former-Californian Voting Trends

In planning literature for the region, an awareness of Californian development patterns is often cited as an important motivational factor: “The majority of residents of the Portland area share a basic vision of a relatively compact metropolis that is Not-Los-Angeles.”<sup>32</sup> If such an influence is significant, then the areas or counties within Oregon that have had a greater in-migration of Californians may be more likely to support increased land-use planning. In such a case, the Californians have become educated about the impacts of uncontrolled growth and dislike such patterns or consider the less developed Oregon environment something important to be protected. Conversely, Californians may be suspicious of or unfamiliar with the Oregon planning system and so vote against planning initiatives.

Since the 1848 California Gold Rush, large population migrations have occurred between Washington, Oregon, and California. The US Census provides a detailed statistical description of this migration between 1985 and 1990. During this period, 128,701 people (4.5% of the 1990 Oregon population) moved from California to Oregon. The largest number of these people, 16,225, settled in Portland's Multnomah county (3% of the county population). Recent Californians comprise the greatest share of the population in Oregon's Curry County (14%), Josephine County (13%) and Jackson County (10%). Data for recent regional migrations and county level electoral records can be compared to investigate the correlation between in-migrant populations and voting patterns.

Preliminary analysis suggests that there may be a connection between the population of former Californians and voting trends but is inconclusive. (Refer to Appendices for results of statistical analysis.) It is clear that the jurisdictions contained within the state's larger metropolitan areas (Portland, Eugene, Salem and Corvallis) are considerably more likely to support measures related to land use planning. These areas also attract the most Californians, have the highest average incomes and the highest education levels. These latter traits also have documented positive impact upon voter support for land use planning.<sup>33</sup> People living in the city perhaps have a preference to be surrounded by farm land, for either visual, environmental or psychological reasons and less interest in realizing the economic potential of undeveloped land or are more conscious that land is a limited resource. When more election and migration data becomes available it may be possible to isolate the influences of each of these variables and provide some useful insight into the correlation between experience with suburban development in California and voting trends.

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<sup>32</sup> Abbot, 1994, p.219

<sup>33</sup> Rohse interview, 1997

*Conclusions*

While it is difficult to make meaningful generalizations regarding the culture of a region, there is a general perception that ecological and historic factors have created some distinct social characteristics common throughout the Pacific Northwest region. Traditionally government has been considered as a tool for moral action and citizens view government as a participatory endeavor. Local values are essentially conservative with respect to the role of the family, the protection of the economy and a distaste for any change of the landscape. The perception of the environment is an idealistic mix of the pioneer belief in nature's perpetual abundance and an environmentalist desire to emphasize environmental protection. Environmentalism is a regional trait and in many cases, environmental protection is seen as compatible with the region's economic development. There is also a strong underlying conservative aspect to the population, that has supported growth management because of a personal adversity to change. As a result, "There is a strong reservoir of support for land use planning in (the region) because both the concept and the process fit with the underlying political culture and values."<sup>34</sup> The population is particularly sensitive to growth issues which has resulted in an adequate willingness to give land-use planning authority to regional governments but has also created a demand for the opportunity for citizen involvement in the planning process.

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<sup>34</sup> Abbott, 1994, p. 205

## **Chapter 3**

### **The Development of Growth Management in Oregon**

#### *Early Development*

##### **Beginnings - Senate Bill 10**

The land use planning policy for Portland is closely tied to the history of planning politics within the state. Much of the system in use in Portland has been directly generated through state policy. The state level debate surrounding growth management and planning issues has done much to educate and influence public thought in Portland as well.

Prior to 1969 "land use planning" in Oregon was virtually indistinguishable from the local level, land use planning conducted in other states, limited essentially to the "administration of zoning and sub-division ordinances."<sup>35</sup> State legislation in 1919 and 1923 made legal provision for development plans and land use regulation at the city and county levels. In 1946, broader planning

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<sup>35</sup> Rohse, 1987, p.1

authority was extended by the legislature to county governments, to enable their response to "chaotic growth of urban fringe areas during the boom years of World War II counties were authorized to form planning commissions, which could recommend 'development patterns' (renamed 'comprehensive plans' after 1963)."<sup>36</sup>

Also embedded within Oregon history is a second and more progressive current of political activity. Populist party politics trace their formal existence to the leadership of W. S. U'Ren and the Direct Legislative League, founded in 1898. This group laid the foundation for direct participation by citizens in government with the initiative and referendum bill of 1902, the direct primary bill of 1904, the corrupt practices act in 1908 and the right to recall, also in 1908. Regulation of natural resources began with fishing regulations adopted by voter initiative in 1908 and 1910<sup>37</sup> in order to protect the already endangered fishing industry. The close dependence of early settlers upon natural resources and upon a cooperative, equitable government may have fostered this early progressivism. In more recent times, the progressive attitude has translated into citizen activism and involvement. A popular movement in the late '60s which prompted government officials to replace the planned Mount Hood Freeway with an urban park is a more recent example of such.

Historically Oregon's population growth has been tied to development of the economic potential of the region's natural resources. As transportation links within the US improved the development of domestic markets produced a demand for Oregon products. The state identifies most strongly with the timber industry which remains a culturally important, if declining, part of the Oregon economy. While in 1848 the state lost somewhere around two thirds of its population of "able bodied men" to the California gold rush, the gold rush also brought an infusion of wealth to Oregon's economy as the demand for timber and agricultural products grew rapidly. The Lewis and Clark Exposition of 1905, a celebration of the original expedition sponsored in part by the rail roads seeking new passengers and potential purchasers of rail road grant land, did much to attract new settlers to the state. The New Deal construction of the Bonneville Dam in 1937 heralded in the era of cheap Northwest electricity and the growth of the aluminum industry within the region.

It was during a period of rapid growth, in the 1960s and '70s, that Oregon's well known land-use planning system was created. Oregonians, concerned about the visible impact this growth was having upon the local landscape and the perceived impact changes in land use would have upon environmental and economic conditions, elected a governor who soon became well known for his

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<sup>36</sup> Abbot, 1994, p. xi

outspoken appeals to control the state's growth and to protect the existing way of life. The new governor proved able to follow rhetoric with political action. During his first term (1967-1970), Governor Tom McCall oversaw the creation of a state Department of Environmental Quality, a Willamette River Greenway planning zone, the "reassertion of public ownership of ocean beaches," a bottle bill, and the selective removal of billboards.<sup>38</sup>

During McCall's tenure in office, tentative leadership also emerged to address land use planning issues from within Oregon's state legislature. In 1969 the Oregon legislature established with Senate Bill 10, ten statewide land use planning standards. All local governments were required to adopt comprehensive plans that met the statewide standards, but without state funding or the existence of an enforcement agency, few actually completed such a plan. In the cases where plan documents were made, they were generally ignored.

### **The Formation of LCDC**

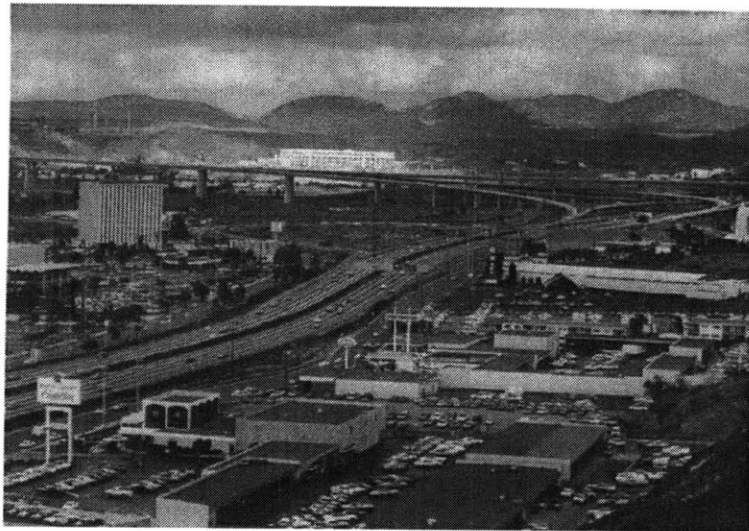
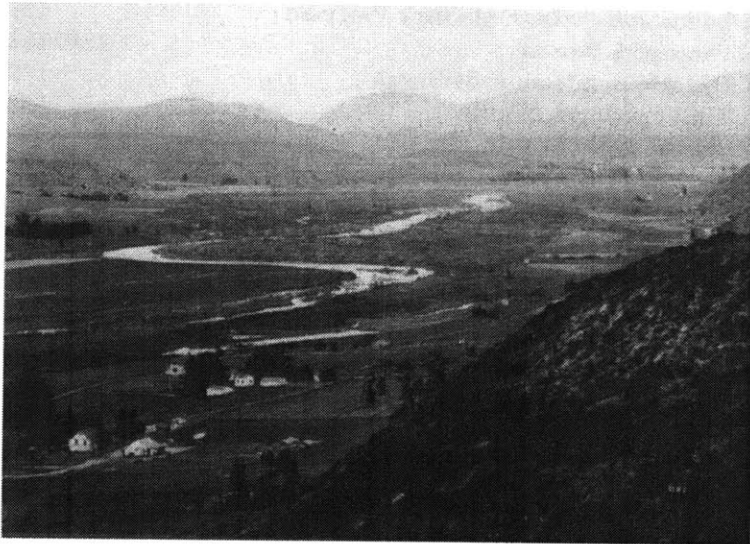
In 1971 Tom McCall was reelected, demonstrating the citizen commitment to support land use planning and conservation. Under the key leadership of McCall and Senator Hector Macpherson (a Linn County dairy farmer), a committee began working to improve SB10, leading eventually to a second legislative attempt, Senate Bill 100. As part of the committee's work, the state employed San Francisco landscape architect Lawrence Halprin to prepare a report on the need for planning. The committee also studied the experiences with comprehensive state planning in Hawaii and Vermont. Based upon this study Macpherson resolved upon the need "to incorporate continuing local participation" as fundamental to the successful implementation of statewide land use planning.

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<sup>37</sup> Oregon Blue Book, 1995-96

<sup>38</sup> Abbott, 1994

## The Development of Growth Management in Oregon



**California's Mission Valley, 1956 and 1977**  
Source: Lynch

To remedy the ineffectiveness of Senate Bill 10, on May 29th of 1973 the Oregon legislature adopted Senate Bill 100 (SB100), creating the Land Conservation and Development Commission (LCDC) and the Department of Land Conservation and Development (DLCD). The LCDC was charged with the task to "prescribe planning goals and objectives to be applied by state agencies,

cities, counties and special districts throughout the state."<sup>39</sup> The DLCD was then charged with the administration of those goals. During the legislative debate over SB100, two of the bill's original provisions were removed. The bill's writers had sought to give the state control over "critical areas" within the state and to create regional planning bodies that could coordinate land use decisions at the regional level. The primary objection to these two provisions was that they would infringe upon the public desire for local control.

Oregon experienced rapid growth in the 1960s which led to an acute awareness of the effects of sprawl within the Willamette Valley. The Willamette Valley is particularly fertile, the location of most of the state's industry and is also known for its quality of life. The Cascade and coastal ranges which border the valley serve as a constant visual reminder to the finite nature of land within the valley. Within this context, the conflict between competing land uses was most evident. Oregonians began to fear the impact of suburbanization as it caused the loss of timberlands, farmlands and increasing energy consumption. Differentiation in the values between coastal timber regions, the more populated Willamette Valley and eastern ranch-land Oregon was expressed in the original House vote for SB100 (the bill which established Oregon's land use planning system): 49 of 60 Willamette Valley representatives voted in favor of the bill while only 9 of 30 representatives from other areas of the state did so despite efforts to include "strong leadership" for Oregon's planning system "drawn from all parts of the state."<sup>40</sup> Particularly in the Willamette Valley land use planning policy innovations have been a favored method for protecting the existing quality of life.

The LCDC began the work of rewriting the ten state goals developed under SB10 with a public involvement campaign. After public workshops were held throughout the state, the LCDC rewrote the state's goals in 1974, adding four new goals and changing the focus of others. Through the public participation campaign and the involvement of political representatives from throughout the states, efforts were made to insure that the state goals accurately reflected the interests of state residents. Since 1969, Goal #1 of the state's land use planning goals has been for a high standard of public participation.

In addition to an emphasis upon public participation (Goal #1) the new goals made maintenance of the distinction between urban and rural lands, through the concentration of new development within Urban Growth Boundaries and the associated protection of farming and forestry lands outside of the UGB, the a central motivation for the state's land use planning policy. LCDC

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<sup>39</sup> Oregon Revised Statute ORS197.005

Goal #14 which makes the orderly transition between rural and urban land a state goal, led to the adoption of the state's now well known Urban Growth Boundary system. The UGB concept had been developed by planners, working within the Mid-Willamette Valley Council of Governments, who sought to manage the growth of the metropolitan area surrounding Salem, the state capital. This cooperative effort between the city of Salem and Marion and Polk counties "produced several reports demonstrating the efficiencies of urban containment over urban sprawl."<sup>41</sup> These boundaries were not intended to place a permanent limit upon urban growth, but rather to direct new growth into areas in proximity to existing urban centers. The UGB adopted in 1979 for the Portland Metro area encompasses a 364 square mile area that was intended to accommodate growth through the year 2000.

### **The Protection of Resource Lands**

An important emphasis of the Senate Bill 100 legislation was upon protection of the economy through protection of land used for farming or forestry which were perceived as important in order to protect Oregon's economic base.<sup>42</sup> Particularly in the late '60s and early '70s, farming and forestry were the primary industries in Oregon. Currently about 16 million acres are zoned for Exclusive Farm Use (EFU) according to LCDC guidelines. Further, about 28 million acres are classified forest lands. Together these two uses consume 71% of the 62 million total acres in Oregon. High public and corporate ownership of the forest land facilitates its management. About 16.5 million acres of the 28 million are owned by the federal government or other public bodies. Of the remaining 11.5 million acres, 4.5 million belongs to private non-industrial owners and 7 million to corporate industrial owners.<sup>43</sup> Tourism, which is also closely tied to land use issues, has since emerged as a third important industry. Land use policies which protect natural recreation areas and the aesthetics of the agrarian landscape also protect the resources upon which tourism depends. The connection between land use protection and the state economy has remained central to the Oregon planning system.

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<sup>40</sup> Abbott, 1994 ,p. x

<sup>41</sup> Abbott, 1994, p. 25

<sup>42</sup> Rohse, 1987

<sup>43</sup> Oregon League of Women Voters, 1995, p.5



The establishment of minimum areas for a particular land use has been used as one method for limiting sprawl. The LCDC system also recognizes ecological differences that exist within each land use category. The state statutes created as a result of SB100 require a minimum 80 acre lot subdivision for land in farm use and 160 acre lot subdivision for range land (as an exception, counties may zone for smaller lots if the overall maintenance of agricultural enterprise is demonstrable).<sup>44</sup> Outside of the UGB, agricultural land is classified according to soil quality and thus productive potential. Farm land with higher value is protected even further by LCDC through LCDC administrative rule OAR 666, Division 33. A distinction is made based upon type of crop as well, as land in use for “high value” crop production (particular fruits, nuts or vegetables) is given separate treatment. Despite the restrictions, however, each year about 900 new dwellings upon farm land are approved. A similar system has developed for forest land. Approximately 9 million acres of forest land, under LCDC Goal #4, are maintained for sustainable production. Since 1993, residential development on some forest land has been permitted, but forest land classified as highly productive (according to cubic feet of timber produced per year) remains under LCDC protection. Forests are further protected through tax breaks and subsidies for reforestation.

Forest Lands are classified as:<sup>45</sup>

- 1) existing and potential land suitable for commercial forest use.
- 2) forest land needed for watershed protection, wildlife and fisheries habitat and recreation.
- 3) lands with extreme condition of climate, soil and topography that require the maintenance of vegetative cover.
- 4) land adjacent to urban or agricultural areas which have value as urban buffers, windbreaks, wildlife and fisheries habitat, scenic corridors or for recreational use.
- 5) forest lands in use as ranching or grazing areas.

While the protection of forest land has decreased somewhat as an economic priority in recent years, the abundant presence of forests and the maintenance of the forest industry remains central, particularly among established residents, to the state’s self-identity.<sup>46</sup> Diversification of the state’s economy has resulted in the a diversity of recognized uses for forest lands, including commercial forestry, environmental/ecological use, recreation and grazing. While the recent enforcement of the Endangered Species Act and national efforts to protect the spotted owl are perceived has having a

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<sup>44</sup> Oregon League of Women Voters, 1995, p.5

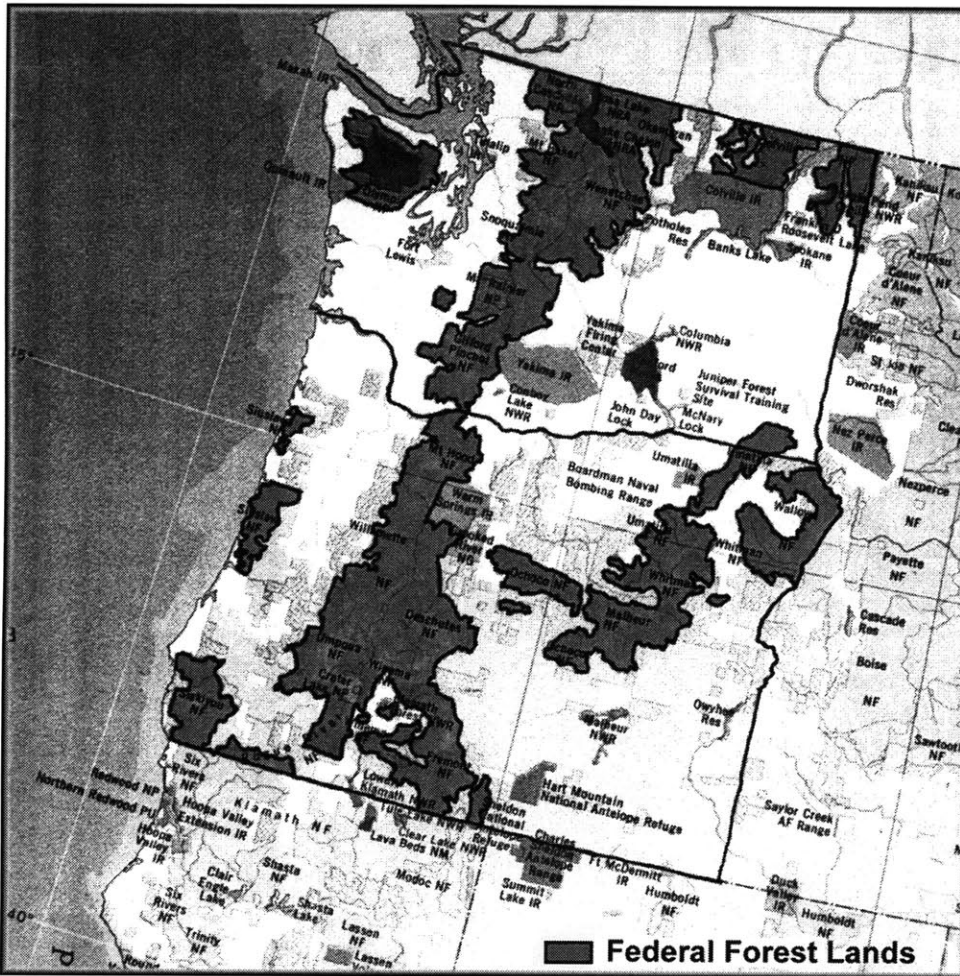
<sup>45</sup> Oregon League of Women Voters, 1995, p.5

<sup>46</sup> Oregon Business Council, 1993

## The Development of Growth Management in Oregon

negative impact upon Oregon's rural economy, the protection of the forest industry remains a strong LCDC priority:

“Forest products will continue to be a major source of income and employment in Oregon. New and improved ways of using forest resources, enhanced management of forests to promote their health and to foster stewardship of the land will contribute to sustaining the forest industry in the future.”<sup>47</sup>



Map of Federal Forest Lands in Oregon and Washington  
Illustration by author

While some may assume that a growth management agency is anti-growth, LCDC seeks to accommodate growth, although in a controlled manner, and is at times pro-growth in the policies that it promotes. Of the statewide planning goals, several are either neutral toward growth or actually

<sup>47</sup> Oregon League of Women Voters, 1995, p.6

facilitate it, including Goal #1 (requirement for citizen involvement) and Goals #8 - #12 (which require local governments to make provision for the development or recreational facilities, economic opportunities, housing, public facilities, and transportation.)<sup>48</sup>

### **Implementation Techniques**

The ineffectiveness of SB10 was due in part to the absence of an effective means for implementing planning goals. Since then however, the state has developed implementation and enforcement mechanisms for the state land use planning system. Local jurisdictions are required to have state accepted plans through financial incentive (public maintenance grants are given first to jurisdictions with plans in affect) or through penalty (tax revenues are withheld from non-compliance). Plan amendment processes and periodic reviews also help to keep the plans up to date.<sup>49</sup> These bureaucratic, administrative and review procedures continue to be refined and in 1982 the Land Use Board of Appeals (LUBA) was formed. This open appeals process may cause developers anxiety, but is considered important for maintaining the fairness of the planning system. The perception of "fairness" has been an important factor in the sustainability of the Oregon planning system: "a system that defines planning as a neutral arbiter of the public interest."<sup>50</sup>

The foundation of the religious community of Rajneeshpuram in eastern Oregon during the 1980s provides an interesting illustration of the role of bureaucratic process as informed by local values in a land use planning conflict. Through large in-migration, members of the Rajneesh religious group gained electoral control over the neighboring town of Antelope and began to struggle with other political interests within the county over both cultural and land use issues. There is some evidence that the leaders of the Rajneesh community viewed Oregon's land use planning system as a value-free regulatory system and so anticipated to be able to overcome it through the strength of their intellectual and financial resources relative to those of the local government. Area residents, in contrast, viewed land use planning as a legitimate instrument for conserving regional character. Eventually the Rajneesh community became frustrated with what they considered undue regulation of their activities and engaged in illegal activities targeting local officials. In this case, the bureaucratic strength of the system in place was able to compensate for the greater resources of the

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<sup>48</sup> Rohse, 1987, p. 4

<sup>49</sup> Rohse, 1987, p. 7

<sup>50</sup> Abbott, 1994, p.205

Rajneesh community, demonstrating the development of a technique for resolving the conflict between competing cultural groups through “bureaucratic routines.”<sup>51</sup> Land use planning was employed by the community as a robust normative process.

### **Citizen Participation and Activism**

In 1975, near the end of his term of office, McCall oversaw the establishment of a citizen advocacy group, the 1000 Friends of Oregon. McCall recognized the need for a “public interest group with broad membership and the legal expertise to challenge local violations of land-use laws and procedures and elicit rulings on key issues from the courts or administrative agencies.”<sup>52</sup> To meet this need, McCall’s supporters formed a non-profit “land-use watchdog” organization, 1000 Friends of Oregon. This group brings important cases to the attention of the courts.<sup>53</sup> By focusing upon cases with broad policy implications, the group, with limited resources, is able to effectively impact the urban growth pattern in Oregon. This group, organized by McCall’s supporters and funded by private donations, has effectively given “the people of Oregon a powerful tool to help America’s leading state land use program succeed.”<sup>54</sup>

It should be noted that advocacy groups have formed on “both sides” of growth management issues. Within Oregon, the group, Oregonians in Action (OIA) has been formed to work against regulation by LCDC that the group considers to be excessive. In other cases, private property owners have been able to successfully challenge development restrictions. A “Taking” is defined by LCDC as the “confiscation of private property by the government” which is prohibited by the Fifth Amendment of the federal Constitution and by Oregon’s state constitution.<sup>55</sup> Legal processes do allow the state to acquire land at market value through “eminent domain” if sufficient benefit to public interest can be demonstrated. Groups, such as OIA, argue that a “taking” has occurred anytime that growth restrictions limit the development potential of privately held land. The ascendancy of such interpretations continues to grow in reflection of current political trends.

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<sup>51</sup> Abbott, p.217

<sup>52</sup> Leonard, 1983, p. 136

<sup>53</sup> Leonard, 1983

<sup>54</sup> 1000 Friends of Oregon, 1982

<sup>55</sup> Oregon League of Women Voters, 1995, p.2

## The Development of Growth Management in Oregon

For Oregon, large population in-migrations in the '60s and '70s resulted in the development of new, typically low density, residential areas. The Oregon economy was not perceived by local residents as having the strength to accommodate the cost of the infrastructure development required to service the new low-density housing areas without serious social cost and a degradation in the quality of existing services. The struggle to resolve the funding of Oregon's public school system, during which several school districts were forced to temporarily close their schools and many others were required to eliminate extracurricular activities, is one aspect of the continuing difficulty to accommodate population growth. In response, a 1990 citizen initiative placed a cap on the property tax growth rate and transferred significant responsibility for school funding to the state. The limits on taxation and the mandated funding of schools created by this initiative combine to create financial stress for the state government and as a result divert funds from planning. As planning is weakened, the expensive, low tax revenue residential sprawl that produced the funding problem could proliferate.

Critics maintain that the Oregon land use planning system remains state dominated. More progressive planning systems allow for a greater direction from local governments and focus more upon building consensus between state and local governments. "Second generation" land use planning systems, such as those seen in New Jersey or Florida, have contributed innovations to the model developed within Oregon. The New Jersey system, in particular, has staked out a dependence upon the formation of a consensual base to justify and make popular land use planning. But recent efforts in Portland and at the state level suggest that planners in Oregon realize that the formation of land use policy is an ongoing process and are seeking to update and improve that process. While the original creators of the Oregon planning system were "dedicated, idealistic and perhaps naive."<sup>56</sup> they have demonstrated the ability to learn the skills needed to meet challenges to the system as they arise.

Oregon's history of local political involvement extends from the electoral reforms at the beginning of this century until the present day. This colorful history includes the group, Sensible Transit Options for People (STOP) which successfully stopped the development of Portland's Mount Hood Freeway in the late '60s. The space was used for a pedestrian oriented park instead. The tradition is also evidenced by Portland's strong neighborhood associations, which in 1974 received official sanction from the state as participants in the land use planning process. The groups provide local political support for planning actions as a result of their investment in the public participation processes. It has also been documented that this local level political process has improved the social equity of the produced planning legislation.

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<sup>56</sup> Abbott, 1994

Grass-roots citizen involvement can also impact the urban political landscape. Terry Moore, a current member of the Metro Council, made her decision to run for public office as part of a neighborhood response to unwanted local road expansion.<sup>57</sup> After members of the community became frustrated with unresponsive county officials, they could think of no course but to each run for some city or county office. If elected, through their respective offices they would be able to work for the type of city they hoped to see. Similarly, Margaret Strachan who initiated the 1988 Portland Central City Plan as a city commissioner, began her political career as a neighborhood organizer. This plan was developed through the leadership of citizen volunteers, representing “unusual efforts at citizen involvement,” undertaken “with a minimum of professional assistance.”<sup>58</sup>

The commitment to public participation has consistently been made a central part of planning efforts in Oregon. Public participation is the first (#1) goal of the LCDC, and the LCDC goals, adopted in 1973, have the force of law. Each political jurisdiction within the state is required to have a process oriented watchdog group, the Committee for Citizen Involvement (CCI), with the responsibility to “develop, implement and evaluate the local citizen involvement program.”<sup>59</sup>

Further, during the initial comprehensive plan review stage of LCDC, each local jurisdiction developed under the supervision of the state LCDC Citizen Involvement Advisory Committee (CIAC) a Citizen Involvement Plan (CIP) which was then also submitted for state level approval. However, in many cases, particularly recently, local planning commissions have been permitted to also act as a CCI. As might be expected, this has somewhat weakened the commitment to public representation as the planning commission may have some conflict of interest.

LCDC Goal #1 also “strongly implies” a requirement for other types of Citizens Advisory Committees (CAC) which have responsibilities other than the CCI. More standard public notification laws also exist for the state. The LCDC definition for “citizen” is very broad, including corporations, government agencies and non-profit organizations as participants in the public participation process. As a result, a wide variety of methods have been employed to involve the public in the planning process in fulfillment of the LCDC vision. The LCDC goals focus more upon providing moral direction than upon determining regulatory process. The resulting adaptability

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<sup>57</sup> Durning, 1996

<sup>58</sup> Keating, 1991

<sup>59</sup> Oregon League of Women Voters, 1995, p.14

reflects an early decision that while state initiatives would influence local decision making, they would also allow local autonomy.<sup>60</sup>

Public participation and thus, indirectly, the formation of citizen initiative groups, is also encouraged from within the government. In Oregon, the history of government organized public participation in land use planning issues spans from the use in 1974 of questionnaires and mobile public information stations (specially outfitted vans that traveled through the state), meetings with local civic and business groups, and public participation workshops to the poll of every household in the Portland metropolitan area undertaken in 1994 as the first step of the Portland Metro 2040 initiative. While public transportation agencies in other cities may focus only upon the provision and maintenance of transit, the Strategic Direction statement of Portland's Tri-Met states that Tri-Met "can and will advocate and provide information to citizens and decision-makers about patterns of land use that make it easier for people to get around." The three basic goals of Tri-Met are also consistent with the state's land use policy: contain development within existing UGB, increase development along transit corridors and assure that "development is designed to be served efficiently by transit." This emphasis upon public participation seems like rather radical and forward looking policy for a transit agency.

The Home Builders Association of Metropolitan Portland has played a more equivocal role as an advocacy group. Growth management has increased market regularity which appeals to the builder's groups. Growth management has also placed constraints upon development and raised housing costs in opposition to the interests of the construction industry. Builders may also support the intention to increase residential density, a policy which has the potential to alleviate otherwise rising housing costs.

Critics of land use planning gained a stronger voice when in 1995 Republicans gained control of state legislature in Oregon. Under Republican leadership, a many bills have been introduced that would reduce some aspect of the state's land use planning authority. The devaluation of property rights, defined as a "taking" in the bill SJR16, could deeply impact the enforceability of environmental regulations. Oregonians in Action has strengthened its lobbying efforts under the more favorable political climate. But much of the argument focuses upon the equity of the current system and the question of whether different types land owners are impacted unequally, rather than being an all-out assault upon the legitimacy of growth management. While no-one advocates sprawl, there is debate over what constitutes it. Because Oregon's current governor, John Kitzhaber, is a

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<sup>60</sup> Leonard, 1983

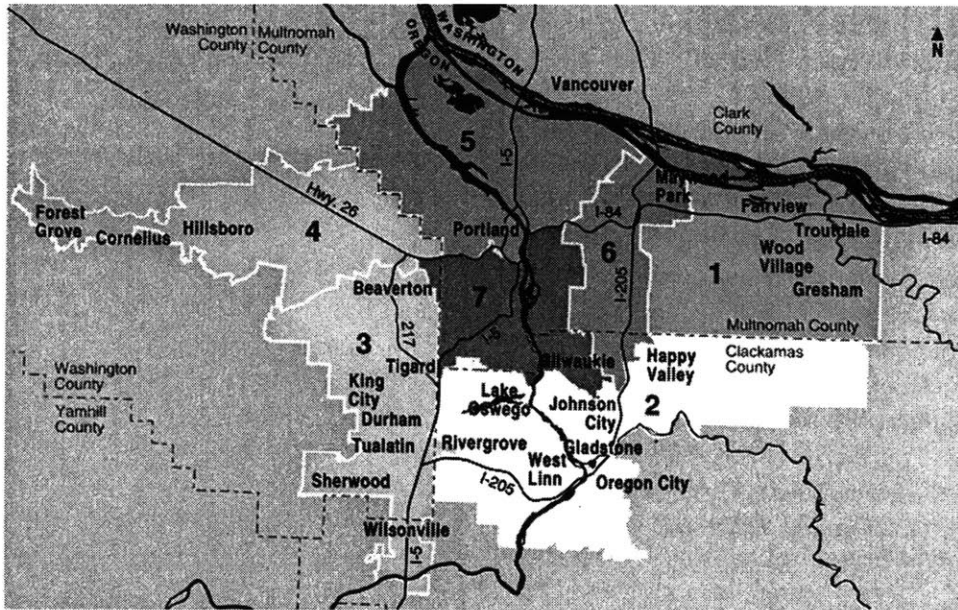
strong supporter of the state's land use planning system, he will likely veto any legislation that would seriously harm it. This has led legislators to seek a popular vote on the issue that will sidestep the governor's veto. The fear of California remains a strong motivation within political discourse. The resolution of personal property disputes will continue to test this policy.

### *Recent Planning Initiatives*

#### **Portland Metro**

As a direct result of the LCDC land use planning efforts it became clear to political leaders and the public that there was a need for comprehensive, multi-jurisdictional planning in the Portland metropolitan region. Portland, like all Oregon cities, was required by LCDC to determine an Urban Growth Boundary and to administer it. Thus voters in 1978, recognizing the need to be able to address issues which cross traditional county and city boundaries, approved the concept of an elected regional government for the 24 cities and urban areas of Multnomah, Washington and Clackamas counties. This new metropolitan government had few powers or responsibilities at first, but has since steadily gained in stature. In 1979 Metro merged with its predecessor, the Columbia Region of Governments (CRAG) and assumed responsibility for managing the metropolitan region's waste disposal system, the city zoo and the Portland Urban Growth Boundary. CRAG, an early council of governments for the Portland metropolitan area, had been viewed as a tool for the city of Portland, during the term of Mayor Neil Goldschmidt (1973-1979) to force the city's objectives upon the region. In 1988 Metro took on responsibility for the management of the Portland UGB and in 1990, voters approved home-rule for Metro giving it true planning authority over the local jurisdictions in the metropolitan area. Since then it has been very active in the development of growth management policies for the metropolitan region.





**Metro Jurisdictions Map**  
Source: Portland Metro

### Metro Charter and the RUGGOs

The Oregon state legislature has continued to maintain an active guiding role for the Portland metropolitan region as well. In 1991, following state requirements, Metro adopted the Regional Urban Goals and Objections (RUGGOs). The RUGGOs reiterate the regions' serious commitment to public participation as part of the planning process. Competition with other states that might be taking the lead in land use planning is stated as a motive for this commitment, revealing that progressive land use planning has become a matter of state pride for many Oregonians. The RUGGOs also restate the LCDC commitment to the reduction of urban sprawl, and the use of the UGB to maintain the clear distinction between urban and rural areas all with the ultimate goal of protecting the region's "sense of place." The RUGGOs also gave Metro the authority to override local plans in order to meet regional goals. The ruling board of Metro is made up of elected representatives from the various jurisdictions found with the metropolitan region so that local communities maintain their ability to participate in the regional planning. Metro also continues to manage the UGB for the Portland metropolitan region. Some adjustments of the UGB have been made (the Portland Community College campus was reclassified to fall within the urban area) but generally the UGB boundaries have remained constant for Portland and throughout the state.

Metro's powers were further expanded in 1992 when a new home-rule charter for the "Metropolitan Service District" was approved by voters. This charter gave Metro the mandate "to

more actively manage the metropolitan area's growth planning process."<sup>61</sup> Concurrently, Metro was restructured, given a primary mission and its current name. The restructuring included a deadline, December 31, 1997, for the adoption of a Portland regional framework plan. Metro was also expanded to include Clark County, in recognition of the region's growing inter-connectedness.



**METRO Main Office, Portland Oregon**  
Photo by author

### **Metro 2040 Growth Concept Plan**

Under the impetus of Metro Portland's Regional Urban Growth Goals and Objectives, Metro has begun to generate more specific land use and transportation policies through the Metro 2040 Concept Plan. Metro initiated this process by presenting to the public four strategies for accommodating the region's anticipated:

- 1) "base case" - follow the standard growth patterns of the past 40 years.
- 2) "grow out" - add land to the UGB to accommodate new growth.
- 3) "grow up" - accommodate new growth by increasing density within the UGB.
- 4) "mixed growth" - expand partially the UGB, increase density and foster growth in nearby cities.

The 17,000 responses that were collected through this study indicated that the public desired for growth to be accommodated through a compromise including some expansion of the Portland UGB

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<sup>61</sup> Metro Facts, Fall 1996

(the lands designated as Urban Reserve) and some increase in the density of established urban areas. This compromise became the basis of the current 2040 Growth Concept and was adopted into the RUGGOs December 14th, 1995 by the Metro Council. Metro considers this an optimized mix of the four growth strategies that is the culmination of both planning expertise and a legitimizing public planning process:

“This document reflected the careful analysis of the various options using the best research tools available and the regional values expressed throughout the previous three years by the region’s citizens.”<sup>62</sup>

This survey also provided a description (detailed in the previous chapter) of local values relevant to growth management. From the survey, Metro developed a list of directives or goals for the 2040 Growth Concept:

- 1) foster compact development, particularly in the downtown, existing business centers, along “main streets” and along transit corridors.
- 2) designate parks, streams, farm land and natural areas (natural reserves) within the region for permanent protection.
- 3) promote transportation programs that support alternatives to the automobile, as well as the automobile.
- 4) work with neighboring cities on growth issues.
- 5) encourage a diversity of housing types and options.

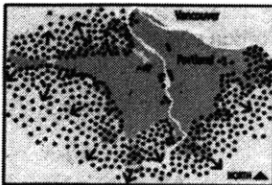
Based upon these, an on-going commitment to enhanced regional “livability” or quality of life was adopted as the plan’s over-riding goal.

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<sup>62</sup> Metro Facts, Fall 1996

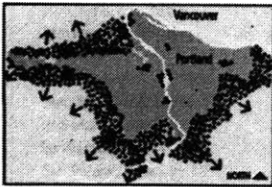
## An Explanation of the Growth Concepts

### Base case



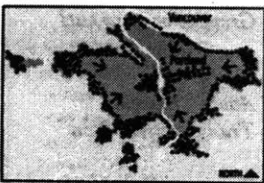
The base case examines issues related to our current growth practices, including: how many acres of land would need to be added to the urban growth boundary to accommodate growth, what kind of traffic congestion is likely to occur and what infrastructure costs are associated with various growth levels?

### Concept A



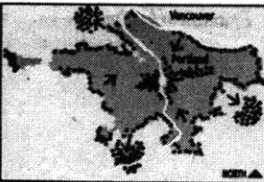
Like the base case, Concept A examines what would happen if most of the growth occurs outside the urban growth boundary. Unlike the base case, Concept A may rely on increased densities and more mass transit to relieve congestion and air quality problems.

### Concept B



Concept B accommodates growth within the existing urban growth boundary. This would send growth inward, with an emphasis on mass transit, development occurring on vacant land within the boundary and increasing densities within existing development patterns.

### Concept C



Concept C combines some aspects of A and B. Like Concept B, there is more intense use of land within the existing urban growth boundary. Like Concept A, there also is development outside the boundary but instead is concentrated in new communities. A greenbelt of land acting as a buffer between developed areas would need to be created.

Diagram of Four Metro Growth Options  
Source: Portland Metro

The Metro 2040 Growth Concept document is intended to provide a strong vision for the Metro region's growth over the next 50 years. By taking an aggressive forward looking stance, the

plan's writers expect to improve the opportunities for the region to "preserve our access to nature and build better communities for the people who live here today and will live here in the future."<sup>63</sup> Like the other concept documents (the LCDC goals, the Transportation Plan), the Metro 2040 Growth Concept is expected to evolve in response to better understood growth management needs, but to also set the direction for a family of associated functional plans:

"This [Metro 2040] Growth Concept sets the direction for development of implementing policies in Metro's existing functional plans and the Charter-required regional framework plan. This direction will be refined, as well as implemented, in subsequent functional plan amendments and framework plan components. Additional planning will be done to test the Growth Concept and to determine implementation actions. Amendments to the Growth Concept and some RUGGOs Objectives may be needed to reflect the results of additional planning to maintain the consistency of implementation actions with RUGGOs."<sup>64</sup>

The increased regional scale of planning for Metro Portland is an important result of the Metro 2040 plan. This allows the city to coordinate development with neighboring cities and to recognize that decisions made by Metro will have an impact upon the larger region. Further, the newly designated "Neighbor Cities" can be asked to accommodate some of the population growth anticipated for the Portland Metro area. The plan develops four concepts for guiding the interaction of Portland with its neighbor cities:

- 1) The rural land between cities should be maintained to insure city identity in conjunction with the development of a regional transportation system.
- 2) The job-housing balance in neighbor cities should be maintained so that they avoid becoming bedroom towns.
- 3) The character of each city should be maintained by promoting unique mixes of cultural, retail and other commercial uses within each city
- 4) A "green corridor" transportation link may be developed between cities to minimize the impact of development upon rural areas while preserving regional accessibility.

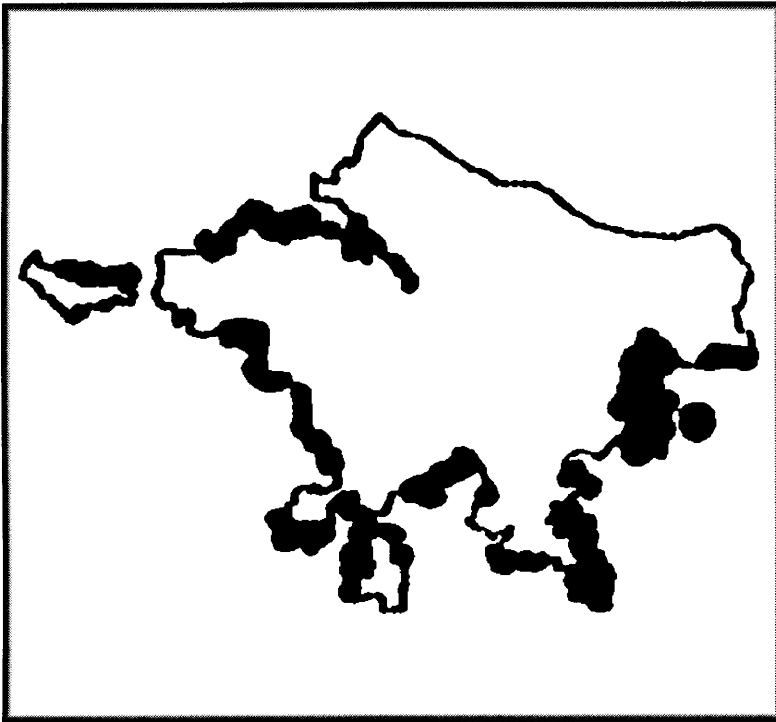
Because the public was unwilling to locate all new growth within the existing Urban Growth Boundary, new "Urban Reserves" were identified on the periphery of the existing UGB area. Under the Concept Plan, the Metro Council designated urban reserve land to be used for the expansion of the UGB, if such an expansion becomes necessary. The current Concept Map has about 22,000 acres of urban reserve land. These reserves are strategic locations considered best suited to accommodate urban growth that are not currently within the UGB. In counterpoint to the Urban Reserves, the

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<sup>63</sup> Metro 2040 Growth Concept, 1995

<sup>64</sup> Metro 2040 Growth Concept, 1995, p.1

Concept Plan designates "Rural reserves" and "green corridors" within the UGB as a necessary provision of open space within the urban environment.



**Urban Reserve Areas Identified by Metro**  
Illustration by author

While many have come to consider the UGB a nearly sacrosanct delimitation of the Portland urban area, the decision to expand the urban area is consistent with the original intention of the LCDC goals. Furthermore, the planned expansion will allow the city to grow horizontally considerably less than it would if current growth patterns were allowed to continue. The lands designated as "Rural Reserves" already have high accessibility and as a result are under development pressure. In conjunction with the Urban Reserve designation, land that UGB should not be expanded into because of topographical features or strategic location was also identified and labeled as "Open Space" areas. Such environmentally sensitive areas are now better understood and can be better identified. In May 1995 a \$135.6 million bond for the purchase of open spaces identified within the Metropolitan Greenspaces Master Plan was approved by voters, making possible the acquisition of 6,000 acres of green space within the Metro area. As of late 1996, 1,158 of these had been acquired.

According to the Metro 2040 plan, the region's percentage of single family homes (vs. multi-family housing) will be lowered from 70% to 62%. Ultimately under the plan 52% of all housing

## The Development of Growth Management in Oregon

will be in "neighborhoods," 33% within "station communities" or "corridors" and 8% in "regional and town centers."<sup>65</sup> It is likely that there will be considerable pressure from current residents for the increase of density to occur outside of existing suburbs. Perhaps in response to this, many of the target increased density areas identified by the plan are in new neighborhoods or existing urban residential areas. Restrictions upon the land available to residential developers will channel new development into the targeted areas, in which traditional obstructions to higher density development will have been removed. Remarkably Metro has, in cooperation with its member jurisdictions, established "Livability Targets" for housing unit and job growth within each jurisdiction, providing precise destinations for the city's forecast growth.

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<sup>65</sup> League of Women Voters, 1995, p.11

**“Livability targets for households and employment approved as Title 1 of the Urban Growth Management Functional Plan”<sup>66</sup>**

<b>Jurisdiction</b>	<b>Dwelling Unit Capacity</b>	<b>Job Capacity</b>
Beaverton	15,021	25,122
Cornelius	1,1019	2,812
Durham	262	498
Fairview	2,921	5,689
Forest Grove	2,873	5,488
Gladstone	600	1,530
Gresham	16,817	23,753
Happy Valley	2,030	1,767
Hillsboro	14,812	58,247
Johnson City	168	180
King City	182	241
Lake Oswego	3,353	8,179
Maywood Park	27	5
Milwaukie	3,514	7,478
Oregon City	6,157	8,185
Portland	70,704	158,503
River Grove	(15)	41
Sherwood	5,010	8,156
Tigard	6,073	14,901
Troutdale	3,789	5,570
Tualatin	3,635	9,794
West Linn	2,577	2,114
Wilsonville	4,425	15,030
Wood Village	423	736
Clackamas County	19,530	42,685
Multnomah County	3,089	2,381
Washington County	54,999	52,578
<b>Total</b>	<b>243,993</b>	<b>461,633</b>

The Concept Plan<sup>67</sup> identifies several types of “desirable” patterns for urban development. The first, "mixed use urban centers" are fairly representative Transit Oriented Development's (TOD's) as have been advocated by Peter Calthorpe.<sup>68</sup> These centers, located within the UGB, combine employment, housing, retail, cultural and recreational uses within a "walkable environment" and in proximity to transit service. These include established urban areas and the few suburban areas

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<sup>66</sup> Metro 2040 Framework Update, 1996/1997, p.3

<sup>67</sup> Metro 2040 Growth Concept, 1995

<sup>68</sup> Peter Calthorpe, 1993



selected for increased density through in-fill. Design explorations, such as the LUTRAQ study (explained below), will provide models for the development of these centers. In the TOD, the benefits of centralization and concentration are realized in the focus of economic and social activities made highly accessible (and not automobile dependent) through the provision of public transit.

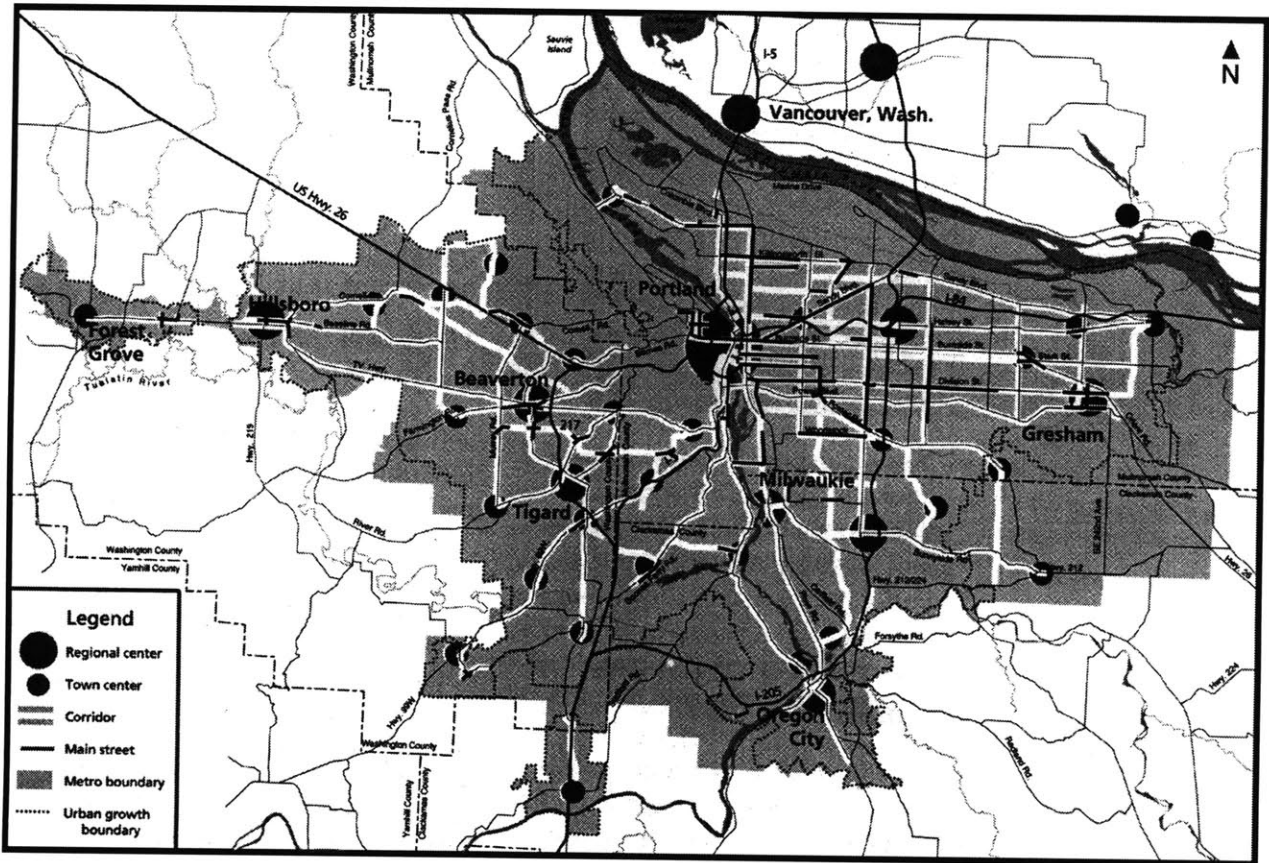
Surrounding land uses are developed at a high density that supports use of the transit system. By targeting some areas that are already developed at low density, it is hoped that the public will become receptive to higher density residential forms: "any increase in density must be made through redeveloping existing land and buildings."<sup>69</sup> The Plan delineates three types of centers:

- 1) The "Central City" center is downtown Portland, which will be maintained as the region's employment and cultural hub. This area already has a significantly high percentage of non-car travel. If the region grows according to the Concept Plan, Portland will maintain a 20% share of jobs and increase in density from 150 people per acre to 250 people per acre.
- 2) The Plan identifies nine "Regional Centers." These are large retail areas located on the central city's periphery and which are highly accessible by both transit and automobile connections. These centers serve existing markets outside of the Central City. Light Rail connections are planned to connect each regional center to the Central City. While automobile accessibility will be maintained, alternative transit options will also be promoted. Nine candidates were identified (Hillsboro, Gresham, Central City, Gateway, Beaverton downtown, Washington Square, Oregon City downtown, Clackamas Town Center and Milwaukie) but it is anticipated that these developments can be asynchronously phased in as new growth requires. Under the Plan, density is increased in each regional center from the current 24 people per acre to 60 people per acre.
- 3) The third type of center is the "Town Center." In these centers density will increase from 23 people per acre to 40 people per acre and local retail and employment opportunities will be added. Care will be taken that the new employment does not infringe upon the availability of housing or the esthetic quality of environment.

"Corridors" are a second development pattern endorsed by the Concept Plan. These are less dense than the centers, but closely follow existing or planned transit routes. The target density for the corridors is about 25 people per acre which would take the form of townhouses and 3 story office buildings situated in a pedestrian oriented environment. Closely related to these are "Station Communities." In proximity to a station, the target density is increased to 45 persons per acre. In areas centered upon a transit station a high degree of pedestrian amenity is expected. Zoning will be used to set the minimum density levels.

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<sup>69</sup> Metro 2040 Growth Concept, 1995, p.6

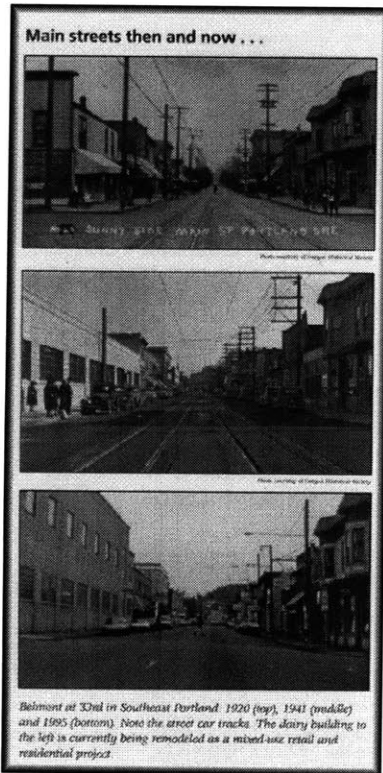


Map of "Main Street" Areas  
Source: Portland Metro

The fostering of "Main Streets" and "Neighborhood Centers" is also an important part of the Metro 2040 Concept Plan. This concept makes use of historic neighborhoods, which had strong transit service and strong business and civic communities, as precedent to create a new “efficient and effective land-use and transportation alternative.”<sup>70</sup> Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard, Belmont Street, the Willamette District, and Cornelius are examples of the diverse types of “healthy” neighborhoods that fall into this categorization, including “opportunities for working, shopping, and living”<sup>71</sup> and a strong transportation system. In the Plan the density of these neighborhoods is increased from between 10 to 14 people per acre to 36 to 39 people per acre. All of these neighborhood areas are required to develop plans to increase their street connections to surrounding communities (grids are cited a good historic example).

<sup>70</sup> Metro 2040 Growth Concept, 1995

<sup>71</sup> Metro 2040 Framework Update, 1996/1997, p.7

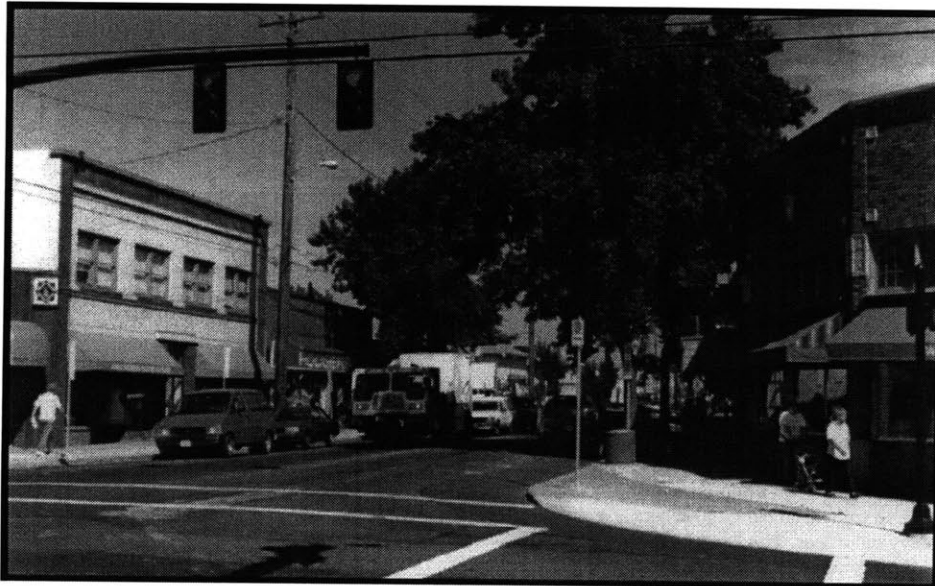


### Historic Development of the Belmont "Main Street"

Source: Portland Metro

As part of their interest in the Main Streets initiative, Metro conducted a historical residential typology study and published the Main Street handbook which includes case studies of several target “main street” areas. Based upon these case studies, street amenity design, shared parking, “traffic calming,” mixed-use zoning and other strategies are articulated and promoted for use in Portland neighborhood areas. The book is being used as an educational tool to create a “shared vision among businesses, neighbors and the local government.”<sup>72</sup> Through education of the public, and private sector groups, Metro hopes to create a “grass roots” advocacy for the implementation of the Main Street strategies. These groups can then direct supportive local government policies.

<sup>72</sup> Main Street Handbook, 1996, p.29



**Example of Existing "Main Street" in Urban Area**  
Source: Portland Metro

The emphasis upon transit continues for "Industrial Areas" and "Employment Areas." The Plan determines that the Oregon economy is dependent upon inter-modal transit facilities ("air and marine terminals, freight rail yards and common carrier truck terminals") and so these need to be identified and protected. While mixed-use is generally endorsed throughout the Plan, single use areas are designated for industrial uses or business that benefit from agglomerate economic effects. Within industrial areas, supporting uses are allowed, but not retail that caters to large market areas. Other employment areas are mixed and should include housing. The required density increase for these areas is from 11 people / acre to 20 people / acre. New industrial areas should be placed in proximity to housing and have access to inexpensive non-auto transportation.

Finally, "Transportation Facilities" are addressed directly as a part of the Metro 2040 regional strategy. Rather than provide an additional transportation plan, the Concept Plan places emphasis upon the compliance of transit development with the regional goals and objectives and the linkage of urban form and transportation. Because of this emphasis, "the region has shown a strong commitment to developing a regional plan that is based on greater land use efficiencies and a truly

multi-modal transportation system.”<sup>73</sup> As a general goal, the plan will foster transit choices, those being primarily alternatives to the automobile in this context. Businesses recognized as inherently “auto-oriented” will be accommodated but for automobile access multiple route design is favored over reliance upon arterials. The strategic purpose of light rail development is to link the regional centers to the central city. Strategies such as demand management, system management and pricing strategies are also recommended for achieving regional transit goals.

### **Oregon Transportation Plan**

In 1992 Oregon adopted a 40 year plan to redirect transportation development trends within the state. The plan gives priority to the development of mass transit, rail, bicycle and pedestrian systems, shipping ports and airports and other alternatives to automobile travel and to development of plans and policy to encourage alternative transportation. The plan also defines minimum service levels for various transit options. Echoing the objectives of other recent planning programs within Oregon, the plan’s ultimate goal is to produce compact, “highly livable urban areas.” Without making use of the term, the “urban village” concept has become a common element within local plans.

The Oregon Transportation Plan was preceded by the adoption of the Oregon Transportation Planning Rule in 1991. The Planning Rule is described as a “comprehensive attempt to address traffic congestion, suburban sprawl and air pollution through an integrated approach combining land-use and transportation planning.”<sup>74</sup> Under this rule:

- 1) Cities and counties in Oregon must plan for non-automobile transportation and directly address transit, bicycle and pedestrian travel within their land-use plans and ordinances.
- 2) Oregon’s four major metropolitan areas “must plan to reduce per capita vehicle miles (VMT) by 10% over the next 20 years and by 20% within 30 years. Plans must identify alternative modes, demand management, parking and land-use measures that will accomplish the VMT reduction.”<sup>75</sup>
- 3) Portland Metro must adjust land-use patterns, density and design as a means to reduce travel demand.
- 4) An interim measure to improve alternative transportation is required by May 1994.

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<sup>73</sup> Metro 2040 Growth Concept, 1995, p.11

<sup>74</sup> League of Women Voters, 1995, p.11

<sup>75</sup> League of Women Voters, 1995, p.11

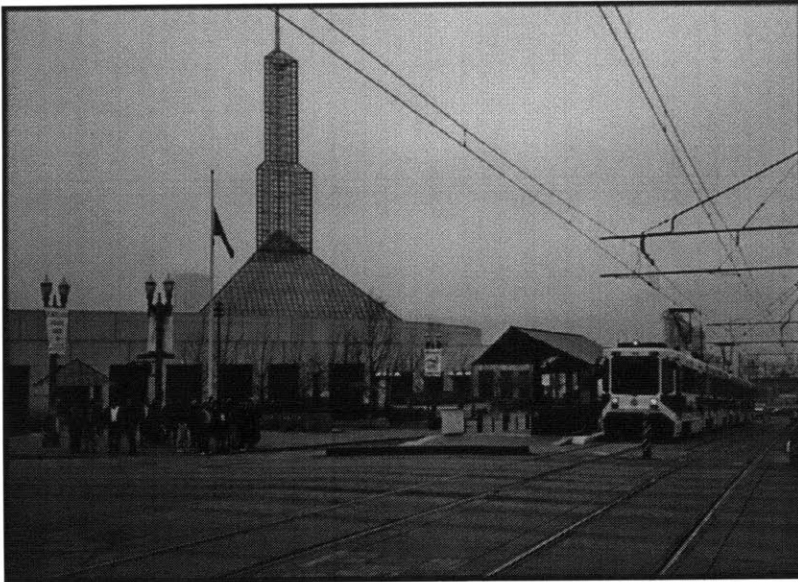
Several strategies for metropolitan Portland have been produced through this initiative:

- 1) The environment for pedestrians and bicycle users between residential areas and transit stops and at intersections which have major transit stops will be improved.
- 2) New commercial and institutional developments are required to have transit oriented site design.
- 3) Maximum setbacks will be oriented towards improving the pedestrian environment.
- 4) Commercial developments will be required to improve the internal pedestrian and bicycle circulation.

Strategies for monitoring and enforcing these requirements and goals had not, as of 1995, been adequately developed. The state will likely provide technical assistance, when requested, as an incentive and employ established plan compliance enforcement procedures if necessary, but it seems likely that metropolitan area governments will make efforts to address the state goals, having become enfranchised within the state planning system. The LUTRAQ study (described below) was conducted as an exploration of possible strategies for integrating transit and transit oriented land use in a manner that satisfies the Transportation Plan goals. The Transportation Plan itself, similar to the LCDC goals, is primarily a vision setting document. Successive plans will develop the strategies for achieving the state's transportation goals.

### **Transit Choices for Livability**

In September, 1996, Tri-Met (Metro Portland's transit agency) conducted a major public outreach effort as part of the process to develop a 10 year transit plan for Portland. An extensive study was conducted of current transit use and the public preferences for future transit options. In addition to a survey, Tri-Met conducted a citizen design transit service initiative using community workshops and other methods to generate transit strategies from within the general public and to familiarize the public with transit oriented development land use patterns. Through this effort and other similar ones, planning in Oregon has remained a participatory and educational process.



**Tri-Met Light Rail Transit Station at the Portland Convention Center**  
Photo by author

### **LUTRAQ - Land Use, Transportation and Air Quality**

In complement to the Metro planning activity, Peter Calthorpe was engaged by the 1000 Friends of Oregon to prepare a regional plan for the Beaverton area. Located within Washington County, Beaverton is the primary employment and housing sub-center for the Metro Portland. The plan was motivated in part by “a proposed \$200 million beltway around the west side of Portland that would violate the Urban Growth Boundary.”<sup>76</sup> Calthorpe makes clear his support of LCDC as well: “The UGB (Urban Growth Boundary) is central to the strategy of containing growth and directing it to support transit and in-fill.”<sup>77</sup> In the LUTRAQ plan he presents a “new suburban vision” that is a self-conscious attempt to counter the trend of decentralization.

The focus of this plan is upon the use of a Transit Oriented Development (TOD) land use pattern to reduce automobile dependency and thus environmental impacts while improving pedestrian accessibility. Similar to the Metro 2040 plan, development is directed into four types of “centers.” Already developed areas are further urbanized through redevelopment and in-fill in the “Mixed-Use Center.” New urban, transit oriented developments, “Urban TODs,” are planned for

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<sup>76</sup> Peter Calthorpe, 1993, p.123

the areas surrounding new light rail stations. Similarly, a Feeder Bus system connects “Neighborhood TODs” to the light rail stations. Other development can be accommodated within “Secondary Areas” located within a mile of a center.

Conventional traffic models assume that residential areas will be developed along conventional patterns. By revising transportation models to anticipate a different, transit-oriented, neighborhood form, and different land use patterns in which transit use increases and pedestrian circulation is promoted through improvements in the aesthetics of urban space, the development of transit system becomes considerably more feasible. Altering the assumptions built into transit models was one focal point of the LUTRAQ study. Consequently in Calthorpe’s scheme, a Light Rail and Feeder Bus system is recommended for Beaverton.

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<sup>77</sup> Peter Calthorpe, 1993, p.118



**Summary Time Line**

- 1969 Senate Bill 10 - first statement of statewide planning goals.
- 1973 Senate Bill 100 creates LCDC and DLCD  
House Bill 3009 provides counties with ability to legislate county level issues outside of incorporated areas, enabling issues to be dealt with at local level, rather than by state.
- 1974 LCDC rewrites and officially adopts statewide planning goals
- 1975 1000 Friends of Oregon organized.
- 1978 Voters in Multnomah, Washington and Clackamas counties give Metro “responsibility of coordinating land-use plans for the regions 27 jurisdictions”
- 1979 Columbia Region Association of Governments (CRAG) and the Metropolitan Service District are combined forming "Metro." Metro's initial responsibilities include solid waste planning, ownership and management of the Washington Park Zoo and management Portland's Urban Growth Boundary.  
Joint Policy Advisory Committee on Transportation (JPACT) formed from Metro's transportation planning department.
- 1981 Management of solid waste operations for Portland transferred to Metro.
- 1982 Land Use Board of Appeals (LUBA) formed.
- 1983 Clackamas Transfer and Recycling Center (Metro South Station) opens.
- 1986 \$65 million general obligation bond for Convention Center approved by Oregon voters.
- 1987 Establishment of Metropolitan Exposition-Recreation Commission.
- 1988 Appointment of Portland Metropolitan Area Local Government Boundary Commission members becomes responsibility of Metro.
- 1990 Voters amend state constitution to allow the creation of a "home-rule" regional government for the Portland metropolitan region.  
Management responsibility for the Portland Center for the Performing Arts, Civic Stadium and Memorial Coliseum assumed by Metro.  
\$28.5 million in solid waste revenue bonds issued to construct the Metro Central Station.
- 1991 Regional Urban Goals and Objectives (RUGGOs) adopted by Metro in compliance with state law.  
Local jurisdictions request long-term metropolitan planning (the 2040 plan).  
Metro Central Station opened.

## The Development of Growth Management in Oregon

- 1992 New home-rule charter for the "Metropolitan Service District" approved by voters "to more actively manage the metropolitan area's growth planning process"<sup>78</sup>, giving Metro a new structure, a primary mission and a new name (Metro). Includes deadline (December 31, 1997) for the adoption of a regional framework plan.  
Oregon Transportation Plan adopted.
- 1993 Oregon Forest Resources Trust created by state legislature to finance the good stewardship of the state's forest lands. (makes loans to cover the full cost of reforestation.)
- 1994 Voters approve North-South Light Rail expansion.
- 1995 Metro 2040 Growth Concept adopted.  
First elected (seven member) Metro Council and first elected Auditor for Metro take office.  
\$135.6 million general obligation bond for money to acquire and protect open spaces, parks and streams approved by voters.
- 1996 Multnomah County Parks and Expo Center ownership transferred to Metro.

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<sup>78</sup> Metro Facts, Fall 1996

*Conclusions*

Since Oregon's statewide planning goals were officially adopted by the LCDC in 1974, the values imbued within those goals have permeated a host of planning initiatives within the state, particularly within the metropolitan areas. A moralistic conservatism can be seen in Oregon's approach to planning and is reflected in the state's abstract goals founded upon the state's concept of the public good:

- 1) work for efficient energy use
- 2) preserve historic/cultural qualities
- 3) provide low-cost housing throughout the state
- 4) foster public participation

Comprehensive land use planning was introduced to Oregon through bold political leadership at the state level. The political leadership in Oregon has realized that long term sustainable development depends upon a sustainable planning process. Planning is initiated through legal mandate provided at the level of the state government. Although it took over ten years for some cities or counties to generate comprehensive plans that received state endorsement, much has been accomplished and the state continues to have a clear, cohesive vision for the future of land use in Oregon. The development of a citizen participation process, bureaucratic enforcement mechanisms (such as LUBA), and a citizen advocacy group (1000 Friends of Oregon) are also important elements of this process. As a result, the Oregon planning effort has these characteristics:

- 1) cities and counties are required to prepare plans
- 2) planning goals are consistent throughout the state
- 3) the goals and standards are high
- 4) the goals and standards are enforced.

Planning in Oregon and in the metropolitan area has consistently given priority to the development of legitimate public participation processes. Because of the focus upon planning processes, "Oregon planning over the last two decades has been moralistic, participatory and bureaucratic."<sup>79</sup> Planners and politicians have been careful to identify and appeal to public values supportive of growth management and land use control. Recently, planners have incorporated within their vocabulary terms which reflect the popular emphasis upon density, mixed-use and transit oriented design but have also kept strong their commitment to public participation. The state and

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<sup>79</sup> Abbott, 1994, p.219

## The Development of Growth Management in Oregon

Metro governments actively conduct education campaigns, solicit citizen input on planning issues and encourage citizen involvement in the planning process. Through the commitment to public participation, the planning system has been able to make adaptations over time to social and economic changes within the state.

## **Chapter 4**

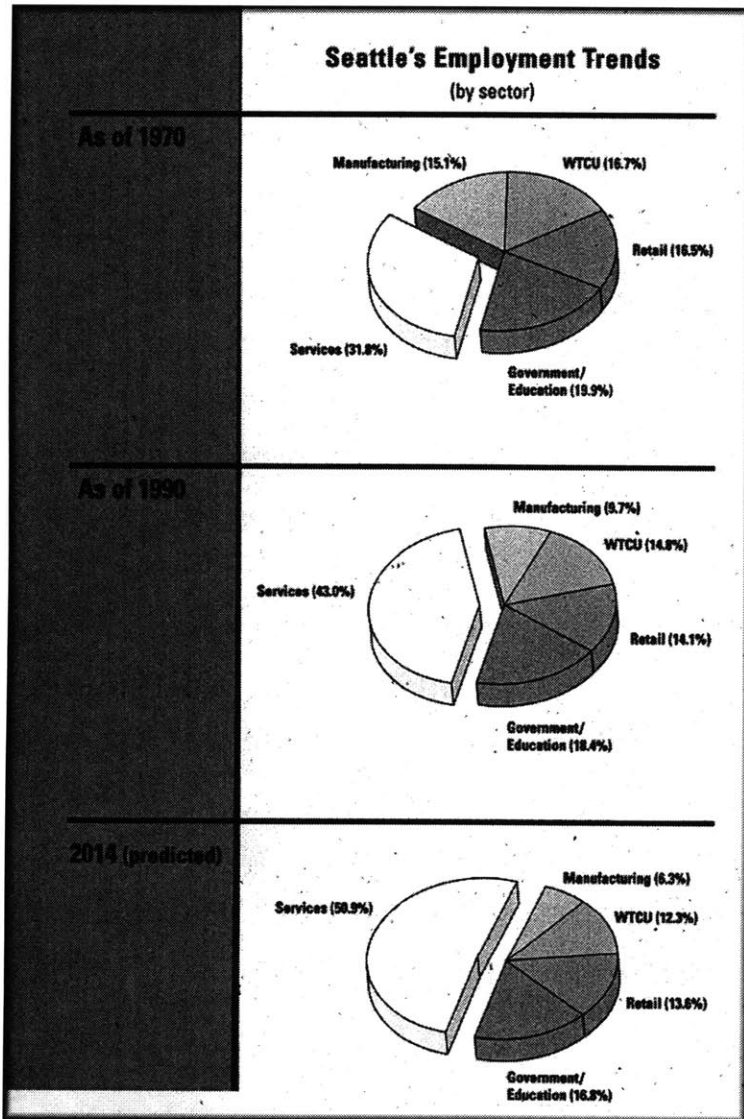
### **Growth Management in Seattle**

Consistent with the other large cities of the Pacific Northwest, the history of development in Seattle incorporates both a reputation for livability and periods of rapid population growth. The earliest settlers were most concerned with economic gain and founded the city accordingly in proximity to a good harbor and marketable timber stands. Although the site initially chosen for the city was a muddy tidal area not particularly conducive to pleasant living, Seattle's engineers proved capable of adapting nature to the needs of the city through various large scale engineering projects, such as the early re-grading of the entire downtown area. The region benefited economically from the California gold rush beginning in 1848 and later Seattle in particular would benefit as the major departure point for the Alaskan gold rush. While the city's founders may not have recorded particular interest in the spectacular landscape, it has played a significant role in the city's more recent economic development. While fortune may be responsible for the local birth of the entrepreneurs who created Boeing and Microsoft, the region's quality of life has been the major encouragement for them not to relocate to locations where profits could be maximized and greatest personal economic benefits achieved. These two firms account for much of Seattle's modern economic growth.<sup>80</sup> (The other major employers, including several government agencies, are

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<sup>80</sup> Lawrence interview, 1997

Nordstrom, Weyerhaeuser, METRO King County Government, the US Postal Service, Swedish Hospital, Group Health Co-op, the City of Seattle, the University of Washington, Seafirst Corporation and US West Communications.<sup>81)</sup>



Seattle's Employment Trends  
Source: City of Seattle

Seattle's population growth in the 1980s occurred in the absence of growth management practices other than conventional zoning, utility and sub-division regulations. As in most US cities, new population growth was accommodated by horizontal expansion of the city. While between 1970

<sup>81</sup> King County, 1996

and 1990, the population grew by 38%, Seattle's developed land area grew by 87%. This horizontal growth increased automobile dependency: "vehicle miles traveled" increased by 136% in the same period. The annual estimated cost for time and fuel lost to traffic jams is \$740 million.<sup>82</sup> 91% of the Greater Seattle population lives in low density, auto dependent neighborhoods.<sup>83</sup> As a result of this widespread sprawl Seattle became one of the most traffic congested of urban areas in the United States.<sup>84</sup> The state's Commute Trip Reduction Law has successfully encouraged policies and practices, such as corporate car-pooling programs, that have reduced commute lengths.

During the '60s and '70s Washington, as had Oregon, experienced considerable growth pressure that threatened to seriously impact the largely undeveloped regional landscape. As early as the 1960s, citizen groups in Washington were lobbying the state legislature to adopt growth management measures and to establish metropolitan area level governments. In the early 70's, Governor Dan Evans failed in an attempt to have the state legislature adopt comprehensive land use legislation. Land use regulation faded as a public interest during the ensuing economic decline, triggered by the downturn of the aerospace and timber industries. With economic revival and the associated growth of the mid-1980s, growth management was revived as a public concern. The renewed fear of growth impacts led the state legislature to address land use planning and in Seattle, the Citizen's Alternative Plan (CAP) was adopted by initiative in 1989 as the direct result of such advocacy.

In 1990 the Washington State Legislature passed the Growth Management Act (GMA - Sub House Bill 2929), which required the fastest growing jurisdictions in the state to develop comprehensive growth management plans, providing the legal framework and impetus for the creation of the Seattle comprehensive plan.

"The law grew out of a widespread perception in the state that growth in Washington state-and in particular, in Western Washington-had been sprawling out of control for a decade or so, wreaking havoc on environmental quality, housing affordability, and other facets of society. The Growth Management Act fundamentally changed local government's responsibilities for comprehensive planning, it required comprehensive plans that simultaneously address the relationships between land-use, transportation, capital facilities, housing, and public utilities."<sup>85</sup>

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<sup>82</sup> Northwest Environment Watch, 1996

<sup>83</sup> Northwest Environment Watch, 1996

<sup>84</sup> Tri-Met's Strategic Direction, 1995-1996

<sup>85</sup> Lawrence, <http://www.sustainable.doe.gov/articles/susseat.html>.

"The legislation also altered the discretion and decision-making powers of local governments. Under the GMA, the City is required to adopt capital facility plans which are consistent with the Comprehensive Plan. Further, no City expenditures can be inconsistent with the City's adopted plan."<sup>86</sup>

Within the state legislature, the support of three groups played a key role in the making the act's adoption possible.<sup>87</sup> As might be expected, environmental groups were supportive of growth management and the issues that comprehensive planning would bring to the forefront of public debate. The legislation also gained the support of commercial developers who were anxious to replace an expensive permitting process established in the 1980s and who recognized the benefits of increased market predictability that the plan would likely produce. Third, local governments supported the legislation as an opportunity to shift responsibility to the state for planning actions and potential local conflicts that local authorities considered necessary but were reluctant to independently pursue.

The combined content of the Growth Management Act (HB2929) and the 1991 legislation (HB1025) creates "a system that is one of the most demanding in the nation."<sup>88</sup> This system incorporates concepts developed in the Oregon land use planning system, including the UGB, an emphasis upon forest and farm land protection and a focus upon economic development. Similarly, a concurrency for transportation facilities<sup>89</sup> was integrated into HB2929, modeled upon Florida's planning system. Oregon's system as a model was extended into the private realm, where the Washington Environmental Council was modeled upon the 1000 Friends of Oregon. The Washington equivalent of the UGB is the Urban Growth Area (UGA). The UGA's are administrated at the county level. The cooperation of local cities is preferred, but the counties have enforcement authority. Disputes are mediated by the Department of Community Affairs. Like Oregon's UGB, the UGA is intended to be a flexible boundary, sufficient to accommodate growth for 20 years and subject to revision following that period. Local jurisdictions are encouraged to develop land use policies that focus new development within the UGA. The environmental indicators that can be used to monitor Seattle's achievement of sustainability are an important addition to the Oregon planning system. These indicators cover a variety of categories including air quality, commute modes and duration, water consumption and transit use. The Washington system borrows many of the concepts

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<sup>86</sup> Lawrence, <http://www.sustainable.doe.gov/articles/suseat.html>.

<sup>87</sup> Lawrence interview 1997

<sup>88</sup> Abbott, 1994, p. 238

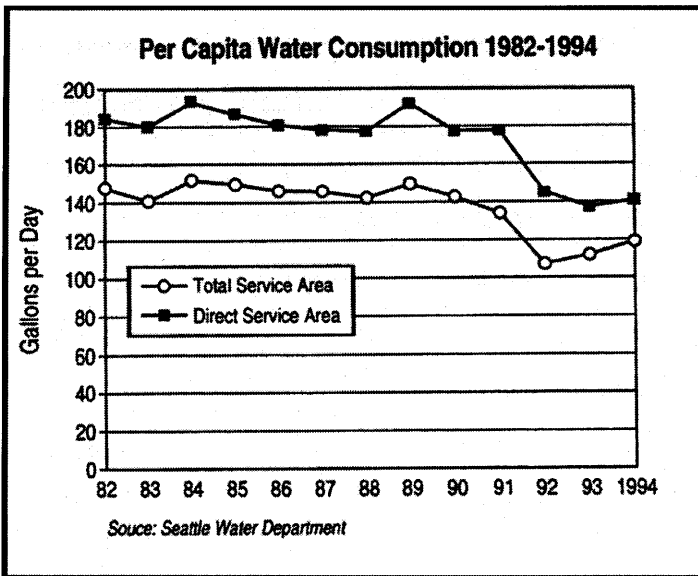
<sup>89</sup> Abbott, 1994, p. 239



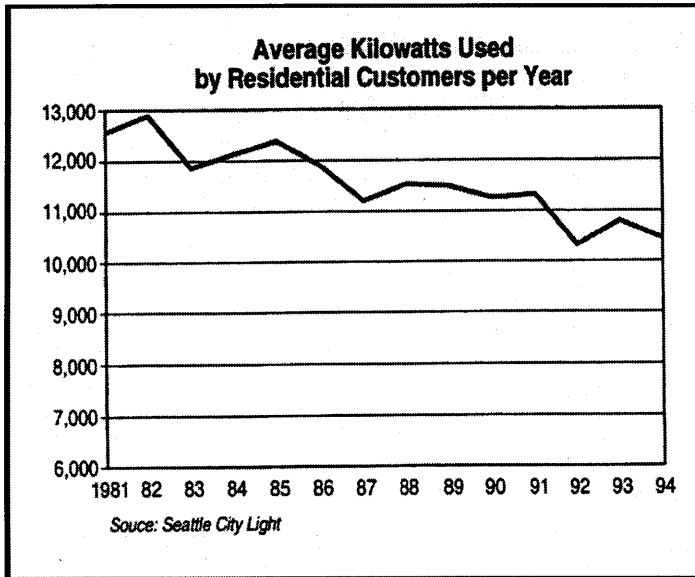
developed in Oregon and some of these, such as the indicators for measuring environmental impact, have been developed considerably further. It will require some time for these concepts to have visible impact upon the Seattle area, particularly since the city has already experienced considerable, uncontrolled growth.



**Daily Air Quality in Seattle**  
 One of the "Sustainability" Indicators Used by the City  
 Source: Seattle Comprehensive Plan - Monitoring Our Progress



**Per Capita Water Consumption - Sustainability Indicator**  
 Source: Seattle Comprehensive Plan - Monitoring Our Progress



**Average Kilowatts Used by Residential Customers per Year**  
Source: Seattle Comprehensive Plan - Monitoring Our Progress

**Change in Seattle Tree Cover 1971-1988<sup>90</sup>**

Tree coverage in Seattle has declined in recent years. The city considers trees to be an important element for quality urban environments and so has begun to measure tree coverage as part the Sustainable Seattle plan monitoring process.

Level of Tree Cover	1971 Acres	1988 Acres	Acre Change	% Change
Full, continuous canopy	2,809	2,784	-25	-0.9%
Heavy, but broken canopy	2,545	2,452	-93	-3.6%
Moderate cover	9,989	9,437	-552	-5.6%
Sparse cover	23,708	23,926	218	0.9%
Little or no cover	14,312	14,783	471	3.3%

The three Puget Sound counties, King, Pierce and Snohomish which encompass the Seattle metropolitan area, were joined in a tri-county jurisdiction similar to Portland Metro. This metropolitan jurisdiction does not have political power equivalent to that of Metro and has not yet played a significant role in the development of Seattle's land use planning. While a Seattle metropolitan government may evolve over time, as has Portland's, it likely will be hampered by the current political power concentrated within the Seattle jurisdiction and the region's more aggressive political style.

<sup>90</sup> Seattle Comprehensive Plan, Monitoring Our Progress, 1996, p.29

Seattle's mayor, Norm Rice (1989 - present), was one local government official who recognized the potential political benefits of the state's enabling legislation. He considered it his role, through the required comprehensive plan, to provide a moral vision for the city. Although the Seattle Comprehensive Plan, prepared under Rice's direction, is limited to the King County portion of the metropolitan area, the plan will have a significant conceptual influence upon the region. Rice also understood the importance of gaining political support for the plan and incorporated sophisticated techniques for communicating with the public and for keeping abreast of public opinion regarding the comprehensive plan. From 1992 to 1993 the city conducted studies of the public support for the mayor's plan through constant use of polling and consultants to communicate with the public and to determine the public's understanding of planning vocabulary, and public perception and awareness of the plan.<sup>91</sup> In 1993 Rice was re-elected, receiving 67% of the popular vote.<sup>92</sup>

In meetings with planners, Mayor Rice was not interested in hearing the usual 'planner's talk' (e.g. view corridors), but instead was interested in identifying strategies for the improvement of measurable indicators of the "Quality of Life" (e.g. a reduction of city asthma cases.) The head of the planning department, Gary Lawrence, was in fact instructed that his access to the mayor's office would end at the first meeting where he attempted to use the traditional, "technical" vocabulary of the planning profession. As a result of this shift in the approach to planning, approximately one third of Seattle's planning department was removed, people who were unable to adapt, being tied to their 'expertise' and unable to view planning as a political process or in political terms.<sup>93</sup>

### *Sustainability*

Based upon the public outreach program conducted as part of this planning effort, sustainability became the moral agent of argument for the Seattle plan. As a conceptual framework, sustainability can provide both political and technical direction and foster an improved quality of life. In many ways the Pacific Northwest has historically been at the center of discussion about the environment and so it is not surprising that contemporary environmentalist thinking would be central to the ideas of Seattle planners. Once the planning process began, a "small group of change agents

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<sup>91</sup> Lawrence interview 1997

<sup>92</sup> <http://www.pan.ci.seattle.wa/seattle/mayor/bio.htm>

<sup>93</sup> Lawrence interview 1997

within city government began work to incorporate the concept of sustainability into the City's business."<sup>94</sup> They were entirely successful, as is evident from the plan the government produced.

"Sustainability has emerged as a key organizing principle and decision-making parameter for City plans, policies, and actions, primarily through the adoption in recent years of two major policy documents: the City's Environmental Action Agenda [adopted by the City Council in October 1992], and the Comprehensive Plan [titled 'Toward A Sustainable Seattle,' and adopted by the city Council in July 1994]."<sup>95</sup>

The Seattle plan's makers named "sustainability" as the key ingredient for a plan to be successfully implemented. Sustainability was defined as the characteristic of a society that can "thrive without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs" maintaining "long-term social, economic, and environmental health." This concept is tied to the plan's three (or four)<sup>96</sup> primary goals, "[community,] social equity, environmental stewardship, and economic security and opportunity." Since these goals are very broad, and possibly contradictory, the plan must address a wide variety of issues. Further, it is stated that their achievement requires the coordination of policy and political goals, and of social programs and physical development concurrently at the municipal, regional, national and global levels. On the surface, these goals are broad enough to garner support from most constituencies. But by being based upon such broad goals, the plan should include adequate procedure to address each one. It is perhaps a weakness of the plan that it is not able to provide a concrete methodology for pursuing the stated agenda of sustainability, while the innovative environmental impact measurement criteria are a strength.

### *Urban Villages*

Perhaps the most noticeable strength of the Seattle comprehensive plan is its use of the "Urban Village" concept to unite many of the ideas expressed in the plan's objectives. In the Seattle plan, this design approach is used to simultaneously address the issues of housing diversity, mixed land use, increasing the density of residential districts, reducing crime, improving school quality, increasing home ownership, creating opportunities for mass-transit development, establishing "pedestrian orientation" and increasing the sense of community. When several city planning goals are united within one spatial organization concept, their successful implementation becomes much

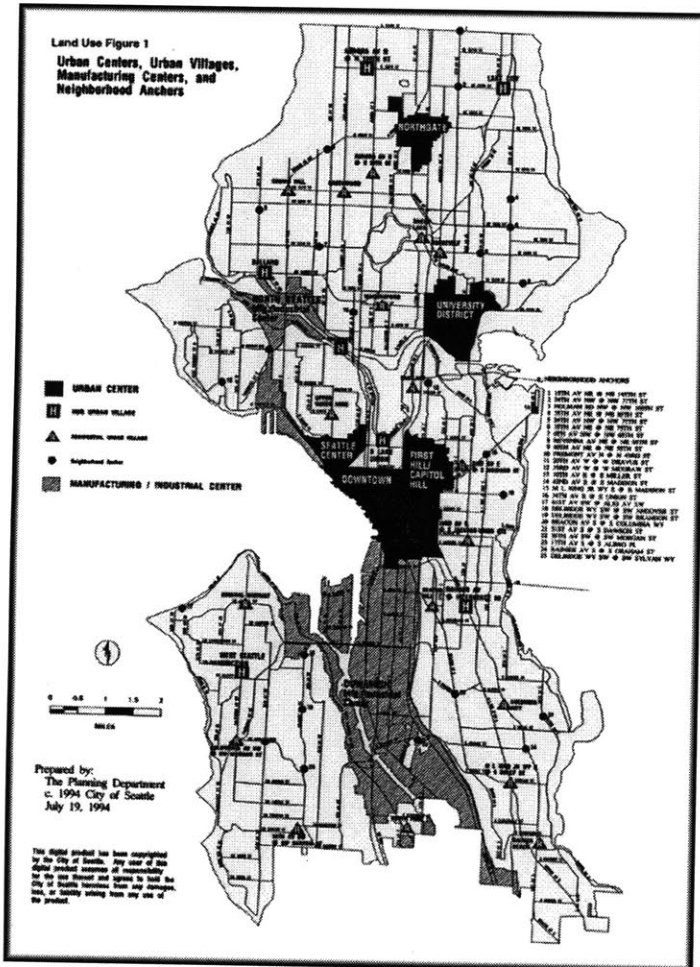
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<sup>94</sup> Lawrence, <http://www.sustainable.doe.gov/articles/susseat.html>.

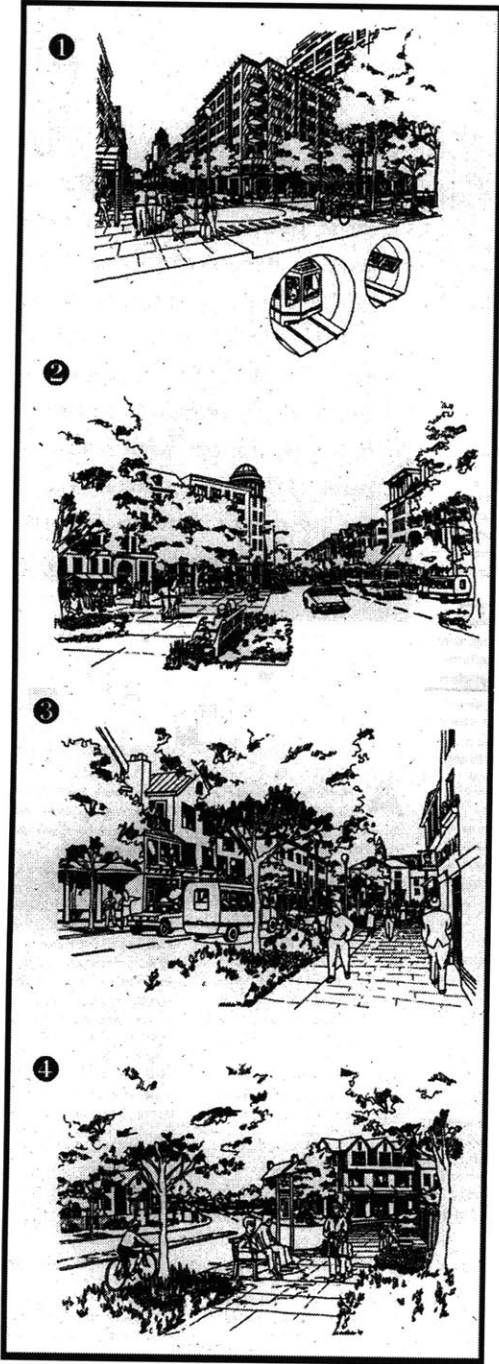
<sup>95</sup> Lawrence, <http://www.sustainable.doe.gov/articles/susseat.html>.

<sup>96</sup> There is a discrepancy in the Seattle planning documents which sometimes list three and sometimes list four goals.

more likely and it becomes possible to evaluate the outcome of the particular concept. Funding provided to each of the urban villages identified within the plan, by acting as an impetus to bring the residents of each area together, has laid the foundations for the villages themselves. Local citizens must meet to determine the use for the money their "urban village" has received. Some of the more specific goals attached to the urban village concept will be more problematic. Specific targets for percentages of residential and economic growth are given for the different classifications within the urban village system. It may be quite difficult for Seattle's planning authorities to realize these goals given the limited controls that government has to direct individual choice within our society and the unpredictability of the region's economic growth.



Seattle - Urban Villages Map  
 Source: Seattle Comprehensive Plan



Urban Village Scenes at Four Density Levels  
Density Decreases from 1 to 4  
Source: Sustainable Seattle Plan

The role of the "Urban Village" in facilitating particular (non-service) economic development, another objective of the plan, is less clear, as is the language used in the plan to describe the details of its economic policy. As the saying goes, "the devil is in the details." Particularly noticeable is the use of terms such as: "strive to improve", "seek ways to assist", "pursue development", "support efforts", "encourage", "recognize the importance" and "periodically assess". All of these reflect the relative weakness of the institutions operating under this type of plan to directly influence or manipulate economic development.

### *Implementation*

In many instances the plan itself does not attempt to resolve the details of its implementation, but rather stops at establishing a set of policies for guiding future planning actions. This approach is indicated clearly in the introduction: "This Plan will be used by the Mayor, City Council and City departments to guide their decisions and actions and relationships with other cities, counties and state government in terms of consistency with Comprehensive Plan policies (as required by the State's Growth Management Act)." As "the Plan will be used to direct the development of the specific development regulations which regulate land use and development, such as the zoning ordinance ... but not necessarily to establish a specific legal duty to perform a particular act or undertake a program or project." The weaker portion of the plan is the lack of a clear methodology or concept for the implementation of its various goals. Further, where the plan has not made some specific recommendation, it will be difficult to evaluate. In an effort to comprehensively address all interests, the plan contains many such underdeveloped areas. But in so doing, the areas which need further attention have become apparent. By employing a "phasing strategy" the planners will be able to further develop these weaker areas while also making adjustments in response to the plan's effects.

The decision to construct light rail as part of the Seattle plan provides an example attempt to influence urban development more directly through public education. While it is less clear how light rail will improve Seattle's transportation network, the message sent to commercial developers is clear. The city is committed to its downtown and plans to pursue that commitment through the investment of public money in downtown infrastructure.<sup>97</sup> The UGA for Seattle sends a complementary message. As the public sector will no longer invest in infrastructure development outside of the boundary, such development will become less profitable for developers. If development outside of UGA is no longer economically feasible, this central component of the Seattle comprehensive plan

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<sup>97</sup> Gary Lawrence interview, 1997

will be enforced through the market. Gary Lawrence has also speculated that the rising population will increase demand for food and raise the value of farm land, further encouraging the concentration of new development within existing urban areas.

### *Public Participation*

In the attempt to provide a comprehensive plan under the broader definition, establishing legitimacy clearly became a major concern of the Seattle planning effort. To this end, the plan's objectives seem to follow a fairly liberal, social agenda responsive to the needs of Seattle's citizenry. That a considerable amount of effort was given to the discernment of the "public interest" is suggested by this statement from within the mayor's summary: "For four years now (1990-94), Seattle citizens have been talking to one another about our future. As residents and business people, we have focused on three important goals: environmental stewardship, economic opportunity and social equity."<sup>98</sup> The three primary objectives mentioned throughout the plan seem to be the result of a compilation of publicly expressed concerns. This is reinforced at several points throughout the text of the plan document and the public information brochure, as additional mention is made of the public's involvement. The plan's spirit is described as one that: "affirms community values as they have been expressed by citizens throughout the comprehensive planning process." And as one that: "engages citizens in planning and decision-making efforts at the neighborhood, citywide and regional levels in pursuit of this vision." To accomplish this, a wide variety of methods was employed: "Publications, public workshops, citizen advisory committees, consultations with citywide citizen groups and other public agencies, television broadcasts through Channel 28 and a special Electronic Mayor's Town Hall, a video, a 'speaker's bureau', focus groups, research studies, surveys, and a wide-ranging media collaboration have all been developed to report to the public on the process and to solicit citizen comment and involvement." Further citizen involvement will be insured as "There will be a yearly public report on expenditures in relation to the plan's core values." Much effort has been placed upon linking the plan's "values" to the "values" of Seattle citizens as a part of establishing legitimacy through comprehensive representation of the "public interest."

The recent history of effective citizen advocacy for Seattle begins in 1987 with the Citizens Alternative Plan (CAP) group. CAP was preceded by a failed citizen initiative, Vision Seattle, which had been organized to address perceived short-comings in the city's 1985 downtown plan. CAP

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<sup>98</sup> Seattle's Comprehensive Plan, 1994



produced a plan for downtown Seattle that significantly restricted growth and which was opposed by the city's mayor, almost all of the city council and the AFL-CIO. This plan was adopted, however, by public referendum, demonstrating the public frustration with the current urban growth patterns.

The failure of the Seattle Commons Plan provides an illustration of the importance of developing a valid public participation process. The Commons Plan, although separate from the Sustainable Seattle Plan, was closely linked as a demonstration of the plan's urban village concept. The Commons plan proposed to redevelop a large light industry and low-rent district of the city. The new development would include a large park (the commons) surrounded by high density mixed retail and residential uses. But in this instance, the attempted method for the plan's implementation seems more akin to the large-scale Modernist urban interventions of the 1950s and 1960s except that Modernist form has been replaced with Neo-traditionalist form.<sup>99</sup> The Commons Plan was not the result of a sincere public participation process, but rather the planned physical imposition of a New Urbanist vision for the city. Local citizens became concerned about the impacts the project would have upon the neighborhood and did not feel that there were adequate opportunities for citizen involvement in the planning process. Eventually the Commons was defeated by a vote of city residents.

### *Value Implications*

Comprehensiveness can be viewed in at least two different manners. A plan described as comprehensive can either be a plan that attempts to make provision comprehensively for all possible contingencies, taking all interests equitably into account, or be a plan that makes a proposal for action based upon a comprehensive viewpoint of the city's needs. If the former case is assumed, then the arguments against comprehensive planning are particularly valid. The requirements of undertaking the preparation of such a complete, comprehensive plan will surely surpass our abilities and resources. The writers of the Seattle comprehensive plan seem to be aware of this limitation: "The best a plan can be is a well-educated guess about how to accommodate people and conditions that can not be known in advance. An effective plan must be flexible enough to succeed within a range of likely conditions and be adjusted as those conditions are monitored and evaluated, while maintaining

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<sup>99</sup> Hirning, 1994; Gardner, 1994; Nelson, 1994

Seattle Community Network, Seattle Commons Opponents

Seattle Commons - Virtual Image

a steady aim at its ultimate goals." However, the second approach can be considered justified, as it can make claim to the advantages of coordination efficiencies and goal consistency without being liable to the criticism of failure from non-inclusiveness. The Seattle planners are right to declare the value of clearly established long-range goals, particularly as tools for evaluation of the plan. Since elements of both interpretations of comprehensiveness can be found within the Seattle Plan, it is in some areas more clearly legitimate and in some areas its legitimacy is somewhat in question.

The plan presents a set of goals that should appeal to a broad segment of the population and be difficult to debate considering the current social climate: development of a strong sense of community, "environmental stewardship, economic opportunity and social equity." Within this goal statement, however, some subtle biases can be perceived. Interestingly, the phrase "environmental stewardship" has quite different implications than such phrases as "environmental conservation" or "environmental protection." Stewardship implies the management of resources for social benefit, rather than the absolute protection of the environment. This usage probably reflects the relative importance of the business people in the planning process. Economic opportunity and social equity are both broad phrases that do much to suggest fairness. Preference for a particular type of family is clearly stated later in the more detailed version of the plan's objectives: "to attract and retain more families with children, to keep "family-wage" manufacturing jobs from leaving the city, to encourage new housing types that are more pleasing" presumably for "A diverse mix of people of varied ages, incomes, cultures, employment, and interests." Simultaneously "This Plan protects Seattle's many wonderful single-family neighborhoods" and seeks to provide "a fair share of low-income housing." It would seem that the plan has promised to protect the interest of Seattle's established residents while also promoting the interests of newer residents. Perhaps the only possible response to the question of serving the "public interest" is to provide something for everyone. The most proactive of the plan's elements, the urban village concept, will probably accomplish some degree of all of these objectives. By concentrating new growth in a few areas, it will be possible to protect older neighborhoods. Within the urban village paradigm, a variety of housing types as well as architecturally pleasing design should be possible. One possible contradiction is the tendency of urban village type development to support service industries more effectively than manufacturing. Also the villages' "pedestrian orientation" may be less comfortable for some than for others. In many cases, mass transit construction and restrictions upon automobile usage have been seen to impact certain segments of the population much more than others.

The greatest possible shortcoming of the Seattle plan is that it doesn't focus enough upon the development of planning and implementation processes for the region. In its writers' attempt to be comprehensive, to establish legitimacy and to capture the moral high ground of operating in the

"public interest" they have not been able to produce a well defined set of objectives and procedures. Further, the plan is quite bold in declaring itself to be comprehensive and reminds the reader at several points within its text of this goal. But with closer inspection, the plan's objectives probably do not make adequate provision to truly protect minority interests, although they do establish that this is a state objective. While much of the plan itself will be quite valid, useful and beneficial to the city of Seattle, it would have been ultimately more beneficial, had it focused upon providing well defined planning action.

### *Conclusions*

As in Portland, strong political leadership has also played an important role in the development of Seattle's comprehensive plan. Public relations and public participation processes have been incorporated into the production of the Seattle Comprehensive Plan, but it is unclear that these processes will be maintained. As a result of the public participation process and through a public education program, the public has become educated concerning growth management issues and the newest urban planning techniques and several key political interests have united to support the plan. Without an empowered metropolitan government body for the Seattle region, it will be very difficult to develop effective land use policy for the large urbanized area that surrounds the city of Seattle. The Urban Village concept has been successfully introduced into the public realm as a powerful tool for attaining increased density. Seattle has also developed a sophisticated system of indicators for sustainable development. Seattle residents do not yet share the level of idealism and the willingness to employ planning as a moral agent found in Portland. Comprehensive planning remains a new experience for Seattle and it is unclear that an enduring planning process has been established.



## **Chapter 5**

### **Lessons from the Pacific Northwest**

Tracing the historical development of growth management policies in the Pacific Northwest suggests some common methodology behind its political acceptance. While the region has some unique cultural and demographic characteristics, it is not clear that the population is inherently supportive of land use planning. Planners have been careful, however, to understand and respond to regional values through the planning process. While public participation has emerged as an important issue for planners everywhere, it seems to have played an especially critical role in the politics of land use planning in the Pacific Northwest. As precipitant and a consequence of the public's engagement in growth management, planning concepts have come to be generally understood among the general population. This has likely facilitated the transfer of public support for planning throughout the region. Consequently, the region has begun to effectively address the issue of sustainable habitation.

*Is it really desirable to emulate the land use planning systems of the Pacific Northwest?*

To some degree the legitimacy of a planning action can be evaluated by its degree of acceptance and successful implementation - its ability to impart change. Corrective forces exist

within the free market of ideas that will compensate for or supplant the particularly weak, omissive or overly idealistic elements of a plan. The planner can view the planning process as an experimental process. If a plan is prepared using the full extent of the planner's technical abilities and ethical judgment, then the validity of these can be tested through observation and evaluation of the plan's outcome. An informed community is an important source of ideas for the planner and public acceptance provides the plan with legitimacy. When ideas from the public realm are introduced within the plan, then the plan also can act as a test of the validity of public thought. A good plan is one that is conducive to such evaluation and should include both a clear set of objectives and either a well defined set of procedures for obtaining those objectives or mechanisms sufficient for generating such procedures.

In many ways, it is yet early to evaluate the successfulness of Seattle's recent attempts at comprehensive planning and growth management. The Seattle plan has certainly introduced and clarified important concepts and ideas which are a valuable reference for planners, but some time must pass before it is possible to measure their true impact the city's social and physical form. Some interesting lessons can be learned, however, from two of the early experiences of the Plan.

The rejection by voters of the Seattle Commons Plan, a progeny of the Comprehensive planning effort, is a significant setback for the Seattle plan, but not one that invalidates its basic premises. Rather, it reveals a weakness in the development of the plan's implementation procedure, which in this case failed to adequately accommodate public interests. Rather than support the plan, citizen initiative was the plan's undoing. In its implementation, the need to be sensitive to and to enfranchise the public will, was not adequately met.

The urban village strategy of the Sustainable Seattle Plan has, in turn, produced one of the plan's more verifiable successes. Through the process of these meetings, the residents of the villages have developed community identity and purpose and have become invested in the success of the Plan.<sup>100</sup> In contrast to the Seattle Commons project, the urban village aspect of the Plan has demonstrated some early success through its emphasis upon the development of social contacts and the citizen participation process.

The 25 year history of growth management planning in Oregon affords considerably more opportunities for the evaluation of the state's planning process. At one level, the Oregon system has effected mixed success with some control of sprawl and some sprawl taking place since the plan's

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<sup>100</sup> Dennis Ryan interview, 1997

implementation. Lower densities can be partly explained by lower than anticipated growth pressures. Local planners and citizens have not abandoned the growth control measures. For the most part the original LCDC goals have remained intact, and areas of limited success have spurred greater planning activity and greater interest on the part of the public. The achievement of high density neighborhoods has become a commonly accepted goal among the public.

The Seattle Comprehensive plan, in fact, draws attention to some of the issues not yet adequately addressed within Portland's planning system. LCDC, apart from its goal to provide affordable housing, doesn't significantly address social equity issues. In large part, this reflects the conservative concerns of the constituency that initially supported the creation of LCDC. Some have noted the emergence of "two Oregons divided by wealth, by economic prospects and increasingly by world view."<sup>101</sup> There is in particular a growing disparity in wealth between urban and rural areas. If forestry and farming, industries protected by the LCDC goals, continue to decline in importance, LCDC will likely lose its tenuous support in rural areas. Increases in minority populations, particularly in Portland, may create additional challenges to the public participation methodology with which planners have become comfortable. The sophisticated environmental indicators developed within the Seattle plan, absent within Oregon's, also suggest that the Oregon system is in need of revision.

The sustainability of Oregon's planning system is the strongest evidence of its success. By keeping the commitment to public participation at the forefront of discussion during planning initiatives, politicians and planners have enjoyed consistent public support for growth control, have provided an opportunity for innovations that originate from the public realm and have been able to micro manage urban problems. This has led to adaptability and the public perception of comprehensive planning as an on-going public process. Large scale transit plans, regional waste management schemes and neighborhood urban design efforts have all been accomplished within the framework of the comprehensive planning process.

*Is it possible to emulate the growth management system of the Pacific Northwest?*

It is also possible that unique conditions within each state have contributed to their planning successes independent of each other. Alternatively, it is possible that a process for the successful

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<sup>101</sup> Abbott, 1993

political adoption and actuation of comprehensive planning is being developed within the Northwest region and that there are significant opportunities for the application of this process elsewhere.

Since its legal adoption in 1974, the Oregon comprehensive land use planning system has also been a subject of critical investigation. Several critics have argued that because within Oregon there are unique conditions which have fostered land use planning, Oregon's experiences do not provide a useful model for other states seeking to undertake comprehensive growth management. These conditions include the strong environmentalist tendencies of the Oregon population, the state's high degree of public land ownership, the presence of a small homogenous population and the opportunity to implement planning before much of the natural landscape was lost. One such critic, Edward Sullivan, argues particularly strongly against the usefulness of looking to Oregon's land use planning system as a model process:

"The establishment of Oregon's planning system in 1973 may well have been a historical accident. It came at a time when Tom McCall, a very popular governor, found a receptive audience for his warnings that, without planning, the state would lose its most fertile farm and forest lands, spoil its coastlines, and ignore its housing needs. It followed an unsuccessful legislative effort in 1969 to require the state's cities and counties to adopt comprehensive plans and zoning regulations. The time was also ripe for the Oregon Supreme Court to consider the nature of planning and its relationship to regulation of the use of land. A happy coincidence of concern over the natural and human environment, a commonly held belief that planning and regulation could avoid future problems, and an enlightened judiciary all occurred at the same time."<sup>102</sup>

While the above mentioned characterizations of Oregon are all true to some extent, it is not clear that they are necessary conditions for the establishment of state-wide comprehensive planning. Oregon's first, unsuccessful legislative attempt in 1969 most likely failed because of its lack of sophistication, rather than an inhospitable social climate. The creation of a comprehensive plan for Seattle, accomplished with different underlying political and geographic conditions, stands as initial evidence for the usefulness of using the Oregon system as a model for other states.

While Oregonians have environmentalist tendencies<sup>103</sup>, it is not accurate to characterize the general population as being supportive of environmental protection at personal cost. Recent opinion

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<sup>102</sup> Abbott, 1993, (Sullivan) p.51

<sup>103</sup> Abbott, 1993



surveys reveal that protection of the environment is a lesser priority for the general population.<sup>104</sup> The legislators, who in 1972 implemented land use planning, tapped into a local sentimentality for the landscape and a basic conservatism that feared the effects of increasing population and uncontrolled development more than a popular demand for environmental protection. The distaste for change and conservative fear of the impacts of population growth have remained important regional values.<sup>105</sup>

It is indisputable that a large percentage of the land in Oregon is owned by the public or large corporations. This ownership pattern has facilitated the development of state-wide land use planning, but has had less verifiable impact upon growth management within urban areas. More developed states or regions will likely experience additional difficulty resolving land use classification in areas where land use is already established and very mixed. The comprehensive planning experience in Seattle, where public land ownership did not play a major role, would suggest that while the presence of large tracts of public land can benefit the preservation of the regional landscape, it is not a necessary condition for the creation of comprehensive land use or growth control policy, particularly within an urban setting.

It is also true that Oregon has a relatively small, but growing, population. Despite the increasing presence of new immigrant groups and the greater mobility of Americans in general, the state's population remains a fairly homogenous mix of new-comers from California and slightly more established settlers from the Midwest or East Coast urban areas. Minority populations, particularly people of Latin and Asian ethnic groups, have an increasing, but still minor, share of the state's population. The political figures who introduced growth management legislation were careful to employ rhetoric that would appeal to the same largely conservative middle class values that can be found in most US states. If the political and environmental education of citizens in Oregon and Washington has facilitated the preparation of land use plans, then planners in other states should be able to educate their citizens as a means to gain similar support.

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<sup>104</sup> Oregon Business Council, 1993

<sup>105</sup> Oregon Business Council, 1993

*What can be learned from the history of land use planning within the Pacific Northwest?*

The politics of land use planning have through necessity involved the resolution of numerous personal conflicts and the negotiation of multiple individual disputes. The politics of any city are deeply infused with local character and personality. However, particularly through observation of the experiences of two distinct geographic settings, it is possible to identify common truths that describe successful attempts to introduce and develop comprehensive planning and growth management programs. The exact goals or the exact set of legislation used in the Portland or Seattle case may not be replicable, but the general procedural concepts illustrated within each city provide valuable guidelines for the urban planner.

**Strong Political Leadership**

The presence of a strong political figure happened to be instrumental in the introduction of comprehensive land use planning for both Seattle and Portland. Certainly, some form of political leadership is necessary to introduce growth management as an important issue to the public and to follow through on the development of effective planning processes. While ultimately state governments are best situated to address regional planning issues, the process can be initiated at the city or local levels. In the case of Portland, Governor Tom McCall made growth control a central issue of his administration and land use planning developed with the tradition of shared state-local participation within a legal framework created by the state. Similarly, Mayor Norm Rice of Seattle considered the Seattle comprehensive plan a major product of his first term of office, undertaken within a legal mandate created by the state government. The popularity and courage of these two officials made it possible for them to undertake controversial and potentially politically dangerous action. Both were rewarded for their courage with consistent electoral support for candidates associated with land use planning while political opponents of planning were defeated. When one particular politician plays such an important role in the development of state policy, those policies can suffer if no-one is able to maintain that political legacy. If the leader desires to have a lasting impact upon planning policy, then it is vital that a sustainable planning system is built through their administration.

It is important to note that Oregon suffers much of the same cynicism and dislike for politicians as seen throughout the US. There have been some significant recent problems with the state's elected officials, such as Bob Packwood, that would be cause for even more cynicism. It is not the case therefore, that Oregon politicians currently are faced with a public particularly receptive to

political management of the public life, although historically, according to some indicators, the state has enjoyed relatively honest government:

“It is interesting to note that on this list of 32 community values “Accountable/honest city leaders” ranks a strong fourth. Oregon is not particularly known for having anything other than accountable and honest city leaders. One might presume that this statement of values might be relevant for elected leaders at all levels and is a further reflection of the dissonance between our various governments and the general population.”<sup>106</sup>

While Tom McCall and Norm Rice are particularly remembered for their political presence, it was ultimately the leadership within the state legislatures of Oregon and Washington that instituted the land use policy change. Drafting a bill which will be truly effective in changing land use practice requires decisive and courageous statewide political leadership.

### **Implementation and Advocacy Groups**

In the case of Oregon, land use policy has been supported with a clear and concise legal enforcement framework and the establishment of supporting, independent political action groups. The plan’s implementation depends upon the presence of “clear, concise and easily applied standards, procedures and definitions - written into statutes or administrative actions resulting from statutory mandate - which can be readily tested in judicial proceedings”<sup>107</sup> While public opinion determines the land use policies, interpretation within the court system has been made straightforward by the development of clear, fact-oriented documents. Oregon’s advocacy group, 1000 Friends of Oregon, has been able to successfully challenge violations of the state’s growth control measures. Only through vigorous litigation has the Oregon land use policy actually had impact upon land use practice.

A land use regulatory system can not be effective if each instance in which the land use plan constricts a property owner becomes a challenge to the validity of basic land use planning goals. By developing an effective legal or bureaucratic system for enforcement of the plan, the system will have a stability and continuity that can satisfy local conservative values by operating within a rubric of fairness. Experience suggests that the formation of an effective enforcement system will require a

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<sup>106</sup> Oregon Business Council, 1993, p.5

<sup>107</sup> Leonard, 1983, p. 136

system of on-going adjustment and that planners should anticipate this. Without long term procedural mechanisms, planning may fail through a lack of political sustenance.

As urban planning efforts become more ambitious, implementation will become more difficult. New planning goals will require the development of additional policies or methods in order to be effective. Clear methods for monitoring and enforcement of the VMT restrictions introduced in Portland's Metro 2040 plan do not yet exist. Similarly, while the content of Seattle's sustainability goals is quite explicit, the methods for their achievement are not. If these planning goals are to be successfully attained, monitoring and enforcement methods will need to be developed.

### **Adaptation to Local Political Climate**

At its inception, land use planning in Oregon was marketed to the public as a method for the protection of economic resources. Clearly stated was the need to recognize long-term needs of the economy and to protect them through land use planning. The LCDC goals were designed to encourage both strategic conservation and strategic development,<sup>108</sup> as it was considered important for the state to not appear to be one-sided in the representation of public interests.

For both Seattle and Portland, the ability to enfranchise a large number of various interest groups emerges as one the hallmarks of a successful planning process. Washington's comprehensive planning legislation and the formation of LCDC both enjoyed such wide based support. When parties as diverse as environmental groups, outdoor enthusiasts, home builders associations, financial institutions and social rights advocates all support a plan, its adoption becomes possible. The removal of a subsidy for the non-environmentally friendly practice of a large corporation can please both the anti-government subsidy sentiments of conservatives and the anti-big business posture of the left.

The rhetoric of planners in the Pacific Northwest quickly reveals an appeal to regional pride: "This pattern of growth would not only enhance our quality of life, it would also put the Portland region on the map as one of the only metropolitan areas in the country that has been able to grow while actually improving its livability."<sup>109</sup> As a result of the state's growth management, "residents here enjoy the amenities of a major city without the associated sprawl, congestion, crime, crowding

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<sup>108</sup> Leonard, 1983

<sup>109</sup> Tri-Met's Strategic Direction, 1995-96

and tensions (of urban life) found elsewhere. In this region, livability is still prized, and citizens and governments work together to protect and enhance it.” The message is clear: this is a more enlightened culture that has maintained a better quality of life. This rhetoric also co-opts the natural human competitive instinct through an implied competition with other cities: “the percentage of total trips taken on transit (including buses, light rail, shuttles, van pools and taxis) in the Portland metropolitan area is as high as anywhere else in the country.”<sup>110</sup>

An additional strategy is to advocate qualities that will appeal to most of the general public: “The vision suggests a pattern of compact growth that would offer the opportunity for all of us to breathe clean air; get where we want to go quickly and easily; live in the type of housing we want and can afford; minimize the tax dollars needed for public services; enjoy safer streets and neighborhoods; and take greater advantage of green and open spaces in our communities.”<sup>111</sup> In this argument, not only is planning necessary to preserve clean air, beautiful landscape, abundant open spaces, and to insure the ease of travel by preventing congestion it will also save the public money: “Shifting money to increase transit now will reduce the region’s total transportation bill in the future.” or, in somewhat ambiguous language: “According to the state, over the next 20 years, more than \$11 billion in road investments can be avoided by shifting land use patterns and expanding transit. For the Portland region, that’s a savings of nearly \$10,000 for every household.”<sup>112</sup> Planned growth is cheaper than unplanned growth and everyone is happy to save money.

Finally, many examples can be found where planners employ scare tactics. Bringing to the public attention practices which threaten our future is also the traditional tool of environmentalists. The vision statement for Portland’s Tri-Met includes such statements: “But we need to act now if we want our children to enjoy the same quality of life we know and love today.” and “we will likely fall prey to the same forces that have ruined other fast-growing American cities.”<sup>113</sup> Such arguments are strengthened by statistical descriptions of the number of new cars that will be added to our highway system and the increasing environmental impact of current practices, prepared for the region by groups such as Durning’s Pacific Northwest Environment Watch.

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<sup>110</sup> Tri-Met’s Strategic Direction, 1995-96

<sup>111</sup> Tri-Met’s Strategic Direction, 1995-96

<sup>112</sup> Tri-Met’s Strategic Direction, 1995-96

<sup>113</sup> Tri-Met’s Strategic Direction, 1995-96

## **Regional Metropolitan Governments**

It would not be possible to plan for effective growth management in the Portland metropolitan area without the existence of the Metro regional government. The establishment of a metropolitan government was encouraged by planning requirements instituted at the state level (such as the metropolitan UGB) and endorsed by a popular vote of the metropolitan region's citizens. David Rusk has identified various strategies for creating such metropolitan governments<sup>114</sup> but no clear mechanism exists to fully explain the willingness of the Portland area jurisdictions to cede political control to a regional authority. Perhaps by limiting the political power of Portland city within Metro, other jurisdictions found the metropolitan government more palatable. Initially Metro was given tasks that were generally not desired by other jurisdictions. As it became clear that Metro would act as a truly representative body its powers were expanded.

Because much of the Seattle metropolitan area is contained within Seattle's city limits or within Washington's King County, a metropolitan government may be less necessary to implement growth management for the metropolitan area. Still, the state has undertaken some efforts to create a metropolitan government, but has been significantly hampered by local political opposition. While the Metro 2040 plan is endorsed by each of the Metro district representatives, the Seattle Comprehensive Plan is ultimately the product of the Seattle mayor.

## **Commitment to Public Participation**

The public values and wants expressed through various public participation campaigns have provided the justification and direction for the planning initiatives developed within the Pacific Northwest. Nationally, it is becoming accepted that there are many reasons for developing citizen participation in the public decision making process. The motivation for public involvement may derive from pragmatic desires to improve the public perception of legitimacy or reach a better solution or it may derive from an idealistic commitment to the ideals of the democratic process. In the Portland and Seattle examples, early citizen participation activities were quite successful at incorporating a large spectrum of the public. Further, groups likely to become either strong supporters or opponents were contacted and included within the early stages of the planning activity.

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<sup>114</sup> Rusk, 1993, pp. 93-98

Experience within this region has shown that inviting one's adversaries to the table can lead ultimately to the most acceptable resolution for all parties and lead to a creative solution that would not have been otherwise found. For public participation methods to be meaningful, they must lead to sustainable citizen participation, and be based upon sincere objectives, continued self-evaluation and a reiterative refinement of methodology.

Observers credit the success of Oregon's land use planning to the public interest generated through a participation process in which it became clear that public opinion would have a serious impact upon the new and reformulated state goals adopted in 1974.<sup>115</sup> While the Oregon LCDC goals give priority to public participation in the planning process, the goals are also the result of such a process. State legislators were able to develop a well integrated, mutually supportive body of goals from the public input. The public participation process built a constituency for LCDC and as a result, LCDC and the state's planning goals have been able to survive several political challenges. Most of the focus for debate in voter referendums has since been more concerned with the proper method for planning than with the actual legitimacy of growth management.

The language in use among planners in the region also reflects the emphasis upon public participation. Portland's Tri-Met goal statement begins with the observation that "people are concerned." It then states that: "Everyone in the Portland metropolitan area will play a part in shaping our future"<sup>116</sup> In referring to its pride in its public approval rating, Tri-Met reveals a dependence upon public support for establishing legitimacy.

With the public participation process firmly in place, it is possible to raise new generations of citizen stake-holders for successive planning efforts. New-comers, a significant portion of the region's population, will not have been involved in the historic public participation process and so are unlikely to feel ownership of the land-use plan produced by that process and thus may be more likely to create political or personal opposition. Thus public participation must also be an on-going process in order to maintain a public constituency. While Seattle's planning initiative enjoyed the support of a popular mayor and planners were careful to employ sophisticated public relations techniques and introduced state of the art public participation concepts, it did not concentrate resources into the development of an ongoing public participation process. In contrast, a commitment to public participation has remained at the core of land use planning efforts in Oregon and thus will provide sustainability to the land use planning itself. Seattle's comprehensive plan may

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<sup>115</sup> Abbott, 1994, p. 211

suffer as political leadership changes and financial resources are shifted, but in Portland, a significant portion of the public has become personally invested in the city's planning process and, through their expectation for participation, will sustain that process.

Perhaps the establishment of mutual trust is the most important ingredient for effective land use planning. Effective citizen participation requires local decision making authority, expanded representation for local interests, increased democracy, decision making by non-professionals, access to information and access to the decision making process, and a transparency of public agencies. All of these require the government to increase its trust in the ability of the public to govern itself. Communication seems to be the primary tool for building trust. As it becomes apparent that discussion is possible, that ideas are being exchanged and that citizens will have an impact upon the final decision, trust will develop. Trust can be gained through honesty and accountability. Experience with public participation has exhibited a pattern of increasing resource demands upon local governments, but also increasing benefit. It is important to avoid using unfamiliarity as an excuse to avoid the step of faith necessary to make these gestures. Many public participation techniques may require an arbitrator, mediator or facilitator who must have both technical understanding of the mediation process and the ability to maintain objectivity. A pool of such public participation "experts" is becoming available.

While the government needs to address the issue of what degree of public control is possible and desirable, it also needs to earn the trust of the public. The polity needs to have citizen support to have a claim to legitimacy and to achieve the effective implementation of planning objectives. In some cases it will be necessary to overcome the negative perceptions associated with bureaucracy, which have been described as "arrogant, insensitive and uncaring." When the decision making process is opened to the public, the agency becomes free from the burden of the absolute responsibility. It is not necessary to completely sacrifice governmental self-interest, but through the public participation process it is possible to reach a consensus based upon superior decisions that are significantly more acceptable to the public. Giving information to the public can be good for the soul as well as being good for public relations.

A focus upon public input is necessary and admirable, but it is important to recognize that some interests will inevitably be given better treatment than others. Saying "because the public said so" can become an excuse for unjust or impractical planning action. In response to this limitation, it may be better for the planners to seek some degree of legitimacy through a commitment to

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<sup>116</sup> Tri-Met's Strategic Direction, 1995-96



professionalism and rational outcome. Continual attention must be given toward achieving the balance between the need for bureaucratic regularity and citizen involvement. Certainly involving the public can be a very useful method for gaining insight to public thinking, but it can not be considered to be a perfectly unbiased representation of the entire community.

Questions from Susskind and Elliott,<sup>117</sup> who deal extensively with public participation, reveal some of the additional issues that will arise. “How can local governments empower neighborhood groups to protect what they have now while at the same time ensuring that needed new development will be accommodated? How can local government empower neighborhoods to maintain the quality of life they desire while at the same time ensuring that sites will be available for facilities that everyone in the city agrees are needed but no neighborhood wants in its backyard? How, in a period of fiscal stringency, can local government justify the cost increases that seem to accompany extensive participation?” Addressing these issues also is central to the selection of an effective set of tools for public participation. Within Oregon, such effective tools are being developed by Portland Metro and LCDC. The LCDC goals were constructed to recognize both the need for community voice and the accommodation of new growth. Local jurisdictions are required to organize public participation and to provide sites for important infrastructure. The financial costs of public participation are compensated by the political gain. Washington has adopted many of the same policies and has introduced some new ideas as well, although many of these are in earlier stages of political refinement. It is clear that public participation has played an important role in the preparation of the Seattle Comprehensive Plan. It remains unclear that the government is truly committed to these processes, and so the public is more likely to question the legitimacy of city planning endeavors as happened with the Seattle Commons project.

Since the evaluation of each tool for public involvement prompts a series of complicated questions, the integrity of the underlying commitment to public participation is essential. The issues involved are complex and specific to each situation and the situations are liable to constant change, so that sustained evaluation and refinement are necessary. If the results of first attempts are not satisfactory, then based upon evaluation it may be necessary to try different methods or to re-implement the same ones in a more effective manner. Sustained self-evaluation is a key part of the process, while a foundation upon the original objectives must also be maintained. The process needs to originate in a set of public objectives and motivations that show a clear commitment to achieving public involvement. Without this commitment, there will be too much temptation to abandon the

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<sup>117</sup> Susskind, 1983

process when sensitive issues are at stake. If these many obstacles to implementing public participation can be overcome, the reward of consensus achieved through this process will be great.

### **Education of the Public**

Education of the public has been one of the achievements of the public's participation in the preparation of land use plans. Where citizens have been involved, they have come to understand and value the relationship between land use regulation and regional landscape and neighborhood character. As education informs the public participation process, understanding has led to greater acceptance and also to the greater involvement of citizens in planning efforts. The ultimate impact of education is the ability to make improvement in the local quality of life, a connection that has been neatly stated by Oregon Governor John Kitzhaber in a 1995 address at a meeting of the Governor's Transportation Initiative: "Oregonians... must make the connection between transportation, livability and economic opportunity so that we can continue to enjoy the extraordinary quality of life that currently exists."<sup>118</sup> The stability of a land use planning system based upon public participation depends upon the availability of information to the public. "Ultimately the survival of the Oregon planning program will depend on the extent to which Oregonians can create and maintain a culture of learning."<sup>119</sup>

Oregon residents have been able to see and to experience the results of growth control and have been favorably impressed. Planners find that they need to spend less time providing justification for planning, but that also the new generation of Oregonians "may be less committed to the system because they do not appreciate what it replaced and fail to see it as a system that they can use to actively protect the state's quality of life."<sup>120</sup> Voting trends suggest a general public acceptance of growth management, but this acceptance tends to translate into passive support while opponents of planning tend to be more vocal.<sup>121</sup> Citizens who are most likely to become activists are often those with an objection to some element of the system and there may not be a counter-balancing motivation for activism among supporters of the current planning system.

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<sup>118</sup> Portland-Metro Regional Advisory Committee, 1996, Governor's Transportation Initiative, Meeting #3 (minutes)

<sup>119</sup> Abbott, 1993, p.298

<sup>120</sup> Abbott, 1993, p.294

<sup>121</sup> Abbott, 1993

Education is one of the central activities at the beginning of the public participation process. Public participation requires that planners be understandable to the public. The Seattle planning department realized the importance of impact the planner's vocabulary could have and so kept constant watch over the public perception of key concept terms through public opinion consultants.<sup>122</sup> Experiences in Oregon and Washington suggest that it is also beneficial to continue educational processes after planning action has been initiated. Newspapers are often called upon to serve in this role. Education plays a key role in fostering citizen belief that participation will be effective, that public officials will respond to citizen inputs and concerns. It may be a challenge to perform this education in areas where planning departments or politicians have little experience with providing information to the public in a mode that invites participation. The importance of citizen education should not be undervalued and considerable effort and time should be invested in this stage of the participation process.

In turn, government officials must find involvement processes that they believe do not infringe upon their authority or undermine their legitimacy as decision makers. Without a change in the attitude of the agency, a citizen participation process may be impossible. In such cases, education of the government agency is even more important than the education of the public. Management training and performance evaluation can be used to foster an acceptance of public involvement. Public opposition, political pressure or litigation can interrupt the ability of the governing body to function. The democratic process allows various interest groups and stake holders to exert considerable influence. The energy of these groups is a resource that can either become an obstacle or a driving force for the planning initiative. The effective implementation of decisions that result from a public process also require that the various power holders, and the involved branches of bureaucracy recognize each other's authorities and view those decisions as legitimate and pursue a coordinated policy of public involvement.

The unique characteristics of the Pacific Northwest play an important educational role for North America. As quality of life has become central to the region's economy, so it will likely in other regions as well. The experiences of land use planning from the Pacific Northwest also provide valuable lessons for the development of planning process in other locations. Ideas about growth management have been transferred within the region and within the nation. It is crucial that planners, when they look to the Pacific Northwest as an inspiration source, adopt procedural rather than

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<sup>122</sup> Gary Lawrence interview, 1997

superficial aspects of the planning system. The Pacific Northwest may act to inform the values of our society as well:

“Drawing on its tradition of turning outlandish dreams into practical realities, the Northwest may be the place that demonstrates how to trade the old worldview for the new, and in the process exchange sprawl and malls for compact, vibrant cities; clear-cuts and monoculture for enduring farms, forests and fisheries; throwaways, overpackaging, and rapid obsolescence for durability, reuse, and repair; volume for value; and consumerism for community.”<sup>123</sup>

But the most significant achievement of the Pacific Northwest has been the education of the public. Only through continued educational programs has the government been able to maintain political support for growth control. As local citizens gain knowledge, that knowledge can spread and the awareness of the benefits and need for comprehensive land use planning can also spread throughout the US and Canada.

### **The Future of "Sustainability"**

In the Seattle plan's fairly conservative definition for sustainability, sustainable practices are those which preserve opportunities for future generations. The more radical bioregionalist movement ideally desires a regional balance between long-term consumption and long-term production, but will work for any reduction in resource consumption as a short-term goal. In both cases, sustainability depends upon the change of public land-use policy and the change of individual behavior. These changes have been attained as the public has become informed through the exercise of public participation and public discourse. Because the inter-regional exchange of information has become an inevitability, the sustenance of regional culture requires the development of processes that foster regionalist patterns of settlement. The involvement of the local public body, informed by the values of the region, will lead toward a regional urban form and also allow and use planning processes themselves to become sustainable.

Urban planners in Seattle and Portland have made the reduction of the use and impacts of the automobile the central strategy for improving the long term sustainability of the region. Outward growth results in automobile dependent suburbs and a spread-out land use pattern that can not be served cost effectively by transit or roads. Increasing residential density is the most prominent method for reducing automobile dependence. A San Francisco study revealed that a doubling of

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<sup>123</sup> Durning, 1996, p.289

density in the settlement pattern “resulted in a 30% drop in the number of vehicle miles traveled.”<sup>124</sup> At the most common density of twelve or less units per acre, residential development is essentially automobile dependent. As density increases, public transit become viable. At a density of 40 units per acre, transit options increase and the area is no longer automobile oriented. Neighborhoods with such a density including Vancouver’s West End and Seattle’s First Hill are promoted as successful alternatives to common residential patterns.<sup>125</sup> Where suburbs are already established, planners are seeking to reduce the need for automobile travel through urban in-fill and the urban redesign of neighborhoods to be pedestrian friendly: “fill it in, mix it up, reconnect it”<sup>126</sup> The Urban Villages strategy of the Seattle Comprehensive plan, the "Transit Oriented Developments" of LUTRAQ or the Main Street plan for Portland are attempts to turn existing suburbs into something resembling an old fashioned street or neighborhood. The perceived positive social aspects (increased sense of community and civic interaction) of such traditional high density neighborhoods act as the sugar to make palatable the medicine of high residential density.

“The City of Beaverton’s Downtown Development Plan, the City of Gresham’s vision for the future, 1000 Friends of Oregon’s Land Use, Transportation, Air Quality Connection (LUTRAQ) study and other plans call for mixed-use, transit-oriented development to reduce dependence on the automobile and to protect livability.”<sup>127</sup>

Municipal revenue projections consist of one important aspect of the rational argument for the need to change lifestyle. Governments in the Pacific Northwest claim that they are financially unable to maintain and preserve the existing road system. The estimated financing gap for Oregon is \$1.04 billion over 20 years.<sup>128</sup> In response to this gap, Oregon will discontinue state maintenance of some roads through privatization and increase some vehicle taxes. Both actions are aimed at reducing auto use through financial disincentive. Auto dependent industries, represented by farmers’ and truckers’ associations, oppose the reductions on highway spending and the increases on transportation taxes. Politicians must accommodate such groups while also addressing regional environmental needs. By funding more economically efficient transit systems now and through the

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<sup>124</sup> Tri-Met’s Strategic Direction, 1995-96

<sup>125</sup> Durning, 1996

<sup>126</sup> Portland Metro Planning Department, 1996, Main Street Handbook

<sup>127</sup> Tri-Met’s Strategic Direction, 1995-96

<sup>128</sup> Portland-Metro Regional Advisory Committee, 1996, Governor’s Transportation Initiative, Meeting #2 (minutes)

implementation of growth management land use policies, the region expects to reduce long term costs.

Other sustainable lifestyle changes include increased recycling, personal preference for public transit and general waste reduction. These areas are currently considered among the strengths of the Pacific Northwest. Modern environmentalists, such as Alan Durning argue that change of personal behavior is best promoted through shifting tax structure so that the costs of goods reflect their true costs of production. The government should remove, for environmentally costly goods such as aluminum, the subsidies currently imbedded within the economy.

Sustainability is further an issue of social equity. Historical policies which subsidized suburbanization in effect created subsidies for the wealthy who drive more and consume more electricity and goods in general, in contrast to the poor who depend more upon public transit and the inner city. Shifting government subsidy away from the suburb will lead directly to a more equitable dispersal of public funds. Bioregionalists may further argue that much of the resistance to neighborhood in-fill is founded in fears of a loss of exclusivity or a loss of separation from “different” people.

In 1989 the average sales price was among the lowest in the US (\$117,000) for a new home in the Portland metropolitan area. Furthermore, as a direct result of the LCDC affordable housing policy, more than a third of new homes were on smaller lots (5,000 to 7,000 square feet) with an average sales price of \$102,500.<sup>129</sup> According to both the Seattle definition of sustainability and Oregon’s LCDC goals, the provision of affordable housing is an important equity issue. It seems that progress in achieving this equity has been made in Portland.

### *Conclusions*

As has been discussed here, a number of the factors necessary for effective, comprehensive planning and for growth control have been consistent in the experiences of Portland and Seattle. In both cases, there was exhibited leadership by a popular and strong political figure (Tom McCall, Norm Rice), the involvement of environmental groups, support from builders, developers and the business community, and the provision for local governments to shift political pressure and blame to

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<sup>129</sup> Hales, 1991

a higher political authority, the state government. Common causes were found to unite groups historically likely to be on opposite sides of the pertinent issues. Builders' groups will support provisions for affordable housing within comprehensive plans. Developers and the business community want the more predictable and consistent market and regulatory system that improved planning can provide. The support of both environmental and business groups reflects a new emerging, but not yet stable trend in the Pacific Northwest. These political alliances or working groups combine environmentalists and people dependent upon natural resources for their livelihood. Increasingly limited resources have brought these two groups into discussions with the goal of finding methods for protecting the resources. Advocacy groups or public agencies responsible for the implementation of planning actions were also developed concurrently with the plan. The legal system for seeing that the plan is implemented according to its underlying principles is particularly strong in Oregon, while implementation strategies for Seattle's comprehensive plan remain less developed. Planning initiatives have been adapted to the local political climate and framed in vocabulary likely to arouse public support. Appeal to local conservative sentiment has been particularly effective. Most importantly, a strong public participation program encourages positive citizen initiative, provides moral legitimacy, fosters a supportive political constituency and results in the education of the society.

Procedural aspects of the comprehensive planning experiences of Portland and Seattle also have significance as exportable methods for moving toward sustainability. Attaining sustainability requires effective planning to counter the short-sightedness of human behavior. Planning which places an emphasis upon providing procedural certainty and timeliness in process has been found to receive greater public acceptance. In the Pacific Northwest, effective planning has involved consistency and mutual support between state and local standards. The Urban Growth Boundary has been identified as a useful and transferable tool. Environmental protection can be the result of an emphasis upon the protection of resource land and thus the economy. Community is something formed through the active participation of people, not something produced by designers.

The initial Oregon legislation has required considerable adjustment, and so most likely will the Seattle Comprehensive plan, so planners should expect to need to work through issues. Planning activity may spur political activity toward more consensus and thus better (clarified) policy. Public experience with planning has fostered political support and increasingly planners are undertaking the type of long term plans which will lead toward sustainability. The long term vision process for planners has undergone a progression from 20 year to 50 year and 100 year plans.

The successful implementation of growth management policies requires a shift in the public perception of the legitimate role of government in shaping land use policy. Within public perception, the protection of property rights must be made subject to the protection of the greater public good. In the two cases studied here, planners and politicians have employed a variety of ongoing processes to achieve such a shift. Eventually, a regional or perhaps national adjustment of the conception of individual property rights must be made if sustainable practices are to be successfully adopted.

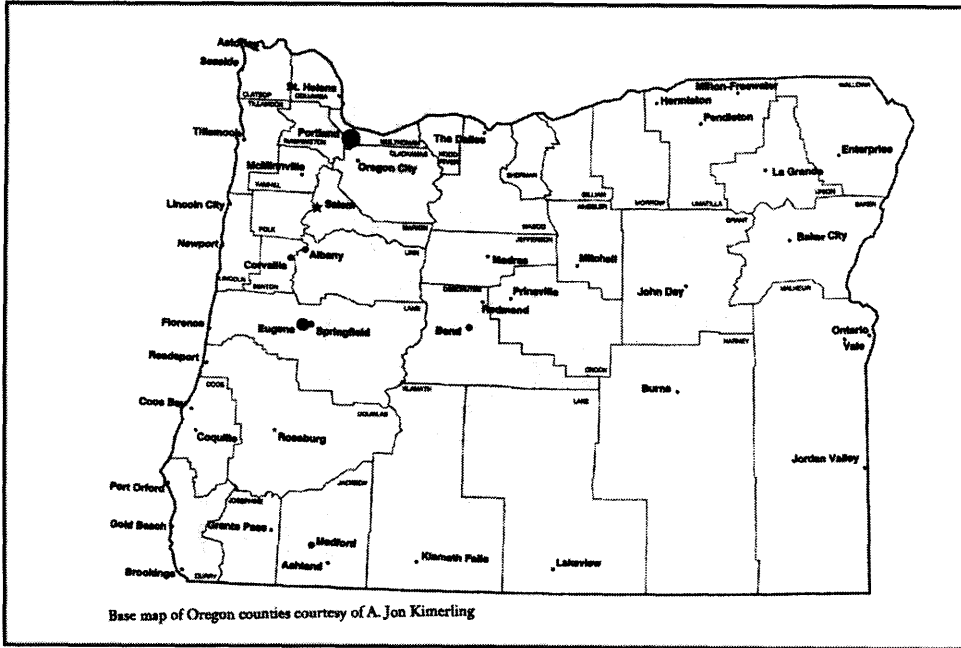
A commitment to public participation processes has proven to be an essential element for growth management. The success of land use planning is particularly tied to citizen support in the Oregon case. Sincere efforts to encourage and cultivate citizen initiative and participation in the planning process have enabled sustainable planning processes. Education of the public has resulted from the public involvement in the production of Seattle's and Portland's growth management plans. The general population has developed a fairly sophisticated understanding of land use planning issues and as a result has become more supportive but also more discerning toward planning initiatives. As the social, environmental and economic costs of unplanned growth have a greater impact upon the places where people have settled, the need for sustainable practice land use planning will become increasingly evident. These experiences from within the Pacific Northwest provide invaluable lessons for planners and politicians throughout the US.



## **Appendices**

### *California In-migrants by Oregon County*

Data for county to county migration was compiled from US Census migration studies. The values in the following table indicate the number of people in each Oregon county who moved to Oregon from California between the years 1985 and 1990.



Oregon County Map  
Source: Abbott

## Appendices

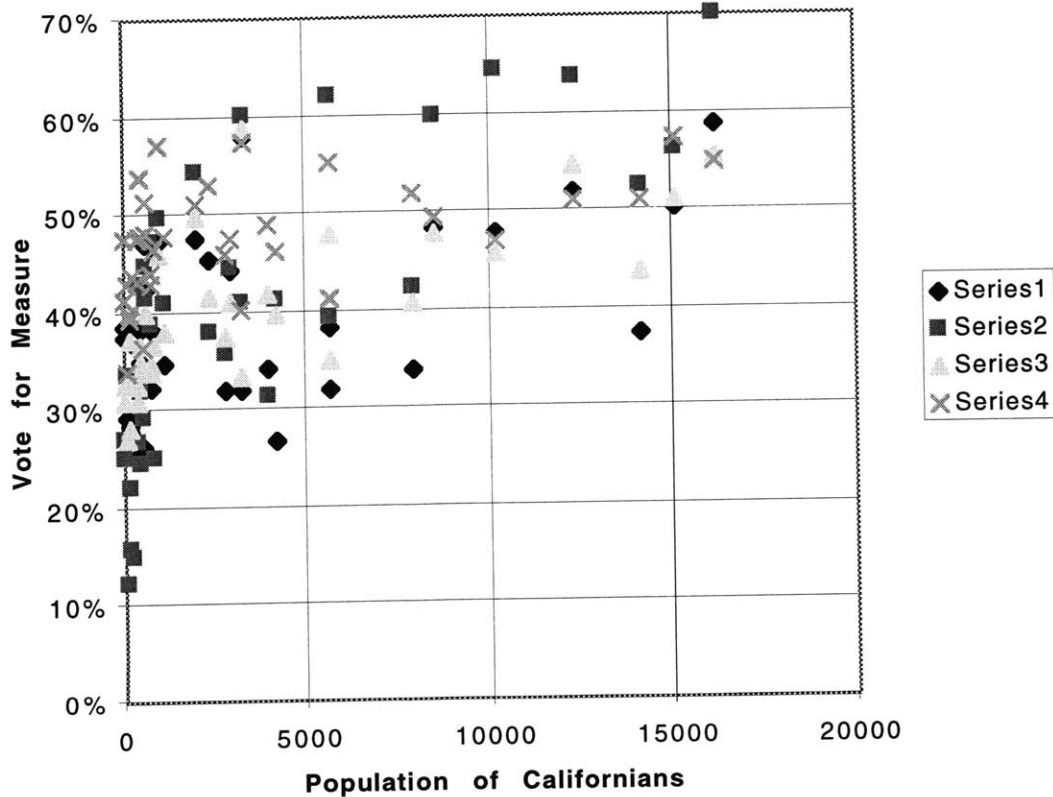
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California Counties	Oregon Counties																																				
	Baker	Benton	Clatsop	Clatskanie	Column	Cook	Curry	Deschutes	Douglas	Gilliam	Grant	Hernandez	Hood	Jackson	Jefferson	Joseph	Klamath	Lake	Lane	Lincoln	Mallam	Marion	Morrow	Multnomah	Polk	Sherman	Tillamook	Union	Wallowa	Wasco	Washington	Wheeler					
Alameda	5	134	376	19	23	0	39	61	116	195	0	3	0	0	599	19	188	86	0	607	11	116	18	309	5	1070	92	4	37	23	17	10	10	670	0	110	
Alpine	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Amador	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Butte	0	9	125	0	24	23	7	0	10	36	0	2	0	0	258	0	28	73	2	128	34	59	0	81	0	90	35	0	0	9	7	2	0	66	0	35	
Catavacs	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Colusa	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Contra Costa	0	148	339	26	18	139	0	98	212	235	0	0	5	0	456	0	191	142	8	409	33	128	0	280	2	505	33	0	0	37	7	18	11	460	0	105	
Del Norte	0	5	51	0	0	153	13	99	18	106	0	6	2	0	137	0	296	18	29	118	27	32	0	60	0	56	6	0	10	2	0	0	0	19	0	0	
El Dorado	5	36	20	0	0	79	29	67	53	13	0	0	7	0	12	119	24	43	0	85	4	21	8	65	8	65	40	2	2	2	0	0	34	3	34	0	48
Fresno	0	16	81	11	5	79	0	59	97	116	0	0	7	0	189	23	93	92	18	131	24	76	36	285	0	193	48	0	5	42	1	0	83	191	0	0	
Glenn	0	28	68	0	4	69	0	122	70	48	0	11	0	0	360	0	78	47	7	206	71	63	8	96	0	207	56	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	45	0	11
Humboldt	0	7	0	0	0	27	0	0	0	38	0	0	0	0	0	0	62	0	0	23	12	13	3	32	0	40	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	48	0	6
Imperial	0	18	17	0	7	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	0	51	0	5	0	0	0	0	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	0	2
Inyo	20	5	50	12	52	99	45	58	94	81	0	6	14	0	242	15	173	59	0	121	19	146	21	206	0	182	46	0	51	29	10	4	0	109	14	52	
Kern	8	0	50	14	0	0	0	24	50	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	37	0	40	12	14	0	0	0	0	60	8	0	0	19	0	0	0	10	0	66	0
Kings	5	0	13	0	5	46	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	7	55	0	11	11	0	48	0	7	52	0	0	0	9	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	26	0	0
Lake	0	8	37	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	16	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Las Vegas	87	486	1988	166	97	636	161	308	1055	1023	5	9	18	110	2704	54	1809	880	17	2988	408	475	145	1882	6	3871	501	2	84	220	62	37	59	3013	0	604	
Los Angeles	0	0	39	0	0	10	0	15	8	25	3	0	0	0	0	8	0	44	0	0	2	0	0	12	0	31	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	40	0	8
Madera	0	41	62	62	0	51	0	15	53	4	0	0	0	0	90	0	44	11	0	245	31	13	2	127	16	189	0	0	15	0	0	0	0	6	131	0	21
Marietta	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mendocino	0	7	11	15	26	33	0	30	0	41	0	0	0	0	133	1	39	14	0	138	7	10	0	13	0	106	0	0	0	14	0	0	0	45	0	48	0
Merced	29	32	8	0	5	4	0	7	15	35	0	0	0	0	0	0	65	55	0	70	9	22	3	40	0	163	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	69	0	28
Modoc	0	8	37	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	16	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mono	0	41	0	0	15	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	20	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Monterey	15	20	102	0	0	106	32	14	117	84	0	2	7	20	121	0	36	32	27	133	29	100	7	47	1	142	17	0	33	5	18	5	0	198	0	28	
Napa	0	9	5	6	38	0	28	61	26	0	0	3	0	0	140	0	106	20	6	84	39	7	0	45	0	116	0	0	18	0	7	0	8	15	0	0	
Nevada	6	6	13	0	6	47	0	30	82	13	0	5	0	0	44	0	52	19	0	69	2	16	0	56	0	81	2	0	16	0	2	0	2	0	21	0	0
Orange	20	255	1204	100	34	159	24	182	499	277	0	9	7	9	1274	37	763	151	60	1212	260	199	20	723	4	1289	115	0	28	44	32	11	5	1409	0	229	
Piace	0	14	177	0	0	43	14	20	96	22	0	3	16	24	0	95	6	111	16	14	0	113	0	0	0	81	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	52	0	35	
Plumas	0	0	15	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	73	0	8	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Riverside	59	152	398	42	8	77	0	32	328	302	0	8	6	10	484	45	303	155	0	501	83	182	17	382	0	255	48	0	35	23	9	0	341	0	61		
Sacramento	33	235	312	118	53	180	0	188	93	235	0	10	0	31	443	7	304	256	25	626	98	125	12	371	0	673	97	0	5	41	9	18	41	501	0	100	
San Benito	0	0	0	0	13	6	15	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	0	0	0	0	21	17	9	12	3	0	0	0	0	0	30	3	0	0	12	0	2	
San Bernardino	28	78	373	0	43	158	12	44	258	319	4	9	10	13	373	7	225	245	21	613	147	189	13	458	3	498	86	0	30	43	47	6	31	485	11	142	
San Diego	14	459	853	94	127	392	66	192	436	500	0	11	11	94	919	48	594	217	37	1191	258	366	20	724	7	1637	209	0	76	120	38	10	34	1380	0	281	
San Francisco	18	130	186	32	7	63	5	5	56	44	0	0	0	0	216	10	61	6	0	381	32	28	0	82	0	2027	0	0	33	0	4	0	56	149	0	36	
San Joaquin	18	24	141	35	5	93	0	14	43	128	0	4	11	5	194	0	74	39	0	121	24	27	0	64	0	210	12	12	28	38	5	15	45	188	0	43	
San Luis Obispo	0	48	81	7	2	75	0	168	142	42	0	7	0	9	129	3	45	34	19	287	19	42	7	119	5	46	0	61	32	13	6	0	73	2	17	0	
San Mateo	13	75	343	16	14	65	0	37	185	129	0	0	10	17	470	7	102	55	0	505	22	9	0	245	8	394	29	0	21	42	13	0	42	264	6	44	
Santa Barbara	7	97	122	66	15	75	14	14	119	75	0	0	0	21	177	7	99	29	6	278	23	53	2	66	0	263	45	0	34	8	3	12	172	0	99		
Santa Clara	0	226	1046	8	89	94	14	179	345	204	8	9	0	97	1033	11	856																				

*Voting Records - Californian Population Regression Analysis*

Preliminary analysis suggests that there may be a connection between the population of former Californians and voting trends but is inconclusive. It is clear that the jurisdictions contained within the state's larger metropolitan areas (Portland, Eugene, Salem and Corvallis) are considerably more likely to support measures related to land use planning.

**Scattergram: Californians vs. Voting**



- Series 1: 1994 Portland Light Rail Bond
- Series 2: 1988 Scenic Waterway System
- Series 3: 1990 Vehicle Taxes for Transit w/ Voter Approval
- Series 4: 1990 Grants Metropolitan Service District Electors Right to Self-Governance

SUMMARY OUTPUT - Californian Population vs. Votes for Measure					
<b>Regression Statistics</b>					
Multiple R	0.759182851				
R Square	0.576358601				
Adjusted R Square	0.521695195				
Standard Error	3240.406707				
Observations	36				
<b>ANOVA</b>					
	<i>df</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Significance F</i>
Regression	4	442848444.5	110712111.1	10.54377397	1.64278E-05
Residual	31	325507304.4	10500235.63		
Total	35	768355749			
	<i>Coefficients</i>	<i>Standard Error</i>	<i>t Stat</i>	<i>P-value</i>	
Intercept	-6138.26408	4956.795825	-1.238353222	0.224881198	
X Variable 1	-9843.036802	10939.75419	-0.899749357	0.375190142	
X Variable 2	15105.84337	6753.387595	2.236780158	0.032632411	
X Variable 3	33935.6503	15638.31453	2.17003247	0.037786184	
X Variable 4	-12545.448	15477.55893	-0.810557275	0.423799201	

- Variable: 1: 1994 Portland Light Rail Bond
- Variable: 2: 1988 Scenic Waterway System
- Variable: 3: 1990 Vehicle Taxes for Transit w/ Voter Approval
- Variable: 4: 1990 Grants Metropolitan Service District Electors Right to Self-Governance

*LCDC Goals*

Oregon's Statewide Planning Goals

**Planning Process**

Goal 1 : Citizen Involvement

To develop a citizen involvement program that insures the opportunity to be involved in all phases of the planning process.

Goal 2 : Land Use Planning

To establish a land use planning process and policy framework as a basis for all decisions and actions related to use of land and to assure an adequate factual base for such decisions and actions.

**Conservation**

Goal 3 : Agricultural Land

To preserve and maintain agricultural lands.

Goal 4 : Forest Lands

To maintain the forest land base and to protect the state's forest economy.

Goal 5 : Open Space, Scenic and Historic Areas, and Natural Resources

Goal 6 : Air, Water and Land Resources Quality

Goal 7 : Areas Subject to Natural Hazards and Disasters

Goal 15 : Willamette River Greenway

To protect the land along the Willamette River.

**Development**

Goal 8 : Recreational Needs

To meet the recreational needs of local residents and visitors and to provide the siting for necessary recreational facilities.

Goal 9 : Economic Development

To provide for economic opportunities throughout the state to provide for the health, wealth and prosperity of Oregon citizens.

Goal 10 : Housing

To meet Oregon's housing needs.

Goal 11 : Public Facilities and Services

To provide public facilities as a framework for development within the state.

Goal 12 : Transportation

To provide safe, convenient and economical transportation.

Goal 13 : Energy Conservation

To conserve energy.

Goal 14 : Urbanization

Order the transition from rural to urban land. (led to UGB)

**Coastal Resources**

Goal 16 : Estuarine Resources

Goal 17 : Coastal Shorelands

Goal 18 : Beaches and Dunes

Goal 19 : Ocean Resources



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