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Royal Roads University

Integrated Land-use Planning: Sustainable Infrastructure
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Moderated by Drs. Ann Dale and Marilyn Hamilton

Participants
Ann Dale, Trudeau Fellow, Canada Research Chair in Sustainable Community
Development, Professor, Royal Roads University
Marilyn Hamilton, Associate Professor, Royal Roads University
Tony Boydell, Director, School of Environment and Sustainability, Royal Roads
University
Kevin Hanna, Professor, School of Geography, Sir Wilfrid Laurier
Chris Ling, Post-Doctoral Researcher, Infrastructure Project
Don Luymes, City of Abbotsford, WPS/CIPS award
Marla Zucht, General Manager, Whistler Housing Authority

Dialogue

Ann Dale

Welcome to the fourth in our series of conversations on sustainable
infrastructure, on land-use planning. It seems to me that conflicts over multiple
use and values over land have been part of mankind's history, and surely, in the
21st century, we have more progressive ways of managing our development, the
topic for today.

May I ask each of you to introduce yourselves and why you are interested in this
critical public policy issue?

Tony Boydell

 My major interest is in how design influences behaviour, whether at the macro-
level of land use planning or at the micro level of urban spaces. At a process
level I have a particular interest in how government interventions in land use &
transportation planning either serve to create barriers to progress or lead to
unintended consequences such as highway rash.

Marla Zucht

Hi, Marla Zucht, here. I am a Member of the Canadian Institute of Planners and am currently the General Manager of the Whistler Housing Authority in Whistler, BC. I am very interested in sustainable infrastructure as I feel we need to be charting new directions for land use planning that use both the land and infrastructure more efficiently.

Ann Dale

Tony, we welcome your expertise, and I may call on you to provide a definition of integrated design? And Marla, Whistler is certainly going to undergo planning pressures as a result of the Olympics?

Marla Zucht

Yes, Whistler has started the venue planning for the Olympics. We will have the Sliding Centre and the Athletes Village in Whistler. I am more involved with the Athletes Village as post Olympics this will be converted to a resident housing neighbourhood for our local residents. The Whistler Housing Authority oversees the resident housing program in Whistler that provides more affordable housing for Whistler residents.

Kevin Hanna

My primary interests are in regional land use planning, regional and integrated approaches to natural resource management, and integrated regional infrastructure.

Don Luymes

This is Don Luymes. my interests revolve around how communities can become more productively engaged in planning, and in how sustainability measures can

influence decision-making and the politics around planning.

Chris Ling

Hi, I am Chris Ling a member of Ann's research team with a background in landscape planning - primarily in England but developing recent experience of the different and similar challenges found in Canada.

My particular interests are in the urban fringe and the role of landscape ecological concepts in planning applications.

Ann Dale

Welcome, Kevin, what do you mean by integrated regional infrastructure, if you don't mind my asking? And welcome, Don, engagement of communities in such an information glut is certainly challenging?

Kevin Hanna

Integrated infrastructure, provided on a regional basis, could include physical and social/economic services delivered based on regional needs, geography and other shared attributes. For example, a regional rural transportation system would connect the anchor communities within a region to outlying rural areas. Regional water or energy systems would provide primary services on a regional basis, and not just municipal. The foundation for such systems already exists in BC Regional Districts and their provision of some waste management services, or the broad scale public transportation system see in the Capital Regional District

Don Luymes

Engaging citizens in a proactive and productive way is hugely challenging! It sometimes seems as though many people will only "tune in" to land planning issues that directly impact their personal space/property. As a result, many people enter into the land planning dialogue from a position of defensiveness and confrontation. More abstract concepts of sustainable development, community need, liveability etc. are not as immediate and therefore not as compelling for many people.

Marilyn Hamilton

Good afternoon, my name is Marilyn Hamilton and I am the Moderator of the E-Audience. I have an interest in Land Use Planning because it seems to underlie every other topic we have covered in the e-dialogues. We have discovered that size and use of land affects energy, transportation, waste management. As such it must be a major factor in any integration that we bring to these discussions on infrastructure for sustainable communities. I also believe that land use planning is a term from an older worldview that pre-dates the engagement with sustainability. I think it needs to be completely re-defined within an understanding of environmental carrying capacity.

I will be a conduit between this E-Panel and the E-Audience, bringing in their questions when Ann asks.

Ann Dale

Welcome Marilyn and Chris, Chris, what do you mean by urban fringe?

Chris Ling

As I understand it the 'Urban Fringe' is that part of a city-region which is where most growth tends to occur and is often neglected by policy by being neither truly urban or truly rural - because it tends to be neglected development in it is often poorly controlled or planned.

Ann Dale

Could you elaborate on this more, Marilyn, about the older worldview?

Marilyn Hamilton

Land Use Planning implies to me a rather mechanistic, divide up the pie approach, that doesn't take into consideration the climatic-geological-biological realities that we need to consider in living human systems at the urban scale. That framing is much more included in the sustainability discourse (though not completely). So practitioners need to be able to see these perspectives as valid while they do their work.

Kevin Hanna

I think the conceptual thinking about LUP has become quite complex over the last decade, especially with the new interest in deliberative and communicative planning, and the integration of equity principles and environmental imperative into planning process and outcomes. Of course that said, the theory is not always mirrored in the results, and we still have many examples of where planning practice has yet to catch up with the scholarly thinking or 'new ideas.' But... there have been great improvements in LUP in recent years. As for mechanistic, yes, but that is still needed, after all we are making decisions about the use of physical space.

Ann Dale

Unfortunately, both Carlo Bonannie from the Toronto Economic Development Corporation and Bill McAlpine, the mayor of Okotoks cannot join us today, due to urgent commitments, both have asked if they can append their answers to our dialogue post-conversation, and I have replied yes, so stay tuned to the archives for those of you who are interested.

Marilyn and Kevin, it seems to me you are arguing for a systems approach? And Don, are we not doomed if we only respond to immediate interest and/or crises? Perhaps you can thread these ideas into our first question of our conversation?

Our first question, today, is can each of you give me 1 to 2 examples of leading-edge land-use plans, either in your own community, or across the country and describe why you think they are innovative?

Tony Boydell

Ann, as you know I am not a land use planner per se and have some difficulty in coming up with examples. However, I would like to comment on Don's point as well as I think this raises the whole challenge of how to create in the public a sense of identity and belonging to a place such that they are willing to engage in many different issues.

Ann Dale

Kevin, can you define what you mean by deliberative and communicative planning, and do you have any papers on this concept? Tony, please do comment on Don's points.

Kevin Hanna

Both are complex ideas, Patsy Healey, Judith Innes, and John Forester are often associated with Communicative/deliberative planning thought, they have each published extensively. Here is a quick quote that helps distil some basic ideas. Issues language, power, equity and consensus are important. Communicative and deliberative emphasises process rather than physical outcome.

"Communicative planning initiatives are being increasingly implemented across both the North and South of the globe. Influenced by Habermas' theory of communicative rationality, this form of planning concentrates upon consensus building between different signified interest groups."
(Pugh, J. 2005. Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers, Volume 30, Number 3)

Ann Dale

Isn't a systems approach, then, a good strategy against short term gain against long-term pain? I had not thought of this before, and if somehow or other, plans became more dynamic with continual community buy-in and engagement, somehow or other, Don?

Kevin Hanna

A systems approach, sure, why not. Ann if we actually plan (strategically), we will encounter few crises, and there are few immediate interests--since these are anticipated at a strategic level. But then we rarely plan, as one former student who went on to work for a planning authority told me, "I don't plan. I approve developments."

Chris Ling

The approach taken by Calgary is interesting. There are a number of time horizons of vision, a what do we want to see in 100 years, what are the 30 year interim goals. The on the ground development is then led by bidding on the budget based on triple bottom line accounting and 'checked' against the goals in the visioning plans http://www.imaginecalgary.ca/

Marla Zucht

Whistler has recently completed its Comprehensive Sustainability Plan, titled Whistler 2020, which is the community's shared vision and strategies for continued success to the year 2020 and in achieving a more sustainable future. It is comprehensive in covering areas such as the built environment, resident housing, transportation, etc. Check out www.whistler2020.ca for more information. Whistler also has a very progressive affordable housing strategy to enable 75% of Whistler's workforce to reside within the municipal boundaries, hence living close to their place of employment. View www.whistlerhousing.ca for more information.

Marilyn Hamilton

As a community-wide systems approach I would use the process that Don Luymes used to develop Abbotsford's Official Community Plan in 2007 -- perhaps he can tell us more how he engaged citizens, staff, developers, culture and the

social aspects of community.

Don Luymes

Two planning processes from the Vancouver area are interesting to me, and they could hardly be more different. The first is the Greater Vancouver Regional Districts's (GVRD's) Liveable Region Strategic Plan. I like the simplicity of the plan - laying out four key driving strategies which are very powerful and very direct. The LRSP is under some threat now, due to Provincial policy initiatives, but as a working regional plan, it has had remarkable staying power and clarity, 10 years or so after it was adopted.

The second plan is the CityPlan process in the City of Vancouver -- an immense and somewhat sprawling exercise of citizen engagement, with dozens of "circles" producing everything from visionary manifestos to modest suggestions for interventions. The process was not intended to result in "a master plan" (the City is exempt from the requirement that every other local government in BC has - to develop an Official Community Plan), but the CityPlan process has informed the style and direction of a plethora of urban initiatives that have made Vancouver such an interesting place.

Tony Boydell

Don, I agree, particularly with the Liveable Region Strategy although I think it took a huge amount of data gathering to begin to put the pieces together!

Chris Ling

I think the problem with integrating a systems approach to planning is that the city system is vastly larger than the jurisdiction of most (all) city planning authorities. I would suggest this is particularly acute in Victoria and Vancouver in BC where components of the city-region are actually competing rather than working together as part of an integrated system.

Don Luymes

Point taken, Chris, but sometimes competition between jurisdictions can be an enriching thing. For example, in the Lower Mainland, best practices in everything from affordable housing delivery to green building or low-impact development

initiatives are widely shared, and local governments are spurred on somewhat to "outdo" their neighbours. In some ways (but not all ways) I prefer this messier approach to that of Calgary's which has produced an urban region that is organized and "systematic", but hardly innovative or dense.

Chris Ling

I think the problem is that Greater Vancouver is neither not particularly innovative or dense either, I would suggest what density exists is more a factor of geography (ie space is much more limited and expensive than in Calgary therefore market forces take care of the density) and the innovation is very patchy - concentrated in the downtown and other spots in the region - rather than helping the region as a whole.

Tony Boydell

Then perhaps the systems approach will only "work" if it is a subset of a larger systems approach that provides a first order framework for decision making.

Following on from my last comment, I thought the Community Charter in BC was heading in this direction but I somehow don't think it has!

Ann Dale

Tony, this seems interesting, can you elaborate further on what kind of instrument this is and how is it being implemented?

Tony Boydell

Well, the purpose of the Act was as follows:
Purposes of Act
3 The purposes of this Act are to provide municipalities and their councils with

(a) a legal framework for the powers, duties and functions that are necessary to fulfill their purposes,

(b) the authority and discretion to address existing and future community needs, and

(c) the flexibility to determine the public interest of their communities and to respond to the different needs and changing circumstances of their communities.

In reality, I don't believe it resulted in local government being able to exercise any more powers that they had before, particularly since no additional resources were in the offing! I would be interested in comments from local government, however.

Kevin Hanna

Ah yes, new powers (maybe) and certainly new responsibilities, but no resourcing, and no power to generate revenues, sounds like the approach to downloading seen here in Ontario, stage managed by some of the folks now holding fed cabinet posts. But I'm being a bit cynical.

Tony Boydell

Kevin, In your systems approach to LUP have you looked at, or used, strategic environmental assessment as a tool?

Kevin Hanna

An interesting question. Strategic assessment is, in my view perhaps the most difficult IA form, and while it makes conceptual or intuitive sense, it is tough to apply in practice. It could be helpful, but I think that a systems approach might lean more toward the use of cumulative IA, which should contain strategic elements.

Ann Dale

Hmm, interesting ideas, longer-term vision or planning horizons, systems approach as a subset of a larger system, deliberative and communicative planning processes that aim to enlarge inclusivity in a community, lead into our second question, what are the barriers, in your opinion, to the implementation of integrated land-use plans?

Ann Dale

Chris, you raise a critical point that Vancouver is geographically bounded by the mountains, and thus, do we only plan wisely when we are forced to by geographical boundaries or limits? What do you geographers think?

Chris Ling

I think it is more a question of the limits being limits - I think they exert almost more influence (certainly faster reacted to) on the market than on the planners. If you simply can't build on mountains and ocean you have to build elsewhere, and smaller.

Tony Boydell

The other "culprit" of course is transportation planning (or lack of it) with all the unintended consequences being visited upon land use. I was just chatting to my colleague Walter Kulash about this and he is sending me some interesting stuff he has done recently on this.

Ann Dale

We would appreciate if you would share this later. Does transportation planning dictate land-use patterns, but perhaps that is another whole conversation? Maybe this is part of integrated planning?

Tony's last comment leads nicely into our third question of the day, what are the solutions to overcoming or going around the barriers to the implementation of integrated land-use plans, and an additional question from our audience, does anyone have examples of where the regulatory framework is a barrier? Lack of municipal authority as indicated in the Community Charter, where should the power and authority lie?

Don Luymes

Ann, with tongue somewhat in cheek, I'd say that one thing that frustrates a truly integrative planning model is human nature itself. It may be impossible in a democracy to achieve complete consensus on a "right way" of living in the landscape and living in community.

I am much more interested in an "alternating-current" kind of planning that oscillates between casting a general framework, crafting micro-scale policy and design interventions within that framework, while constantly measuring incremental progress.

Tony Boydell

Ann, I am not convinced that the regulatory framework is the real culprit but rather the nature of the governance structure. I remember discussing this same issue in 1991 with many people from local government in BC and the overwhelming conclusion was that we needed a new form of governance. It had really to do with the forms of taxation were available to local government and how, without substantial changes to the size of the pie slice, nothing would ever happen!

Kevin Hanna

The Ontario experience had interesting implications for regional governance, infrastructure and services. It can be simply distilled into...
1. download provincial responsibilities to local government
2. give some transitional monies, but not enough to cover the real costs, they didn't even allocate enough to cover Toronto's transition costs.

3. tell local governments they have to deliver these new responsibilities, not cut them.
4. don't allow them to raise taxes or develop new taxes, tell them to 'realize new efficiencies'
5. sit back and watch the municipal infrastructure system unravel
6. act surprised when it doesn't work.
7. step in restore partial funding and hope for the best.

The lesson for integration was simply that in the absence of a strong provincial presence, and a stable funding for regional and municipal system, the exiting mechanisms broke down and we are now playing a game of catch-up. It is very expensive to restore large scale systems once you have allowed them to deteriorate. There has to be a role for the state in regional infrastructure and land use planning, to set a stable foundation, and to invest in basic services.

Marla Zucht

I firmly believe you have to have the political will to want to see change implemented. Without progressive leadership, the status quo will inevitably remain entrenched. We are fortunate in Whistler to have a very progressive Mayor and Council who do push for innovation and expect new innovative ideas to come from staff. Green Buildings is one example where our Council continues to send development proposals back to staff that do not include examples of green building infrastructure.

Don Luymes

Actually, in the Lower Mainland, it is the Agricultural Land Reserve, more than the wider geographical constraint of mountains and water that have set the constraints. If you take out the ALR from the land base of the Lower Mainland, the density of the urban areas is higher than most (possibly all, with the exception of San Francisco) Western NA cities. Suburban centres as diverse as Richmond, Coquitlam, New West, Metrotown, even Maple Ridge and Abbotsford are relatively densely developed, compared with comparable parts of other urban regions. This is a consequence of a far-sighted Provincial decree in 1973, and not something any local government can claim credit for. My point is that the basic constraint on urban land supply is legislative, not geographic (yet).

Kevin Hanna

This is a very astute comment, the ALR has had a very discernable, though difficult to measure, impact on Lower Mainland planning and urban form, along with topography it has very much helped create the current build landscape.

Ann Dale

Accountability against plans through measuring, key point raised in previous dialogues, I like the idea of alternating-current, introducing dynamic living system dimensions, life is not static, nor is sustainable development an end goal, but a constantly evolving process, but the issue of accountability against plans, to me, is key, and who is accountable? It seems to me that in many smaller communities, with which I am more familiar, councils are elected that swing between pro-development and then anti-development, and the forces of evil do what they want anyway with patchwork and uneven unsustainable development, maybe Kevin's cynicism has rubbed off on me!

Kevin Hanna

Local governments can indeed experience some interesting shifts, which is why a good macro governance framework (e.g., provincial municipals act or similar) is needed to create the setting within which communities can plan for local conditions, but cannot 'run amok.' It calls for a balance between local needs/autonomy and a sense of greater good, regional connectivity and provincial/macro standards.

Tony Boydell

Well, it certainly can be, depending on the scale of the enterprise. In BC we used to say that real land use planning was only done by the Ministry of Transportation & Highways!

Kevin Hanna

Indeed, the same has been said about MTO here.

Marilyn Hamilton

And I can't resist observing that the original Agricultural Land Reserve legislation WAS based on geography -- farmable geography :-)

Kevin Hanna

The ALR is sometimes inaccurate, there are many rock piles well preserved within its confines (and the Commission will fight tooth and nail to keep them within the ALR), as there are many important farmable areas. It was coarsely drawn by present standards, subject to gerrymandering, and it is all that is left of a comprehensive set of agricultural polices (some of which were meant to offset its 'takings qualities'). At present the ALR is growth control by proxy (my copyright on that comment). I also know a senior planner who told me "the ALR doesn't stop development, it just makes it a more interesting game" I'm not quite so jaundiced about the reserve though.

Chris Ling

How much has the ALR around Vancouver contributed to growth of cities along the Fraser Valley and increased commuting?

Kevin Hanna

It cannot really be quantified (since we do not really know what would have happened if the ALR did note exits, I guess we could try to model it). I suspect, but we can say that the ALR has forced growth into areas that would not have been the first choice of developed had the reserve not existed, so yea it has contributed to the growth of FV communities, but it has also contributed to their contemporary form.

Don Luymes

The ALR is an example of "being saved from ourselves." The temptation is to always convert "cheap land" to "higher and better uses" to quote the old planning chestnut. Local governments are as guilty of this as any developer. The fact of the ALR makes it tougher to do this, and forces both developers and planning policies to look for density innovations. In Abbotsford, for example, 75% of our city is in the ALR, and our population has been growing at a rate of 2% per year for a long time. So, we are "forced" to grow more densely, to liberalize secondary suite policies (permitted in all detached residential zones outright), to include townhouses in all residential designations in our OCP, etc. As a result, we have "low density" neighbourhoods with 77 persons per hectare (which causes its own set of issues . . .)

Ann Dale

Again, and again, governance raises its thorny head, we have a system essentially predicated on the 1867 BNA, with many attempts to re-negotiate federal/provincial relationships, never mind municipal, and now the rise of the city-state. Marilyn raises a key point, place-based relationships, perhaps our current political boundaries no longer reflect modern day reality, however, I do not want ot deprive the audience of their time, could we move on to our next question?

What do you think are the critical elements that should be in an integrated community sustainability plan (tied to gas tax rebates, an enlightened requirement by the Federal Government I believe), or an integrated land-use plan, or are they essentially the same thing, regardless, what are the minimum, and if we have time, optimal elements?

Tony Boydell

Not the same thing in my view! Being somewhat of a new urbanist, I believe that integration must extend well beyond the physical "functionalities" to include both the socio-cultural dimensions of community design as well as the socio-economic

elements.

Chris Ling

A place for nature and a place for food production (even better those two integrated with the place for people). A recognition that development / redevelopment does not take place on a blank canvass but somewhere with a cultural and ecological legacy and function.

Ann Dale

Chris, can you put this in more concrete terms (pardon the pun) for a plan, what would be the headings? Should a plan describe existing place and space characteristics and then decide what is to be preserved, maintained and developed within that place and space?

Chris Ling

I would say that every area at every scale has characteristics that already exist (self evident maybe, but rarely apparently considered by economic development agenda), these are ecological characteristics that provide the natural capital and the processes that maintain and sustain populations (of any description), cultural characteristics that reflect established and past uses for the land, and the interaction between the land and people, economic characteristics---opportunities for wealth and prosperity and aesthetic characteristics that connect with the human spirit and essentially contribute to liveability and quality of life. These characteristics, if seen and understood are more likely to point to a sustainable future, and are more likely to be seen by those currently engaged in the landscape in question. So yes, a current review of a landscape and its assets, and then understanding these in the context of change. Build on existing strengths and maintain or enhance positive features, build new uses and development around them, not over them.

Ann Dale

Tony says an ICSP would be broader and include socio-cultural community aspects, other elements, panel?

Kevin Hanna

Hmmm, how about a few gratuitous ingredients? Walkability, higher densities, stable/sustainable revenues, connectivity within and without (public transportation), maximum green-space, connectively to regional food systems.

As for governance hope, I think the real changes will come about from necessity. Politics is the art of avoidance, no politician wants to make a tough choice or a tough decision--at least until they absolutely have to, then systems will change. Environmentally, we may be approaching that point.

Don Luymes

With respect to governance, downloading is a serious issue, for sure. For example, in the area of affordable housing, cities are left "holding the bag" to deal with the consequences of Federal and Provincial pull-outs. I do believe that local government is best positioned to understand and respond to the social needs manifest on their streets, but without the resources to respond effectively. My (faint) hope is that there will be some sort of "block grant" program instituted, and a return of tax revenue (fuel taxes, real estate transfer taxes, sales taxes for a start) to the communities in which they were generated. I'd love to see the 1% real estate transfer tax handed over to local government, but earmarked specifically for affordable housing projects. Same with fuel taxes, earmarked only for transit, cycling and pedestrian infrastructure improvements, and sales taxes earmarked for green initiatives like waste reduction, recycling, land conservancy etc. Ah, one can only dream, eh?

Tony Boydell

Don has provided a good response to the earlier comments about taxation and empowerment of local government. Unfortunately I have to agree that the hope is extremely faint that we will see this sort of change in the immediate future.

Kevin Hanna

I must leave for a meeting, thank you for including me, I look forward to receiving a copy of the complete dialogue. Best to all. Kevin Hanna

Ann Dale

Thank you, Kevin, for your participation, this is a busy time of year for us all, Don, how do you reconcile planning that must include, I believe, different scales to be sustainable, no one sector, no one community is independent from another if they are serious about the implementation of sustainable development? Tony, your thoughts? Marla?

Tony Boydell

I think that in the end we need some form of regional sustainability planning. This has been attempted in various disguises before, certainly in the Pacific Northwest, but the difficulty has generally been the lack of a sufficiently large legislative stick to establish some common rules of engagement. In BC, there was absolutely no ability to actually enforce the intent of the legislation such that it left adjacent municipalities (at the political level) refusing to engage in a common purpose.

Marla Zucht

I think the critical elements of an integrated community sustainability plan include the built and natural environment, arts and culture, energy, health and recreation, finance and affordability, and transportation. But even more importantly than the compartmentalized elements is that the plan is drived and empowered to be implemented by a wide representation of community members, each holding expertise. This keeps the planning process open, transparent and accountable for stakeholder input.

Marilyn Hamilton

We struggle with the integration of our levels of government. It seems we need to integrate civic engagement so that levels of government will align. They do in emergencies (usually). And sometimes when the civic rage is fiery enough (as it was with Sumas Energy plant activism that aligned 3 levels of government in Canada versus the US).

Chris Ling

I think what I am trying to say is that in the past all consultations were based on economic drivers in a city. We are now moving to a period of more inclusive consultation and participation of the whole of the social structure and diversity. In order to balance our three legged stool the next step is to consult the land - not the best or wildest land, but the land as it is and what it could be.

Ann Dale

Is it about empowerment, or about capacity? It seems to be the reason our county has such gridlock, and implementation gaps is because of the power and conflict issues between our three levels of government? Marla raises a critical point about the need for such plans to be dynamic and evolving and accountable to stakeholder input. Marilyn raises the key point between governments and governance, broadening the level of civic engagement.

Marilyn, for our last half hour, do we have some audience questions?

Marilyn Hamilton

Yes, we have several questions. I will post them separately with a pause or so between them so e-panel can respond.

Lenore asks: I would be interested in hearing how Whistler managed to recreate the kind of zoning found in a European Alpine setting- that is a walkable village that does not sprawl into the surrounding sensitive ecosystems.

Marla Zucht

Whistler was committed early on in its development and evolution to have a pedestrian oriented village, yes, similar to a European alpine experience. It has been very successful in creating a vibrant centralized community core. With the benefit of hindsight from other resort communities, Whistler committed early on to a growth management strategy, where we will only allow a certain level of development to occur. This is held sacred in our planning and as a community we've only pushed beyond the growth cap for development that will result in substantial community benefit, such as affordable housing developments. This is why you will not seeing sprawling development occur in Whistler.

Marilyn Hamilton

Marla, I am curious how this development boundary was "held sacred"? Was it legislated? at what level? Whenever I propose that for Abbotsford, I am summarily shot down -- as that's impossible to do. But I believe that the City of San Francisco did they same thing too - put a pop. cap of 750,000 and kept that sacred.

Don Luymes

Some context is necessary, though, Marilyn. Whistler is not a complete community, it is a resort. Different animal. Also, the housing prices there are astronomical, in part due to the development cap. Finally, the cap has squeezed workers' housing into Pemberton, to Squamish, and now into the Callaghan Valley. Whistler is a wonderful place, and a good example of its type, but I don't believe it has much relevance as a model for complete communities . . .

Marla Zucht

Don is correct in noting that Whistler has some special tools since it is designated as Resort Municipality, but I entirely disagree that it is not a complete community. It is very much a complete community and your facts are incorrect about having employees living in the Callaghan Valley -that is not the case, nobody lives in the Callaghan Valley. We have 75% of our workforce living within Whistler, which is an extremely high % or our workforce. To Marilyn's question about our development cap, Whistler' OCP puts limits on the number of bed units that will be created. It is not a cap on population growth but rather on units that

can and will be created in the future.

Marilyn Hamilton

That makes sense ... as noted earlier ? the ALR has had the same effect on land prices in the Central Fraser Valley. This shows the connection of LVP/LUP to financing and governance (ie. how we value land ... and how those values are embedded in the worldviews of our citizens, elected officials and planners).

Marilyn Hamilton

Levi asks: I heard a councillor for the city of Markham (a sprawling suburb if there ever was one) speaking about all their efforts to make the city more liveable and cleaner, but said that all their efforts would be moot if the pattern of building sprawl continued. She said it with a certain sense of helplessness that I never quite figured out - so I'm also curious about what defines the reality of city "planners".

Don Luymes

Local government planners do not practice in a vacuum, nor can they dictate urban form without political support, but are embedded in communities with strong political and economic forces. The challenge is to find solutions that are politically acceptable while also pushing us towards greater sustainability. The trick is to work "behind the scenes" in the community to change the political climate. Much easier said than done, as I can attest, having come from 13 years in academia (where I could spout rhetoric with the best of them!) to the rough and tumble world of local planning!

Ann Dale

Don, it has always seemed to me an irony that we professors teach so separately from the communities in which our institutions are embedded, which argues for

me, for the critical necessity for researchers to involve their students in at least one applied research course of benefit to the broader community. To me, your concept of plans that are adaptive, with actively community engagement processes, can provide a critical stability to shorter term political agendas?

Don Luymes

I agree, Ann. One of my big frustrations is getting politicians to see the value of measures that go beyond their mandates, and of indicators that may carry a political risk. All we can do is try, right?

On the subject of student internships, I have become more convinced than ever that these should be required in any professional planning program.

Ann Dale

I always hate to close a conversation summarily, however, we are nearing the end of this conversation, are there any last comments about integrated sustainability community plans? What about combining some of the best tools of the disciplines--design charettes from architecture, scenario building, decision analysis, GIS and integrating these into community planning processes?

Tony Boydell

Ann, I think all of these tools are appropriate and I have been exposed to most of them in a community planning context. However, I would also stress that a community is neither isolated nor self-sufficient and that planning must therefore occur within the larger regional context. Easy to say but hard to do, I suspect!

Don Luymes

Charrettes are a great tool, because they get people dreaming and seeing the possibilities that may have been hidden before. And, it gets ordinary people engaged in the planning of their community.

Chris Ling

Attempts to model the future and use the results as visualization tools in community participatory planning and decision making processes I think has some future - the problem is creating models that are believable and don't peddle an agenda. Maps are extremely powerful advocacy tools - just look at the Sierra clubs recent use of Google Earth to show the future coastline of Vancouver in a business as usual scenario.

Marilyn Hamilton

If the e-panel were City Planners in one location, we'd have an A-Team :-) ... seriously, the alignment around the need to take a wholes systems approach that includes cultural and social perspectives along with the space/place perspectives is music to my ears. I take away some hope :-0

Ann Dale

I would like to thank each of you and the audience for your time and conversation, our e-dialogue will be archived in a few days for other people to read, although they miss out on the real time dynamics, and for younger scholar to access for research ideas.

Also, our next e-dialogue scheduled for next week has been post-phoned to the New Year. I would like to wish everyone and their families a joyous Christmas and a riotous New Year.

Don Luymes

Signing off. Thanks everyone for such a stimulating discussion!

Tony Boydell

Thanks Ann! I appreciated the opportunity to be involved. Tony.

Marla Zucht

Thanks to the other participants and to the audience. I look forward to the full commentary.