PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN LOCAL TRANSPORTATION PLANNING:

AN EXAMINATION OF

SUDBURY AND PRINCE GEORGE

by

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B.A. Honours, Queen's University, 1994

THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF

THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF

MASTER OF ARTS

in

POLITICAL SCIENCE

THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN BRITISH COLUMBIA

August, 1996

Abstract

Since the 1960s there is increasing reference in political science and planning literature to citizen participation in decision making. This thesis explores whether or not citizens are indeed participating in the process of transportation planning at the local level of government. This study considers political theories of public participation in the context of urban planning. Particular attention is given to the transportation planning processes in Prince George, British Columbia and Sudbury, Ontario. The factors that influence participation are explored including: institutional frameworks, legislative requirements, political culture, avenues of access, and the types and degrees of participation. These factors are examined to determine the limitations and barriers to public participation in decision making.

It is argued that although there is some public participation in transportation planning in both cities, primarily it is the elites of the community that are involved, not a representative sampling of the overall population. For the most part, participation of the general public is still fairly limited in policy processes. Contrary to what one might believe from various government documents or literature, there appears to be little, if any, devolution of decision making power to the citizenry. From the perspective of public policy some public involvement in planning processes can be a useful tool to ensure that the goals of a particular project meet the needs of the public. This is not to suggest, however, that there should be unbridled public participation. There needs to be a balance struck between achieving administrative and policy efficiency in terms of time and financial resources and a democratic and responsive system of governance. A degree of citizen participation can be both relevant and worthwhile in the area of local transportation planning.

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Acknowledgements

During my two years at UNBC there have been many, many people who have provided support, encouragement and lots of laughter. Thank you all for making my time in Prince George a memorable and growing experience.

First and foremost I must take this opportunity to thank my family. I am very lucky to have such a stable base of people who care. Thank you Mom, Dad, Suzanne, Neil, Ty, Tate, Claire, Rob, Faye, Joel and Meaghan.

A very special thank you to someone who knows me better than I know myself, my best friend Alison Saunders. You never cease to amaze me Alison. I only hope that I have enriched your life half way as much as you have mine in the last eleven years. Thank you for your patience and understanding.

To my fellow graduate students especially those in Political Science (Sara, Tracey, Meryl, Don, Rabia, Shauna, Steve, Chris and of course Joel). Thank you for the friendship and the Thursday nights at Alfredo's. Thanks also to Melanie T., Garth, Sprom, Ian, Marvin, Jenny L. and Beaner.

Thank you to the people at the Regional Municipality of Sudbury and the City of Prince George for their time and assistance.

Maggie Clarke, Lois Crowell and Bev Schroeder are angels who somehow keep everything running smoothly in the middle of a chaotic world. Thank you for your patience over my endless requests. The three of you add sunshine to every day.

I cannot leave this university without taking the opportunity to recognize the wonderful department/program of political science: Alex Michalos, John Young, Greg Poelzer, Ed Black and Mary Louise McAllister. Never have I encountered such a warm, enthusiastic, supportive group of people. I have learned valuable lessons from each and every one of you, not only about the field of political science but important life lessons about hard work, dedication and the importance of humour. A new university such as UNBC could only be successful with professors such as yourselves. A special thank you to Ed Black for his outstanding leadership in the UNBC community as well as within the department of political science.

This thesis could never have been completed without my wonderful thesis committee: Mary Louise McAllister, John Curry and Doug Baker. Thank you all for your hard work and encouragement. Mary Louise you have been an outstanding thesis advisor, personal psychologist and teacher. I have learned so much from my time here in Prince George, and you have had a lot to do with that.

Introduction

Government documents in planning literature and policy analysis increasingly refer to the issue of citizen participation. What has not received as much attention, however, is whether, in fact, citizens are participating in the process of policy making. The following analysis examines this issue in the context of local transportation planning and decision making, specifically roadway planning. Urban transportation systems are a basic component of an urban area's social, economic, and physical structure (Meyer and Miller, 1984, 1). The design of a transportation system provides opportunities for mobility and also influences the patterns for growth. Transportation is an integral part of local planning and as such serves as a useful case study. Roadway planning was chosen because it is primarily a municipal government responsibility, although the provincial government does provide funding for construction and maintenance. A further justification for the selection of transportation planning is that it is an area that has historically had limited public participation in the decision making process due, in part, to the technical nature of the process.

The cities of Sudbury, Ontario and Prince George, British Columbia have been chosen as the case studies because they share similarities in a number of significant areas. The population and land base of both cities are similar as well as their geography and climate. Both cities play important cultural roles as northern capitals for their respective provinces. In such northern cities, transportation needs are distinctive in terms of transportation of industrial materials as well as

urban use. Prince George relies heavily on the forest industry and Sudbury on nickel mining and production.

Public participation has become a "catch phrase" in many decision making processes of governments at all levels. This trend reflects the growing belief that citizens should have some control or input in the areas of government decision making that affects their lives and their environment. The trend towards citizen involvement is as a result of a multitude of factors that will be explored throughout this account. These factors include: legislation, political culture, institutional structure, avenues of access, geography, and whether or not the city is a university or company town. There are many questions that arise in the context of public participation in decision making: Who participates? How do citizens participate? Is public participation making a difference in the types and quality of policy decisions? Are governments actually sharing decision-making authority with individuals who do chose to participate? What are the roles of the elected officials in these processes? Who is held accountable for decision making and why? An examination of a variety of political theories regarding the role of public participation in a liberal democracy will provide a useful theoretical framework in which these questions can be considered.

While the case studies provide an analytical focus, the issue of public participation will be considered more generally with reference to local government decision making. Local government is the level of government that is said to be closest to the people and therefore most likely to be responsive to the public's requests. Local government is potentially an important area for the development of citizen competence, but citizen knowledge and participation cannot be

taken for granted. Rather they will be contingent, to a certain degree, on the design and culture of municipal institutions and the autonomy and authority of local government vis-a-vis the wider political system (Judge, Stoker, and Wolman, 1995, 171). The structure of the local government, the political culture of the city and the local government's attitude all affect the types and extent of public participation in decision making.

Chapter one explores political theories relating to the role of participation in a democratic process - specifically elite democracy and pluralist democracy. This discussion establishes two distinct prescriptive and analytical viewpoints on the nature of public participation, including the characteristics of the participants, limits and barriers to participation, types of participation, and the ways in which public participation affects local government decision making. An examination of the historical development of local government considers whether the evolution of local government and the structure of local government have encouraged participation of the general public or reinforced the elite nature of decision making.

Chapter two discusses the heightened recognition citizen participation has received in urban planning documents and literature. This chapter explores the history and early influences of Canadian planning, and discusses how public involvement is assumed to be part of planning processes. This chapter raises the question of whether public involvement in decision making differs in a technically oriented policy area such as transportation planning.

Chapter three outlines the methodology or the approach taken to guide and establish the boundaries of the research and the manner in which to disseminate the research findings. The discussion includes: the approach, subjects, limitations of the comparison, data collection and data analysis.

Chapters four and five explore the regional government of Sudbury and the municipal government of Prince George. The intention of these chapters is to identify each government's approach towards citizen involvement in decision making. A delineation of the policies and procedures that are followed by the city regarding citizen involvement in transportation planning will help determine the level and types of public involvement in transportation planning.

Chapter six builds on the cases outlined in the previous two chapters identifying the similarities and differences between the cities with respect to the ways in which the public is involved in transportation decision making. The political theories of participation, as outlined in chapter one, are used to analyze the nature of citizen involvement in the case studies. Recommendations of ways to usefully involve the public in decision making processes are detailed along with specific examples of progressive planning processes. This provides some ideas regarding the successful incorporation of the public into government decision making.

The conclusion reviews the role of the public in decision making and relates theories of public participation to transportation planning processes of Sudbury and Prince George. The findings of the case study and successful methods of public participation are briefly presented. In sum,

public participation in local transportation planning has, to date, been quite limited. Opportunities do exist, however, for developing a more effective role for members of the interested public in planning processes. These are worthwhile exploring.

Chapter One

Public Participation in Local Government

In the last few decades there has been rising pressure in Canada to include the public in government decision making processes. As a result, the issue of increasing the public's role in policy processes has been gaining salience on political agendas. Throughout the country there has been an upswing in the prominence of round tables, multi-stakeholder approaches, and integrated planning in government decision making. There are numerous examples in each province. Ontario's Commission on Planning and Development Reform (1993), British Columbia's Commission on Resources and the Environment (CORE) (1992), Alberta's Round Table on Environment and the Economy (1993), Saskatchewan's Conservation Strategy (1992), Manitoba's Provincial Land Use Policy (1993), Prince Edward Island's Royal Commission on the Land (1990), are just a few examples of government processes that promote the education and participation of the public in government decision making. The public's role and responsibilities of participation differ depending on the specific process.

Higgins (1986) defines public participation as "action taken by individuals or groups in an attempt to achieve some goal that they desire. This may usually be translated into either attempting to change some element of the status quo or trying to preserve some element in the face of a

perceived threat" (Higgins, 1986, 258). Public participation in this sense then goes beyond the minimal level of participation through voting, although that is the most well known avenue of political involvement. Participation involves a variety of activities including: contacting government officials, joining pressure groups, signing petitions, attending meetings or public demonstrations. While the concept of participation has gained momentum and recognition, not enough attention has been devoted to the study of who actually participates in the policy process and how. For example, do community leaders dominate contemporary decision making processes or has the process for including the public changed in ways that facilitates the inclusion of a wider variety of individuals and groups? In the case of decision making in local government, public participation appears to have become an accepted part of the political decision-making process, yet its implications for local government are unclear. This chapter explores the nature of public participation, the characteristics of the participants, the limitations and barriers to participation, and the ways in which public participation affects local government decision making.

Theoretical Perspectives on Public Participation

The notion of public participation in civic decision making has been an element of the political process since the era of Periclean democracy in Athens. Since that time, the role of the individual and the purpose of public involvement has been the subject of considerable debate leading to the development of a significant body of scholarly material. Two theoretical approaches in particular - participatory democracy and elite democracy - lend themselves to an examination of the role of public participation in local governance.

In participatory theories, the participation of the individual citizen plays an integral role in the fostering of a democratic system. Jean Jacques Rousseau, a classic participatory theorist, described the ideal political system as one that is designed to develop responsible, individual social and political action through the participatory process. During this process, the individual learns that "the word 'each' must be applied to himself; that is to say, he finds that he has to take into account wider matters than his own immediate private interests if he is to gain co-operation from others, and he learns that the public and private interest are linked" (Pateman, 1970, 25). For Rousseau, individual participation also ensures that "political equality was made effective in the decision assembly" (Pateman, 1970, 23). Rousseau argued that extensive public participation was a way of protecting private interests and ensuring good government. Individual participation would also lead to a broader public acceptance of collective decisions. Furthermore, he cautioned against group participation because groups could potentially overwhelm individual attitudes.

Carol Pateman, a modern theorist, analyzed the classic arguments related to participatory democracy. Pateman (1970) suggested that participation serves to change or influence individual attitudes. She stated that individuals learn to participate by becoming actively involved in the political process and that feelings of political efficacy are more likely to be developed in a participatory environment (Pateman, 1970, 105). Political efficacy is an important concept for Pateman because it is through the development of personal political efficacy that individuals increase their own sense of worth and become involved in the political system. A system that encourages public participation may also encourage acquisition of political information.

For participatory theorists, it is through participation that individuals are educated. The acquisition of information by the average citizen results in a citizenry that is better equipped to assess policy alternatives and make better decisions. The sense of personal efficacy also plays an important role at the local level. Through participation in local governments, individuals may increase their sense of belonging to the community by having a say in decisions that will directly affect them.

John Stuart Mill and Alexis de Tocqueville, both classic political theorists, were proponents of citizen participation, particularly at the local level of government. Both Mill and de Tocqueville argue that local politics serves as a training ground for the citizenry. Mill sees "participation in 'free and popular local and municipal institutions' as part of the 'peculiar training of a citizen, the practical part of the political education of a free people" (Mill, 1974, 108). Mill notes that local politics provides experience in citizenship for the 'lower grades' of society, who might not otherwise gain access to the political process. If members of the public are involved in local decision making, they will learn about the process of democracy and be able to participate effectively in other levels of government.

Mill's argument about public involvement at the local level of government is supported by the writings of Alexis de Tocqueville. De Tocqueville believes that the " 'spirit of liberty' is 'imbibed' through the practice of citizenship at the local level. He argues that 'municipal institutions constitute the strength of free nations....A nation may establish a free government, but without municipal institutions it cannot have the spirit of liberty' " (de Tocqueville, 1946, 57). Both Mill

and de Tocqueville see municipal government as 'formative of the citizenry' and credit this level of government with helping to create the type of citizenry necessary for a liberal democracy to flourish (Judge, Stoker and Wolman, 1995, 170). For such theorists individual participation, especially at the local level of government, is beneficial to the overall democratic process.

Who Participates?

The main characteristic of individuals who are typically politically active is that they possess a higher than average social-economic standing and education (Verba and Nie, 1972, 112). Elites, being leaders in business, academia and other areas of the community, have traditionally dominated the political participatory process. There is some debate about whether extensive participation by the masses is desirable or whether representation by the minority elite could better facilitate the goals of a democratic system. Elitism refers to the "advocacy of or reliance on leadership or domination of a select group" (Judge, Stoker and Wolman, 1995, 35). Elite theory is based on the "hierarchical conceptions of society and concerns itself with relations between the rulers and the ruled, the powerful and the powerless" (Judge, Stoker, and Wolman, 1995, 35). Elite dominated participation allows people who have the interest, knowledge and time to dedicate to political issues to become involved in the political process. This reality conflicts with traditional participatory theory which focuses on participation of the mass public:

> No longer is democratic theory centred on the participation of 'the people', on the participation of the ordinary man, or the prime virtue of a democratic political system seen as the development of politically relevant and necessary qualities in the ordinary individual in the contemporary theory of democracy it is the participation of the minority elite that

> is crucial and the non-participation of the apathetic ordinary man lacking in the feeling of political efficacy, that is regarded as the main bulwark against instability.
>
> Pateman, 1970, 104

Several modern democratic theorists have investigated elite participation in the political process. Dahl (1956) argues that a relatively small proportion of individuals in any form of social organization will take up decision making opportunities (Dahl, 1956, 87). An examination of the nature of participation in a democratic system appears to support Dahl's statement, particularly a large scale democracy. Sheer size makes collective decision making practically impossible. Some analysts refer to this as the technocratic approach, suggesting that elites "for good or for ill, are necessary for the management of increasingly complex modern societies" (Judge, Stoker and Wolman, 1995, 36). According to a variety of theorists, such as Berelson (1954), Dahl (1956) and others, elite participation or participation of the few, may actually be a positive force in a democratic society. Such theorists see the apathy and disinterest of the majority as playing a valuable role in maintaining the stability of the system (Pateman, 1970, 7). According to Schumpeter (1943), there should be sufficient citizen participation to keep the institutional machinery working (Schumpeter, 1943, 283) to ensure the stability of the political system. Prior and Walsh (1993) agree with the argument that mass participation destabilizes democratic political systems and also argue that popular participation is unrealistic:

> Participation is impractical because traditional ways of life are breaking down; people no longer have the time nor the inclination to involve themselves in the day to day life of their locality. Participation is undesirable because it is likely to be defensive or promotional of sectoral interests; any notion of the common good may be lost in the

> context of a participatory free for all. This approach emphasizes 'representative democracy' rather than direct democracy.
>
> n.v. quoted in Judge, Stoker and Wolman, 1995, 165

Prior and Walsh further explain the relationship between participation and representative democracy. They state that participation may be important as a basis of the duty of citizenship, but extensive public involvement of diverse groups can seriously slow down, inhibit, or at times, paralyze the decision making process. Participatory democracy is a slow process that costs more money and time than some people think it is worth. Public participation should take place with a strong representative democracy, whereby accountable representatives "have the authority to evaluate needs, balance demands, establish priorities and monitor the outcomes of the political system" (Judge, Stoker and Wolman, 1995, 169). Representative democracies allow for the voices of citizens to be heard through their elected officials. Where representative democracies fail is that they cannot account for all citizens' interests. Elected officials in representative democracies must make decisions based on what they think is best for the community at large. These representatives do not have time to address the concerns of every individual who may be affected by the decision. Today's policy world appears to be characterized by a never ending debate about finding the right balance between effective and democratic representation of the public interest and the overall efficiency of the decision making process.

The goal of democratic representation of the public interest is not necessarily a representation of the general population, because there is a certain type of individual that tends to participate most often. There are general characteristics of individuals who have traditionally dominated

participatory processes. Participation can be deemed a function of individual personality traits or attitudes. Level of knowledge about government, attitudes about civic responsibility and controversial social issues are important features influencing the frequency and level of public involvement in the government decision making process. Some people have the resources to contribute to the participatory process. As noted above, in order to participate effectively, it is necessary to have a knowledge base as well as the time to dedicate to becoming involved in local decision making. There are other personal factors which allow individuals to become more involved in policy processes. These include wealth, contacts, social standing, legitimacy, specialized knowledge and ability to mobilize people (Higgins, 1977, 186). These characteristics are indicative of a certain segment of the overall population, specifically the business and community leaders - the elites.

Considering the characteristics of the people who typically participate, it is likely that certain groups do not tend to participate in governmental decision making processes. Many of these groups possess a lower socio-economic status:

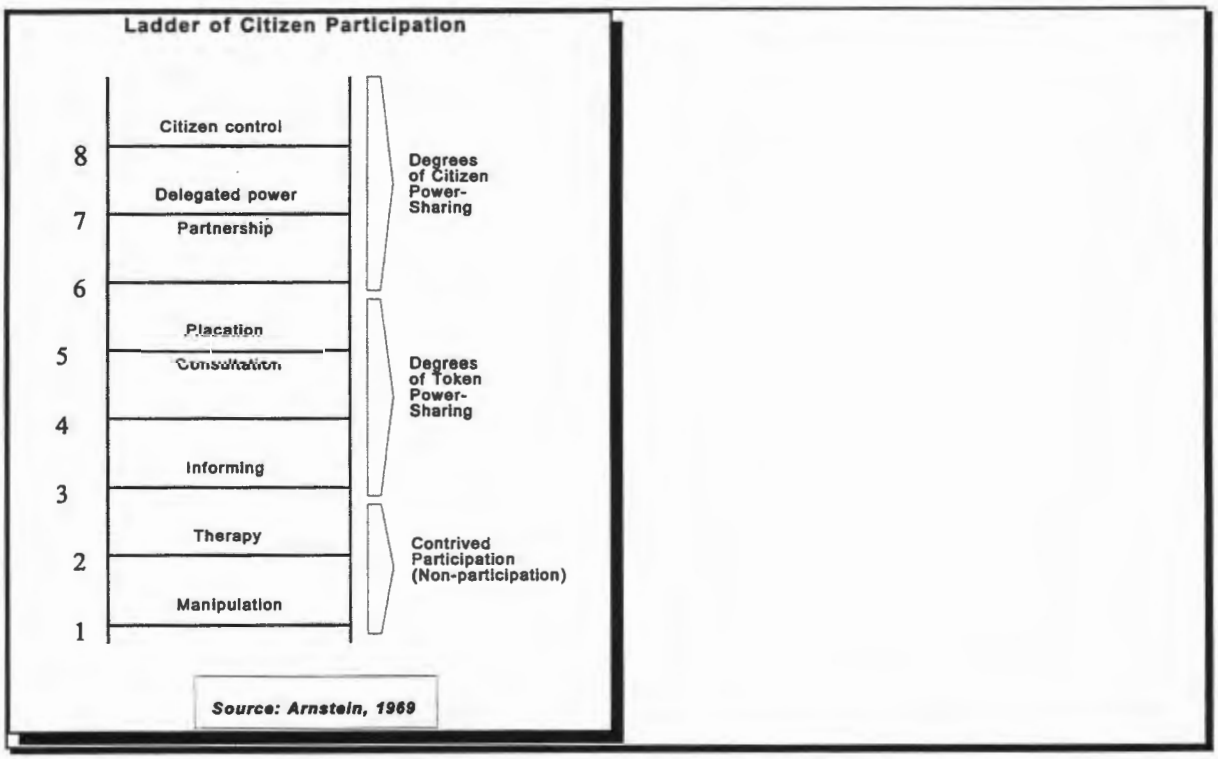
> Data from large scale empirical investigations into political attitudes and behaviour, undertaken in most Western countries over the past twenty orthirty years, have revealed that the outstanding characteristic of mostcitizens, more especially those in the lower socio-economic-status (SES) groups, is a general lack of interest in politics and political activity...
>
> Pateman, 1970, 3

Lack of participation may be attributed to limited time, financial resources or knowledge base (Dahl, 1961, 1). It is important to recognize the possible democratic implications of lack of input from these groups. In a local decision making process such as urban planning, a segment of the

population will be excluded from decision making. Groups that are most likely to be excluded are those that represent lower socio-economic individuals, single parent families and those simply not interested in becoming involved. The concerns of these groups may not be addressed in an elite dominated decision making process, which would result in communities being planned without consideration of the needs of these segments of the population.

Types of Participation

There are a variety of ways for the public to participate in government decision making processes. These include consultation with the mayor, councillors or bureaucrats, signing of petitions, demonstrating, citizen advisory groups, public meetings or various types of community groups. Public participation comes in a variety of forms; it is worthwhile examining the extent to which these forms of participation are recognized or given credibility in the decision making system.



A classic model of levels of citizen participation is Arnstein's Ladder of Citizen Participation (1969). Arnstein outlines eight levels of participation, which range from non-participation to actual power sharing amongst the citizens. The eight levels of participation are: manipulation, therapy, informing, consultation, placation, partnerships, delegated power and finally citizen control. Manipulation and therapy are considered "non-participation", which may involve informing the electorate but does not promote sharing in decision making (Higgins, 1986, 25). Informing, consulting and placating are characterized as tokens of power sharing. In this grouping, citizens may be encouraged to obtain, as well as comment, on information. There may even be opportunities for the citizen to assist in the development of alternative policy solutions (Higgins, 1986, 25). Finally, partnerships, delegated power and citizen control are actual degrees of power sharing. According to Higgins (1986), partnerships involve sharing in the decision making power through avenues like planning committees or other groups where citizens may be directly represented (Higgins, 1986, 25). Delegated power or citizen control would entail citizens having controlling influence in the decision making process. This classification of public participation is limited for citizen power is not distributed as 'neatly' and as one dimensionally as Arnstein's ladder would suggest. The purpose of Arnstein's ladder is to illustrate that the term 'public participation' encompasses a wide spectrum of actions and power devolution.

Benefits and Limitations of Participation

There are both benefits and limitations to public participation in the decision making process depending on the goals and the nature of participation. One obvious benefit is that elected officials are held accountable to their constituents' opinions (Gil and Lucchesi, 1979, 569), giving

citizens the opportunity to influence and shape the political agenda. Citizen participation may also improve the quality of policies of government agencies, officials and planners by ensuring that central planning authorities are responsive to the needs of citizens and taxpayers (Gil and Lucchesi, 1979, 570). Community participation in the decision making process may also contribute to the resolution of social problems, increase the sense of community spirit and legitimize governments' actions contributing to political stability.

There are, however, some significant drawbacks to increasing the role that citizens play in decision making. One argument against citizen participation, particularly those forms which grant anything more than limited advisory powers, is that it weakens our representative form of government (Gil and Lucchesi, 1979, 568; Fagence, 1977, 339). In representative democracies, officials are elected to make the best decision for the community they represent. Individual citizens or groups, on the other hand, will often seek to influence decision making based on that particular groups' own best interest, not the best interest of the community at large. This may result in unevenly represented neighbourhoods whereby certain groups in a community may have minimal influence, power and political representation. Gil and Lucchesi (1979) argue that some neighbourhoods would use their voice in public participation as an exclusionary tool. For example, zoning and planning could "exclude potential residents along social or economic lines" (Gil and Lucchesi, 1979, 569). One related concern with citizens having more decision making power is that they are not held accountable by any means to the decisions that they make. Accountability refers to the obligation of an organization or an individual "to be answerable for fulfilling responsibilities that flow from the authority given to them" (Richmond and Seigel, 1994,

94). Elected officials can be replaced if the decisions that they make are not seen as suitable for the area that they represent. There is no similar avenue to hold citizens accountable for their role in these decision making processes.

Another factor affecting the degree of public participation is the political culture of municipal governments and public perceptions of local politics. The public often undervalues the role and importance of municipal government. The public's lack of interest may be due to the perceived mundane or ordinary responsibilities of the municipal government. The lack of interest creates problems for participation because information and level of knowledge is a primary determinant of participation (Higgins, 1977, 194). Another possible explanation for the lack of interest in municipal politics is that there are usually non-partisan elections. Non-partisan elections remove clues provided by party labels and deactivate party organizations. Without these, many voters lose interest (Trounstine and Christensen, 1982, 43).

A further barrier to participation within the structure of local governments is the general public's lack of understanding of the 'language' of municipal governments. Each profession and discipline has its own language, its own value system and its own structure of thinking (Cullingworth, 1984, 8). Effective public participation disrupts this "myopic professionalism and departmentalism" (Cullingworth, 1984, 8). For individual citizens to be most effective in the participatory process, they must be able to understand and use the jargon in the area of dispute. If this can be successfully accomplished, then they have a better chance of influencing the overall process. Governments themselves can also be viewed as impediments to public participation:

"The biggest obstacle to the effective implementation of government-administered public participation projects appears to have been the government itself. Public participation can easily upset the relationships between departments and between politicians and civil servants" (Cullingworth, 1984, 8). Administrators or politicians may not see an increased level of public participation in a positive light. A government's willingness to provide the citizenry with the proper education and training may be an indicator of the administration's dedication to incorporating the public and, therefore, the success in the participatory planning process.

Economic factors also serve to limit wider public participation. Extensive public participation is expensive; public meetings, the dissemination of information and the provision of training of citizens for participation require considerable resources. The costs of these initiatives could be more than taxpayers are willing to absorb, depending on the scale of participation. In addition to the extra administrative costs of heightened public participation, there is also an additional layer of bureaucracy that comes with more public involvement. The inclusion of citizen groups may result ultimately in better decisions, but it can also aggravate and complicate a process that is already viewed as inefficient.

The opposing argument, however, is also worth considering:

> ..while public participation may take longer than conventional idealized planning practices, it could be much shorter in practice, if the time spent in dealing with controversy were also considered. As delay is often expensive, there could be cost savings as well.
>
> Wellman, 1974, 5

There are also costs for the individual participants, in terms of transportation, child care or time off work. Such expenses may hinder some individuals from getting involved and add to the elite nature of the participatory process. Furthermore, 'community burnout' is a consideration. There may be great demands being placed on the elite segment of the population that does participate. The elites of the community can only be involved in a number of decision making processes before they have reached a threshold due to time or emotional considerations. There are also limitations due to the structural organization of local governments. Bureaucratic structures are not readily adapted to include citizen participants in the decision making process.

Local Government and Public Participation

Local or municipal government is a natural forum for community participation; it is the level of government which is closest to the people. Unlike provincial or federal officials, local representatives remain in their communities giving citizens direct access to their representatives. The municipal structure is potentially more responsive to the demands of the public than the provincial or federal levels of government. As noted earlier, clas participatory theorists such as John Stuart Mill (1859) see the municipal level of government as a training ground for citizenry. As Mill remarks: "We do not learn to read or write, to ride or swim, by being told how to do it, but by doing it, so it is only by practising popular government on a limited scale, that the people will ever learn how to exercise it on a larger scale" (Dahl, 1961, 118). Mill and other proponents of this perspective argue that it is participation at the local level which trains the public for participation in provincial or federal governments. Robert Dahl (1973) argues that participation was highest in the smallest units of government and lowest in the largest. Dahl concludes that

participation is most likely to be frequent when people are able to identify and understand government (Higgins, 1986, 26). Sidney Verba (1961) states that the benefit of individual participation decreases as the scale of the governmental unit increases, for the amount of contribution one person can make in decisions is likely to be higher when the total number of people involved is small (Verba, 1961, 226).

While there may be more scope for broader public participation at the local, rather than national, level of politics, elites also appear to dominate municipal political processes. The nature of participation may, however, be somewhat different. At the local level members of the public often interact informally with the local government on a regular basis through telephone calls, for example, to complain about services or request information on road conditions. This is a valid form of participation and may include a wider spectrum of the public than more formal avenues of access. Members of the public can also play a worthwhile role in the actual shaping, designing and implementation of public policy. These areas of participation merit closer examination. This is not to advocate unbridled participation but meaningful consultation to ensure that government is responsive to a diversity of public concerns.

The need or demand for public participation varies with the political climate of the city and the role of local leaders. Levels of participation are also influenced by the interest of the public in a particular civic issue and whether the structure of the local government is conducive to public participation. The demand for active participation arises when citizens have little faith in their government officials to make the right decision (Gil and Lucchesi, 1979, 553).

The political climate and tradition of the community also affects levels of participation. The political culture may encourage involvement by fostering the belief that political activity is indicative of the community's spirit and sense of belonging (Higgins, 1986, 260-261). Even if the political climate is conducive to participation, however, citizens may not become involved due to a perceived lack of political expertise. If interested citizens are intimidated by the complexity or the technical nature of an issue, they are less likely to participate. The segment of the population that participates in government decision making is influenced by both the characteristics of the individual or group, as well as the political culture of the city.

Evolution of Local Government

An exploration of the evolution of local governments reveals how rising demands for public participation reflect similar trends in planning. Historically, municipal institutions have not encouraged the general public to participate but instead have reinforced the elite nature of government decision making.

Around the turn of the 20th century, American municipal governments were restructured to try and lessen the influence of 'party machines'. 'Party machine' describes the types of political organization that prevailed at the time. 'Machine politicians' distributed patronage and material benefits to build strong, loyal party organizations (Judd, 1984, 52). These organizations were often viewed as corrupt, operating outside the law, and distributing favours and municipal jobs on the basis of loyalty, not merit or ability. The American reform movement which emerged in response to 'machine politics' was based on several related principles:

> The businesses and professionals who dominated this movement held that municipal government was different from federal and provincial governments in that the senior governments dealt with important political issues, but municipal governments were simply concerned with administering services. This went hand in hand with a view which held that municipal politicians were corrupt or inept or both. Thus, it was important to minimize the impact which these corrupt and venal people could have on public policy, and it was particularly important to keep them away from really important services.
>
> Richmond and Seigel, 1995, 10

The reform movement of the United States influenced changes in Canadian local governments. The basic premise, in both countries, was the attempt to separate politics from administration, for the purpose of improving service delivery:

> Advocating more efficient administration and the removal of all corruption,reformers called for the exclusion of politics from local government. Decisionsshould be made on objective, rational grounds. Municipal administrators shouldbe free to provide services efficiently without political interference from theelected representatives.
>
> Tindal and Tindal, 1990, 4

With efficiency being the primary rationale for the reform movement, it was predictable that municipal governments would be compared with that of private business (Judd, 1984, 101) and reflect business values. The result was a reform movement that was elite in nature leading to decisions that benefitted the elites of society. The public interest was to be served through efficiently provided public services such as roads and sewers. This left little room for the discussion of social issues that may conflict with the goal of efficiency: "What municipal reformers wanted to re-establish, once and for all, the idea that the city was a marketplace, not a complex social entity" (Judd, 1984, 109). Studies of the origins of the reform movement show

that business and upper class elements normally encouraged reform while lower and working class groups usually opposed it (Judd, 1984, 108).

As a result of this movement, there was also a transfer of some responsibilities from elected council to appointed boards. This trend reflected the management values of the days which focussed on the merit of individuals. The move towards appointed boards was based on the misguided assumption that elected representatives were the only ones prone to corruption, given the infamous practices of 'machine politics'. It was also believed that the transfer of power to appointed boards would result in increased efficiency in service provision. These boards could administer the various functions that "communities needed to handle their growth - waterworks, transportation, parks, police, schools, libraries - more efficiently because they would not be subject to political pressures" (Hodge, 1991, 89). These boards tended to acquire significant powers with their responsibilities. Members of the boards were often selected from the elites in society, further reinforcing the class bias of the movement. The proliferation of appointed boards resulted in fragmented responsibilities and made the co-ordination of activities within the local government structure difficult.

Another element of the reform movement was 'boosterism'. This business movement was interested in making cities attractive places for investment. The emphasis was on efficiency of service provision, not representation of the public's interests: "Boosterism in this context reflects a combination of a sense of pride in, and pursuit of, local (business) prosperity, along with the kind of aesthetics associated with prize winning gardens, tree lined boulevards, monumental

public buildings, and attractions designed to appeal to tourists" (Higgins, 1986, 241). The emergence of 'boosterism' entrenched the growth or development mentality in operations of local government. Due to the significant interactions with businesses as a result of boosterism, local governments tended to adopt a more corporate approach to administration. This corporate approach to municipal administration has been labelled by Higgins (1986) as the 'administrative' view of local government. This approach sees local government as nothing more than administrative agencies of other levels of government:

> This public administrative viewpoint of local government is therefore analogousto the corporate world where large companies have head offices in which all important decisions are made, and local branches are for the purpose of administrative ease.
>
> Higgins, 1986, 15

This perspective views the structure and organization of municipal 'corporations' as similar in nature to private business. The adoption of business structures was thought to limit the politics in local governments. This approach fails to recognize that 'politics' is always present when decisions are made which will benefit one group interest at the expense of another. Nevertheless, the goal of both the reform movement and boosterism was to limit the 'politics' within local government and improve efficiency of service provision.

Scientific management was the next major movement to influence local government. The scientific management movement dominated from 1915 to 1940 in Canada, though elements of it still persist in government decision making today. It was during this time period that science gained greater prominence and legitimacy in wider society. During the 1920s and 1930s, the prevailing attitude was that science and engineering held the key to solving most modern

problems. The purpose of applying scientific principles to local government was to remove the political elements from the system and increase the efficiency of administration of programs and policies. The proponents of scientific management saw few barriers for this to improve the overall workings of government:

> In the atmosphere provided by scientific management, a mechanistic concept of public administration came to prevail widely and in important circles. Administrationwas separated severely from the legislative body, toward which its spokesmen frequently manifested not only impatience but also profound distrust.
>
> Kettl, 1993, 410

Local government was seen as a natural forum for the adoption of the technical approach of scientific management for many of the responsibilities of local government were deemed to be non-political or 'housekeeping' tasks: "No one argues that pot holes in city streets should not be filled or garbage should not be collected" (Higgins, 1977, 194). The goal of scientific management was to implement policies in a rational and efficient manner, again encouraging the elite bias. This goal was thought to be easily accomplished because many local government tasks, such as planning, were viewed as non-political.

The non-political tradition of the reform era of local government became increasingly unacceptable in the post war period (Tindal and Tindal, 1990, 4). There was the realization that many of the services provided by local governments did actually fall within the realm of 'the political', because they affected the quality of life of citizens:

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> But in denying any political role for local government, the reformers were misguidedand harmful. Even if they perceived local governments very narrowly as only concerned with service delivery, it is still necessary to decide 'what services to deliver, in whatquantities, and where, and such decisions cannot be made without some kind of political process.
>
> Tindal and Tindal, 1990, 4

It was also during this time period that attentive members of the public began to argue that their views and concerns were at least as important as the advice and recommendations that the municipal council might receive from their technical experts. The 'best' decision was not pure and abstract, insulated from politics, but was a political decision based on a consideration of the views and concerns of the citizens involved (Tindal and Tindal, 1990, 4). What resulted was a recognition that municipal governments are not simply administrative arms of provincial governments, but are political institutions in their own right.

Post World War II was a significant time for changing perspectives regarding the role of local government. It was during this period that other theoretical approaches were gaining attention and undermining the scientific management approach, which had failed in its mission to remove politics from governmental decision making processes. Behaviouralism emerged in response to scientific management and shifted the focus from institutions to individuals. This shift reflected

the changing view toward the individual: "Politics affected structure, and the nature of structure affected the behaviour of people within public complex organizations" (Pross, 1976, 9). With behaviouralism came the recognition of the potential influence individuals have within government structure and process.

The shift toward incorporating the individual into local government processes did not mean the extinguishment of the boosterism mentality. Boosterism and development continued to be the primary focus of local governments. What had begun to change, during the 1970s, was the individual's role in the development process. This movement was referred to as the new reform movement. Citizens' groups were mobilizing against developers, and were beginning to win their battles to protect neighbourhoods and green space (Sancton, 1991, 473). The 'new urban reformers' were responsible for introducing the idea that individual and citizens groups should be encouraged and allowed to participate more actively in civic affairs. Student organizations played an important role in this movement. One example of such a movement was Montreal's Milton Park Citizen's Committee, a student driven protest group, that fought a proposed development in the Milton Park area. Such groups helped alter the style of the municipal political process so that "sensitivity to neighbourhood concerns became an a vowed objective of municipal managers and engineers" (Sancton, 1991, 473). The focus of the local governments had shifted somewhat from efficiency of service to a growing recognition of democratic concerns. These changes were also reflected in institutional structures of municipal governments.

Structures of Local Government

One factor which influenced the nature of participation is an individual's ability to influence government decision making. The ability to gain access to local government is partially dictated by the structural organization which either facilitates or represses public involvement in decision making. Political structures are not value free, they are policies themselves (Trounstine and Christensen, 1982, 43). There are a variety of avenues of access for citizens within local government. Traditional points of access include the mayor, the councillors or the bureaucrats. Weekly council meetings provide another opportunity for citizens to interact with representatives of local government. In the last five years, the Internet has also opened another avenue of citizen communication to local officials through such forums as electronic mail, homepage links or the recently developing FreeNets and CommunityNets. These advances in technology provide alternatives to the traditional avenues of public access to government decision making. It should be noted, however, that not all groups in society uniformly take advantage of these opportunities.

There are a variety of basic structures for municipal governments. Many of Canada's smaller or medium sized communities have a Council - Chief Administrative Officer (or council - city manager) structure of organization for local government. This model of municipal government was developed as a result of the American municipal reform movement. The institutional structures "favoured by the reformers reflected the values of economy and efficiency rather than the values of participation and pluralism and representative democracy" (Judge, Stoker and Wolman, 1995, 145, 148). The Council - Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) organization was patterned after business corporations for the purpose of instilling 'neutrality' into local

government. By adopting a business model, it was hoped that local governments would not fall prey to the corrupt political machines that had been prevalent in American municipal government at the turn of the century. At the same time, however, local governments were also embracing the elite tendencies of the reform movement.

The CAO model attempts to maximize policy decisions made by council to leave the administrative tasks to the employees of the local government. The basis of the council-manager system is that the council should function like a board of directors of a corporation in that it hires a chief executive officer to administer the municipality while the board provides policy directives. The sole administrative power to be held by council is the hiring and firing of the city manager (Higgins, 1986, 151). The CAO acts as a liaison between the city council and the various departments. All lines of communication involving council and all department bureaucrats are designed to flow through the city manager's office for the purpose of achieving neutrality and efficiency (Higgins, 1986, 152). This structure also strengthens the city manager's control over information flow which may result in the isolation of city councillors from pertinent information. The American model of the CAO has been modified to suit the Canadian context. In Canada, there is less of a degree of isolation of council from the bureaucracy. Department heads do deal directly with council rather than only indirectly through the city manager (Higgins, 1986, 152). In Canada, the city manager is responsible for most areas of administration, but there are still some special purpose bodies and some administrative officials who report directly to council. One benefit of this structure is that the city manager is not as constrained by the 'politics' of the local government and instead can concentrate on long term policy choices.

This particular municipal structure has been criticized because it serves to minimize community involvement in decision making due to its focus on efficiency. According to Higgins (1977), the CAO structure of municipal government "tends to depoliticize civic affairs and thus probably tends to make city politics less stimulating and less interesting to many people than provincial or federal politics" (Higgins, 1977, 194). This may be a result of the basic premise of the model: that politics can be separated from administration.

Public Committees - Special Purpose Bodies

Another structural element of local government that has an impact on the level of public participation are special purpose bodies. Special purpose bodies can be described as 'quasi - autonomous' local authorities that are created for quite narrow and specific purposes and that usually exist and function on a permanent basis (Higgins, 1986, 142). Public utility commissions, school boards and planning boards are all examples of such bodies. These bodies have some autonomy from local government, meaning that they are not under direct municipal control. Instead the body is governed by a board consisting of "people who are either elected by the general electorate or appointed by various governments or other organizations" (Richmond and Seigel, 1991, 11). Special purpose bodies provide another avenue for public participation. The board structure allows for a presence of outside expertise or for the representation of a number of groups or interests (Richmond and Seigel, 1994, 61). There are significant differences in the amount of authority that each special purpose body possesses. Responsibilities are delegated by the local government to the special purpose bodies. The fragmentation of responsibility within the municipal government structure may result in the citizenry being

confused about what body is responsible for what duty. This confusing structure may discourage public involvement resulting in the local administration being less aware and responsive to the demands of the public.

A planning advisory committee is one of the more common special purpose bodies and one avenue for public participation in the planning process. More and more government agencies are faced with the issue of 'public participation' in planning and are turning to such bodies as a vehicle for more public involvement. There have been few formal studies surveying the roles of planning advisory committees. One study, a background paper prepared by John Bousfield Association (1977) for the Ontario Planning Act Review Committee, investigated the implications of such committees. This report identified four major advantages of planning committees with particular consideration for their impact on public involvement. The first advantage is that planning staff can work with the community to identify concerns and devise specific policies or plans (Cullingworth, 1984, 13). Secondly, planning advisory committees provide a means by which the public can contribute to the planning process, through selected spokespeople. Thirdly, it creates a "pressure group through which political lobbying can be carried out effectively" (Cullingworth, 1984, 13). Finally, such committees allow for sustained public involvement in the planning process from the onset of the project (Cullingworth, 1984, 13).

Nevertheless, there are negative implications associated with such committees. Advisory planning committees do not expand the opportunities for involvement of the general public, because participation in such groups is limited, and usually elite dominated. There is also the

concern that the participants do not represent the average member of the public as they are exposed to more information and therefore have a different planning perspective than the average resident (Cullingworth, 1984, 13). Citizens who are involved in the process have a greater understanding of the demands placed on the local councils and therefore may modify their initial goals. These citizens become a part of the process and can no longer be independent observers or participants. Moreover, there is always the possibility that the advice of the citizen advisory committee is ignored by the politicians and bureaucrats.

The conclusion reached by the Bousfield report is that planning advisory committees can play a useful role, "but it seems that the interests of other residents must be safeguarded by providing other more conventional ways of public involvement" (Cullingworth, 1984, 13). Planning advisory groups allow for limited, but educated, public involvement in planning. The advisory committee technique has many limitations and should, therefore, be considered only one among several avenues of public participation.

In recent years, some significant criticisms have emerged regarding the role of special purpose bodies. The view of municipal government has shifted from the era where they were seen as having no political power, with only administrative duties, to an era where citizens are demanding public accountability for policy decisions. This shift in attitude has resulted in frequent criticisms of special purpose bodies. The complaint regarding these arm's length bodies is that elected officials should not be able "to hide from accountability by placing important services at arm's length" (Richmond and Seigel, 1995, 11).

Conclusion

There are many theoretical debates concerning the role of public participation at the municipal government level. Theories about the nature of public participation differ depending on the lens applied when analyzing the merits of civic participation in a democracy. Two theories considered here are elite and participatory democracy. A historical review reveals the elite nature of public participation in political processes. An examination of Arnstein's ladder illustrates that the concept of public participation can encompass a wide variety of meanings and applications. Limitations and barriers to public involvement in decision making such as accountability, finances, institutional framework and public interest, illustrate that there are some practical and democratic problems with existing institutional mechanisms for including the public in policy processes. This historic overview notes that the institutions and procedures of local government have been developed primarily to provide services rather than to promote a more participatory democracy at the local level. Within the structure of municipal governments, special purpose bodies do provide a forum for public involvement, albeit a limited one.

Chapter Two

Public Participation in Planning

One major responsibility of local governments is urban planning. Increased recognition of citizen participation in decision making also represents an integral shift in the planning profession. This chapter explores the history of planning to determine the roots and the evolution of the profession. Such an overview assists in the understanding of how public involvement has become entrenched in the planning process. Public participation, specifically in transportation planning, may be more limited in such a technically dominated policy area than in other areas of local services which do not require specialized expertise and knowledge. The focus is on the nature of participatory processes and the types of individuals or groups who get involved. Finally an example of citizen involvement in a transportation dispute is provided to illustrate how members of the public can, and have, influenced policy decisions.

History of Planning

The concept of urban planning emerged in response to industrialization, urbanization and urban squalor. In the late 1800s and early 1900s cities in North America were suffering from a large influx of newcomers, prominently poor immigrants and people from rural areas. Housing, sanitation and transportation services in most cities at the time were inadequate to handle their new growth (Hodge, 1991, 72). Public health problems were rampant and required some planning

to attempt to curb disease. Prior to industrialization, private property was not used for communal interests. The public health problems of the time were so extensive that the private land ideology shifted as public controls were needed. Private property owners resisted the increasing public interest legislation, but "it could be politically unwise to do so (the fear of social unrest), it could be physically dangerous to do so (cholera was no respecter of social class), and it could be uneconomic to do so (the belief that zoning protects property values)" (Cullingworth, 1984, 36). Legislation was introduced to allow for the creation of sewage systems, that would assist in alleviating the health crisis of the time. Concerns about public health were one of many factors that contributed to the development of modern planning.

Patrick Geddes

Patrick Geddes, a planner, was an active participant in shaping the 20th century British town planning movement. The strongest motivating force behind this movement was a reaction against the problems posed by ugly, unhealthy 19th century industrial cities (Hoist, 1974, 30). Geddes was a firm supporter of the need for ecological sensitivity. More specifically, he felt that changes should proceeded by an understanding of the city in terms of "human and social needs, be consistent with the unique individuality of the particular city and finally be understood as an expression of the commonality of all cities" (Hoist, 1974, 32). Geddes was an important figure in early planning because he contributed the idea of "combining objective and subjective knowledge about a community: its cultural values, and lifestyles, as well as its demography, housing and street design" (Hoist, 1974, 36). He was a strong proponent of the idea that a city must be surveyed before it was planned and he also advocated that the survey's results " maps,

charts, photographs - be put on public display. This 'civic exhibition', as he called it, would help citizens and officials appreciate both the current problems and the future prosperity of planning for them" (Hodge, 1991, 81). Geddes was one of the first planners to recognize the social implications of planning and the role that the citizens had in the process.

Ebenezer Howard

In 1898, the Garden City movement emerged in Britain, spearheaded by Ebenezer Howard, a court reporter and inventor. This movement also arose from the problems associated with the industrial revolution and "the rise of cities, with their profound problems and tensions, contributed greatly to shattering residual faith that actions based on individual self interest when added together would equal the common good" (Baker, 1991, 96). A garden city is a town designed to accommodate both healthy living and industry. This movement signified a reaction against both congestion and sprawl. Each city was designed for a maximum population of 32,000, which was in direct response to the problems of overpopulation in industrial cities. Garden cities were envisioned in a way that would reduce the internal transportation to the practical minimum. Automobiles were to be used primarily for non-work trips between communities. All the land of the city would be owned co-operatively and all the residents would pay rent. This income would cover the cost of improvements, the primary debt service and finally, health care and pensions for all workers. The citizenry therefore had an active interest in the planning of their city as they also benefitted financially from how the city was planned and run. The Garden city movement was extremely important as it signified a shift in approach to planning. It succeeded in integrating a real mix of housing, workplaces and commerce. It allowed for, and encouraged, the interaction

between physical and social environments with the goal of improving the overall living conditions of the citizenry.

This planning movement was also significant for the development of Canadian planning. Thomas Adams was associated with building Letchworth, a garden city north of London, England. A decade after his experience with Letchworth, Adams came to Canada as the Town Planning Advisor to the Canadian Commission of Conservation. Adams argued for "a holistic model with strong government presence to ensure the well being of the entire community" (McAllister, 1995, 272). Although Adams did not plan "any Garden Cities in Canada, undoubtedly his involvement with this early and important planning concept influenced his approach to the many dozens of Canadian communities that sought his advice" (Hodge, 1991, 52).

The Howard and Geddes movements are important to explore because these men are identified as the fathers of modern planning. The origins of modern planning concepts are found in these movements. Some of the principles that developed were only put to very limited practice at the time. What these movements did do, however, was help identify the values and goals of planning, and the direction in which planning should evolve. These movements may have recognized the role that the public had to play in planning, but the decision making policies were still structured in a top-down approach and the final decision making was dominated by the planners and politicians.

Community Planning

The origins of community planning in Canada date as far back as the 1890s - 1930s, although the practice of community planning did not become popular until the 1960s (Hodge, 1991, 82, 348). Community planning is an evolution of the planning process which incorporates the social aspects of a community in decision making. Hodge (1991) describes community planning as "communities taking some halting steps to assume responsibility for their planning problems and to draw upon technical and professional assistance in this regard" (Hodge, 1991, 82). Hodge asserts that community planning is a "public activity that aims to improve the quality of daily life in our cities, towns, and regions" (Hodge, 1991, 71). The goal of this trend of planning is to combine the community's needs and interests with technical solutions. In community planning there is the concern for both rational physical organization and better community living (Hodge, 1991, 390).

Prior to 1960, community planning principles were mainly theoretical, with minimal application to the planning process. Politicians based their decisions on the advice of the expert technical planners. This practice of planning was challenged by the public during the 1960s mainly as a response to the rapid urban growth and development and the larger social protest culture . Citizens began to protest proposed projects, particularly redevelopment and expressway projects (Hodge, 1991, 348). Due to citizen protests, the politicians were forced to change the traditional way of planning to include the concerns of the citizenry. From this time period onward, planning

was accepted as a political activity. The planner, the politician, and the public all became important players, with varying degrees of input and decision making power.

Public Participation in Planning

Modern planning has expanded beyond the realm of decision making by technical experts who often failed to consider the social implications of their decision making. This lack of consideration for the 'human element' has become politically unacceptable: "Local planning strategies are expected to be much more inclusive, encapsulating social, health and environmental considerations" (McAllister, 1995, 274). Due to the significant social implications of planning, decision making processes should reflect the public's interests. It has been argued that citizens should have input into the planning of their city as it is their neighbourhoods and their quality of lives that are affected. Some analysts suggest that citizens should be the major decision makers in the "delineation of values, goals and objectives" (Gil and Lucchesi, 1979, 566; Wellman, 1974, 1) of the planning process. Justifications for participatory planning have also been made from the standpoints of responsiveness, equity and expediency:

> Responsiveness, in that the participation of other clienteles will result in decisions which will better serve their interests and be more consistent with their values. Equity, in that all those clienteles who will be significantly affected by a transportation decision are deemed to have a right to have a voice in that decision. Expediency, in that it may be necessary to involve new clienteles if politicians want to retain power and planners want to implement their plans.
>
> Wellman, 1974, 3

Lack of public participation, even in a technical field like transportation planning, has become politically untenable as members of the interested public now demand that their elected

representatives listen to, and respond to, their needs. The type of public involvement, however, does vary from city to city and issue to issue. Public participation can be useful for the democratic reasons, mentioned in chapter one, as well as in terms of administrative efficiency. If an initiative is to be effective, it is only sensible to include the end user in the policy development process to ensure that the service fulfils the initial goals of the policy and the needs of the users.

Planners have the ability to influence the participatory process within municipal government: "Despite the fact that planners have little influence on the structure of ownership and power in this society, they can influence the conditions that render citizens able (or unable) to participate, act, and organize effectively regarding issues that affect their lives" (Forester, 1989, 28). Planners play an integral role in determining whether the process is elite dominated, or if input from the entire population is encouraged. The advancement of public participation in planning may be misleading unless the type of people who become involved are examined. The expansion of participation in planning does not necessarily mean more representative involvement by the mass public. Instead, increased public involvement in planning may simply mean the legitimization of elite involvement.

Community Planning Association of Canada (CPAC)

An examination of the Community Planning Association of Canada (CPAC) illustrates the planning community's attempt to encourage public participation. CPAC was established in 1946 as a result of the 1944 Curtis Committee. The Curtis Committee strongly recommended

involving citizens in the planning of their own communities, because people would accept and support decisions if they were involved in the process (Hodge, 1992, 99). The reasoning behind the creation of CPAC does not seem to be the betterment of society through encouraging grass root democratic involvement of the citizenry. Moreover, the explanation of involving the public because "people would accept decisions more easily if they are involved" does not suggest a desire to share political authority in order to help members of the public shape their communities.

The stated purpose of CPAC was to promote planning and "foster public understanding of, and participation in, community planning in Canada" (Higgins, 1986, 289). CPAC encouraged the establishment of local planning departments and the hiring of planners. These actions do seem to promote the profession of planning in Canada but do not necessarily mean the involvement of the public in the planning process.

CPAC's approach to planning was that it was a process that should not be controlled by professionals and politicians. Instead the focus was placed on a community or public approach to planning communities where the role of professional planners was one of technical assistance (Higgins, 1986, 290). This organization focussed on a number of goals, the first being providing the public with information and education about planning. CPAC also advocated open planning processes with substantial public involvement. It supported pro-active planning by assisting groups that were interested in becoming involved with specific planning activities. This assistance may help organized groups in their efforts, but does not necessarily encourage the establishment of otherwise excluded groups from participating. The goal of CPAC to encourage 'community'

planning may be misleading since the elitist elements of the organization do not represent the concerns of the overall 'community'.

CPAC depended on the federal government for much of its funding, which eventually lead to the downfall of the organization due to cutbacks in assistance. The organization did not die without having a significant impact on planning in Canada. Most major municipalities now have public input and involvement in their planning decisions. This shift in the nature of planning in Canada can be partially attributed to the work of the Community Planning Association of Canada (Higgins, 1986, 290). While CPAC did not appear to be strongly committed to principles based on participatory democracy, it did recognize a role for the public in legitimizing planning decisions in areas including transportation planning.

Transportation Planning

When examining transportation, it is first necessary to explore jurisdictional responsibility of each level of government to determine the specific responsibilities of the municipal government. Transportation issues concern all three levels of government depending on the specific area. In Canada, the federal government has jurisdiction over travel by water, air and rail. The provincial level which, "because of its technical resources and median position between local and federal government, is the principal executor of urban transport policies" (Feldman, 1981, 200). Finally, the municipal level of government has the benefit of extensive local knowledge about the needs of the community and how to meet those needs through local roadway networks. The responsibility of municipal government for local roads is supported by the provincial government,

which provides funding for construction and maintenance (Kitchen, 1990, 107). The local nature of roadway planning means that transportation planning guidelines, thus participation requirements, have evolved differently across the country.

Transportation planning is a complex process which attempts to satisfy present demands on the transportation system as well as considering the future needs of the public. It has been developed in an attempt to alleviate the problems of movement in ever - growing population centres (Bruton, 1985, 51). Traditionally, the main goal of urban transportation planning has been to provide adequate services in a manner that is cost effective, safe and accessible to a broad spectrum of socio-economic groups in the urban area (Andrey, 1995, 145). In recent transportation planning policy makers are increasingly influenced by the need to mitigate the environmental impacts of urban transportation. Transportation planning can be defined as the process of:

1. Understanding the types of decisions that need to be made.
2. Assessing the opportunities and limitations of the future.
3. Identifying the short and long term consequences of alternative choices designed to take advantage of these opportunities or respond to these limitations.
4. Relating alternative decisions to the goals and objectives established for an area, agency or firm.
5. Presenting this information to decision makers in a readily understandable and useful form.

Meyer and Miller, 1984, 8

Transportation planning activities may be divided into three categories: transportation policy planning, systems planning and project planning. Transportation policy planning refers to strategic issues of urban development and form. Systems planning is concerned with the analysis of "multimodal networks from the perspective of location, operation, and regulation" (Andrey,

1995, 154). The principal goal is to provide efficient service to meet a known set of transportation needs and demands. Finally, the design, construction, and management of specific network components, such as roads or signals, is the focus of project planning (Andrey, 1995, 155). The transportation planning process is based on a range of assumptions and principles. Two of the most basic are: "that travel patterns are tangible, stable and predictable and that movement demands are directly related to the distribution, and intensity of land uses, which are capable of being accurately determined for some future date" (Bruton, 1985, 52).

The process of planning varies from institution to institution, but a general description of a planning process is as follows. The first step is the collection of information on the transportation system including relevant information on the policy, organizational and fiscal environment in which transportation planning takes place. The second step in the process is a diagnosis of the information collected. From that point, planners are able to identify, analyze and evaluate feasible policies or strategies. After a complete evaluation, scheduling and budgeting can begin. The project can then be developed and implemented. The final step is to monitor the operations of the project (Meyer and Miller, 1984, 10). This is a general framework for the process of transportation planning. This framework can be applied in establishing a more detailed process for specific projects. To be effective, "this process must reflect the needs and characteristics of the relevant decision making process" (Meyer and Miller, 1984, 11).

Within the rubric of planning, transportation planning has not always included the citizenry in decision making (Wellman, 1976, 3). One explanation for this is that transportation planning has

traditionally been dominated by engineers who were trained to understand the complex and technical issues involved. This situation is changing with the recognition that transportation is an integral element of all societies as it structures and shapes the way citizens interact:

> Transportation is an integral part of the functioning of any society. It exhibitsa very close relationship to the style of life, the range and location of productiveand leisure activities, and the goods and services which will be available forconsumption.
>
> Morlock, 1978, 31

A community's transportation structures affect the general organization of a society as well as the community's standard of living (Morlock, 1978, 44). Historically, settlements developed based on the location's proximity to a body of water for water was the primary means of transportation at that time. The importance of transportation opportunities has continued in modern day as transportation services offered in a community determines who can participate in what activities, where individuals live in regard to their place of employment, and vacation opportunities (Bruton, 1985, 13). Transportation is intimately linked with a community's economy and potential for growth since it is transportation that sets the limits and forms of growth. No location is sufficiently endowed with the ability to produce all the goods and services that consumers demand. Transportation systems are needed to transport goods at a feasible price within a reasonable time period. It is because of the influence of transportation on a community's quality of life that "governments act in various ways to ensure that the transportation service provided is not only adequate to meet immediate needs but will also help guide the development of that society along desirable lines in the future" (Morlock, 1978, 570). Transportation has a significant impact on the way that society is shaped and how it functions.

It can be argued that public participation in transportation planning might allow citizens to influence planning so that it is responsive to the community's interests and values.

Changing perceptions of public participation also have altered the responsibilities of transportation planning in local government. Traditionally, local governments have been seen as merely administrators of the policies of the provincial government. With the recognition of the political aspects of planning, municipal government responsibility has moved into policy formation and political decision making typically characteristic of the higher levels of government. Higgins (1977) explains how this change in roles has had an impact on transportation planning:

> ...maintenance and construction of city streets has been transformed from a matter of non-controversial decision making to a policy making matter intimately connected to public transportation. People in cities do not usually argue among themselves about the desirability of maintaining existing streets, but they can and do argue about public transportation, so street decisions have tended to become expanded into questions of transportation policy involving long term consequences for the nature of the city.
>
> Higgins, 1977, 198

Morlock (1978) suggests that transportation planning is a political process because it directly relates to the economics of the region and, therefore, the social considerations of the region. The importance of the effects of transportation systems on the overall society should be considered in the planning process as these decisions are political and long term in nature.

Citizen Participation in Transportation Planning

In the post World War II era, citizen participation has also become an element of transportation planning. Public involvement in transportation planning has historically been highlighted by the

media coverage of a few select protest groups such as Toronto's famous Stop Spadina Save Our Community Co-ordinating Committee (SSSOCCC), and the debates over Vancouver's Chinatown freeway and Halifax's Harbour Drive. The move towards more public involvement in this area was a result of a variety of factors. First, there was the general movement towards more citizen involvement in governmental decision making processes. Second, there were reasons specifically relating to transportation planning:

> Perhaps some considerations of equity are involved, but it must be recalled that the growth of "outside" public protest movements in the sixties had hindered the responsiveness of transportation to their traditional highway user and budget maker clienteles. Protests were delaying expressway construction. If facilities were eventually built, they were more expensive because of the delay or because public pressure had caused costly design modifications....Furthermore, having to deal with such protests was costly to officials in terms of their own time. It diverted their energy to continual contentious crisis situations rather than routine planing. The systematic incorporation of more extensive formalized participatory practices into the planning process was in response to such practices.
>
> Wellman, 1974, 4

Local governments were pressured into responding to public demands which resulted in routine planning being delayed. By incorporating the participatory process within the formal planning situation, public demands might stop being a crisis and become part of the routine planning situation (Wellman, 1974, 5). One result of this inclusion was to legitimize these protest groups and therefore participation in transportation planning. In some ways, planners also benefited from the inclusion of the public in the decision making process. The entrenchment of the public into the decision making process allowed for interested citizens to be educated about the issues regarding transportation planning: issues such as cost, safety and speed. By being made part of the formal planning process, "pressuring public might be less absolutist in their demands and more

amenable to negotiation with other interests" (Wellman, 1974, 5). The extent of public involvement and power devolution depends on the individual planning process. In the best possible situation information gathered from the public is incorporated into decision making or the citizens groups are given a share of the power of decision making. At the least, interested members of the public will receive information and become more educated about the issues and the way in which government operates. They can then become politically responsible members of society.

Stop Spadina Save Our City Co-ordinating Committee

One of the most well known cases of citizen participation in transportation planning is that of the "Stop Spadina Save Our City Co-ordinating Committee" (SSSOCCC). This case provides a concrete example of how public involvement, in the form of a protest group, initiated change in a transportation plan. An examination of the SSSOCCC also demonstrates the complexity of such a process and the dedication required to make public involvement successful.

The SSSOCCC was a special interest group that officially formed in 1969 to protest the proposed Spadina Expressway. The Spadina Expressway was part of a transportation plan that was made public in 1959 and adopted by the Metro Council in 1960. The Ontario Municipal Board (OMB) approved the construction of the Spadina Expressway in 1963 and construction began on the project even though there was rising public opposition. There was also conflict of support within the governmental agencies that were directly affected by the expressway. Toronto City Council opposed the construction of the project, whereas the Metropolitan Government of Toronto fully

supported the completion of the Spadina Expressway. The opposition to the Spadina Expressway was based on a number of concerns, such as:

> ...the aesthetics of the expressway, the fact that it would encourage more people to drive cars downtown thereby increasing congestion, the consequences of an expressway system on overall development of Toronto, and displacement of houses, businesses, and parkland to accommodate the expressway.
>
> Higgins, 1986, 284

The opposition to this project rose and the SSSOCCC was formed to co-ordinate this opposition. The SSSOCCC helped to co-ordinate 220 briefs that were submitted to Metro Council's transportation committee. The SSSOCCC also hired the eminent lawyer J.J. Robinette to argue the case against the expressway (Higgins, 1986, 285).

Construction on the expressway was stopped by Metro Council after an extensive publicity campaign headed by the SSSOCCC. After reviewing the project, Metro Council in 1971 reaffirmed its commitment with the support of the OMB. Just before the 1971 election, premier William Davis, announced to the Ontario legislature that the provincial government would not proceed to support the plan for the expressway. In effect, Cabinet overturned the OMB's decision (Higgins, 1986, 286). A three foot wide strip of land in the path of the expressway would be deeded over to the City of Toronto, who was firmly against the continuation of the project. By owning that land, the City of Toronto would have a virtual veto over further extension (Higgins, 1986, 286).

The example of the Spadina expressway illustrates the power of interest group involvement in the decision making process. Through their efforts, the SSSOCCC created sufficient controversy so that the Spadina expressway was re-evaluated as an important issue for the politicians. It was through the SSSOCCC that the opposition to this project was brought to light and the politicians responded to the desires of the interest group. It is important to note that the active members of the SSSOCCC were articulate members of the attentive public and not a general representation of the masses. This example also illustrates the potential length of such a project. The Spadina Expressway debate surfaced in the early 1960s and was not resolved until 1985 when Premier Davis officially signed the strip of land over to the city of Toronto. The SSSOCCC died out before the land was officially deeded over, but that was not before the group had made its impact on the overall decision to stop the construction.

Conclusion

A general overview of the evolution of the planning profession reveals that forms of public participation were evident in planning movements from the late 1800s onward. A discussion of these movements helps to identify the changing role that public participation has played throughout the development of planning. A brief overview of the history of transportation planning illustrates how public participation has moved from isolated protests against specific projects to incorporation of the public throughout the process. The latter may be the exception rather than the rule, for public involvement in transportation planning appears to be limited in the actual planning process. Finally, the case of the SSSOCCC provides an example of the

dedication required for individuals or groups to influence decision making in transportation planning.

Chapter Three

Methods

Information used in this thesis was drawn from a variety of sources which deal with the politics of participation and urban planning processes. While this thesis examines public participation in transportation planning, the methodology employed follows a political science rather than planning methodology. As such, the emphasis is more on political theory rather than on the methodology used to test theories in practice.

Approach

The research approach selected for this thesis includes a theoretical and historical analysis of secondary and primary literature, illustrated by examples taken from two cities. The analysis looks at two particular cases but does not constitute a full blown case study as it is defined in some disciplines. In those situations a case study is described as an inquiry that "investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real life context, whose boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident; and in which multiple sources of evidence are used" (Yin, 1989, 23). Robert Yin (1989) suggests that case studies allow an investigation to retain the holistic and meaningful characteristics to real life events (Yin, 1989, 14). By using this research method, a variety of sources of evidence can be introduced, which also increases the validity of

the information gathered. A case study approach allows for the investigation to include many factors such as institutional structures, the political climate and culture, and linkages between theory and the practice of public participation in planning.

It must be noted that a case study approach provides very little basis for scientific generalizations (Yin, 1989, 21), partially due to the manner in which the information is collected. The purpose of this account is not for the conclusions to be scientifically generalizable or necessarily transferable to other situations or settings. The comparison between Prince George and Sudbury will outline how the conclusions are generalizable to theoretical conceptions of participation. As well, a comparison of these two cities might provide some insight into how the public may be included into transportation planning and decision making in a way that could improve the decision making process. Such insights might also be relevant to other areas of local government decision making.

The first two chapters of this thesis have outlined the theoretical framework for this study and have provided a review of the relevant literature. Within these two chapters there have been explanations of participatory theory and how that relates to transportation planning. These theoretical sections are integral to the case study comparison as they assist in explaining and "defining the problems or issues to be studied and the development of the case study design" (Yin, 1989, 61). According to Yin (1989), the use of theory, in case studies, is not only an immense aid in defining the appropriate research design and data collection, but also becomes the main vehicle for generalizing the results of the case study (Yin, 1989, 40).

Subjects

The case study component of this thesis contains a comparison of the transportation planning processes in Prince George, British Columbia and Sudbury, Ontario within the last fifteen years. These two sites were selected for a variety of factors. Both are northern cities with similar geography and climate. Prince George has a population of 71,000 (1992) and a land base of 31,857 ha which is comparable in size to Sudbury with a population of 90,402 (1992) and a land base of 26,723] ha. Both cities are resource based: Prince George relies heavily on the forest industry and Sudbury on nickel and mining production. In such northern cities, transportation needs are distinctive in terms of transportation of industry materials as well as urban use.

Limitations

Limitations of this case study should be considered so that the weaknesses of the comparison are acknowledged and an attempt is made to minimize the effects of this on the overall comparison. One limitation of this case study is that it is a cross provincial comparison. Under Section 92 of the Constitution Act, local governments in Canada fall under the responsibility of the province. Local governments are 'creatures of the province' and only have powers that are given to them by the province through municipal acts or other provincial statutes (Diament and Pike, 1994, 2). It is because of this provincial assignment of powers, that municipalities have evolved differently across provinces: "While there are general similarities, a review of Canadian municipalities suggests that no two provinces deal with their municipalities in exactly the same way" (Diament and Pike, 1994, 6). With regards to public participation, provinces are autonomous in developing

specific guidelines, as there are no mandatory federal guidelines (Wellman, 1974, 8). This variable is important to acknowledge as this particular case study involves cross provincial comparisons. Provincial-municipal relations, as well as regulations and sources of revenue will vary. Nevertheless, it is expected that a strong comparison of the two cities' approaches to public participation can be made. A cross provincial comparison might provide additional insight into successful means of incorporating public participation into decision making. One province may be more successful than the other in accomplishing this goal. Care will be taken to outline the differences in municipal structures and the role of municipalities within each province.

Another limitation is that transportation planning is the responsibility of two different levels of government in these particular case studies. In Prince George, the municipal government is responsible for transportation planning. In Sudbury, it is the regional government of Sudbury, that has responsibility for transportation planning. Ray Hortness, the Co-ordinator of Traffic and Transportation Services in Sudbury, agrees that citizen participation decreases in higher levels of government, since members of the public are less likely to see the direct effect of their participation. Regional governments are still a form of local governance. One area where differences might be found between participation in a local government and a regional government is accessibility. In this particular case study the limitation of comparing a regional to a local level of government will be considered and avenues of participation and accessibility will assist in determining the limitations of the comparison.

A final limitation is that both Sudbury and Prince George are university towns which may affect levels of public participation. A university or college may have an impact on levels of participation because one determinant of citizen involvement is level of knowledge and information (Higgins, 1977, 194). Students and professors are more likely to be active in decision making activities. Laurentian University was built in Sudbury in 1960, so the potential for impact on the general public's knowledge levels are more significant than in Prince George where the University of Northern British Columbia was only officially opened in August of 1994. Such issues can be controlled for by examining the nature of participation. Any additional limitations of this case study will be identified within each chapter.

Data Collection

General information on transportation planning will be used insofar as it relates to public administration and public participation in the political process. Scholarly journals, books, and governmental and popular sources in the field of politics, political theory, planning and planning theory have been consulted. Political and planning theory are used as a vehicle for defining and explaining the issues and results of the case studies. These sources provide the theoretical basis necessary for this investigation as well as reviewing the dominant literature in the field. It should be noted that government documents, which are an integral aspect to this study, are written for a specific purpose and should be examined with this bias in mind. Government documents are used in conjunction with other written documents, as well as information gathered from interviews, to ensure that a wide variety of perspectives are included.

Several interviews have been conducted with relevant government officials. The interview process was selected as a way to gather a substantial amount of information in a short period of time, with the flexibility of clarifying details and inquiring about subsequent information that may not be available with other options of data collection, such as the questionnaire. The type of interviews that were arranged are referred to as 'in depth' interviews. In depth interviews are not necessarily formal, structured interviews, but rather more like conversations. The purpose of this type of interview allows for the "researcher to explore a few general topics to help uncover the participant's meaning perspective, but otherwise respects how the participant frames and structures the responses" (Marshall and Rossman, 1989, 82). The strengths of this procedure are the ability to collect a large amount of information quickly and include a number of subjects. The weaknesses of the interview process include the fact that interviewees may not be willing to share all the information or the information that they present to the interviewer may be biased. The interviewer may also be at fault as they might not ask appropriate questions due to a lack of expertise or technical knowledge. The interviewer may also not properly comprehend the information supplied by the interviewee (Marshall and Rossman, 1989, 82). Interviews will be conducted in conjunction with other avenues of information gathering to ensure well balanced, representative presentation of information.

Gary Champagne, the Director of Public Works for the City of Prince George, was interviewed because the Department of Public Works has historically held primary responsibility for transportation planning in Prince George. Presently, the responsibility for transportation planning in Prince George is shared between the Public Works Department and the Department of

Development Services. Peter Bloodoff, the Director of Development Services for the City of Prince George, provided a planner's (rather than engineer's) perspective on transportation planning. George Paul, the City Manager, discussed his general impressions about public participation within Prince George.

In Sudbury, Ray Hortness, the Co-ordinator of Traffic and Transportation Services was interviewed. Mr. Hortness was selected because in the Regional Municipality of Sudbury, there are two departments that are responsible for transportation planning: public works and planning. Mr. Hortness works closely with both departments as well as spending fifteen per cent of his work time with the City of Sudbury. Mr. Hortness, through the variety of his work experience, has the best overall view of the intricacies of transportation planning in Sudbury. Bob Falcioni, a roads and drainage engineer for the Regional Municipality of Sudbury, provides an engineering perspective from Sudbury. He also participated in the "Alternative Access to Laurentian University and South Shore of Ramsey Lake" environmental assessment process which is one case study detailed in the exploration of Sudbury's participatory process. Tin-Chee Wu, a senior planner for the Region, detailed the planning perspective in the Region.

Finally, Bill Lambert, the Director of Transit for the Greater Vancouver Regional District, was interviewed to provide an alternative perspective on citizen participation in transportation planning as well as explain some of the tactics that are used in Vancouver to encourage the public to get involved.

A copy of the general interview questions have been included as Appendix A. These questions provided a framework to structure the initial interviews. Subsequent interviews were conducted to clarify details or expand on specific information. All dates of communication are included in the bibliography.

Data Analysis

The results of the comparison between Prince George and Sudbury are contrasted to the theoretical components of this thesis as outlined in the first two chapters. The nature of participation will be established using Arnstein's Ladder of Citizen Participation. Arnstein's definitions of the various types of participation, are the classifications used to determine the level of public involvement in both Prince George and Sudbury.

Chapter two outlines the characteristics of the individuals who typically participate in decision making. In the analysis of the case studies, an attempt was made to determine if the stereotype of elite domination in participatory processes is applicable in Sudbury and Prince George. The determination of the socio-economic status of participants, is beyond the scope of this project. Whether or not the municipal governments in Sudbury and Prince George actively attempt to include a representative sampling of the general population, may be one way to successfully determine the types of people who become involved. Minimally, the goal is to determine if the same people or same groups of people are participating in many forms of government decision making.

There is a comparison of the two cities' participatory processes to establish the strengths and weaknesses of both. The specific benefits and limitations of participation as outlined in chapter two are compared to Prince George and Sudbury to determine if the theoretical concerns come to fruition in these settings.

The specific policies of the local governments are probed to clarify whether the political climate of the local governments are conducive to public participation. The amount of money and time committed to educating the public might also be an indicator of the specific government's commitment to meaningful citizen involvement. The structure of the local governments are explained to establish if there are multiple avenues of access for the citizenry to participate and whether there are opportunities for public involvement in relevant special purpose committees.

Chapter Four

Transportation Planning Processes in Sudbury, Ontario

An explanation of the transportation planning processes within a particular region, Sudbury, Ontario provides a concrete example of how various public interest groups participate in this area of local decision making. A brief history of Sudbury provides some background about the political culture of the city and the factors that affected its development. This case study illustrates the legislative requirements for public participation in a roadway project in Ontario. This examination suggests that while some progress towards increasing public participation has been made with the introduction of the provincial environmental assessment process, the process is flawed. Since only a few members of the public can make themselves heard, the process itself may serve the interests of only a narrow group of ratepayers.

Historical Overview

Sudbury, located in north-eastern Ontario, was formed in 1883 as a temporary town site of the Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR) and was transformed into a mining community by the turn of the century (Bray and Thomson, 1992, 165 - 166). Nickel and other minerals were key variables in the development of Sudbury from the onset. The American military was a determining factor in the evolution of Sudbury's nickel industry, particularly after World War II. The United States

wanted to encourage greater international competition for strategic minerals such as nickel (Bray and Thomson, 1992, 169). Due to its strategic mineral potential, "the Sudbury Basin received $789 million between 1950 and 1957 from the American government to diversify the nickel supply and other metals through stockpiling and special purchase agreements" (Bray and Thomson, 1992, 169). This financial support assisted in the development of the mining industry in Sudbury with spin off effects for the overall population. The existence of nickel and mining companies contributed to the lack of infrastructure in Sudbury during this time period. Provincial policies gave tax breaks to the struggling mining companies to encourage the industry. Mining companies were not required to pay municipal taxes; as a result, the city had a limited financial base to devote to the development of infrastructure. With the eventual financial support of the provincial government, however, infrastructure was developed slowly in the Sudbury region. The Sudbury-Parry Sound-Gravenhurst highway was built gradually between 1952 to 1956. This highway opened up northern Ontario to southern Ontario, which reduced the isolation of Sudbury as well as providing easier access to a large market.

Within the city itself, there were some significant changes that occurred in the late 1950s which altered the nature of development in the area. The City of Sudbury attempted to curtail the random growth that had been occurring, in favour of a more controlled and planned development. A city planner was hired in 1955 and the first Official Community Plan published in 1959 (Bray and Thomson, 1992, 171). These changes focussed and provided structure for the new goals of development in Sudbury.

Another structural change that was significant in the evolution of Sudbury was the shift from a local government structure to a wider, regional government. The local government of Sudbury was changed to the regional Municipality of Sudbury on January 1, 1973 as a result of direct provincial intervention. The purpose of this was to improve on the accused inefficiency of the previous municipal government structure. This was significant for Sudbury and area because "it provided the Sudbury Basin communities with an administrative framework for dealing with regional problems at the appropriate regional level" (Bray and Thomson, 1992, 171).

Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, the Sudbury area strengthened its role as a regional centre in northeastern Ontario. The development of roads and highways was integral to the evolution and growth of Sudbury as a northern centre. In 1970, Highway 144 was opened which linked Sudbury to Timmins. This highway was then extended to include Smooth Rock Falls and Cochrane via Highway 655. This allowed Sudbury to exert an influence in areas formerly dominated by North Bay (Bray and Thomson, 1992, 175).

The development of more substantial infrastructure, along with the development of the city as a northern centre, assisted in the region's ability to diversify its economy. The diversification in Sudbury's economy counterbalanced the drop in employment rates in the mining industry. Sudbury's mining based employment dropped from a historic high of 25,700 in 1971 to 17,700 by 1981 and by 1988 mining employment dropped by yet another 7,000 before stabilizing (Bray and Thomson, 1992, 174). By the late 1980s, the region had one of the most stable economies in the entire country due to strong political and planning leadership and financial support from the

provincial and federal levels of government (Bray and Thomson, 1992, 175). The diversification of the economy was also significant in terms of altering levels of participation. Historically, in single company towns, there is often minimal public participation because the company has all the decision making authority. With diversification of the economy, there is also the dispersion of decision making powers and the potential for more public involvement.

Transportation Planning

Transportation planning in Sudbury is the responsibility of the Regional Municipality of Sudbury, not the City of Sudbury. The two main departments involved in transportation planning are Public Works and Planning. Tin-Chee Wu, a senior planner with the Region, describes the relationship between the Engineering Department (Public Works) and Planning as a close one. According to Wu there is some degree of tension between the two departments because their perspectives are significantly different. Robert Falcioni, a roads and drainage engineer, agrees with Wu, and argues that the planning department has a tendency to plan long term whereas engineering's focus is more short term. Ray Hortness, the co-ordinator of traffic and transportation services, is a key participant in the transportation planning process. Hortness, and his department, are primarily responsible for the co-ordination of transportation planning. Hortness, who reports to Public Works, works closely with both departments, to develop both long and short range planning goals. For the planning department, Hortness attends planning meetings to represent transportation issues within planning, specifically such issues as where growth should be and the most appropriate avenues of 'people flow'. For public works, he is involved in environmental assessments, providing input into traffic design and the technical

aspects of transportation planning. Hortness also spends fifteen per cent of his time working for the City of Sudbury, dealing with any transportation issues that arise there.

When asked generally about the nature of public participation at the local and regional levels of government, Hortness suggested that citizen involvement is important at the local level of government because the public can recognize the overall impact or effect of the planning decisions on their community. When planning is undertaken at the regional level, the community's interest is limited as they cannot directly see the implications of decisions. Wu explains that planning at a regional level is more streamlined yet there is a greater base of expertise to call from, than would be found in a typical municipal government.

One concern that Hortness had with extensive public involvement in decision making is that citizens are usually only concerned with how the decision affects them personally and not how that decision will contribute to the overall community, both in the long and short term. This sentiment was echoed by Falcioni who believes that it would be beneficial to have a representative sampling of the overall population involved in decision making. Unfortunately the people that do get involved are often there to defend their own self interests. Falcioni argued that the "betterment of the community should not be slave to individual concerns" (Falcioni, 1996). There is also the consideration that supporters of projects have a tendency to participate at a lower level, if at all, where opponents participate more intensely. It is due to these factors that Falcioni believes that the process is, and should continue, to be driven by the engineers. This statement leads one to question whether engineers themselves are necessarily equipped to

determine what is best for the overall community. As is the case with the interested citizen, engineers are also unelected and have their own particular biases that they bring to the decision making process. These biases may or may not be in the best interests of all citizens.

The process of public participation differs significantly in Ontario and British Columbia as far as provincial legislative requirements. According to Ontario's Environmental Assessment Act (1990), the public that is affected by the decision must have the opportunity to respond to the proposition being put forth by the city or region. The onus is on the city or regional government to provide educational material to the public. This is accomplished through a variety of avenues including: newspaper advertisements, distribution of material to individual households, public forums and direct interaction between the government agency and the individual citizen or group. The costs for educating the public is the responsibility of the governmental agency involved. If the public and the government cannot come to a consensus or compromise regarding the issue, then the individual or interest group has the right to submit a complaint to the Minister of the Environment, who can then recommend further environmental study if deemed necessary.

As far as legislation at the local level is concerned, there have been two major transportation plans developed by the engineering department within the Regional Municipality of Sudbury, one in 1973-74 and another in 1990-91. There is a third transportation plan scheduled to be developed in 1998-99. These plans are incorporated into the Official Community Plan (OCP) to create an overarching document to provide vision for the growth of the region. The planning department at the Region is responsible for the development of the OCP, but the engineering

department prepares the transportation plan within the OCP. The OCP provides a vision statement for the city and outlines both the values and goals of the city and planning as well as specific land zonings. The public of Sudbury is involved in the development of this document. The Region informs the public of the revisioning of the OCP through advertisements in the newspaper, mailing lists, contact with key interest groups, direct mailing and public forums. Once the OCP is revised then it is put before the local council and local community associations for feedback. Any public objections to the document can be appealed to higher provincial authorities.

Alternative Access to Laurentian University and South Shore of Ramsey Lake

Recently, in Sudbury a transportation issue raised the concerns of various individuals and interest groups. The issue and the way in which it was dealt with provides an excellent example of the process of public participation that Sudbury follows in transportation planning. The issue concerned the proposed development of an alternative access to Laurentian University and South Shore of Ramsey Lake in the city of Sudbury. This project was identified as a result of the Regional Municipality of Sudbury's 'Sudbury Regional Transportation Study' which was completed in 1992. The purpose of the project was to determine the best way to provide a second access to Laurentian University and the South Shore of Ramsey Lake for emergency services as well as to alleviate congestion along Ramsey Lake Road and Paris Street (UMA Engineering, 1995, 1-2). This specific example was selected due to the amount of public involvement and the types of concerns that were raised by the citizens. Some concerns regarding

the project were technical in nature, but many complaints were directly regarding the process of public involvement.

The Laurentian University and South Shore project was classified as a Schedule C project which meant that it was required to procede through the class environmental assessment process. A class environmental assessment (class EA) process is a "planning process used for a group of projects which are relatively small in scale, recur frequently, have a generally predictable range of effects, and have relatively minor environmental significance" (Municipal Engineers Association, 1987, ix). A class EA can be "bumped up" to a full or individual EA which "refers to an individual environmental assessment which requires the submission of a formal document for an understanding to which the Act applies, and which is not exempt nor covered by Class EA approval" (Municipal Engineers Association, 1987, x). Schedule A projects do not fall under the EA process although there is still some public involvement. The Region is still obligated to inform property owners who may be affected by a particular project and in some cases local councillors organized a public forum regarding the project. Schedule B projects have a less rigorous public participation requirement to fulfil than Schedule C projects (Falcioni, 1996). After the project has been classified, the next step in the process was to select a suitable candidate to head up the project. The Region retained UMA Engineering to conduct the environmental assessment (EA). The requirements of the Environmental Assessment Act (EAA) were met by following the 'Municipal Engineers Association (MEA) Class Environmental Assessment (Class EA) for Municipal Road Projects'. The planning department at the Region does not get involved at all in EAs.

The Environmental study report for this project followed the procedures as outlined by 'Class Environmental Assessment for Municipal Road Projects' document. In this document there are three mandatory points of public contact:

i) an initial notice which briefly outlines study objectives and invites public comment
ii) a forum to permit review of alternative design concepts
iii) a notice of completion of the Environmental Study Report including viewing locations and the rights of citizens to request that the project be bumped up to an Individual EA.

UMA Engineering, 1995, Appendix E

UMA Engineering and the Region followed the public participation requirements for a Schedule C as outlined by the EA Act and the Class Environmental Assessment for Municipal Roads Project. The public was informed at the very beginning of the project, through advertisements in the local newspaper, that the project was commencing. The advertisements provided the contact names and numbers at the Region for any members of the public who had concerns or questions. The EA requirements state that a forum must be provided by the Regional Municipality of Sudbury so that the public and staff of affected agencies could have the opportunity to share ideas and concerns. There was a public information session held and much correspondence between interested citizens and UMA Engineering. The forums for public information and consultation will be explained to explore the extent and type of public involvement.

A/ Public Information Meetings

i)Public Information Centre

The impact assessment and preliminary evaluation of the alternative solutions were presented to the general public and interested review agencies at the Public Information Centre (PIC) meeting on February 28, 1994, from 1:00 to 8:00pm. Falcioni stated that the public was welcome to suggest alternative routes not considered by UMA Engineering in the initial presentation.

All individuals and agencies who had expressed an interest in being involved in the study received notices by mail. Notice of the Public Information Centre meeting was also placed in the Sudbury Star on two separate days. Staff from the Regional Municipality of Sudbury Engineering Department and UMA Engineering made presentations and were on hand to answer questions and discuss the study.

The information presented at the public forum included: a summary matrix of the evaluation and assessment, a description of the Class EA process, including a flow chart; a statement of purpose of the project; and descriptions of the alternative solutions. A map illustrating conceptual alternative access route alignments was also presented.

The public meeting was attended by a total of 120 people: nine representing review agencies; eight Laurentian University staff; one elected official and 102 members of the general public. All

attendees were provided with questionnaires and additional information was mailed to individuals upon request.

There were a variety of comments and suggestions by the public during and after the public meetings. In addition to distributing the questionnaires at the public meetings, blank copies of the questionnaire were also circulated by individuals to their neighbours and also by South Side Ratepayers Association. A total of 116 questionnaires were completed and returned to UMA Engineering (UMA Engineering, 1995, 4-4). Many comments were simply in support or opposition for certain alternatives and there appeared to be no general consensus as to what the preferred alternative should be.

ii) Public Meeting at Laurentian University

A forum was also held at Laurentian University to provide interested individuals with project information. The preliminary impact assessment and evaluation of alternative solutions were presented at the March 9, 1994 meeting. Members of Laurentian University's transportation task force, a representative of the Region's engineering staff and UMA staff made presentations and answered questions. Approximately twenty-five people attended this information session. Many in attendance had also attended the PIC on February 28 (UMA Engineering, 1995, 4-5) . Questionnaires were provided to all in attendance.

iii) South Side Ratepayers Association Meeting

A representative of the Region's engineering staff was invited to address the South Side Ratepayers Association meeting on March 22, 1994. The Region explained the purpose of the study and the procedure that the Region, through UMA Engineering, had to follow to uphold the principles of the Environmental Assessment Act. The Ratepayers Association independently distributed the questionnaires to those that attended the meeting (UMA Engineering, 1995, 4-6).

B/The Process

There were three major phases of this study. Phase one involved defining the problem and phase two generating proposed solutions. In Phase two there were six alternative options considered, including the option of no construction at all. Evaluation criteria were developed to weigh the features of each alternative. These criteria included consideration of the impact on: traffic service, social/cultural environment, natural environment, land use and development and cost. After an impact assessment and evaluation was completed and public sessions held, a preferred solution was selected. The initial plan for the preferred alternative was modified as a result of concerns expressed by individuals and the Region's planning department. The Environmental Study Report was published on November 14, 1994 and placed on the public record for review for 30 days (UMA Engineering, 1995, 3) . The public was notified of the completion of the report through a newspaper ad and mailings from the project's mailing list. Finally, in phase three the design concepts for executing the project were selected (UMA Engineering, 1995, 2-1).

If concerns regarding the project were not resolved in discussion with the Region, a person may request that the Ministry of Environment and Energy 'bump up' the project from a class EA to an individual environmental assessment, during the 30 day review period (UMA Engineering, 1995, 1-2). The Minister has the final decision as to whether a 'bump up' is necessary. According to Falcioni, there has only been a few 'bump ups' since the advent of the legislation. The cases that were bumped up were primarily done so as a result of procedural irregularities, not environmental considerations. Falcioni explains that most environmental concerns can be mitigated within the process itself.

There were a number of parties that requested a 'bump up' of the project to an individual environmental assessment. Due to the number of complaints, the Environmental Study was withdrawn by UMA Engineering, to try and reconcile some of the public's concerns. The concerns were all addressed by UMA Engineering through written correspondence which was documented in the Revised Environmental Study Report, the second version of the document that was published and submitted to the public for an additional 30 day review. If an individual or group had request a 'bump up' with the first environmental report, that request was not considered in the second report. The complainants were informed by the Minister of Environment that they were required to request a second 'bump up', if they still had concerns. A summary of issues raised during requests for 'bump up' and the response or action taken has been included as Appendix B. Some of the concerns raised by citizens and groups regarding the process and the level of public participation will be explored to identify what the Sudbury public saw as the downfalls of this particular process.

C/ Public Response

The members of the Executive Committee of the South Bay/Bethel Lake Neighbourhood Association (which represents 80 households in a very prestigious area near Laurentian University) requested a 'bump up' to a full and thorough Environmental Assessment due to their dissatisfaction with opportunities for public involvement. This neighbourhood association requested more "meaningful participation in the study by residents in the area prior to approval of the report". The South Bay/Bethel Neighbourhood Association's concerns regarding the public involvement process were that the methods used by UMA Engineering were "sorely ineffective if empowerment and community development solutions are the desired goals of the exercise". In a letter sent by the neighbourhood association to UMA Engineering, the association executive states:

> While the consultant is correct in stating that the "open house" public participationvehicle is an unintimidating method, we feel that it should have been combined witha presentation of the general study methods, findings, analysis and decision criteria.None of the "open house" participants had a chance to hear all the facts presented tothem, rather they were able to examine bits and pieces of the study material and engagein single issue discussions with study staff about personal concerns. They had littlechance to hear the views or concerns of others or to digest the full logic of the studyfindings. Several "Town Hall" presentations and public discussions, and several focus groups with cross-sections of road users and residents would have balancedthe study's expert centred approach.
>
> UMA Engineering, 1995, Appendix F

The South Bay/Bethel Neighbourhood Association also had reservations about the proposed secondary access due to the fact that 'four-laning' of roads and secondary access was discouraged by the City's Ramsey Lake Community Improvement Plan (1992) due to the potential

environmental impacts. The Ramsey Lake Community Improvement Plan was prepared by the Regional Planning Department after extensive public involvement. The South Bay/Bethel Neighbourhood Association claims that the UMA proposals disregarded the environmental information collected by the Ramsey Lake Community Plan and based their decisions solely on engineering considerations (UMA Engineering, 1995, Appendix F).

Another letter of complaint was submitted to Bud Wildman, the Minister of Environment and Energy at the time of the project. One concern outlined in this particular letter (individual names were removed from the document for the purpose of confidentiality) was the methodology used by UMA Engineering and the Region of Sudbury to solicit and present support for the project. The author of the letter argues that while class EAs and environmental study reviews are becoming increasingly common, a majority of the population is still not familiar with them or the long and complex processes involved. Of those who are familiar with the process, there are fewer still who are comfortable participating in the environmental review process. The author was concerned that the Class EA process rested in the use of the written word for collecting information and data. The emphasis placed on the use of the written word for informing the public poses a literacy barrier thereby preventing a substantial portion of the population from participating in the environmental review process. The author states that 30% of the population is functionally illiterate and raises the question "How does the EA process accommodate members of society that cannot read or write well enough to participate in this process?". The author also questions why the public meeting wasn't advertised on the radio, since there is a significant segment of society that does not read the newspaper. The author brought forth that concern that

the report was not available in French which excluded the francophone population in the Sudbury Region (UMA Engineering, 1995, Appendix F).

The manner in which the public data was collected during the public information sessions was also distressing for the author. The author explains that during the public input sessions, the public was invited to complete a brief questionnaire. This questionnaire was structured so that supporters of the project had front page visibility yet those who had negative comments on the project had to turn the page and write them on the back. This physical separation of the 'pros' and the 'cons' for the project is subject to manipulation at subsequent stages of the process. It was also troubling for the author that many of the names of those people who did offer criticism of the project were prevented from appearing in the final report presented for public viewing. Those individuals who offered positive feedback had their names included in the report. The author felt that it should be stated clearly in the report why the deletion of public names was necessary as part of an open and public environmental review and that there should be a consistent policy for both positive and negative feedback from the public (UMA Engineering, 1995, Appendix F).

Another concern was with the involvement of a MPP and a provincial minister in the process. Shelly Martel, MPP for Nickel Belt and then minister for Northern Development and Mines along with Sharon Murdock, MPP for Sudbury attended one of the public information meetings. Both MPPs completed the questionnaire. Their written submissions stated that they did not have any objections with the proposed project. The author of the letter argued that MPPS should have to

stay at arms length of a Class EA in order not to influence or bias the outcome (UMA Engineering, 1995, Appendix F).

There were two further comments documented regarding public involvement in the process. One person noted on a questionnaire that "every time you have a meeting, we have to fill out a form to stay on the mailing list. It seems like the process is designed to include only the most dedicated public input and decrease the level of objections...". Finally, there was one letter submitted that argued that the 'open house' did not devolve power to the individuals, but kept power in the hands of the engineering firm and the region. This criticism was based on the observation that there was not a coherent presentation summarizing all the elements of decision making. The proposed alternatives were presented to the public without an explanation of the criteria by which those decisions were made. Citizens' comments were not documented and there was no opportunity for citizens to share and discuss their concerns about the project (UMA Engineering, 1995, Appendix E). A summary of UMA's responses to the complaints are addressed in Appendix B.

According to Hortness, the process of public participation under the Environmental Assessment Act (EAA) of Ontario has encouraged more active public involvement. Furthermore, he noted that even before the EA, property owners were always notified of projects. Nevertheless, the EA process does not always lead to a better outcome. Many people who do get involved do not understand all the issues surrounding the project. For example, the public may be protesting against a road being planned to pass through a specific green space, without realizing that a road

is absolutely necessary for a broader public purpose and there are no alternative routes. This particular situation may be particularly frustrating for planners and engineers who have already exhausted all the possible alternatives. On the other hand, the requirement for public involvement does force the government body to be more responsible for its decision making processes in a variety of ways. Hortness asserts that this is particularly significant for transportation planning for many transportation departments have been negligent in educating the public. The government body is required to educate the public, who in turn, educates the transportation planners by forcing the government to consider all the concerns and alternatives that the public presents. The public participation requirements of the EAA do add additional expenses to the decision making process, which may be substantial depending on the public interest in the particular issue.

Falcioni asserts that the costs for putting a project through the EA process are very high, ranging from around one hundred thousand dollars to two hundred thousand dollars. The costs of the 'Laurentian University and South Shore of Ramsey Lake' EA process was approximately one hundred and twenty five thousand dollars (Falcioni, 1996). The financial requirements for public participation must be weighed in the context of the overall costs for the project. The intrinsic value of public involvement is also a consideration. The costs for the Laurentian University project supports the general concern that Hortness has about involving the public in decision making. Falcioni believes that these sums of money are quite out of proportion considering that the EA process is structured in a way to satisfy a very few active members of the public and does not necessarily serve the interests of the broader general public. Falcioni says that

the EA process also adds an additional one to two years on the front end of the project. He agrees, however, that the process has made the region more sensitive to the needs of the public. Falcioni believes that the provincial government might not be so stringent in applying the process to future projects when the costs and the time commitment involved are fully realized. For him, money is always the 'bottom line' and he is concerned that smaller municipalities might not have the resources to complete projects, if extensive public participation is required.

Falcioni suggests one way in which to remedy this situation is to have more projects, mainly road widenings or maintenance, fall under the classification of schedule A. Any new roads should still be required to uphold the requirements of the class EA process. Falcioni believes that such changes in the requirements for public participation are necessary. Presently, the EA process is self- regulating. The engineering department decides the classification of the project. The characteristics and classifications for schedule A, B, C are outlined in the legislation but there are some elements of the definitions that are open to interpretation and, therefore, manipulation. The classifications could potentially be manipulated so that a project does not fall under schedule C in order for the Region to bypass the requirements of public participation. The level of participation of the general public is not a legislated right, but instead determined by the engineers though the classification of the project.

Maley Drive Extension

A similar public participation process was followed by Marshall Macklin Monaghan consultants for the Maley Drive extension in 1995. This project proposed reconstructing the existing segment

of Maley Drive and extending it west from its terminus at Barry Downe Road to Lasalle Boulevard, for the purpose of creating a northern bypass around the developed area in the City of Sudbury.

This project was partially initiated by a group of ratepayers which had concerns with respect to the environmental and social impacts of large trucks on Lasalle Boulevard and other streets in the region. Notification of the study was provided to all relevant agencies and property owners in the study corridor. A public information meeting was held on June 27, 1994 to obtain public input on the project. Most of the comments favoured the Maley Drive extension, and there were no documented complaints about the process of public involvement. According to Falcioni, the Maley Drive Extension project is more typical than the Laurentian University project regarding the usual amount of public involvement.

Conclusion

A number of factors have influenced the development of the city of Sudbury, including the fact that it historically was a one-company town. Nickel mining and production has been integral to the growth of the area with implications for the present municipal political climate. Diversity of the region's economy has shifted Sudbury from a city where the people who controlled the mining industry also held extensive power in municipal decision making, to a modern city which has typical distribution of power within the city.

The presence of Laurentian University seems to have a degree of influence on public involvement in the decision making processes of the local and regional government. High levels of knowledge and education are characteristics of people who traditionally become involved in decision making. Tin-Chee Wu, a senior planner for the Region, argues that the faculty, the staff and the students of the University rarely get involved in the Region's decision making processes because there is no encouragement and recognition from the University for such activities. Wu suggests that individual professors who have a specific interest as citizens of the area do participate in decision making, but they are not participating as representatives of the University. The details of the Revised Environmental Study Report suggest a different perspective about the involvement of the University community. It was noted that eight members of the Laurentian University staff attended the first public information meeting and a second public information meeting was held specifically at Laurentian University where 25 members of the public attended. One of the major letters of complaint that requested a 'bump up' was submitted by the South Bay/Bethel Neighbourhood Association. This community association represents households in a very prestigious area near the University. Several of the residents of this area are professors. While faculty and staff may not be participating as official representatives of Laurentian, the university may indeed be indirectly contributing to the level of public participation in local decision making.

The alternative access to Laurentian University and South Shore of Ramsey Lake project was selected as a case study with the recognition that the amount of public participation is not typical of most transportation planning projects of the Region of Sudbury. Nevertheless, the case serves

as a useful example of the role the public can play in transportation planning. It also serves to highlight some of the flaws in the participatory process. The complaints from the public regarding the process of public involvement in transportation planning allowed further insight into the perceived weaknesses of the public participation requirements of the Environmental Assessment Act for schedule C projects. By examining the process of public participation in the Region of Sudbury some of the pitfalls for the legislated public participation were identified. The ability for the Region to determine the classification of the projects illustrates the Region's ability to manipulate the nature and degree of public participation. This is neither democratic nor an efficient use of time and resources. The point at which the majority of public participation took place was also significant. At the public information meetings, the impact assessments and preliminary evaluations of alternative solutions were presented to the public. This structure gave the public little opportunity to provide input into the primary values and goals of the project. To the regional government's credit, the public was initially informed about the project when it was initiated through advertisements in the newspapers. Regional representatives also said that they would be responsive to any public suggestion regarding alternative solutions. The public is given the opportunity to voice their opinions and the Regional Government does have to be responsive to the public in their requests for 'bump ups'. Public participation is possible, for the very interested, knowledgeable and those committed to following through to the end. The effectiveness of holding governments accountable to the public in this way is, however, weakened by the governors' ability to choose the classification of each project. It can still be argued, however, that the principle of public participation has been formally acknowledged through the

Environmental Assessment process. Such acknowledgement is an important first step toward developing more effective processes for public participation in planning.

Chapter Five

Transportation Planning Processes of Prince George, B.C.

An examination of public participation in terms of transportation planning processes of the City of Prince George provides a worthwhile comparison to Sudbury. The history of Prince George, similar to Sudbury, underscores the important role that transportation played in the economic development and political culture of the city. The perspectives of key city employees offer insights into the process of public involvement in decision making. Examples of ways in which the City of Prince George has tried to incorporate the public into decision making helps explain its mixed success in achieving effective public involvement.

Historical Overview

Prince George is located in the central interior of British Columbia, where the Nechako River joins the Fraser River. The City is the major service centre for the north and as such has been labelled as 'B.C.'s Northern Capital'. The City's image as the Northern Capital is partially as result of its location at the cross-section of two main highways, the north-south Highway 97 and the east-west Highway 16.

The forestry industry was critical to the development of Prince George. The first saw mill was opened by Fort George Lumber and Navigation in 1909. The purpose of this company was to provide transportation and building supplies (Runnals, 1946, 88). Population growth was slow until the 1950s when many people arrived from the prairies and Europe to work in the sawmills. The 1960s and 1970s were years of remarkable growth associated with modernization of the sawmill industry and construction of three pulpmills. Today, the city's economy is still based on the forest industry with fourteen sawmills, two single pulpmills and a twinned pulpmill, one of the largest in the world. The importance of the forestry industry for Prince George's economy has placed some specific demands on the road infrastructure. The roads in the area must be constructed to meet the needs of the forestry industry as well as typical urban use.

Road transportation has been important to Prince George since the era of fur trading. As a northern city, infrastructure was crucial for the city's growth and expansion. By 1919, the surrounding district was served by a system of settlers roads, approximately 500 miles in total. The highway between Prince George and Quesnel was completed in 1924 and the Fraser Canyon highway opened in 1926 which linked Prince George to Vancouver (Runnals, 1946, 166). Presently, there are 650km of roads in the City of Prince George. There are very high demands placed on these roads due to the climate and type of use.

Transportation Planning

The Prince George municipal government is the agency responsible for transportation planning. Within the local government structure, there are two main departments that are accountable for

transportation planning: Development Services and Public Works. Traditionally, Public Works, or the engineering department was the primary actor in transportation planning, but Development Services, or the planning department, is now much more involved in the overall process. Public Works and Development Services work very closely together on a number of issues. One problem with the responsibility of transportation planning being split between these two departments is that the planning that occurs is usually in response to crisis issues, not the development of long range planning principles and practices (Bloodoff, 1996). This is not unusual in the day-to-day policy world best defined as 'disjointed incrementalism', a term first coined by Charles Lindblom. The City of Prince George also works closely with the provincial government's Ministry of Highways. The relationship between the Province and the City is a close one, even though the approaches and the perspectives of these institutions are very different. The Province is concerned primarily with the safety and efficiency of the flow on roadways and highways. The City is also concerned about efficiency, but also wrestles with how roadways will assist businesses and improve access to the City (Bloodoff, 1996). The province has the final authority regarding highways, since highways fall under provincial jurisdiction. The Ministry of Highways works with the City to ensure that the City's concerns are being met. The Ministry of Highways rarely overrules the plans of local council.

To gain insight into the culture of planning within the local government of Prince George, Peter Bloodoff, the Director of Development Services for the City was interviewed. When asked generally about the role of planning, Bloodoff said that "planning is politics" and not just the application of technical expertise. His comments illustrate an acceptance that planning, even a

technical area like transportation planning, is more than just the application of scientific principles. Planning is not a science, but an art, with no clear answers or values. It is due to the political element of planning that politicians are ultimately responsible for decision making in this area (Bloodoff, 1996). Planners can provide advice and recommendations to council but to ensure that planners are kept outside the political realm, accountable politicians are ultimately responsible for decisions. The process of planning involves a combination of factors influencing the priorities in decision making. Bloodoff states that there are three primary influences in planning: technical issues, public good and the proponent or developer. He states that some believe that there is a fourth influence - politics. In Bloodoff's opinion, the City of Prince George has not been captured or influenced by the 'politics' of planning. He argues that Development Services makes their decisions based on their professional training, not the demands of the local council. Bloodoff also recognizes that there are variety of other factors which may play a role in the planning process. The economic state of the City and the Province, cycles within the community and/or department, and how planning cycles relate to the party in power in the Province are all factors which may influence the types of decisions that are made.

Bloodoff states that the formal mechanism for defining the public interest is through the Official Community Plan (OCP). An OCP was completed for the City in 1979 and again in 1993. There is a OCP Community Review scheduled for 1998. An OCP is an important document for the planning process as it is the visioning document for a city. It outlines the direction in which the public and the council want to see the City grow. Bloodoff agrees that the OCP cannot possibly accurately reflect the public good at all times since the definition of the public good is

constantly changing and evolving. The 1993 OCP document took a year and a half to develop due to the time spent dedicated to public consultation. According to George Paul, the City Manager for Prince George, the public that attended the OCP public meetings were those that had a general interest in the process. These participants were not necessarily a representative sampling of the general population.

The City of Prince George used established community associations throughout the city as a vehicle to reach the interested public and encourage them to become involved in the development of the OCP. The process for community involvement in the 1993 OCP was as follows:

> The City held a series of workshops with residents and representatives from volunteer groups in November 1991. The participants were asked to identify the city's positive and negative attributes, planning issues, and ways that the city might make the desired changes. In May 1992, the City organized several community forums. The staff presented the information, proposed land use maps and policies, and asked the residents for their views. In January 1993, the City met with other government agencies and held an open house. Throughout the process of updating the plan, the staff also met informally a number of times with City Council and other departments.
>
> OCP, 1993, 6

According to Bloodoff, the goal is to have no one show up for the official public participation venues that are hosted for the OCP because by that point everyone's interests have been consulted and their concerns considered. Bloodoff argues that public involvement is most successful at the beginning of the process. Once the public has been consulted and the OCP finalized, the document is then put before Council, which is responsible for its final approval. According to Bloodoff, Council rarely makes changes to the final version of the OCP.

Bloodoff is hesitant about supporting extensive public participation in decision making. He does not believe that the general population makes the best decisions because they are usually not concerned about future, long term goals of the City and have a tendency to be 'fickle' in their opinions on issues. Bloodoff argues that the local council for the City of Prince George does consider the long term implications of decisions and whether or not these decisions are best for the community at large. This type of attitude reflects the traditional paternalistic approach to planning whereby planners and engineers monopolize decision making, since the public is unable to see beyond their own self interests.

Typically there is very little community involvement in decision making unless the issue directly affects the public. Gary Champagne, the Director of Public Works, claims that the public does not get involved as long as they are satisfied with the decisions of City Hall. This is one possible explanation for the lack of public participation. The public could also be simply apathetic or unaware of the avenues by which to voice their concerns. Bloodoff's belief is that officials are elected so that the community does not have to be involved in every decision. Elected officials are the ones that have the final say in decision making for accountability purposes. Council can vote 'yes' even if all the citizens groups want the answer to be 'no'. Accountability is Bloodoff's major concern with the devolution of power to citizens groups.

Bloodoff's reluctance to encourage extensive public participation does not mean that limited public participation is not encouraged in the City. Public participation is an element of some

decision making for Prince George. Champagne argues that the City of Prince George has a very sincere approach to planning because it takes public suggestions to heart and really tries to be responsive to the public's requests. An example of this is that comment cards that rate the City's performance are included in utility bills twice a year to receive feedback from the mass population. Most of the public involvement, according to Champagne and supported by George Paul, City Manager, is through daily events not long range planning. There is active recruitment for public involvement depending on the situation. The City does work closely with Community Associations. These Associations presently have a tendency to be focussed on recreational issues but the City is trying to encourage the Community Associations to become more involved in the budgeting process and other areas of local government decision making. With the focus of Community Associations on recreational activities for their area, it is unlikely that they would be interested in transportation issues such as roads. Bloodoff states that the people who have a tendency to participate in Community Associations are the same people who get involved in many committees and associations, and aren't necessarily reflective of the general population. A representative from the Peden Hill Community Association praised the City for their responsiveness to their Association's recreational requests.

The City of Prince George has attempted to incorporate the public in decision making relating to transportation issues. Beginning in 1995 the City wanted to encourage public input in the determination of the priorities in the Capital Expenditure Program (CEP). The CEP prioritizes long term capital constructions and rehabilitation, of which transportation issues play a key part. In 1995, there were four meetings held at schools throughout the City both during the day and

at night, to accommodate as many of the public as possible (Champagne, Paul, 1996). The purpose and the location of the meetings were publicized in the newspaper and on the radio. The turnout over the four days only amounted to about thirty to forty people (Champagne, Paul, 1996). Champagne says that members of the public who did participate were the same people who usually get involved in local government's activities. Paul argues that the public just simply is not interested in getting involved unless they are directly affected. The City attempted to encourage more public involvement, through a different avenue, in 1996.

The City of Prince George had an open house for the staff of City Hall and the general public in April of 1996. The purpose of this open house was to share information with the public about each department's responsibilities and goals, as well as educating the public about the issues involved in each area. This open house is also beneficial for the staff at City Hall so that they are kept up to date and informed about the work of each department. Part of the purpose of the open house was to gather input into the CEP. The public turnout for the open house was disappointing, according to Paul. There was approximately fifty people who attended the meeting, about forty of which were members of the Blackburn Community Association. The representatives from the community association took this opportunity to lobby members of City Hall about a water issue that affects their area. The result of the lobbying was that the Blackburn project was moved up a year in the CEP. The open house was not successful in involving a more representative sampling of the overall population of the city.

Conclusion

There is limited public involvement in any decision making processes within the City of Prince George. Possible explanations may lie in the institutional framework, the political culture of the city and City Hall, the public's lack of interest, or the City of Prince George's lack of commitment to actively incorporating the public into decision making processes. There seem to be few successful formal avenues of public participation within transportation planning, in comparison to Sudbury. The legislative requirements for the two provinces are substantially different regarding public participation in transportation planning. Ontario's Environmental Assessment Act was of critical importance in shaping Sudbury's participation process. British Columbia's Environmental Assessment Act does not have the same role for transportation planning, at the moment, says Champagne. Prince George does have a variety of planning boards on which there is public representation, which contrasts with Sudbury where the only planning board is a committee of council. The City of Prince George staff is attempting to improve access for the public to involve them more substantially in decision making processes. The lack of public participation has significant implications for the future development of the city. It is difficult for a growing city, such as Prince George, to adapt effectively to changing values and new demands in a rapidly diversifying economy with no input from the public. More public involvement may be successfully accomplished if the City of Prince George attempts to diversify its approach to incorporating the public. If the city is sincere in its commitment to public participation in local decision making then it is necessary to utilize more proactive and creative approaches, since the traditional methods, such as open houses, have proven ineffective.

Chapter Six

Lessons Learned: Public Participation in Practice

There are some notable differences in the planning processes of Sudbury and Prince George. The differences serve to highlight the strengths and limitations of public participation in the transportation planning processes of the two cities. These differences may be categorized in terms of institutional structures, the distinct planning culture, the level of participation, and the provincial legislation governing the two cities. This chapter explores the processes and practices of transportation planning in Sudbury and Prince George and relates them to the theoretical conception of public participation, as outlined in chapter one. An examination of the weaknesses in the two systems lends itself to a series of prescriptions that may improve the effectiveness of public participation in local planning.

Institutional Structures

The first and most obvious difference between the two planning processes is at the level of government where planning occurs. In Prince George, the municipal or local government is responsible for transportation planning. In Sudbury, transportation planning is conducted at the regional level of government, which is one level higher than municipal government. This was thought to potentially have an impact on levels of participation. It was suggested that the farther

removed from the impact of the process, the less likely the public is to get involved. In Sudbury, the difference in the level of government responsible for planning did not seem to be an impediment to public participation. The alternative access to Laurentian University and the South Shore of Ramsey Lake project attracted public participation. The public that participated primarily consisted of those who were to be affected by the project. This is typical of most participatory processes, regardless of the level of planning.

Both Sudbury and Prince George possess Council-Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) models of municipal government. The structural limitations of this model were outlined in chapter one. The CAO model evolved from the American municipal reform movement and was patterned after business corporations. The goal was to maximizing service delivery, not encouraging public involvement. Democratic goals of public participation directly conflict with business goals of efficiency. Public participation is difficult to encourage within a structure that tends to minimize the importance of it.

Another movement that emerged from the American municipal reform movement was "boosterism". Boosterism, or the focus on attracting development to the city, is a dominant feature of both cities in the case studies. Prince George is trying to expand its service base to encourage its image as B.C.'s Northern Capital. Sudbury also faces the pressure of being the service capital of northern Ontario. Sudbury's focus, particularly in the 1980s, was on attracting business to diversify their economy is also an example of the boosterism mentality. Due to the significant interactions with businesses, as a result of boosterism, municipal governments tend to

adopt a corporate approach to administration. The notion that what is good for business, is good for the community still prevails. The boosterism mentality reinforces the above noted concern for efficiency, at the expense of public involvement.

Special purpose bodies, specifically planning advisory boards, can serve as important avenues of public participation. In Sudbury there is only one planning advisory board and it is a committee of council which means that there is no public representation on it. Prince George has a variety of planning boards, and/or boards related to transportation issues, where there is representation of the public and related agencies. These boards include: Advisory Planning Commission, Environmental Advisory Committee and the Traffic Safety Committee. As stated in Chapter One, planning advisory boards provide an useful, but limited forum for public participation, and should be used in conjunction with other avenues of public participation to reach a wider segment of the population.

The Culture of Planning

Within the structure of local governments there are two main departments that are key participants in transportation planning: engineering and planning. There is tension between planners and engineers resulting from the differences in training and perspective. Engineers tend to look to technical issues to solve problems whereas planners are usually more conceptual thinkers. There are also differences in the goals of the two professions. As Falcioni from the Region of Sudbury argued, engineers tend to consider the effects of the project for the next 12 - 15 years in the future whereas planners are concerned about the effects of planning 20 - 50 years

in the future. There is also tension between planning theory and planning practice: "....the system of planning reflects the ideologies of a governing elite, of which planners in practice are part, and serves their interests, rather than reflecting the aspirations and ideals which planners so frequently commit to paper for discussion" (Cullingworth, 1984, 36).

There is notable tension between the planning and engineering departments in both Prince George and Sudbury for the reasons stated above. This tension may be characteristic of local governments generally. John Curry (1995) found similar conflict in Vancouver's municipal government. One interviewee in Curry's research stated that tension between the planning and engineering departments is "such a part of City Hall, that no one thinks about it anymore" (Curry, 1995, 164). Transportation planning in both Sudbury and Prince George is dominated by the engineering department due to the technical nature of this type of planning. This is illustrated by the fact that the transportation plans of both cities are the responsibility of the engineering department. These plans are then incorporated into the Official Community Plans (OCP) to provide the 'visioning' document for the city. The rest of the OCPs are prepared by the planning departments. The fact that transportation planning still remains primarily a responsibility of the engineering department may have an impact on levels of participation. The vast majority of the general public has little or no knowledge about the specific technical details required for some transportation planning. Public participation in this area has not undermined the role of engineers in the planning process. They are still the primary agents responsible for making the technical decisions, but the public now has the opportunity to voice their concerns about the impacts of such decisions.

Levels of Participation

In Prince George, the level of participation in transportation planning seems to be very much non-participation as defined by Arnstein's ladder. This classification was determined because the primary motive behind the participatory processes is information sharing not devolution of decision making power. In Sudbury there is also information sharing between the Region and the general public. The public in Sudbury is encouraged to obtain and comment on the project due to the requirements of Ontario's Environmental Assessment Act. This level of participation may be misleading as the public does not have the opportunity to form the values or the basic tenets for the project. A proposed roadway, with various alternatives, is presented to the public for consideration, but the public is not involved in the initial making of the decisions on the alternatives. They are provided the opportunity to suggest alternative options, but this opportunity is not one that is openly encouraged by the Region's engineering department. With this procedure the public can be very easily led to support one alternative over another by making one option more feasible than the others. This process is hardly a sincere attempt to involve the public, rather it is a process whereby the work of the planners and engineers is simply supported by the unsuspecting public. In Sudbury one member of the public was infuriated that the decisions were substantively already made and the information given to the public was not a complete presentation of all the information. Sudbury, therefore, would also be classified in Arnstein's classification of non-participation.

Legislation

The process of the Environmental Assessment Act of Ontario does make the Regional Municipality of Sudbury somewhat more publicly accountable for their decisions as the governmental agency must address and account for all the public's concerns in the Environmental Study report. These concerns must be signed off by the Minister in charge of determining whether to 'bump up' the assessment from a class EA to a full EA. Falcioni's concerns about the expenses related to the process are significant. This complaint illustrates the dichotomy between efficiency and democracy. The concerns about costs illustrated the business attitude of local governments in their decision making.

In Sudbury, the main avenue of participation for transportation planning is through the requirements of the Environmental Assessment Act. The ability to manipulate the classifications of projects under the act is one example of how the nature of public participation is dictated by the municipal structure, whether that structure is a local or regional government. The Environmental Assessment Act is only as good as the Provincial government that administers it and the municipal governments that adhere to it. Both Peter Bloodoff and Gary Champagne, from the City of Prince George, assert that the British Columbia Environmental Assessment Act does not play a significant role in transportation planning, at this point.

Suggestions for Successful Public Participation

Desmond Connor, a consulting sociologist, wrote a resource book, *Constructive Citizen Participation,* for successful public participation in decision making. Connor firmly believes that

citizens play an integral role in decision making and has developed this manual to assist governments in their attempts to include the public in decision making. According to Connor, public involvement is important for a number of reasons. People resist change when they do not understand or agree with the goals, methods or timing of a proposed change (Connor, 1990, 1-11). By involving and educating the public, they become aware of the issues and the demands placed on the government. Involvement in planning is demanded by increasing numbers of citizens who want to experience the process of creation as well as its product. Often they have a substantial sense of ownership in their part of the environment; to ignore this is insulting (Connor, 1990, 1-5). There is difficulty in designing a successful public participation process because there is not one best way to design and manage such a program; it must reflect the specifics of the given situation (Connor, 1990, 1-18). Connor's *Constructive Citizen Participation* provides a variety of options for effective citizen participation.

For Connor, public participation is neither a single unitary act, such as a public hearing, nor a haphazard set of occurrences, but a planned process, responsive to the unforeseen but guided by a general concept (Connor, 1990, 1-3). Connor argues that for citizens to become successfully involved in decision making, they must find early and convenient opportunities to make positive contributions (Connor, 1990, 1-1). This sentiment was also argued by representatives in Prince George and Sudbury. Unfortunately, this is not always the time where the public is most interested in becoming involved. For Connor early involvement of the public is integral, since it illustrates the government's sincere commitment to public input. It is through early incorporation of the public and other key actors, that a mutual process of education occurs. Through this type

of participatory process, communication is encouraged between planners, politicians and the public, and a foundation of trust is established.

Connor, by recognizing and supporting the role of elected representatives and bureaucrats, also determines the balance of power between the citizenry and the politicians. A democratic manner of operation recognizes an open process to gather information, ideas, and preferences as directly as possible from citizens and to respond to this input; yet it also assumes a representative process of legislative democracy in which the political system functions by making final decisions on matters of public policy (Connor, 1990, 1-4). The responsibility for the technical aspects of the project remain with its professional staff; public participation does not remove that responsibility nor that of the elected representative under whom the project is carried out (Connor, 1990, 1-4). It is also the responsibility of elected officials to ensure that their decision making is not being guided by the vocal interests of a few, but instead consider the concerns of the vast public.

Superficial Public Participation

Through his examination of public participation, Connor also identifies what public participation is not. For him, public participation is not: selling a pre-determined solution by public relations techniques, planning behind closed doors when information can be shared, planners telling people what is best for them, public confrontations between 'people power' versus the bureaucracy, and by-passing elected representatives or impairing their freedom to exercise their decision making responsibilities (Connor, 1990, 1-1). Many of these elements have been present

in traditional planning processes and indeed some of these forms of 'non-participation' are apart of the planning processes of Sudbury and Prince George.

Planners or engineers selling a pre-determined solution to the public is quite a common occurrence in planning processes. This concern was raised in the case of Sudbury where the public was presented with a variety of alternative routes of access to Laurentian University and South Shore of Ramsey Lake. Falcioni affirmed that if the public had any other solutions to present that they too would have been considered. There was substantial feedback from the public of Sudbury regarding each of the alternatives proposed. There was no general consensus of support for one specific alternative, so this specific process does not seem to have been biased towards public support for one particular alternative.

In both Sudbury and Prince George, city administrators, not citizens, primarily made the determination about what is in the best public interest in planning processes. In Sudbury, the primary values, goals and objectives of the Laurentian project were determined by the Region's Engineering department and UMA Engineering, not the public. Data on public goals, attitudes, values, preferences, and priorities is crucial to an effective planning process. The most useful sources of that information are the citizens affected. Attempts to give the public what planners think is best for them or what planners think they want have, according to Connor, led to one debacle after another. Such disasters leave the original problem unsolved, a heavy financial expenditure with little to show for it, and a corrosive residue of ill will (Connor, 1990, 1-5). In the case of Sudbury, there were complaints about the lack of information that was presented to

the public. There was no discussion between the decision makers and the public of Sudbury regarding how and why decisions were made. Connor's support of early incorporation of the public would relieve this tension as the public would be a part of the process from the beginning.

In Prince George, the engineering department appears to decide what is in the best public interest in the area of transportation planning. There is minimal public involvement in transportation planning in Prince George, and the public involvement that there is seems to be reactive not proactive planning. Connor argues that the creative capacity for perceiving solutions to problems is not a prerogative of technical experts. Indeed, their training often equips them with as many blinders as insights. Concerned laymen can often see sound alternatives that experts do not (Connor, 1990, 1-5). The blame for this situation cannot be placed squarely on the shoulders of the public of Prince George nor the City of Prince George. The public seems to have faith in their elected officials, as well as demonstrating a lack of interest in becoming involved. The City has tried a variety of mechanisms to incorporate citizens in decision making with limited success. The City should vary its attempts to incorporate citizens in decision making; to try different and more proactive approaches.

The final two elements of non-participation as defined by Connor do not seem to be predominate features of transportation planning in Sudbury or Prince George. Neither city has had any significant public confrontations regarding transportation issues in the past few years. Nor has either city had public individuals or groups attempt to impair the decision making responsibilities of the elected representatives.

Overcoming Inappropriate Processes

The role of the government officials is imperative in creating a process whereby public participation can be successfully accomplished. There are certain steps that should be taken in order to maximize the potential for success of the process. The government officials that are involved should identify what they understand citizen participation to be and what they see as its advantages and disadvantages. By identifying the expectations of public participation, there is also a scale by which to measure the end success of the participatory process. A thorough review of the terms of reference of the project should identify assumptions, priorities, differences in perceptions and hidden agendas (Connor, 1990, 1-9). By establishing the boundaries and characteristics of a project, it is then possible to deal with problems that might impede public participation. There should also be an examination of the nature of the system and its implications for participative planning. By determining the nature of the system, needed improvements in organizational effectiveness, might also be identified and altered to accommodate public participation.

Techniques for Successful Public Participation

There are a variety of techniques that governments can use to encourage public involvement. Involving the silent majority requires a systematic and careful professional performance over a period of time. Some techniques are more successful than others and for maximum success a number of techniques should be used. Open houses or public meetings are a traditional forum for public participation. Connor, differentiates between public meetings and open houses. A public meeting is a formal presentation of information usually followed by a question period. An open

house is much more informal. It usually consists of information being distributed and visitors having an opportunity to talk to those involved in decision making. The goal of an open house is for there to be free flowing conversation, directed by the visitors. Decision makers then have an opportunity to individually account for concerns and gain insight from a wide variety of the public who may not be vocal in a crowd situation.

Planning workshops are another avenue of public involvement. Typically, a mix of representatives from the project, broadly based citizen groups, special interest organizations and perhaps relevant government agencies meet together for a day to review a proposed project, its community effects, local concerns, alternative ways of resolving them, decision criteria, ect.(Connor, 1990, 1-28).

A social profile of the affected area is another way in which to gather information about the social impacts of decision making. A social profile is a summary of the main characteristics of a community and its publics, including knowledge of and attitudes about the project. Telephone surveys are a relatively quick and economic way in which to gather information to enable decision makers to identify, understand and use the views of the entire population. Information centres, informal consultation, and the distribution of educational material are other ways in which to inform and educate the public. If the silent majority is not involved in some way like that outlined above, decisions will often be initially imposed by vociferous and well organized minorities (Connor, 1990, 1-28).

Public ParticipationTechniques in Practice

An examination of an alternate transportation planning process may provide some alternative options of citizen participation for planning in Sudbury and Prince George. William Lambert, Director of Transit for the Greater Vancouver Regional District, explains how public participation in transportation works in Vancouver, British Columbia. Lambert, cites the example of the Light Rapid Transit (LRT) lines that are to be built in Vancouver beginning in 2002 with the expected completion date of 2006. The Greater Vancouver Regional District (GVRD) have already established community offices along the future LRT route. The purpose of these offices is twofold; to provide communities with information about the LRT lines and how these lines may affect them, as well as gaining valuable input from the public. Such community offices provide the public with the opportunity to obtain information and raise concerns at the very beginning of the project when concerns are most likely to be heard and considered. This type of planning follows the principles of successful public participation as outlined by Connor. One downfall of this approach is that these offices have been established so far in advance that it is difficult for the public to identify with the issues around the construction of the LRT.

Lambert believes that it is most beneficial if the public is involved in planning from the earliest stages onward. One difficulty with this philosophy is that the very beginning of the process is not always when the public is most interested in becoming involved in the process. Often, according to Lambert, the public does not participate until they can visually see construction or how the proposed projects might affect them. Lambert states that it is important to have public

involvement as the public is often able to bring forth suggestions or identify concerns that had not previously been thought of by the planners or engineers. Delays which arise from public protests are very costly and these protests can be minimized with public involvement from the onset. For these reasons, Lambert believes that public involvement in the planning process is beneficial for all involved. The public has the opportunity to voice their opinions at the beginning of the process where their ideas may actually make a difference in the overall project which allows the citizenry a stake or sense of ownership in the project. The city or region also has the benefit of additional information from the public and a lessened chance of delay.

Vancouver regional government attempts to take a systematic approach to public involvement. To try to overcome the elite bias that is prevalent in most participatory processes, GVRD conducts polling and market research to ensure that a representative sampling of the public is reached for comment. The development of the surveys for public comment is also scientific in nature so not to bias the input from the public. Lambert is concerned that public questionnaires might be pointless if they are designed in such a manner that the responses are biased. If decisions are based on public input from a poorly designed survey then there will inevitably be improper decisions made. One downfall of this scientific approach is that smaller communities might not have the resources to dedicate to developing non-biased surveys and administering them in a non-biased fashion. The surveys are usually administered by phone as that is the most cost effective way to reach and get responses from a large sampling.

The political climate in Vancouver is somewhat different than it is in Prince George or Sudbury, which may be a contributing factor to the more extensive participatory measures in that city. The public in Vancouver is very aware of transportation issues for they are faced with significant transportation problems, such as extensive commuter congestion, on a daily basis. The political climate and media coverage has stimulated significant public awareness of transportation issues.

The Regional Municipality of Waterloo

Another example of a planning process that utilized extensive public participation is the case of the Regional Municipality of Waterloo in their 1992 Official Policy Plan Review. The focus of this review was to develop a regional vision using community involvement in planning for the future. It was decided at the onset of the Regional Official Policies Plan (ROPP) Review that public participation in all phases of the Review was desirable and necessary to achieve a community-based Plan (Regional Municipality of Waterloo, 1992, 1). The goal of the process was "To conduct an open and inter-active Public Participation, Education and Awareness Program by involving the general public and target groups in the development of a Regional Vision and New Official Plan within available resources" (Regional Municipality of Waterloo, 1992, 1).

Phase one of the project involved a 'visioning exercise', including future transportation requirements of the area. The ROPP Team approached the vision phase as an exercise in 'community brainstorming'. As a result, people's desires and concerns have been heard early in the process, and many people with diverse interests have discovered that they have common

aspirations for the Region. During this phase all of the target groups were reached. As well, all of the communication vehicles have been used, with varying degrees of success (Regional Municipality of Waterloo, 1992, 4). There were a variety of communication vehicles used to inform the public of the goals of the process and receive input from the public.

These communication vehicles included: Public and Technical Advisory Committees, public open houses and meetings, publications, newspaper articles, Committee and Council reports and presentations, out reach meetings, student contacts, workshops, questionnaires, media contact, public displays and radio and television phone in shows (Regional Municipality of Waterloo, 1992, 2). All of these communication vehicles were utilized to reach as many members of the public within the Regional Municipality boundaries. The Regional Official Policies Plan Review Team also made presentations to 40 local community groups, worked with school programs and area municipalities to ensure that as many members of the public as possible were informed and given the opportunity to participate. The Review Team made a special effort to involve the youth of the Region: "By involving students in planning for future growth and development in the Region, it is hoped the young will become more aware of Regional issues and institutions, and take a stronger interest in participating in community affairs, both as young citizens and eventually as mature adults" (Regional Municipality of Waterloo, 1992, 13).

The process that the Regional Municipality of Waterloo developed for its Official Policy Plan Review would be an excellent example to follow for any municipality, interested in incorporating the public, in their Official Community Plan Reviews. The Region was able to successfully

incorporate many members of the public, from all the municipalities in the Region, and develop a regional vision that reflected the desires of the communities.

CityPlan - Directions for Vancouver

A final example, *CityPlan - Directions for Vancouver*, demonstrates that it is possible to have extensive public participation in helping to determine the values and goals of decision making. On June 2, 1992, City Council moved that "That the City prepare a CityPlan reflecting a shared vision for the future of Vancouver; and THAT the City Plan program inform citizens about the issues facing the City and present Council policies, and create, from their advice, a shared sense of direction for the City and its place in the Region" (City of Vancouver, 1995, 2). *CityPlan* is not a detailed map and budget for the City. The Plan only goes as far as the two year public process went: to create a plan to guide future planning, development, and civic decisions. The next step is for citizens, Council, and staff to work together to fill in the details.

There was extensive public involvement in the development of the *CityPlan*. Over 20,000 people actively participated by making submissions and attending events. Survey results suggested that their choices generally reflect the opinions of the broader population (City of Vancouver, 1995, 5). The purpose of the *CityPlan* was to: provide meaningful opportunities for participation in a broad range of Council decisions; bring citizens and City staff together to resolve community issues; and ensure a broad constituency takes place in city-wide decisions and neighbourhood planning (City of Vancouver, 1995, 38). In order to achieve these goals, *CityPlan* recommended that Vancouver increase the opportunity for people to participate, create better processes to

involve residents in addressing major changes in their neighbourhoods, improve the ability of neighbourhood-based staff to work with residents on decisions; use *CityPlan* directions as a context for city wide and neighbourhood planning, create better two-way communication about City politics and programs so that more people can be aware of and involved in decision making processes and make information about issues Council is addressing easily accessible (City of Vancouver, 1995, 38). It is important to note that when it comes to public policy, however, it is during the process of administration and implementation, that the goals laid out in the public vision statements often take a "back seat" to the more immediate goals of daily administrative decisions. These opportunities for involvement are theoretical without a specific plan as to how to accomplish them.

The *CityPlan* did recommend a variety of concrete avenues by which to accomplish these goals. Integrated Service Teams should be established in each neighbourhood to work with the community to resolve local issues and provide a link with City Hall. Another suggestion was to use the ethnic media, electronic links, local City offices, and other means to provide a diverse public with convenient access to information on policies, services, and issues being considered by Council. Finally it was advocated that the public should be involved in the regular monitoring and reporting on the implementation of the *CityPlan*.

The strength of the *CityPlan* report was that it promoted the need for citizen participation and a variety of benefits that citizen participation would have. There were many ideas within the report regarding how to get the public involved. The downfall of the report is that it does not

provide sufficient detail as to how the goals identified can be met. The report does not provide information on the financial requirements necessary to accomplish the goals nor does it give specific details regarding the implementation of the goals. The *CityPlan* could serve as an excellent initial policy paper to foster citizen participation in local government decision making. However, until some of these ideas are implemented and lead to concrete actions, it is difficult not to be sceptical about the document being little more than another political exercise in public participation with little final applicability.

Conclusion

This examination of the strengths and limitations of citizen participation in the transportation planning processes in Sudbury and Prince George has served to illustrate that there are some significant differences between the two cities. Many of the limitations of public participation in these cities were a result of the structures of the municipal government and the culture of the planning and engineering departments. Transportation planning is a technical area of planning which still seems to be a major element in discouraging public involvement. Nevertheless, Connor's *Constructive Citizen Participation* does provide some useful suggestions which could be used to help encourage successful public involvement in decision making. Examples of progressive planning processes, such as those provided in Vancouver or Waterloo, also offer alternative options or avenues of public participation in decision making. These suggestions could help strengthen the participatory processes in Sudbury, Prince George or other similar communities.

Conclusion

The level and nature of citizen participation in transportation planning at the local level of government varies from city to city and province to province. Due to increased exposure and discussion of public participation, most local governments are aware of the potential role the public can play in decision making. This awareness is not necessarily equivalent to a commitment incorporating the public into decision making. The public participation that does take place, does so at many different levels and capacities ranging from non-participation to actual power sharing among citizens. Each participatory process has its own unique features and defining characteristics which makes generalizations about public participation in local government decision making difficult.

Historically, in transportation planning, specifically roadway planning, the role of individual citizens and groups tended to be minimal. This situation can be attributed to a number of factors including a general lack of interest in roadway planning, a lack of interest due to the technical nature of this type of planning, an apathetic public, or a public that is confident in the decisions of their elected officials and saw no need for personal involvement. This changed somewhat in the 1960s when the political culture in Canada reflected the social movements in the United States which resulted in protests in many policy areas including transportation planning. This movement, in culmination with the emerging realization that the public should have some input into decisions that affect their personal environment, led to a policy shift which included

recognition that there should be some role for the public in transportation planning. What the role should be and who should participate was, and is, poorly defined in the literature and in many contemporary urban policy exercises.

In the examples of Sudbury and Prince George, the specific requirements for public participation in transportation planning were quite different. In Prince George, there is little, if any active involvement at all, of the public in transportation planning issues. Public involvement that does exist tends to be informal, through complaints to the city about road conditions. Public participation in decision making generally at the Prince George City Hall is primarily through the development of the Official Community Plan (OCP). Even the public turnout for the OCP forums was disappointing for the city staff. The City has also attempted to receive input from the public through yearly open houses which again met with little success. The citizens of Prince George that do get involved, have a tendency to be the ones that are consistently involved in an assortment of community issues. The lack of interest of the population of Prince George in local politics and decision making may be a reflection of the political culture of the city's attitudes towards civic politics or it may be an indicator of the need for the City to diversify their approaches to public participation.

In Sudbury, there is a process for public participation in transportation planning as a result of legislative requirements of the Environmental Assessment Act. The requirements for public involvement differ depending on the classification of the project. The classifications of the projects are determined by the engineers involved, which illustrates that engineers and planners

are significant in determining the nature and extent of participation. The alternative access route to Laurentian University attracted more public participation than other road projects in the Sudbury area. The public involved in the Laurentian University project were representative of the elites in the Sudbury region. Many of the major participants and interest groups that were involved represented the area around the University where the extension is to take place. The neighbourhoods that surround the University are very prestigious and expensive places in which to live. The Laurentian University case study supplements the thesis that those that generally get involved are the elites of the community and those that are directly affected by the project.

There is a significant role for the public to play in a democratic decision making process. The right course of action, especially in planning, is always a matter of choice. The choice may simply be between technical solutions, but the decision is still one that is affected by political issues of cost or impact on the environment. It is only sensible to include members of the affected public in planning processes to ensure that the final decision takes into account the users' perceived needs. Through the inclusion of the public, a sense of ownership of the community is encouraged as well as enhancing a sense of personal political efficacy. The very ability to participate in governmental affairs, no matter how minimal, can enhance feelings of self confidence and empowerment (Marcuse, 1987, 285). The ability to participate, particularly at the local level of government, fosters the development of the responsibilities of citizenship. A responsible, politically aware citizen then has the tools to participate effectively in other levels of government decision making. For citizens to be effective in civic participation, they must learn how to organize themselves and to work within the institutional framework of municipal government.

The process of inclusion and effective public participation is also partially the obligation of the government agency involved. Planners and engineers have the power to determine the form that participation will take and whether or not it will be positive. Planners, engineers, politicians, and bureaucrats all play a part in creating the nature of public participation and determining whether or not decision making power will be devolved to the public. Some theorists argue that citizen participation, without the accompanying power, is an empty ritual as citizens do not have the power to affect the outcome of the process (Arnstein, 1969, 216). Due to the need for accountability for decision making and the technical knowledge necessary for some transportation planning, the final responsibility must rest with the politicians, planners and engineers. This also ensures that the decision making process is not captured by one or two vocal individuals or interest groups. Finally, it is important to a liberal democratic system that the public feels that it has the right and ability to participate in decisions that affect them, whether or not they choose to exercise that right.

The characteristics of those groups that participate have not necessarily changed even with the current political initiatives which promote public involvement in decision making. Historically, elites have dominated participatory processes. Some contemporary decision making processes, such as Vancouver's *CityPlan*, do facilitate the inclusion of a wider variety of individuals and groups. In the case of Sudbury and Prince George, only a very small segment of the population participated in decision making. This small segment, usually the elites in the community, have the tendency to be involved in many decision making and community activities. Even in processes that consult extensively with the public, there is still a smaller elite group that organizes and

categorizes the information and directs decision making: "While the public is often consulted throughout the policy process, decision makers independently evaluate that input and select what will be included in the final decision" (Karvinen and McAllister, 1994, 107). Collective decision making by the mass public is impractical and inefficient and arguably unnecessary within a representative democracy. Robert Dahl's argument outlined in chapter one, states that a relatively small proportion of individuals in any form of social organization will take up decision making opportunities (Pateman, 1970, 8). Minority domination is an entrenched aspect of decision making. Limited public participation, primarily through the involvement of those that have an interest in civic politics, may be the most effective means by which governments can respond to the public interest.

Successful public participation in decision making depends on the characteristics and nature of each individual situation. There are some standard elements that should be a part of all decision making processes that involve public participation. The goals of public participation should be determined at the onset of the project. Established goals will also be beneficial for evaluating the results at the end of the project. Public participation is most effective, starting early and continuing throughout the process. The public has an opportunity to determine the values and goals of the project and have their concerns voiced at a point where they can still be addressed. With reference to the general process of planning, outlined in chapter two, the public could be involved from the point of collection of information on the transportation system and at every step in the process. The public could have a valuable role in the analysis of information, in the development of policies, and in the budgeting decisions, right up to the point where the project

is developed and implemented. For public participation to be successful in such a process a variety of involvement and communication techniques must be used to reach as many members of the public as possible.

If the process of involving the public is systematic and wide ranging, public participation can be a beneficial element of decision making. Some limitations on public participation are inevitable, because of institutional structures and the financial resources required. These features provide the framework within which public participation must work, and the impact of these limitations can be minimized, with recognition and acceptance of their existence. Effective and well designed public participation allows for the practice of democratic methods of consultation, communication, and negotiation to be balanced with efficiency of decision making.

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Appendix A

Interview Questions

1. What is the organizational structure of the local government? What are the lines of accountability for the departments within the structure of local government?
2. What departments are responsible for transportation planning? What is the relationship between the engineering and planning department in regards to transportation planning? How autonomous are the engineering and planning departments? Do recommendations from these departments often get overturned by City Council? How does the city characterize its relationship with the provincial government, specifically the Ministry of Highways?
3. What special purpose bodies does the local government have and what kind of decision making powers are they given? Who participates on these special purpose bodies and how are the participants selected?
4. What is the process for involving stakeholders in local government decision making? How are the stakeholders selected?
5. What level of decision making power are public participants given in participatory processes within the city? Is the public being delegated decision making power?
6. What members of the public generally participate in local government decision making? Are there specific interest groups who actively participate in civic decision making? Who are these groups and how do they participate?
7. Are costs ever a consideration when shaping the structure of a participatory process? Who bears the costs for public involvement in decision making?

8. What are the avenues of access for the public to participate in local government decision making, both formally and informally?

9. How is the public involved in the development of the Official Community Plan (OCP)?

10. What legal requirements are there for public involvement in the development of the OCP?

11. How are citizens informed that the OCP is going to be updated or revised?

12. What is the optimum time for community involvement in the planning process? Is the public involved in decision making at the optimum time? Why or why not?

13. Is public participation useful in local government decision making? Why or why not?

14. What are the contemporary realities or pressures of public participation at the local level of government?

15. How does the city balance growth versus sustainability issues in transportation planning?

16. What is the process for establishing priorities in transportation planning? Is the public involved in this process? How so?

Appendix B

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSIONS WITH PARTIES REQUESTING BUMP-UP

Issue Raised	Response/Action Taken
No environmental impact assessment was performed on the 1992 Sudbury Transportation Study	The Region was not required to undertake an environmental study in conjunction with the Transportation Study
The ESR does not include any information on how this road project will impact on greenhouse gas production. CO_2 production should be modelled.	Future CO_2 production is very difficult to predict and would be of little benefit in comparing alternatives, since predicted total traffic volumes are identical for almost all of the alternatives. A reduction in traffic congestion (at constant traffic volumes) will lead to a reduction in greenhouse gas production.
Ramsey Lake Road should be widened to three (3) lanes, therefore requiring little additional pavement.	Section 5.2.1 of the ESR has been revised to provide more details of the screening process used for widening alternatives.
The Region should exercise some control over development of parking facilities at Laurentian University.	The Region can restrict parking at new developments on the Laurentian campus during the site plan approval process. (ESR Section 4.1)
The Region should improve public transit service.	Transit is outside of the Region's jurisdiction. The Region can only make recommendations to Sudbury Transit. (ESR Section 4.1)
Greenspace will be lost unnecessarily.	The proposed new route traverses an area already zoned for development. The new route will not be constructed until warranted by traffic volumes. (ESR Sections 3.5.2, 6.2)
The comment sheets were structured such that support was indicated on the front and negative comments were recorded on the back.	Only level of interest was indicated on the front of the comment sheet. All comments were to be recorded on the back.
The names of those who criticized the project were deleted; the names of those who support the project were printed.	Only the names of individuals representing an organization or agency were published. The names of individuals were not printed to protect their privacy. No consideration was given to the nature of their comments when removing their names from correspondence.
MPPs may be in conflict of interest by supporting this project.	The MPPs were contacted as part of this study but expressed neither support nor objection to this project.
Comments from provincial employees do not constitute ministerial support for the project.	These comments were in response to an official request for comment on this project.
Bicycle/pedestrian paths should be wider than 2.5 m.	The bicycle path will be 3.4 m wide to accommodate mixed use. (ESR Section 6.1)
The north end of Hunter Street should not be extended due east to connect with the new access road.	The Planning Department changed the South End Development Plan to show the northerly end of Hunter Street extended southeast to connect with the new access so that Hunter Street does not provide a short cut. (The South End, Section 3.4)
Extension of either end of Hunter Street should be subject to a Class EA.	This is not feasible since there is already a dedicated road allowance and zoning in place. A traffic impact study including a public information centre will be requested for any major development in this area. (ESR Section 3.5.2)

The Traffic Model is not valid in that it does not adequately account for student population.	The model exhibited a good correlation with school year traffic counts conducted by UMA. More detailed information on the modelling technique was provided to the interested party. (ESR - Appendix B)
The public information centres were inadequate means of public contact.	The MEA Class EA document for road projects cites PICs as having high information exchange and education potential for large (+50 people) groups. Public meetings were conducted with the South Side Ratepayers and Laurentian University.
An alternate access route will negatively impact the wildlife corridor; hiking, nature and cross-country ski trails.	These impacts were considered in the evaluation of the alternatives. Mitigation will be provided for ski trail crossings. (ESR Sections 4.4.2, 5.5.3)
The alternate access route will be constructed to serve developers.	The alternate access route will not be constructed until warranted by traffic volumes. This study represents planning for a new road, not imminent construction of a new road. (ESR Section 6.2)
Travel demand management measures are not considered.	TDMM was considered and is part of the preferred solution. The ESR will be revised to include details of the TDMM recommended by LU's Task Force on Transportation. (ESR Sections 4.4.3, 6.1)
Three-laning Ramsey Lake Road including a centre reversing lane is preferable to four laning.	This would require extensive overhead electric signage on Ramsey Lake Road and raises concerns over motorist safety. More details on the screening of widening alternatives are included in Section 5.2.1.
Emergency access is no longer as important an issue.	This is true to some extent. Air ambulance service can be provided if access difficulties are encountered. Sudbury Regional Police expressed support for a second access route. (ESR Table 5.1)
A second access route will lead to an increase in crime.	Sudbury Regional Police indicated there may be a perceived increase in vulnerability to crime, but the crime rate is not likely to increase. (ESR Table 5.1)
The Planning Department is opposed to the preferred solution.	This is not the case. The South End Development Plan is consistent with our preferred solution. The Planning Department comments are included in the report.
Could bump-up requesters have access to other bump-up requests.	In order to avoid violating the Right to Privacy and Freedom of Information Act, the names and addresses of individuals requesting a bump-up will not be published when the requests are included in the ESR. Names and addresses of agencies and organizations which have requested a bump-up will be published in the ESR. (ESR - Appendix F)

Source: UMA Engineering, 1995, Appendix F