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News & Views, published quarterly, is the newsletter of the Economic Development Division of the American Planning Association. We welcome articles, letters, suggestions and information regarding workshops and other educational opportunities for economic development professionals. Please forward your submissions by email to our Editor, Terry Holzheimer (address below).

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Yikes, There's a Tourist in Town: Guidance for Local Planners

by Michael E. Kelly, MCIP, AICP

Unless directly engaged in making tourism plans or working in a destination community, local planners tend to give little thought to tourism or to tourists in their day-to-day work. However, many communities across the country attract some share of visitors, and planners should be aware of the possible implications and opportunities that may result.

It can be easy to become swept up in the boosterism that surrounds what is often taken for tourism planning, but really is just tourism marketing and promotion. Local governments have a key role to play in tourism planning and development, but it is not attracting tourists to a community. Marketing and promoting tourism are activities best left to political and business leaders.

The true role of local government in tourism planning, as in all development planning work, is to first capture the community vision as it is informed by a comprehensive situational analysis, then attract the investments that will fulfil that vision, and facilitate and control development so that it conforms to the vision and mitigates external costs. In this *PAS Memo*, I will look at the relationship of tourism to local government, the roles that community and economic development planners play in this relationship, and some tools used by local governments in implementing tourism development.

In the United States there are over 1.1 billion trips taken annually by U.S. residents travelling to other parts of the country, and another 50 million international travellers arrive each year (U.S. Travel Association 2009; UNWTO 2008, 9). In Canada, international arrivals in 2005 num-

(continued on page 4)

The true role of local government in tourism planning is to first capture the community vision as it is informed by a comprehensive situational analysis, then attract the investments that will fulfil that vision, and facilitate and control development so that it conforms to the vision and mitigates external costs.

THOUGHTS FROM THE CHAIR



I've just returned from APA's Leadership Meeting. There are 21 Divisions at APA, of which the EDD is one of the larger. Divisions have three primary functions: 1) exchange ideas among members; 2) provide expert policy review to APA; and 3) educate APA members and others regarding

particular professional areas of interest. We're doing all three through our conference workshop, newsletter, and new blog site, <http://apaeconomicdevelopment.blogspot.com/>, where you can ask questions, test ideas and provide comments to members around the country (see page 14 for more information). Thank you to Shana Johnson for setting it up. We are working on a series of webinars based on our conference workshop that will count toward CM. We'd like to coordinate more with chapter conferences. Please let us know if you're interested.

At the legislative briefing and UN World Habitat Day, we heard HUD Secretary Shaun Donovan and Adolfo Carrion (a city planner), Director of the White House Office of Urban Affairs, among others. Clearly,

the Obama Administration recognizes the importance of planning to economic development. HUD, DOT and EPA formed an interagency partnership to foster sustainability. HUD's FY2010 budget proposes setting \$150 million within the CDBG program for a new sustainability initiative for planning grants. Senator Chris Dodd has introduced the Livable Communities Act (S. 1619) to provide multi-year authorization for the sustainability initiative. The House-passed American Climate and Energy Security Act (H.R. 2454) and the introduced Senate Clean Energy Jobs and American Power Act (Kerry-Boxer) contain planning and alternative energy provisions. President Obama this week issued Executive Order 13423 — Federal Leadership in Environmental, Energy and Economic Performance, which requires federal agencies to meet greenhouse emission targets. This measure will increase demand that will help develop cleantech industries.

The link between planning, sustainability and economic development is being established — a positive step for our economic future and an exciting time to be in our profession. ■

— Bill Anderson, FAICP
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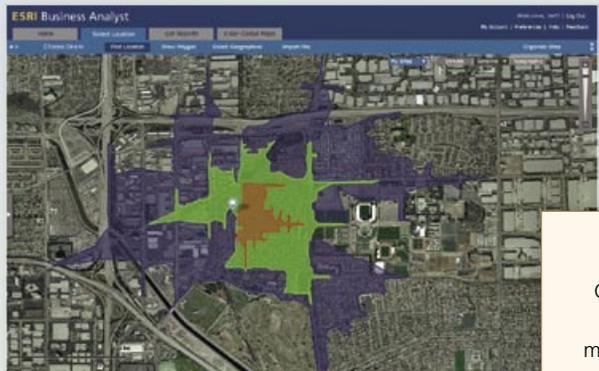
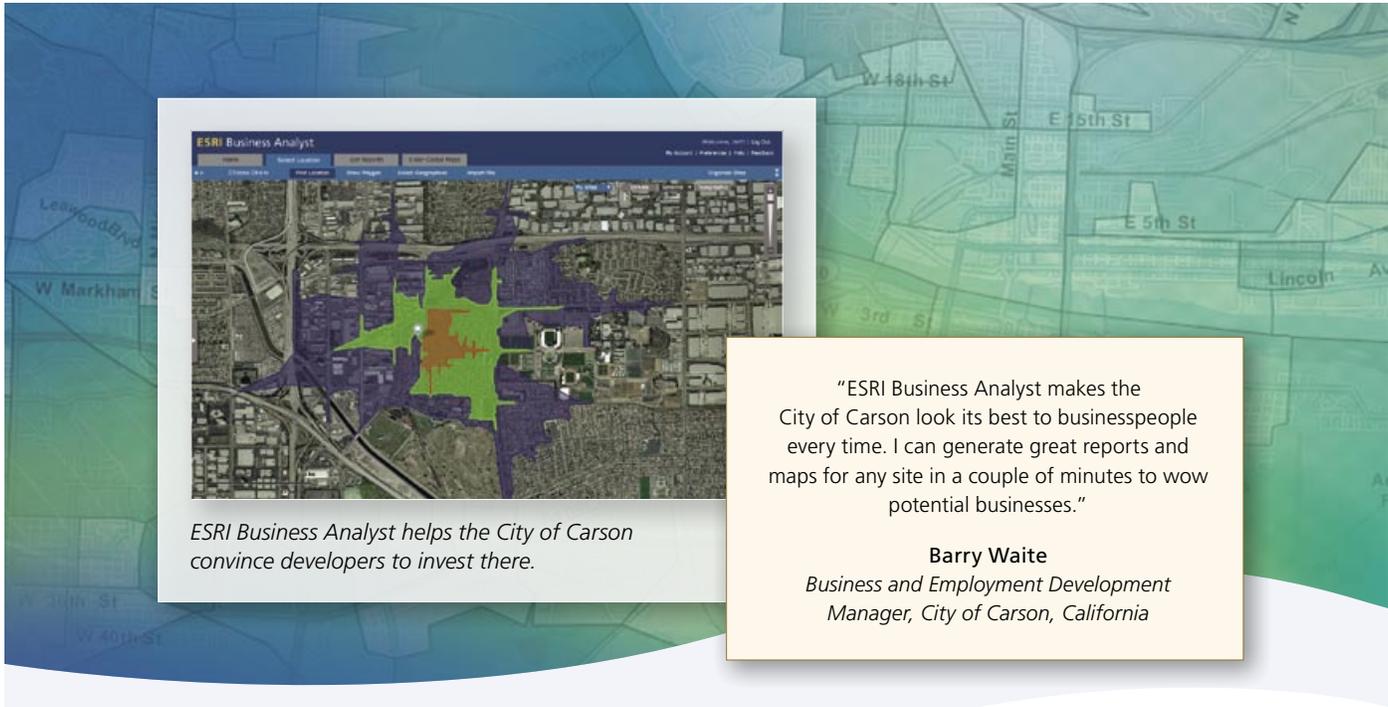
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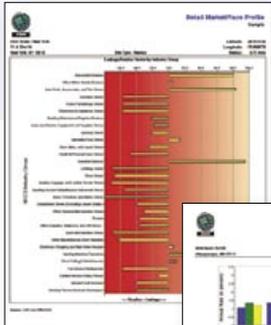


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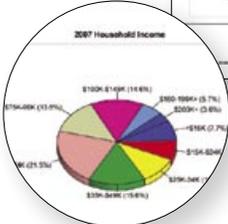
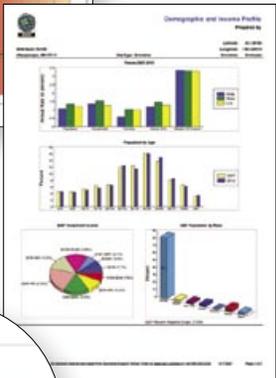
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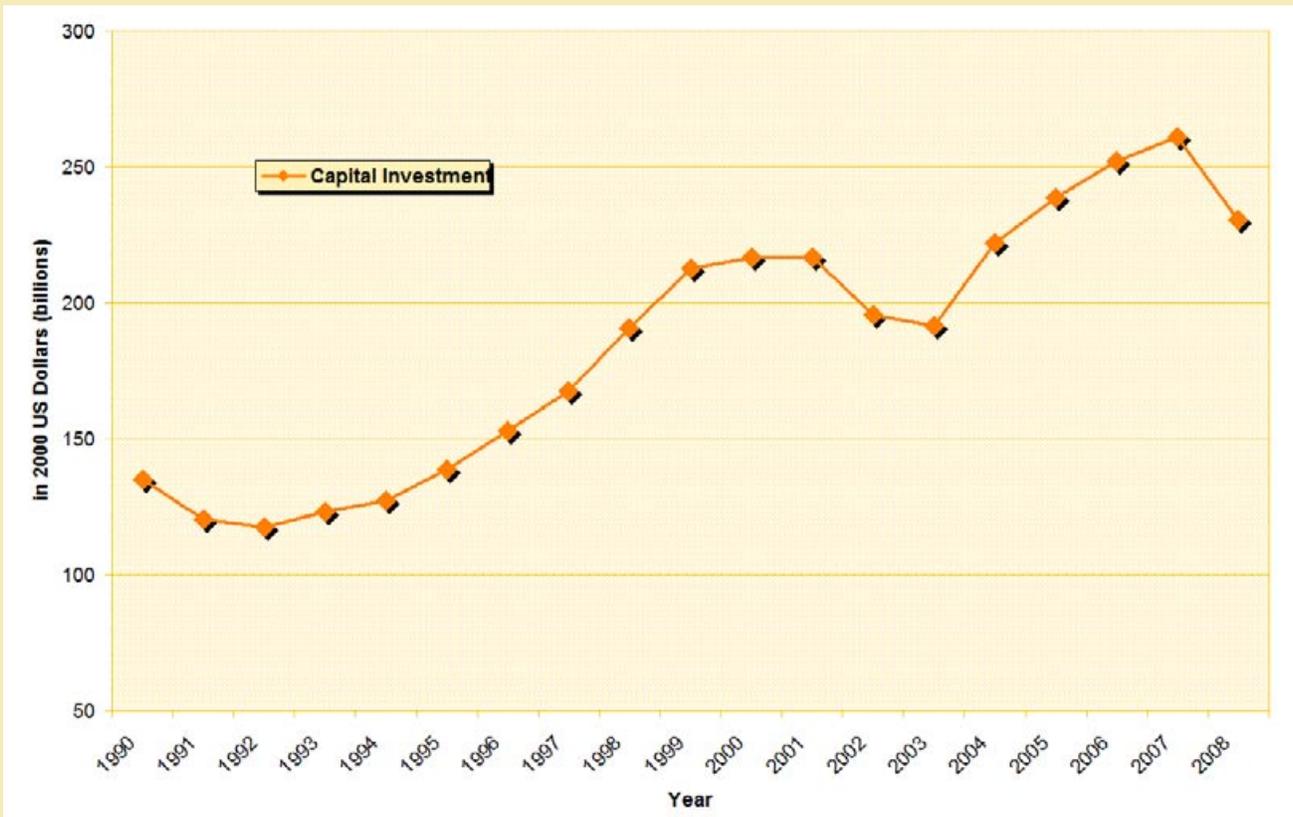


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YIKES, THERE'S A TOURIST IN TOWN, CONT. FROM P. 1

U.S. Travel & Tourism Capital Investment



Michael Kelly. Data: World Travel & Tourism Council 2009a. Real Travel & Tourism Activity (data set: 2000 U.S.\$ bn)

bered 18.6 million people, or about 27 percent of the total number of international arrivals (67.8 million) for North America in that year. Domestic travellers on day trips place only limited demands on local tourism and community infrastructure, but international travellers on longer stays require accommodation, several meals, and a variety of other services from a community.

Every year, our federal, state, and provincial governments, as well as the private and nonprofit sectors, allocate considerable financial resources to attract tourists to their respective jurisdictions and destination communities. The World Travel & Tourism Council (2009a) reports that even after a sharp decline since 2007, annual capital investment in tourism in the United States in 2008 was still above \$230 billion. In Canada, tourism investment in 2008 was over \$16 billion (in U.S. dollars).

Tourism investment includes public sector spending on air, highway, and rail facilities; travel offices; parks; and water, sanitation and utility infrastructure. Examples of private sector tourism investment include airplane

purchases, car rental fleet purchases, and lodging facilities construction (WTTC 2009b). Investment in tourism is not necessarily made in just a community itself; investments made in surrounding jurisdictions can affect small towns or cities as well.

Planning for Tourism

Tourist activity at such national magnitudes has planning implications for many local communities in the United States and Canada. The impacts of tourism on a community can be beneficial if planned and managed, and extremely damaging if left without controls (Bosselman, Peterson & McCarthy 1999; Kregag 2001). The positive economic impacts of tourism motivate local governments to become stakeholders in tourism development. Key economic benefits for local governments include new direct and indirect tax revenue and increased local employment.

Tourism has its costs and challenges too. These
(continued next page)

YIKES, THERE'S A TOURIST IN TOWN, CONT. FROM P. 4

include the need to provide affordable housing for community support staff such as police, fire, and health workers, water operators, and trash collectors, as well as tourism operations support staff including hotel/motel staff and housekeepers, cooks, waiters, busboys and girls, and visitor bureau front counter staff. Then there is managing traffic congestion, parking congestion, littering, public toilets, seasonal homes and their attendant vacancy, and drugs, vice, and crime. A tourism development plan and program is an important way for a community to encourage and support the positive impacts

of tourism while controlling and mitigating potential negative impacts.

Creating a vision for a successful tourism development program is a team effort. A community tourism planning team should represent many diverse interests: local government agencies, tourism and non-tourism related businesses, local business organizations, non-profit and non-governmental organizations, community safety personnel, and community members at-large. Planners can lead such teams in delivering facilitated public par-

(continued next page)

Salt Spring Community Assessment



PILGRIMAGE / REPUTATION

Salt Spring Island is a well known regional attraction. People from Vancouver's Lower Mainland, from the Capital Region around Victoria, and from other places farther afield have been drawn to Salt Spring Island by its mystique of alternative life style, high quality arts and crafts, and recreational adventure. Ganges, at the core of the island's tourism development, provides the basic service infrastructure (hospital and waste water treatment) required to support tourism. Many people willingly travel over three hours to arrive at Salt Spring.

SPECIAL INTEREST



Tourists who come to Salt Spring Island want the special experience of a vibrant local outdoor market. Other experience demands include outdoor recreation and a growing interest in health and spa resorts. At the moment the island is not overwhelmed by tourists, although Ganges on Saturdays during the high season might well break through the 1:1 tourist to resident threshold. Demand for the Salt Spring experience, however, has declined slightly in the last several years.

FRICTION

There are many reports and some physical evidence of friction between Salt Spring residents and tourists who come to the island. While undoubtedly certain business, studio, and accommodation owners benefit greatly from tourism, it remains to be documented that there are measurable overall benefits of more than \$200/resident to the community derivable from tourist activity and that there are other positive environmental outcomes. The natural ecology of the island is fragile and under natural conditions is at its most vulnerable during the summer months. This peak vulnerability is coincident with peak tourism activity.

Courtesy of Michael Kelly

YIKES, *THERE'S A TOURIST IN TOWN*, CONT. FROM P. 5

participation processes, conducting community situational analyses, and synthesizing the collective conclusions of the team.

One useful tourism planning tool is the strategic community development assessment. The results of the assessment can give a tourism planning team and local planners an indication of how a community is positioned with respect to ongoing social, physical, and economic impacts of tourism and help ascertain if it is appropriate to develop tourism any further, if at all (Palermo, et al. 2001).

This tool was recently used to analyze the situation of Salt Spring Island as a case study in a larger tourism planning study for the Islands Trust, a multi-jurisdiction regional planning agency in British Columbia. Salt Spring Island, the largest of British Columbia's Gulf Islands with a resident population of just over 9,000, is an iconic tourism destination for the region, attracting over 115,000 visitors annually.

The assessment is usually presented in three panels. The data used to develop the assessment is gathered through interviews with key community informants and through observations made in the community. Analyses of three key dimensions — supply, demand, and consequence — strategically measure the community situation. Narratives provide background information related to the assessment results in each dimension and conclude with intervention action recommendations. See Additional Resources box for links to the full report.

Who are the Tourists, What do They Do, and Why is This Important to Local Planners?

Tourism can be broadly defined as “the temporary movement of people to destinations outside their nor-

mal places of work and residence, the activities undertaken during their stay at these destinations, and the facilities created to cater to their needs” (Mathieson and Wall 1982:1). Current thinking (Gunn and Jamal 2007) sees tourism as a broad holistic system that includes multiple dimensions: economic (demand and supply),

cultural, social, environmental, geographic, political, and organizational.

Tourism planning means making public policy that supports the inclusion of the activity and service needs, through investment and development, of a group of people who are not local residents, but whose numbers can represent a substantial proportion of the total number of people present in a community at a given time. Scales include single sites (physical design), multi-jurisdictional destination areas (local and regional policy), and entire countries (national policy). Tourism developers can come from private, public, or not-for-profit sectors.

A Tourist Impact Index (TI_t) is a simple indicator that can be used to model the impacts of tourism on residents of a community.

$$TI_t = V_t / (R * t)$$

where:

V = estimated number of visitor days spent by visitors during period t,

R = number of community residents, and

t = number of days in a visitor log's recording period (often one month, 30 or 31 days).

An analysis of tourist impact relative to community size suggests smaller communities may be disproportionately

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Tourism can be broadly defined as “the temporary movement of people to destinations outside their normal places of work and residence, the activities undertaken during their stay at these destinations, and the facilities created to cater to their needs.” Current thinking sees tourism as a broad holistic system that includes multiple dimensions: economic (demand and supply), cultural, social, environmental, geographic, political, and organizational.

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YIKES, THERE'S A TOURIST IN TOWN, CONT. FROM P. 6

Tofino, British Columbia: Back-of-the-Envelope Tourism Index (TI) Estimates, 2006

Resident Population of Tofino CSD and the Tin Wis IR: 1,671 (Statistics Canada, Census 2006)

2006 Visitor Estimates

(by Tourism Tofino Visitor Services – Cox Bay Info Centre, acknowledged undercount):

Total: 40,191 Range: 9,308 (Aug); 255 (Jan)

by Parks Canada Visitor Services – Long Beach Unit Visitor Centre, reliable data, but no daily breakdown):

Total: 767,155 Range: 122,691 (Aug); 33,474 (Dec)

Tourism Impact Index (TI) Estimates:

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Annual:} &= V_t / R \\ &= (767,155 \times 2) / (1,671 \times 365) \\ &= 2.52 \end{aligned}$$

$$\begin{aligned} \text{High Season (Aug):} &= (122,691 \times 2) / (1,671 \times 31) \\ &= 4.73 \end{aligned}$$

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Low Season (Dec):} &= (33,474 \times 2) / (1,671 \times 30) \\ &= 1.25 \end{aligned}$$

Note: Parks Canada counts visitors once, but they stay two or more days on average

impacted by tourism and may require more planning protections than larger communities. This index is a relative indicator and can be used to compare one community to another or to compare two points of time for the same community. In the case of Tofino, B.C., the index shows a constant tourist impact throughout the year with substantial impacts for the summer season and lower relative impacts during the winter.

Because tourism impacts on community development can be substantial, community planners need to think about the permanent resident equivalent (PRE) when planning local infrastructure for a destination community. This number can be estimated by calculating the median number of daily visitors in a year:

$$PRE = ((V_{t \text{ Max}} - V_{t \text{ Min}}) / 2) + V_{t \text{ Min}}$$

When added to the resident population number, the PRE gives a better estimate of the true infrastructure loads and public service demands that a community is likely to encounter. For small communities with high tourist volumes such as Tofino, B.C., the demands can

become substantial.

Behavioral characteristics of tourists have implications for local planning. Tourists in North America generally travel for three reasons: visiting friends and relatives (VFR), business and conferencing, and leisure (U.S. Travel Association 2009). For VFR and leisure travellers, shopping (30 percent) and attending a social or family event (27 percent) decisively win the activities participation sweepstakes. This suggests potential policy interventions of encouraging investment and development in retail shopping opportunities in revitalized downtowns, malls, or other destination districts as well as social event venues. Table 1 lists some other tourist behavioral statistics along with potential policy response areas for local government.

Policy Implementation Tools: The Carrots & Sticks

Because tourism is viewed as a business and economic activity, there can be a tension between fostering tourism growth and development while maintaining community sustainability and livability. Local govern-

(continued next page)

YIKES, *THERE'S A TOURIST IN TOWN*, CONT. FROM P. 7

Table 1. Potential Policy Response Areas for Selected Tourist Behaviors

Tourist Behavior (U.S. Travel Association 2009)	Policy Response Area
73% of trips by auto, truck, or RV	Policy on community signage & parking
33% of trips in summer	Policy on recreational & outdoor activity areas
23% of trips are day trips	Policy on pedestrian spaces, business mix, ground level retail shopping, & public toilets, parking
35% of trips are 1 or 2 overnight stays 54% overnight stays are in motels, hotels, or B&Bs 40% overnight stays are in private homes	Policy on business hours, business mix, accommodation location, B&B location & neighborhood density, vacation home rentals, parking, & signage
26% to 31% of trips made with kids in tow	Policy on children activity spaces, parks

ments can use incentives and regulations to achieve the necessary balance.

Incentives

Incentives are subsidies governments offer businesses in order to influence their decisions and achieve the community vision for a local economy. Options include tax incentives, grants and loans, financing, technical assistance, regulatory and procedural relief, labor force development, and quality in community amenities. Investment incentives are commonly used by governments at the federal, state/provincial, and local levels to persuade businesses to locate or remain in their jurisdiction rather than go somewhere else. The State of Kentucky and the municipalities of Asheville, NC and Blyth, CA provide examples of the use of incentives to foster tourism development (see Additional Resources for links to more information).

Kentucky’s Tourism Development Act and Tourism Development Loan Program is the first of its kind in the United States. This legislation allows developers of new or expanding tourism projects to recover up to 25 percent of development costs over a ten-year term. Projects constructed on state, federal, and national park and forest lands are eligible to recover up to 50 percent of development costs over a twenty-year term. An expanding attraction receives the incentive on increased sales tax revenue due to the expansion. Eligible projects include cultural or historical sites, recreation or entertainment facilities, areas of scenic beauty or distinctive

natural phenomena, entertainment destination centers, Kentucky crafts and products centers, theme restaurant destinations, and lodging.

The City of Asheville, NC’s Economic Development Incentives Policy is designed to stimulate private sector investment, economic growth, and job creation in the City by offering economic development grants to companies and industries seeking to relocate and expand business. It establishes a consistent manner for the City’s participation in the development of business activity which will have a significant and positive effect on the economic health of the community. The City’s Industrial Development Grant (IDG) program allows the City to make a 5 year grant to a new or existing industry, including tourism projects drawing from outside a 100-mile radius, based on the amount of new capital investment.

To encourage downtown redevelopment and revitalization, an action which can result in increased tourist activity, Blyth, CA, has implemented a Storefront Improvement Rebate Program to fund architectural and aesthetic improvements to commercial buildings. New and existing businesses can obtain a 50 percent match, up to a maximum of \$20,000, for construction-related improvements, and a 25 percent match with a \$10,000 maximum is available for improvements to vacant structures. Technical assistance and grant opportunities for similar projects are offered in the U.S. by the National Trust for Historic Preservation’s Main Street Program.

(continued next page)

YIKES, *THERE'S A TOURIST IN TOWN*, CONT. FROM P. 8

The Canadian government established a similar program in 1979, but it has been cut from the budget in recent years.

Regulations

Regulations constitute the rules of the governance game. Zoning is probably the most important tool local governments have to guide and control tourism development to achieve the community plan's vision. Other regulations that can influence tourism development include density bonuses for developer-provided public amenity or social housing, development permitting,

parking, signage, urban design, and architectural character bylaws and ordinances.

The old-world Danish village of Solvang, CA (population 5,300) attracts over 1 million visitors each year. To maintain its special character in the face of modern development, Solvang has adopted a general plan and zoning regulations designed to protect the village core while promoting tourism. A Board of Architectural Review reviews all new developments in the Village Area (which overlaps their Tourist Commercial District) for compliance with architectural guidelines.

(continued next page)

Solvang, CA: Achieving the General Plan Vision Through Regulations

Solvang General Plan — Land Use Element

Goal 4: Promote and Protect the Village Area as the Heart of Solvang's Commercial District and the Main Attractor of Tourists.

Policy 4.1: Promote restaurants and shops that reflect Solvang's unique Danish Northern European character.

Policy 4.4: Encourage and/or undertake design improvements in the Village area to create a safe, convenient, and pleasant pedestrian environment.

Solvang Zoning Regulation, Title 11, Chapter 7

Article A. TRC Tourist Commercial District

11-7A-1: Purpose and Intent

A. General: The purpose of the TRC tourist commercial district is to primarily provide areas for tourist related retail business and commercial needs including stores, shops and hotels. Also, it is the intent to provide offices supplying commodities or performing services for the residents of the surrounding community and for local trade. In conjunction with such commercial uses, residential mixed uses are encouraged.

Solvang General Plan — Community Design Element

4.2 Theme

Community design in Solvang involves three basic themes. First, the Village Area has been developed based on the Danish/Northern European design theme. This theme suggests the character and feeling of a small Danish village with an orientation to pedestrians. It is the "old world" charm of such design that provides Solvang with its unique identity and encourages a high degree of tourism. In this area the automobile is secondary to the pedestrian.

Solvang Architectural Review Guidelines (in Community Design Element)

4.3.1 Village Area.

Exterior Appearance

1. All new construction and remodels within the Village Area shall be within the traditional and historic Danish theme or design vernaculars which are found in Denmark or neighboring northern European countries. Eighteenth century, half-timbered structures found in Denmark are encouraged.

YIKES, *THERE'S A TOURIST IN TOWN*, CONT. FROM P. 9

The Town of Golden, B.C., has deep heritage ties to the forestry and rail industries. Located on the TransCanada Highway, it receives many pass-through visitors travelling from Calgary to Vancouver. Recently, the Town adopted a revised and updated Official Community Plan and new Form and Character Guidelines to help conserve and commemorate the working character of Golden while enhancing the community for residents and visitors.

With the many policies, regulations, and entities empowered by state and provincial governments to carry out planning and economic development activities,

care must be taken to avoid competition among different government agencies and inconsistent regulations. Internal dysfunctions in senior governments sometimes frustrate the efforts of local governments in achieving their tourism development goals. The experience of Valemount, B.C., in their attempts to attract tourism resort developers to their region is a case in point. In recent years, potential investors from Italy, France, and several Canadian provinces have met with Village representatives to discuss potential tourism projects, but the lengthy bureaucratic process to identify Crown (public)

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Golden, B.C.: Preserving and Enhancing Community Authenticity

Official Community Plan, Form & Character Guidelines

Executive Summary:

This document provides a set of architectural form and character guidelines as part of the Official Community Plan for the Town of Golden. It identifies and builds on qualitative characteristics found in and around Golden at present and which have appeared throughout its history. As such, it takes advantage of a nuanced understanding of "place," embracing Golden's industrial, natural, touristic, and historical identity.

1. The Historical Downtown

Goal: The Historical Downtown should become focal point for the community, a place where people will live, work, and gather. It should attract residents and visitors into the historical downtown core and encourage economic growth for all businesses in Golden.

Strategies:

- (1) Encourage new development to be sympathetic with the existing scale and material palette present in this area.
- (2) Create a new focus for the town in and around the interface with the Kicking Horse River, expanding the breadth of the public and service realm to include natural amenities.
- (3) Create a connection between the public pedestrian areas of the historical downtown and the Kicking Horse River, particularly between the two bridges.
- (4) Consolidate hospitality, service and public amenity development in the historical downtown.
- (5) Create a compelling 'destination' bringing short-term visitors from the Corridor to the town centre and riverfront and provide clear signage and directional flow to the historical downtown core from all areas of the community.
- (6) Encourage the development of a clear pathway from the highway corridor to Golden's historical downtown to enhance the town's legibility at a number of scales while bringing business from the highway into the core.
- (7) Institute a strong, legible network of public spaces with both pedestrian and vehicle connectivity to enhance the overall vitality of the historical downtown area. In particular, an improved interface between the town and the river could become a strong asset in the overall perception of Golden as a destination or a stopping point.

YIKES, THERE'S A TOURIST IN TOWN, CONT. FROM P. 10

land sites for potential development has derailed each proposal thus far. Overlapping jurisdictions and current legislation, regulations, and policies at the Crown level are in this case hampering Valemount's ability to seek economic diversification through tourism investment (Pfister 2000).

Sometimes tourism development benefits from the combination of granting incentives and regulating land use zones in unexpected ways. Within a commercial zone, a local government can establish business improvement areas (BIAs) or districts (BIDs) and create district associations of business owners. These associations receive annual operating and program grants which are really a return of the association members' own tax dollars. Such associations often name their area and use the grants to



Nanaimo, B.C.: Business Improvement Area Grant Incentives & Districting Photos by Michael Kelly.

improve image recognition through branded signage and streetscaping, thus creating an attractive tourism destination in an urban center. Nanaimo, B.C., is an excellent example of this process.

Sustainability

Whistler, British Columbia, has taken on the sustainability challenge. A world-class resort with a resident population of 9,200, it will be the site of the 2010 Winter Olympic alpine ski events. Whistler is noted for its compact, pedestrian, vernacular village design. It has explicitly adopted tourism as its economic base and recently, with the strong leadership of its mayor, council, and municipal staff, has adopted a comprehensive sustainability plan to maintain future sustainability as a successful tourism destination.

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YIKES, *THERE'S A TOURIST IN TOWN*, CONT. FROM P. 11

Conclusion

Tourism is a unique economic activity in that tourists — the consumers — come to a destination in order to experience and participate in the tourism attractions and services offered by the destination. Thus visitors place additional loads on host communities. And

besides the physical infrastructure and public service demands, there is also an intangible demand for hospitality that is placed on each and every community member. This demand comes not only from the visitors, but also from those community businesses that directly benefit

(continued next page)

Whistler, B.C.: Cultivating a Tourist Economy with a Sustainable Plan

Whistler 2020 Comprehensive Sustainability Plan

Vision: Ensuring Economic Vitality

In 2020, tourism remains the primary economic driver of Whistler's ongoing success. To build and stabilize customer visits, the resort has successfully expanded into ventures that complement tourism and that move the resort community toward sustainability. The resort community partners have tracked external trends such as changing demographics, climate change, globalization, emerging resorts and growing competition, along with other tourism trends that influence the economy and Whistler's attractiveness as a destination resort.

Why is Whistler focusing on a tourism economy when traditional economic development principles promote diversification across sectors, and when certain global trends appear to be moving in a direction contrary to our tourism focus? There are fundamental reasons why a tourism economy is the right decision for Whistler. Whistler is very different from traditional communities because it was designed specifically as a destination resort and has many specialized tourism amenities. Economic diversification that undermines the value of these amenities and natural surroundings could irreversibly destroy our tourism economic base. Our tourism focus provides us with strong incentives to protect the environment and community health and vibrancy that both residents and visitors enjoy.

Strategies: Economic

The Economic Strategy enhances Whistler's tourism-based economy in the context of the regional economy. It focuses on increasing tourism while optimizing the impact of dollars that flow into the community. The strategy addresses Whistler's business climate and workforce as well as implications of trends on existing/emerging economic sectors.

...As a result of external and internal factors, visitation peaked and began to decline in the year 2000. The resort's current economic challenge is to harness its entrepreneurial spirit to build a progressive economy and regain economic health in a way that integrates the regional economy and optimizes use and stewardship of existing assets, including natural, social, and financial capital.

Strategies: Visitor Experience

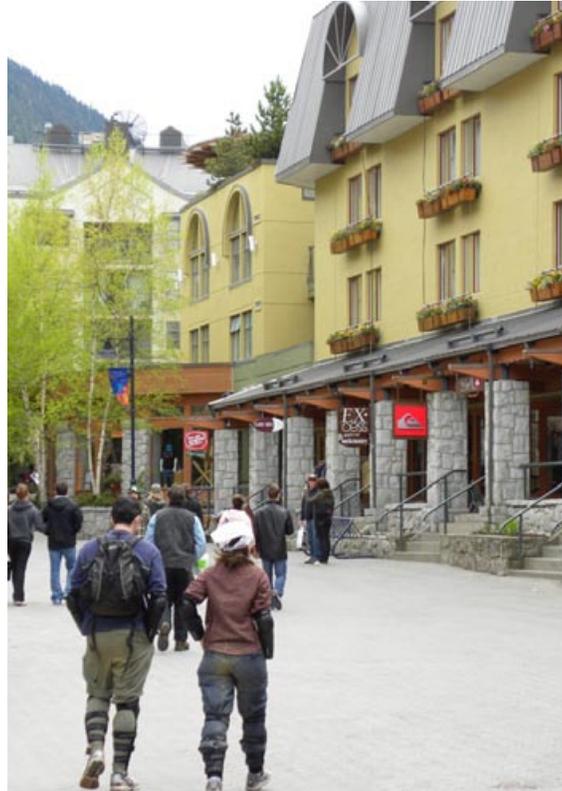
The Visitor Experience Strategy focuses on providing exceptional experiences and excellent value to increase repeat visitation and recommendations, setting Whistler apart from its competitors. The strategy addresses the welcoming and servicing of visitors: (1) before their visit; (2) upon their arrival and for the duration of the stay; and (3) upon leaving Whistler.

Whistler is a successful destination resort, centered on a lively pedestrian village that is located at the base of two world-class mountains. Purpose-built to encourage social interaction, create vibrancy and support a healthy tourism economy, Whistler is home to almost 10,000 permanent residents and accommodates approximately two million visitors per year...Providing such memorable experiences requires...unique, diverse and authentic offerings and service, while enhancing the community's social fabric, and natural and built environment that creates Whistler's special sense of place.

YIKES, *THERE'S A TOURIST IN TOWN*, CONT. FROM P. 12

from the tourist economy. This makes the linkages between tourism and the community complex and far-reaching and, because of this, local planners would do well to include an element in their long range planning work projecting desirable future scenarios for tourism in their community. ■

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Tourists enjoy Whistler, B.C. Photo by Michael Kelly.

Blyth, CA Storefront Improvement Rebate Program www.cityofblythe.ca.gov/documents/Redevelopment/Redevelopment%20Agency%20Programs/Storefront%20Rebate%20Program.pdf

National Trust for Historic Preservation's Main Street Program www.preservationnation.org/main-street/

Solvang, CA General Plan www.cityofsolvang.com/index.php/departments/planning/planning-documents/cat_view/63-planning-documents/64-general-plan

Solvang Zoning Regulation www.sterlingcodifiers.com/codebook/index.php?book_id=701&Itemid=56

Golden, CO Official Community Plan, Form & Character Guidelines

www.town.golden.bc.ca/upload/dcd857_Schedule_D_Design_Form_and_Character_Guidelines.pdf

Whistler, B.C. Comprehensive Sustainability Plan www.whistler2020.ca/whistler/site/priority.acds?instanceid=1930532&context=1930531

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About the Author

Michael E. (Mike) Kelly, MCIP, AICP (mek@community-tourism.net) is a planning consultant working in private practice (www.community-tourism.net) from his home community of Duncan on Vancouver Island in SuperNatural British Columbia. Formerly he was Director of the Office of Community Planning and Economic Development for the Hopi Tribe and lived in Kykotsmovi, AZ. He is a past Chair of the APA's Resort & Tourism Division.

Additional Resources

Reader's Guide to Tourism & Community Development Supply-Demand-Consequence Analysis. www.community-tourism.net/documents/Readers-GuideToSDCAnalysis.pdf

Initial Tourism Planning Strategy for the Islands Trust Area, June 2006. www.llbc.leg.bc.ca/public/PubDocs/bcdocs/403925/InitialTourism.pdf

Salt Spring Island Strategic Community Development Assessment. www.community-tourism.net/documents/SaltSpringIsland-SDC%20Assessment-FinalPackage.pdf

The Islands Trust www.islandstrust.bc.ca/index.cfm

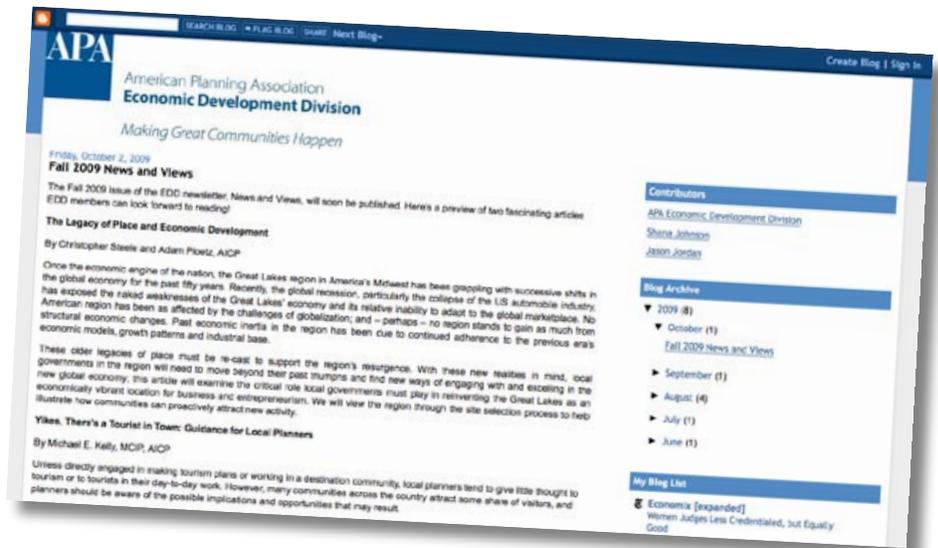
Kentucky Tourism Development Act and Tourism Development Loan Program www.kentuckytourism.com/industry/Incentives.htm

Asheville, NC Economic Development Incentives Policy www.ashevilenc.gov/uploadedFiles/Business/Business_In/Economic_Development/Incentive-Policy.PDF

Interact with EDD Online in Our New Blog!

This past summer EDD launched its new blog, online at: <http://apaeconomicdevelopment.blogspot.com>. The goal of the blog is to present a diverse set of perspectives on the full-range of local and regional economic development issues and to give our members a chance to exchange their ideas on these issues. To date blog posts have covered topics such as the role of the Federal Economic Development Agency in local economic development, the role of planners in the green economy, and defining economic development. Planned blog posts include an examination of the impact of water resource constraints in the Western United States on local development patterns, and a new regular feature summarizing relevant and insightful economic development commentary found on the web.

This summer the blog was updated on a weekly basis; however, as several EDD members will become regular blog contributors in October, blog posts will be-



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come more frequent. Be sure to check the blog often for new posts! And, if you have an idea for a blog post, or are interested in becoming a contributor to the blog, please email Shana Johnson at shana.johnson@gmail.com.

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EDD Officer Nominations

This is an election year for the Economic Development Division with two positions to be filled: Chair Elect and Secretary/Treasurer. The "job" descriptions for these positions can be found on the EDD website at: www.planning.org/divisions/economic/elections. If you want to be considered for one of these positions, please contact Terry Holzheimer at tholzheimer@arlingtonva.us or Bob Lewis at blewis@development-strategies.com by November 13, 2009.

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Legacy of Place and Economic Development

by Christopher Steele and Adam Ploetz, AICP

Once the economic engine of the nation, the Great Lakes region in America's Midwest has been grappling with successive shifts in the global economy for the past fifty years. Recently, the global recession, particularly the collapse of the U.S. automobile industry, has exposed the naked weaknesses of the Great Lakes' economy and its relative inability to adapt to the global marketplace. No American region has been as affected by the challenges of globalization; and — perhaps — no region stands to gain as much from structural economic changes. Past economic inertia in the region has been due to continued adherence to the previous era's economic models, growth patterns and industrial base.

These older legacies of place must be re-cast to support the region's resurgence. With these new realities in mind, local governments in the region will need to move beyond their past triumphs and find new ways of engaging with and excelling in the new global economy; this article will examine the critical role local governments must play in reinventing the Great Lakes as an economically vibrant location for business and entrepreneurship. We will view the region through the site selection process to help illustrate how communities can proactively attract new activity.

Regional Independence Moves to Global Interdependence and Economic Decline

Once the economic engine of the nation, the Great Lakes region has grappled with successive shifts in the global economy for the better part of 50 years.¹

The region became the Rust Belt when companies and jobs initially went south and west; Japanese manufacturing and technological innovation brought another wave of outsourcing in the 1980s. The intense and open
(continued next page)



Photo Credit: JM Schilling

The Great Lakes region's industrial past, has burdened the region with large numbers of brownfields/greyfields, vacant property, and land assembly issues.

LEGACY OF PLACE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, CONT. FROM P. 15

competition associated with globalization threatens to eclipse the impacts of these past changes.

Many groups — public and private — have analyzed the economic and economic development challenges that the region faces and have further tried to come up with new solutions. Notably, the Brookings Institute's Great Lakes Economic Initiative — a multi-year research and policy project started in 2005 — attempted to find strategies for improving the economic vitality of the region. This initiative's capstone report *The Vital Center*, identified several specific challenges brought about by globalization including: underdeveloped human capital, a flat economy and lagging entrepreneurialism, and uncompetitive metropolitan communities.

Many of these challenges are associated with the Great Lakes region's "legacy of place" costs — the result of a declining industrial base that has left the region with older infrastructure, high unemployment, and a tax base that is not sufficient to support demand for services.² Regions burdened with these costs are at a disadvantage when repositioning their economies for growth relative to newer metro areas. There are hard and soft legacy costs. Hard costs include decaying transportation and water/sewer infrastructure, aging housing stock, and challenges associated with brownfield redevelopment. Soft costs include the social implications of industrial decline such as lower educational attainment and greater demand/costs for social services.

The Site Selection Process

As a result of the above, the Great Lakes region tends to lag behind in attracting new development to the area. Understanding how companies make key location decisions helps to frame the discussion. The first several months of the location process typically occur outside the view of the public or — indeed — beyond the view of all but a select group of corporate executives. In this first stage, the group recognizes and defines the need for a new location and lays out the goals that

the new location must fulfill. It might be access to a new market, to new partners for product development, to gain or retain cost competitiveness, or to mitigate some form of operational risk.

These goals will be used to progressively narrow the universe of possibilities to a very short list of final candidates. For example, once the goals are defined the team identifies regions that meet basic thresholds for the operation. Will it have enough of the people that we need? Can our people, our customers, and our goods get there?

Data on the business characteristics on each location are then entered into a weighting and ranking model to test which community will consistently meet the various requirements for the various functions and uses to be housed there. The team will test several scenarios to ensure that the short list candidates will perform well under each potentiality.

In order to understand the story behind the data and actually see the final locations under consideration, the team will travel to each candidate. There they will meet representatives from the state and regional economic development agencies, speak with other local employers, other possible partners in the area, and will examine possible facility options. This field stage is often the first time that communities are even aware that they are under consideration.

Reasonably comprehensive cash flow and GAAP models of each finalist option are developed to estimate costs for each location. Real-world data from the field calibrates the model to what the company was likely to experience as they actually established operations.

This makes for a comprehensive view of the company's new business — a process not unlike finding a new town in which to live, and for good reason. While finding a nice house at low cost is nice, it can only make a good home if the schools are good, the commute works, and you like the neighbors.

Incentives — tax credits, infrastructure loans, employment grants and the like — often get much public attention during the selection process. Discussions during field visits often emphasize later items like buildings and incentives, causing communities to ascribe more importance to these items than is due. However, the company will have performed many months of due diligence before entering *any* incentives discussion. A good incentive package cannot make up a bad match between area characteristics and business need.

On the other hand, the incentives and permitting discussion *can* be an ideal setting for explicitly building

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The Great Lakes region's legacy of place costs, including aging housing stock, put the region at a competitive disadvantage.

the partnership between corporate and community goals. Here compromises and collaboration can create relationships between the prospect and a variety of area entities — relationships which benefit not only the company in the short term, but which provide a robust, wide-ranging and long-term forum for success and innovation.

There is logic and an eye towards long-term business success behind each location decision. Underlying characteristics of place make for a good business location, not incentives.

The Advantages of a Proactive Economic Development Policy

Only through proactive planning can communities build truly sustainable economic development policy. In reactive mode, these communities can only chase the opportunities brought to their doorstep. In a proactive strategy, each community seeks to build early-term partnerships with a variety of public and private sector

institutions (research, development, manufacturing, assembly, distribution, servicing, administration, education, vocational training, financing) to develop and enhance clusters that have reasonable chance of success.

Such a proactive approach also involves a frank discussion on capabilities and values, and explicitly brings them into the strategy discussion. For example, there must be a full discussion of what the region is capable of supporting from the standpoint of:

- Labor and talent
- Infrastructure
- Cost of doing business
- Tax and regulation
- Land use

At the same time however, the region needs to be able to balance this against the driving values of the society at large.

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In other words, the Great Lakes could once again become a low-cost manufacturing Mecca, but it would involve significant subsidization of operating costs and development of a low-skill, low-paying workforce and could also involve significant environmental compromises.

Importance of Working Regionally

The opportunities of tomorrow will involve incredibly involved, complicated value chains requiring broad networks of partnerships to gain success. Regional economic development agencies need to learn quickly, and must understand that — as far as corporations are concerned — borders are arbitrary. The national borders which had held companies to their nations of origin have become much less rigid. States and regions need to find a way of amassing their strength when making economic development plans, finding a way of sharing the rewards, and also find a way of sharing the investment. Only by building these partnerships will they be able to fully succeed in bringing sustainable opportunity to their citizens.

State governments also need to work more actively with each other in terms of setting goals, and priorities. There then needs to be a clear direction in developing and instituting land use, site plan, transportation and other regulatory policies which explicitly and clearly operationalize these goals and priorities. As part of this, states need to streamline their complex and fragmented state economic development incentives and assistance programs. As noted before, the aim is not to knuckle under to any pressure, but to instead draw a clear path between community goals through public policy to likely outcomes. It is to create practicality and predictability, not to ease difficulty for uses that don't match community goals.

Other areas of the Midwest are already well along in driving such change. The Kansas City Area Development Council — a regional economic development group established by private industry — took pains to understand their regional strengths and were able to identify transportation and animal life sciences as key area industry clusters. Both had strong employment and industry bases, and both showed promise as ongoing economic engines for the future.

Based on this knowledge, the KCADC helped establish both KC SmartPort and the KC Animal Health Corridor to actively foster new investment in both clusters.

The KC SmartPort takes the concept on step further by acting as a full port authority in the area, driving economic development, finding investment partners, and facilitating the cooperation of two state, eighteen county, and dozens of municipal governments. All parties to the SmartPort entered with the understanding that if any community gains employment and investment, the entire region benefits.

Retooling for Growth — Local Government Responsibilities

Local governments can play a critical role in creating economic development policy/practices that can help the Great Lakes region compete in a flat world. With the understanding that many local jurisdictions are constrained financially, limiting both their ability to incentivize economic development and direct personnel hours to the issue, we feel that municipalities should focus on three core issue areas that build on its role as service provider and regulator.

Recognize Economic Development as a Local Issue

Most municipalities recognize economic development as a local issue, but too many do not convert this recognition into positive action. Clearly, municipalities can play a central

Clearly, municipalities can play a central role in the economic development process, from establishing long term policy/planning related to economic development, setting an efficient regulatory environment or addressing regulatory barriers to economic development...

role in the economic development process, from establishing long term policy/planning related to economic development, setting an efficient regulatory environment or addressing regulatory barriers to economic development, providing services and infrastructure, and its ability to be an intermediary between local/community interests, land owners/developers, state entities, and regional organizations (both public, quasi-public, and private).

The planning community has made great gains in the last several years in helping the public and public officials make the connection between transportation and land use; conversely, planners working in economic development need to do a better job of making the connection between economic development and other

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municipal planning issues like housing, capital improvement planning, transportation, and environmental and “sustainable development” issues.

Become a Partner

Municipalities maximize their impact on economic development by partnering with organizations that focus solely on economic development. Over the past several years many regional business organizations (i.e. large regional chambers of commerce) have embraced a more holistic outlook to economic development.³ These groups once viewed municipal government as an antagonistic hindrance to growth but now see government as partners in addressing barriers to economic development. By partnering with these groups — as well as state entities and quasi-public organizations focused on economic development — municipalities can:

- Help shape, provide input, and lend their voice to coalitions in support of specific projects or broader economic development policy issues;
- Utilize these organizations’ contacts to disseminate information about development opportunities within your municipality;
- Take advantage of technical assistance offered by these organizations for municipal planning related to economic development; and
- Identify available incentives and technical assistance offered by these organizations that are available to businesses within your municipality.

Strong partnerships and working relationships at the local level with chambers of commerce, main street/downtown development groups, commercial real estate brokers, and developers can also help municipalities:

- Better understand the needs of the local business community and help set priorities for infrastructure investment, workforce, development, and public services;
- Help build public support for actions needed to make local economies more successful;
- Identify barriers to economic growth in municipal policies/regulations;
- Craft new policies and regulations that support business interests;
- Improve the interaction and exchange among business owners; and

- Tap into knowledge about trends in the local commercial real estate market.

Invest in Physical Assets

Investing in physical infrastructure and preparing land for development should be key focus areas for municipal economic development efforts. Legacy of place costs have left the Great Lakes region with aging and decaying water/sewer and transportation infrastructure, limited/dismantled public transportation linkages, and aging public facilities. Addressing these physical deficits requires financial support from state and federal governments and there is good reason to believe that federal funds will increase in the near and long term for these investments. Capital improvement planning is the best way for municipalities to identify and prioritize infrastructure improvements and to set the stage for state and federal funding.

The Great Lakes region’s industrial past, dramatic population loss, and disinvestment has burdened the region with large numbers of brownfields/greyfields, vacant property, and land assembly issues. The municipal role in land development puts them at the front line of these challenges. Municipalities in the region need to continue to focus on land assembly and land recycling/brownfield redevelopment as a key strategy to attract private investment and economic growth.⁴ Communities can also work through the state legislative process to ensure that legislation governing public involvement in redevelopment is simple to implement and administer.⁵ ■

Christopher Steele is President of CWS Consulting Group LLC and Adam Ploetz, AICP is the Manager of Sustainable Development Programs for the 495/Metro West Partnership.

Footnotes

- ¹ For the purposes of this article the Great Lakes region is defined as: Ohio, Indiana, Michigan, Illinois, Wisconsin, Minnesota, and the western portions of New York and Pennsylvania.
- ² Eberts, Randall, George Erickcek, and Jack Kleinhenz. Dashboard Indicators for the Northeast Ohio Economy: Prepared for the Fund for Our Economic Future. Cleveland, OH: Federal Reserve Bank of Cleveland, Working Paper 06-05, 2006.
- ³ Futureworks. Minding Their Civic Business. Arlington, MA: Futureworks, September, 2004.
- ⁴ The American Assembly. Retooling for Growth: Building a 21st Century Economy in America’s Older Industrial Areas. New York, NY: The American Assembly, November, 2007.
- ⁵ Finkle, Jeffery A., Shari Garmise, and Shari Nourick. Retooling for Growth: Building a 21st Century Economy in America’s Older Industrial Areas. Ed. Richard M. McGahey and Jennifer S. Vey. Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2008.

Special Event Announcement

World Town Planning Day Online Conference on Resilience in a Changing Climate
November 12-14, 2009

For the first time ever, eight planning organizations — including the APA International Division — have come together to support a joint “virtual” conference for planners from around the globe in honor of World Town Planning Day. This conference is conducted completely online as part of efforts to reduce the carbon footprint resulting from presenter/participant travel.

This online conference will bring together a conference featuring speakers from around the world. It will include live voice and presentation links to presentations that will be held at various times throughout the three days of the conference. The conference theme is Resilience in a Changing Climate. Presenters from around the world will highlight their answer to the question, “Why my town or city — or the planning system I work in — will be resilient to climate change.”

Presentations will seek to answer questions such as, what is it about your community or system that makes its approach to mitigating or adapting to climate change particularly effective? Why is it effective? What ‘lessons learned’ can other planners take from your experience that will guide them in addressing this crucial issue in their own communities?

Learn more about the conference and register to receive updates by visiting the conference website, www.PlanningTheWorld.net. 

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- International Economic Development Council**
www.iedconline.org/?p=Conferences
- Lincoln Institute of Land Policy**
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- National Association for Business Economics**
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Crispina Ojeda	Chicago, IL
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Membership Survey Coming in November!

The elected leadership of the Economic Development Division once again needs your input on services and activities of the division. In November, each member will receive an email with a link to an online survey and we will expect a 100% response rate. Or as close as we can get. At the New Orleans annual conference of APA, we will be changing the division's leadership (you'll also be getting a ballot after the first of the year), so your survey responses will help the incoming Executive Committee to adjust the division's work program for the next two-year cycle. Thank you in advance for your response — and we will thank you again after the survey when we publish the results in *News & Views* in advance of the New Orleans conference. See you then! ■■■

Special Event Announcement

Paying for Growth
November 12-13, 2009
Alexandria, Virginia

The recent American Planning Association (APA) Task Force Report on Paying for Growth begins with a startling set of assertions:

- Most communities do not have a fiscal sustainability component as part of their comprehensive plans.
- Most planners do not understand the elements of the fiscal equation and how they influence the fiscal results for various land uses.
- Some communities have applied the results of fiscal impact studies in an inappropriate manner, using the results to support exclusionary, or "fiscal zoning."
- Other than impact fees, many planners are unfamiliar with the revenue sources and funding mechanisms available to fund growth-related needs.
- Most fiscal analyses are prepared for individual projects and the results are not viewed within the larger context of the comprehensive and capital facilities plans.

This course will give planners the background and tools they need to respond to these issues in a way that promotes sustainable economic growth.

This course has been submitted for 12 AICP CM credits and is endorsed by the Economic Development Division.

For more information contact the website at www.planningacademy.ncr.vt.edu/courses/fall2009/paying_for_growth_2009.html. ■■■

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