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# **Competitive Cities, Healthy Communities: Charting Collaboration**

**Patrice A. Dutil**

**NO. 12**

# COMPETITIVE CITIES, HEALTHY COMMUNITIES: CHARTING COLLABORATION

*REPORT ON A SYMPOSIUM IN WESTERN CANADA*

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## Abstract

Ce numéro de la collection Nouvelles directions vise à résumer les principaux points soulevés au cours d'un symposium qui s'est tenu au Morris J. Wosk Center for dialogue à Vancouver (Colombie-Britannique), les 11 et 12 mars 2003, sous le titre : *Competitive Cities, Healthy Communities: Charting Collaboration*. et d'accroître la compréhension et de partager les perspectives intergouvernementales sur les villes concurrentielles et les collectivités en bonne santé ainsi que d'explorer des réflexions stratégiques à long terme sur leur orientation future. Les perspectives des collectivités d'affaires, artistiques et autochtones ont donné lieu à plusieurs présentations. Les participants ont également entendu les points de vue de fonctionnaires travaillant dans les tranchées : l'un provenant d'une grande ville; un autre provenant d'une plus petite ville et un dernier provenant d'une ville concurrentielle sur le versant américain : Portland, Oregon.

This report summarizes the key points raised during a symposium held at the Morris J. Wosk Centre for Dialogue in Vancouver, British Columbia in 2003. The objective of the symposium was to improve understanding and share intergovernmental perspectives on “competitive cities” and “healthy communities” and to explore some long-term strategic thinking about their future direction. Included are texts that offer insights on the perspectives of the business, artistic, and aboriginal communities as well as insights on managing big cities, smaller cities and a competitive city on the other side of the border: Portland, Oregon.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This issue of *New Directions* summarizes the key points raised during a symposium held at the Morris J. Wosk Centre for Dialogue in Vancouver, British Columbia on 11 and 12 March, 2003, entitled “Competitive Cities, Healthy Communities: Charting Collaboration.”

The objective of the symposium was to improve understanding and share intergovernmental perspectives on “competitive cities” and “healthy communities” and to explore some long-term strategic thinking about their future direction. Over 100 participants from the federal, provincial and municipal governments attended, as well as representatives from a number of non-governmental organizations.

Presentations offered insights on perspectives from the business, artistic and aboriginal communities. Participants also heard from public servants working in the trenches: one from a big city (Vancouver); one from a smaller city (Moose Jaw) and one from a competitive city on the other side of the border (Portland, Oregon).

The intent was to raise the degree of collaboration on which responses can be built between all orders of government. The meeting was founded on a desire to build networks, to build energy by establishing connections, to solidify existing connections, or to establish new ones.

Typical of IPAC events, pride of place was given to the tasks of informing each other, to sharing perspectives. The intent was to identify common ground and to uncover the reasons underlying a consensus. Could those reasons bring insight on other issues? It was important to also understand where there may be differences in perspectives. We also hoped to identify the reasons underlying those differences.

The symposium was revealing. A few observations are discussed in the conclusion:

- considerable consensus was manifested on the importance of what is sometimes considered soft issues, particularly those related to social and cultural capital;
- there was strong agreement on the necessity for more effective managerial initiatives;
- there was strong agreement on the necessity for increased funding to cities and changes in the way funding is organized;
- there was considerable ambivalence about the importance of what is often considered the hard issues, such as business, economy and demography; and
- there was a great deal of uncertainty, perhaps even confusion, over the process of selecting priorities in achieving competitive cities.



## SOMMAIRE EXÉCUTIF

Ce numéro de la collection *Nouvelles directions* vise à résumer les principaux points soulevés au cours d'un symposium qui s'est tenu au Morris J. Wosk Centre for Dialogue à Vancouver (Colombie-Britannique), les 11 et 12 mars 2003, sous le titre : *Competitive Cities, Healthy Communities: Charting Collaboration*.

L'objectif du symposium était d'accroître la compréhension et de partager les perspectives intergouvernementales sur les villes concurrentielles et les collectivités en bonne santé ainsi que d'explorer des réflexions stratégiques à long terme sur leur orientation future. Une centaine de participants en provenance des paliers de gouvernement fédéral, provincial et municipal ainsi que d'organismes non gouvernementaux y étaient présents.

Les perspectives des collectivités d'affaires, artistiques et autochtones ont donné lieu à plusieurs présentations. Les participants ont également entendu les points de vue de fonctionnaires travaillant dans les tranchées : l'un provenant d'une grande ville (Vancouver); un autre provenant d'une plus petite ville (Moose Jaw) et un dernier provenant d'une ville concurrentielle sur le versant américain (Portland, Oregon).

L'intention était de soulever le degré de collaboration entre tous les ordres de gouvernement afin de générer des réponses plus efficaces en matière de politique et de service. La réunion reposait sur le désir de constituer des réseaux, de créer de l'énergie en établissant des relations, de consolider les relations existantes ou d'en établir de nouvelles.

Comme dans tous les événements de l'IAPC, la place d'honneur a été accordée aux tâches d'informer et d'échanger sur divers points de vue. Le but était d'identifier les points communs et de dévoiler les raisons sous-jacentes à un consensus. Ces raisons permettraient-elles de mieux cerner d'autres problèmes? Il était également important de saisir les différences, le cas échéant, dans les perspectives. Nous espérons aussi pouvoir déterminer les raisons derrière ces différences.

Ce symposium a été révélateur. Quelques observations sont présentées dans la conclusion :

- L'importance de questions parfois considérées moins rigoureuses, en particulier celles reliées au capital social et culturel a obtenu un consensus marqué;
- Le besoin d'entreprendre des initiatives de gestion plus efficace a également obtenu un fort assentiment;
- La nécessité d'augmenter le financement des villes et de changer l'organisation de ce financement a également reçu un fort assentiment;
- Les avis sont très partagés pour ce qui est de l'importance des questions souvent considérées rigoureuses, telles que les affaires, l'économie et la démographie;
- Une incertitude, voire même un certain niveau de confusion, plane sur le processus par lequel les villes choisissent leurs priorités.

## INTRODUCTION

This document summarizes the key points raised during a symposium held at the Morris J. Wosk Centre for Dialogue in Vancouver, British Columbia, on 11 and March 2003, entitled “Competitive Cities, Healthy Communities: Charting Collaboration.”

The objective of the symposium was to improve understanding and share intergovernmental perspectives on competitive cities and healthy communities and to explore some long-term strategic thinking about their future direction.

Across Canada and among OECD countries, politicians, public administrators and academics have recently insisted that the impacts and the needs of urban areas need to be revisited. The conclusion is simple: A healthy country needs healthy cities. This conclusion arises from a new awareness that the urban areas are important motors of economic vitality. Discussions, however, have been tempered by the realization that growth and “competitiveness” in an era of freer economic trade must not come at the cost of the health of the communities. Increasingly, the debates have included concerns about the environment, the culture, the health of democracy, and ultimately about the services governments can offer.

The intent of the symposium was to raise the degree of collaboration on which responses can be built among all orders of government. The challenges are to build a competitive city and a healthy community, not so much because that is a new concept but because revisiting them seems to be in the radar screen of today’s new set of policy challenges. The meeting was founded on a desire to build networks, to build energy by establishing connections, to solidify existing connections, or to establish new ones.

Typical of IPAC events, pride of place was given to the tasks of informing each other and to sharing perspectives. We also wanted to acknowledge and recognize common ground. What are the reasons underlying a consensus? Can we use that insight on other issues?

The meeting, however, was not simply to find common ground. It was important to also understand where there may be differences in perspectives. We also hoped to identify the reasons underlying those differences.

In the words of the session’s facilitator, Glenn Sigurdson, conversations such as this one are a bit like a river: a river divides the land and in a sense causes a division. At the same time it is the river that creates the energy, and it is the flow that gives the land on both shores its vitality. The goal of this session was not to try to pull the banks of the river together but to try to build bridges as public servants from all levels of government move down the river. The objective was to determine what the different access points may be and where it might be easier to cross. It was also to identify the real challenges.

## DAY 1

The symposium started with introductions. Mr. Glenn Sigurdson asked each participant to identify one aspect of the city of the year 2020 they would personally like to see. The respondents – citizens of cities in western Canada – offered a wide variety of ambitions. Many hoped that cities of the future in western Canada would be marked by effective working relationship between all levels of government where effective governance understandings would supplant unilateral decisions to transfer services to local levels of government. Many commented that the cities of the future should be “connected” and accessible so that their services could reach their clientele. As one participant memorably put it, “governments should be on tap and not on top.” Among the other remarks:

- Many wished to see cities retain talented youth.
- Many participants spoke of a “real sincere spirit to be fully inclusive” where “everybody could realize their own potential.”
- Many wished for cities with “a capacity to act”; some spoke of better “partnerships between business and citizens.” One participant envisioned a great city as one with entrepreneurial spirit that encourages competition and free exchange of ideas. Many spoke of prosperity, but many also spoke of the need for environmentally sound cities. In this regard, many voiced concern for the balance between city-living and rural-living.
- Many participants waxed eloquent about western cities “where there’s a thriving debate about issues that’s responsive to emerging issues, where debate is driven by vision as opposed to resources.”
- People spoke about “nurturing neighborhoods” as vital parts of the healthy city, “where people are connected to each other in their community and we have healthy social capital.”
- Many identified financial self-sufficiency for the city; others spoke of the city of the future as being vibrant in the areas of the arts, economy, culture and people, having a sense of place where citizens respect and seek out diversity in all its forms.
- People spoke of cities that would address underlying causes of crime and victimization, an underlying sense that social and economic issues are intertwined.
- Some talked about the importance of a sound decision-making process “that is responsive to economic, social and environmental considerations.”
- Many hoped to see the city of the future offering challenging and interesting employment opportunities that will attract people and where employers have a social conscience that will help address the challenges faced by urban aboriginals and the integration of immigrants. One participant saw “friendly, welcoming” cities (like Edmonton!).

- One Saskatoon participant summarized a goal comprising three “As”: acclimatization, accommodation and adjustment as providing a real hope to make the city a healthy and accommodating community.
- One Vancouver resident raised the need for affordable housing; another spoke of safe homes, safe communities.
- Many expressed concern over the consequences of urban sprawl.
- Another Vancouver resident wished for “integrated regional approaches to problem-solving; not just the easy issues like transportation.”
- Many wished for the revitalization of downtown areas.
- Many said that a successful and desirable city is one that has respect for and cares for senior citizens.
- One saw the future being hospitable to those who work in the arts and culture sectors where they can take for granted the same employee benefits as the rest of the sectors in our community.
- One offered a bold ambition: reducing passenger vehicles by fifty per cent and at the same time adding fifty per cent more green spaces (like golf courses!).
- Some wished for cities that have no need for prisons, where there might be alternatives to incarceration.
- Some wished for cities that would recognize that everything is interconnected: build social, economic and environmental capital at the same time.
- Others wished for cities where people unite to build a city across cultures and groups while maintaining one identity.
- Some wished for a vibrant core with an active life and participation balanced by strong civic management: a vision where everyone is respected and where their inputs are reflected in the operations and decisions of the city.
- One said that the cities in 2020 should have “a buzz”; one Edmontonian spoke of “charm and energy.”
- Some said that cities of the future should be forward-looking instead of only responding to issues – that they would employ creativity in their planning.
- Many said that they would hope to see multi-agency approaches to problems.

- One said that the cities in 2020 should have an environment in which all talents are embraced and applied, where cities do more than pay lip-service to diversity.
- Some said that cities in 2020 should feature great mobility: improving transportation, getting cars off the road, improving transit, urban development (moving people back to the city and creating neighbourhoods in the city).
- Many said that cities should resolve the many current issues around governance that challenge change.

# “THINKING TOGETHER ABOUT A CITY’S COMPETITIVENESS”

## LEAD DISCUSSANT: LINDA THORSTAD CEO, VANCOUVER ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

**Linda Thorstad:** This symposium is relevant to me here in my role in Vancouver. What makes a city competitive? What are its key attributes? How can a city capitalize on some of those competitive advantages?

It’s my view that business interests are so interwoven with social and environmental interests that they are not mutually exclusive. A city works well when all of those interests are involved. What makes a city competitive? A competitive city has to have a longer-term vision as to what it wants to be. For Vancouver, it is to be the preferred global centre for innovation- and knowledge-based enterprise. It is a lofty goal, but we think it is achievable. We’ve got leading Canadian universities here and an enviable quality of life and that will allow us to attract a very high quality of individual to the area.

It is equally important that a city have a set of values and a strategy that helps to guide its efforts. Our set of values, captured by the acronym IDEAS includes

- *innovation*, which helps support the growth of a number of our key sectors;
- *diversity* – both cultural and economic; cultural diversity provides strength to the city;
- *entrepreneurship* underpins our work; along with
- *alliances*: a pooling of resources, a collaboration aimed at harmonizing efforts; and
- *sustainability*: an integration of economic, social and environmental considerations.

Another key element in terms of the competitive city is seeing strong but collaborative leadership. Our mission is to continue to provide leadership and continuing strategic direction that enhances strength and the diversity of the Vancouver economy.

But we do not view our role in isolation; we have worked extensively with federal and provincial governments, who provide policy context for a lot of our effort. We also work with city staff, business and the arts community. Collaborative efforts are critical to our success.

In the broader view, we have adopted a strategy with a set of well-defined goals:

- making sure the business climate works;
- making sure that the businesses here actually stay and grow; it is essentially customer-relationship management;
- business attraction – attracting new investment and knowledge-based business consistent with that broader vision that we had put forward;
- monitoring progress: making sure that we’re monitoring our own economic progress; benchmarking ourselves against a number of other urban centres; and

- adopting a broader view: the city has to have a well-defined sense of identity – some kind of value proposition that really sets it apart from others, a “brand.”

The branding process was truly a collaborative effort. We were able to draw on Industry Canada’s market research and the work done by the provincial government. We then pulled all that data and information together to conceive a brand and its graphic identity and then market-tested that brand. Our new brand presents Vancouver as vibrant, innovative, and connected.

A competitive city must understand its business communities — its key sectors or clusters, its newly emerging businesses as well as its mature businesses that drive the economy and account for a number of head offices. A competitive city must also have an active business-retention program.

What does this mean to public-sector managers? It means knowing your business community; tracking business movements; letting businesses know that the city is supportive and interested in their presence; ensuring that local businesses are aware of the services that are available; and providing a real communications link with city council.

What are some of the key competitive factors?

- a vibrant community with access to a skilled and diverse workforce;
- a diverse economy;
- a competitive cost regime;
- land-zoning and land-use that enables growth in desirable sectors;
- a culture of innovation;
- strong capacity;
- strong educational institutions; and
- proven commercial success: companies that take ideas and turn them into commercial products.

The other piece that I think is critical is “connections”:

1. To the world by way of transportation, telecommunications; and
2. To nature and its promise of a better quality of life.

So, with all of those key pieces in place, how does the city then capitalize on its competitive advantages? I see three key themes. Because we are operating in a global context, that means we need

- aggressive marketing at the city, regional, provincial and federal levels;
- relationship-building, with key real-estate contacts and site selectors; and
- to maintain current data and understand who our “competitors” are.

“Competitors” is an interesting word; we also view much of what we do as complementary to other cities both up and down the coast. It’s really just keeping track of our sister cities around the world.

## A Discussion on Branding the City

**Question:** Ms. Thorstad, what is the relationship between vision and branding?

**Linda Thorstad:** It has been said that a “vision” creates a longer-term view about where a community wants to go. A “brand” rather defines what a community is and what its “value proposition” is, particularly in relation to other urban centres: the job is now to make sure that that brand is out there in front of people

**Question:** What about alliances and partnerships? Every city, community that has been successful is able to forge alliances. How challenging is it to bring together the key, most dynamic leaders to have the desired effect in terms of the sort of work that helps to allow Vancouver to grow? It was pointed out that the current Vancouver city council is not particularly pro-business or pro-development. All councils are complex, but this one wasn’t really elected on that basis. You personally face a challenge this afternoon: maintaining and strengthening that partnership with one of the key constituents.

**Linda Thorstad:** Relationship-building is one of the key pieces and one of the cornerstones of our efforts. We have found that we have been able to garner tremendous support from the business community. We estimated that over 2,000 volunteer-hours from the business community were spent participating in workshops, supporting us at the board level, and supporting us in voluntary efforts in communities.

It’s been relatively easy; there is a lot of pent-up enthusiasm, pent-up interest in seeing economic development advance here. It is worth pointing out that we enjoy an excellent working relationship with City of Vancouver staff, and they’ve been very supportive of our efforts. They’ve given their time; so we view them as partners, along with the Vancouver Board of Trade and the BC Business Council. Almost every project that we’ve done, every study that we’ve undertaken, has been done in partnership with other organizations.

**Question:** Ms. Thorstad, what process did you go through to articulate that vision and the involvement of those groups in sectors of society?

**Linda Thorstad:** We created a number of workshops and involved a wide range of interests. We worked with the City of Vancouver’s city plan, which was predicated on two years of consultation, and we worked with over 200 people from a broad range of organizations, including the arts council, of other levels of government, a broad cross-section in terms of the communities, and not just the business community.

**Question:** Ms. Thorstad, what about the goals? How do you measure your success and report back to the aforementioned groups?

**Linda Thorstad:** That’s the most difficult thing to answer, and we ask that question of many of our sister organizations. We look at a number of other business models across the country and

around the world for economic development. We compare organizational structures and a whole range of things.

We were recently able to announce that eBay has moved to Burnaby, near Vancouver. We worked with them to bring them here; those can be measured. A lot of activity-based measures apply – just releasing our annual report next week – a lot of those activity-based measures are in there.

**Question:** Ms. Thorstad, when we talk about economic development, there's always the traditional measures: the number of head offices, for example. Perhaps we need some new ways to measure in terms of what the business community can offer to the city. Can we measure the quality of the corporate leadership any given business can bring into the community? How do you talk about values that go beyond the traditional economic?

**Linda Thorstad:** Quality not quantity; it's a critical piece that guides a lot of our work. In terms of corporate leadership on the "people" side – there are clear benefits from economic growth, a stronger tax base, better benefits. Most organizations do play a role in the community through corporate sponsorships.

Duke Energy purchased West Coast Energy. We had a talk at the Vancouver Board of Trade with the new CEO and he was absolutely adamant about the critical role Duke Energy needed to play in the community in terms of corporate sponsorship, volunteer involvement of the staff in Vancouver and in various communities.

**Comment:** Ms. Thorstad, I'd like to talk about Regina's experience with branding. Before we had used a sort of city symbol: in block letters – "Regina," with a crown on the top. We emphasized the "queen" city; and we emphasized Mounties and the like. The new logo has a bit of a skyline on it, and it has a new approach. This is an identity that came about when we came to look at our image. We adopted a process similar to yours, and the Mayor's Task Force on Regina's Image was created.

The vision established by council a couple of years back is very similar to the visions that we could develop from individual comments in this room this morning:

- where people grow together;
- a city recognized for social, economic and environmental sustainability;
- the hub of a region of diversified economic growth;
- people-centredness;
- inclusiveness – celebrating cultural diversity;
- aboriginal people participating fully in economic and community affairs;
- people coming here because of the quality of life – it is attractive, generous, affordable, accessible, compact and competitive; seniors can retire in security; young people can thrive in opportunity; a good place to live; and
- at the centre of the vision of our city council was the word "prosperity."

City council is a key group when you start talking about business issues. Our own council relies considerably upon advice that's given to us by our economic development authority. But we need other partners – those of you in the provincial government circles, and federal government circles as well. The people in Regina know how key all three levels of government are in developing prosperity within a community or a region.

Look at incentives – the municipality provides incentives from the tax base or encouragement for businesses to settle in the community. But the long-term benefits of that newly created industry or business tend to go to the province or to the federal government. If you look at taxation that is paid within the municipality, very little of it goes back into the municipality for quality of life. All of the additional taxes that come from the people, whether consumption, income taxes, etc., tend to go to other levels of government. That's why you're hearing my level of government say we want other levels to participate in our prosperity; it's important that we translate that prosperity into quality of life so that we do have a competitive community.

**Question:** Ms. Thorstad, can I ask about the scale of your activity? Do you work only at the broad “Vancouver” scale? Does your type of work go down to the local neighbourhood? What about small businesses and their ability to live in the neighbourhood as well as in the city?

**Linda Thorstad:** Yes and no. We are tasked with economic development for the city of Vancouver, which exists within the greater Vancouver Regional District. I have challenged a number of my peers around the region to see what we can do to harmonize our efforts at a regional scale. Our focus is Vancouver; there are other organizations like business-improvement associations that exist for neighbourhoods. We focused on broader economic development. So, whether it's a new business (like eBay, which chose Burnaby), it's the macro-economic piece that we're looking at, not local business-improvement associations.

**Question:** What does the economic incentive activity do for the community?

**Linda Thorstad:** Vancouver is not only about economic growth, economic development at any price or cost. We recognize that when new jobs come into the city, pressure are placed on the transportation sector and on community services. We have a comprehensive program of financing growth in Vancouver. As new development occurs, the city gets money to ensure that the neighbourhood's services, community centres, day care, parks, affordable housing have money coming in from that new development, to help maintain the livability of the community so there is a very close link. Without it, the communities become less livable; it's a challenge to charge people to come. It's hard to say no, but for the long-term you need to do that. We need mutual funding.

**Question:** How do you measure your success with attracting the right people?

**Linda Thorstad:** It's our job to make sure that people know about Vancouver, that people want to come and live here. The argument is that, if you're looking at building a business, you will find in Vancouver access to a highly skilled labour pool. For many businesses, that is the top consideration, and all the other pieces fall in underneath it. KPMG ranks cost of doing business

in Vancouver as among the most competitive. We do have that unique perspective, along with incredible quality of life, and that attracts people, not just business.

**Question:** Ms. Thorstad, I am concerned with the word “competitive” in the commercial world. It does depend on branding. But we have traditions that precede all this commercialization, and I wonder if we can find ways to promote cooperation. It is clear that we are inheriting a tradition where the city was the crucible, where change was accommodated, where social progress was made, which still today is the only real hope for global progress. Is it all about competition?

**Linda Thorstad:** I would suggest that we not view the business/commercial interests alone, but they must be considered in the broader sustainability context. While we benchmark competitor cities – we view many of those as collaborative relationships – in fact, we are building some trade relationships now with a number of cities around the world. This is in a formative stage, but we view opportunities in the biotech area, for example, and exchange information and help sectors with sister cities around the world. It is my job to do economic development for the city. We do it to support the social services, arts and culture. There are wider benefits to the work we do. I have no doubt that eBay considers it chose the Vancouver area but from a municipal context, eBay went to Burnaby. In reality our work is beneficial to the entire province.

**Final Comment:** Ms. Thorstad, I think we must recognize that the big driver of what we can do in cities is global capitalization – and the set of inequalities that comes with it. I think there are opportunities amidst the challenges. The reality is that we don’t control who comes to our cities. We don’t have passports; people show up whether you want them or not. There is never an ideal mix of both the people we want and don’t want. This issue of collaboration – in light of global capitalization – forces us to realize that we are partners at one end but competing at another.

## **“THINKING TOGETHER ABOUT THE PLACE OF CULTURE IN THE CITY”**

**LEAD DISCUSSANT: DUNCAN LOW  
DIRECTOR, VANCOUVER EAST CULTURAL CENTRE**

**Duncan Low:** Arts and culture define Greater Vancouver as a community; they help shape the region’s unique identity. They set us apart from other metropolitan areas; they are fundamental to the quality of life enjoyed by Greater Vancouver residents and are an attraction for visitors. It is important to recognize that the cultural sector also makes a substantial contribution to Greater Vancouver’s economic well-being, supporting jobs and businesses across the region.

Arts and culture contribute to the “livable” region. It follows that public investment in an arts and culture sector represents good value to all levels of government, with the investment being returned several-fold in economic and social benefits.

However, as the executive director of a medium-sized arts centre on Vancouver’s east side, I would like to start with a quote from Toronto’s chief of police: “We have been bogged down; overloaded by paperwork.” Hold that thought – I will come back to it.

Many believe that any relationship between arts and business is seriously flawed – some believe they should never enter into a relationship of any kind. I would argue that there is a positive role to be played by business in the arts, and vice versa. The nature of private enterprise does not ultimately marry well with a city’s, province’s or country’s cultural policy. A policy founded on profit and loss is not a healthy indicator or benchmark for a community to base either its future policy or its healthy existence upon. Yet that seems to be what is happening.

In the last fifteen months, I have been asked to conduct six consultancies under the Canada Council to look for answers to the same questions: How do we increase our private-sector revenue, either to compensate for under-funding or to compensate for a decline in funding?

It is at this point that some here today might argue that some levels of public funding are increasing. That may be true. But they have been overshadowed by decreases in other sectors and rising costs. It must also take into account the drastically different levels of *per capita* funding for the arts across the country.

It is not good enough for funding agencies to compare themselves with other funding agencies in the same province; one must look to the highest municipal or provincial benchmark and ask how they do it.

If one likens the cultural community to a cake – I would argue that the private sector must only ever be seen as the icing, it cannot be seen to contribute the cake itself. Last year, Vancouver’s East Cultural Centre (VECC) met all its expenses. It received more support from

the private sector than from the City of Vancouver and the BC Arts Council combined; that includes the fact that our building is city owned, and that the VECC leases it for \$1 a year.

The VECC youth program is an example of corporate-sponsored arts in a healthy city. In 1997, the VECC realized that its program was missing a whole section of society: young people aged fourteen to nineteen. We explored the creation of a youth program, both in cost and content. In 1998–99, the Vancouver Foundation gave \$50,000 over a two-year period to support the youth pilot-project’s coordinator. This grant was strictly to help initiate the program. In 2000–01, based on the success of the pilot-program, BC Hydro sponsored the youth program for \$50,000 for the next two years. In 2002, BC Hydro did not continue their sponsorship. Continuation was recommended, but due to BC Hydro’s financial position, severe cutbacks were being initiated.

As of today, the VECC has not been able to find a sponsor to fill the void left by BC Hydro. The problem is finding a corporate sponsor who is willing to pick up a sponsorship discarded by another organization. Sadly, the trend now is for each sponsorship to be “new” for that partnership, and this is also becoming the trend for certain aspects of government funding as well.

It is the population of any municipality, province or country that must ultimately decide on what level of services they wish to have because it is through taxation that the level of services will ultimately be decided.

It is a politician’s responsibility to outline the cost implications for a healthy city as a whole rather than, as it usually happens, limiting their involvement to putting forward the “either/or” scenario. A truly healthy city must, like an apple, be healthy throughout. Or, to put it another way, it is the politicians’ and civil servants’ responsibility to determine and outline to the citizens they represent what they can properly fund under the current tax base. It is government’s responsibility either to fund it or cut it; they, like the citizens they serve, cannot have it both ways.

The trouble we all face is not whether or not we would like healthy cities, but, more importantly, whether we want to pay to live in healthy cities. And there you have the problem: too often we all want something but we just don’t want to pay for it. Look at what is happening to symphony orchestras across the country.

How many recent governments have been elected on an increased taxation ticket? The environmental lobby has been very good at getting their message across; a healthy environment may cost more but it is necessary – it is a necessity. Is it possible to get the same message across for all aspects of a healthy community, including arts and culture? I don’t know.

As director of a small arts centre, the last three years have left us with something a doctor might possibly diagnose as cultural schizophrenia due to the close and continuous contact with all levels of government. On one hand, we have the overpowering sense of achievement and contentment that comes from knowing that governments at all levels are committed to the

continued support of the arts and cultural sector and enabling continued creativity. On the other hand, he have the overpowering and ever-increasing sense of frustration at the mounting levels of forms and reports that must be completed to attain the funding in order to make that creativity possible.

To demonstrate the cultural schizophrenia theory, I use Robert Lepage's recent visit to Vancouver with "The Far Side of the Moon," an award winning production. If you look at the cultural health of any city, Robert Lepage is one of Canada's natural resources; however, as with any good medicine, it often needs to be taken in regular doses. But, for financial reasons, some of his award-winning production has never made it to the west coast. Four arts organizations in Vancouver came together to present "The Far Side of the Moon." The production was a sell-out success made possible through the generous support of several funding agencies.

At the same time, on the other side of the cultural schizophrenia equation, the VECC recently went through a funding process where over a number of weeks we completed, re-completed and re-completed the re-completed application forms. We had to re-complete for several reasons: we had misunderstood several sections of the form, we were told we had a certain number of pages to complete our programming statement. Then, we were told our program statement was not detailed enough. So, we were told to re-complete the form, ignoring the number-of-pages rule. The application process is becoming so elongated that in some ways it is becoming counter-productive. By applying on an annual basis and by applying so far in advance, we are missing some cultural opportunities.

Another example is the VECC's capital campaign. We have just completed our feasibility study; we've secured a \$1-million Vancouver grant and secured funding from the private sector. We recently sent the forms to a government agency to secure a second payment of under \$9,000. We were slightly taken aback when asked to complete another report; we felt that a detailed, 100-page document, in-depth study would have sufficed. I must cite the Toronto police chief (I told you to hold that thought!): we are being bogged down, overloaded by paper work.

The VECC is a medium-sized arts centre that presents over 200 performances a year. In July 1996, the organization was on a point of financial collapse; the centre's current deficit was \$250,000. There was an accounting problem: there were no accounts! There was a severe cash-flow problem, and a large numbers of creditors. Today, I am happy to report the centre is nearly debt-free; has a healthy cash flow, and has created a new partnership with Alcan, the largest performing arts award of its kind in Canada. We have recently secured the second million-dollar award for capital improvements.

I leave you with a number of requests. First, municipal, provincial and federal funding agencies must come together to create one funding document or form that is suitable for all arts and cultural organizations. They should ask that an organizational profile be filed once every three years from which agencies at all levels of government can make funding decisions.

Second, I make a request that all government agencies act responsibly: funding decisions are taken today that place arts and cultural organizations in a threatened situation because they force them to act in "unbusiness-like" manners. In some instance, they force arts and cultural

institutions to break the law – in the use of the minimum wage, for example. Governments must make some hard decisions: either fund organizations so that they will have the tools to be successful, or don't fund at all.

Third, we should allow government representatives to sit on boards of directors. Finally, we should start to discuss the idea that arts-stabilization programs may not be the solution.

## **A Discussion on the Place of Culture in the City**

**Question:** Mr. Lowe, you said that “culture defines a community.” I agree, but reflecting on my work as a public servant, I recall having to make the argument many years ago that arts and culture were a relatively inexpensive way for governments to create jobs. I wonder now if this is a valuable proposition. Should we not support the arts and culture because of their intrinsic value to us in expressing to ourselves who we are? We need to go back to the core issue: why should we support the arts and culture in our cities? What is the purpose?

**Duncan Lowe:** I agree with you that we should support the arts because of their intrinsic value and because it states who we are. I think it's a way for cultures to talk to cultures; for societies and countries to talk to each other; there are artistic experiences all over the world today – art theatres, centres, major festivals – we don't have a major arts festival on the west coast. Maybe we should.

**Question:** Mr. Lowe, I am struggling through your stabilization idea. It was never intended as the panacea, and has been – take the case of Vancouver to support the symphony. Eight other organizations went through it and did not emerge very well. So, we are looking at that: the whole question of cultural funding from government – the revenue mix, the public /private mix – do you have in your mind what the right kind of formula would be? They're different all over the country. Some are direct to the organization; others are done through taxation, revenue. There's quite a mix of elements in funding the arts, depending on what it is and what level they want to go to

**Duncan Lowe:** Quebec has a very fine funding model; per-capita funding from all levels of government, and you can see the effect Quebec is having on the world stage. I first came to Canada from the U.K. because of the extraordinary work we were seeing coming out of Quebec. There is a model, and Quebec is the one to follow.

**Question:** Mr. Lowe, we are facing an interesting choice in our community: we have two competing proposals for a similar site. We are being asked – as citizens and funders – to consider the trade-offs: if we use a very premium site in our community for an arts building, we potentially deny that site for business. An innovative, high cash-flow, job-creation opportunity might be lost. The question is, how do we deal with the forced choice that public institutions must make? If municipal government is going to create a climate conducive to business it may have to compromise on its support to the arts community. We have a site choice that must be made; how do we get at that?

**Duncan Lowe:** I can point to a recent case study: the Edinburgh Travis Theatre. It was built on a prime site and came to a compromise: they built the business above and the theatre in the basement. It was a successful model. You could do that on your site with the right team of architects and financing, I'm sure you could.

**Question:** Mr. Lowe, I would like to take the discussion away from funding to focus on the place of culture in competitive/healthy cities. There's a dialogue going on now regarding creative cities. They are seen as cities where knowledge workers want to work because they promise an environment where creativity and ambition is nurtured and seen as valued. Within that context, how could we ensure that the public understands and supports the importance and value of the arts within a broader discussion of creative cities and along a continuum of support to the arts, non-profit, "professional arts associations?" The arts has been shown as being extremely valuable in the school system, how it expands students thinking, develops cognitive abilities, motor skills. I would like to see a continuation of arts and cultural support in society, not just in not-for-profit professional arts societies.

**Duncan Lowe:** How do you get this synergy going, a city moving so that creativity is a way of life? If we are careful about how we structure the role of the arts in the city then we are in a position to make a vibrant city in the west. Cities in western Canada are changing rapidly; communities are emerging. In Regina and Saskatoon, the aboriginal community is growing fast, cultural institutions are struggling, new creators emerging, new audiences, new art forms. Are we ready to follow the shift that is currently taking place when we look at the western Canadian population? Are our cultural institutions making this shift along with the make-up of Canadian cities?

### **Reports from the Breakout Groups:**

*Following Mr. Low's remarks, a dialogue circle of four discussants identified three questions that they felt needed to be addressed. Breakout groups gathered in the concourse to discuss one assigned question. Each group reported in a closing circle of conversation about the outcome from the breakout group discussions.*

#### ***Question 1: Why should we support the arts?***

Arts development and culture can

- help address social problems;
- make cities more attractive to residents, tourists, potential residents and business;
- build social cohesion, in terms of giving people a sense of space;
- provide activities to get involved with at local level;
- provide opportunities to meet neighbours and promote connectedness between people and their community;
- reduce recidivism, if delivered in a prison setting. At the school level, it might encourage the young at an individual level to be interested in the arts; and
- contribute overall to a competitive and healthy community; if cities are to compete for new business and residents, culture is a key factor in helping attract people and business.

#### ***Question 2: What is the role of the arts in a healthy community?***

Arts in a healthy community

- allows people to escape, to find a socially acceptable way to express themselves;

- instigates and continues to advocate for social change;
- promotes inclusivity — from hip-hop to women to graffiti;
- impassions (people die for issues of cultural expression); it's part of the resiliency of this part of human nature – you can't make it go away;
- promotes self-expression;
- expresses cultural values and its experience instils a sense of pride in ethnic and cultural communities. Not having this outlet is destructive; in that sense, arts and culture strengthens the Canadian mosaic;
- attracts top talent into the community; for example, in the health-care sector, we have lots of difficulty in recruiting of health professionals – particularly rural areas. One of the reasons: lack of opportunity to be able to take advantage of the arts community;
- builds bridges to the aboriginal community and provides opportunities to become acquainted with First Nations communities; sometimes it is the first introduction to that community;
- brings diverse cultural communities together, and promotes the appreciation of the richness of our own ethnic communities — for example, the Edmonton Heritage Days Festival; and
- keeps us balanced; it stretches our thinking.

***Question 3: What are the models, formulae for organizational and financial responses to the challenges faced by the arts/ cultural sector?***

- One of the issues that needs to be addressed is the paper-work issue. We need to make the process simple, with a single form, single access; levels of government should cooperate in providing this type of application process.
- The federal government should make a decision to reduce its support of such a wide number of national organizations and instead provide sustainable levels of funding for those organizations it does support.
- There needs to be an effort made by arts and cultural organizations to position and brand themselves. Use the example of universities that have very successfully identified themselves as a legitimate, important area for investment and that have reaped the benefits of significant investment efforts.
- Governments have to tie cultural and arts support with economic and social health, particularly in a city.
- The private sector is getting a free ride. In order to attract and retain foreign investment and people to work, you need the cultural institutions. The private sector doesn't seem to be doing its fair share in this country.
- Culture is a key factor in attracting business. It attracts top talent. If culture is so integral to attracting top talent and business, then why aren't we at the table more often to have discussions about the future of our city and province?

# “LEARNING TOGETHER ABOUT THE COMPETITIVE CITY IN THE UNITED STATES”

**LEAD DISCUSSANT: WYMAN WINSTON  
EXECUTIVE DEPUTY DIRECTOR, PORTLAND (OREGON)  
DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION**

**Wyman Winston:** Portland is the twenty-seventh largest city in the United States, with 1.9 million residents, and a major port, commerce and trade, and has experienced extraordinary growth. It has competitive advantages that keep it growing; much of the population that it is attracting are knowledge workers. Along with large numbers of immigrants – particularly *Latinos* – who are coming to Portland at three times the rate of growth of the normal population. It has a well-educated workforce; a significant number of young people in their twenties and thirties make Portland their home, and that energy also provides an advantage that is unique among American cities.

Portland faces major challenges, such as in transportation. Lately, wages and income have stalled. There are broad social issues: how do we as neighbours work together, trust each other, develop a common trust and vision that will allow us to look beyond our individual needs within our community, and how do we look at the broader value that might exist by working together?

I would like to talk about the Portland Development Commission (PDC), the urban-renewal tool that has been so critical to Portland’s growth. It has accomplished a great deal since it was formed in 1958, but I must emphasize this has been a collaborative effort of local, county, region, state and federal governments.

The PDC was conceived as an urban-renewal agency to implement brick-and-mortar projects: parks, streets, sewers, infrastructures. It also negotiates agreements with commercial and retail development. We are now working on a major convention-centre hotel. The PDC is the public face of the built environment in the city. It is governed by a five-member board that plays a critical role in policy and networking with the other governmental bodies in the city and in the region.

Its mission is to attract and bring new resources to the city. It has a vision of a diverse city that is both sustainable and economically healthy, featuring a healthy urban core and a healthy region. Our bottom line is to better the quality of life for all citizens.

We have accomplished that by pursuing three goals: jobs, Housing, and redevelopment. Staff is expected to integrate these goals and understand the synergy of bringing together jobs, housing and redevelopment creating something far greater than any of the individual goals could do alone.

Key partners are not only public institutions and agencies but units of government. Over the last decade, there’s been a slow process of working beyond the city proper and region, and recently we have developed a much more formal relationship with our regional partners. The PDC often

acts as the host of partners brought together to develop a common vision that we can all respect and work within.

How do we pay for the brick-and-mortar and development activities? The primary source is a tax increment. Federal grants account for less than five per cent; the city is a major player. In many cases, that investment is a substitute for the vacuum resulting from the lack of focus and attention payed by the federal government. The current annual budget is around \$250 million, but our goal is to develop \$5 billion in investment this decade.

The PDC currently focuses its attention on ten urban-renewal areas, including downtown, airport, neighbourhoods with a poor history in investment and infrastructure, and areas where transit is a major component of the development activity.

How exactly do we create it? How did this end up in our budget?

Boundaries are drawn around specific areas and the tax base is frozen. Bonds were issued to finance projects and the bonds are eventually paid off by the rising property values above that frozen base. Urban renewal occurs in a twenty-to-thirty-year period. The revenue earned through bonds, however, allows the PDC to invest in major projects. Eventually, the bonds are retired through the increment, and, at the end of the period (some time between twenty and thirty years), the tax increment district is eliminated and all of that tax increment that has grown over time reverts to all of the taxing bodies.

There are some limitations of what the PDC can do. It cannot fund social services, for example. Can urban renewal be used for art? Yes, as long as that art is part of the brick-and-mortar development that is occurring, so it can't be isolated from development but must be integrated into the development itself. It can't be used as wage-and-income support as a way to supplement the wages of low-income residents in that geographical area. We are prohibited under state law to use it this way.

The history of the PDC and the impact it has had reflects part of what makes Portland what it is today. When it was first created, it focused its effort on the area south of downtown. By the early 1980s, the area had contributed visibly to the development of the central business district because it now provided middle-class enclaves within walking distance of it.

In 1966, Portland State University was designated as an urban-renewal area, and the PDC negotiated an agreement to become the development partner for the university. The PDC oversaw the physical development on the university – including student housing, academic buildings; mixed-use buildings. The Portland State University concluded that it made more sense to reinforce and use an entity that had that capacity than to build it themselves.

Beyond the university and the revitalization of neighbourhoods, the PDC involved itself in urban-waterfront renewal in 1974. This had been a major highway through the city. The highway was decommissioned, and the PDC built the waterfront that many people know as Portland. In 1978, the PDC focused on economic development – a concentrated effort to bring knowledge workers and technology companies into Portland, while at the same time developing

neighbourhoods. So, there's a back and forth – between downtown development and neighbourhood in response to the needs of the community, which raised legitimate criticism that our focus was too much on downtown.

Today, the PDC is working on the “soft waterfront,” the last major undeveloped parcel in the central city – 130 acres. On this site, the university has agreed to put major wet labs and technical facilities. The idea here is for the soft waterfront to lead development for the 21<sup>st</sup> century, with a major focus on technology, especially biotechnology. This partnership with the PSU, the city and the region will bring housing, retail, commercial and laboratory facilities into one brand-new neighbourhood.

But we have some challenges, not the least of which is affordable housing. Like Vancouver, it is difficult for working-class families to live in the city: Portland has blue-collar wages but west-coast prices.

We have just completed a major economic development strategy that will focus on looking at preparing Portland and the region for the 21<sup>st</sup> century. One of the conclusions is that Portland is overrepresented in manufacturing – particularly in high-tech manufacturing. We are going to lose those jobs – no question about it. Asia will have the infrastructure to be able to compete with us and we are not going to be able to keep those jobs. The question is, what industry will distinguish our economy so that we can both attract and retain companies for the robust economy of the 21<sup>st</sup> century?

We've established new production goals. We need to double housing production not only in terms of low-income housing but housing for middle-class families – those whose incomes are too high to use traditional public subsidies but too low to compete in the market place. We have to find a solution for both.

Portland has had an excellent business environment – it is ranked highly as a place for business and has the highest rate of women-owned businesses. Our job now is to leverage that. Electronic manufacturing is a big area, but we are transitioning away. We have done this successfully in the past, moving way from an economy based on timber to electronics. We now have to move from electronics to the new industries.

The challenge is to organize intelligently and get our message across: if everyone is doing their own thing, if we have the synergy, Portland can be the big dog.

Thank you for inviting me here. This is my first time in Vancouver. There is a very special relationship between Portland and Vancouver. The City of Portland benchmarks itself to you; it looks at what you have done, your successes and failures, and tries to use those lessons to make Portland a better city. I want to welcome you to Portland, and maybe there are a few things we can share with you, and things you can learn.

## A Discussion on the Portland Experience

**Question:** Mr. Winston, how do you politically organize that process to make it truly democratically representative?

**Wyman Winston:** The PDC is appointed by the mayor but approved by council. The PDC is a technically limited, special-purpose agency, and the city can at any time take those powers back. Portland local governance has a weak mayor structure and is very decentralized. All local council members are elected on a city-wide basis, so we don't have districts.

Below that, there are 140 neighbourhoods, and Portland is unique in this regard among American cities. These recognized neighbourhoods contribute and have a very formal role to play in a range of zoning processes. Citizens, through their neighbourhood associations, have the opportunity to participate in decision-making. The city does offer support for these neighbourhood organizations – typically, a person in an office that will support six neighbourhoods.

There are also formal urban-renewal advisory boards where citizens can get involved. The PDC is on the verge of passing a resolution that will institutionalize what used to be an informal process we've been using to bring citizens together to provide advice to our commission.

**Question:** Mr. Winston, the PDC is an intriguing entity. In Winnipeg, development responsibility is scattered; nobody in the city is really responsible or accountable for urban renewal. You have the mayor, the council, but nobody who is clearly given that responsibility and accountability. In your opinion, does urban renewal lead to economic development? Or is it the other way around?

**Wyman Winston:** The driver is urban renewal, in our experience. It's a little ironic. The PDC is about brick and mortar, but what goes on inside the building is what is important.

**Question:** Mr. Winston, have there been mistakes?

**Wyman Winston:** In cities across the nation, urban renewal has been used as a blunt instrument of oppression; it's calling it the way it is. In the early 1960s, the PDC pursued a project that inadvertently destroyed a predominantly Jewish/Italian community; the people have never really recovered. But Portland did something unique: it pulled back from behaving as a blunt instrument and tried to reposition redevelopment and use it as a tool that was in the best interests of the largest number of citizens.

Many American cities that had similar problems abandoned their urban-renewal projects because of the political fallout from the abuses; the political decision was that such a tainted tool could not be used any longer. Portland worked through that and chose to maintain it.

**Question:** Mr. Winston, your story reminds us that you can accomplish great things with a simple plan. The key things that I heard you talked about were about clear goals, strong partnerships, shared vision, a limited number of renewal areas. The plan was tackled in an orderly fashion. Can you talk about the importance of performance measures to test as you're going along, how, in fact, you were meeting the goals that you set for yourselves?

**Wyman Winston:** The PDC has been very successful in producing the type of results that the community wants. We've incorporated a significant goal around sustainability. What we call the triple bottom line:

- Equity: pursue projects that will help resolve the issue of the income disparity;
- Environmentally sound;
- Economic sense: because if it doesn't, it simply won't happen.

**Question:** Mr. Winston, I have two questions: First, how do you ensure that this re-investment is benefiting all the segments of your population defined by ethnicity, age, socioeconomic income? Secondly, what is your perception as to whether this re-investment has contributed to minimizing urban sprawl in Portland?

**Wyman Winston:** Portland and the PDC have been very successful in reinforcing urban-growth boundaries. We don't have exclusionary zoning, but the investments that we have made provided incentives for the larger civic, political and policy direction that the broader civic leadership decided to take. Consequently, in-fill housing, mixed-use housing, mixed-income housing is a critical part of what we do, and we are confident that it does reinforce the urban-growth boundary.

The best example of that is “Pearl,” a brand new neighbourhood that was formed in the last decade. Pearl is in one of our urban-renewal districts; it was a former rail industrial yard, under-utilized land. The PDC managed to clean up this toxic land and turned it into a brand new neighbourhood. In the last ten years – particularly the last four to five years – that has been important. We aim to preserve sixty per cent of all of the affordable housing in our central business district that is “threatened” through the normal process of the downtown, which usually means going to higher and better use, and that usually translates in the higher rents or conversions to condos. That market is mainly the person who is making modest wages, mostly in the service industry.

The future holds some very interesting things: the PDC is looking at ways that would focus on wealth creation so as to help low-income persons save for their home. If we can create more home ownership for low-income persons we can help them weather large shifts in the economy. We follow the “triple bottom line” and the issue of equity. For now, we focus on those particular segments that are most at risk in the traditional capitalist development model.

## **Plenary Discussion**

***What are the opportunities and challenges in taking the Portland story into western Canadian cities and communities?***

*Participants were asked to cluster informally in groups of four to six to talk about the presentations and what they believe to be the most important implications and lessons for the “Competitive Canadian City” from Mr. Winston’s remarks. Everyone then returned to their seats for a discussion. The following are among the representative remarks:*

- “In British Columbia, we have the municipal finance authority – so municipalities do have ways in which they can borrow money for redevelopment. We have a history of provincial government helping with urban renewal. Perhaps across western Canada we have different tools and different strategies that can be applied.”

- “Could a B.C. municipality create a commission like the Portland Development Commission to do this kind of work? I can’t see why not. Could they provide some funding to that organization to carry work out? I can’t see why not. We may have more potential than we think we do, if we just look hard enough.”
- “I don’t think the governance model is the challenge; the issue is that we have a patchwork of different framework legislation that enables different municipalities to do different things. So the challenge from the federal perspective is this: how do you engage in partnerships to achieve common objectives across the country when the capacity for municipalities to partner with the federal government and provinces is so uneven. Should we seek an equivalent patchwork of legislation and practices to respond to the challenges? It would not help, it would just add a level of complexity.”
- “Speaking from a municipal perspective, this whole issue of patchwork and governance is very interesting and challenging. But what about the opportunities? There is a major opportunity for municipalities to create their own vision. Through leaderships, through that vision, municipalities can basically build. What I liked about the Portland piece was that, from 1958 through to the current day, Portland stayed the course. It held the value, held the vision; and held that together through some tight political and economic times. Portland shows that the municipality holds responsibility at the end of the day, and municipalities have to take hold of that. Cities must decide if they are going to plan consistently, and they must decide what they are going to be when they grow up.”
- “Our group saw that instead of it being a social program, urban renewal could lead to economic development. The concept that economic development could actually sustain the cost of doing it in the first place could be a major concept breakthrough for many levels of government who fear that they just pour money into problems while being unsure of what benefits will come out of it.”
- “The possibility that structures such as the PDC could lead to a different form of governance was attractive. Maybe the current model of multi-level governance and protection of jurisdiction is not necessarily the most effective. Perhaps a concept such as the PDC can somehow break down mindsets and create the potential and the space for change.”
- “It takes time to build a city. The Vancouver results that you see today are the product of policies that the council set thirty or forty years ago. Like in Portland, a good clear vision has allowed other councils to stay the course. Vancouver has a community charter that has given it more power than other municipalities. We have looked at tax-increment financing in Vancouver with caution. The problem has been this one: if you used your tax increment to build your capital, what do you use for the operating costs over the years? We have tended to use the tax increments to pay for increased demands for police, maintaining the community centre, etc. We have had a lot of developers talk to us and try to argue the tax-increment method. Our response has been to turn the table: We need money from you to make the operation happen. We need your additional money for the actual capital up front.”

**Wyman Winston:** The comment that resonated with me the most was about leadership and a vision. I believe that it’s far more important to establish that vision and to build support around it than to focus on money.

The comment on the use of tax increment is heard in Portland also. There is pressure to use it for social services. The question we're struggling with is the frozen base in Portland does provide for those services; but the frozen base effectively says that "you're putting me on a fiscal diet," in that the amount of dollars you have today don't rise with inflation. In exchange, you get the development and the largesse later; and there is debate in municipalities and in the U.S. generally as to whether this system is cost-beneficial.

Our studies suggest that over time, the benefit is in fact there, but it is at a price of present-day sacrifice for a future benefit. And that is always a challenge – with any governmental body that has limited dollars having to make decisions around who is going to get it and who is not going to get it.

## DAY 2

### Introduction

**Glenn Sigurdson:** Two anchor-concepts started to emerge in the first day. The first was inclusion and diversity. They seem to be constant themes moving around the discussion, and, inevitably, whenever we got into a discussion, we had to ensure that we were able to somehow build a responsive outcome, whether in terms of the process or the substantive outcomes that we wanted to achieve.

We also talked about governance structures and the way in which we managed them, the way we build networks and partnerships, the way governments at different levels and layers are interacting with each other, and their capacity and ability to work within the private sector and NGOs. Governance surfaced and bubbled up to the top as we were talking.

And, around that, one of the things that started to emerge in terms of process, was the need for leadership, clear goals, focus, partnerships, and performance measures.

At the bottom of this, the theme that continued to emerge was sustainability, a word that kept surfacing. There was a need to work towards real results in order to solidify leadership. The sense was that if public servants did not deliver responsive results, then leadership would be challenged to maintain its credibility.

We had a discussion about arts and the culture. It was a wide and broad discussion that defined art as encompassing what we express and think. Arts and cultural services flow into creativity and inevitably lead to competitive and healthy communities.

The kind of conversation we had at the beginning when we introduced people suggests that there were powerful ideas moving around the room. Many people have thoughts on competitiveness, many others on enhancing healthy communities. It was now a question of piecing these ideas together and bringing to life a new collaboration.

## **“THINKING TOGETHER ABOUT TOLERANCE IN A COMPETITIVE AND HEALTHY COMMUNITY”**

**LEAD DISCUSSANT: GEORGE E. LAFOND  
SPECIAL ADVISER ON ABORIGINAL INITIATIVES,  
UNIVERSITY OF SASKATCHEWAN**

**George E. Lafond:** I would like to centre my presentation on the White Buffalo Youth Lodge. I wanted to talk about its lessons, how it began and the theory behind it. I was fortunate to be part of the City of Saskatoon in the mid-1990s to begin work on urban strategies and services for First Nations people.

It was a unique time. It had its challenges but also it affected the moral stance that I had on many issues – principles of how I conducted myself as a politician, not only as a leader for First Nations people but for all the people of Saskatoon. We were trying to create a partnership in which all citizens of Saskatoon were going to benefit. It was easier said than done: the fiscal climate in the 1990s made money tight and partnerships seemed unattainable.

When I was sworn in as a tribal vice-chief in 1995, many of us thought that we had the opportunity to turn theories into decisions. We have seven chiefs on the council, and they were not all the same: we had Dakota First Nations, we also had Saulteaux First Nations in our tribal council (I had no affiliation with Saulteaux people prior to my time as a tribal vice-chief), and four Cree bands.

The new leadership wanted to see progress urgently. If you play to win, you have to have partners. You also need a willingness to compromise in order for the whole to move forward. I have not often seen such a willingness to compromise in order to achieve progress, but the White Buffalo Youth Lodge showed it could be done.

The year 2000 started off as a very normal year. I had just come through an election to be the tribal vice-chief on my third run. I was very comfortable about the fact that we were doing something right: the White Buffalo Youth Lodge partnership had been solidified and we were preparing to make an announcement.

The White Buffalo Youth Lodge was a response to a new demographic reality. Half of Saskatoon’s aboriginal population is under twenty-five years of age. The young people were asking me very serious questions: they wanted to know what we were doing on their behalf. They recognized that they were the biggest real shareholder in our tribal council because they represent the majority.

The Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations recognized this in 1997 and commissioned a report that talked about the future demographics in Saskatchewan. It had nothing to do with the politics of the past or the present. The federation wanted to engage the province in a clear discussion of emerging realities: this is what will become reality and we all have a stake in

making sure that aboriginal youth become a positive force in the future and not the ingredients for what I would call a perfect storm.

What happened on that morning jeopardized the whole project and the partnership itself. I think it changed Saskatchewan and Saskatoon politics. The agenda for the morning of February 7th was simple. We were going to go to the Ukrainian Hall on Avenue G, we were going to sit with our partners – the chairman of the Saskatoon Health Authority, the mayor, the Métis leaders, a number of public servants from the province, a number of federal public servants, and myself. But the phone rang, and I was asked to go visit the chief of police, in his office that morning before the announcement.

I assumed that he was going to ask me to put something in my speech that would acknowledge the partnerships that had been forged in the city on justice issues for young people. It would be easy for me to do. Most of my programs and most of my rhetoric as a tribal leader was “we are working with youth, youth, youth. And when we stop working with youth, we will work with youth some more.”

The city police were an integral part of our partnership. We had worked with their liaison officer; we had organized excursions to northern Saskatchewan with police officers and young people; and we had created what we called a court-diversion program to allow young people to examine what went wrong and what could be done to rehabilitate them.

So we knew each other well. I walked into the office, feeling confident that a great day had arrived. We had all worked very hard to have this event take place. Instead, the chief informed me that an aboriginal man had contacted the city police to complain that he had been abandoned by officers outside the city limits, on a cold February night.

This was terrible news. I gave my word that I would not make any comment to anybody about this and that I would let the chief of police have his opportunity to do a full review of the events and report back to me.

This issue had the potential to create a real uproar and derail our plans for the White Buffalo announcement. We were only beginning to do these programs. I soon felt like I was the only one beginning to address how we keep this thing positive – the good of the city was at stake, as was the good of our region, this partnership, the tribal council.

My first inclination was to speak to people inside the First Nations community, to let them be aware that I should not be the only one that should know this information. But there were too many unknowns, and events could easily combine into a perfect storm that would set back all our collaborative efforts. I would not speak to anybody; it was very hard not to say anything.

It did eventually come to light. And the biggest question asked of me by my friends and colleagues was: Why did you not tell us? Was I thinking too much of the White Buffalo Youth Lodge? Was I not thinking of the bigger picture? So there I was: trying to find an answer to a situation that I'd never seen before.

In reality, this is what is happening in western Canada on the aboriginal front. I would argue that we are in new territory in which winds are gathering. This event challenged me: could I possibly reconcile my love of the city of Saskatoon with the fact that there was something terribly wrong with the city and its relations with First Nations people? There are other ingredients: the high incarceration rates, unemployment, family violence, gender issues, suicide, drugs, prostitution, alcohol, power struggles, and racism. The young people that are now becoming expressive in their opinions do not have the patience to wait five years for change. Their demands are immediate. And I would argue that this explains a very strong trend in our communities: gangs.

In the end, the partnership survived, but the events of February 2000 sent a cold chill on relations between aboriginals and the state. It offered hope; it also offered despair. Like winds that come from opposite directions, events like these can provoke storms. Saskatchewan may become the ground for a perfect storm if partnerships such as the White Buffalo Youth Lodge are not multiplied.

### **A Discussion on Collaborating with First Nations in Urban Areas**

**Question:** Mr. Lafond, there are fourteen urban reserves in Saskatchewan, and Regina finally is going to get an urban reserve. You have pointed to many problems, and I agree with you. But there have been major successes – casinos and major hotels are owned by First Nations people themselves, the impact of the businesses in Sutherland, the forestry field, the potential growth of ethanol. In terms of education, the good news is that more and more kids are staying in school. By some counts, there are well over 3,000 kids in college right now. What is your advice to the provincial, municipal, federal people? How can we work together to make sure that the aboriginal people in the urban areas are supported so that they, in turn, can help themselves. How can we best work together?

**George E. Lafond:** My thought is that strategies are possible and are urgent. What do people want? Many say they want housing, but most of our constituents don't want housing for the house. They want housing in the serviced areas: they want bus routes, school, and our neighbourhoods that have levels of services equal to all others. I am also saying that progress will come if First Nations take their politics from a different perspective. We must recognize that we are in this together; if we don't have some reconciliation on some very important matters we're all going to be in a backwater. We will not have a very civil society in Saskatchewan.

As a citizen of Saskatoon, you just have to get out there and begin to build some very basic relations based on some very principled leadership that calls on trust. You can agree to disagree, but you have to make sure you are focused on objectives. Why are we here? It's for quality of life, it's for having our children growing up and having a chance of a future; all of those are big-picture issues.

You have to get out there; if you are a civic politician you must go out to the tribal council – meet the tribal leader, meet the chiefs in the community. If you are a church leader, go out to a community to see their practices (sweat lodges, for instance), and try and see the similarities and not see the differences. If you are a coach in a small hockey team, make the effort to include a First Nations youth who may not have the father or parent. It comes down to that type of practical approach.

I had tense moments with the mayor of Saskatoon, but we didn't allow the White Buffalo Youth Lodge to be jeopardized. We both recognized that this was important for Saskatoon. We have to be patient about politics and realize that the people working behind the scene in politics can also keep it going forward.

**Comment:** What will it take to move from a reactive stance to a proactive, play-to-win vision that makes the dollars move to make things happen? Is the perfect storm the likely consequence of not making this move? I agree the perfect storm is coming. Take a place like Onion Lake in Saskatchewan, a town of 3,000 people. Over a third of the people are children in school. There is no employment in the community. Some of those children are having children. What are the goals, hope, aspirations of those people? They receive all the same media hype: it is a storm that can be dealt with but we have to work in a more proactive approach. In North Battleford, the First Nations community, the Catholic school board and the public school board decided to work together to develop an aboriginal high school where the youth would not be lost to the streets. In the fall 2001, the plan came together and a year later the school opened. Not even a year and the project was up and running and 267 students were in the school! Against all odds, people got together with the hope that maybe this time it would work. It did! So we should not imagine too many barriers in our path. We should look for positive, proactive approaches that can happen today.

### **Closing Remarks**

- “If we are going to move to a proactive approach, we have to be driven by a clear goal. Often it is personal connections and hard work that solve problems. Solutions and resolutions come by looking to the future. There may be a need for new dollars, but there's old dollars that can be reworked and used to work more effectively.”
- “It's not a fear of the future that's causing us problems; it's the unwillingness to give up the old way. With every goal you must have time lines. It's great to speak to the future, but to make progress we need some clear and short time lines. This must be accomplished within fiscal years. Five-year plans are good to achieve certain things, but six-month projects show the promise of quick results. We need to build a broader urban strategy. We can't have the urban aboriginal strategy over here and an urban strategy over there. This all has to move together.”
- “Saskatoon is not unlike Portland. You need leadership and some kind of vehicle to keep the vision alive. Saskatchewan struggled with the treaty land-entitlement issue, how to settle it, how to make the formula, how to bring the parties together. Their solution was a good one: a reserve inside the city – precisely the kind of urban project that we're talking about today. What our city council did was unique, and by so doing has changed the community culture through statements and its strategic plan.”
- “I'm worried that we do not fully understand the sense of urgency here. I'm concerned that we're talking about whether or not there will be a storm when in fact there is already a storm, and it's in the form of gangs. You don't have to go far to be faced with that reality. There is a leadership issue here. People think this is a western Canadian problem, but it's not. If this problem were happening in Ontario or Quebec, it would be a national, major issue. But it's not, and somehow we have got to do something about that.”

- “We should be very careful that we don’t aim to have a pan-aboriginal approach to this issue. Calgary has had a very different experience with the aboriginal population. We don’t have a number of tribal councils and political entities that the people gather around; many aboriginal people in Calgary are from all over Canada so there isn’t that one political voice. This has worked out well. There is a great deal of capacity at the front-line level, and we talk about “community” in a very generic way and the work is getting done by the people working in the Calgary organizations. The first thing aboriginal people need is homes. Without stable homes you can’t begin to address the issues of education, health care, community participation, or the urban initiatives by the federal government. The homelessness issue is central. The two issues must move forward together.”

## **“UNDERSTANDING THE SMALLER CITY: ISSUES, OBSTACLES, OPPORTUNITIES”**

**LEAD DISCUSSANT: BRIAN HAMBLIN  
DIRECTOR, CORPORATE SERVICES, CITY OF REGINA  
FORMER CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER, CITY OF MOOSE JAW**

**Brian Hamblin:** Moose Jaw was incorporated 100 years ago and is best known as the home of the Snow Bird acrobatic plane corps. Its population has hovered around the 34,000 mark for decades. It is a microcosm of the province in many ways. Moose Jaw has the usual city services, fire, police, parks and recreation. It does not have ambulance services, social services or health services. It is a very fiscally conservative community. Property taxes are set at 2.5 per cent of residential market value. It is worth remembering this figure because property taxes as a source of revenue for municipalities will not sustain the demand for services.

In Moose Jaw, the biggest share of the expenditure dollar is fire department, the police service and street lights. Those three items represent fifty per cent of the city budget. If there are going to be cuts it will be staff. Moose Jaw does receive provincial grants from the province of Saskatchewan, but those have declined.

It is the federal and provincial governments that are the main beneficiaries of economic growth. Moose Jaw has been prospering for the last couple of years. However, that results in increases in assessment base that are still not adequate to fund municipal operations. Moose Jaw’s taxable property assessment average annual growth was 1.6 per cent per year over the period 1997–2002. The five previous years saw no growth.

Moose Jaw’s main focus was economic development, for many reasons. Housing is relatively affordable, with the average “annual” sale price at \$65,000 compared to the national average of \$166,000. It has a relatively homogenous population. According to the 1996 census, 1,000 people belonged to visible minority groups, and there were 920 aboriginal individuals. Ninety-eight per cent of homes declared using the English language. But there has been no population growth. Therefore, there is a need for property assessment growth to fund operations.

There have been success stories in Moose Jaw. CP Rail is the largest employer, with over 570 people employed. CP recently built a high-speed refuelling centre and contributed funds to build a rail overpass. Other economic development successes in Moose Jaw include the “tunnels of Moose Jaw,” the “Murals of Moose Jaw,” a contaminated site recovery program, a campus development foundation, a native employment training centre in Canada, and, finally, a key one: a contract the Canadian government granted to Bombardier Aerospace to train pilots in Moose Jaw.

Moose Jaw also revised its tourism strategy ten years ago. The city paid \$1 million to drill a geothermal well. In 1996, the Temple Gardens Mineral Spa started operations. The project was made possible by Western Economic Diversification and the Province of Saskatchewan, then

through Southcorp, the city's industrial development corporation lent the city over \$1 million to operate the spa. Moose Jaw is the only Saskatchewan city that has an industrial development corporation. The community is also involved, as are the banks. The city has invested millions of dollars to support that project in the hope that the spa will become a major tourism attraction and eventually a big property taxpayer. Should a small city have to shoulder that type of a role in an economic development project? Not many small cities have the capital reserves to do so.

The tourism initiative also includes an information centre, a cultural centre and – with assistance of all levels of government – the revitalization of some downtown heritage buildings. In the near future, Moose Jaw will also have a new casino.

Such development inevitably attracts environmental concerns, and Moose Jaw experienced a classic tug and pull between environmental and development issues. Saskatchewan Environment asked us to revise our twenty-year-old plan, and city council resisted. An arrangement was made, and Moose Jaw became the province's first urban conservation area. Environmental initiatives are important, but they should not distort other programs. Our experience shows that one of the difficulties with the current provincial infrastructure program is its emphasis on water and sewer projects. This simply is not a priority for Moose Jaw.

Based on the Moose Jaw experience, what can be said about the development of small cities in western Canada? Partnerships between all three levels of government and the private sector are key. Small cities must build on existing strengths. Bobby Jones, the famous golfer, would say "hit the ball where it lies." Of course, there is an element of risk in all partnerships. They can only work if political support is strong and the community is involved.

But there are major challenges appearing on Moose Jaw's radar screen. First, it exists in a small province. The city must compete with other important provincial priorities such as health, education, highways, and social services. A second challenge is that Moose Jaw does not have a university. Both Regina and Saskatoon have very good universities. Moose Jaw was home to the Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology, but the strategic importance of science in Moose Jaw was not recognized provincially.

There are more generic issues Moose Jaw shares with other small cities. There is an infrastructure gap, what we refer to as the thirty-year sidewalk life cycle. There is also the issue of human-resource requirements, of environmental sustainability, of managing diversity and inclusiveness. Above all, Moose Jaw must deal with shortfalls in revenue.

There are opportunities also. There are opportunities to elevate support for projects to a more systemic support from levels of government. Successes in economic development are very much project-linked. But I think it's important to find linkages, not leakages, and to pursue opportunities that provide linkages within the community, as opposed to leaking the benefits elsewhere.

In sum, the specific needs of smaller cities need to be recognized. The hard reality is that these areas can no longer rely on property taxes as adequate sources of revenues, and governments must work together to find processes that are based on a city's needs.

## A Discussion on the Smaller City

*After Mr. Hamblin's remarks, a dialogue circle of discussants was asked to comment and to identify key opportunities and critical challenges in setting a future course for the achievement of "The Great Canadian Small City and Healthy Community" in their region.*

- “The challenge for me is that governments do not seem able to distinguish between the needs of large communities and smaller ones. In B.C., Vancouver dominates the discussion, and there is no sense of what is going on in rural areas: Vancouver issues become the small city issues. The last census saw a decline in population in rural British Columbia. In that context, it is very difficult to grow the economic tax base. We also see higher levels of socioeconomic distress in rural B.C.”
- “There is opportunity in some areas, and that is encouraging – communities getting involved in aboriginal and non-aboriginal partnerships. Taking advantage of the new economy and new trends in eco- and cultural tourism. For rural B.C. and rural communities across Canada, the vision has to be sustainability. The problem is that we are not sure what level to focus on: local or regional?”
- “There is opportunity if we start with the local level and help communities, particularly those that are stagnant and/or declining, to become more sustainable. But I think the role of all three levels of government should be focused on developing partnerships and building capacities so local communities can go it on their own.”
- “Surely there are opportunities for communities to capitalize on the unique quality of life and lifestyle. Take Tumbler Ridge. New residents and business were attracted to town because of the small-town culture, characteristics, and the natural setting.”
- “Here's an Alberta perspective: fifty years ago, Edmonton and Calgary were small cities but their experience demonstrates the Alberta challenge of boom/bust economy. Some small communities like Fort McMurray and Métis settlements have incredible wealth, resources and a great influx of population. Aboriginal people are moving to small places like Fort McMurray for work and education. My point is that there has to be an economic purpose for a small community: not ghost towns of resource and agricultural communities.”
- “I think the challenge for the smaller communities is to create a critical mass in order to be able to address their difficulties. They should be encouraged to see if regional answers can help resolve some issues. Regina and Moose Jaw, for example, have been working together for some years now developing quays between the two communities where there's a mainline railway and try and attract and develop business there. I see that is a very beneficial arrangement on a regional basis.”
- “The other major challenge around the smaller towns in western Canada is that First Nations reserves are close to them. If things don't go well for them there, smaller cities feel the consequences. A regional approach to cooperation and collaboration with First Nations strikes me as imperative.”

- “I think smaller cities need to be challenged to develop their capacity to create regional collaboration. A good example is policing. It requires business people to be involved, municipal planners, architects, community representatives, etc. I don’t see it being employed to the extent that it could be.”
- “Small communities are also affected by the larger communities nearby – crime migration and crime displacement, for example, affect the health of small communities that have fewer resources. It’s only a forty-minute drive between Regina and Moose Jaw – and twenty minutes in a stolen car. We need more responsive approaches between the numerous agencies that need to work together on those initiatives. And this applies to many other jurisdictions as well.”
- “There is another practical way for public-sector managers to work together. We were having difficulties adapting to a computer program, so we entered into partnership discussion with Calgary to tap into its staff knowledge during peak seasonal fluctuations. But the challenge seemed to be greater than the opportunity. There had to be compromise. Not every community has the dollars to invest \$300,000 in a computer program. It must partner with others and share the cost. Yet, it seems that every small government has its own idea of what program it wanted.”

## **“UNDERSTANDING THE BIG CITY: ISSUES, OBSTACLES, OPPORTUNITIES”**

**LEAD DISCUSSANT: JUDY ROGERS  
CITY MANAGER, CITY OF VANCOUVER**

**Judy Rogers:** I have been asked to speak about “Managing the Big City.” What are some of the issues for our big cities? Are there obstacles we face in addressing these issues? Are there opportunities that may be used to ensure strong and successful cities? The City of Vancouver has used a number of tools to address our city’s challenges.

To provide some background, it is critical to first look at the changes that have occurred in our cities over the last few decades. Not only are our cities evolving – their physical characteristics, culture, and business – but our citizens are changing. They are more involved, more vocal, and have increasing expectations. The world around us is also evolving – globalization, the increasing ease of travel, trade and communication – and these factors have significant impacts on us all.

When British Columbia was founded in 1871, it was a rural province. Three per cent of the population lived in urban areas. Today, seventy per cent of British Columbians live in urban regions, and fifty per cent of the B.C. population resides in Greater Vancouver.

Vancouver is a city of 575,000 people in a region of over two million people. During the past decade, the region has grown by over 40,000 people per year. This is the equivalent of adding a new town to the region each year. A quarter of the region’s annual growth is in the City of Vancouver.

The rise in urbanism has brought positive changes to our region: we have seen the growth of a multicultural society, the rise of Vancouver as an academic and business centre in Canada, and certainly Vancouver is known worldwide for our livability and quality of life. However, with urban growth have come challenges: crime and safety, transportation, economic development, and sustainability. In addition, our existing infrastructure is changing and our population requires new services as it ages. Vancouver is not alone in facing these challenges – all of our big cities are facing similar issues.

Let me spend a bit of time on the legislative framework for cities.

Vancouver’s existing legislation has both strengths and weaknesses for managing a big city. Our strengths are the legislative framework for managing the use of land and budget control. Our weaknesses are the uncertainty of funding to maintain infrastructure and services and address social responsibilities.

Vancouver has legislative strengths. I have summarized them under four topics:

- city-region partnership;
- Vancouver charter;
- community-city partnerships; and
- budget control.

Looking first at city-regional relationships, Greater Vancouver is one of the few Canadian urban regions that have not been amalgamated. The GVRD [the Greater Vancouver Regional District] is a partnership. The region is responsible for delivering services that benefit from economies of scale – water, waste removal and transportation. Municipalities are responsible for land-use and the delivery of local services.

The advantages of the city-region partnership model are

- efficiencies generated from economies of scale realized through the shared delivery of major infrastructure services;
- regional strategic plan and infrastructure investments that shape broad land-use patterns; and
- cities that are responsible for local land-use and services

This provides the ability to customize plans and services to address resident/business desires for distinctive neighbourhood character and services.

This is especially important when we consider the limited funds cities have and the many demands for services. Local government can direct limited funds to local priorities.

A “Made for Vancouver” city charter is one of Vancouver’s key legislative strengths. The Vancouver charter gives the city ultimate authority over land-use and budget decisions. City land-use decisions cannot be appealed to the province. The advantages are

- clear where decisions reside and who (city council) is responsible;
- timely decisions, since they are not subject to appeal; and
- authorities befitting a large city such as the power to negotiate site-specific development and amenity agreements.

Changes to the charter must be approved by the province. However, we have found the province to be willing to let the city experiment with new responsibilities, often as a pilot for future changes to the Local Government Act, under which other B.C. municipalities are governed.

The B.C. government recently released a community charter, modelled in part on the Vancouver charter, to expand the powers of local government in B.C. The community charter outlines a new approach to the relationship between the province and local governments, one of increased empowerment and consultation for municipalities. It seeks to balance new and broader municipal authorities with increased public accountability and recognizes that municipalities need more flexibility to meet the diverse needs of their communities. The community charter represents a substantial empowerment over authorities currently contained in the Local Government Act and will provide municipalities with the means to respond more efficiently and rapidly to their local requirements.

Various forms of public-private community partnerships are emerging as a strength of managing a big city like Vancouver. Extensive community participation processes are the basis for major land-use and budget decisions. This builds community commitment to implementing plans and recognition of the difficult trade-offs necessary to balance a city's budget. The key ingredients of Vancouver's participation processes have the following features:

- it is multi-dimensional, dealing with a variety of interrelated social, economic and environmental issues;
- it has public input on key choices facing the city;
- it has a strong education component to assist people to consider the consequences of choices; and
- it is inclusive, ensuring broad participation through multicultural access programs.

The Vancouver charter has enabled the city to set and implement thirty-year programs to shape Vancouver's urban form to improve social, economic and environmental sustainability.

Let me illustrate policies that have been implemented over time, irrespective of changing federal and provincial priorities:

- minimizing commuting by locating jobs close to housing;
- zoning for densities to support transit;
- maintaining a stock of affordable rental housing; and
- redeveloping old industrial lands for new economy.

Our policy is to create complete communities that centralize jobs and housing to minimize the fiscal and environmental impacts of sprawl and to create sustainable communities.

Involvement builds community partnerships. Example, community partnerships include

- community visions, where residents determine local land-use and service priorities, and then participate in implementation plans;
- business improvement programs, where local businesses pay for shopping-area improvements and enhanced security services; and
- neighbourhood integrated-service teams, where locally based city staff work with the community to solve local problems.

The Vancouver charter gives the city the power to engage in commercial, industrial and business undertakings, thus enabling the city to implement public-private partnerships.

We are only starting to explore how this authority might be used. For example, we are currently considering the feasibility of using a public-private partnership to fund a downtown transit system.

New partnerships provide opportunities for the city and its citizens to rely on ourselves to fund and deliver programs rather than relying on dwindling senior government largesse.

City finances are both a strength and weakness of our current legislation. Provincial legislation requires the City maintain a balanced budget, minimizing the impact of today's decisions on future generations. (Too bad senior governments have not followed suit.)

User-fees are charged for additional waste removal and parking. The ability of the city to negotiate a full set of amenities from developers as a condition of large-scale redevelopment has minimized the financial impact of growth on existing taxpayers.

Financing the costs of growth associated with smaller developments is more challenging. Vancouver is currently reviewing its policies and legislation to better recapture the costs of new services. This needs to be done in a way that maintains neighbourhood services and minimizes the impact on development activity.

1. Vancouver's existing legislative weaknesses revolve around limited sources of revenue to address emerging responsibilities. Our problems are not unique. Vancouver is not responsible for funding health and social programs. However, the reality is that for a city to remain safe and livable, it must have the resources to address poverty and maintain infrastructure and services.

The problem is not that we are a poor city: quite the contrary. Vancouver residents and businesses pay significant income, goods and services and fuel taxes. For example, residents of Greater Vancouver pay over \$300 million annually in fuel taxes. Very little is returned to the region to fund transportation improvements.

We continue to experience challenges associated with

- dependence on uncertain senior government programs for infrastructure and affordable housing and transportation;
- limited revenue sources; and
- uncertainty of senior government programs.

Vancouver has been addressing our transportation challenges in a cooperative way with other governments and our citizens. Through intergovernmental mechanisms such as infrastructure grants, mega-projects have been carried out in a collaborative way. The City of Vancouver's "Greenways Program" is an excellent example of collaboration. Program funding not only comes from the city's capital budget but also through other levels of government programs, donations, non-profit agencies or business associations. In addition, "Neighbourhood Greenways" are partially funded by the city, with the community providing funds or in-kind contributions to their planning, construction and maintenance.

The city's "Downtown Transportation Plan" is an example of how the city interacts with a number of stakeholders in the development of transportation options for Vancouver. Over 76,000 residents now live downtown, a sixty-two per cent increase from 1991. A conservative projection for 2021 is for 100,000 residents. Employment is also expected to grow substantially, from 132,000 jobs in 1996 to almost 175,000 by 2021, a thirty per

cent increase. Accommodating growth without adding traffic lanes to the existing bridges and roads is the major challenge facing transportation planning downtown. The city's goal is to improve access to downtown homes and businesses while enhancing the unique attraction of downtown Vancouver.

In the development of the "Downtown Transportation Plan," there were opportunities for the public to be involved. For example, there were open houses and meetings, information newsletters and reports. There were public workshops and working groups to review plan components and develop options. Throughout the process, staff from the City's Downtown Transportation Planning Office was available to meet with interested groups. Participation at every stage of plan development has been welcomed and encouraged.

The public, city council, and numerous stakeholders confirmed their support for the downtown streetcar when the city's "Downtown Transportation Plan" was approved in July of last year. The city is now investigating the possibilities of a public-private partnership to further the project.

2. There is inadequate responsibility and few resources to address social issues. Crime and safety is an issue facing all of the big cities of Canada. In fact, this is an issue not restricted to big cities. The City of Vancouver has unfortunately drawn attention nation-wide due to the high concentration of crime and safety concerns in the Downtown Eastside: substance abuse, crimes to persons and property, health problems and poverty.
3. There is increasing local responsibility for national environmental improvements (i.e., air and water quality) with no new resources. The importance of maintaining infrastructure such as sewers, water, housing and roads cannot be overstated. These factors are necessary to ensure the health of our communities:
  - limited revenue sources;
  - uncertainty of senior government programs; and
  - increasing responsibility to address environmental issues with no resources.

Sustainability is an issue that the City of Vancouver is actively addressing. A key example at this time is the Southeast False Creek area, which covers a total of approximately thirty-six hectares (eighty acres) of former industrial land near downtown Vancouver. In June of 1997, planning commenced to create a high-density, family-oriented residential neighbourhood that would model the principles of sustainable development. The city has developed a three-pronged approach that addresses environmental, social and economic viability.

Many stakeholders have been involved in the development of the Southeast False Creek area – land-owners within the area, adjoining neighbourhood community groups, other levels of government such as the GVRD, Vancouver School Board, Vancouver Coastal Health Authority, and many others.

And now, a portion of the South East False Creek site has been identified as a site for the athlete's village in the 2010 Olympic bid. This village, to be built on sustainable principles, will provide after the 2010 games, a social housing legacy for its future citizens.

The challenge for all is finding the balance – to determine the costs and benefits of sustainability without putting undo burden on the local taxpayer. By continuing to partner with citizens, developers and governments, we must make sustainability affordable.

The current economy is dominated more and more by the big cities. This changing face of business is demonstrated in the shift away from resource-based economic drivers into information-based economies. While resource-based sectors are found throughout the country, information, the core of the new economy, is centred in urban areas.

Vancouver, in fact the province of B.C., is challenged by a shift away from our traditional economic sectors of forestry, mining and fisheries. The move from a resource-based economy to a knowledge-based economy requires the commitment of all governments to support not only the declining industries but the emerging ones.

The city's challenge is to ensure that there is ample appropriate land and structure to respond to the needs of this growing sector. We have responded. With the creation of "I-3" zoning, we have addressed the zoning requirements of the diverse technology sector. This has positioned the city to offer a home to B.C.'s emerging new technology industries.

Located southeast of the downtown core in the False Creek Flats, the "Great Northern Technology Park" has been re-zoned as an I-3, an industrial zoning class approved by the City of Vancouver. This location potentially offers almost 3.5 million square feet of technology uses (high-tech, bio-tech, enviro-tech, film and multimedia, etc.). Other more conventional uses such as office space, retail, service, commercial and hotel can also be accommodated within the I-3 zoning. The park is Vancouver's first "high amenity urban industrial park," focused solely on the needs of the technology industry. The lands surrounding the park have also been zoned I-3, providing further space to suit the needs of the technology sector. The further development of the Millennium Line into the lands provides the necessary transportation into the area and illustrates the way in which the principles of sustainability are applied to large-scale projects.

These re-zoned lands offer a location that combines the business activity and amenities of the downtown core, with the close proximity of residential areas and recreational opportunities. This combination will help to encourage the growth of the high-tech industry in the Vancouver region.

The Vancouver Economic Development Commission (VEDC) also plays a vital role in Vancouver's economic future. Formerly a city department, the Economic Development Commission was transformed into an independent, non-profit agency in 1996 in order to bring the private and public sectors together to promote progressive and sustainable economic growth for Vancouver.

The partnership between the commission and the City of Vancouver encourages investment from within Canada, as well as encouraging foreign investment. The commission's goals are

- to provide leadership with respect to economic development in Vancouver;
- to promote Vancouver as a vibrant and diversified destination for business and investment; and
- to assess and report on performance indicators for Vancouver and VEDC.

There is, however, a need for a broader regional strategy.

We are currently experimenting with a new model to address our social needs.

The "Vancouver Agreement" is a tri-partite approach to addressing local issues of poverty, homelessness, substance abuse, safety and economic revitalization in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside. The key ingredients of the Vancouver Agreement are as follows:

- Inter-governmental initiatives are coordinated through a single accountable agency.
- Funds are combined and accounting processes are clear.
- There is a coordinated prioritization of funds.
- Service gaps get addressed.
- Duplication of services is eliminated.

In summary, our weaknesses revolve around inadequate resources to address increasing responsibilities.

There are some parts of our current legislative framework that work for us and may provide models for other cities to consider.

While Vancouver continues to press senior governments for a larger share of revenues collected from the city, we are not resting all our hopes on redistribution.

New revenue sources and contributions "in kind" through public-private partnerships and city-community partnerships are more likely to ensure the livability of our city.

However, as demonstrated throughout this presentation, cities are finding ways to address these obstacles. Opportunities exist to develop partnerships and to involve citizens in their communities.

In the City of Vancouver, we look for opportunities to do these in everything we do.

In conclusion, I would say that big cities are all facing similar challenges and obstacles, and there are a number of ways we can, and do, address these issues. The opportunities available to us are not limited to those I have discussed today. However, I believe those that I did discuss, which focused on partnerships, citizen involvement and community development, will build on our city's strengths and develop competitive cities and healthy communities.

## **A Discussion on the Needs of the Larger City**

**Comment:** The concept of urban sprawl seems to be alive and well, because of the competition between the municipalities for development – we’re currently building the most affordable housing as far as possible from the jobs that they’d be servicing. I would say that in terms of commuting, the Greater Vancouver community is going down a road that is less than desirable, whereas the city is pursuing a “densification” initiative. The urban-sprawl issue within the region should not be overlooked. I do see that our cities are competitive against each other, but all the municipalities that make up the region have arrived at a livable region strategic plan in which each of us has agreed to certain densification objectives.

**Comment:** One of the parameters of the Greater Vancouver Regional District strategic plan is to protect the green zone. A number of years ago, the provincial government instituted an agricultural land reserve so that there are some boundaries to the region. As a result, it is very difficult to get land out of that agricultural land reserve. The region has some large protected areas and has the ability to say – because they’re responsible for your major trunk, sewer and water supply – no to extend those services into those areas if they start to infringe on the green zone. While we’re not perfect in our containment policy, there certainly are some very real restrictions to sprawl.

**Question:** How are you involving the aboriginal community in the “Vancouver Agreement”?

**Judy Rogers:** The lead on the Vancouver Agreement’s involvement of the aboriginal community has rested with the federal government as part of its aboriginal urban strategy. One of the big challenges we have is finding better ways to include the activities that have currently gone on under the urban aboriginal strategy into the umbrella Vancouver Agreement, so that they not become two distinct operations.

## **“SETTING THE COURSE” – WHAT, HOW, AND WHAT NEXT?**

*Small groups were organized by province to reflect on the discussions and to answer the following questions: Where are we trying to go? What will it take to get there? Is it helpful to distinguish between the “what” and the “how,” what we want to achieve, and the structures and decision-making it will take for us to get there? What are the points of opportunity and challenge that we need to identify on the new Canadian urban compass? Are there distinctions that need to be made for local and regional realities with the national framework?*

### **Manitoba**

We had a broad discussion – part of it is historical and part of it on some of the gaps going forward. Winnipeg has had twenty-odd years of tri-level agreements called core-area agreements. Two rounds of those were multi-program, where each level of government paid a third of the costs. They addressed various things, from housing to public space, heritage issues, entrepreneurship programs, etc. We had two five-year shots at those to try and revitalize the core. The recent “Winnipeg Development Agreement” was more city-wide; we are now on the threshold of starting into another five-year agreement.

The driver is – and we tried to compare with the other cities – the urban-aboriginal issue. For this agreement to work, we need a clear, articulated consensus on what the driver is, and why we are doing this. We are trying to build other elements around that core issue: housing issues, for example (an issue that has come up in spades in the last couple of days), and the environment (we are trying to bring in other departments such as health, etc.).

We acknowledged some of the challenges that have historically impeded progress. We also noted an ever-increasing trend in political involvement and horse-trading that goes on in programs and projects.

We also acknowledged how existing money could be used to address some of these issues, specifically which “through-transfer” programs could go directly from a federal level through the provincial level and directly into the civic level for delivery on a broad scale of day-to-day services. Very often, when an agreement like this comes along, public servants are trapped in that transfer mode. It is very difficult to back out of the way housing dollars flow and say, “what we’d really like to do is focus them on urban aboriginal issues for the next five years,” and so on. The challenge that quickly emerged in our discussion is that, despite our tradition of tri-lateral agreements that have prevented a range of problems and greater issues related to aboriginal community, we do not have a consensus about an urban strategy. Despite the success of a mechanism that appears to be working very well, there is no urban development strategy for the city as a whole, as in Portland.

Part of that challenge is financial: a lot of the current objectives are driven by parameters of existing programming as much as by need. Clearly the aboriginal focus that was described for Winnipeg is driven by real need; it is also driven by programming parameters that allow that need to be addressed. The problem is that this creates impediments to thinking more broadly, or I guess I am responding in a more generic kind of way to urban planning: urban thinking.

Another challenge we identified was the degree of community engagement. It's worth emphasizing that the process that exists in bringing together the three levels of government works well in identifying an agenda, and in responding to needs. But less clear was the scope for community engagement that might help bridge some of the political shifts over time and that help build a bit of a longer-term agenda.

One important concrete next step we all agreed on: we need to plan beyond the successes that Winnipeg is currently experiencing. We must begin to address some of the tougher issues for which we don't have easy answers.

## **Saskatchewan**

We started with a provocation: do we really want strong cities? Do aboriginals want strong cities? Do governments in Ottawa and at the provincial level want strong cities?

The provocation worked: the sense from our group was that strengthened cities are an important goal. In our province – and in the west, generally – cities are, by default, becoming the focus for rural migration. So whether we like it or not, people show up at our doors. There are going to be some ongoing tensions around this notion of what the “healthy city” really means. Is this only a cry for more money? Maybe not: cities need to be resilient to face the challenges much as an individual, healthy human.

In Saskatchewan, and in Saskatoon in particular, we have some mechanisms to build on: we are feeling some success. The provincial government some years ago took some initiative to build these intersectoral committees. They were fairly cautious. After all, this was a provincial initiative (nobody wants to be seen as encroaching too much), but we persisted in working with our cities and regions to build some very effective tools.

We have built an aboriginal strategy without much federal participation. On the other hand, we adopted a multi-sectoral approach in helping early childhood development. This sustained focus on kids not attending school involves aboriginal people, but it is led by our municipal government. We have, with federal participation, created a community housing plan and strategy.

We are interested in rationalizing some of the mechanisms that we have created. How do you proceed from here – because a lot of these initiatives were started by the pragmatism of one sectoral interest. We should proceed by consensus, from the get-go. Probably we still need to be a little cautious, to continue to work on the small projects while keeping an eye towards some pretty fundamental changes.

The other observation from our group is that our success so far tends to be in the areas of social and economic agendas. Cities, however, do clearly face major challenge around physical infrastructures. There is potential for the learning from the social development environment to spill over.

The next step – if we anchor this kind of mechanism in our communities – is to get a commitment at the political layer. The reality is that it is very easy to see excellent work subverted by well meaning ministers of the provincial government, a city councillor, a federal aboriginal minister; we have coped with all of that. We need that unanimity on some of those problems.

In Saskatchewan, we do have some unique tools. One of them, the intersectoral initiative that combines governments and NGOs has provided a mechanism that will assist in identifying and may make it easier for governments to respond. Our colleagues from Saskatoon informed us that from their perspective, success can only come with consistent civic leadership.

We had a bit of a discussion about how the cities are part of a regional economic entity. Perhaps in our considerations we needed to be much more aware and prepared to talk about the surrounding areas and how to include them in our thinking process. So that this wasn't just about cities but rather about viable economic regions.

We acknowledged that what we were really attempting to do here was a fundamental change, at least from the federal government perspective. Federal public servants seem less focused on trying solutions but instead on trying to enable communities to find solutions to their problems. This is a bit of shift in thinking. So, the programs are there to assist the communities and their problems, rather than us having programs that are going to solve problems.

## **British Columbia**

The first question we grappled with is, where are we trying to go?

In general, we talked about livable cities and what that means. Inevitably, that means dealing with affordable housing; it also means building vibrant, efficient, sustainable communities. We talked about dealing with urban issues in smaller communities and how we need to customize our response. We also acknowledged that our objectives ultimately aim at maintaining livable neighbourhoods – places where people can relate. In B.C., that also means improving the situation of aboriginals in urban areas.

What will it take to get there? More cooperation, we think, at the regional level, but only on condition that planning is brought down to the neighbourhood level. We acknowledged that some neighbourhoods and communities may not want growth and that we need flexibility, collaboration.

We acknowledged that B.C. has unique attributes. There are differences between regions in the west and within our province. B.C. is a coastal province; the range of environmental issues that we need to manage ranges from the ocean to earthquakes. We also have some very strong north-south connections.

Where do we go? Our thought would be to continue to experiment with new approaches. We need to pursue the Vancouver Agreement and work with organizations like the Fraser Basin Council, a body that monitors the sustainability of the Fraser Basin and that includes all levels of

governments, First Nations, and members of the broader community. We also have the Georgia Basin eco-system initiative.

We also noted that we all have informal approaches to horizontal policy discussions, and those need to be continued.

The last thought is this notion of us bringing together experts to discuss these issues; we would like to see those get back together and talk about these issues.

## **Alberta**

We opened the discussion by talking about the tri-partite model. There was a feeling in our group that that model was problematic in many cases: it meant that the city or the federal government could only speak to each other if the province was involved. We thought that there should be opportunity for the city and the federal government to come together bilaterally. We also felt that First Nations should be consistently included.

Cities are blessed with what we called “random acts of money” in that they are induced – often – to chase the dollar, often resulting in a rearrangement of their priorities in order to take advantage of the opportunity. Sometimes the dollars are plucked from the federal tree, or the provincial tree. We all agreed that governments had to communicate better in order to better understand each other’s businesses, pressures and priorities. We felt that through this communication we could find common ground and actually better align some of the priorities that each of us has.

What is it that the cities really want? What are their priorities? They have to step forward and say what they really are. The priorities vary from city to city. There are a lot of common elements, but the emphasis is different. We agree that cities cannot be forced into the same template, and we have got to adjust to the uniqueness of each municipality.

The group really made it clear that the obligation was on the municipality – cities in particular – to put their issues forward and to state them clearly. The group also felt that perhaps cities should identify “pathfinders” to work their way through the federal system.

Finally, we talked about the importance or lack of importance of a formal agreement between province and the federal government on these issues. There is some merit in considering this strategy because it would allow for the building of trust over a period of time

## DISCUSSION: WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

**Glenn Sigurdson:** The question that challenges us still is this: what is going to happen on Monday morning that will be different. Are there some concrete steps that can be taken?

- “The thing that struck me is that we are looking for communities to define their own solutions and the challenge for the provincial and federal government to build a framework to enable them to do so. That’s a fundamental change in perspective. What’s driving it?”
- “We heard in Manitoba the concern that you needed to reconcile parameters with needs-driven initiatives, and that always created a tension. We also heard that there was a problem with dollars and the way agreements were structured and managed for specific needs.”
- “The key challenge is responsiveness of government, particularly at the federal level. When it comes to city agendas what the federal government has in play is programs. Part of what we had been grappling with in Saskatchewan’s federal community is this: how to be responsive, given that our limitations are really programs? And so for me one of the things I have taken away is that probably we will never solve the problems, but we can enable the communities and the people who live in those jurisdictions to engage in those solutions.”
- “The implication of what we’re saying is that the problem is not what it appears; the problem is within the organizational structures of governance that are shaping programs in certain ways partially. Ultimately, the real challenge then is to remake government at the senior levels?”
- “There has been a meteoric rise of consciousness at the federal level in Ottawa about the importance of urban issues, on the one hand, and the importance of how the government should organize itself in partnership with other levels. That being said, we must see the issues evolving over the medium and long term.”
- “For me, the second thing is not so much the multitude of programs out there, but the issue of ability. It manifests itself in two ways.”
- “To render those programs flexible you do need a high level of “intelligence.” Not one-size-fits-all – the fact is that the challenges in Saskatoon and Regina don’t bear any relationship with those in St. John’s or Halifax.”
- “There needs to be a capacity to pursue policy planning over the medium term, in a horizontal fashion at three levels. First, at an intrafederal level in Ottawa. In other words, as far as transit and housing programs, you have to keep in mind that you have got Kyoto commitments to meet as well, so you need horizontality between government departments in Ottawa on municipal issues. We also need better horizontality between

levels of government and the capacity to partner on the ground, in different cities, across the country, using national programs tailored to specific needs of different communities within different cities.”

- “I want to ask if there should be a discussion about governance and about democratic representation as an issue related to ensuring that urban issues get a fair hearing in legislatures. The reality is that politicians can yell and scream, but the fact is that the enabling legislation that gives municipalities their fiscal tools and their capacities to act is provincial, primarily. And they are controlled by majorities of people elected outside bigger cities.”
- “There was discussion around rural/urban issues. Some of the existing Saskatchewan imbalances come to mind, since there is a reluctance to change in the rural areas. Even though the change is in fact going on, we didn’t talk about it in the sense of political terms. But there was discussion about the impact of programming decisions on rural areas and their reaction to that.”
- “We are focusing on the question of the implications organizationally for governments. If you are going to create the kind of framework that will empower communities to drive the agenda and if we want to create flexible programs, we need to create capacity. Is that a sufficient answer? Or is it a bigger question than that?”
- “What we are actually finding is that we can replicate this notion of multi-sectoral participation, down to and including citizens in rural communities and amalgamated rural regions around this principle of intersectoral, multisectoral participation.”
- “I am interested that the question frequently gets posed as a question of governance, which no doubt has good reasons to be a preoccupation, but it is very difficult to disentangle ourselves from it. We have a history in our province where municipal governments have commissioned consultants to try get at new governance arrangements in our community, and our province continues to steadfastly say ‘get out of town, we don’t want to talk about that.’ At the same time, they have expectations for services that make more sense, and so that’s really where our multi-sectoral agenda has focused itself on the pragmatic arrangements to provide better services, both urban and rural.”
- “One of the challenges right now in our committee is how to make sense out of a framework that has the municipal government prioritizing one item as ‘very high-need, high-risk neighbourhood’ and a health authority that sees that as its highest priority exist in a larger geographical area, because it has a responsibility in dealing with outlying rural communities. It has the challenge to do both because that’s its mandate, and we’re dealing with it not in the governance framework but in terms of outcomes that matter to communities.”
- “I want to address the point of whether the programming is flexible enough. In our experience – dealing with rural teams – what often comes back at us is, ‘get your act together.’ We are basically putting the onus on the citizen to figure out three levels of

government: the programs, the ones they need, the ones they're eligible for. What can we do? That comes back in spades in our experience with the rural teams, and I don't expect it will be any different as we wade into an urban agenda, you bump up against the same sort of things."

- "Regarding the broader governance issue and the implicit desire to redraw constituency boundary maps, I must say that the Saskatchewan group did not discuss it, nor would I have expected it to be on the table. There is a legislative process for reviewing constituency boundaries periodically. A new constituency map was adopted by the legislature in the fall of 2002, adding one seat to Saskatoon and removing one from a rural area, which happened to be the seat occupied by the minister responsible for municipal affairs. Alberta has recently lived a similar experience."

## RESPONSES TO THE QUESTIONNAIRE

### **1 QUESTION: The key indicator of the competitiveness of a city is its exports/tradables.**

Strongly agree:	0
Somewhat agree:	39 %
Somewhat disagree:	23 %
Strongly disagree:	20 %
Do not know:	18 %

### **2 QUESTION: Responding to “business” concerns is critical to making the city competitive.**

Strongly agree:	15 %
Somewhat agree:	53 %
Somewhat disagree:	19 %
Strongly disagree:	1 %
Do not know:	12 %

### **3 QUESTION: “Government” has the capacity to work with business more effectively in making the city competitive.**

Strongly agree:	33 %
Somewhat agree:	43 %
Somewhat disagree:	10 %
Strongly disagree:	1 %
Do not know:	13 %

### **4 QUESTION: The key to making cities competitive and healthy is the quality of the educational system.**

Strongly agree:	37 %
Somewhat agree:	39 %
Somewhat disagree:	9 %
Strongly disagree:	2 %
Do not know:	13 %

### **5 QUESTION: The key to making cities competitive and healthy is a vibrant cultural/entertainment community.**

Strongly agree:	25 %
Somewhat agree:	52 %
Somewhat disagree:	13 %
Strongly disagree:	4 %
Do not know:	6 %

**6 QUESTION: The key to making cities competitive and healthy is a high degree of accommodation with minorities.**

Strongly agree:	35 %
Somewhat agree:	27 %
Somewhat disagree:	6 %
Strongly disagree:	9 %
Do not know:	23 %

**7 QUESTION: Government currently has the capacity to work effectively with environmental interests.**

Strongly agree:	19 %
Somewhat agree:	47 %
Somewhat disagree:	20 %
Strongly disagree:	8 %
Do not know:	6 %

**8 QUESTION: The key to making cities competitive and healthy is the inclusion of the diverse population (including those who are marginalized) in decision-making.**

Strongly agree:	53 %
Somewhat agree:	38 %
Somewhat disagree:	4 %
Strongly disagree:	0 %
Do not know:	5 %

**9 QUESTION: The policy recognition by all governments of the diversity of aboriginal peoples is critical to the health and competitiveness of western cities.**

Strongly agree:	44 %
Somewhat agree:	34 %
Somewhat disagree:	4 %
Strongly disagree:	2 %
Do not know:	16 %

**10 QUESTION: Changing the way cities receive funding is important.**

Strongly agree:	60 %
Somewhat agree:	29 %
Somewhat disagree:	5 %
Strongly disagree:	1 %
Do not know:	5 %

**11 QUESTION: Communication, education and imagination have replaced “location, location, location” as keys to success.**

Strongly agree:	15 %
Somewhat agree:	45 %
Somewhat disagree:	22 %
Strongly disagree:	10 %
Do not know:	8 %

**12 QUESTION: Reducing the overlap of services and programs between governments should be a first priority for collaboration.**

Strongly agree:	49 %
Somewhat agree:	22 %
Somewhat disagree:	17 %
Strongly disagree:	6 %
Do not know:	6 %

**13 QUESTION: Reducing the overlap of services and programs between NGOs should be a first priority for collaboration.**

Strongly agree:	27 %
Somewhat agree:	42 %
Somewhat disagree:	16 %
Strongly disagree:	9 %
Do not know:	6 %

**14 QUESTION: Public-sector managers must work better with politicians at all levels of government to make cities more competitive and healthier.**

Strongly agree:	35 %
Somewhat agree:	43 %
Somewhat disagree:	11 %
Strongly disagree:	3 %
Do not know:	8 %

**15 QUESTION: The way cities set their priorities is confusing.**

Strongly agree:	24 %
Somewhat agree:	34 %
Somewhat disagree:	15 %
Strongly disagree:	13 %
Do not know:	14 %

**16 QUESTION: Cities can be made competitive with an aggressive program to promote their business, technology and educational achievements.**

Strongly agree:	8 %
Somewhat agree:	52 %
Somewhat disagree:	20 %
Strongly disagree:	13 %
Do not know:	7 %

**17 QUESTION: Cities need more autonomy.**

Strongly agree:	39 %
Somewhat agree:	44 %
Somewhat disagree:	8 %
Strongly disagree:	3 %
Do not know:	6 %

**18 QUESTION: Governments need to do more to attract tourism to western cities.**

Strongly agree:	12 %
Somewhat agree:	32 %
Somewhat disagree:	38 %
Strongly disagree:	10 %
Do not know:	8 %

**19 QUESTION: The actions of public servants at the various levels of government are coherent in terms of making cities more competitive and healthier.**

Strongly agree:	1 %
Somewhat agree:	11 %
Somewhat disagree:	32 %
Strongly disagree:	48 %
Do not know:	8 %

**20 QUESTION: It's all about infrastructure.**

Strongly agree:	9 %
Somewhat agree:	35 %
Somewhat disagree:	30 %
Strongly disagree:	22 %
Do not know:	4 %

**21 QUESTION: The government that should take the lead in making the city more competitive is**

Federal:	11 %
Provincial:	19 %
Municipal:	47 %
Do not know:	23 %

**22 QUESTION: The first step in getting better collaboration between public servants in the three levels of governments belongs to**

Federal government:	27 %
Provincial government:	14 %
Municipal government:	6%
NGOs:	0 %
Do not know:	53 %

**23 QUESTION: There is a danger that cities can be overregulated.**

Strongly agree:	46 %
Somewhat agree:	38 %
Somewhat disagree:	9 %
Strongly disagree:	1 %
Do not know:	6 %

**24 QUESTION: To remain competitive, western Canadian cities must work to attract talent.**

Strongly agree:	46 %
Somewhat agree:	41 %
Somewhat disagree:	6 %
Strongly disagree:	1 %
Do not know:	6 %

**25 QUESTION: There is a significant mismatch between federal priorities, provincial priorities and municipal priorities.**

Strongly agree:	46 %
Somewhat agree:	33 %
Somewhat disagree:	9 %
Strongly disagree:	7 %
Do not know:	5 %

**26 QUESTION: “Governments” need to focus more attention to physical and psychological security issues in cities.**

Strongly agree:	6 %
Somewhat agree:	46 %
Somewhat disagree:	28 %
Strongly disagree:	6 %
Do not know:	14 %

**27 QUESTION: Events like this can improve collaboration between levels of government.**

Strongly agree:	34 %
Somewhat agree:	51 %
Somewhat disagree:	9 %
Strongly disagree:	5 %
Do not know:	1 %

**28 QUESTION: Affordable housing is a key feature of the competitive, healthy community.**

Strongly agree:	90 %
Somewhat agree:	8 %
Somewhat disagree:	2 %
Strongly disagree:	0
Do not know:	0

**29 QUESTION: “Government” must pursue policies to retain youth in competitive, healthy communities.**

Strongly agree:	24 %
Somewhat agree:	34 %
Somewhat disagree:	20 %
Strongly disagree:	11 %
Do not know:	11 %

**30 QUESTION: “Government” must pursue policies that offer quality services for seniors.**

Strongly agree:	49 %
Somewhat agree:	44 %
Somewhat disagree:	3 %
Strongly disagree:	1 %
Do not know:	3 %

**31 QUESTION: “Revitalization” should be a key priority for governments.**

Strongly agree:	70 %
Somewhat agree:	20 %
Somewhat disagree:	5 %
Strongly disagree:	1 %
Do not know:	4 %

**32 QUESTION: The “Competitive city/healthy community” should be marked by a vigorous (“buzzing”) civic culture.**

Strongly agree:	46 %
Somewhat agree:	46 %
Somewhat disagree:	2 %
Strongly disagree:	0
Do not know:	6 %

**33 QUESTION: Urban sprawl should be a central concern.**

Strongly agree:	70 %
Somewhat agree:	19 %
Somewhat disagree:	4 %
Strongly disagree:	1 %
Do not know:	6 %

**34 QUESTION: Which factor is most important in determining a city’s competitiveness?**

Innovation/Entrepreneurship:	6 %
Diversity/Inclusion:	9 %
Infrastructure:	16 %
Sustainability:	8 %
Alliances/connectedness:	3 %
None of the above:	58 %

**35 QUESTION: Population growth is an important indicator of the successful city.**

Yes:	23 %
No:	75 %
Do not know:	2 %

**36 QUESTION: Who is best positioned to allocate arts funding?**

Government:	24 %
Artists:	4 %
Citizens:	28 %
NGO and Not-for-Profits:	25 %
Do not know:	19 %

**37 QUESTION: Do you have experience in more than one level of government?**

Yes:	20 %
No:	41 %
No response:	39 %

**38 QUESTION: Your age group?**

23-35:	4 %
36-45:	16 %
46-55:	33 %
56+:	8 %
No response:	39 %

**39 QUESTION: The federal government should work directly with cities on key issues.**

Strongly agree:	57 %
Somewhat agree:	6 %
Somewhat disagree:	3 %
Strongly disagree:	1 %
Do not know:	33 %

**40 QUESTION: The federal government should dedicate more funds to address key issues in cities.**

Strongly agree:	44 %
Somewhat agree:	16 %
Somewhat disagree:	4 %
Strongly disagree:	2 %
Do not know:	34 %

**41 QUESTION: How many years of experience in government do you have?**

Less than 5:	4 %
6-10:	2 %
11-20:	16 %
21-30:	28 %
31+:	10 %
No response:	40 %

**42 QUESTION: Can an institutional system in which municipalities have no constitutional recognition foster sustainability?**

Yes:	44 %
No:	16 %
Do not know:	40 %

**43 QUESTION: Government currently has the capacity to work effectively with cultural interests.**

Strongly agree:	19 %
Somewhat agree:	51 %
Somewhat disagree:	20 %
Strongly disagree:	5 %
Do not know:	5 %

## **RAPPORTEUR'S OBSERVATIONS**

This symposium addressed a number of issues and brought together an equally wide range of over a hundred public servants from all parts of western Canada and from all levels of government. Clearly, individuals came with an assortment of assumptions, experiences, and corporate cultures. The objective of the symposium was not to force a consensus but to make an effort to ascertain the positions held by the public service in western Canada and to see what could be done to “chart” collaboration.

Public servants in western Canada have been dealing with urban issues for well over a hundred years: at times when they were the least of priorities and at times when they seemed to dominate political discussions. Given the level of experience they brought to the discussion in March 2003, and judging by the quality of the exchanges, it was clear that there were few ideas in the air the participants had not debated many times before. That Vancouver ranked second and Calgary ranked twenty-sixth in a recent survey by the British arm of Mercer Human Resources Consulting on Quality of Life in cities around the world is indicative of the public sector's success in western Canada. Both cities beat out places like Paris, Seattle, Portland, New York, Chicago and Singapore.

That being said, the symposium was revealing. A few generalizations can be made from the outset:

1. Considerable consensus was manifested both in discussions and in the survey on the importance of what is sometimes considered soft issues, particularly those related to social and cultural capital.
2. There was strong agreement on the necessity for more effective managerial initiatives.
3. There was strong agreement on the necessity for increased funding to cities and changes in the way funding is organized.
4. There was considerable ambivalence about the importance of what is often considered the hard issues, such as business, economy and demography.
5. There was a great deal of uncertainty, perhaps even confusion, over the priorities and responsibilities for effective governance in achieving competitive cities.

### **The Healthy Community: Social and Cultural Factors**

There was an overwhelming emphasis among the participants on what we might call the social and cultural factors necessary to make a community healthy as well as competitive. Educational systems, cultural/entertainment communities, accommodation with minorities, diversity, recognition and engagement of aboriginal peoples, talent, affordable housing, and a vigorous civic culture were all priorities that a significant majority of respondents considered important in the achievement of a competitive city. It was widely accepted that no city could be economically sustainable if it did not address the social and cultural conditions of the community.

It was consistently emphasized that decision-makers needed leadership and vision on these issues and that a high level of collaboration among the three levels of government and the emerging aboriginal leadership was required to make effective use of the human capital of cities in western Canada.

### **The Competitive City: Economic Factors**

This stood in stark contrast to the respondents' consideration of the importance of what might be called economic and demographic considerations. For instance, a majority did not believe exports/tradables were a key indicator of competitiveness, that infrastructure was a key indicator, nor that building a stronger tourism industry was a priority. Only six per cent thought innovation/entrepreneurship was the most important factor in competitiveness; only sixteen per cent considered infrastructure to be so. Finally, a vast majority did not consider population growth as an important indicator.

Nonetheless, a distinct majority did believe that responding to business concerns was critical to making the city competitive. Also, when the promotion of business was combined with promotion of technology and education, it then received a higher level of endorsement as benefiting a city's competitiveness than individual business-oriented elements did on their own (e.g., exports, infrastructure, entrepreneurship).

There seemed to be a wide consensus that urban economies would thrive if a diverse range of businesses thrived within their boundaries. The issue of clustering – the notion that proximity to other employers in an industry will build a rich talent pool – seemed to be assumed more than discussed. Indeed, there seemed to be a consensus that getting some sectors to achieve a critical mass in a city may be more important than the location of the city itself. Housing, in fact, could be seen as a key economic issue, not just a social one. The feeling was that affordable homes would offer higher living standards for the entire community.

There was considerable attention paid to the environmental toll of urban growth. Sustainability was a consistent theme throughout the two days, and the issue of urban sprawl in particular was seen as vitally in need of attention. By the same token, revitalization of city cores was also seen as very important. The issue of transportation, both in terms of urban transit and commuting to and from regions, was held as an important consideration. In urban areas such as Vancouver or Calgary, in particular, an efficient mass transit system was seen as a competitive advantage.

Some potential key threats to the competitiveness of cities were identified: governance issues, infrastructure needs, competition from within Canada and from the United States.

There were tensions around how far government should be involved in promoting "competitiveness." Some argued that government should aim to encourage regional growth where it occurs naturally and not try to influence market forces: only a minority, for example, agreed that governments needed to do more to attract tourism. Others suggested that government's role should be to plan for growth, rather than simply letting organic factors dictate where and how growth occurs.

In sum, participants agreed that competitive cities shared some key characteristics: that they be environmentally pleasant and economically prosperous, demonstrate a high level of trust among social groups, include the disadvantaged in their deliberations and decision-making, have thriving ethnic communities, be well managed, culturally diverse, have a high quality of labour, and offer good housing choices.

Access and infrastructure continue to be of vital importance to economic success. It was agreed that a city's economy often depends on its region for people, goods and services and these need to be supplied to and from surrounding areas efficiently and effectively. As such, it was important for cities to work collaboratively with the regions that surround it.

### **Charting Collaboration: Public Management Issues**

If there seemed to be relatively little dissent from the broad characteristics of what a competitive, healthy community should look like, there was a great deal more discussion of the need for better collaboration. The message often heard was that all three levels of the public service should be involved in developing effective, long-term urban plans. Many people affirmed that cities in western Canada have little independent authority – they are creatures of provincial parliaments. Participants said that all too often local governments are weak politically and fiscally. Despite their resounding call for collaboration, over eighty per cent of participants agreed that cities needed more autonomy.

There was considerable frustration expressed at the lack of coordination between government agents. Over seventy per cent of participants identified “reducing the overlap of services and programs between governments” as a priority. An almost equal number saw reducing the overlap of services and programs between NGOs as a priority. Almost eighty per cent of participants said that public-sector managers had to improve their working relationships with politicians. In terms of how cities chose their priorities, almost sixty per cent of respondents (presumably a majority of non-municipal participants) agreed that the process was confusing. When asked if they thought that the actions of public servants were “coherent,” an overwhelming eighty per cent said “no.” Indeed, an equal number agreed that there was a “significant mismatch” between federal priorities, provincial priorities and municipal priorities.

In light of this fragmented system, leadership and coordination of policy and services were seen to be vitally important.

In terms of capacity to act, participants felt strongly that the public sector had the tools necessary. Over seventy-five per cent of participants felt they had the capacity to work effectively with the business community. They also agreed in roughly similar proportions that they had the capacity to work effectively with cultural interests and environmental interests.

Who should take the lead in managing change? A majority thought it was the municipality that should take the lead in making cities more competitive and healthy. However, when asked which level of government should take the lead in getting collaboration between levels of government on this issue, the majority did not know. The majority of those who had an answer thought it was

the federal government's responsibility. A significant majority also thought that the federal government should work directly with cities on key issues, though even here a third of those asked couldn't provide an answer to this question.

In sum, participants seemed to agree that future policy will require strong political leadership and vision at the urban level in combination with an active participation from the other two levels. There will continue to be a defining role for provinces, but participants felt there could be an important strategic role for central government since local strategic thinking can often be limited by economic boundaries.

It was agreed that both formal and informal partnerships were important in making governance arrangements work. However, it was observed that while some tension between partners leads to a positive creative dynamic, there is often also potential for damaging conflict, especially if provincial and federal governments insist on one-size-fits-all policies. Managing this tension may be the most important role of public servants at all levels of government in western Canada.

### **Measuring Performance**

Throughout the two-day conversation, public servants emphasized their need to measure performance, and the survey indicated that there was only a tenuous agreement on what a scorecard should look like. It was pointed out that there was a lack of comparative time-series data that can help determine whether a city is "competitive" and "healthy," and, as a result, it is unclear what the key drivers of high performance might be.

However, it was clear that high performance was not related to the presence of specific industrial sectors. The ability to cope with change – to accommodate and then constructively benefit from it – was widely seen as a key characteristic of a competitive, healthy city.

There did not seem to be a single model for creating competitive, healthy cities (and city regions) for western Canada. There was agreement that high performance can be achieved under a variety of governance arrangements and that uniform policies will fail.

It was often said that the public sector exists to improve the quality of life and that this, in and of itself, was vital in determining a city's competitiveness and health. It was felt that the extent to which cities welcome diverse groups and accommodate aboriginal Canadians will make an important contribution towards their competitiveness. The "welcoming" nature of a city as manifested by its public services – however difficult to grade – was important.

Excellent public services in health, education and law and order were identified as factors in many participants' assessment of a city's performance. Delivery of these services is often more difficult and complicated in some cities, however. Results on the question regarding public safety seem to indicate that this issue will only become important to people when crime reaches a certain threshold in public perception.

## Charting Priorities

### *a. Policy Priorities*

In order for western cities to become more competitive and healthier, participants felt that public services will need to improve dramatically their ability to collaborate.

Of the many priorities identified to make cities more competitive and healthier during the symposium, three seemed to be three policy priorities:

- housing;
- engaging the aboriginal communities in urban areas; and
- revitalization of distressed neighbourhoods and urban sprawl.

It was revealing that sixty per cent of participants agreed that the keys to successful communities were “communication, education, and imagination.” Could these be seen as policy objectives? With the exception of education, none of them has a constitutional definition, let alone municipal programs.

How can the public service in Canada respond to such priorities? Clearly, there must be more cohesion brought to bear on policies and programs. It was agreed that public servants must make greater efforts at understanding each other’s priorities, improve their relationship with political authorities, and focus on reducing the overlap of their programs.

### *b. Administrative Priorities*

How can the policy objectives be achieved?

Participants often expressed the thought that it was not an easy task to build the networks for policy and implementation that are necessary to successfully pursue policy and program changes. The issues are as vast as the territory, and – as it was made abundantly clear – municipal governments resent policy proposals that are insensitive to their particularities. That being said, provincial governments and federal governments need a degree of consistency in accountability. How can these differing positions be bridged?

### *Knowledge Transfer*

In light of the revelation that government priorities were confusing, participants said that an effort should be made to facilitate the liaison between levels of government on urban issues. There seemed to be a consensus that a knowledge engagement should precede a policy or program commitment.

It was pointed out that municipal public servants must improve their capacity to deal systematically with the other two orders of government. They are the most important in that they

have the most intimate knowledge of their communities, can predict with most accuracy how policies and programs will evolve, and have the best grasp of how to measure progress. They must be more transparent when outlining their priorities and introduce to their colleagues their short-, medium-, and long-term strategic plans.

Participants clearly appreciated the policy capacity of both the federal and provincial governments. It was held as important that the “knowledge transfer” from those levels of government be vigorously pursued so that it can better connect to local planning and decision-making.

Participants agreed overwhelmingly (eighty-five per cent) that in-person forums for dialogue such as this symposium were helpful. Many pointed out that there is an array of strategies that could be adopted, ranging from a systematic regime of on-site visits to Internet sites where discussion papers, case studies, reports and essays could be posted.

Regardless of the mechanism chosen, participants believed that the collaboration should be “educational” and “team-building”: the centrality of “knowledge transfer” had to be a central goal.

#### *Action Transfer*

With better mechanisms for “knowledge transfer,” it was felt that public servants could be more effective in synthesizing their knowledge and understand better the implications of what they know for policy and programs. In turn, this would help the task of identifying priorities. It was felt that once priorities have been identified, public sectors will be in a better situation to decide whether to act unilaterally, bilaterally or multilaterally. They will be better able to balance “top-down” and “bottom-up” approaches.

This symposium revealed a great desire to collaborate and to be inclusive in decision-making and program delivery. It was felt that this would lead to more effective “action transfers.” It was pointed out that these can be vertical (in both directions) but will likely take place along horizontal lines with a multitude of partners both from within and outside government. It was consistently emphasized that action transfers will have to be accompanied by a high degree of consultation with a broad range of partners. This will require sophisticated partnerships and much compromise. Agreements such as the one struck by all levels of government for Vancouver, it was felt, seemed to offer promise that original solutions to longstanding problems can be found.

#### *Transferring “Knowledge-to-Action” and “Action-to-Knowledge”*

The two-day symposium displayed no shortage of knowledge but considerable frustration in transferring knowledge into action. Participants stated that rigorous knowledge and action transfers will ultimately lead to transfers of knowledge into action, and vice-versa.

It was often said that once action has been triggered, there should be an equal commitment to transfer the accumulated knowledge and experience – to rigorously account and measure

performance – back to the policy, programming and decision-making community. Participants were keenly aware that they cannot pursue priorities without community support — from neighbourhoods, the business community, the arts community, the aboriginal community, and many others. There seemed to be an overwhelming consensus on this point, and it is clear that public consultation should remain a high priority for all levels of government.

“Imagination” can hardly be called a policy priority, but, if anything, this symposium seemed to show that there was no lack of vision for cities in western Canada. Participants felt that what was needed now to make western cities “competitive” and “healthy” were mechanisms and networks to transform “imagination” into concrete policies and programs. The public sector needs better cohesion in order to succeed in making western cities competitive and healthy. They need agreement on qualitative measures, quantitative measures and governance models. They will inevitably need new models of collaboration, new models of horizontality, and perhaps a new model of federalism in action. Only then will they be able to ensure that western Cities in Canada build their economic strengths and remain great places in which to live.

**APPENDIX A**  
**AGENDA AND PARTICIPANTS**

**“Competitive Cities, Healthy Communities: Charting Collaboration”**

**-An IPAC Intergovernmental Dialogue-**

**MORRIS J. WOSK CENTRE FOR DIALOGUE  
SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY  
580 WEST HASTINGS STREET, VANCOUVER, B.C.  
11 AND 12 MARCH 2003**

**Day 1**

**9:00**

**Introductions**

**“An Explanation of the Format and the Structure”**

*Participants will be asked to spend a few minutes with a colleague and share backgrounds and the following question, followed by a lively and “up tempo” round of introductions, each of the other.*

*“The year is 2020 and the western Canadian city is a triumph – competitive, healthy, and vibrant: What is the single most significant characteristic that you believe makes the city everything that it has become?”*

**10:45**

**“Thinking Together about a City’s Competitiveness”**

**Linda Thorstad, CEO, Vancouver Economic Development  
Commission – LEAD DISCUSSANT**

*After Ms. Thorstad’s remarks, a dialogue circle of four discussants will join in conversation in the centre of the room, and then the circles of conversation will be opened across the room.*

**Noon**

**Lunch break**

**13:00**

**“Thinking Together about the Place of Culture in the Competitive and  
Healthy City”**

**Duncan Low, Director, Vancouver East Cultural Centre – LEAD  
DISCUSSANT**

*Following Mr. Low’s remarks, a dialogue circle of four discussants will identify five key questions that need to be addressed. Breakout groups will gather in the concourse to discuss one assigned question and to pick one additional question from the list of five. Each group will assign one person to join in a closing circle of conversation about the outcome from the breakouts, and to share the notes from the discussion for use in developing the proceedings.*

**15:00**            **Networking break**

**15:30**            **“Learning Together About the Competitive City in the United States”**  
**Wyman Winston, Executive Deputy Director, Portland (Oregon)**  
**Development Corporation—LEAD DISCUSSANT**

*Participants will be asked to cluster informally in groups of four to six to talk about the presentations and what they believe to be the most important implications and lessons for the “Competitive Canadian City” from Mr. Winston’s remarks. Everyone will then return to their seats for a discussion in the round.*

**17:00**            **Concluding remarks/End of day**

## **Day 2**

**9:00**            **“A Review of What we Heard and Said Yesterday”**

**What “worked” yesterday? What could have “worked better?”**  
*(A focus on expectations, including thoughts and suggestions on what we need to do over the day to meet expectations for the session.)*

**9:30**            **“Thinking Together about Tolerance in a Competitive and Healthy Community”**  
**George E. Lafond, University of Saskatchewan—LEAD DISCUSSANT**

*After Mr. Lafond’s remarks, a dialogue circle of discussants will join in conversation with him. In the course of the discussions, the facilitator will suggest and discuss three questions to raise in the hall and invite the participants to bring back their energy and reflections after informal conversations over the break.*

**10:30**            **Networking break**

**11:00**            **“Understanding the Smaller City: Issues, Obstacles, and Opportunities”**  
**Brian Hamblin, Dir. Corp. Services, City of Regina; Former CAO, City of Moose Jaw—LEAD DISCUSSANT**

*After Mr. Hamblin’s remarks, a dialogue circle of discussants will be asked to comment after the presentation and each will identify one key opportunities and one critical challenges in setting a future course for the achievement of “The Great Canadian Small City and Healthy Community” in their region.*

**Noon**            **Lunch break**

**13:00**            **“Understanding the Big City: Management Issues, Obstacles, Opportunities”**  
**Judy Rogers, City Manager, City of Vancouver–LEAD DISCUSSANT**

*After Ms. Rogers’s remarks, a dialogue circle of discussants will be asked to comment after the presentation and each will identify one key opportunity and one critical challenge in setting a future course for the achievement of “The Great Canadian Big City and Healthy Community” in their region.*

**13:45**            **“Setting the Course” – What, How, and What Next?**

*A conversational café in the concourse within small groups organized BY PROVINCE to reflect on the discussions and to answer questions like: Where are we trying to go? What will it take to get there? Is it helpful to distinguish between the “what” and the “how” – what we want to achieve, and the structures and decision-making it will take for us to get there? What are the points of opportunity and challenge that we need to identify on the new Canadian urban compass? Are there distinctions that need to be made for local and regional realities with the national framework?*

*And, finally, each group will be specifically tasked with identifying the one, most important concrete next step that should be taken following this meeting, and suggesting who (and how) might most appropriately take the initiative following this meeting.*

**Networking break**

**15:15**            **“Charting Collaboration – Pulling the Circles of Dialogue Together”**

*One representative from each of the groups will report back on the outcome of the discussions through a dialogue circle of discussants. The conversation will then widen out the circle of conversations across the hall: Are there overlapping views as to practical steps for what should happen next? Is there an emerging sense of where there is the potential for finding common ground? And where there are differences? Are the reasons underlying them clear and understood? Are there clear priority points on the compass, requiring more information, more discussion, or more perspectives? What do we need to take away from this place and this time together to add to the effectiveness of future conversations? What needs to be done to make cities in western Canada more competitive and healthier?*

**17:00**            **Concluding remarks/End of session**

## Symposium Participants

<b>Susan Anzolin</b> Privy Council Office, Ottawa	<b>Ken Armour</b> Human Resources Development Canada, British Columbia	<b>Jeannette Aubin</b> Western Economic Diversification, Manitoba	<b>Mike Badham</b> SK Urban Municipalities Association, Saskatchewan	<b>David V. Bates</b> Indian and Northern Affairs, British Columbia
<b>Michael Bates</b> Pacific Council of Senior Federal Officials, British Columbia	<b>Fabiola Bazo</b> Industry Canada, British Columbia	<b>Sylvie Bérubé</b> Health Canada, British Columbia	<b>Roy Bird</b> Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, Saskatchewan	<b>Bill Balan</b> Canadian Heritage, Manitoba
<b>James H. Boland</b> Fisheries and Oceans Canada, British Columbia	<b>Doug Borrowman</b> Saskatchewan Federal Council, Saskatchewan	<b>Zita Botelho</b> Environment Canada, British Columbia	<b>Chris Branch</b> City of Calgary, Alberta	<b>Orville Buffie</b> Manitoba Federal Council, Manitoba
<b>Bob Butler</b> Métis Nation of Alberta	<b>Sandy Calvine</b> Natural Resources Canada, British Columbia	<b>Lorraine Cameron</b> Status of Women Canada, British Columbia	<b>Lewis Cardinal</b> Edmonton Aboriginal Urban Affairs Committee, Alberta	<b>Richard K. Carson</b> Fisheries and Oceans Canada, British Columbia
<b>Linda Charles</b> Human Resources Development Canada, British Columbia	<b>Dennis Chubb</b> Saskatoon Regional Intersectoral Committee, Saskatchewan	<b>Terry Coleman</b> Moose Jaw Police Service, Saskatchewan	<b>George Cornwell</b> Saskatchewan Federal Council, Saskatchewan	<b>W. Brent Cotter</b> Government Relations and Aboriginal Affairs, Saskatchewan
<b>Belaineh Deguefe</b> Industry Canada, Ottawa	<b>Diane Devonshire</b> City of Calgary, Alberta	<b>Brian Dolsen</b> Community, Aboriginal and Women's Services, British Columbia	<b>Liese Dorber</b> Western Economic Diversification, Manitoba	<b>Bruce Drake</b> Industry Canada, British Columbia
<b>Bruce Duncan</b> City of Edmonton, Alberta	<b>John Dunfield</b> City of Calgary, Alberta	<b>Patrice Dutil</b> Institute of Public Administration of Canada	<b>John Edwards</b> Government Relations and Aboriginal Affairs, Saskatchewan	<b>Jim Fleury</b> Western Economic Diversification, Alberta

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## **APPENDIX B: LEAD DISCUSSANTS (IN ORDER OF APPEARANCE)**

### **MR. S. GLENN SIGURDSON (MODERATOR)**

Mr. Glenn Sigurdson is a fellow of the Morris J. Wosk Centre for Dialogue, a research associate, and an adjunct professor in the Simon Fraser University School of Environment and Resource Management. He received his B.A. (Hons.) in economics from the University of Manitoba and a law degree from Osgoode Hall Law School in Toronto. He is a barrister and solicitor called to the bars of Manitoba, Saskatchewan and British Columbia.

His legal career began in 1972 in Winnipeg. In 1985, he was appointed Queen's Counsel. He practised in Winnipeg until 1989, when he opened a Vancouver office for Taylor McCaffrey. He is no longer engaged in the active practice of law but continues to maintain a relationship with Taylor McCaffrey in Winnipeg as counsel.

His arbitration practice has included workplace, commercial, environmental and health care disputes. As a mediator and facilitator, he has assisted in multi-party efforts to reach acceptable solutions to complex problems, including the development of regulatory frameworks for managing change within organizations, fisheries issues, forest management and environmental assessments, health-care disputes, multi-party litigation and workplace disputes.

Mr. Sigurdson was president (1996) of the 3,500-member Society of Professionals in Dispute Resolution (SPIDR), now known as Association for Conflict Resolution (ADR), the pre-eminent organization in the field that is internationally headquartered in Washington, D.C.

### **MS. LINDA THORSTAD**

A lifetime Vancouver resident, Ms. Linda Thorstad, M.Sc., is the executive director of the Vancouver Economic Development Commission. The commission is mandated with fostering economic development in Vancouver, promoting Vancouver nationally and internationally, advising city council on economic matters, and providing critical economic information. Previously she served as a business and communications consultant; the vice-president, Corporate Relations for Viceroy Resources Corporation; director for B.C. and Alberta for the Canadian Bankers Association; consultant for the Fraser Basin Management Board; associate for the Commission of Resources and Environment (C.O.R.E.); and president and director of Interaction Resources Ltd.

In 2002, Linda Thorstad was awarded the 2002 Women of Influence in Business Award, and, in 1996, she was honoured with the YWCA Woman of Distinction Award for Management and the Professions for her many accomplishments.

Ms. Thorstad is vice-chair of the University of British Columbia Board of Governors and is immediate past-president of the University BC Alumni Association. She also serves on the UBC and Hamber Foundations and has recently served as a member of the BC's Women's Hospital Foundation Board, the BC Council for Sustainability, BC Heritage Rivers Board, and Whistler Centre for Business and the Arts Board. Additionally, Ms. Thorstad has led fundraising efforts for the United Way Campaign and BC's Children's Hospital Foundations annual campaign.

From a professional perspective, Ms. Thorstad was president of the Association of Professional Engineers and Geoscientists of the Province of BC in 1995–96 and is a founding member of the

Canadian Council for Professional Geoscientists. She has also served on a Minister of Natural Resources Canada Advisory Board, the Canadian Council for Professional Engineers, and as a member of the Vancouver Board of Trade.

### **Mr. Duncan Low**

Mr. Duncan Low is the executive director of the Vancouver East Cultural Centre. He is currently completing a six-month assignment as producer of “Celebration 2010,” a three-week province-wide arts celebration in support of the Vancouver/Whistler bid to secure the 2010 Winter Olympics.

The Vancouver East Cultural Centre is a multi-purpose arts centre with a flexible theatre (250–400 seats) and an art gallery. The centre has been at the forefront of Canadian performing arts for twenty-five years.

Currently the theatre is operational ten months of the year and presents a mixed program of works that include theatre, dance, opera, classical, jazz and folk music and a series for children and young people. The program includes both national and international work.

Since assuming his post in 1996, the VECC won the 2002 VanCity Million Dollar Award, retired a large deficit (\$250,000), and placed the theatre on a secure financial operation. It has created the largest (\$60,000) annual performing arts award in Canada for the creation of new work (funded by Alcan Ltd.) and introduced the Telus Youth Pass, a program that allows adolescent students to see live performances for \$2. It has also created a company-in-residence program.

Mr. Low also currently sits on the Arts and Culture Advisory Committee of the Vancouver Foundation and is a board member of the Candance Network and the B.C. Epilepsy Association. From 1988 to 1995, he was founder and executive director of the Scottish International Children’s Festival, which is now the largest performing arts festival for children and young people in the United Kingdom.

### **Mr. Wyman B. Winston**

Mr. Wyman Winston, an architect, is deputy executive director of the Portland (Oregon) Development Commission. He joined the PDC as the director of housing in 2001, where he administered financial resources to stimulate and support the development and preservation of housing units throughout the city, and initiated Portland’s New Market Tax Credit project. In November 2002, Mr. Winston was appointed deputy executive director, overseeing internal operations and professional services.

Prior to the commission, Mr. Winston worked at the Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Authority in Madison, Wisconsin, as director of emerging markets, responsible for leading the strategic business goals in new product and services development and initiating the e-commerce plans to address business-to-business opportunities. Mr. Winston also served as director of Multifamily Housing. Mr. Winston has also served as the manager of Home Front/Department of City Development and executive director of Westside Conservation Corporation, both based in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

Mr. Winston obtained his bachelor of architecture at the University of Illinois-Chicago.

He is active in the community, including volunteering for CommUnity Call-to-Vote, a grassroots organization focusing on encouraging young adults and non-traditional voters to vote; organizing the African-American Coalition for Empowerment (ACE) in Milwaukee; working as a community development volunteer in the planning and development of \$7.9 million residential subdivision sponsored by a community-based non-profit organization (The Genesis Park development went on to win a national Nehemiah Housing grant of \$1.2 million from the Department of Housing and Urban Development); and acting as a trustee board member of the Parkside Housing Cooperative.

### **Mr. George E. Lafond**

Mr. George E. Lafond was named in January to the new position of special adviser on aboriginal initiatives to the president of the University of Saskatchewan. He is responsible for moving the university's aboriginal initiatives forward and advises the president and university executives on representing the University of Saskatchewan to the aboriginal community.

He was born and raised on the Muskeg Lake Cree Nation. He received his B.Ed. from the University of Saskatchewan and taught native studies and history. In the course of his career, he has been a special adviser to three federal ministers of Indian and Northern Affairs. He served as president of the Canada Council for Aboriginal Business, in Toronto. He has been extensively involved in his community as a fastball coach and as hockey player and coach.

From 1995–2002, he served as elected tribal leader of the Saskatoon Tribal Council, which consisted of seven First Nations.

### **Mr. Brian D. Hamblin**

A life-long Saskatchewan resident, Mr. Brian Hamblin is the director of corporate services for the City of Regina.

He graduated from the University of Saskatchewan with degrees in commerce and law. In 1992, after six years of private law practice, he was appointed the city clerk/solicitor for the City of Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan.

Mr. Hamblin has served on the Canadian Association of Municipal Administrators Board since 2001 as the representative from Saskatchewan-Manitoba.

### **Ms. Judy Rogers**

Ms. Judy Rogers is city manager for the City of Vancouver. Having served as both deputy and assistant city manager before becoming city manager, Ms. Rogers has been instrumental in many important city initiatives, including developing and implementing the Neighbourhood Integrated Services Teams; coordinating a comprehensive review on gambling that established guidelines for the city's stance on gaming; and serving on Vancouver's Coalition for Crime Prevention and Drug Treatment.

Over the course of her career, Ms. Rogers has also held several other positions with the City of Vancouver, including acting director of social planning; manager of the City Plan Community Access Program; director of the Equal Employment Opportunities Office and the Hastings

Institute; and general manager for the Vancouver Indian Friendship Centre. Prior to joining the city, she was director of social and community Services for the YWCA, where she helped develop a daycare program in the Downtown Eastside, and a teen mothers' program at a local high school.

Ms. Rogers holds a masters in public administration degree from the University of Victoria and a bachelor of physical education degree from the University of B.C. She's a recipient of the Lieutenant Governor's Medal for Excellence in Public Service in B.C.

Currently, Ms. Rogers serves on the executive board of the Olympics, is vice-president of the Institute of Public Administration of Canada, vice-chair of the Labour Relations Advisory Committee for the Greater Vancouver Regional District, co-chair of the Joint Emergency Liaison Committee for the province and region, and is a member of the LGMA, ICMA and CAMA.

### ***The New Directions Series***

The Institute of Public Administration of Canada (IPAC) has, for many years, sponsored issue-oriented working groups of public servants and academics to find practical solutions to emerging issues. The Institute assembles groups of experts working on public-sector reform and public policy to discuss, compare, analyse, document and advance the understanding of critical issues and themes. While these reports are published in the language in which they were written, the executive summary is provided in the other official language.

The projects continue to explore a wide range of issues. In its continuing commitment to exploration and exchange, IPAC launched this series. Publications in this collection highlight critical findings and analysis from our action-oriented research activities. Besides advancing the understanding of current best practices, this work also serves to advance the understanding of what these initiatives mean with respect to the broader concerns of public-sector reform. These reports are available free of charge to IPAC members. Orders can be placed by contacting the IPAC national office in Toronto ([www.ipaciapc.ca](http://www.ipaciapc.ca)).

### ***La Collection Nouvelles Directions***

Depuis plusieurs années, l'Institut d'administration publique du Canada (IAPC) commandite des groupes de travail axé sur les grandes questions en administration publique. Composés de praticiens et de théoriciens, ces groupes d'experts se réunissent pour apporter des solutions pratiques aux nouveaux enjeux qui confrontent les administrateurs publics. Spécialisés dans les secteurs de la réforme administrative et des politiques, ils discutent, comparent, analysent les problèmes et questions critiques qui sont soulevés et documentent leurs observations, faisant ainsi avancer la compréhension dans ces domaines. Des rapports découlant de ces études sont publiés dans la langue dans laquelle ils sont soumis. Un sommaire exécutif est présenté dans l'autre langue officielle.

Nombreuses questions d'actualité sont continuellement étudiées dans le cadre d'activités de recherche. L'IAPC a donc lancé cette collection afin de poursuivre son engagement d'explorer et d'échanger. Les publications qui paraissent dans *Nouvelles Directions* mettent en relief des conclusions et analyses importantes qui sont tirées de notre recherche active. Tout en faisant avancer la compréhension des meilleures pratiques en vigueur, ces études permettent de mieux saisir leur importance en ce qui a trait aux préoccupations plus générales concernant la réforme du secteur public. Ces rapports sont offerts gratuitement aux membres de l'IAPC. Pour obtenir des exemplaires, prière de communiquer avec le bureau national de l'IAPC à Toronto ([www.ipaciapc.ca](http://www.ipaciapc.ca)).

### **Other Reports in the Series/ Déjà parus dans la collection**

1. *Management and Performance Measurement in the Jewellery Industry: A Golden Opportunity?* By Ann Rauhala.
2. *Performance Management: Linking Results to Public Debate.* By John English and Evert Lindquist.
3. *From Controlling to Collaborating: When Governments Want to be Partners.* By Jim Armstrong and Donald G. Lenihan.
4. *Improved Reporting to Parliament.* By Jim Thomas.
5. *Crossing Boundaries: Privacy, Policy, and Information Technology.* By Harvey Schachter
6. *Collaborative Government: Is There a Canadian Way?* Edited by Susan Delacourt and Donald G. Lenihan.
7. *Business Planning in Canadian Public Administration.* Edited by Luc Bernier and Evan H. Potter.
8. *Making Government the Best Place to Work: Building Commitment.* By Monica Belcourt and Simon Taggar.
9. *To Better Serve Canadians: How Technology is Changing the Relationship Between Members of Parliament and Public Servants.* By Jonathan Malloy.
10. *Serving the Public North of 60.* By Frances Abele and Katherine Graham.
11. *"Always Better": Continuously Innovative Public-Sector Organizations in Canada.* By Peter Buker