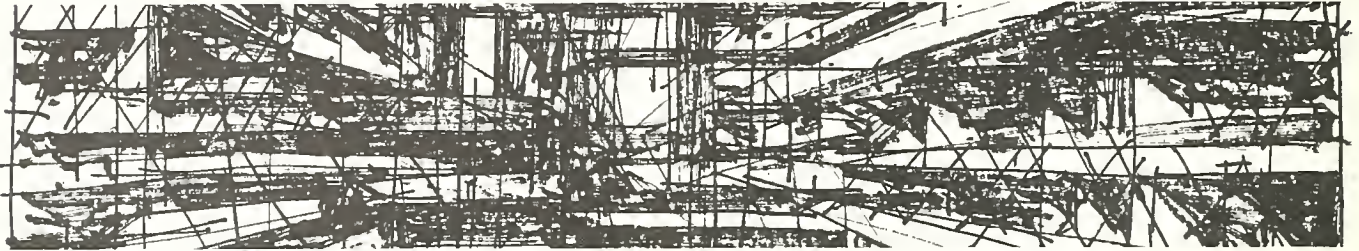

Planning in the Eighties: A Special Report



Community Organizing, Self-Help, and Planning in the Eighties

Environmental Planning in the Eighties

Neighborhood Planning in the Eighties

Transportation Planning in the Eighties

Public Participation in the Eighties

North Carolina's Lead Regional Organizations in the Eighties

Human Services Planning in the Eighties

Introduction

This special report on the future of planning is a direct response to the wave of self-examination now underway for planning practitioners, academics and community groups. The young decade's tides of budget slashing, regulation cutting and reorganization have led many to reassess the mission of planning, planners' identities and approaches planners use to achieve their goals.

carolina planning has asked a number of noted practitioners and academics in various fields of planning to sketch some impressions about planning in this decade. In the following report, the contributors view recent trends in substantive areas of planning practice, discuss the roles planners may play and the approaches planners may be taking. One major thread running through the pieces is the need for strong planning in a period of shrinking resources.

Community Organizing, Self-Help, and Planning in the Eighties

Community organizing has never been very kind to planning. In the next decade, the issues faced by grass-roots organizations and self-help development groups, and the strategies they adopt to meet those issues, are likely to cause more intense conflicts with planners and put pressure on planners to develop new skills.

The methodology of community organizing has many elements which are antithetical to the

methodology of planning. Many community organizations, focusing on short-term tactics, have looked to planners for ammunition for community fights and little else. Indeed, one of the rules of Alinsky-style organizing is not to get "bogged down" in planning.

Even neighborhood organizations which have become directly involved as the developers of projects taken from a comprehensive plan have

not worked easily with city planners. These development organizations need planning, but the kind of planning they need can be characterized more as market strategy and project management planning than as comprehensive community planning. When these groups have looked to or hired planners with public agency backgrounds, they have often found that those planners lacked the skills needed to arrange financing for and to manage the implementation of housing and economic development projects.

The cutbacks in government spending at every level will make the near future even rougher for planners who will be involved with community organizations. The number of planners in public agencies is likely to be reduced, creating a heavier work load for those who remain. Furthermore, public agencies will be under fire from constituency and community organizations on the impact of budget reductions. For better or worse, administrators in the sixties and seventies learned to rely on planners for the front-line representation of agencies at public meetings with community groups. As community groups grow more hostile to administrative policies, planners run the risk of being cannon fodder in the confrontation.

THE FUTURE OF ORGANIZING

Certainly community organizing must learn new strategies, and those are emerging. In a period of a shrinking public resource base, old style confrontation organizing, which demanded always more from public authorities, becomes outmoded. When faced with demands that exceed budget capabilities, mayors and other elected officials have been taking a hard line with neighborhood based constituency groups.

"No win" confrontations often occur because frustrated citizens cannot present realistic alternatives to public policies they see as detrimental. The organizing of the eighties must shape creative alternatives for budget strapped bureaucracies or it will fail. Community organizing must push for reorganization of public service delivery systems, greater budget scrutiny, accountability for output and new modes of performing old public work.

For example, in the early sixties, it was not uncommon for public housing authorities to account for operating costs by cost item on a pooled basis, including all projects within the responsibility of the housing authority. Since there was no project based accounting, there was no incentive for a tenants' organization to reduce the vandalism costs in a given project in hopes of applying that cost saving to some improvement in that specific project. When tenant organizing and then the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban development forced project based cost accounting, tenant organizations were in a

position to negotiate for improvements based on tenant activities to reduce the historic operating costs of their particular projects. Could this learning of the sixties be applied to the eighties?

"IN A PERIOD OF A SHRINKING PUBLIC RESOURCE BASE, OLD STYLE CONFRONTATION ORGANIZING, WHICH DEMANDED ALWAYS MORE FROM PUBLIC AUTHORITIES, BECOMES OUTMODED."

I am anxious to see the first neighborhood organization negotiate a neighborhood based cost accounting system across all public services provided by government. It would then be possible for residents to launch self-help efforts to provide certain services for themselves in order to see those cost savings applied to services which they desire but could not be provided under budgets drawn by more conventional methods.

PLANNERS' OPTIONS

As the eighties bring a return of those policies which gave us conflict and confrontation in the sixties, public sector planners are inevitably placed between opposing camps in the public debate. They might well be advised to learn some group process skills applicable to the situation. The techniques of conflict resolution have been markedly refined over the past twenty years and are taught by a wide variety of organizational development and human relations training networks across the country. Further, planners' communication skills could be improved and broadened to embrace new group techniques and new technologies.

In the final analysis, however, issues of substance are more irresolvable than process techniques. Budget constraints will simply not allow the level of service or capital improvement that many community organizations will demand. Reimbursement formulas will not support the cost of human services that constituency groups will demand. The planner is called on by those inside the agency and clients outside the agency to be a magician of sorts. Knowing the issues now, planners must get to work to envision alternative solutions for planned shrinkage of government budgets: less expensive modes of delivery; self-help services, or "privatization" of public services; involvement of unions, public officials, and organized citizens in problem solving before the issues are joined in the streets.

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SELF-HELP DEVELOPERS

Confrontation organizing is not the only trend among neighborhood groups. The last ten years have witnessed a tremendous increase in the number of community based organizations attempting to become developers in their own right.

In some cases, a group's development approach was motivated by dissatisfaction with other entities implementing community revitalization plans, or by the unintended consequences of earlier revitalization activity (such as displacement resulting from increased real estate activity and visible community improvements). In other instances, the move to development was inspired by the growing recognition by self-help organizations that the build-up of equity in the community was being lost to outside developers, and profits which could be recycled into further development were being drained away. Whether to respond to a problem or to seize an opportunity, thousands of neighborhood self-help organizations in cities and rural communities across the country have become or have begun to move toward becoming development corporations.

In virtually every region of the country, and among every ethnic and income group, there are outstanding examples of community based self-help organizations which have become successful real estate developers, housers, business developers, and industrialists. These organizations exist and have succeeded in both urban and rural settings, and in cities of virtually every size. They have built new housing for ownership and for rental. They have successfully managed complex multi-family rental projects. They have renovated abandoned buildings and turned them back to low-income rental property. They have created a wide variety of rehabilitation programs to recycle deteriorated properties for home ownership by low and moderate-income families. They have created new jobs and new businesses in their communities targeted to the unemployed of those areas. They have assisted local businessmen in revitalizing neighborhood retail districts and have constructed or helped finance the construction of a wide variety of retail and commercial space. They have attracted new industry and assisted small manufacturing firms in their communities to expand.

In some cases, they have developed equity pools to invest in the creation of new ventures in their communities thereby creating a net increase of available jobs. They have successfully operated targeted programs in employment training to free their community's unemployed. Many have recognized, and the National Commission on Neighborhoods has documented, that the participation of these organizations often creates new revitalization solutions not envisioned by public officials or technicians in the

fields of housing, economic development, and commercial revitalization.

In the past, self-help development groups have also shown their creativity in their ability to combine the resources of neighborhood residents, government, private businesses, and lending institutions in unique ways that meet the needs of their immediate neighborhoods. These leveraging schemes inevitably created partnerships where there might otherwise have been confrontation. The future will clearly bring greater involvement of the private sector as partners in neighborhood revitalization.



Photo by Anne Hafrey

The self-help development groups which will be successful in the eighties are those which can translate community goals into investment opportunities for private capital, albeit that some of the risks of the deals will be underwritten with public funds. To be successful, self-help developers need internal expertise, reliable and sensitive external advice, and access to conventional sources of public and private funds.

The private sector has begun to respond. Lending institutions all over the country are involved in reinvestment projects. Neighborhood Housing Services have re-awakened thousands of savings and loans. Commercial revitalization projects everywhere involve local banks. Aetna Life Insurance has agreed to finance redevelopment schemes in six neighborhoods by funding the capacity-building needs of those neighborhoods and their national coordinator, National People's Action. Traveller's has created a new department for its reinvestment program. Prudential has increased its neighborhood oriented efforts by making five million dollars of below market loans available through the national Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC). In addition, LISC has recruited corporate commitments all over the country to create a substantial pool of investment capital. The insurance companies of Minneapolis and St. Paul have

created a similar local pool. The demand still outstrips supply, but the private sector is becoming more open if neighborhood groups are delivery oriented and plan their projects with a "bottom line" appeal.

THE PLANNER'S ROLE

The planning skills needed by community economic development organizations are the planning tools of real estate and business development: market analysis to pinpoint the opportunities for new ventures; feasibility analysis for sites in low- and moderate-income communities; identification of comparables and the analysis of competition. These are the kinds of analyses a neighborhood development organization needs from a planner, rather than broad economic analyses. In business education, this field of work is included under the heading, "the economics of the firm." Unfortunately, there has been no counterpart area of study in planning schools on the details of project development. If it has been a struggle to refine the tools of economic planning to the micro-economics of a city or a significant portion of a city or rural area, planners must struggle even more to get down to this mini-economics level.

Planners are in a position to serve self-help development groups as outside advisors, as brokers to their own public agencies, and as connections to the private sector. As outside advisors, they can refine the business planning of projects; they can identify and recruit technical expertise within government agencies. As brokers, they can help sell the public role in the investment deal. As a point of access to the private sector, public planners can identify potential private partners through public agency contacts and experiences. They can also help a neighborhood group define the gains it must negotiate for in a partnership. Finally, public agencies can bestow on neighborhood groups credibility with the private sector.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

There are two improvements in the planning profession which were not made in the sixties or seventies but which community organization in the eighties and nineties will demand. The first improvement is of policy and program analysis so we can avoid detrimental side effects of revitalization activities. The second improvement is the popularization of planning skills so that they might be practiced by a larger number of community residents who are not planning technicians.

The current issues of displacement and gentrification illustrate the deficiencies in the state-of-the-art in planning program interventions for neighborhood revitalization. Re-

member some examples with a longer history: the failure of joint development schemes intended to protect residential neighborhoods from interstate highway construction; the neighborhood upheaval caused by relocation policies intended to prevent displacement of residents; and the disastrous economic effect of the construction of highway bypasses around small towns intended to improve business on main street. Each of these schemes had unintended consequences that were devastating to those who lived in the communities intended to be "saved." In a time of volatile economics and shrinking resources, planning needs to be more competent in identifying program outcomes. A better understanding of the economic market place within which public programs operate is more essential now than it ever has been.

Finally, if the public is to make better use of planning tools, then planners must also become educators. Planners will be challenged to demystify the planning process and to spend more time affording community organization leaders the opportunity to use the techniques of professional planning. The jargon itself of planning can often be more of a barrier than a help to the planning process. In my own neighborhood, the planning unit of the development department recently distributed a flier urging all citizens to come out to attend the public meeting to discuss the construction of "100 DUs." There was a footnote explaining that DU meant housing for the elderly. What ever happened to apartments? We have learned from some of the confrontations of the past that often community members who are not technicians or planners arrive at the most creative solutions to community problems. Planners cannot afford to be the only active agents involved in designing alternative solutions.

Environmental Planning in the Eighties

"Environmental planning" encompasses such a diverse range of vocations, professional interests and institutional milieux that it is difficult to generalize briefly about its future form and content. It includes, for instance, public sector specialists in air and water pollution control, area-wide waste management planning, and environmental impact assessment; resource management professionals planning the uses of public lands, forests and parks; and engineer/planners developing water supply systems. It includes private sector specialists in industrial environmental planning, planners of new communities and other "built environments," as well as independent consultants such as architect- and landscape architect-planners. Finally, it includes a heterogeneous range of local and county level planners dealing with land use controls in urbanizing areas, and espe-



cially with environmental aspects of such activities as subdivision approval, open space protection and site design, flood plain and conservation zoning, agricultural conservation planning, and private forest management. Each of these activities is often appropriately labelled "environmental planning" by its practitioners--yet there are substantial differences among them in approaches, tools and professional concerns.

One can identify, however, a series of movements in the general environmental field that affect many of these more particular approaches. Some of these movements I touched on in an earlier article in this journal (carolina planning, Vol. 5, No. 1, 1979, pp. 16-21), but for purposes of the present discussion let me summarize them somewhat differently.

LEGACY OF THE SEVENTIES

Six major patterns dominated environmental planning in the 1970s, and shape the present transition to the eighties.

Expansion. Environmental planning expanded dramatically in the 1970s, in every form and by virtually all measures. Previously existing forms of it continued to grow, some new job titles and many new issue areas emerged, and substantial new resources were allocated to practically all activities that are described as environmental planning, in both public and private sectors.

Federalization. Much of this expansion represented a vast enlargement of the role of the federal government, as it responded to public concerns by adding to earlier activities in land and water resource planning and public health protection, and by strengthening planning in such areas as air and water pollution control, toxic material and hazardous waste management, coastal area planning, and other environmental protection programs.

Regulation. In particular, the growth of federal environmental planning included not only enlarged budgets and financial assistance programs (such as for municipal sewage treatment plants) but also the proliferation of federal regulatory authorities over environmental conditions. Whatever the merits of current proposals to change some of these authorities, clearly a large number of new environmental regulatory

mandates were created during the past decade, some of which remain unimplemented and others relatively uncoordinated.

Politicization. The expansion and proliferation of environmental planning activities have both resulted from, and brought with them into planning processes, intensified conflict over the appropriate outcomes of environmental planning. New mandates have been added without clear weights relative to old mandates. New agencies' regulations constrain the missions of old agencies. New interest groups have gained equal access to administrative decision-making processes, and potential power, through litigation.

Sophistication. Much more is now known about environmental conditions and hazards than ten years ago. For a growing number of hazards, research and publication have blossomed, measurement has been refined to parts per billion, and innovations in control technology and economic incentives have been developed. Among the results of these trends has been the emergence of "second-generation" planning problems considerably more technical, sophisticated, and difficult to manage than such early problems as lake eutrophication and smog. Current examples include toxic chemicals, hazardous wastes, groundwater pollution, acid rain, trace carcinogens in food, surface mine reclamation, and simply the evaluation of all the relevant information on any substantive problem.

Complication. The combined effect of the five trends above has been to expand, but equally to complicate, the various practices of environmental planning. Each practice has become more technically sophisticated in itself. Relationships between practices--land use control with development planning, pollution control regulation with forest management, hazardous waste cleanup with hazardous waste siting opposition--have enormously complicated the challenge of environmental planning and management. Far more professional effort is now devoted to environmental planning, and undesired proposals can be more easily prevented. By the same token, any plan or management decision that evokes less than an absolute consensus has become far more

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Drawing by Heather Barbour

difficult to implement.

CURRENT SHIFT

Several further shifts in these patterns are being attempted by the current administration. The federal role is being contracted, both by central veto authority over new regulations and by substantial cutbacks in budgets and staff. Federal budget cutbacks will reduce state and local efforts funded by federal grants, especially in such areas as municipal waste treatment. The visible reduction of federal enforcement will diminish the incentives for private sector compliance with environmental planning. High interest rates and a poor economic outlook are also reducing activities in environmental development planning, at least for the present.

At the same time, however, many environmental problems continue to exist and to excite public concern. Chemical hazards continue to be identified, both by research and by recognition of irresponsible waste disposal practices. These wastes continue to accumulate, heightening the need for some safe means of disposal. Increasing pollution of both surface and groundwater sources appears to present growing risks to public drinking water. Simple demographics are increasing the magnitudes of some environmental problems. More people are now beginning to reach ages at which environmentally-influenced disease symptoms emerge. Moreover, population shifts from "frostbelt" to "sunbelt" leave the former with the environmental problems of economic decline (such as abandoned neighborhoods, and insufficient revenues to provide environmental services), even as they inflict the environmental problems of growth on the latter (such as urban sprawl, air pollution, and water shortages).

OUTLOOK FOR ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNERS

The problems will continue. Emphases and priorities may shift, but the needs for environmental planning--both in protecting against hazards and in creatively developing resources--remain central to the health and welfare of American society. Moreover, they are becoming more and more widely recognized as central to other societies as well. Water supply and quality will probably be among the central issues of the eighties both in the U.S. and abroad.

Employment is difficult at present, but will stabilize and continue. The present transition is probably not a reliable indication of the longer term future for environmental planners. If problems continue, so will the demands for their solution--short of a major war or economic catastrophe--and thus the need for people competent to assist in those tasks.

The need for technical competence will increase. The need will involve not just technicians per se, but also planners who have a solid understanding of the relevant environmental sciences, statistics, economic analysis, and the legal and regulatory context of environmental planning. Many environmental planners may also find it more effective to become "specialists with some generality" than the traditional "generalists with a specialty," though this balance deserves debate.

Political conflict may intensify. The issues are becoming more technically sophisticated, but most of the American population is not. Two predictable results are growing public distrust of scientific knowledge and expert authority, and the substitution of "not-in-my-backyard" self-interest for civic-spirited cooperation in the search for solutions. Political friction may also be exacerbated by the relaxation of environmental protection and public resource management under the current administration, by the perception of increasing power of big business and the wealthy over environmental conditions, by further discoveries of hazards by environmental scientists, and by the entry of larger numbers of environmentally sensitized people into age groups that have increased in both political influence and in greater vulnerability to environmental hazards.

New roles are emerging. Most public sector planners in the past have probably spent much of their time not planning as such, but collecting data, implementing policies and programs, processing and making recommendations on permit or variance applications, and providing more general staff support to political officials. These roles will undoubtedly continue for many planners, including many environmental planners. In environmental planning, however, two additional role-needs have begun to emerge. The first is for planners as technical educators of the interested public: professionals who understand the technical and scientific aspects of environmental problems, and can help not only

political officials but also the public at large to understand the problems, the possible solutions, the uncertainties and the consequences of alternative choices. This is a professional approach to planning, but posits the shared teaching and learning of the educator as role model, rather than the authority of the doctor, the advocacy of the lawyer, or the data control of the bureaucrat. The second and related role need is for planners as facilitators of environmental conflict resolution: professionals who recognize the need for continuous public understanding and acceptance of environmental management decision processes, and know how to design such participatory processes effectively. New sources of theory and method are emerging in these areas which would be valuable to planners, but they are not yet strong in planning curricula.

CONCLUSION

It is both difficult and risky to predict the course of environmental planning in the eighties, especially amid the wrenching conflict of philosophy in the public sector which is now in progress. The future job descriptions, employers and immediate priorities, therefore, are perhaps hardest to foresee. The substantive problems change more slowly, except for those that are suddenly discovered through advances in knowledge and those that are suddenly worsened by withdrawal of government management. The advances in planning theory and methods can also be monitored and developed somewhat independently of the headlines from Washington.

There is much to do in environmental planning in the eighties, both in addressing new needs and in improving the effectiveness of past practice. The greatest present need is to get about the business of planning--planning for the environmental priorities of the next five to ten years--rather than merely reacting to the current turmoil in Washington.

Neighborhood Planning in the Eighties

Throughout the history of modern city planning in the United States the neighborhood has been a major focus of attention. Originally, Clarence Perry presented the neighborhood unit concept, a series of design principles, as a templet for new urban development. The neighborhood was conceived as a means of enhancing feelings of community, assuring both orderly urban development and public safety. Later the neighborhood was the focus of federal programs--such as Model Cities--designed to revitalize neglected urban areas. Currently, the neighborhood is the focus of several public planning programs as well as a unit for privately initiated redevelopment programs.

The term neighborhood planning has come to mean many things to many people. Here the term will be used to refer to planning efforts, either public or private, which focus on the neighborhood as a geographical, social and/or political unit of analysis with the goal of improving overall physical conditions and involving neighborhood residents in the planning and redevelopment process.

Contemporary neighborhood planning emphasizes the conservation and rehabilitation of existing areas through a combination of public and private initiative. It attempts to provide both direction and new resources to improvement efforts as well as to energize the existing resources of the community. Citizen involvement is an important component of these programs, as it develops resident commitment to program objectives. Neighborhood planning programs have successfully addressed a wide variety of problems, including dilapidated housing and public facilities, inadequate public services, and the lack of human services; these efforts deserve continued support.

For the purpose of this discussion a distinction is drawn between publicly and privately initiated neighborhood planning programs, the former sponsored by federal, state or local governments, and the latter primarily by independent neighborhood organizations. Both types of programs, I believe, will undergo significant changes in the eighties.

During the seventies, publicly sponsored neighborhood programs received considerable support from the federal government. Programs like the Community Development Block Grant program (CDBG), Neighborhood Housing Services, and the Neighborhood Self-Help Redevelopment Program provided funding and direction to neighborhood planning.¹ In the eighties, however, federal involvement will diminish. In fact, some neighborhood oriented Federal programs have already been eliminated, including the Neighborhood Self-Help Development Program. Furthermore, the funding levels of surviving neighborhood planning programs will be considerably reduced. Funding for the CDBG Entitlement program, for example, will be reduced by five to ten percent and funding for the Small Cities program will be reduced even more. Neighborhood development activities will be competing with other eligible activities for a smaller pot of funds.

¹ For a complete list of federal programs that could be used to fund neighborhood planning projects as of 1979, see Neighborhood Oriented Programs of the Federal Government, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

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Changes in regulations governing federal neighborhood oriented programs may have an even greater impact on neighborhood planning in the eighties. The new regulations for the Urban Development Action Grant program (UDAG), for example, no longer require that funds be equally divided among commercial, industrial and neighborhood projects. This means that neighborhood projects will be competing for funding with large commercial development projects. The result will undoubtedly be the funding of fewer neighborhood projects. In addition, citizen participation requirements in the CDBG and other programs are being loosened, thus weakening incentives for involving neighborhood groups in planning programs.

Many of the municipally sponsored neighborhood planning programs--such as those in Atlanta, St. Paul and Denver--were created as a means of satisfying Federal requirements for citizen participation. Thus, weakening participation requirements may result in fewer new municipally sponsored programs and will compromise the position of existing programs. Moreover, states will have to assume responsibility for neighborhood programs previously managed by the federal government. Within broad general guidelines, states will be deciding on how funds for programs like Small Cities will be dispersed and how they can be used. Thus, previous funding patterns cannot be assumed.

Privately initiated neighborhood planning programs will also be affected by recent federal actions, yet probably not to the same extent as publicly initiated programs. For instance, terminating the Neighborhood Self-Help Development program will reduce the effectiveness of the neighborhood groups it funded, though they should survive the loss. Terminating this program, however, has considerable symbolic overtones since it was the only HUD program that directly funded neighborhood groups. Privately initiated groups will also suffer from changes in the tax system. Lessening the tax burden on the upper income segment of society reduces the incentive for contributing to foundations and non-profit neighborhood organizations. Less private money may then be available to support neighborhood groups and their activities. Finally, due to large cut-backs in federal funding for human services, neighborhood groups will likely show greater involvement in this area. Independent groups will be trying to pick up the most important services cut by federal budget reductions.

In essence, the environment in which neighborhood planning programs have been operating is drastically changing. If neighborhood planning efforts, both public and private, are to survive, they will have to adapt to these changes. The future effectiveness of neighborhood planning programs depends on how well they adapt.

Allow me to suggest a number of adaptive strategies. First, neighborhood groups must find new sources of funding. For example, the CDBG may fund eligible activities carried out by non-profit neighborhood groups, but securing CDBG funds will require a concerted political effort on the part of neighborhood groups in each urban area. Groups interested in this form of funding will have to develop skills in financial accounting and management to satisfy accountability requirements. A number of non-profit groups, such as The National Association of Neighborhoods, The National Trust for Historic Preservation, and the Center for Community Change provide short courses and/or technical assistance on this topic.



Photo by Jane Buckwalter

Additionally, publicly and privately sponsored groups may rely more on state and municipal funds. A small number of states, including New York and New Jersey, provide funding for neighborhood planning projects, yet, most do not. State support of neighborhood planning activities must be expanded, and a well planned and coordinated political campaign will be necessary for this to happen. Similarly, some cities commit substantial amounts of municipal funds to support both publicly and privately sponsored neighborhood improvement projects. Political pressure must be applied in cities that do not commit local funds to initiate funding programs.

Furthermore, neighborhood groups will need to increase fundraising from private sources in the local community. Along with the traditional local or national foundations, such as the Ford Foundation, the Mott Foundation and National Endowment for the Arts, local businesses should be solicited for contributions.

Neighborhood organizations can also sponsor self-help activities ranging from street fairs to local businesses. Retail, manufacturing and construction businesses are presently being run by neighborhood groups in various parts of the country. These entrepreneurial activities can generate revenues and at the same time further community goals, such as increasing local employment, and improve the physical environment. These ventures, however, are not for all neighborhood groups. They require a high level of dedication, commitment and satisfaction. Food, housing or other types of cooperatives can also be sponsored by neighborhood groups. These can help to both keep prices down and instill a sense of pride and control in participating members. The National Consumer Co-op Bank can help in providing loans and technical assistance to groups starting cooperatives.

Second, neighborhood groups must adopt new political targets. As states assume a larger role in neighborhood oriented programs, neighborhood advocates will need to establish new contacts, develop supporters, lobby, and engage in other political activities at the state level. Statewide coalitions of neighborhood associations are the logical spearhead for these efforts. Political activity at the municipal level must also be increased to protect existing neighborhood planning programs and to develop new ones. Finally, national political activity is still important. The remaining federal laws and programs supporting neighborhood planning (e.g., the Community Reinvestment Act, Neighborhood Housing Services) must be protected, and new efforts to increase support for neighborhood planning must be launched.

The changes in neighborhood planning in the eighties will undoubtedly alter the role of planners working with these programs. Planners will be involved in identifying new sources of funds and will need to develop new relationships with state agencies. They will also be called on to help neighborhood groups develop fundraising strategies, financial management procedures, and to devise new local social service programs (e.g., community day care, emergency food programs). Unfortunately, as funds grow short, comprehensive neighborhood planning may become an unaffordable luxury. Planners will be asked to develop specific project plans without a comprehensive neighborhood plan as a guide.

Planners will also have to develop better relations with the local business community (e.g., bankers, developers) since they will be the

sponsors of many new neighborhood development projects. Creative new leveraging techniques will have to be developed to interest these groups in neighborhood redevelopment. At the same time planners must help protect the interests of the indigenous community. Physical rehabilitation should help existing residents, not drive them out. Great care must be taken to design an overall program that does not result in displacement. Rent subsidies, agreements with landlords, and educational campaigns can be employed to accomplish this end. Physical rehabilitation of an area can be profitable for the business community and still benefit indigenous residents.

"AS STATES ASSUME A LARGER ROLE IN NEIGHBORHOOD ORIENTED PROGRAMS, NEIGHBORHOOD ADVOCATES WILL NEED TO ESTABLISH NEW CONTACTS..."

Planners working directly for community groups will have to work harder to maintain effective organizations as financial pressures put new strains on groups and on group members. The tendency for splintering and infighting under stressful conditions must be resisted and collective action encouraged. Finally, in that the poorest areas will have the greatest difficulty adapting to the changes, planners will need to make special efforts to maintain and expand programs in these areas. In particular, self-help programs designed to fill the gap left by federal cutbacks will be necessary. This may include day care, emergency food and shelter, job training and other human service programs.

If there is a contemporary approach that exemplifies many of the major elements of neighborhood planning in the eighties, it is the Neighborhood Housing Services program. This program brings together local citizens, bankers and city officials to work on neighborhood improvement. It relies on a minimum of federal funding and a maximum of citizen participation and self-help. In addition, the local financial community plays a larger role than in other approaches to neighborhood development. Neighborhood Housing Services emphasizes cooperation, local initiative, and the mobilization of existing community resources. These will be the major elements of neighborhood planning programs in the eighties.

The era of relying on federal initiatives in neighborhood planning is over. Other than the Urban Enterprise program now being discussed --which is narrowly focused on business development--no new federal neighborhood programs can be expected in the near future. New initiatives will need to be designed at the state, metropolitan and neighborhood levels to continue upgrading the quality of life in urban neighborhoods. This will require an organized and concerted political effort by both planners and citizens, and the development of creative

new ways to involve the private sector in neighborhood development.

Transportation Planning in the Eighties

The Reagan Administration is clearly effecting major changes in how urban transportation services are delivered and priced. Gone is the emphasis on energy conservation increases. Transit operating subsidies will end after fiscal year 1984 for cities over 50,000. A host of regulations, including the controversial 504 regulations requiring wheelchair lifts on buses, are being eliminated. And urban rail starts have been stopped.

It is tempting to view these changes as fundamental policy changes; aberrations produced by the election of a conservative president. If this were so, then it might be possible to dismiss some of these changes as only temporary, to be rectified by some future election. However, this view ignores the fact that pressures have been mounting for years to make such policy changes. In fact, it is perhaps more accurate to view the Reagan urban transportation policies as another stage in the continuing evolution of transportation policy.

An example might clarify this perspective. Urban transit policy at the federal level dates back to the early 1960s. The fundamental transit legislation was passed in 1964 at a time when market failures were forcing cities to take over bus and rail systems. Embedded in this 1964 legislation were a number of provisions protecting against potential adverse affects of federal involvement. The most controversial of these provisions is the labor protection clause, better known as Section 13c.¹ While many of these provisions made sense in 1964, they became onerous in the late 1970s, and pressure mounted to free local decision makers from the "burdens" of such federal restrictions. It is to these pressures that the Reagan administration is reacting, but it is fair to assume that these pressures would have eventually received attention regardless of who was president.

The cutoff of transit operating subsidies is another example of the evolutionary nature of transit policy. This change is the most critical aspect of the Reagan urban transit policies, yet it represents a continuation of the debate

over the federal role in transit. Prior to the beginning of federal transit operating subsidies in 1974, there was much debate about whether the federal government should subsidize operating costs in addition to capital costs. Opponents of operating subsidies argued that federal subsidies would raise labor contract demands and increase operating costs, while proponents cited the enormous financial pressures already facing cities. While such arguments defy clear answers, the years since 1974 have shown that the subsidies received by cities have indeed come at a price. The federal requirements and restrictions that have accompanied operating assistance have certainly not encouraged local transit decision makers to be more innovative and creative. One might, therefore, view the cutoff of federal operating subsidies as the end of an experiment in federal policy. Regardless, it is but one more step in the debate over what role the federal government should play in providing transit service.

While the Reagan policies are part of a continuing evolutionary process, they will result in direct impacts on the provision of transportation services. These impacts in turn are changing the roles of planners.

One obvious impact is the greater reliance on the private sector to provide services in a less regulated environment. With less money, transit authorities will no longer be able to provide such services as "shopper specials," some express routes to industrial parks, and service in low-density neighborhoods. In many cases, the private sector will provide such services independently of the transit authorities; the latter will follow the lead of Tidewater Regional Transit in Norfolk and contract with less-costly private operators to replace unproductive portions of their service areas. In short, the role of the public sector will likely diminish while that of the private sector increases.

"ARE WE PREPARED TO SAY THAT SOME PERSONS SIMPLY CANNOT EXPECT TO RECEIVE TRANSIT SERVICE?"

The question, however, is what happens in cases of market failure? If the private sector finds some services to be unprofitable, will those services simply vanish? This situation is the basis upon which public takeover of transit first occurred. Are we prepared to say that some persons simply cannot expect to receive transit service? Will this policy change when gasoline supplies dwindle? These are questions which will remain central to the debate over urban transportation policy and which will persist long after the Reagan Administration.

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¹ Section 13(c) of the Urban Mass Transportation Act of 1964, as amended, stipulates that, conditional to receiving federal aid, transit systems must sign an agreement with the Department of Labor assuring that no workers will be adversely affected as a result of receiving such aid.

Another legacy of the Reagan policies will likely be a renewed concern over facility construction. In administration cost-cutting measures, the starts of new fixed-rail transit facilities have been halted. Rail systems are costly to build and are always controversial politically, yet they are needed in many heavily used corridors. One can expect that there will someday be a recognition that we have fallen behind in the construction and upgrading of both heavy rail and light rail facilities, and federal policy will again shift to remedy this problem.

The new era of transportation policy has considerable impacts on planners. The essence of these impacts is simple: transportation planning is becoming more management oriented.

Like the overall change in transportation policy, this new role for planners is not a surprise. The 1950s and 1960s were a time of infrastructure development. Highways, airports, and local streets were being rapidly built. These projects created challenges to planners: how large a demand should these facilities accommodate; where should they be located; how could unwanted social and environmental effects be ameliorated? These were difficult issues, and they were squarely faced in city after city by planners who were simultaneously developing the tools and techniques which these problems required. Planners learned to forecast travel demand, to load networks, and to estimate vehicle emissions. These techniques were useful; however, the problems have changed.

The new problems facing transportation planners are quite diverse. First, they are no longer primarily demand-oriented; they are very much supply-oriented. Cost constraints are forcing transit planners to determine how best to cut deficits, not how best to meet new demand. Planners are also forced to examine roadway networks to determine which road segments can be downgraded. In these and other instances the planner's focus has shifted toward developing a better understanding of how a system can be operated more efficiently or even at a reduced level of service.

Another way of looking at this change in roles is to view the planner as part manager. At first glance, this shift in roles may not appeal to some planners, for it implies a maintenance function as opposed to a change-agent function. However, this management function is not without great challenges. Perhaps the most challenging aspect of this managerial role is that of coordinator. Assuming the proliferation of private sector and public sector providers of transportation services, the planner will face an increased challenge in helping to make these services useful in a coordinated system. This task may prove to be far more

appealing than demand forecasting.

Two related and important aspects of the role of the planner must be underscored. First, there will be new clients for the planner's skills. Second, the private vs. public sector distinction will be less important or noticeable. Planners will find public sector job opportunities diminished but the private sector opportunities increased. There will be more genuine private-public partnerships. The role of the planner will become more generic, less specific to the public sector.



To solve the new problems facing the planner, new skills and tools are necessary. For the sake of convenience, these may be considered in two groups: quantitative and non-quantitative.

Many of the existing quantitative tools of the transportation planner will retain their utility. Demographic analysis, network analy-

sis, statistical analysis and impact analysis will all be useful. In addition, planners will need to know more about financial analysis, including pricing theory, regulatory theory, and marginal cost analysis. These skills will enable the planner to address the major questions of cost-effectiveness of various service components. For example, where and when should a transit system reduce service so as to reduce its deficit with minimal impacts on mobility? Such questions demand an analytical understanding of marginal costs and revenues.

While quantitative skills will remain essential to many effective planners, the scale at which these skills are applied is likely to change. The explosive growth of micro-computers is forever altering the relationship between people and computers. No longer will it be necessary to depend on large, complex computers, and more importantly, on persons who can communicate with them. Instead, many of the analytical tools needed by transportation planners will be met by small in-house computers. This change in technology may be a difficult one for some planners in the short run, but in the long run it will greatly expand and enhance the capabilities of transportation planners.

The non-quantitative skills required will be much the same as those now required of planners. Communication skills and implementation skills head the list. The role of the planner as coordinator and manager of transportation services will heighten the need for the planner to deal with a wide range of constituencies, to facilitate action, to present concepts, and to identify alternatives.

Despite the changes which planning is undergoing, there remains one important constant, a skill which undoubtedly will retain its value. The planner has always been part visionary and part protector of the public good. Although at times chastized for being impractical or obstructionist, the planner nonetheless serves a vital public function in pointing out both inequities and opportunities. While the exigencies of fiscal constraints are making planners more management-oriented, the need for vision will persist.

Public Participation in the Eighties

"We are experiencing a new American Revolution. It is a revolution of aroused citizens, concerned about the quality of our environment, demanding action by government and industry and taking action themselves." (U.S. EPA, 1972) This animated quote comes from a 1972 booklet published by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) as a citizen's guide for participation in

environmental actions, and is shown here to illustrate the very different government climate of just a decade ago. During the 1970s, EPA, along with most federal agencies, began to require public or citizen participation with the federal programs they were funding. In fact, by 1978, most agencies receiving federal funds were using public participation in their planning activities.

Public participation includes all agency activities which meet goals of constituency involvement. These activities run the gamut from periodic public hearings to frequent advisory committee meetings.

Public participation in the 1970s became an integral part of federal, state and local government programs. It took many forms, but its goals always included involving citizens in planning and/or decision making. For the most part, public participation was required by the federal government for projects, plans and activities which were supported by federal dollars. Thus its existence was mandated.

At first glance, continued strong public participation requirements in the eighties could be considered highly unlikely. Gone are the ambitious mandates of the last decade. In this period of extensive fiscal constraint, there is widespread speculation that citizen participation programs are among the most vulnerable areas of federal involvement. However, citizen participation came about as a means to satisfy serious governmental needs; these needs continue, and will outlast the political winds of a single administration. In fact, even in the absence of the 1970s requirements, citizen participation will continue as a significant activity of public agencies. The reasons for citizen involvement are just as strong as ever.

Earlier action by the federal government to encourage participatory citizen involvement came about in response to widespread political activism in the 1960s. Citizens were then demanding a voice in government at all levels. The increased centralization of power in Washington was one major impetus: people began feeling that the size of the federal machinery prevented it from being accountable. Further, citizen concerns mushroomed on certain issues: widespread recognition of environmental problems, demands for minority participation flamed by the civil rights movement, anger against the broken promises of urban renewal, defacto citizen involvement in community enterprises (such as health services), and citizen mobilization against American foreign policy.

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As a result, mandatory citizen participation requirements were issued by virtually all federal agencies. These began with the poverty and urban renewal programs of the mid-1960s, and became routine in environmental and health legislation of the early 1970s. The book Citizen Participation was distributed in 1978 by the Community Services Administration to provide a reference of requirements for public participation in all federal agencies. The range of methods catalogued is considerable, and a variety of implementation techniques are also included. The book serves as a guide for both staff and citizens, and is an impressive attempt by the federal government to expand the effectiveness of the public participation mandate. The seventies response to participation demands was considerable.



Drawing by Heather Barbour

In the 1980s, the characters of new forces pushing all levels of government suggest no relaxation of citizen demand for significant involvement. As rapid changes occur in administration of federal programs, and as human services, transportation and environmental protection budgets feel the huge loss in federal funding, citizens will demand to exercise some control over remaining programs. They will demand knowledge about the consequences of losing programs and services which are cut. Further, as economic and environmental priorities conflict, government will find its plans paralyzed without recourse to citizen involvement. Witness the strong citizen reaction to nuclear power plant construction and the siting of hazardous waste disposal sites. Further, the promised shift of power from federal to state and local governments will bring more citizens closer to the sources of major governmental decision-making, and presumably open avenues for direct participation.

To find out how practicing public participation staff see the future of citizen involvement, I spoke with nine federal, state, and local government people. All but one have had the responsibility of coordinating their

agency's citizen advisory committees or public hearings. That one person has done research within his state agency on effectiveness of citizen advisory committees.

The overwhelming theme from these interviews is that public participation has been crucial to agency programs in giving them constituency viewpoints. Participation has helped create better understanding of specific programs and has made program implementation more successful. For these reasons, agencies will continue to use citizen involvement even if it is no longer mandated from Washington. Since most staff members assigned to public participation have other duties as well, the lack of federal funding will not necessarily affect the agencies' capacities for participation.

Those interviewed believed in the value of citizen involvement. Numerous studies of public participation indicate that the practice is effective if staff believe in it. It sometimes requires a thick skin to go out to your constituency groups and receive verbal abuse and misunderstanding, and on occasion engage in shouting matches. My experience, though, shows that sincerity and perseverance will ultimately be rewarded.

CONCLUSION

The trend of the future looks as though public participation will not be a mandated requirement for receipt of federal funds. This will result in fewer agencies initiating public participation in their programs. However, agencies that have used it successfully will continue to do so. Those that grudgingly used public participation will be relieved to put their efforts elsewhere.

Citizen involvement itself, however, will continue to be an important phenomenon. Citizen groups have learned how to work with the system successfully, have become sophisticated about educating their fellow citizens, and have established working relationships with many agencies. This has been a rewarding experience, with positive gratification for those involved. It will continue.

Basic motivations for citizen involvement remain. "The American people have grown increasingly distrustful of public institutions ...because of the devastating effects of inflation and the enormous growth of computers with the consequent inroads into private life." (Langham, 1980) Thus, during the eighties, citizens will continue to seek a voice in government. Although the federal government may no longer be responsive in the form of mandating public participation, many federal, state, and local agency staff will continue to be responsive to the public.

The future of public participation will depend, as it did in the sixties, on how many citizens express their desires. The push came from outspoken citizens in the last two decades, and will continue to come from them in the eighties. Responding to this push will be left in the hands of state and local governments.

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North Carolina's Lead Regional Organizations in the Eighties

Lead Regional Organizations (LROs) are voluntary associations of city and county governments working together to solve mutual problems in a defined, multi-county area. Based on their work and interests, some are organized as regional planning commissions, economic development commissions, combined planning and economic development commissions, joint planning organizations arranged with local planning boards, and finally, regional councils of local officials, or councils of governments. There are 18 such organizations in North Carolina, designated by letters A-R as well as by name. LROs are created by local governments and serve under state enabling legislation to coordinate functional planning activities within the region. They also serve as a forum for local governments to discuss problems of regional significance and to establish priorities for state and federal funding in the region. Where the local need is identified, LROs also provide direct services to member governments.

As a perspective on the future, the North Carolina Lead Regional Organizations Directors' Association in early 1980 began its own effort to identify roles which regional councils could play in issues of major importance to the state and its local governments. During 1980, three subcommittees of this group met and produced ideas, some representing a continuation of present services and others representing new directions and emphases to meet changing times and conditions. Specifically, the committees addressed the question, "What are important needs of local governments in North Carolina for the eighties in which LROs can and should provide assistance?" The resulting study effort produced a draft paper entitled "Roles of North Carolina's Lead Regional Organizations in the 1980s." This draft paper is intended as a statement of priority issues and concerns for

individual LRO Boards to consider as they seek to operate with fewer federal mandates and greater independence in developing programs in the eighties. The following is a summary of LRO draft findings in several areas: physical planning, community development, economic development, human resources planning, and technical assistance to local governments.

PHYSICAL PLANNING

LROs can assist local governments with the physical planning problems of the eighties and help them to identify issues and situations requiring state and federal assistance. Major elements in this physical planning category include growth management, water resources, transportation, and waste management planning.

As part of the sunbelt, local communities in North Carolina will be increasingly concerned about growth management. Transportation, housing, and energy costs require greater attention to the physical layout of communities. Growing competition between farm, urban, and suburban uses of land bring growing pressures on local governments to maintain viable plans and tools for growth management. With the concern about economy in government, small counties, and municipalities will turn increasingly to expertise of the LRO--which is accountable to them and can be shared with other units of government on a cost-effective basis.

For example, in the area of housing, LROs have the data and planning expertise for refining local means to improve housing and implement housing plans. LROs can assist local governments in such matters as reviewing development plans, growth management tools, and operating procedures to conserve and promote greater community efficiency and self-sufficiency. LROs can act as clearinghouses for new technology, passing it on to local governments as applicable. LRO assistance to land use and land-related planning efforts of local governments and planning boards has potential as a key area of activity to encourage positive changes in traditional values regarding land ownership, land stewardship, and better land records and tax management. Finally, farmland preservation should also figure strongly in future cooperative local and regional planning efforts enhanced by the LROs.

In water resources planning, the need for local, regional, and statewide cooperation will become critical by the end of the eighties, unless corrective steps are taken soon. Some problems--like rivers or water bodies they involve--are larger than a single region, often encompassing expanded roles for state government in managing water resources. State officials H. Dewitt Blackwell is Planning Director for the Western Piedmont Council of Governments in Hickory.

and water management experts realize that local units of government are major actors, as operators of waste treatment facilities, regulators of growth and development, users and retailers of water for commerce, industry, and drinking. A coordinated approach to local activities is essential.

Working with state government, LROs can help local governments address key water problems of the eighties. These include inadequate supplies to meet competing demands, fragmented planning and management, with related disorderly competition and environmental degradation of sources, inadequate flow maintenance, and conflicts between land use and water integrity. LROs' strength in this area include their ability to coordinate local and state levels, their capacity to provide technical services and their understanding of local resources, institutions, and problems which influence the management of water resources. There is a clear need for local governments through their LROs to assess water resource problems, to plan for water resource development, and to work together and with the state to manage those resources. LROs' understanding of local resources, problems and institutions can be used to develop cost-effective and environmentally sound management decisions.

In the transportation field, current limitations on revenues, the need for energy conservation, and increasing costs lead to growing need for local governments to identify critical transportation priorities. Existing metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs), as designated by the U.S. Department of Transportation, provide an opportunity for relating local plans to transportation programming. However, current MPO boundaries are restricted to urbanized areas. LROs provide an essential service to smaller localities. LROs can help match available resources and perceived needs; link human service, physical and transportation planning; and utilize lessons from alternative and innovative transportation plans and programs used elsewhere in the country. The LRO boards are in an excellent position to provide dispassionate analysis and to help in local priority setting, thus balancing competing demands with limited transportation resources.

The management of solid and hazardous wastes is a final major physical planning concern. New EPA requirements, increased costs for landfills, increasing economic attractiveness of resource recovery, citizen concern about siting of landfills and protection from improper hazardous waste disposal, and higher transportation/collection costs make this area a priority for the eighties. Many aspects of this problem are multi-county and require intergovernmental cooperation. LROs can promote local government sharing of expertise to do routing and collection studies, analyze land-

filling and other waste disposal alternatives (e.g., resource recovery), undertake multi-county studies to determine optimal landfill or resource recovery locations and transportation modes, and assist in public education.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

LROs can provide much assistance in community development by searching out methods to reduce the effects of erosion in federal aid, facilitating local government efficiency and productivity, and helping local governments maintain a safe, decent, sanitary housing inventory for all citizens. In the eighties, local member governments may need to consider asking their LROs to provide even greater assistance with: annexation feasibility studies; local and regional capital improvement planning; preparation of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) applications; administration of CDBG programs when project funds or time frames are limited; and applications of computer and systems analysis for more efficient municipal operations.



Photo by Priscilla Cobb

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

As North Carolina continues to develop amidst the "Sunbelt", Lead Regional Organizations can help local governments and their citizens prepare for this growth and guide it in appropriate locally determined directions. Specific areas where LROs can serve include: preparing economic development and balanced growth plans, including needs analyses and the setting of economic priorities; compiling data for economic development initiatives and grant assistance; undertaking regional and local industrial recruitment, better enabling substate regions to attract a "fair share" of overall state industrial growth; identifying regional alternatives to large individual expenses (e.g., regional capital facilities, regional parks, etc.) which have a major impact on local taxes and fiscal integrity and; focusing on solutions to growing housing problems--a key to future economic development.

The growing limitations on funds for human resource programs and the increase in local dependency make this a critical area, especially for counties. The intergovernmental nature of LROs--its vertical integration of levels of government and its horizontal integration of agencies in the regions--will continue to be important. As block grant programs begin to provide greater flexibility, LROs can help by: supplementing a county's own limited staff in specialized areas; promoting volunteerism and the development of non-tax and private non-profit resources; cultivating a closer partnership between public and private providers of human services and; increasing the cost-effectiveness of programs and interagency coordination, through the establishment of human resource departments and interagency councils where appropriate. LROs may also undertake traditional activities, such as monitoring and evaluation of multi-county programs and assistance in writing local human service plans.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

The eighties promise to be a decade of limited public resources, both in federal funding and local taxes. Local governments will need to cooperate and use the expertise of their LROs and other service organizations (e.g., the League of Municipalities and the Association of County Commissioners) to yield the greatest benefit from their limited local resources. LROs employ specialists that many of their member governments cannot afford on a full-time basis. Because of their contact with many governments, LROs can transfer and build upon the experience of one government in assisting another. LROs can foster coordination and bring about a sharing of resources to meet the needs of all a region's local governments. Although the assistance LROs provide varies with board policy, budgets, staff expertise and other factors, many of the areas of technical assistance are suited to contractual arrangements between the LRO and member governments when a significant amount of time is required. Key services which LROs may provide in a decade of limited resources include increased local government staff training, regional purchasing arrangements and assistance with the state purchasing, regional investment pools, insurance and risk management studies, position classification and pay plans, organization and management studies, and administrative manuals.

CONCLUSION

The eighties will be a period of significant change in lifestyles and people's expectations of government. Government will be expected to deal with increasing problems of growth management, energy scarcity, complex human resources and environmental integrity.

Lead Regional Organizations can provide consultative assistance to local governments in finding partial solutions to these growing problems. Lead Regional Organizations will be needed to develop intergovernmental solutions, based on the interdependence of the levels of government and of city, suburban and rural dwellers as everything grows "closer" and society becomes more interested in centralized government. The LRO in its unique role as local clearinghouse and coordinator can serve best as the catalyst that: promotes an interchange of information, ideas and experiences within a region and fosters the mutual growth and development of local governments through their communication and cooperation with one another.

Human Services Planning in the Eighties

With the back-drop of recent legislative and executive actions under the Reagan administration, it is all too tempting to conclude that human services planning in the public sector has no future. While it is true that many of the planning institutions and vehicles in human services (e.g., HSAs, Title XX, Community Mental Health Systems Act) have either been eliminated or emasculated under the new philosophy guiding the national administration, planning as a function and responsibility is not so easily dismissed, or discarded.

Predicting the future of human services planning demands some initial agreement as to the meaning of the enterprise. As a process, human services planning has been viewed primarily as an application of the rational model: problem analysis, needs assessment, establishment of goals and objectives, analysis of alternatives, program implementation, and evaluation. This view of planning has been termed a population-based approach which,

... determines health (human service) needs and establishes resource requirements based upon an assessment of risk levels and health status of a given population. The determination of need is derived solely from attributes of the population, initially ignoring all existing resources.
(Tannen, 1980, 128)

Planning in human services is also a reflection of social values. The recognition and definition of social problems, limits on "reasonable and acceptable" intervention strategies, and criteria for program evaluation all implicitly incorporate dominant social values. In a pluralistic democracy, human services planning is usually forced to deal with competing and conflicting social values: efficiency, equity,

individualism, civitas, free-market, social justice.

In practice, human services planning has been primarily characterized as regulation of resource allocation. Regulation as a planning strategy is primarily geared toward controlling growth, not at promoting activity. (Tannen, 1980) Serving as a mechanism to allocate limited resources on some "rational" basis has lead to a planning approach which,

...attempts to match the supply of health (human service) resources with the demand for health (human) services. The objective of this process is to accommodate demand in the most efficient manner possible, and it relies heavily on service-to-population ratios. (Tannen 1980, p. 127)

This practice of planning for resource allocation is inherently conflictual. As the resource base available for allocation shrinks, greater conflict arises among special interest groups advocating competing programs.

"PERHAPS THE TIME HAS COME FOR PLANNERS TO BEGIN TO DEVELOP ADMINISTRATIVE SKILLS AS AN ESSENTIAL TOOL FOR REALIZATION OF PLANNING IN THE ADMINISTRATION OF HUMAN SERVICES PROGRAMS."

While attempting to function in this environment, human service planners have typically been responsible for planning, but have had no authority to assure that decisions made during the planning process are actually carried out. As staff/advisors to administrative and legislative decision-makers, planners have effectively been relegated to the fringes of policy and program decision-making in human services.

With this background on past experience in the field, some future directions in human services planning become apparent. The planning function in public human services will probably not change substantially over the next ten years. The visibility of planning and planning institutions will fluctuate with the philosophy dominant in the Federal Executive at various times. Planning will continue even if called by other names (e.g., reorganization, realignment or redistribution of responsibility, etc.).

Ironically, even while the institutional mechanisms which have supported planning during the previous ten years are dismantled, the amount of planning actually being done may increase. As a generalization, the amount of planning activity may be inversely correlated with the resources available to support programmatic interventions -- a situation directly analogous to the family budget. The planning which does take place, however, will probably only be conducted to a very limited extent by

those who would define themselves as planners. Instead, the plans will be conceived and carried out by decision-makers.

Planners as a professional group will be highly restrained in their conception and definition of professional practice. The majority of planners will function in roles limited to technician-trustee or trustee delegate in which they adopt the goals of some power elite or elected official and serve as technical advisors regarding realization of objectives identified by their sponsoring group. (Rabinovitz, 1970)

The prospects for planners qua planners is fairly limited. Some entrepreneurial planners will undoubtedly build substantial careers as consultants primarily functioning to provide an aura of legitimation and objectivity to decisions already made by decision-making authorities. The vast majority of planners will rely upon their knowledge and experience in substantive program areas for jobs, rather than upon planning skills and expertise per se. This will be a trans-substantive basis for professional practice. (Hemmens, et al. 1978)

Planners may gradually tire of the advisor/staff technician role that dominates professional education and conceptions of the "planner." Careers as administrators, managers and even elected officials in which planners may function as brokers, mobilizers and leaders in the actual decision-making process should have ever increasing appeal for those who prefer implementation over incantation and impact over intent.

Administration is consistently portrayed as encompassing planning as one of its major responsibilities. Perhaps the time has come for planners to begin to develop administrative skills as an essential tool for realization of planning in the administration of human service programs.

The notion of planners as administrators and decision-makers in the arena of human services administration represents a fundamental challenge to the perspectives and philosophies dominating the traditional rubrics of professional planning education. Educated technicians who serve at the behest and beckoning of decision-makers are too far removed from the workings of human services programs, politics, and policies to significantly affect their organization and functioning. Planners who expect to influence policy and programmatic decisions must also be able to budget, supervise, organize, control, delegate and direct those organizations which are to implement the

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plans. Planners have to stand ready to decide, not simply advise, and to take direct heat for decisions rather than seek shelter in traditional staff positions.

CONCLUSION

The shock which is still reverberating throughout the human services community as the result of the Reagan administration's "safety-net" approach may result in benefits to some of those professional groups most affected. Program planners and evaluators in human services have been repeatedly criticized for their irrelevance, not entirely without justification. The professional insecurity which has resulted from recent changes in funding and eligibility for various human services programs may force planners to realistically assess their professional identities. Self-examination may focus on the function and process of program planning and evaluation, the role of the planner in program implementation and decision making, and the professional education of planners. With luck, we may arrive at a more realistic and operational view of planning. If so, the benefits to both the profession and the society it is to serve will far outweigh the current discomfort.

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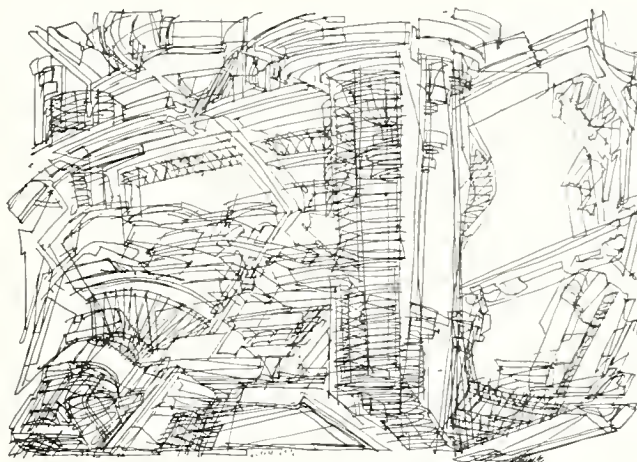
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