

# Regional Strategic Planning: Part of Vancouver's Secret Sauce

Ken Cameron FCIP RPP

SFU Adjunct Professor of Urban Studies

Author of *Showing the Way: Peter Oberlander and the  
Imperative of Global Citizenship*

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H. Peter Oberlander CM, 1922-2008

“The city is an organic entity, humanity’s  
greatest achievement”





# What is an “organic city”

- Boundaries coincide with market areas for housing, labour, commerce and transportation
- Grows and changes in response to stimuli
- Different parts play different roles in the success of the whole



# The real city of Vancouver





# Governing and planning in the organic city

- Governance is a matrix of decision-making made better by widely-accepted plans
- Planning must be strategic:
  - Find concepts that deliver on variety of goals
  - High level – leave room for others, especially municipalities
  - Focus on conservation/efficient use of five key resources: water, land, air, energy and financial capital



# Livable Region Strategic Plan (1996) - Key Strategies

- Protect the Green Zone
- Build more complete communities
- Achieve a compact metropolitan region
- Increase transportation choice



# The Vancouver of today - different from other cities (and from what it might have been)

- Compact, livable urban form; excellent urban design
- “Cities in a sea of green” – explicit and resolute protection of the working landscape
- Automobile restrained, transit-oriented transportation system
- Social harmony and civility
- Democratic self-determination



# Challenges of the next 30 years

- Continued population growth and diversification
- The cost of land
- Impact of the Anthropocene age, including humanity's three self-generated existential threats: climate change, nuclear war and technological disruption
- Leadership





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